

## A Shangri-La on This Cosmos

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### Abstract

In fiction, Shangri-La is often depicted as an earthly paradise, specifically a mythical Himalayan arcadia that is portrayed as an impressively blissful realm, isolated from the rest of the world. There is no comparable counterpart anywhere else in the universe to Dayalbagh, the 'Garden of the Merciful' that contemporaneously rivals Shangri-La. This article explores a wide range of subjects, from Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece painting, the "Mona Lisa", to the concept of the future Superman. The blissfully radiant 'cutie-pie' smile of the toddlers in Dayalbagh surpasses even the enigmatic smile of "Mona Lisa". The leadership of a living spiritual master, combined with a simple life style, profoundly influences the intellectual, intuitive, and spiritual faculties of these budding infants of the superhuman evolutionary scheme.

### Introduction

Two of our University colleagues from Electrical Engineering Department, were invited for technical discussions at FBK-Sustainable Energies Research Centre during March 20-31, 2021 at Trento, a prosperous city located on the banks of the river Adige in Italy. This meeting was a part of an ongoing multi-national research project with IIT Roorkee, IIT Delhi and Dayalbagh Educational Institute (Deemed to be University) had provided an excellent opportunity to confabulate the progress of the project besides

glancing at the host country from a close perspective. Italy is well-known for its architecture, culture, art, opera, literature, film, and fashion; and vouched for its mesmerizing topography, pristine beaches, historical artifacts, monuments, and much more [1]. After learning about Leonardo da Vinci, an Italian polymath of the Renaissance period who made contributions to Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Science, Mathematics, Music, Architecture, Engineering, Geology, Astrology, Literature, Botany, Anatomy, Paleontology and Cartography [2], it was realized that Italy has a lot more to proffer. Leonardo da Vinci is identified as one of the greatest painters in the history of art. His magnum opus, the “Mona Lisa”, is his best known work and often regarded as the world’s most famous painting. His greatest triumph of combining art, science, optics, and illusion was the enigmatic smile of the “Mona Lisa” [3]. I was literally teleported to Italy with such vivid description; perhaps it was a case of quantum entanglement. My dream flight to destination took off through the wings of desire providing an opportunity to share experiences of Shangri-La; a fictional place described in James Hilton’s novel “Lost Horizon” and the concept associated with region of Tibet, particularly the town of Zhongdian renamed as Shangri-La in 2001 to attract tourists. This mythical paradise is said to possess a timeless allure, where time stands still and the worries of the world fade away in Nature’s embrace [4].

The embodiment of Dayalbagh way of life, ethics and ethos interweaving educational network with its spiritual and normative foundations are strong enough for sustainability [5]. Prof. Budd Hall, UNESCO Co-Chair in community Based research and social responsibility further writes that the foundation of Dayalbagh is almost two centuries old, much before Gandhi’s own ideas on education were articulated and practiced [5] which exemplify it as harbinger for change and a crusader for welfare of the society [6].

The joint meetings connecting the different continents on the globe remind me of the famous poet Rudyard Kipling, who had said,

*“Oh, East is East, and West is West,  
and never the twain shall meet.” ...*

Perhaps these lines do not hold true in the current scenario in the notional sense. With the emerging robust technologies, the world is too small. Jock Sturges quotes “The world is shrinking as we see more and more of it in the media .....”. Conceptually, the east and the west have in fact merged in the pious land of Dayalbagh at various international platforms of the ‘Towards the Science of Consciousness’ (TSC) held at Dayalbagh and Arizona and later during the ‘Dayalbagh Science of Consciousness’ (DSC) hosted by Kiel University, Germany in the virtuous virtual mode. Rothman writes “After three years of Pandemic, our relationship with time has changed - may be for better. Life stopped but time continued” [7]. In contrast to this, life never came to stand still at Dayalbagh; it remained a vibrant place relishing outdoor activities close to nature even during the pandemic. Even to this date, not only the toddlers (above 4 years) but the entire community of Dayalbagh strictly exercises an abundance of precaution by wearing mask, headgear and maintaining social distancing. The entire creation of Dayalbagh offers a glimpse into an enthralling worldview in which the microcosm reflects the macrocosm. Everything here is connected to everything else at all times. Whispers captivate deep within as one navigates through the panoramic expanse of Dayalbagh, a place ever resonating with articulative sound currents in accelerative mode towards consciousness and conscientiousness and further towards grand trinity of sublime bliss, beauty and benediction.

## The Enigmatic Smile of 'Mona Lisa' vis-à-vis 'Cutie Pie' Smile of Superman

Neil Gaiman has said, "Adults follow paths. Children explore." The live example of this saying is seen on a unique place in this universe. Had we ever thought that the toddlers would ever wake up their parents in the early morning to tell them to take these tiny-tots to the fields....seems quite surprising and unbelievable.... but it is true. Such a unique place does exist on this earth and is bestowed with the Divine presence of the Spiritual Leader of the Radhasoami Faith. Welcome to the Shangri-La on this cosmos. It is entitled Dayalbagh, which literally means 'garden of the merciful'. Life here is blissful. The inhabitants of this place feel fortuitous under the care and protection of their Revered Spiritual Living master. They are so very thankful, incredibly grateful, unbelievably and abundantly blessed. It is here that the supermen are born and are being nurtured to serve mankind. In this 'Garden of the Merciful', the future pillars of the nation-the children -the super humans are getting ready to meet the challenges of this world. Paulo Coelho has rightly said, "Fortunate are those who take the first steps." The versatile children of the Superman scheme (from 3 weeks to 8 years old) are leading a tough but miraculous life. These infants and children via innovative experiment get accustomed to the mundane regime and spiritual revelations of Shangri-La. They partake in congregational prayers, selfless service in the lap of nature-the community fieldwork, healthcare exercise, and march past activities.

The genesis of Superman has the reference in the philosophical texts since the time of Plato. Citation to superman can be traced in the philosophical thought of Vedic culture or *Upanishads*, we may find references to Superman. A German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche published a book in 1883 entitled "Thus Spoke Zarathustra". This philosophical treatise dealt with many of Nietzsche's ideas about the relationship between morality and humanity, and caught in the middle was the character of the ubermensch. This figure is called the "overman" or by some 'superman'. The English playwright George Bernard Shaw propounded his theory of Superman in his famous play *Man and Superman*. The Superman from Shaw's play possesses - superior intellect, cunning and intuition, ability to defy obsolete moral codes and self-defined virtues [8].

The day of these bairns in Dayalbagh, starts at 3 am in the early morning, where they work with their own hands in the Agricultural cum Precision farming-in spite of the rain or shine, summer or winter with an emphasis on values amidst Sigma Six Q Model, further elaborated as  $\Sigma A^* \Sigma 6 Q \& V_s$  Model [A\*, Q & Vs stand for Computer Cloud Attributes (Smart, Mobile and Resilient), Qualities (Air, Water, Health and Education, Agriculture and Dairy Farming, Innovation and Values)] [9]. These indefatigable children bubbled with a special energy and enthusiasms get rejuvenated to be in the lap of nature once again in the evening shift too. It has been rightly said, "The special life is where the ordinary becomes extraordinary, the natural becomes miraculous, and the everyday becomes unique. Finding the magic and wonder within nature is the most assured means by which children rediscover the joy of life". It is this feeling of joy, ecstasy and blissfulness which is experienced not only by the young buds in the vicinity of this Shangri-La, but also all the Supermen across the globe who are connected to the same in virtuous virtual mode. William Wordsworth in his poem "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" says:

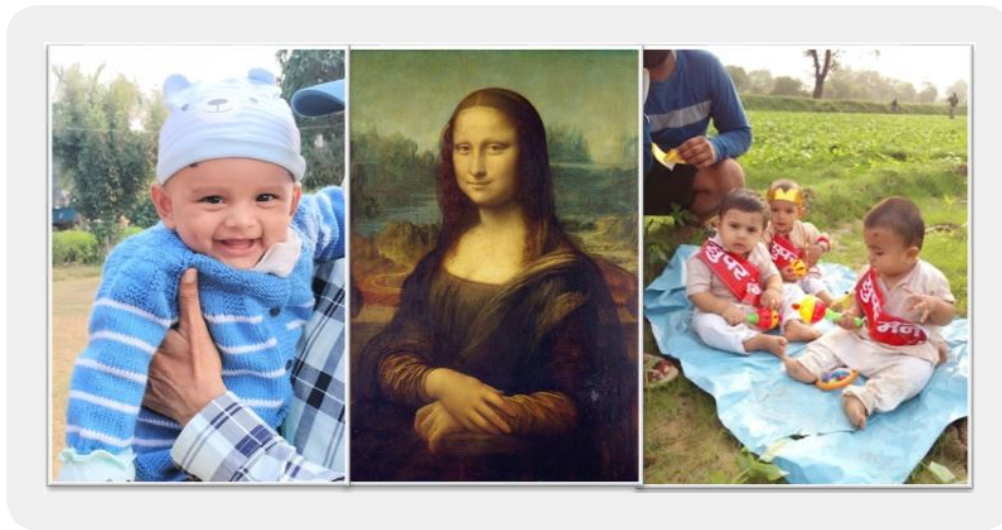
*“Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy;..”*

These superman have re-casted the enigmatic smile of “Mona Lisa” painted by renowned Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci and converted it into the ‘cutie pie’ smile. This ‘cutie pie’ smile, a special smile, conveys happiness and blissfulness forever and ever [Fig. 1]. These innocent toddlers, preschoolers, and middle childhood reveal that they are blessed to be in this Shangri-La, where life is bliss. These jubilant kiddies convey a message to all that their euphoric smile symbolizes their triumph and pleasantness in any and every situation. Their sparkling eyes and gleaming smile with dimple cheeks transcends national and cultural barriers. Their dazzling eyes are windows to the soul. One can smell the magnificent spirit of love and affection emanating from these toddlers.

William Wordsworth in his poem “My Heart Leaps Up” has said, “Child is father of the man”. There are many different interpretations of the phrase, the most popular of which is that man is the product of habits and behavior developed in youth. Whatever they imbibe is what they would develop. Thus these ‘super humans’ turn the sour feelings or experiences into pleasant ones. This is how they strive towards better worldliness. The bliss that they experience is not a pie in the sky. Their innocent cutie pie smile is an indication of the compassion, sympathy, motivation and consolation which they have for the fellow human beings. They follow the precept of ‘Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man’. In the words of William Arthur Ward, “A warm smile is the universal language of kindness”. The special cutie pie smile of these children shows their fortune and blessedness of being under the care and protection of their Supreme Father. They are not affected by any adversity or sorrow. They have learnt to be contented and happy in all the situations. So their triumph over the odd forces makes them dynamic in all respects. This is what they inspire others also to follow. To be blissful forever and ever-just out of this world. “Welcome each day with a genuine smile from within. That smile comes when you know for sure that the Divine loves you”. The radiant torch bearers of the ‘Garden of the Merciful’, Dayalbagh, will illuminate the world with their charismatic, alluring and cutie pie smile. It has been rightly said, “Use your smile to change the world, and don’t let the world change your smile” because “A smile is the universal welcome.”- Max Eastman.

With their goal of ‘service to mankind’, these inhabitants have taken initiatives to bring better worldliness with their selfless services. In the words of the US Ex-President George Bush, “There could be no definition of a successful life that does not include service to others”.

Violence, bloodshed, greed, materialism-are some of the evils that have misaligned humanity from the path of peace in the present scenario. Feeling of care and consideration for others will certainly bring peace in the world. We cannot forget what Mother Teresa, charity and nobility personified, had said, “Peace begins with a smile.” This world, now a global village, does not crave for differences and wars. India’s G-20 agenda of ‘*vasudhevkutumbukam*’, propels communiqué that the world is one family and all the inhabitants of this world are the children of the Supreme Father.



*Figure 1: The Irresistible Enigma of a Blissfully Radiant Cutie-Pie Smile*

### **Evolving Scientific Perspective**

The trend of selfless service to all is an important feature of this unique place. Sustainable socio-economic quality of life of any community / society has three significant determinants- Health, Education and Empowerment. These important factors have been given prominence in UN-Sustainable goals too. Commensurate with the DEI philosophy of education-‘Excellence with social relevance’, a free multi-specialty medical and assistance camp is organized every Sunday to facilitate the underprivileged children, men and women of the neighboring community with varied services by the dedicated team of staff, students and doctors. Over a period of 12 years since the beginning of the camp, significant improvement in overall health status, education level and skill-set among the neighboring communities has been observed. These multi specialty medical camps are a mark of our flagship program moving on with enthusiasm. In this way Dayalbagh, a health care habitat, sets an example to serve and bring qualitative improvement in the lives of the last, the least, the lowest and the lost of the social ladder. Free nutritional supplementation program has also been started in the camp with an objective to improve the nourishment of the children, from the neighboring villages, visiting the camp regularly. Most of these children are up to 8 years of age--the period which is crucial for the development and growth of the brain.

It was noted that most of the children attending this program had signs of moderate to severe protein deficiency such as marked loss of pigmentation in their hair or presence of grey/white hair, signs of vitamin deficiencies and many children were noticeably under weight. Therefore, every child is given nutrients like Chyavanprash, an ancient ayurvedic preparation made up of Indian gooseberry, sesame oil, herbs and spices [10], Threptin biscuits plus seasonal items like carrot juice, apples, bananas, oranges etc. at no cost. They are also given cold flavored Cow’s milk containing Protinex and nutrient rich recipes from multi grain flour to further augment their nutritional intake. The parents as well as the mentors noticed accelerated growth and development of these little participants of the Superman scheme. The findings were confirmed by the scientific studies carried out by the pediatrician and others research groups. The impact of nutritional

supplement on the health of the children was assessed by measuring the height and weight of those children who regularly participated in the program. The Pediatricians and dieticians concluded that there was an improvement in their nutritional status as indicated by the reversal of the loss of pigmentation in their hair and decreased signs of the disorders due to the skin vitamin deficiency [11]. Besides improving in the nutritional status, these children have also learned manners and discipline e.g. Forming queues, being courteous to other children, especially girls, avoid littering, voluntarily engaging in camp preparations etc.

Significant increase of weight, height and head circumference together with intelligence, social, emotional, and spiritual quotients as well as intuitive consciousness remains a noteworthy feature here. It has been proven by the scientific study by the pediatrician that these children are unlike the children of their age. Their intelligence, social, emotional, and spiritual quotients as well as intuitive consciousness is higher as compared to the other children of their age—not a partisan of this scheme. The association with the Spiritual Master and ‘Dayalbagh way of life’ has a profound impact on the physical parameters and development of intelligence, social and emotional maturity, and intuitive and spiritual faculties of young children. These are clear indicators of the progression of these children as “Superman”, according to the research presented in the DSC. These scientific perspectives are now being reached out to different centers of Dayalbagh across the global network of 487±1 nodes.

## Conclusion

The infants and children of the Superman Evolutionary Scheme right from three weeks to eight years of age engage in spiritually enchanted quotidian life of Dayalbagh and join for assembly prayers, selfless service, health-care and self-defense workout reinforced with nutritious diet in hygienic milieu. Tutelage of a living spiritual master blended with austere life style has intense influence on blossoming intelligence, social and emotional maturity, and intuitive and spiritual faculties of growing infants. The Chinese proverb “It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness” is very apt because the candle on this Shangri-La of Dayalbagh has been lit to let the light shine forever and brighten our inner glow. All of us should take pride in and welcome these “supermen” –the torch bearers of the future–in this Shangri-La on this Cosmos. The million dollar ‘cutie pie’ smile of the toddlers of Dayalbagh outshines the enigmatic smile of “Mona Lisa”. The frugal and self-restraint life style coupled with, sustained hard work, selfless service to the society, conservation of resources, universal economy, and unity of purpose, thought and action redefines roadman and leadership qualities of Dayalbagh [6,9,12].

## Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest with any one in publishing this article.

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Consultant Department of Pediatrics, Saran Ashram Hospital, Dayalbagh, Agra. This article is dedicated to my grandson Master Sparsh on his first birthday.

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