

# The Lost Continent of the Soul

By

**Ashok Bedi, M.D.,**  
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I have leaded a study tour to India annually for last several years under the he auspices of the New York Jung Foundation. We trace the iternary of Carl Jung's visit to India in 1937-1938. Jung had several interesting observations about India and our study groups visits these sites of archetypal, spiritual and mythological significance and reexamine his assertions about India in light of new medical, analytical and cultural developments. Our next tour will start tomorrow and today I am packing feverishly to get ready for the air trip.

What intrigues me every time I go to India is the awe and reverie that India invokes each time in me and my students who participate in these tours. Some have attended the tour in several occasions, yet India draws them in mysterious ways. I have wondered

often why India has such a hold on my and the Western Psyche. India is a land of contrasts. The mundane and the profound coexist in seamless harmony. The material and the spiritual do their eternal dance in an unbroken rhythm.

India symbolizes the lost continent of the soul for the Western Psyche. Here, the ego of the Western individual meets his soul. The myths and archetypes are in the air and pulsate with every breath you take. If you stay open, it has the potential to align you with the mystery of your depths or overwhelm you!

Carl Jung posed the question: It is possible that India is the real world and the white man lives in a madhouse of abstractions? Life in India has not yet withdrawn into the capsule of the head. It is still the whole body that lives. (Vol. 10. Para 988)

Jung noted that –

In India, the primitive and the civilized aspects coexist without a split. India offers the Other Way of civilizing man, without suppression, violence or rationalism. The Western man lives in the rational/cultural world, but the primitive psyche stays unconscious and operates in dissociation – without the modulating impact of culture and consciousness. (Vol 10, Para 1007-1011).

In the West, we live in these splits between our primitive and cultural selves. We

suppress the primitive into the unconscious and maintain a cultural persona. The repressed primitive psyche may only speak to us via our hang ups or complexes, our medical and psychiatric problems, our relationship tangles and synchronistic events. Denied Gods manifest as sacred illness that we again try to suppress with medication and repression. So these repressed archetypes have to increase the volume of their whispers till we have to take notice. Often it is too late. If we only pay attention to the archetype of love and call of intimacy and whispers of our feeling function in the heart chakra after our third heart attack, it may be too late to redeem our connection with our soul!

India challenges its visitors to integrate our projection of our primitive psyche onto it by a spiritual reflection that is unmistakable twin of the primitive. We are forced to reckon this lost spiritual continent of our soul. The participants in these study tours start out as tourists and return as pilgrims on the path to their soul.

Fortunately for most of us, it may not be necessary to visit India to rediscover this lost continent of our soul. It speaks to us daily in our dreams and images, in our medical and psychiatric problems, in the accidents and synchronicities, in our fascinations and antipathies, in our artistic and creative outputs, in our complexes or hang ups, in our relationships and projections of friends and foes alike, in the

myths, fairy tales or movies that fascinate us, in the personal myths and symbols that these above whispers of our soul offers us constantly. However we must make sacred space with silence, solitude, journaling, prayer, reflection and mindfulness to attend to these memos from our unconscious. If we ignore these, we do so at our own peril. I invite you to make room in your life to attend to these faint whispers from the lost continent of your soul. The psychological principal of reciprocal action refers to the dictum that if we honor these symbols of our soul, they will reward us handsomely by gifting us the potential for health, wholeness and spiritual purpose. The horizontal mundane axis of our life will then be balanced by the vertical transcendent dimension of our life. The sacred cross is then complete. I invite you to make your own lived life an Ashram – a sacred place where the transcendent may manifest.



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## Ashok Bedi, M.D.

**1220 Dewey Avenue,**

**Wauwatosa, WI 53213**

**Phone (414) 454-6610**

**[www.pathtothesoul.com](http://www.pathtothesoul.com)**

*Dr Bedi is a Diplomat Jungian psychoanalyst and a board certified psychiatrist. He is a member of the Royal College of psychiatrists of Great Britain, a diplomat in Psychological Medicine at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of England, a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. He is a Clinical Professor in Psychiatry at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and the President Elect, a Training Analyst and a faculty member at the Analyst Training Program at the Carl G. Jung Institute of Chicago. He is Honorary Psychiatrist at the Aurora Psychiatric Hospital and the Aurora Health Care Network. He has been a psychiatric consultant to several agencies in Metro Milwaukee. Presently he is the consultant for the Sexual Assault treatment center at the Aurora Sinai Samaritan Hospital, Dewey Center at the Aurora Psychiatric Hospital for treatment of Addictions and the Pastoral Counseling Service of Greater Milwaukee.*

*Trained in India, Great Britain and the US, he is interested in the emerging frontiers of Spirituality and Healing and the synapses of the Mind, Body, Soul and Spirit. He is author of the book, Path to the Soul, Weiser Books, 2000, Awaken the Slumbering Goddess: The Latent Code of the Hindu Goddess Archetypes, Booksurge Publishers, 2007 and the coauthor of Retire Your Family Karma, Nicholas-Hays, Inc. 2003, These and his other upcoming presentations can be previewed at his website [www.pathtothesoul.com](http://www.pathtothesoul.com)*



*Ashok Bedi has been in practice in Milwaukee for over twenty- five years and specializes in Adult Psychotherapy and Jungian Psychoanalysis. He regularly presents lectures and seminars in India, Great Britain, Ireland and USA on the topic of the Spiritual and analytic dimensions of treatment, healing and personal growth. Over the last several years, he has been the International Association of Analytical Psychologists liaison person for developing Jungian training programs in India and travels annually to India to teach, train the consult with the Jungian Developing groups at several centers in India including Ahmedabad &, Bangalore. He leads the annual "In the Footsteps of Carl Jung in India" study group to several centers in India under the auspices of the New York Jung Foundation.*

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