



The English Wording of the Fundamentals of PROUT

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This paper (June 2017) is a revised version of the September 2012 preliminary report “The English Wording of the Fundamentals of Prout”, prepared in response to a campaign for a disparate translation of the five fundamental principles of PROUT and its spreading into training and publications. Apart from the fundamental issue of the sanctity of Baba’s legacy, a main concern is that no scriptural, philosophical, or ideological divisions should develop.

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Mantra mulam' gurur vakyam'

“Whatever the Guru has uttered is to be carefully preserved just as you would a mantra.”

~*~

1. Introduction

“They are the same!” - Baba¹, 1979

During Baba’s first tour of Europe (May-June 1979), He was informed that someone had published an English wording of the five fundamental principles of PROUT² different from the original. Ac. Vijayananda Avt., head of the organization’s central publications office at Kolkata, accompanied Baba on that tour. He was the one who conveyed to Baba that the proposer³/publisher of the different wording thought the English of *Idea and Ideology* was at odds with the Sanskrit sutras of *Ananda Sutram* (5:12-16).⁴ Baba’s immediate response was an emphatic: “They are the same!” meaning there is no difference between the original English wording and the later five corresponding Sanskrit sutras.⁵

According to Ac. Vijayananda, Baba reacted quite strongly, to the information that the proposer had gone ahead and published an alternative English wording of Prout. Baba stated, “Who is he to teach me Sanskrit?”, alluding to the fact that the proposer’s mother tongue is American English. In fact, Baba knew very well that the proposer did not have any formal training in Sanskrit other than the short beginner’s introductory course included in the organization’s training program for junior acaryas (teachers of spiritual meditation) and tattvikas (teachers of spiritual philosophy). What’s more, according to the organizational guidelines the proposer should not have published any changes to the original English wording of Prout’s fundamentals in an organizational mouthpiece in Australia, titled *Pranam*, without first consulting with the proper authority. Possibly, disciplinary action ensued.

Today, nearly 40 years on, that incident would have been buried in Ananda Marga’s rich history if it wasn’t for the fact that the same person continues to promote the notion that the original English wording needs to be replaced. I was introduced to it at the PROUT convention in Denmark in 2010. A

¹ The propounder of Prout, Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar (1922-1990), was known fondly to His followers as Baba, meaning “beloved” and “father”. As the founder and spiritual director (*Guru*) of the socio-spiritual organization Ananda Marga, He was known as Shrii Shrii Anandamurti.

² The original English wording of the fundamental principles of Prout have been published in numerous works by Ananda Marga Publications since 1959 till today. The reason why they have never been changed is made clear in this paper. The original principles can also be found here: <http://proutglobe.org/prout/foundations>.

³ Ac. Abhiik Kumar, later Ac. Abhidevananda Avt.

⁴ The original English wording was first published in Sarkar’s book *Idea and Ideology* in 1959. *Ananda Sutram* (authored by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti) was dictated in Sanskrit in 1961.

⁵ Told by the late Ac. Vijayananda in 1995 to Ac. Acyutananda of Ananda Marga Publications dept. in Tiljala, Kolkata, communicated in e-mail of September 21, 2012.

seminar trainer and some other presenters there had been convinced and were presenting the same unwelcome wording as “a genuine translation from the Sanskrit,” while ignoring the original English.

Then and there I thought: “Well, it may be quite common for people to apply alternative terms and references when discussing subtle concepts that are perhaps perplexing or foreign to them.” However, upon closer examination their substitute terminology and indeed newfound understanding, it appeared, demonstrated fatal flaws as far as elementary PROUT is concerned. As a matter of fact, their presentations of it, both orally and by publication, provide ample proof that when an original theory is tampered with it can no longer be treated as the original theory. If for example Maharishi Kanada’s classic theory of causation (“No cause, no effect”) is altered into something like, “Without a cause there may or may not be any effect,” we no longer have Kanada’s original theory but something quite different. Therefore, when a changed wording of the theory of Prout was being projected in training sessions as well as in publications, I thought to review the history and language of those five fundamental principles of PROUT as well as their meaning.

In my effort, I acknowledge the following limitations:

1. I explained the matter to the in-charge at the Archives department, Tiljala and requested information from them. Due to lack of time and other resources at both ends what follows here may be lacking both in substance and detail. Had instead this material been prepared systematically by Archives staff, and rather in cooperation with Publications dept., its testimony, eloquence, etc., would undoubtedly have been significantly improved.
2. The aim of this paper is not to discuss the proposed new wording/translation or its history – personal or otherwise. A few examples of textual discrepancy are detailed to determine patterns of semantic, conceptual, ideological and other ambiguities and disparities.

In addition to the kind input of Ac. Pranavatmakananda of Archives dept., testimonies and facts have been collected from senior acaryas and others closely associated with Proutist Universal and Ananda Marga Publications. They are all mentioned in the report.

Authentic witnesses interviewed for this paper include Ac. Sujit Kumar (Delhi), Ac. Amulya Ratan Sarangi (Ranchi), Ac. Santoshananda Avt. (Delhi). Their shared qualifications for appearing here include:

- They were present when Baba first dictated or quoted the five fundamentals of PROUT in English (before the Sanskrit);
- They were taught PROUT directly by Baba in 1959; and
- They were busy in organizational work still at the time of the preparation of the 2012 report.

Arguments for the proposed revision of the original English wording of Prout

The attempt (1979 onwards) to replace the original English wording of the fundamental principles of PROUT (1959) with a translation of *Ananda Sutram* 5:12-16 (1961) has continued for nearly 40 years now. Among its claims we find:

1. As Ananda Sutram is the philosophical treatise of Ananda Marga it should be recognized as the scriptural source of the five fundamental principles of PROUT.
2. Numerous differences between a translation of the Sanskrit of *Ananda Sutram* (sutras 5:12-16) and the original wording of *Idea and Ideology* disqualify the latter.
3. The original wording in *Idea and Ideology* must be a poor translation of what Baba may have said in some Indian language. It is impossible that it was dictated by Baba in English. In fact, the proposer has said and written that the original English wording is nothing but “gobbledygook” invented not by Baba but by some other individuals who were quite helpless as far as proficiency in the English language is concerned.¹
4. Promotion of that gobbledygook wording (‘No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth ...’ etc.) amounts to dogma and intellectual dishonesty.

The essential matter of contention

The above claims of the proposer and more are dealt with in this paper. At this point I only want to state that the whole issue appears to be less about the authority of Ananda Sutram² and more about Prout being an essentially spiritual theory. A spiritual theory will certainly exhibit full grasp of spiritual realities. Since I feel the proposed new English wording does away with Prout’s essential spiritual orientation, and thereby its reason for being, this paper is divided into three main parts:

The first part (chapters 1-2) presents historical findings. The second part (chapter 3) details some linguistic findings (with more of that in Appendix B). The third part (chapter 4) focuses on ideological concerns. Although the historical and linguistic findings of this paper are overwhelmingly in favor of the original English wording, the ideological concerns are of crucial importance to me. I also feel sorry for those who have been with the Marga for so many years and yet fail to understand Baba’s original Prout to such an extent that they have found it necessary to present a completely different theory, thereby risking upsetting both Baba’s legacy and His mission.

¹ Jargon for bureaucratic nonsense language, inept expression, gibberish.

² Ananda Sutram is a collection of 86 sutras in Sanskrit. The work presents the philosophy of Ananda Marga in a rudimentary form. The fifth and last chapter of Ananda Sutram contains 17 sutras presenting the Marga’s social philosophy. The five fundamental principles of Prout, first presented in English a couple of years earlier, are included there, in Sanskrit. Their original English wording has figured unchanged in Prout literature since, including the 31 years of Baba’s life time following the birth of Prout. The original 1959 English wording of the five principles was also included in Ananda Sutram (1962) below the Sanskrit wording, and that is the only case of English translation of sutras in that work (the original Bengali publication).

2. Historical findings

“I think some of you have come in contact with our PROUT theory. I think you have gone through it. There is the fifth item, fifth fundamental factor, where it is said that the style of utilization should vary according to change in time, space and person. Didn't I say like this?”

- Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, 15 September 1979 evening, Istanbul, *A'nanda Vacana'mrtam Part 30* and *PROUT in a Nutshell Volume 2 Part 9*

In the above quote, Baba states that He Himself said it; it is Baba who formulated the five fundamental principles of PROUT in English. (This is important. The proposer claims that Baba cannot have formulated it; someone else with little knowledge of proper English must have provided the original English wording of Prout, he opines.)

The original wording of the fifth fundamental principle of Prout is: “The method of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space and person, and the utilization should be of progressive nature.”

Whereas the proposed new English wording – translated from the later Sanskrit – is: “Utilizations vary in accordance with time, space, and form; the utilizations should be progressive.”

While there is a lot to be said against the latter, it is, as we shall see, the proposed wordings of some of the other principles that really changes the nature of the theory into something that is clearly not Prout but into something opposed to and deeply conflicting with it.

Baba's dictations in English of the five fundamental principles of PROUT

From August 1959 to July 1961 Baba dictated the five fundamental principles of PROUT in English on at least two occasions and quoted them in English on at least two other occasions. According to the authentic witnesses I have spoken to, the wording was identical on all occasions.

Formulation and first dictations

In e-mail of September 9, 2012, Ac. Santoshananda writes:

“The five fundamental principles were first dictated in English by Baba to Sudhirji who later became Acarya Abhedananda Avadhuta (killed on March 5, 1967, at Ananda Nagar). ... Sudhirji was a very good sadhak besides being a very active margii studying in I.Sc. in Munshi Singh College at Motihari. Sudhirji was senior to me as a student as well as a sadhaka [meditator]. Since he was also my close intimate worldly relative, besides being a margii, we had regular exchange of information regarding any Marga activity.

Shri Madan Rai is a senior Margii of Kolkata. When he was interviewed by Ac. Pranavatmakananda (deputed by Archives) in the 1990s, he told that he was massaging Baba in South End Park MG Quarters in Kolkata in 1969 when Baba told him how the five principles were given:

“Once while in Jamalpur, Sudhir ji, who was a student at the time, had come for Baba's darshan. In Jamalpur ashram Sudhir ji suggested to Baba that Ananda Marga does not have anything concrete to offer for the alleviation of the problems of those suffering from lack of basic needs of life. Baba told Shrii Madan Rai that He formulated the five fundamental principles of Prout within a few minutes following Sudhir ji's request.”

Baba dictated the fundamental principles of Prout in English to Ac. Vaedhyanath and others in Jamalpur, August 1959, for the purpose of getting them published in *Idea and Ideology*.¹ Ac. Vaedhyanath noted down Baba's dictation in English of the five fundamental principles of PROUT to be added as the final page of *Idea and Ideology*. A transcription of his testimony (recorded on videotape 334 in Archives dept.) was conveyed by Ac. Acyutananda of Publications, Tiljala (in e-mail September 23, 2012). It reads:

“We got the permission to go for the field walk on that evening. We were passing by the market and Baba asked me to go and buy one candlestick and matchsticks. Once we reached in the field Baba asked me to light the candle and then He asked to write in English: “Five fundamentals of Prout.” I wrote it. Then I asked Baba about the spelling of the word Prout, which I never had heard before. After clarification, Baba continued and I kept asking about spelling and noted down accordingly. Baba then went over it and made necessary corrections and then told that the book *Idea and Ideology* was being printed in Bhagalpur and I should take the notation there and ask them to print that in the last page.”

In his testimony, Ac. Vaedhyanath states that Ac. Krsnananda was present too that evening and witnessed the dictation at the tiger's grave, and accompanied him to Bhagalpur by train the same night. In a separate testimony, Ac. Krsnananda corroborates this statement.

Ac. Pranavatmakananda oversaw the Archives video-team during its most active years of recording in the early 1990s, following Baba's physical departure. He writes in email of September 19, 2012:

After dictating the principles in English, Baba corrected the notes and directed Ac. Vaedhyanathji to take the night train to Bhagalpur and the next morning to go to United Press and give the instruction to add the additions about Prout at the end of the last chapter of the book *Idea and Ideology*, which was under print there. It was towards then end of August but the exact date was not remembered by anyone.

¹ Following inquiries in connection with this report, a discussion arose in India in September 2012 as to the details of the two first occasions where Baba uttered the principles. Those two events took place at Motihari and Jamalpur, both in Bihar, within a short span of time in the autumn of 1959. The sequence indicated here is as per current Archives information. It is hoped that the issue will be determined before the final publishing of this report (January 2013). In any event, the wording appears to have been the same on both occasions.

Some 20 years ago, Ac. Raghunath, the late President of Ananda Marga Pracaraka Samgha (AMPS), the mother-organization founded by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti whose civil name was Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, was video-interviewed by Archives. Ac. Pranavatmakananda wrote about it in email of September 20, 2012:

“Ac. Raghunath told that he was the person who compiled the class notes of the *Idea and Ideology* seminar sessions in English. Baba had given the classes in English and some in Hindi after which Ac. Raghunath handed over his notes to GS. Later when he saw the published version it was completely different from the notes he had compiled. He asked Pranay da (GS) about it. Pranay da said that Baba had given fresh dictations on the topics that He discussed in the Idea and Ideology classes.¹

“Dictation was Baba's usual procedure for all books. Baba gave fresh dictation in case of all other books also published before emergency, except Subhashita Samgraha Part 9 & 10. After the Emergency also the same system was followed in case of most of the books. Even the language and style of Idea and Ideology book is something which none could have put together even if it was based on Baba's class. It is obviously Baba's language and style.”

The above bear witness to the fact that Baba was very careful about the final shape of the work Idea and Ideology, as He was about all His literature.

Baba quoted the fundamental principles of PROUT in English at Motihari, September 1959, and they were published there in the first PROUT manifesto in the same month. Ac. Santoshananda continues (in e-mail of September 9, 2012:

“I was a student at Patna at the time. Sudhir ji and I had mutual cooperation and coordination in the works of Universal Proutist Students Federation, the first Proutist organisation founded by Baba at Motihari. The five fundamental principles were also printed in the first manifesto of U.P.S.F. Sudhirji was the secretary (head of U.P.S.F.) of the newly formed U.P.S.F.

Ac. Pranavatmakananda writes in e-mail of September 19, 2012:

“Other than Sudhirji, Guruprasad (who later became Vishokananda), S.N. Varma, son of Ac. Sarju Prasad, and a few others were present in Motihari. When Baba announced the starting of UPSF, S.N. Varma asked Baba what Prout was. Baba said that he should read the book Idea and Ideology book to get to know about it. Then Baba repeated the five principles of Prout in English to them.”

Organizational records confirm that Baba visited Motihari September 14-16, 1959. While there, He discoursed on “The Vital Energy of Students”² and formed the first Proutist organization, Universal Proutist Students Federation (UPSF).

¹ The whole of *Idea and Ideology*, except the last page, was given in the form of classes to higher tattvika trainees in Jamalpur in June 1959.

² <http://proutglobe.org/2016/11/the-vital-energy-of-students>.

In e-mail to me (September 23, 2012) Ac. Santoshananda specifies that the principles of PROUT were printed in Baba's original English in the first *Prout Manifesto* (1959). That UPSF Prout manifesto was published in English, he states on basis of having worked with Baba on translating the principles into Hindi (mentioned later in this paper).

The above bear witness to the fact that Baba was particular about getting Prout promoted in English from the very beginning.

Baba quoted the fundamental principles of Prout in English in Jamalpur in October 1959. Ac. Sujit Kumar was one of those who became Tattvika following the June 1959 training in Jamalpur. He became Acarya of Ananda Marga the following year. On phone (September 19, 2012) from his home in Delhi, Acarya Sujit Kumar told me how a week-long seminar was organized in Jamalpur in October that year where Baba proceeded to give elaborate teachings on Prout concepts and principles, including economic decentralization, local economic control, and theory of revolution. The content of that seminar was published as *A Discussion*, later revised and titled *Discourses on PROUT*.

"An invitation letter had been sent out from the General Secretary to 14 young, well-educated persons – doctors, lawyers, teachers – requesting them to attend a one week seminar in Jamalpur. Baba took leave from His job to teach the seminar Himself. He sat with us both in the morning and in the evening every day.

"Baba started the seminar by introducing The Progressive Utilization Theory, saying it was a new socio-economic theory. Then He quoted the five fundamental principles of PROUT in English, and proceeded to teach us Prout. After the completion of the seminar, Baba conducted examination of all attendees. Seven of us passed, I was one of them."

Ac. Sujit Kumar confirmed to me that the wording in English of the five fundamental principles uttered by Baba at the onset of those sessions was identical with the wording dictated to Ac. Vaedhyanath earlier that year.

The five fundamental principles of Prout, quoted by Baba in English during the seminar, were not cited in the published work *A Discussion*. They were however discoursed on:

"There should be rational acquisition and rational distribution of mundane property, otherwise the peace and tranquility of society will be disturbed. The per capita limit of acquisition should be fixed according to the collective resources of the universal society."

- *Discourses on PROUT* – 1, October 17, 1959

The above quote exhibits the essence of the first fundamental principle of Prout with its particular reference to mundane wealth exclusively.

In July 1961, Baba began dictating *Talks on PROUT* to Ac. Amulya Ratan Sarangi in Ranchi. The talks were serialized in the English language periodical *Our Universe* the same year and later published in booklet

form. In a write-up, “The History of the Five Fundamental Principles of PROUT”,¹ Jayanta Kumar of Publications dept., presently living in Melbourne, Australia notes:

“In July 1961, the first section of a discourse given by Baba in English in Ranchi was published in the English magazine Our Universe. The remaining sections of the discourse were published in instalments in subsequent editions of the magazine during that same year (and possibly into the following year). The discourse was first published in book form in English as “Talks on Prout” in *Prout in a Nutshell, Part 15*, 1988. In this discourse, on pp. 22-24 of the book, Baba discusses the five fundamental principles, giving a brief explanation of each one. The wording of each of the five fundamental principles in this discourse is the same as the wording given in *Idea and Ideology*. This discourse is ... the first occasion on which He explains each of the principles.”

In e-mail of September 5, 2012, Jayanta Kumar writes:

“When we were doing PROUT in a Nutshell [in the 1980s], I personally confirmed with Ac Sarangi – who noted down the dictation in English for Talks on PROUT and subsequently had it published in serial form in the English magazine, Our Universe – that Baba did in fact give these discourses in English. So the possibility that the five fundamental principles were translated from Hindi or Bengali into English for this book does not arise.”

Ac. Acyutananda of Publications dept., Tiljala, Kolkata, writes (in e-mail of September 13, 2012):

“Talks on Prout was originally a series of articles called The Observer's Diary in Our Universe. I have a copy of that series.”

Acarya A.R. Sarangi passed away late 2015. He told me he was initiated in 1957 and had participated in both the June and the October sessions in Jamalpur in 1959 after which he was deputed by Baba to give classes on Prout. Ac. Sarangi has since specialized in working with the English language. When I spoke to him on phone on September 18, 2012, he told me he was working on translations into English of some of Baba's discourses in Hindi and Bengali, and on an English edition of his own memories of Baba. He has worked with the Publications dept. for decades and is known among other things for his work on Baba's *Varna Vijinana*, “Science of Letters”, on which he has published himself as well.

This most competent and historical person, Ac. A.R. Sarangi, confirmed the following to me:

1. Baba did dictate the fundamental principles of Prout in English to him in Ranchi in July 1961.
2. The wording of the principles dictated to him then was the same as the one articulated previously by Baba both at Jamalpur and Motihari.

As related by both Ac. Acyutananda Avt and Jayanta Kumar, the material dictated by Baba in English to Ac. Sarangi, including the fundamental principles of Prout, was subsequently serialized in a periodical titled Our Universe. Ac. Sarangi clarified that the title of the magazine had been suggested by Baba and

¹ Jayanta Kumar's review of the history of the five principles may be downloaded at www.proutglobe.org/pdf/historyofFFP.pdf

that it was a 100% English language magazine. Baba had asked him to launch that magazine and had deputed him as its editor. Ac. Sarangi told how Baba had taken him by surprise that time in 1961 when directing him to launch *Our Universe* as an English language periodical and not as a magazine in the local language or a major Indian language.

Ac. Sarangi told that at the time he held a government job there in Ranchi. Baba instructed him not to cite his own name in publications that contained the Prout material dictated to him, as there were some restrictions regarding such matters from the employer's side. Consequently, when the material was first published in *Our Universe*, Ac. Sarangi omitted both his own name (as editor) as well as Baba's (as author) as Baba too was holding a government job in the same state of Bihar. This is confirmed by Ac. Acyutananda who writes that even Baba's name is not cited as the author of those serialized articles in *Our Universe*.

The above establishes that Baba took care so that the Prout pracar could be carried out properly in English. It seems inconceivable that a person with such English language skills as Ac. A.R. Sarangi, deputed by Baba as editor of a new English language magazine, should err about whether the fundamental principles of Prout were dictated to him in English or in some other language.

The dictation of Ananda Sutram in 1961, published in 1962

Jayanta continues in his chronological account:

"In 1961, Baba dictated A'nanda Su'tram in a series of night sessions while sitting on the tiger's grave in Jamalpur. The manuscript was first published in Bengali in 1962; it was subsequently translated into English, and first published in English in 1967. All the su'tras were given in Sanskrit and all the purports were given in Bengali. For additional information about the book, see the Publisher's Note:

"Chapter five of A'nanda Su'tram contains sixteen principles, which are generally considered to be the principles of Prout. Principles twelve to sixteen are the five fundamental principles in the form of five Sanskrit su'tras, each accompanied by a purport.

"In the most recent English edition of A'anda Su'tram, a footnote to su'tra twelve in chapter five states:

In 1959 the author gave five principles in English known as the "Five Fundamental Principles of Prout". They were published as part of the discourse "The Cosmic Brotherhood" in *Idea and Ideology*. Subsequently, in 1961, the author dictated Ánanda Sútram, whose fifth chapter contains, as we see here, sixteen Sanskrit sútras, or aphorisms. Aphorisms 12 to 16 correspond to the Five Fundamental Principles given earlier in English. In this edition of Ánanda Sútram, the author's original English of each

of the Five Fundamental Principles has been printed below the corresponding Sanskrit aphorism. (Though in each case it is the author's English, it has been presented in square brackets because it was not originally given in the context of this book.) What follows every other Sanskrit aphorism in this chapter and other chapters is a translation of the aphorism rendered by the editors. Thus the bracketed English below the Sanskrit in each of Aphorisms 12-16 is not a translation as such. Note that the word samája in Sútra 5-12 is normally translated "society"; "collective body" appears in the English. Parivarttante in Sútra 5-16 is normally translated "does vary" (present indicative); "should vary" appears in the English. –Eds."

So on the third occasion¹ that Baba mentions the five fundamental principles, rather than discussing them in English as He had done on the first two occasions, He discusses them in Sanskrit and Bengali. This occasion is also the second time that He explains each of the five fundamental principles.

Baba based His teachings on the original English wording of *Idea and Ideology* when giving PROUT classes to margiis and workers

Baba taught classes on Prout in the Jamalpur jagrti in the 1960s. Ac. Sujit Kumar told me on phone that he used to attend classes taught by Baba on Prout in Jamalpur after 1959 and that the classes had a different format than the seminars of 1959. While taking class, Baba would discuss Prout on the basis of the English wording of *Idea and Ideology*. He would make use of blackboard and maps, enlighten the participants on contemporary issues, and take examinations.

Proutist writer Dr. Susmit Kumar was born in Jamalpur as the eldest son of a well-known Margii family. The late Ram Tanuk, Baba's legal counsel throughout the jail period and the regular lawyer of the organisation, is his maternal uncle. In e-mail of September 16, 2012, Susmit ji writes:

"In Jamalpur, Baba gave classes on Prout to a group of 7 or 8 margiis and out of them two were from my family. Baba was using blackboard and maps. My uncle Binod ji was the youngest among all, but he used to get the highest marks in all the examinations conducted by Baba. Binod ji used to remember each and every sentence of Baba. He was just 16 or 17 years old at that time."

The following examples document how Baba took classes on the five fundamental principles on the basis of the English wording of *Idea and Ideology*.

¹ The aforementioned Motihari dictation of the five fundamental principles does not figure in any of Baba's published discourses and books. In fact, the only discourse left from Baba's at least two visits to Motihari is the one cited earlier, "The Vital Energy of Students". As documented, the Motihari dictation was published in a UPSF pamphlet that may have been lost during the Emergency.

Some years ago, Ac. Acyutananda took detailed council from senior workers in the matter of the five fundamentals of Prout. One senior worker stated he had attended Prout class in Jamalpur where Baba explained such details as the differentiation between “permission” and “approval” in the first fundamental principle. Surviving hand-written notes from Baba’s classes on Prout in Jamalpur, produced by attendees, state:

“Baba has used two words – one is “permission” and the other is “approval”. These two words are very significant. Why? When there is permission, it means “to all,” without considering special demand, special quality, and special problem. According to special demand, special quality, special facility, and special need the collective body will give special consideration, special treatment, it is called “approval”. General allotment for all is called “permission”.

“This is a beautiful combination of individual demand and collective interest in the first principle. Prout has given a beautiful solution to harmonize the interests of the collective body with the needs of the individual. A beautiful synthesis of the two extreme ideas in capitalism and communism – blending rationality (spirituality) and a temporal approach.”

One worker informed Ac. Acyutananda that he got his understanding of *permission* and *approval* from more than one worker who attended Baba’s classes in Jamalpur, and that among those sources there was no dispute. He stated that permission relates to “day-to-day requirements” and that approval relates to “special amenities . . . or for old people”. One of the workers commented that a most senior worker, who had attended Baba’s class on Prout in Jamalpur and is considered as an authority on Prout, was always most careful about basing his classes strictly on Baba’s words, and not using his own interpretations.

Notes also inform us that Baba discussed the use of the term “clear”: Permissions and approvals should be issued in writing and in unambiguous language – they should be “clear”.

The terms “clear” and “approval” are among many of Baba’s original terms that are left out of the translation suggested to replace Baba’s original English wording of the fundamental PROUT principles.

Here we note that in the quote above *collective body* is again used. As we shall see, all this particular terminology mentioned here and later in this paper is thrown out in the proposed new wording of Prout.

The style and content of notes taken during Baba’s classes on PROUT have much in common with early publications on Prout such as *PROUT What It Is* and *PROUT Giita*.¹ Hence, the bases for these publications appear to have been faithfully recorded during Baba’s classes.

Original English wording in WT and LFT syllabus

A further indication was pointed out by Ac. Acyutananda in e-mail of September 10, 2012:

“In the training-center (WT and LFT) syllabus in Baba’s time *Idea and Ideology* was given much importance and *the Idea and Ideology* rendering of Prout was taught. Trainees had to memorize

¹ Both works have been republished online at www.proutglobe.org/resources/classics/

the Sanskrit of those sutras as well but were not taught translations of them. Baba's original English wording of the five fundamental principles was taught."

This was standing policy, Ac. Acyutananda notes. Let us then look at some aspects of the translation issue in question.

Publication of Prout in Baba's time

It is to be noted that the original English wording of the five fundamental principles prevailed unchanged in all publications throughout Baba's lifetime. Apart from the printing and reprinting of the literature authored by Baba Himself, there were innumerable pamphlets, booklets and books published and authored by persons and movements around the globe that were showed to and appreciated by Baba. In most cases these would exhibit and project the five fundamental principles in English as worded by Baba or translations into local languages of them.

As already documented, Baba kept an eye on the contents of His publications and often re-dictated His own discourses, even into English as was the case with *Idea and Ideology*. He loved to receive and read such material for Himself or have others show it and read it to Him.

Early books by Baba, prior to *Idea and Ideology* and the dictation of the five fundamental principles of PROUT, include *Ananda Marga Elementary Philosophy* (1955), *Tattvika Diipika* (1956-57), *Caryacarya* (1956), *Tattvika Praveshika* (1957), *A Guide to Human Conduct* (1957), *Yogic Treatments and Natural Remedies* (1957-58), *Tattva Kaomudii* (1958), *Problems of the Day* (1958) and *Human Society* (1959). These, and all DMC discourses of the *Subhasita Samgraha*-series, were all given in Hindi and Bengali, and to some extent in other local languages.

In those days, Jamalpur was the very epicenter of Ananda Marga. Baba's permanent presence attracted new and old margiis continuously – all most alert to any little detail of whatever Baba did and said, and most attentive to the least development of His dynamic Mission.

It seems hard to believe that all of them, including Baba Himself, would have erred colossally as to the identity of the wording of the brand new socio-economic theory that He expounded there. Rather, it is highly probable that they all sat up when Baba suddenly gave much of the tattvika training in June 1959 in English. In fact, they would have noted carefully indeed that the fundamental principles of PROUT were dictated in English, a foreign language, and not in any of their domestic languages.

Probably, as evidenced by Ac. A.R. Sarangi, the well-educated participants, particularly selected and formally invited to Baba's exclusive seminar, would have seen fit to preserve Baba's English most properly. As mentioned, Ac. Sarangi himself was especially appointed and indeed suited for that job. This reasoning on part of Baba appears to be appropriate to all four dictations and quotations of those principles from 1959 to 1961. We have also seen how He took all care so that His teachings were noted and printed exactly as He wanted it to be.

3. The English wording of Idea and Ideology vs. the Sanskrit wording of Ananda Sutram

“*Ananda Sutram* is our philosophical treatise.”

- *Caryacarya* Part 1

“The recognized book on Ananda Marga Philosophy is *Ananda Sutram*.”

- *Ananda Marga Philosophy in a Nutshell* Part 4

Ananda Margiis know very well that *Ananda Sutram* forms the basis of their philosophy. Then, how about sutras 5:12 to 16¹ (the Sanskrit versions of the five principles) of its fifth chapter if Baba’s original English wording in *Idea and Ideology* are authoritative? Don’t those five sutras matter as much as the other 81 sutras? Why did Baba include the five fundamental principles of Prout in *Ananda Sutram* if not to be the ultimate authority?

The above musings present several dimensions that need to be explored. Let us look at chronology first and hear what some senior Prout workers make of it.

Ac. Krtashivananda Avt., holding the posts of SG PU and Global Office Secretary (Copenhagen) at different times during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, comments in e-mail of September 4, 20012:

“*Ananda Sutram* 5:12-16 may as well be seen as a case of translating from English to Sanskrit, and not the other way around.

“*Idea and Ideology* consists of a series of lectures given in June 1959. For a long time there was no permission to translate it to any other language. Only in 1987 direction was given to Ac. Vijayananda to translate it into Bengali. A series of the lectures were first published in Bengali and Hindi versions of *Ananda Marga Philosophy in a Nutshell* in 1988. The Bengali version of *Idea and Ideology* was first published in 2008.”

Jayanta Kumar lived and worked in Publications (Central) in the Tiljala headquarters for many years in the 1980s. He continues to provide translation and other services for Publications still today. In e-mail of September 4, 2012 he writes:

“When we did PROUT in a Nutshell in 1987 and had to deal with this issue, Dada Vijayananda determined that there was no reason to make a new translation of the five fundamental principles from the Sanskrit in *Ananda Sutram* as Baba had given the English as the original of the five fundamental principles before He gave *Ananda Sutram*. This remains the policy today, so any other version of the five fundamental principles in English is unauthorized.”

¹ *Ananda Sutram* 5:12-16 are the five fundamental principles of PROUT in Sanskrit, dictated by Baba in 1961.

Ac. Santoshananda writes September 9, 2012 in email:

“Ananda Sutram came much later. Therefore, any change in the English wording of these five fundamental principles is to express something not meant by Baba.”

Ac. Santoshananda was posted by Baba as Editor of *PROUT* (Delhi) in 1964, a position he holds still today. He recollects (September 9, 2012):

“In 1966, I was entrusted with the duty to also publish *PROUT* in Hindi from Delhi. When I was translating these fundamental principles to Hindi, I directly asked Baba about exact words in Hindi for His English expression, like "should". Someone had translated it into Bengali, which sounded more like "must". Therefore I specifically asked Baba about it. Baba's reply was:

"When a philosophy is propounded, it is for acceptance by the general public. It can therefore never be an order. Therefore the philosopher Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar has used the word 'should', and not 'must'. But when Proutists will go to materialise the philosophy, it will be 'must' and not 'should'. In a philosophy, it is always 'should' and in a cult it is always 'must'".

“According to these guidelines, I translated those principles from English to Hindi.”

It is evident from the above that Baba in 1966, five years after the dictation of *Ananda Sutram*, continued to provide a clear and detailed understanding of the five fundamentals of Prout as worded in the original English and how to translate those English sentences into other languages such as Hindi and Bengali.

There is no record of Baba having articulated the fundamentals of Prout in any other language than English both prior to and following the dictation (in Sanskrit) of *Ananda Sutram* in 1961. The inclusion of Prout in *Ananda Sutram* can therefore not be an argument for its Sanskrit roots but rather for it being part and parcel of a complete spiritual philosophy. The reason for *Ananda Sutram* being dictated in Sanskrit is that its form is that of a collection of sutras, a traditional literary form that has always been written in Sanskrit. *Ananda Sutram* is the only work of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti that was ever done in Sanskrit, except for a few songs included in *Prabhat Samgiit*.

On deeper analysis, there may be no contradiction between the two original wordings – English and Sanskrit; one would find only the same characteristic identity. A rational approach to the resolution of their apparent differences could be twofold:

1. To look deeply into what the Sanskrit actually contains; and
2. To use both according to the requirements of various times, places and persons.

Insurmountable differences may not necessarily arise out of the two wordings – English and Sanskrit. A main concern should be not to sacrifice one for the other but to preserve them both in the spirit of synthesis.

The suggested translation

Apparently, not a single margii from that time doubts in the least that Baba dictated the five fundamental principles in English. Rather, the person who actually doubts it and who has been the driving force behind the attempt of nearly 40 years to replace the original English with his own translation of the Sanskrit *Ananda Sutram*, hails from another part of the world and entered the Mission much later. He has no formal training in Sanskrit and appears very much in this matter as a self-styled revisionist. His known collaborators, too, has no training in Sanskrit.

Whatever we have seen of the proposed translation/new English wording indicates:

- The protracted attempt to replace the original English with a translation from the Sanskrit is based on a blind belief that Baba did not dictate the five fundamental principles in English.
- What seems to be an obsession with apparent linguistic dissimilarities, in this case between English and Sanskrit, leads to irretrievable, fatal losses of essential Prout.

For all practical purposes, we should use the original English wording for now, and make use of the Sanskrit in education in particular and at such times in general when Sanskrit again will emerge as a living language of many people. Those who tend to always see the differences of the English and Sanskrit rather than their synthetic whole may sort out their knotty problem by applying Prout itself: *“The style of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space and person.”*

The future of Sanskrit

While reviewing the issue in linguistic terms, we may take the opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary existence and status of Sanskrit, a world classical language, as well as that of English, the present world language.

The essential content of Ananda Sutram is 86 sutras presented in Sanskrit, each followed by a brief explanation (“purport”) that was dictated in Bengali. It is well known that Baba held Sanskrit in high regard. He reasoned that Sanskrit has the potentiality to become the common language of India:

“Take the case of the Saṁskṛta language. Each and every Indian has a common universal love for Saṁskṛta because it is the origin of most of the Indian languages. There was a time when human feelings and sentiments were exchanged and official activities were conducted in Saṁskṛta, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. The influence of Saṁskṛta on all modern Indian languages is easily discernible: 92% of Bengali, 90% of Oriya, 85% of Maethilii, 75% of Malayalam and 3% of Tamil has come directly from Saṁskṛta vocabulary. Obviously no one can oppose the Saṁskṛta language.”

- “Human Society Is One and Indivisible – 2”, *A Few Problems Solved* Part 2

“Let Saṁskṛta be the common language as it is the ancestral language of all India. If Saṁskṛta is recognized as the link language amongst all linguistic groups, it will be to the advantage of all. Saṁskṛta is the source of all vocabularies for all Indian languages. Whenever there is a shortage of a particular word, take a word from the Saṁskṛtic stock.”

- “The Significance of Language”, August 24, 1989, Kolkata. *Prout in a Nutshell* Part 17

Sanskrit is not only the common linguistic denominator of most of India but of the entire Indo-European language sphere, comprising of hundreds of languages and dialects of most of Europe, the Americas, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, South Asia, and more. At present, however, many academicians deem Sanskrit to be a “dead” language. They think so because Sanskrit was once widely spoken whereas nowadays it is not.

Ananda Marga does not view Sanskrit to be the dead in the least. Our spiritual philosophy teaches us that this magnificent language lives in seed form in every human being, at the core of our psycho-spiritual structure where it awaits renewed universal expression. Moreover, as history goes Sanskrit was born in an exceptional way and has already outlived the natural life span of any language several times over. The re-awakening of Sanskrit is indeed part of Ananda Marga’s mission, and its mantras and celebration verses in addition to its essential philosophy have been formulated in that sacred language.

Compared to any other language, including English, Sanskrit has a unique history and appears to command an especially elevated position in human spiritual culture. We may therefore infer that Sanskrit has a particularly bright future and will continue its exceptional existence beyond the usual limits of other languages.

The present situation

The present situation, with English as the world language, seems to be the rationale why Baba chose to establish the fundamentals of Prout first in English and then in Sanskrit. The proper approach would therefore be to honor and use both wordings as and when required. It is a conclusion of this paper that Baba gave two identical wordings of Prout – English and Sanskrit – to be used according to the requirements of various times, places and persons.

4. Ideological concerns

“What should be the relationship between individuals and society? Every individual possesses two invaluable and extraordinary potentialities: psychic and spiritual. The collective body cannot issue dictates concerning these two potentialities – its jurisdiction is limited to physical wealth only. In the physical sphere if individuals do not violate the interests of the collective body, both society and the individual will avoid difficulties and enjoy a state of well-being. For this reason the individual right to go against the interests of the collective has been withdrawn. But in the psychic and spiritual spheres, every individual has complete freedom to advance and progress.”

- From “Social Defects in Gandhism,” September 1960, Ranchi. Published in *Prout in a Nutshell Part 5*

Baba’s original wording of the first fundamental principle of Prout details numerous specific terms, such as “individual”, “allowed”, “physical”, “clear”, “approval” and “collective body”:

“No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body. “

The proposer’s suggested translation of *Ananda Sutram* 5:12 does not mention those terms, but: “There should be no accumulation of wealth without the permission of society.”

Among many other things, the suggested translation from the Sanskrit unfortunately appears to be far removed from the basic reality of the world we live in. He, and some of his collaborators, insist on a ban against free accumulation of any type of wealth including mental and spiritual wealth. The reality, however, is that only physical wealth is limited whereas the mental and spiritual are found in unlimited quantity. Therefore, only accumulation of physical wealth needs to be regulated in the interest of all. The short and long of it is that spirituality is defined by infinity; it is indescribable, unfathomable, and able to quench human infinite thirst. Mental wealth is not absolute in character but relative; it cannot quench our infinite thirst but is found in infinite supply and therefore there is no harm done in accumulating as much as one can of it:

“As material wealth is limited, over-abundance for one leads to crippling scarcity for others. These infinite human longings can be fulfilled only through psychic and spiritual wealth. Brahma has generously arranged infinite psychic and spiritual wealth for human beings; humanity will have to properly utilize that wealth.”

- *Problems of the Day*, 1958

The literary argument advanced here yet again by those who promote the disparate translation/wording appears to be immaterial to the point of displaying utter ignorance: It claims that the Sanskrit sutra says only *dhana* (wealth) and that there is no word for “physical” in it.

This argument indicates Sanskrit illiteracy. *Dhana* means wealth in the sense of physical wealth only. There is no need for a separate term for “physical” as far as *dhana* is concerned. *Artha* is another Sanskrit term for wealth, meaning any type of wealth such as knowledge, friendship, love, home, money, free time, space, etc. This is so because *artha* means “that which removes any kind of suffering.” *Dhana* on the other hand means physical material wealth only. Wealth being a most attractive, interesting and multifarious term to human beings, the rich Sanskrit language has very many words and terms for its various types and meanings.¹

From what we heard earlier from Baba’s own classes (page 12), particular terms in English, such as “clear” and “approval” were detailed by Him for very practical reasons. The term “collective body” has been left out of the proposed translation and substituted with “society”, thereby removing Prout’s concept of constitutional and representative collective bodies such as “bloc level bodies” and “planning bodies” detailed by Baba in various discussions on Prout. “Allowed” is possibly left out by the same reasoning.

The absence of “individual” from the suggested translation is portentous, too. It leaves a vast field of uncertainty behind: Who is wealth accumulation intended for? Individuals, groups of people, anything else? Otherwise, and as quoted earlier, in *Discourses on PROUT* we learn that “the *per capita* limit of acquisition should be fixed according to the collective resources ...”

The argument of those who promote the proposed translation/wording appears to will it differently. They claim that the Sanskrit does not mention “individual”. We may then ask: Why should it? Over-accumulation of physical wealth is a self-centered propensity that has everything to do with increasing private property and giving supreme value to the personal power it accords. The cause of this mental disease, as Baba often called it, lies in the very crudeness of physical wealth – it reduces the mental radius and makes a person increasingly self-centered. In the case of state capitalism (communism), too, the inner motivation of that variety of capitalists is selfishness.

Today it is urgently required that we regulate the physical accumulation of individuals to explore and distribute all sorts of wealth – individual and collective – in a more balanced, progressive way. This essential translates to liberating the world from the staticity of self-centeredness. For securing the minimum necessities of all and gradually increase their living standard it is necessary to limit the accumulation of physical wealth (*dhana*) of individuals. If anybody wants to increase their realization of subtler wealth there is no reason whatsoever to place any limitation on his or her activities.

More on linguistics and terminology is found in Appendix B.

Practical argumentation

In his book *Principles for a Balanced Economy*, Ramesh Bjonnes writes:

“When mental and spiritual resources are converted into physical property, in the form of intellectual property rights, they can also contribute to massive over-accumulation of wealth.

¹ Try a search for “wealth” on sanskritdictionary.com or other sources of Sanskrit words.

Inventing and then owning the intellectual property rights to Microsoft computer software made Bill Gates the wealthiest person in the world. The corporation he started, Microsoft, now controls more than 90 percent of the world's software market, not including the freeware portion.

“The situation is similar with spiritual wealth. Spiritual teachings, religious doctrines, and sacred knowledge can also be avenues for physical wealth accumulation in the form of property and money. Christian preachers amass great wealth from unsuspecting followers, and the Catholic Church is one of the richest institutions in the world. Some yoga teachers, who freely have borrowed the age-old knowledge of yoga from India, are being accused of commercialization and of making too much money. In other words, even the free human gifts of intellectual and spiritual knowledge may be used to amass great physical wealth.

“Furthermore, even if intellectual or spiritual property is not converted into physical wealth, as long as it is ‘owned’ by somebody, and by that ownership prevents others from being allowed to use it, it will deprive others just in the same way as if it had been physical wealth. An example would be an oil company buying up patents for alternative energy resources without marketing them in order to prevent the development of technology that would compete with their business interests. This is a common occurrence in today’s economy. Therefore there is a distinction between the free use of intellectual property, and the hoarding of intellectual property in such a way that it prevents other people from using it.

“But the problems do not stop here. Even in the case where certain mental wealth does not deprive other people of its use, unrestricted access to certain mental and spiritual wealth may not be in the interest of society as a whole. The world would not be a better place if everyone was taught in school how to pick locks or make explosives out of ingredients you can buy in a supermarket. There is actually a lot of knowledge and information that is better not distributed to everyone.

“In conclusion, society should have the right and ability to restrict the accumulation of all types of wealth, not only physical.”¹

First, the author does not talk about mental and spiritual wealth but of their physical derivatives. Intellectual property rights concern inventions, discoveries, and products of creativity such as copyright, rights to a piece of music or to a design, names, etc. These are not intellectual wealth per se but physical merchandise subject to economic calculation and exchange. As far as Prout is concerned these are types of physical wealth and the accumulation of such generated physical wealth would be subject to regulation.

The same logic applies to the author’s argumentation about spiritual wealth where he again refers to their physical derivatives – commercialization, physical buildings, gold, money, etc. – and not to spiritual wealth itself. For example, a priest may walk into town, set up a confession booth and charge every

¹ Principles for a Balanced Economy, R. Bjornes. Prout Research Institute 2012, pp 26-28.

confessor one dollar. Some may say he is greedy and narrowminded in his spiritual approach. Anybody suggesting that spiritual wealth should be limited because of this priest being greedy? Another priest comes in the next day and proceeds to see confessors for free, stating it is done out of simple compassion. Who of the two would be seen as more spiritual? It is a matter of simple arithmetic proving that those who realizes a greater degree of spirituality within themselves and proceed to share it unreservedly with others will be seen as more spiritual. There is no question of limiting access to spiritual wealth in this equation.

Secondly, the author's problem in understanding the value of mental and spiritual wealth becomes rather clear in the fourth paragraph where he proceeds to give an example of wrong education: "The world would not be a better place if everyone was taught in school how to pick locks or make explosives out of ingredients you can buy in a supermarket. There is actually a lot of knowledge and information that is better not distributed to everyone."

This is a dangerously wrong conclusion; that refraining from sharing certain types of information is equal to not harming society and not allowing people free participation in the psychic and spiritual spheres. Such kind of thinking reveals a lack of basic understanding of Prout's concepts of rational distribution, proper utilization, and of spirituality.

First, it is necessary here to say something about the difference between principle and policies. A principle is a constant while policies vary in harmony with the principle. For example, policies on the basis of the principle of limiting accumulation of physical wealth will naturally vary with changes over time, in places and in people, but the principle will remain unchanged. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to limit a lot. In other circumstances, where people's sense and sensibilities are subtler and physical wealth abounds, it may not be necessary to emphasize physical limitations that much.

Secondly, Prout's spiritual approach to problem-solving. Prout is essentially a spiritual theory. Its propounder, Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, is known to have stated: "I have given Prout to pave the way for Dharma." Prout's approach is always positive. A negative approach is not Proutistic.

To take the author's example of teaching young kids chemistry class: Teachers would certainly be wise to pursue a policy of considering their age and maturity, and will naturally select their way of teaching. In the same way as a gardener will treat different plants differently, as guardians will approach their kids of various ages and capabilities differently, as prison guards will handle different prisoners differently to guide and assist them in the best way, as a doctor will treat different patients with different constitutions differently although they may all be suffering from the same disease, etc.)

This does not however mean denying rights and locking down potentialities. To cut people off from any type of wealth is not something we associate with Prout but with communism and fascism. Prout puts the spiritual and other subtle good first and then works out how to organize the physical and cruder aspects of existence to generate all-round progress. A successful teacher will certainly take the mental and spiritual maturity of students into consideration even when teaching something of a mostly physical nature to see to the all-round development of the students. Indeed, a main lesson of our modern world

is that one-eyed physical focus certainly creates problems and crises in the end. It is surprising to see that our author here sleepwalking as it were into this very trap.

No problem will be solved by limiting accumulation of all types of wealth only, even of physical wealth. The solution provided by Prout is proper utilization and rational distribution. The limiting of accumulation of physical wealth will only work if hand in hand with proper utilization and rational distribution of all sorts potentialities, while the limiting of subtler types of wealth will never work under any circumstance.

Prout's solution works for classroom teachers, too: They have to carefully select their methods and ways of teaching, which includes presenting useful and not senseless examples, assisting in unfolding proper understanding of circumstances and perspectives, and appearing before students as ideal, inspiring personalities who encompass the physical, mental and spiritual in one. "It is not what you teach, it is what you are." In this way teachers should allow all students free access in all possible areas of existence, and in such a way that it does not harm the students or their society. Students should be taught how to share the physical both out of necessity and for their mutual benefit, and how to share the mental and spiritual for their mutual benefit.

If any student fails in this respect, the teacher should be ready to take the blame.

Material on Prout's concepts of *rational distribution* may be found here:

<http://proutglobe.org/2011/05/2nd-fundamental-principle-of-prout>.

Material on Prout's concepts of *proper utilization* may be found here:

<http://proutglobe.org/prout/foundations/utilisation>.

5. Conclusions

Every single publication on Prout published during Baba's time, including numerous books by Baba and others, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, seminar notes, newsletters, etc., very often carried the original English wording of the fundamental principles of Prout. That wording of the fundamental principles were taught in training (including local full timer as well as wholetime training) and seminars, and margiis would readily recognize them and refer to them as the essence of the theory of Prout. How could it have escaped Baba's attention if there was something seriously wrong with that wording?

How is it possible that Baba would never have commented on something so essential and of central importance to our work had their wording been defective and dogmatic all along? For instance, during the nine years of composing *Prabhat Samgiit*, Baba would on numerous occasions halt the singing, even in front of tens of thousands at DMC, to correct a mistake. It was standard procedure, Him correcting His followers. He did that all the time, in His garden, inside the house, while travelling, on walks. He corrected people and things whenever He found it necessary. So how would He not have corrected abysmal flaws in the wording of the fundamental factors of Prout not even once for 31 years?

The term "collective body" is not used in conventional economics, political science or any other science that has to do with socio-economics, by Marxists, capitalists or any other. If at all the English wording of the principles in *Idea and Ideology* were a translation; how in this blessed Cosmos could someone have translated such simple terms as "samaja" (society) and "sukma" (subtle) into something as uncommon as "collective body" and "supramundane" respectively?

It seems most unlikely that those very simple terms (say in Hindi or Bengali) would have been rendered into something so unusual by someone else than Baba Himself, presenting such demanding English when much more unassuming terms (such as "society" and "subtle") would be the obvious choice for the average translator.

More likely, everybody present at those occasions, where Baba dictated the principles in English, including note-takers and translators would have followed Baba's original English to the letter having this brand new socio-economic theory introduced to them. Probably, Baba simply dictated Prout (including terms such as "collective body", "supramundane", "metaphysical", etc.) and made doubly sure it was duly noted, thoroughly understood, and published correctly.

As is evident from this paper it was also what happened. Substantial evidence supplied by authentic witnesses point to the fact that the English wording in *Idea and Ideology* and innumerable later publications was originally dictated and quoted by Baba on not one but at least four significant occasions. I have not been able to find any source or evidence to the contrary; that the principles could have come about in any other way.

Also, it is born out of information presented in this paper that Baba took the final result of His published works most seriously. After initial dictation He would pursue the matter Himself, and in the majority of cases He would re-dictate material following His evaluation of initial notes taken. *Idea and Ideology* was

far from an exception. Those who argue that “Baba had no time for perfectionism”, and describes the language of Idea and Ideology as “gobbledygook”, would probably do well to note this historical fact carefully.

Appendix A: The original wording and the suggested translation

The five fundamental principles of PROUT

1. No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body.
2. There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supramundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe.
3. There should be maximum utilization of physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective bodies of human society.
4. There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supramundane and spiritual utilizations.
5. The method of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space and person, and the utilization should be of progressive nature.

The suggested translation of Ananda Sutram 5:12-16

1. There should be no accumulation of wealth without the permission of society.
2. There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of the crude, subtle, and causal resources.
3. There should be maximum utilization of the physical, mental, and spiritual potentialities of the individual and collective beings.
4. There should be a well-balanced adjustment among the crude, subtle, and causal utilizations.
5. Utilizations vary in accordance with time, space, and form; the utilizations should be progressive.

Appendix B: Some textual discrepancies and their implications

A pre-emptive discussion on the suggested translations from the Sanskrit does not come within the scope of this paper. The below elaborations on some of the numerous textual discrepancies with the suggested translations are included to indicate their implications.

Fifth Principle – Ananda Sutram 5:16

In Madras in 1978, Baba said in English (He invariably spoke in English when discoursing there):

“I had no alternative but to accept, in the fifth fundamental principle of Prout, changes due to change in time, space, and person. Changes should be according to the change in time, space, and person.”

- “Mobility and Cognitive Stance”, Madras, December 1, 1978. *Ánanda Vacanámrtam* Part 23.

In the original English quote from Istanbul (1979), cited earlier in this paper, we learn the same:

“... it is said that the style of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space and person.

Nearly years later, in 1988 in Kolkata, Baba stated (in English according to Publications records):

“PROUT philosophy is situated at the height of pinnacled excellence because it moves with the changes of time, space and person.”

(“The Speciality of the Fifth Fundamental Principle of PROUT”, *A Few Problems Solved* Part 9)

These original quotes in English tally with the original wording of the fifth principle: “The method of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space, and person; and the utilization should be of a progressive nature.”

The suggested translation of sutra 5:16 does not tally: “Utilizations vary in accordance with time, space, and form; the utilizations should be progressive.”

Among other incongruences, “in accordance with changes in time ...” is left out. Essentially, this omission seems to kill off the first of the two core values of this sutra:

- “The method of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space ...” gives a clear directive on the necessity to keep up with various changes; while
- “Utilizations vary in accordance with time, space ...” appears to offer a useless non-descript description.

The above documents that the original English of *Idea and Ideology* accords with Baba’s statements in English about the fifth principle, whereas the suggested translation does not.

Third principle – Ananda Sutram 5:14

“There should be maximum utilization of physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective bodies of human society.”

As a replacement of the above, the proposer has suggested the following translation (of the sutra):

“There should be maximum utilization of the physical, mental, and spiritual potentialities of the individual and collective beings.”

Here we should first remind ourselves the most fundamental claim of the person who promotes the translation: *Ananda Sutram* must always be followed to the letter. His translation of this sutra seems however to present an exception to that rule:

The Sanskrit indicates “bodies”, which is reflected in Baba’s original wording. Possibly, those who promote the suggested translation may not have grasped the meaning and implications of Prout’s collective bodies. As previously referred, the publication PROUT, What It Is came about as a direct result of Baba’s classes on Prout in Jamalpur. Here we learn:

“The totality of the physical might of entire humanity is its physical wealth. Similarly, the entirety of the intellectual potential of all human beings constitutes the metaphysical potential, while the spiritual wealth implies the sum total of all unit consciousness.”

- *PROUT, What It Is*, Proutist Forum of India (1970) www.proutglobe.org/2011/05/prout-what-it-stands-for-3rd-fundamental-principle

Prout terms those, who together realize these various types of wealth, as collective physical, mental and spiritual bodies. The suggested “collective beings” is not a concept of Ananda Marga philosophy.

As mentioned earlier, the term “collective body” may indicate a functional, executive, representational, etc. body, such as a planning body, block level body, etc. The first fundamental principle obviously infers this type of collective body: “No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval by the collective body.”

“The economic units or zones will have dictatorial boards. These boards will form one higher board which will be called federated boards. These federated boards will govern the different federations. The collection of these federated boards is called the confederated board or body. This body will look after the confederation as a whole, but will not ignore the interests of any federation.”

- “Talks on PROUT”, July 1961, Ranchi. *PROUT in a Nutshell* Part 15.

In the final analysis, the concept of “collective body” is deeply spiritual; we conceive of the collective as the expansion and greater existence of our being. In Prout, the unit body and the collective body is one and inseparable.

PROUT for a human society

The suggested rationale of the translators for removing “human” from the third principle appears to be twofold:

- The Sanskrit sutra says only *samaja* (society) and not *manava samaja* (human society); and
- The later introduction of Neo-humanism requires us to think in terms of not only human society but a society of all living beings and therefore “human” must be removed here.

Both ideas are defeated by the fact that Baba gave Prout a distinct human identity.

Firstly, when concluding the theory of Prout, Baba stated (the last sutra of *Ananda Sutram*):

“This is the progressive utilization theory, propounded for the good and happiness of all.”

The corresponding Sanskrit sutra (5:17) mentions *sarvajana*: “all people”. Were we to translate that sutra in the strict literary terms demanded by the said translators, it would say “... for the good and happiness of all *people*.” But Baba mentioned only “all” in English. Still, the sense of humanity is there:

The theme of humanity is evident throughout Prout, not the least in the 16 sutras themselves and their purports. With the exception of a single sutra – 5:8 – which speaks of the general diversity in Creation, all other sutras and purports of the fifth chapter speak of human beings and their relationships to each other and to their environment. They do so to such an extent that even sutra 5:8 becomes an argument about people (as is evident from its purport) even if Baba Himself on several occasions applied that particular sutra in a total universal context.

Beyond *Ananda Sutram*, relevant quotes include:

“Prout is the path of socio-economic emancipation for humanity.”

- “Prout and Neohumanism”, October 25, 1989, Kolkata. *PROUT in a Nutshell* Part 17

“According to Prout human society is one and indivisible. Human society is just like a garland which is made of different types of flowers, woven together by one common thread.”

- “Some Aspects of Socio-Economic Planning”, June 1979. *PROUT in a Nutshell* Part 15

“When I started Ananda Marga, I wanted all humanity to stand upon the strict code of cardinal principles, human values, and spirituality; and when I saw everything internally I came to the decision that there are so many loopholes in human society. Human beings came here about ten lakhs of years ago, but they have not yet been able to form a well-knit social order. We require a strong social order. That’s why I had to create another branch of philosophy, known as Prout, through which we are to remodel the social order so that nobody is compelled to do anything, nobody is compelled to resort to immorality, for want of food or clothes or other necessities of life.”

- “Lord Buddha's Cardinal Principles”, May 30, 1979, Valencia. *Ánanda Vacanámrtam* Part 12

“Never before has anyone thought of the enormous all-round potentiality of human beings. Prout is therefore a new theory.”

- “Science and Population Control “, July 1961, Ranchi. *PROUT in a Nutshell Part 15*

Neo-humanism, on the other hand, is a socio-spiritual philosophy that “includes both the animate and inanimate worlds”:

“The Neo-humanist approach includes everything – it includes both the animate and inanimate worlds within its jurisdiction. Prout is for human beings, for the living world, while Neohumanism is for both the animate and inanimate worlds ... There must be close correlation amongst Prout, Neohumanism and spiritual practices. The balance amongst these three will elevate the structure of human beings to its existential status. We cannot neglect Prout, Neohumanism or spiritual practices. This balance is to be maintained for all. It will create good will and elevate the standard of human beings so that they can render more service.”

- “PROUT and Neohumanism”

From a questions and answers session conducted by Baba, we learn:

“Question – Can you say whether Prout is a supplement to NeoHumanism or whether Neohumanism is an appendix to Prout?

Answer – Prout is based on spirituality. Neohumanism is also based on spirituality. Neither Prout nor Neohumanism are subservient to each other.”

Question – Which is of primordial importance: Prout, Neohumanism or the theory of microvita?

Answer – All are of equal importance because they are all based on the fundamental spiritual philosophy of Ananda Marga.”

- “Questions and Answers on Society – 3”, *PROUT in a Nutshell Part 14*

There is no need to change neither PROUT nor Neohumanism because of the other. They are defined as the two distinct wings of the bird of spirituality and both wings exist for the bird only. This view is in total harmony with the theory of *Prama*.

With the fifth chapter of *Ananda Sutram* in hand we can say that Prout, albeit being universal in spirit, is human-centric in its approach; Prout’s world is the world of human beings. The mentioning of a “human society” in the original wording of the third fundamental principle of PROUT therefore appears to be in place. It seems erroneous to remove that appellation. Baba’s call for close correlation between PROUT and Neohumanism surely comes within the definition of a *human* society.

END