

# Atheism as a Value System

by Ankur Betageri (June 2015)

We atheists, children of reason and science, have been judged harshly and unfairly. We have been seen as monsters and brutes: as coldblooded unemotional psychopaths out to destroy the wise, dreamy and intuitive landscapes of faith. As a child this is exactly how I saw atheists in relation to religion. I saw atheists as defilers of the sacred. Growing up in Basavanagudi, that stronghold of ancient tradition and faith of cosmopolitan Bangalore, this was natural. Even now the remembered image of *aarti* –flames lighting up the contorted bronze figure of Hanuman in that dim-lit temple in Gandhi Bazaar fills my mind with astonishment and awe.

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