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Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

INTEGRAL VISION OF VEDIC SEERS*

'Truth is one : sages call It by various names'

यद्देवा अदः सलिले सुसंरब्धा अतिष्ठत ।
अत्रा वो नृत्यतामिव तीव्रो रेणुरपायत ॥

1. O gods, when in the deep waters¹ you remained well-arranged (*susamrabdhā*), as if you were dancing², then a storm of dust arose from you (*vo tīvro reṇurapāyata*).³

Rg-Veda 10.72.6

यद्देवा यतयो यथा भुवनान्यपिन्वत ।
अत्रा समुद्र आगूळ्हमा सूर्यमजभर्तन ॥

2. O gods, you filled the worlds [with your radiance] like Yatis.⁴ Then you brought forth the sun hidden in the ocean.⁵

Rg-Veda 10.72.7

* The hymn on the creation of the gods is continued here. According to Sāyana, the two stanzas given here are in praise of the class of gods known as Adityas. Evidently, in Vedic times the Aditya legend had a deeper, allegorical and mystical meaning.

1. That is, before creation. The Purānas state that the whole universe was covered with water before creation. Also cf. *āpo vā idam sarvam (Mahanarayana Upaniṣad 29.1)*.

2. Says Wallis in his *Cosmology of the Rg-Veda*, 'The two verses 7 and 8 are interesting as containing an independent story of the origin of the world : the gods are said to have kicked up in dancing the atoms which formed the earth.'

3. According to Sāyana, the 'dust storm' refers to the rising of the Sun. In modern astronomy the 'nebular hypothesis' holds that the solar system arose by a condensation of cosmic dust.

4. The word *yati* is usually translated as an ascetic or great sage. But Sāyana interprets it into 'cloud'; the meaning would then be, 'as clouds fill the earth with rain'.

5. This again refers to the creation of the Sun. The 'ocean' symbolizes the unmanifested condition of the universe before creation. In Hinduism creation does not mean the production of something out of nothing, but only the evolution of something already involved ('hidden') in pre-existing Reality.

ABOUT THIS NUMBER

There is only a spiritual solution to the basic problems of life—this is the theme of this month's EDITORIAL.

Sri M. P. Pandit of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, concludes his exposition of the Way in SRI AUROBINDO'S INTEGRAL YOGA by describing the three stages of progress through which the sādḥaka passes, namely Psychicization, Universalization and Supramentalization.

There is a GOLDEN KEY, says Ann Myren in her article bearing that title, which opens the door to spiritual life. It is renunciation or detachment. With deep insight and conviction the author shows how this key can be used to find our way out of the difficulties of life which confront us every day. The article is an adaptation of a lecture given on May 31, 1981 at the Vedanta Society of Sacramento, U.S.A. The author

is an instructor in social sciences at the College of Alameda, Alameda, California, and is a member of the Vedanta Societies of Northern California, Sacramento and Berkeley.

In PATTERNS OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN PRAVṚTTI AND NIVṚTTI Prof. Arvind Sharma of the Department of Religious Studies, University of Sydney, Australia, shows how the different religious traditions in the East and the West have tried to reconcile the two divergent ways of life.

Rūpa Gosvāmin, a disciple of Śrī Caitanya and one of the founders of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism, occupies an important position in the history of Hindu religion. Prof. Ranjit Kumar Acharjee of Ramakrishna Mahavidyalaya, Kailashahar, North Tripura, presents a lucid study of the saint's life and thought in RUPA GOSVAMIN : HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT.

THE SPIRITUAL SOLUTION

(EDITORIAL)

The *Bhāgavatam* narrates that Vidura, on being insulted by prince Duryodhana, once left the city of Hastināpura and wandered from place to place as an ascetic. After many years he met Uddhava, the great devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and learned from him all about the terrible Mahābhārata War and about the death of Kṛṣṇa and the destruction of the entire Yādava clan. Pondering deeply the inscrutable workings of fate, Vidura journeyed on and reached the hermitage of Maitreya on the bank of the Gangā. He opened his talk with the sage by asking him, 'People do work with a view to getting happiness. But they neither attain happiness nor succeed in ending their sorrow

through their actions. On the contrary, they undergo suffering again and again as a result of those acts. Therefore O worshipful sage, please tell me what is advisable under the circumstances.'¹

This question was asked not by an ignorant bum but by one who was considered one of the wisest men of his time. And what was Maitreya's response? Did he ask

1. सुखाय कर्माणि करोति लोको
न तैः सुखं वाऽन्यदुपारमं वा ।
विन्देत भूयस्तत एव दुःखं
यदत्र युक्तं भगवान् वदेन्नः ॥

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 3.5.2

Vidura to meet influential people, or to organize social reforms, or to study political theory or economics? No, he did nothing of that sort. He simply began a long discourse on the glories of the Lord, and advised Vidura to worship the Lord. In other words, the sage suggested only a spiritual solution to the problems of life.

Life is full of difficulties and uncertainties, and most people find themselves caught in a maze of problems. But many of them believe that the source of all their difficulties lies in the external world and that they are clever enough to solve all their problems by manipulating men and materials. When confronted with difficulties they run hither and thither, try to influence or coerce others, and try all kinds of worldly means to get over those difficulties. But soon they discover that problem solving is an endless process which consumes all their time and energy: The very attempt to solve one problem creates more problems. And if at all any solution is found, it proves to be partial and temporary. This was what the great sage Nārada told king Prācinabarhis. 'There is no such thing as absolute freedom for the Jīva from even one of the three types of sorrow, namely those brought about by divine agencies, those inflicted by other beings, and those relating to one's own body and mind. Even if there is a remedy in a particular case, it only proves to be a temporary relief. As a man carrying a heavy load on his head may shift it to his shoulders, so are all worldly remedies.'²

At long last the thoughtful person comes to the conclusion that the problems of life cannot be fully solved through worldly

means. And he asks himself, is there a total and lasting solution? This question came to Buddha two thousand five hundred years ago. If he had thought that there could be a worldly solution to the problems of life, he would have become the king and ruled wisely. But he didn't. Rather, he renounced the world and practised meditation under a tree. In other words, he too sought only a spiritual solution.

Is there a spiritual solution to the problems of life? The scriptures of world religions are unanimous in holding that there is. The lives and teachings of hundreds of saints and sages bear testimony to this truth. This truth forms the foundation of spiritual life. It is this belief that makes renunciation, austerity, prayer, worship, meditation, and self-analysis worth all the struggles and trials that they entail and the burden they impose on society. However, many spiritual aspirants forget this central fact. They practise spiritual disciplines as a religious duty, or out of fear of God or Satan or for some temporary benefits like relaxation or concentration. This is the main reason why spiritual life does not appear real to them or transform their lives. Prayer, meditation etc. will reveal their transforming power only when they are practised with the firm conviction that through them alone one can find a lasting solution to the problems of life. To practise spiritual disciplines and at the same time indulge in worldly competition, conceit, cunning, hatred and double-dealing or lead an indolent life is nothing but religious hypocrisy. Destiny punishes such people by depriving them of both worldly prosperity and peace of mind. Whether one follows worldly life or spiritual life, one should hold on to certain basic convictions. Otherwise one will not attain success in either. Before he embarks on the spiritual quest every aspirant must convince himself that through that alone can he attain lasting peace, joy,

2. दुःखेष्वेकतरेणापि दैवभूतात्महेतुषु ।
जीवस्य न व्यवच्छेदः स्याच्चेत् तत्तत् प्रतिक्रियाः ।
यथा हि पुरुषो भारं शिरसा गुरुमुद्रहन् ।
तं स्कन्धेन स आधत्ते तथा सर्वाः प्रतिक्रियाः ॥

fulfilment and find a total and final solution to the problems of life.

Why all people don't seek the spiritual solution

If spiritual solution is the only true solution to the problems of life, why is it that only very few people seek it sincerely? Spinoza raises a similar question at the end of his monumental book *Ethics*: why is it that the way of salvation which he has shown is being neglected by almost everyone? And he answers sadly in the last sentence of his book: because it is difficult and therefore rare, like everything sublime. When we are confronted with problems, it appears to be easier to talk to people and rush here and there than to sit down and pray to God or meditate. Why is it so? There are three reasons why spiritual solution appears to be difficult.

One is the fear of the unknown. It seems to us safer to hold on to things—friends and relatives, money and materials—which are known, even though perishable, than to pray to an unknown Being or dive into the unknown depths of one's consciousness. In order to depend solely on an unknown reality one needs extraordinary courage. It is faith that gives this courage. Some people seem to be born with deep faith, some others acquire it through their contact with holy men, while the rest spend their lives swinging between the sublime and the ridiculous. The second reason why people avoid the spiritual solution is ignorance of the laws of the spiritual world. To build a house, to attain success in business, or to acquire wealth one has to work hard. By analogy we are apt to think that spiritual life also involves so much labour and hardship. No doubt, effort is needed in spiritual life too, but it is of a totally different type. All that is necessary is to establish a contact with God, the source of infinite power and glory, either through self-

surrender or through a meditative opening of the soul to cosmic consciousness. The third reason for avoiding the spiritual solution is *bhogavāsanā*, the natural craving of the mind for objects of the senses. Past actions and experiences create an outward-going habit in the mind which is so strong that few people can resist it and turn the mind inward.

What are the problems of life?

We have used the term 'problems of life' repeatedly. We do not mean by it scarcity of food and clothing. Although this problem is a serious one in a poor country like India, its basic cause is socio-politicals and can be remedied through sweeping economic reforms. Many of the advanced countries of the West including Russia have successfully eliminated hunger and economic poverty from society.

But there are other problems which have nothing to do with poverty and which cannot be solved through physical means. These are the intrinsic problems of life which are peculiar to human existence. These existential problems have been collectively called *duhkha* or suffering in Indian religions. Suffering does not depend upon what we have but what we are. A poor man may lead a happier life than a rich man. When Buddha spoke of life as *duhkha* what he meant was this existential suffering. It should be remembered that the three sights which changed Buddha's life were disease, old age and death, and not hunger and poverty. Had he seen a hungry man, he would have stopped the chariot and ordered some food for him; had the sight of poverty affected him, he would have gone home and started agrarian and socio-economic reforms.

Why was Buddha so powerfully affected by disease, old age and death? Because they meant change, impermanence. Why should change be a problem? Because it

strikes at the root of the ego, the very foundation of man's existence. All the desires, ambitions, plans and activities of man are based on the belief in the permanence of his being (*sat*). Impermanence means the denial of all these. It means non-being (*asat*), the negation of existence. Non-existence, impermanence, is an essential part of life and a matter of common experience. But we become aware of it only at certain critical moments. In the *Mahābhārata* when king Yudhiṣṭhira is asked, 'What is the greatest wonder?', he replies: 'Every day people go to the abode of the King of Death, and yet those who remain hope to live for ever. What can be a greater wonder than this?'³

What we call life is a dialectical confrontation between *sat* (being, existence) and *asat* (non-being, non-existence). This is implied in the definition of life given by Swami Vivekananda to the Maharaja of Khetri: 'Life is the unfoldment and fulfilment of a being under circumstances tending to press it down.'⁴ Being and non-being, affirmation and negation are the two poles of life. Life is thus a contradiction, a paradox. Almost all the problems of life stem from this paradoxical nature of life. Animals do not feel it; man alone feels it. It is a peculiarly human experience. Man tries to resolve this paradox through two complementary strivings. One is the struggle to overcome non-being (*asat*), and the other the struggle to assert being (*sat*).⁵

The struggle to avoid non-being. There is

3. अहन्यहनि भूतानि गच्छन्तीह यमालयम् ।

शेषाः स्थावरमिच्छन्ति किमाश्चर्यमतः परम् ॥

Mahābhārata, Vanaparva 313.16

4. *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by His Eastern and Western Disciples (Calcutta Advaita Ashrama, 1974), p. 219.

5. The word *sat* is usually translated by Indian writers as 'existence'. It is perhaps better to translate it as 'being', for 'existence' has a specific connotation in modern Western thought.

in all people a deep-seated fear of non-being. Non-being does not mean only physical non-existence or death of the body. It covers mind and its products also. Non-being means negation—negation of everything connected with human existence, negation of the real nature of man, the essence of the human soul. In Vedānta non-being is called *Māyā* or *Ajñāna*, ignorance. According to Vedānta our real nature is pure and good; evil is its negation. Our real nature is blissful; sorrow is its negation. Sin is the negation of the divinity of the *Ātman*; humiliation is the negation of the dignity of the soul. There is a perpetual fear of negation, non-being, in us. Behind every action there is the fear of failure, behind every desire there is the fear of unfulfilment. As a well-known Sanskrit verse puts it: 'In enjoyment there is the fear of disease; in social position, the fear of fall; in wealth, the fear of hostile kings; in honour, the fear of humiliation; in power, the fear of enemies; in beauty, the fear of old age; in scholarship, the fear of opponents; in virtue, the fear of scandal-mongers; in body, the fear of death. Indeed, everything in this world is accompanied by fear. Renunciation alone is fearlessness.'⁶

One of the basic teachings of Swami Vivekananda is that fear is the main cause of human suffering. He says, 'Either in this world or in the world of religion, it is true that fear is the sure cause of degradation and sin. It is fear that brings misery, fear that brings death, fear that breeds evil.' Here by 'fear' Swamiji means the deep-seated existential fear. He continues, 'And

6. भोगे रोगभयं कुले च्युतिभयं वित्ते नृपालाद् भयं
माने दैन्यभयं बले रिपुभयं रूपे जराया भयम् ।
शास्त्रे वादिभयं गुणे खलभयं काये कृतान्ताद् भयं
सर्वं वस्तु भयान्वितं भुवि नृणां वैराग्यमेवाभयम् ।

Bharṭṛhari, Vairāgya-satakam, 31

what causes fear? Ignorance of our own nature'.⁷ It is this ignorance that Existentialist philosophers call non-being.

In modern times the Existentialist philosophers of the West have paid considerable attention to the experience of 'Angst' or existential dread as a typical characteristic of human existence. Kierkegaard has summed up the nature of human existence in four words: individuality, contradiction, choice, dread. The root cause of fear is individuality, the awareness of one's separate existence as the ego. The greater the feeling of egoism, the greater the feeling of insecurity. This inherent fear manifests itself in different people in different ways.

One is the feeling of loneliness. The attempt to overcome this by identifying oneself with one's family, monastery, friends and colleagues seldom succeeds because these external relationships hardly touch the core of human existence.⁸ Our negative reactions constitute another mode of expression of the fear of non-being. Hatred and jealousy spring from the fear of some loss to the ego. The boss's reprimand, a friend's betrayal or the calumny spread by the neighbour makes us feel upset and sad not because of any danger to our physical survival, but because it threatens the survival of the ego.

Another very common mode of existential fear is anxiety. Anxiety is a general feeling of insecurity which is not directed to any particular object. When it is directed to a definite objective—as for example, the education of a son, the marriage of a daughter, a business transaction—it becomes worry. Worrying is an attempt to get rid of anxiety. When worrying goes beyond a certain limit it develops into psychosomatic diseases or neurosis. The eminent

existentialist theologian Paul Tillich has classified anxiety into three types: the anxiety of guilt and condemnation, the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness, and the anxiety of fate and death.⁹ The first one comes more commonly during adolescence, the second one during youth and middle age, and the last one in old age. Of these it was the anxiety of meaninglessness that gave rise to the Hippie movement in the 1960's, and it still continues to be a serious problem for the modern youth especially in the industrial societies of the West. If life is evanescent, if there is nothing worth striving for, what is the meaning and purpose of life? This question may not arise in all people clearly articulated. More often, it may appear in the form of a feeling of emptiness, boredom or lack of zest, when life appears to be what William Faulkner called 'the same frantic steeplechase toward nothing'.

The struggle to assert being (sat). We have seen that there is an inherent fear of non-being, destruction, in all creatures. Half the energies of man is spent on overcoming this fear. However, it is only the negative side of life. Its positive side is the struggle to assert being. In plants, animals and primitive men this struggle goes on mostly at the physical level in the form of a struggle for food and multiplication. This is what Darwin called the struggle for existence. In civilized societies this struggle for mere physical existence has been eliminated to a great extent through technological advancement, economic planning and reconstruction, and increased social awareness. In the civilized person the struggle to assert being is mostly shifted to the mental plane.

At the mental plane the struggle to assert being manifests itself in four ways: pursuit of sense pleasure, pursuit of power, pursuit of higher values and spiritual aspiration.

7. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1973), vol. 3, p. 160.

8. Cf. David Riesman, et al, *The Lonely Crowd* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1953).

9. Paul Tillich, *The Courage To Be* (London: Collins Fontana, 1970), pp. 50-60.

In Hindu scriptures these are respectively known as *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma* and *mokṣa*, and are collectively called the four goals of man (*puruṣārtha*). In some people all the mental energies are directed towards sense pleasure. An ancient story goes that king Yayāti, in an attempt to get satisfaction through sense pleasure, exchanged his old age for his son's youth and enjoyed carnal pleasures for thousands of years. At last he discovered : 'Carnal desire (*kāma*) can never be satisfied through sense-enjoyment ; nay, it will only increase like fire fed with ghee.'¹⁰ Sense pleasure can never bring us fulfilment ; On the contrary, as the young sage Naciketa said, it only dissipates the vigour of the senses and the mind.¹¹ The mental energies of some others are directed to acquiring power, which is what *artha* really means. It is the desire for power and superiority¹² that urges people to acquire more land, money, material goods, more strength, fame and beauty, and higher social status. However, the lust for power can never be satisfied. For the more one acquires, the more one's needs increase.

In more enlightened people the struggle to assert being manifests itself as the pursuit of higher values like Truth, Goodness and Beauty. Formerly philosophy was regarded as a search for Truth, but its place has now been taken over by science. The pursuit of Goodness takes the form of ethical life and social service. The pursuit of Beauty constitutes the primary basis of art. All these three pursuits are covered by the compre-

hensive term *dharma* in Hinduism. But these values, though superior to sense pleasure and greed, are only the shadows of the ultimate reality and are therefore incapable of bringing us lasting fulfilment. With a few notable exceptions, the lives of scientists, social workers and artists reveal that their desire for higher values is vague, and is not deep enough to transform their character which continues to be narrow and imperfect.

The effort to attain fulfilment by way of *kāma*, *artha* and *dharma* (which are collectively called *trivarga*) is restricted to the body and mind. When man realizes the futility of this effort he begins to seek the spiritual principle beyond body and mind. Then dawns true spiritual aspiration in him. True spiritual aspiration is an intense desire for freedom—freedom from fear and unfulfilment, freedom from non-being, freedom to attain the true immutable being which is man's original nature. Total and everlasting freedom from all miseries and struggles is known as *mokṣa*.

Now to recapitulate. There are two basic strivings in man : the struggle to avoid non-being and the struggle to assert being. The former manifests itself as fear or anxiety and the latter as unfulfilment. How to attain freedom from fear and unfulfilment : this is the main existential problem of man. He tries to work out various worldly solutions. But, as the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* points out, worldly remedies are neither absolute nor final.¹³ Commenting on this passage, Vācaspati says that if such remedies existed, nobody would strive for spiritual life. 'If honey is available near at hand, where is the need to go to the mountain for it?'¹⁴

10. न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति ।
हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मैव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 9.19.14

11. सर्वेन्द्रियाणां जरयन्ति तेजः ।

Katha Upaniṣad 1.1.6

12. The philosopher Nietzsche and the psychologist, Adler believed this to be the basic motive behind all human activity.

13. एकान्तात्यन्ततोऽभावात् ।

Sāṃkhya-Kārika, 1

14. अत्के चेन्मद्यु विन्देत किमर्थं पर्वतं व्रजेत् ।

Quoted in *Tattva kaumudi* on *ibid*

The Vedantic solution

Here the question arises as to why worldly remedies are inadequate to solve the problems of life. The answer is that the problems of fear, anxiety, unfulfilment, love, hatred etc. are really problems of human experience. External objects and people only serve as secondary causes. The primary cause lies deep down in consciousness. Naturally, their solution too must be sought in consciousness.

We have seen that the basic problems of life arise from the contradictory nature of life which is due to the presence of both being and non-being, birth and death, joy and sorrow, knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice and other polarities. Before proceeding further it is necessary to examine how the different schools of Indian thought have tried to solve this problem of contradiction.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya-Yoga schools accept both being and non-being as equally real. The former regards non-being as absence (*abhāva*) while the latter regards it as just another mode of Prakṛti. Patañjali holds that the Ātman or Purusa or Self is pure existence and that it can be separated from the hold of Prakṛti which is the source of all contradictions. This *viyoga* or separation of pure being from non-being he calls *yoga*.

According to Buddhism non-being or non-existence, which it calls *śūnya*, is the real nature of things. Being, existence, is illusory, and clinging to this illusion is the sole cause of sorrow. If we should give up this illusion and disappear into *śūnya*, all our problems would disappear too. The remedy suggested may seem to be worse than the disease, but it has enabled millions of people to attain peace of mind.

Advaita Vedanta holds the diametrically opposite view. According to it being alone is real, non-being is an illusion, *māyā*, *ajñāna*, ignorance. The other schools of

Vedanta do not look upon non-being as illusion, but they also hold that there is nothing but being. This one universal, all-pervading, absolute continuum of Being is called Brahman. Nothing but Brahman exists.

Vedanta, however, differs from all other schools in positing something more. It states that the ultimate goal of life is not merely freedom from fear and sorrow but also the experience of pure bliss. Brahman is not only absolute Being (*sat*), but also absolute Bliss (*ānanda*). Happiness is an inseparable aspect of being or existence. There are different levels of existence, and for every level there is a corresponding level of happiness.

It is through consciousness (*cit*) that both being and happiness are known. Thus consciousness acts as a link between being and happiness. If there is one infinite Being, it must be of the nature of infinite Consciousness. Therefore Vedanta describes the ultimate Reality as *sat-cit-ānanda*, Being-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. The discovery that the ultimate Reality is of the nature of absolute consciousness—*prājñānam brahma*—is one of the great events in the history of human thought. Nowhere else in the world did this idea develop except in India. The sixth century pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Parmenides recognized a homogeneous infinite Being as the absolute reality filling all space, and regarded plurality and change as illusory. But he did not identify it with infinite consciousness.

The concept of an infinite all-pervading Consciousness nullifies the concept of non-being. We have seen that the fear of non-being, destruction, negation, is one of the main causes of sorrow and that half the energies of a person is directed towards overcoming this fear. The Vedantic concept of consciousness eliminates fear and makes the struggle to avoid non-being unnecessary. It also eliminates the struggle for fulfilment, for happiness is the very essence

of the real nature of man and there is no need to struggle for its attainment. Existence itself is happiness.

The true Self of man, the Ātman, is inseparable from Brahman. It partakes of divinity and is the embodiment of perfection. The values Goodness, Truth and Beauty are only reflections of the *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* aspects of Brahman; and these values can be fulfilled not in the external world but only in the Ātman. Furthermore, the concept of divinity of the human soul provides a universal solution to the problem of morality. Why should a man be good, moral, chaste? Because, says Vedanta, purity is the original nature of his soul.¹⁵ When people realize that they are by nature pure and good, they will desist from wickedness and immorality. Why should a man love his neighbour as himself? Because, says Vedanta, it is the one Supreme Self that dwells in all beings as individual selves. This is the reason why Vedanta offers Self-realization as the only solution to the problems of life. The whole Hindu civilization is centred on this single idea.

Owing to ignorance, man forgets his divine nature and regards himself as a separate limited entity, the ego. It is this separation from universal life that produces the illusion of non-being and the consequent fear. 'Fear comes only from duality', says the Upaniṣad.¹⁶ It is the insecurity of the ego that makes people quarrel and compete with one another. Egoism is the root cause of all human misery, and it is impossible to

¹⁵. This great idea, always implied in Hindu ethics, has been forcefully stressed only in recent years by Swami Vivekananda. Western moral philosophers like Kant, Bishop Butler and Hegel had traced the source of morality to the soul of man. But they did not believe that the original nature of man is good; the Chinese philosopher Mencius believed it but did not develop the concept of the divinity of the soul.

¹⁶. द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति ।

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.2

find a lasting solution to the problems of life within the ego-bound world. As long as the soul is enveloped in ignorance it cannot understand the mystery of life. A final and comprehensive solution to the problems of life can be found only by transcending the ego. This is the unanimous verdict of all the sages and saints of India. They did not believe that man could find peace and happiness by changing his environment. The key to the solution of the problems of life lies within, but in order to find it man must go beyond the ego, transcend his senses. This is the Vedantic solution to the problems of life.

Laws of transcendence

In his introduction to the well-known book *The Secret of the Golden Flower* Dr. Jung says that in the course of his practice he came across several people who were not benefited by psychiatric treatment but who, nevertheless, gradually got freed from their mental troubles without any outside help. He closely studied some of these cases and found that these people had not really 'solved' their problems but had *outgrown* them. They had somehow reached a higher level of consciousness where their problems lost their urgency. 'What on a lower level had led to the wildest conflicts, viewed from the higher level of personality, now seemed like a storm in the valley seen from a high mountain top.' From this Dr. Jung concludes: 'I have learned to see that the greatest and most important problems of life are all fundamentally insoluble. They must be so, because they express the necessary polarity inherent in every self-regulating system. They can never be solved but only outgrown.'¹⁷

By his discovery that man cannot solve the basic problems of life through ordinary

¹⁷. Richard Wilhelm and C. G. Jung, *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950).

means but can go beyond them, Dr. Jung had stumbled upon an important law of human existence. *The higher the plane of consciousness we attain, the greater becomes our knowledge and power to deal with the problems of life.* This important principle was discovered in India thousands of years ago. It forms the basis of yoga. In fact it is a central principle of Hinduism. For, as Śwami Vivekananda has shown, religion rose in India, not out of ancestor worship or fear of the powers of nature, but out of an attempt to solve the problems of life by transcending the senses.¹⁸

The principle mentioned above is closely connected to another fundamental law of consciousness which may be stated as follows. *The significance of an event depends upon the person's level of consciousness.* Human personality has different levels and at each level our view of the world, our understanding of reality, changes. What appears as difficult, conflicting or confusing at a lower level ceases to be so at a higher level. When we are confronted with a problem, before attempting to solve it, we must first of all ask ourselves what level of consciousness we are in. If the mind is restless or is overpowered by strong emotions like hatred, fear, etc., it means that we are in a lower state of consciousness. In that condition it is not possible even to have a clear idea of the nature of the problem, much less solve it. In the dark the stump of a tree may be mistaken for a policeman by a thief, for a ghost by a frightened man, or for one's beloved by a lover. Similarly, we get a distorted view of people and situations when we are in the grip of powerful emotions. To understand this is the first step. The next step is to try to rise to a higher plane of consciousness. The third step is to see the problem in a larger divine context.

How to rise to a higher plane of consciousness? How to transcend the limitations of the ego? The answer lies in yet another law of the spiritual world: *Transcendence is possible only through a transformation of consciousness.* Rising to a higher plane is not as easy as going to an upper floor by the staircase or lift. There is no short cut to spiritual illumination. Each level of consciousness has its own laws, and it is not possible to reach a higher level unless the lower levels are transformed in accordance with their own laws.

Transformation of consciousness

The *Taittirīya-Upaniṣad* distinguishes five planes or *kośas* in human personality: the physical (*annamaya*), the vital (*prāṇamaya*), the mental (*manomaya*), the intuitional (*vijñānamaya*) and the blissful (*ānandamaya*). The true Self or Ātman is beyond all these planes. But in ordinary life it gets identified with any one of these planes at any given time. As a result, during that time, that particular plane appears to be a separate living entity, an independent self, a different 'I'. The first three 'selves' together constitute the ego or the 'lower' self, and the remaining two form the 'higher' self. The attitude, mood, behaviour and even the appearance, of a person depend upon which of these 'selves' he identifies himself with, that is at which plane his centre of consciousness lies. When bodily needs are being attended to, the centre remains in the physical plane; when a person is overcome by strong passions like anger and greed, the centre of his consciousness moves to the vital plane; when he is engaged in thinking or studies, the centre moves to the mental plane. This shifting of the centre among the three lower planes is mostly an unconscious process, and is going on continually in the course of the day-to-day life. It needs only ordinary effort or no effort at all.

¹⁸. See the lecture 'Necessity of Religion' in the *Complete Works* (1970), vol. 2, p. 59.

But shifting the centre to the plane of spiritual intuition (*vijñānamaya kośa*), which means rising from the lower self to the higher self, needs a fully conscious and disciplined effort and a thorough transformation of consciousness. The discipline by which consciousness is transformed is known as Yoga or Sādhanā. An undisciplined life makes the mind restless and dissipates its powers. When, however, the mind is purified and concentrated, its movements become harmonious, centralized, silent and powerful like a lubricated wheel rotating on ball bearings. As the impeller-wheel of a motor pump lifts water from a deep well to the ground above, so the wheel of yoga lifts consciousness from a lower level to a higher level.

Yoga involves two basic processes: purification and concentration. These can be done in different ways and, depending on their nature, Yoga has been classified into different types. Whatever their differences, they all aim at one thing—the transformation of consciousness. This is something every person has to do himself. Accordingly, as Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have repeatedly emphasized, *every man has his own Yoga*. At first this process of transformation is restricted to certain limited parts of the personality and certain times of the day. But through practice the transformation involves the whole personality and goes on all the time. To convert one's whole life into Yoga and meet the problems of life through Yogic consciousness—this is the spiritual solution to life's problems that the great teachers of the Upaniṣads and Yoga have placed before mankind.

This solution is based on self-effort and faith in one's own higher Self. It calls for extraordinary courage—the 'courage to be' as Paul Tillich calls it—to face the world alone, to remain as the Ātman radiating the inner light. 'Through the Ātman one attains

strength', says the Upaniṣad.¹⁹ The practical significance of this important maxim had remained neglected for centuries until Swami Vivekananda re-discovered it and taught it. Swami showed that the Ātman is the source of all power and perfection which can be called forth and brought to bear upon the problems of life. He made this idea the foundation of his new gospel of Practical Vedanta. In a memorable verse, which every spiritual aspirant should inscribe in his soul, Swamiji has condensed his message of Self-strength: 'Why weepst thou, my friend? In you is all power. O mighty one, summon up your true Self which is the embodiment of all perfection, and all the three worlds will be at your feet. Spirit alone triumphs, not matter.'²⁰

Yoga : human and divine

Is self-effort the only way? Is there no other way for those who do not have the requisite knowledge and strength to depend entirely on their own inner resources? Here comes the importance of the theistic side of Vedanta. The great teachers of Bhakti have emphatically declared that there is a Power which is far superior to self-effort. It is Grace, the limitless and infallible power of the personal God, known as *anugraha*, *prasāda* or *kṛpa* in Hinduism.

The ultimate Reality is regarded in Vedanta not only as the impersonal Absolute but also as the Personal God, the supreme Deity who dwells in all beings as the Inner Controller (*antaryāmin*). Through prayer,

19. आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यम् ।

Kena Upaniṣad 2.4

20. किं नाम रोदिषि सखे त्वयि सर्वशक्तिः

आमन्त्रयस्व भगवन् भगदं स्वरूपम् ।

त्रैलोक्यमेतदखिलं तव पादमूले

आत्मैव हि प्रभवते न जडः कदाचित् ॥

Complete Works (1978), vol. 6, p. 275

worship, self-surrender and other devotional exercises it is possible to contact this Cosmic Person and open one's life to His grace. When the aspirant succeeds in doing this, divine Power flows into his soul and transforms his consciousness more quickly and thoroughly than self-effort ever can. Then self-effort, individual yoga, becomes a part of Divine Yoga.

Yoga, whether human or divine, means one thing : depending on the Spirit alone and not matter ; it means finding a solution to the problems of life in the Spirit within, and not on the material world outside. Yoga, whether human or divine, has the same end in view : to transcend the ego and the sorrows of life. Hence the *Gītā* defines yoga as the separation of the soul from the combination of sorrows.²¹

Is this all that spiritual solution means ? Does God give only spiritual strength and knowledge to remain unaffected by the sorrows of life ? Does He not intervene in the affairs of His devotees and remove their sorrows and difficulties ? The great Incarnations, saints and scriptures of world religions assure us that God is not a passive witness of the drama of life but helps, guides and protects those who depend on Him alone. According to Patañjali the type of body the soul assumes (*jāti*), its longevity

(*āyus*), and its experience of happiness and misery (*bhoga*) are determined by one's past Karma.²² It is a common belief that the effect of past Karma cannot be counteracted by ordinary means. But devotees of God believe that the Lord can change man's Karma by His infallible will. The whole creation is an act of Divine Yoga (*yogamaśvaram*)²³ or Divine Play (*līlā*).²⁴ Mitigating the sufferings of devotees is also a part of this divine Play.

However, a true devotee does not ask for wordly benefits. The *Bhāgavatam* says that when Akrūra, a pious charioteer of Kāṁsa, went to Vṛndāvana to take Kṛṣṇa to Mathura, he had cherished many desires in his heart. But as soon as he saw Kṛṣṇa all his wishes got fulfilled. Referring to this Śuka observes : 'What remains unattainable when the Lord who is the abode of Lakṣmī (the goddess of prosperity) is pleased ? And yet, O king, those who are exclusively devoted to Him seek nothing (other than the Lord).'²⁵ For a true spiritual aspirant God realization or Self-realization is the only real problem, and also its solution.

22. *Yoga-sūtra* 2.13.

23. cf. *Gītā*, 9.5 and 11.8.

24. cf. लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम् ।

Brahma-sūtra 2.1.33.

25. किमलभ्यं भगवति प्रसन्ने श्रीनिकेतने ।

तथापि तत्परा राजन्न हि वाञ्छन्ति किञ्चन ॥

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.39.2

21. तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।

Bhagavad-Gītā 6.23

SRI AUROBINDO'S INTEGRAL YOGA

THE WAY—II

SRI M. P. PANDIT

Spiritualization

As the practice of meditation gathers strength and consistency, movements and realms of the inner being begin to reveal themselves. New areas of experience open up. But the experiences are not the same for everyone. It depends upon each one's nature, development and seeking what kind of experiences ensue. Some may feel a perceptible descent of peace, formation of calm. Some may begin to see lights, patterns and designs: they indicate the opening of the subtle sight. For behind the gross physical sense of sight, there is the subtle sense and it visions the subtler dimensions of existence. What is thus seen may be symbols or movements in the subtle world which may or may not actualize themselves in the physical world. Some may get strange fragrances, smells of flowers which are not there physically. That indicates the opening of the subtle sense of smell and so on. All such experiences are to be observed without excitement, without rushing to interpret them; they should not be interfered with. By themselves they do not mean much by way of changing the consciousness. They are not to be given too exaggerated an importance and made occasions for spiritual romanticizing. Nor should they be undervalued. Actually they are signs that the consciousness is waking up on deeper or higher levels of being. It is to be noted, however, that experiences of this nature are not an absolute rule. They may not come at all: visual or sensational experiences may not figure in the sādhana of some who may feel onsets of quiet, calm, peace, etc.

The real foundations are laid when a certain basic calm and peace are established in

the being. During the meditations on such bases, the thought-movements come to a halt. There is a sense of vacancy. But the vacuum is not allowed to last for long. It is filled up, sooner or later, with a solid Peace and Silence. The world seems to move away into some distant oblivion. There is a strong sense of unreality about movements outside of oneself; things fall away leaving one nude. One is *alone*.

This is a capital experience which stabilizes itself into the realization of the silent or static Self. But that is not the terminal. In a way it is the beginning of yet another realization. For as one stays in utter receptivity, another experience starts unrolling itself.

Above the thinking mind are the ranges of the spiritual mind.

The spiritual mind is a mind which, in its fullness, is aware of the Self, reflecting the Divine, seeing and understanding the nature of the Self and its relations with the manifestation, living in that or in contact with it, calm, wide and awake to higher knowledge, not perturbed by the play of the forces. When it gets its full liberated movement, its central station is very usually felt above the head, though its influence can extend downward through all the being and outward through space.¹

These planes of consciousness get activated in the being of the sādhanika. The reasoning thought-process ceases to be the sole means of functioning as he ascends in consciousness by his will, aspiration and help from above. Other and newer powers of Knowledge take birth in him—this is the real meaning of the birth of the Gods in man so often spoken of in the Veda.

1. Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga, Tome One*, p. 335.

Above the thought-mind open the levels of the Higher Mind. The Higher Mind

is a mind no longer of mingled light and obscurity or half-light, but a large clarity of the spirit. Its basic substance is a unitarian sense of being with a powerful multiple dynamization capable of the formation of a multitude of aspects of knowledge, ways of action, forms and significances of becoming, of all of which there is a spontaneous inherent knowledge ... its special character, its activity of consciousness are dominated by Thought; it is a luminous thought-mind, a mind of spirit-born conceptual knowledge.²

The action of this Higher Mind is allowed to replace that of the lower labouring mind of reason and regularized. It is then integrated with the rest of the being so that the whole of it—or more and more of it—is informed by this higher faculty. Thus there is ascent, descent, integration—a process that is repeated at each new level that is attained.

The next movement is a further ascent which is marked by the working of the Illumined Mind which is

a Mind no longer of higher Thought, but of spiritual light. Here the clarity of the spiritual intelligence, its tranquil day-light, gives place or subordinates itself to an intense lustre, a splendour and illumination of the spirit: a play of lightnings of spiritual truth and power breaks from above into the consciousness and adds to the calm and wide enlightenment and the vast descent of peace which characterize or accompany the action of the larger conceptual-spiritual principle, a fiery ardour of realization and a rapturous ecstasy of knowledge. ... The Illumined Mind does not work primarily by thought, but by vision; thought is here only a subordinate movement expressive of sight.³

Above the Illumined Mind is the Intuitive Mind. Intuition is a direct perception of truth based upon an inner identity. It is fourfold in its action: revelatory, truth-

seeing; inspirational, truth-hearing; sensory, truth-seizing by touch; discriminating, truth-discerning. It may be noted that it is this Intuition that is called in the Veda Sarama, the Hound of the Gods to discover the Truth. The others may be identified as Sarasvatī (Inspiration), Ilā (Revelation), Dakṣiṇa (Discriminating power of truth).

The play of intuition is in flashes, it is a ray from the truth, not the entire truth. It is liable to get mixed with the mental movement. There is a still higher faculty, called in this philosophy, the Overmind. Forming the highest reaches of the Mind, it has a cosmic range. It comprehends the multiplicity of creation but is always aware of an underlying Unity. When one realizes this overmental consciousness he has a spontaneous understanding of the justifying truth of all movements, all forms. He develops a consciousness that is universal. His mind is a part of the universal Mind, his life a current of the universal Life, his very body one in substance with the universal Matter.

This *universalization* of the being is the second major movement in this yoga, the first being *psychicization*.⁴

Supramentalization

The Overmind is the highest on the reaches of the Mind. But it is still the Mind, subject to the shadow of divisive Ignorance. It lays stress on the multiplicity and is not actively aware of the Unity when it fronts the Many. That is why it is compared to a lid—though a Golden Lid—that obscures the plenary sight of the Orb of the Sun of Truth. The Truth-Sun is the Gnosis, the Divine Mind which always proceeds on the basis of the One and organizes the Many as so many rays of the Splendour. That is the Vijñāna of the

². Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, vol. 2, chapter 26.

³. *ibid.*

⁴. See the first instalment of this article in *Prabuddha Bharata*, April, 1982.

Upaniṣad, the Ṛtam of the Veda, the Supermind of this philosophy.

To put it in other words, the supermind or the supramental is the creative poise of Sat-Cit-Ananda in which the Reality organizes itself, regulates its infinity in a supreme Truth-Will to manifest the verities it is self-moved to put out of its vast Being. In this truth-consciousness are to be found the resolutions of all problems of harmony, namely, the finite and the infinite, time and the timeless, the one and the many. The truth of the One is never lost here; it is the dominant note in a many-toned orchestra. There is, consequently, no division and therefore no ignorance, no error, no deflection from truth. Here lies the key for the manifestation of the Glory of Sat-Cit-Ananda without any veil of *māyā*, for the perfection of life in the image of God. To attain to this consciousness for life is the supreme aim of the Integral Yoga. The Upaniṣad speaks of this Gnosis as the Sun through the gates of which one passes never to return. But the Gates are part of the manifestation and can surely open into it in response to the call of Earth. The *sādhaka* of the supramental yoga aspires not only to realize the consciousness of the supramental truth on the summits of his self but also to invoke it into his earth-being, so that it can become an operative power in his life even as the Mind is.

The lid between the levels of the Overmind and the beginnings of the ranges of the Supermind is broken by an act of Grace in the manner of all climactic happenings in spiritual life, being precipitated by the Will of the Divine. It is beyond human effort to effect the transition. And when the supramental truth descends in its full power in the *sādhaka*, the last shades of ignorance fade away and all is knowledge, the last shadows of nescience recede and all is light; limitations imposed by division in consciousness break down and there is an integral unity—unity among his own

members and unity with all around. Man ceases to be human; he becomes divine.

No doubt it is a long process, an untiring effort of self-opening, reception, assimilation, adjustment and recasting of nature at every stage, at every level. In proportion as the surrender is complete, the work of this transformation is taken over by the supramental Śakti. This Power leaves no corner until, no impediment untackled; it insists on what Sri Aurobindo calls perfect perfection. Mental knowledge is replaced by a natural knowledge by identity. Intuition functions not only in the mind, but also in the heart and even in the body. The growing harmony in the being organized around the psychic makes it more and more impregnable to attacks of disease and illness. The physical consciousness in the body awakes to this incessant pressure from above and participates in the change. The Mother speaks of the steady action of the supramental consciousness on the physical cells of the body to educate them, coax and convert them to accept a new law for their functioning. At present they obey the law of birth, growth, decay and death. But it need not always be so. It is possible to get them to agree and accept the law of birth, growth and endless progression so that *death* ceases to be obligatory. The cells and the systems based upon them can be taught to constantly renew themselves, thus bringing the prospect of the deathless body nearer fruition. That will be possible only when the divine consciousness fully informs the tiniest cells in the body. The advent of the truth-consciousness in the body opens up this possibility of realizing the ancient vision of *jyotirmaya deha*, an illumined body, if not a body of light on earth.

Sri Aurobindo recognizes that it is not possible for an individual to get thus transformed and stay in that condition, unless his environment too shares in that change. Man does not live alone by himself. At every moment he is exposed to impacts from

everywhere and there is a natural tendency for dilution. Hence the dimension of collective effort in this yoga. There is a concerted attempt to get together like-minded seekers, sharing the same aspiration, the same discipline and way of life, so as to form a nucleus of a possible gnostic community where the New Consciousness can establish itself and function on a corporate basis. This community in turn can work as a centre and an agent for a radical change and Godward progress in the general humanity.

Throughout the long course of this sādhana, the guiding Mantra is always one: 'There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and the supreme Grace that answers'. (Sri Aurobindo)

The faith that sustains and justifies itself in the end is again the assurance of the Pathfinder :

The supramental change is a thing decreed and inevitable in the evolution of the earth-consciousness; for its upward ascent is not ended and mind is not its last summit. But that the change may arrive, take form and endure, there is needed the call from below with a will to recognize and not deny the Light when it comes, and there is needed the sanction of the Supreme from above. The power that mediates between the sanction and the call is the presence and power of the Divine Mother.* The Mother's power and not any human endeavour and tapasya can alone rend the lid and tear the covering and shape the vessel and bring down into this world of obscurity and falsehood and death and suffering, Truth and Light and Life divine and the immortal's Ananda.⁵

Conclusion

Speaking of his Yoga of Self-Perfection, Sri Aurobindo observes that this system

* In this Yoga the Divine Grace, the Yoga-Śakti, the Divine Power to whom one surrenders and entrusts oneself is conceived and experienced as the Divine Mother.

5. Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother*, 6.

starts with the method of the Vedanta to arrive at the aim of the Tantra. For in the Vedanta, the Soul, the Spirit is all important while in the Tantra it is the Śakti that takes the premier place. In the former, the Śakti, Nature, is ignored, in the latter the Soul, Puruṣa is subordinated. In this Yoga stress is laid on man as spirit in the mind rather than as spirit in the body and the yogic change starts from the soul outwards to nature culminating with the spiritualization of the powers of nature. The Śakti is taken up and harnessed by the Soul-centred being.

Secondly, the opening of the centres of consciousness here starts from above downwards instead of from below upwards. There is no set uniform method of awakening these centres, step by step; the entire being is kept open to the action of the Mahāśakti and those centres that are more ready or receptive open first and the movement extends thence.

In the Tantra, as in most other systems, the liberation aimed at is individual. Even when the Tantra posits *bhukti*, enjoyment, as part of *mukti*, liberation, it relates to the individual. In Sri Aurobindo's Yoga, individual realization is made the basis for the realization of the Divinity in the Cosmos and through it for a spontaneous unity with all beings. This triple realization leads to participation in the fulfilment of the divine aim in humanity.

This Yoga does not reject Nature, or withdraw from life in the world. It seeks to gain mastery over the powers of Nature and change their application. It accepts life in order to change its character. It recognizes that life as it is lived is out of focus, imperfect, false; it helps to find the true centre of life and from there alter the direction and nature of living. In other words, it seeks to spiritualize and divinize life.

It goes without saying that all elements in life are taken up with a view to investing them with fulfilling values; the claims

and aspirations of the mind, of the heart, of the vital (life dynamism) and of the physical body are given their legitimate recognition and a synthesis attempted around the truth of the soul. In this sense, its motto is *all life is yoga*.

It recognizes that life is imperfect, limited and frustrating because the powers that are active in nature are themselves limited, stunted, the light that guides the leading mind is obscure and the physical base itself is handicapped by inertia, *tamas* and inconscience. There is an insistent effort to become conscious in all the parts of the being and displace elements that are obscure by clarities of the spirit.

The movement of this Yoga is more wide and comprehensive—and therefore, perhaps, slow—than concentrated and speeding in one direction on one narrow path. It may be described more as a yoga of Nature than of Supernature. It is wholistic in character, not selective.

The Yoga has three major movements, each with its consequence for the world.

The first : finding the Individual Divine in oneself.

The second : uniting with the Universal Divine.

The third : ascending to and embodying the Transcendent Divine.

The first establishes a centre of Light and force for progress. The second promotes the assumption of the individual in the universal Consciousness and develops an identity of interests in place of division and conflict. The third invokes and releases in the world a Power of Truth, Love and Unity, undiluted and supreme, that is a harbinger of the Glory of God for the Earth.

It is a principle with Sri Aurobindo to maintain a continuity of consciousness. He conserves and assimilates all that the evolving consciousness in Nature has developed and puts it to the best use in building a meaningful future. Thus all that the past spiritual realizations have contributed to the progress of the human spirit enters into the spirit and application of the Integral Yoga, with a new dimension added in tune with the Time-Spirit of the Age. The truths of the Haṭha, Rāja, Jñāna, Bhakti, Karma, Kuṇḍaliṇi and other Tantra yogas enter into the scheme of this *Pūrṇa Yoga* at some stage or other, in one form or another.

Broad lines of practice are laid down, but each sādḥaka is left free to work out his own way. The sādḥana of each proceeds according to his readiness, his nature and his need.

The main aim of this yoga being change of consciousness and transformation of life, the practices are more psychological than physical, internal modifications and conversions more than external observances.

Both ascent and descent play their role as in the ancient Vedic Yoga or later Tantra Yoga. But here *descent* is more decisive. It is the descent of the Higher Consciousness that makes radical ascents possible and establishes new elements in the aspiring being. The Yoga is conceived and works in the spirit of Sri Aurobindo's call : 'Heaven we have possessed, but not the earth ; but the fullness of the Yoga is to make, in the formula of the Veda, "Heaven and Earth equal and one."'

(Concluded)

THE GOLDEN KEY

ANN MYREN

The golden key. What is the golden key? What does it open? The golden key opens the door to spiritual life; it opens our hearts to God. It is a precious key. There is nothing of value which is comparable on earth or in heaven to the golden key. Like all things of great value, it is hard won, but unlike worldly objects it is accessible to *all* because it is in our very nature. The golden key is renunciation, detachment. It is renunciation which opens the door to spiritual life and unlocks our hearts to God. Those of us who work, take care of families, and handle many world-related responsibilities, we who have not formally renounced, must take hold of the golden key.

Swami Vivekananda came to this free land, America, and poured out his heart to us and for us. As we study his lectures, we find the theme of renunciation stressed again and again in countless different ways. To whom did he speak about renunciation? To persons such as ourselves who participated in life in the world. He spoke to people whose life's blood was freedom and equality, values he held high. He loved the wonderful freedom of American women, and the liberating atmosphere which could make a humble, down-trodden immigrant hold up his head proudly after only a few weeks here. He knew that freedom and equality, so important in the Western tradition, could only reach true excellence and have genuine meaning and value for a society when they were understood to rest on Spirit. He saw that Americans must not only feel and be free and equal in our social life as a nation, but that we must weave into the social fabric the true knowledge that these values, freedom and equality, are derived from the eternal Truth. Man is free and equal by virtue of his true nature. Swamiji knew that

social values must come to be viewed as resting on the real nature of man, Spirit or Ātman, not on the circumstances of life. When we know, as a nation, that truth, we shall have true freedom and equality as envisioned by Swamiji.

Swami Vivekananda saw in America the possibility of forming a new civilization, one with material wealth and great spirituality, a nation which would have to learn to manage its wealth for the good of *all* mankind. Having this rich material life and tremendous material potential, how could a nation come to manage itself for the good of the world? Only through renunciation. So we are the pioneers of Swamiji's dream. And when we lose heart and deplore the excesses and violence of our present society, we must remember that we are, at the same time, struggling to grow as a nation in spirituality, and that ultimately we will become a nation of spiritual seekers. That was Swamiji's dream. To fulfil this dream, we must *all* possess the golden key, renunciation.

How do we find the golden key? It is accessible to all because it is in our very nature. We are Divine, the Infinite Spirit is our own true nature. That Spirit, or Ātman, shines in our minds, making us conscious beings. It is because of the Ātman that we are self-conscious beings and perceive the world. It is through the Ātman that perception takes place. According to knowers of Truth, we all have available to us the higher mind. This is the region of the mind that is very fine, very calm, and nearly infinite. It is very like that Ātman itself. Now this higher mind stands, as it were, above our ordinary, work-a-day mind, and from this higher mind there is some 'seepage' into the lower mind. This lower mind, for its part, would *naturally* like to

be unbound. That is why we want to fulfil our desires. We think in our deluded state of mind that fulfilling our desires will make us feel free. And in a certain lower sense, when we satisfy our desires, we do have a sense of fulfilment and freedom.

Now since the lower mind truly wants to be unbound, free, there must be a way whereby using this desire for freedom, we can take the lower mind, as it were, from its lower state to a higher state, or bring the higher mind into the lower mind. So, clearly it is indicated that the means to that blessed state of freedom or infinity which we desire is by contact with the highest mind.

How do we make this contact? By evoking our real nature. By declaring that we are neither body nor mind and by affirming that we are infinite, free, eternal beings. All of the affirmative ideas, Ātman, Spirit, God, Divinity, Brahman, correspond with Reality, and so when we affirm our real nature, we are affirming the Truth. When we say, 'I am not the body, nor the mind; I am pure Spirit,' we are using the very basis of our being, our own Divinity, to raise us to an unlimited perception of Divinity. When a note is struck on a piano, a stringed instrument in the next room will vibrate. When we affirm our Divinity, we strike the chord of Reality which is present in the higher mind. So this higher mind is our friend, and this lower mind can be our friend, too, if we use it correctly for the proper end. Swami Vivekananda assured us again and again that we can know the Truth by our own effort. This is why he said, quoting the *Īśa-Upaniṣad*, 'Whatever exists in this universe is to be covered with the Lord.'¹ Here is a practice which brings real results. By covering everything with God, we call out from within ourselves that real Being, God, and we make this objective world our own divine subjective experience.

Swami Vivekananda said in 'Practical Vedanta', 'Whatever is really in the universe is that Impersonal Being, and form and conception are given to it by our intellect. Whatever is real in this table is that Being, and the table-form and all other forms are given by our intellect.'² So when we experience the table, the world, and so forth, we are experiencing that Impersonal Being hidden by name and form. If we call out the Divinity by using our minds, then we shall in time experience that Divinity. We do not need to make a complicated exercise out of this, but just cover everything with the Lord; in other words give to our minds the 'God conception' of reality. In time, divine 'seepage' will take over, and we will begin to experience God, Ātman, or Brahman directly.

Swami Ashokananda said in his lecture 'My Philosophy and my Religion' of an experience he had which affirms the truth of the practice of 'covering everything with the Lord'. He had been doing this practice diligently, thinking that everything was Brahman, for some time. He said:

I remember I had a very unusual experience at that time. My college life was over, and I had become a school teacher for a short period. There was a cat and it had given birth to several kittens in our house. I remember one day I was alone and there was this mother cat and one of her kittens. I looked at the mother cat. I saw her face as luminous, luminous with divine light... I did not have to reason it out. My efforts had slowly succeeded in breaking the barrier.³

Another instance illustrative of the same practice occurred when a teacher was listening to a student who had come to talk. This

². *ibid*, p. 338.

³. Swami Ashokananda, *My Philosophy and My Religion* (San Francisco : 1970), p. 58. Swami Ashokananda was the editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* from 1927-1929 and head of the Vedanta Society of Northern California from 1931-1969.

¹. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1976), vol. 2, p. 146.

student was mentally very disturbed, but able to function in a public school. The talk went on and on, and it soon became apparent that the student could not talk coherently. The teacher felt it was her duty to listen, but comprehension was a rather hopeless task, so she fell to 'covering everything with the Lord' and suddenly a luminous light shone from the student's head. She was stunned, and she knew in a real way that everyone was indeed Divine.

You can see from these experiences that we *can* make headway in seeing everything and everyone as God. And that this practice of seeing everything as God is an act of renunciation, for when we do this we are renouncing the material world. We are using the golden key to open the door to spiritual life. We are renouncing our age-old sense perceptions of the world and insisting on seeing the Truth. When we try to find the Truth, it is called discrimination. But as we discriminate, we have to reject or renounce the material world. Renunciation and discrimination are two sides of the same coin, and to try to separate them is somewhat artificial. In spiritual life if we renounce, that is, practise detachment, it will lead to discrimination; and if we discriminate, seek the Truth, it will lead to renunciation.

Now, the golden key, as previously stated, is accessible to *all* because it is in our very nature. What is that nature? It is God, and God alone, or we can call it Ātman or Brahman. So we find that by nature we possess in the fullest measure renunciation, because Satcidānanda, our real nature, is by definition unattached, free from worldly desires. Renunciation has behind it this Reality. All of our values and actions, worldly or otherwise, have behind them this Reality. Love is based on the principle of bliss; honesty is based on the principle of Truth; service is based on the principle of unity. We want to practise renunciation, which is based on the principle of freedom,

and we find this principle is our very nature. So, when we take up the practice of renunciation, we are not taking up an alien practice; we are, in fact, calling out our own eternally free, unattached nature. We say, 'Well, very good, but I still have to struggle.' Yes, that is true. We must struggle to get back, as it were, to our own perfection. But remember, it is our perfection, our very own.

This discussion of renunciation reflects the Advaitin point of view. Sri Ramakrishna himself was a great Advaitin, although we may think of him otherwise when we read about him. His constant play and relationship with Kālī, his talk about devotion, his interest in worship, seem awfully dualistic. But he was trained in Advaita by the great monist, Tota Puri, and spent six months, no less, in nirvikalpa samādhi, the highest non-dual state of being. He said, 'This pure Ātman alone is our real nature.'⁴ But he assumed a devotional mood in order to keep his body intact so that he could teach and carry out his mission to bring spiritual power into the world to raise up mankind.

His chief disciple, Swami Vivekananda, was a great Advaitin, too. Swamiji started out his discipleship as a dualist, but was gradually led to the position of Advaita, until finally, after begging his Master, he was plunged into the non-dual state. And then, as we know, the treasure was locked up by Sri Ramakrishna until he finished his mission of teaching mankind, which was the work his master had given him.

It is from these experiences, the living reality, of these two great God-men, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, that we should take the Advaitin position about ourselves and the world. It is not that we must understand all the refinements of the philosophy, although it would be quite help-

4. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Translated by Swami Nikhilananda (New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, 1942), p. 582.

ful, but it is that the non-dual Reality is the reality of our very own Self as demonstrated by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. And it is that we are interested in practices, ways of getting to God. It comes down to the question of whether it is more effective to think of ourselves as a limited being, or as an unlimited being with infinite strength and capacity. We who have taken up spiritual practices have chosen to lead our lives defying nature, and going against the materialistic currents of our society. After all, the practice of renunciation is to go directly against our age-old tendencies, against our senses and desires. We need all the help we can get, and one sure source is the conviction that we are Infinite.

So we need to *practise* that conviction, to see everything as God. We know in our minds that this world of illusion is all mixed up with Reality. We need to focus on that Reality to give ourselves the strength and power to practise renunciation. When we conclude in a really deep way that the source of strength is in ourselves, we need to go to no other source; there is, in fact, no other source to go to. The forceful imperatives of Swami Vivekananda in *Inspired Talks* illustrate this practice of asserting the Ātman, Brahman, or God: 'Be free and know at once and for all that there is no chain on you.'⁵ 'Know that you are infinite then fear must die.'⁶ 'Stand on your own Self.'⁷ 'Learn to feel yourself in other bodies, to know that we are all one.'⁸ 'Be free. Death alone can never free us. Freedom must be attained by our own efforts during life...'⁹

These are the lines along which Swami Vivekananda wanted us to think of ourselves. These are the thoughts which make us fearless, and help us to practise renunci-

ation, particularly when the going gets tough. If we can think of ourselves as free, fearless, pure, infinite, we will find it easier to renounce, regardless of whether we are dualist or Advaitin, or, perhaps, Advaitin philosophically and dualist practically. The practice of renunciation, to repeat, stems from the principle of freedom. If we are by nature free, there can be no real attachment. Renunciation is in our very nature.

All this may seem very unsystematic. In one sense it is, but not so in another sense. It is unsystematic in the sense that it is not philosophy in an organized, systematic scheme. Our two greatest exponents of Advaita, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, did not seem to emphasize systematic philosophy as a method to help mankind realize God. They were realizers, practicers, teachers, examples. We who live so close to them in time can surely dare to follow their example. And we might note that Indian philosophy has consistently developed after great men of realization. The Upaniṣads are not philosophical systems. Buddha did not teach a philosophical system. Systemizers came later. Śaṅkara had his realization first and did his philosophizing second. We do not need to feel that it is mandated that we seek a consistent philosophy, or that if only we have a consistent philosophy, will we be able to understand the realities of Vedanta. We can, if we wish, bring to life philosophy by spiritual realization, enrich our philosophical understanding and satisfy the intellect. But it is not vital to have a systematic philosophy. What is absolutely vital, however, is making what starts as a concept, Ātman, come alive and become the reality of one's own being. That is important. And to do that we need systematic practice, meditation, discrimination and renunciation.

Is this Advaitin viewpoint incompatible with a devotional attitude? No, it is not. For that matter, the understanding and conviction that our own reality is the Ātman can

5. *The Complete Works* (1972), vol. 7, p. 4.

6. *ibid*, p. 7.

7. *ibid*, p. 87.

8. *ibid*, p. 91.

9. *ibid*, p. 101.

strengthen our devotion and help us in God realization. The Ātman, Satcidānanda, is full of bliss, and it is this bliss aspect of the Ātman that is manifested in devotion, both as the devotee's love for the Lord and the Lord's love for the devotee. This aspect of the Ātman, its blissful nature, can be viewed as being the principle of love, and this principle is in our very own being. So as devotees worshipping the Lord, in order to come closer to him, we can feel that we are, by our very own nature, full of devotion, that we are in no way lacking in devotion, and that we may pour out our hearts in love of the Lord. It is, after all, our very own being which is full of love. Of course, a devotee wants to enjoy God's love, too. So we feel that God loves us as Spirit, that we are Souls and that we exist in a spiritual relationship to him and that we want to lose ourselves in divine love. It is not that the Personal God is different from Ātman-Brahman, but the devotee chooses to worship the relative aspect of the Absolute.

Here again is the golden key, within our very grasp, within us. In the devotional mood, we find that renunciation is attachment to God, which means detachment from the world. As we grow in our love for God, knowing that we have this love in our eternal nature, our attraction to the world diminishes, and we are able to renounce more and more worldly attachments. As we renounce more and more, we are using the golden key to open our hearts to God.

As we grow in spirituality, we may feel that we want to serve the Lord out of devotion or mankind out of compassion. We may want to help the Vedanta work go on so that more persons can find a way to God realization. Or we may want to serve those great spiritual teachers who have come and continue to come to make us free. And in so serving, we help to perpetuate the ideals that will help to make others free. Perhaps we may want to cultivate an atti-

tude of service in order to feel the unity of mankind, and the unity of mankind with God. We are active by nature, and we need activity in the form of spiritual practices to help us overcome this delusion which we have come to accept about ourselves, that we are body and mind. Cultivating the attitude of service is very helpful, particularly if we see mankind as Ātman or Brahman or feel that the Lord is dwelling within everyone. This attitude of service springs directly from the Ātman and is based on the principle of unity which is ever-present in the infinite Ātman. By serving others we renounce our little self, the ego, and assert our divine nature and the divinity of those we serve. So, in doing selfless service, we are asserting our true nature. We are asserting the truth of renunciation, by giving up our attachment to our little self and the little selves of everyone else. By giving up attachment, we are using the golden key.

Thus far renunciation sounds very easy as presented here, by insisting that renunciation is a part of our very being. But we know from our own experience and the experience of others that it is no easy task to free ourselves from attachments. Our minds get so muddled and deluded by the sense world that attachment seems very natural and desirable. So let us consider some ideas which will help us understand renunciation better and bring the golden key within our reach.

When we take up spiritual life, we generally give up certain things which are basically, if not out-and-out, obstructions to spiritual life, somewhat inimical to the goal of spiritual life. Many of us understand renunciation this way and practise it at this level, which is good. It is a beginning. We try to give up our desires and attachments one by one as they appear to us as obstructions to spiritual goals. But then, if we still are part of the work-a-day world and have family responsibilities, this method more or less exhausts itself because there

are some things which our position in life simply will not allow us to give up. For example, we cannot give up our parents and leave them to struggle with the problems and difficulties of old age. Nor can we give up our children or mates. However, what we can renounce in such a situation is our relationships.

Relationships by definition are, in the sense world, made up of logical or natural associations. Family relationships are made up of the associations among *bodies* and *minds*. There are, after all, no relationships in Ātman or Brahman, which is our only basis of reality. We seek relationships because we see and feel differences. When we begin to experience unity and sameness in a spiritual sense, we will seek fewer and fewer relationships; in fact, we will feel that we are one with all persons, which is the truth. If we are more dualistic, then we will begin to feel reverence for all human beings as a natural result of our reverence for the Lord, the Supreme Being. How wonderful to live in a family in which the fundamental feeling or equality of family life is spiritual unity or reverence. It is that shift from the sense world to the world of Spirit that makes possible renunciation for a person living a family life.

In the outside world, as with the family situation, we should try to get rid of being bound by the idea of relationships. That may seem somewhat against the organization of the places in which we work, for generally tasks and responsibilities are distributed in a hierarchy. Here, we can accept our responsibilities but treat all persons, regardless of position, from the very lowest to the very highest, as the Ātman or as Divine. It is remarkable how this attitude will smooth our relationships and add a kind of wonderful reasonableness to all of our personal interactions. We renounce what our senses tell us, this person is high, that person is low, and treat them all with

same-sightedness which is based on the Truth of their own being.

Because we live in a very competitive society, we have been trained to aspire to higher and higher positions. We may be plagued by large and small fears in the world of work. Fear that we will not succeed; fear of powerful persons; fear of persons who can hurt us; fear of losing our jobs; fear that someone will take what is ours. Oftentimes at work there can be an acrimonious atmosphere, and we feel that this disharmony will either harm us or upset our minds, or that we will somehow get entangled in an unpleasant situation and come out of it feeling irritated, ruffled and generally mentally upset. Yes, working can be a real battleground, where all of our strength is tested and, most importantly, where our courage to be what we are—fearless beings, is constantly challenged. How can we survive amid disharmony? By renouncing the disharmony, the material world, giving up what our senses tell us and asserting what we know to be true: that there is one—and only one—Being. Where there is only one, that infinite One, there can be no fear. Fear depends on relationship. The necessary condition for fear is the recognition of the *other*, or two. To quote Swami Vivekananda, 'Why are people so afraid? The answer is they have made themselves helpless and dependent on others.'¹⁰ So, if we can remove the idea of relationship, by asserting our true nature, and if we can see all others as Divine, we will lose our fears and anxieties, and add a positive, calming power to our workplaces, what to speak of our minds. Each time we assert our true being and make ourselves detached from the sense world, we are using the golden key.

This need to undo relationships is also true when we think about ourselves. What do we think we are? We think, all too

¹⁰. *The Complete Works* (1977), vol. 8, p. 131.

often, that we are made up of a mind, a body and a Soul. Once again we view ourselves as the product of a relationship. Is this true? If we stand on the sure ground of Truth, then we know that we must give up these small ideas of ourselves and insist on being the Ātman or Spirit. If we do not do this, as we begin to go through the trials and tribulations of aging and the contemplation of death, we shall surely see the wisdom of doing it. We have made a mistake in our identity and we must adopt our true identity: that we are the Ātman, pure Spirit, beyond decay and death, eternally free. We must *feel* that we are eternally free as this is the basis of detachment or renunciation.

If we can assert our real nature, and renounce our little self when we are plagued by worry and anxiety, when we are suffering or when our mind is disturbed, we can make real headway and get detached from our negative feelings. If we do not identify ourselves with negative feelings, we find our mind returns to a calm state more quickly. Discrimination, when in the fires of emotion, tempers the mind, making us stronger and more able to keep a constant recollection of our true nature, the Ātman, the Self. We can use our suffering as a positive force to help us become more detached, renounced.

Discrimination always sounds as if it were an Advaitin practice, but it belongs to dualists as well. Here, discrimination takes the form of understanding the true Self, Spirit, in relation to God, as a devotee or as God's child, completely dependent on Him. These practices use the relationship between God and the individual in a positive way, whereby attachment to God will lead to detachment from the sense world.

We start our renunciation by giving up various activities, attitudes, and relationships, but this is not the only way we can view renunciation. We might take up the practice of renunciation as prescribed in *Rāja*

Yoga. Swami Vivekananda translated a very important verse on renunciation as follows:

That effect which comes to those who have given up their thirst after objects, either seen or heard, and which wills to control the objects is non-attachment.¹¹

Swamiji made the following commentary on the verse:

The two motive powers of our actions are (1) what we see ourselves, (2) the experience of others. These two forces throw the mind, the lake, into various waves. Renunciation is the power of battling against these forces and holding the mind in check. Their renunciation is what we want.¹²

Clearly, we can practise real renunciation while being active in the world. Here, Swamiji states the psychology of renunciation, not to let the mind form waves because of experience. When the mind becomes very calm, we have that experience of Divinity which we are trying for. So we see that renunciation is really a mental struggle. With the power of the mind, we try to hold the mind in check. He further said, 'To deny them (temptations), and not to allow the mind to come to wave form with regard to them, is renunciation.'¹³

We can all practise tremendous renunciation, regardless of our position in life. We have so much idle time, when our minds are not occupied by tasks at hand that we can practise this mental control of trying not to let the mind break into waves. How do we do this? By evoking the power, strength, and calmness of the higher mind, that mind which responds to our assertions of our own true nature. Or, if we are devotees, we turn our attention toward that higher mind by evoking the power of our devotion. Everytime we cover everything

11. *The Complete Works* (1977), vol. 1, p. 208-209.

12. *ibid*, p. 209.

13. *ibid*, p. 209.

with God, everytime we think of ourselves as Divine, everytime we struggle to see Divinity in the actions, attitudes and motives of others, everytime we feel devotion to the Lord, we are practising renunciation. We who work in the world or take care of families must give our minds to that work. That is all right, if we do our work with full concentration. When we concentrate, we are controlling the waves, letting only the correct waves rise. It is the struggle with the mind that gives us mental strength which is called renunciation. as Swamiji said. He concludes his commentary with the wonderful sentence, 'Vairagya (renunciation) is the only way to freedom.'¹⁴

We are challenged by this world of illu-

14. *ibid.*, p. 209.

sion which has created a delusion in our minds. We must take up this challenge and struggle against the forces of nature, using our own conviction that Divinity or Truth is the basis of all experience. So, whether we want the freedom of the Ātman or the freedom of Divine love, renunciation is the primary practice. It is the golden key which opens the door to spiritual life and our hearts to God.

We have the golden key within our very nature, within the absolutely free Ātman, our very Self. We need to insist again and again, to affirm again and again, this freedom of the Ātman so that we can come to feel an urgent desire, a passion for renunciation, detachment. When we come to be propelled by this desire, then the golden key is within our grasp. We must take hold of it. Use it. Open our hearts to God.

PATTERNS OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN PRAVRTTI AND NIVRTTI IN EASTERN SPIRITUALITY

PROF. ARVIND SHARMA

Meaning of the terms

Before the patterns of reconciliation between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* in Eastern Spirituality can be discussed, the meaning of these terms must be made clear. The words have been used in several senses. For instance, Abhinavagupta, in his commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, at one point takes *pravṛtti* to mean the 'creation' of the universe and *nivṛtti* to mean its dissolution.¹ That is to say, he understands these terms on a cosmic scale. It is not our intention to use the words in this sense. Then sometimes the word *pravṛtti* is used to indicate the engagement of the mind in the world

of sense-objects and *nivṛtti* to indicate the opposite—namely, its withdrawal therefrom. That is to say, the words are understood as technical terms in the psychology of Yoga.² It is not our intention to use the words in this sense either. Then sometimes the words *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* are used in the sense of what should or should not be done, as in *Bhagavad-gītā*, 16.7.³ That is to say, the words are understood in a moral sense. It is not our intention to use the words in this sense either. In what sense, then, it may be asked, do we propose to use these words?

2. See Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), pp. 38, 252.

3. Cf. Franklin Edgerton, *The Bhagavad-gītā* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 76, 101.

1. Abhinavagupta on *Bhagavad-gītā*, 16.7, 8.

We propose to use these words in the sense in which they are used by Śaṅkara in his introduction to the *Bhagavad-gītā* when he speaks of the twofold Vedic Dharma and remarks :

The Lord created the universe, and wishing to secure order therein He first created the Prajāpatis (Lords of creatures) such as Marīci and caused them to adopt Pravṛtti-Dharma, the Religion of Works. He then created others such as Sanaka and Sanandana and caused them to adopt Nivṛtti-Dharma, the Religion of Renunciation, characterized by knowledge and indifference to worldly objects. It is the twofold Vedic Religion of Works and Renunciation which maintains order in the universe.⁴

Thus by *pravṛtti* we mean active life, taking an active part in worldly affairs and by *nivṛtti* we mean dissociation from worldly affairs and a life of renunciation and contemplation. The roots of this distinction can be traced back even into the *Rg-Veda*.⁵ Dīrghatamas seems to have developed the view therein that 'The world as a whole is guided on towards a path of progress by two principles—active and passive, compared to two birds resting on the same world tree. One of them eats fruits, while the other does not eat, but silently reflects only.'⁶

The problem in other cultures

The dichotomy between these two modes of life, one may observe, is more keenly felt in Eastern than in Western spirituality. In Judaism, for example, the attitude towards worldly affairs is very positive. It has been observed,

In Hinduism and Theravāda Buddhism the basic outlook is optimistic in spite of the material world rather than because of it. How different the first chapter of the Genesis, which opens, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth' and builds from there to its climax in which 'God say everything that he had made, and behold, it was *very good*'. Let the reader dwell for a moment on the wonderful little word 'very'. It gives a lilt to the entire religion.⁷

Thus the Jews have high opinion of marriage and prosperity. 'Archbishop Temple used to say that Judaism and its descendant, Christianity, are the most materialistic religions in the world.'⁸ According to Huston Smith, 'Islam should probably be added to the list.'⁹ There is the well-known *hadith* that when the Prophet saw a group of Christian monks in the desert he said in effect that this is 'not 'our way'.¹⁰

It is actually in Christianity that traces of a conflict between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* can be detected. The Hebrews were critical of asceticism and criticized Jesus for being single.¹¹ In Protestantism, however, the clergy are allowed to marry and their main duties are pastoral rather than sacramental. Besides, they are fewer in number. 'Just as all men wear shoes, yet a few shoemakers suffice to supply the needs of a town, so the religious needs of men are cared for by a few priests.' But Roman Catholicism in its contrastive sacraments of holy matrimony and holy orders supplies the two horns of the classic spiritual dilemma: which world does a man choose? Without undue confidence in the cross-cultural applicability of the two terms *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*, one

4. A. Mahadeva Sastri, translation, *The Bhagavad-gītā with the commentary of Sri Śaṅkarācārya* (Madras: V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu & Sons, 1961), p. 2.

5. *Rg-Veda* 1.164.20. *Yāska, Nirukta*, 14.30.

6. Benimadhab Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhist Indian Philosophy* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1921), p. 30.

7. Huston Smith, *The Religions of Man* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 261.

8. *ibid.*

9. *ibid.*

10. See John B. Noss, *Man's Religion* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967), p. 754 footnote; also see A. J. Arberry, *Sufism* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1972), pp. 84-85.

11. See *Collier's Encyclopaedia*, vol. 11 (New York: P. F. Collier & Sons, 1953), pp. 466-467.

might say that holy matrimony in a sense stood for the former and holy orders for the latter.

In Western spirituality, then, the need for a reconciliation by and large between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* does not arise (as in Judaism, Islam and Protestantism) or when it does arise (as in Roman Catholicism) the two are not reconciled but rather kept apart and a choice offered between one or the other.

In Buddhism

In Eastern spirituality such a choice was offered very sharply in early Buddhism¹² and although the edge of the dilemma may have been blunted in some form of Mahāyāna Buddhism,¹³ the contrast, if not the conflict, between the two persists. It is the pattern of the resolution of this conflict to which we now turn.

Theoretically one can leave the Buddhist order at any time but very few do. It seems, however, that those who could not or would not entirely forsake the world and thus resolve the conflict for good as the full-fledged monks did, did evolve a pattern of reconciliation. This pattern may go as far back in time to king Aśoka of the third century B.C. who did so much to propagate Buddhism. He is believed to have spent some time with the Sangha but historians are still uncertain about the real significance of the term with which he refers to it—*saṅgha upete*.¹⁴ The idea seems to have been that he became a temporary member of the Order, though we can't be sure. A

similar pattern for reconciling *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*, however, has become institutionalized in Burmese Buddhism. 'The *shinbyu* (initiation) ceremony in Burma . . . when the young Buddhist comes of age and leaves home to live for a time in the monastery, is gathered round the story of Buddha's great renunciation. It may begin with a procession as the young novice rides through the village, attired in princely costume. He may be mounted on a white pony, for does not the Great Story tell us how the Prince Siddhārtha thus left the palace on the day of renunciation. . . .'¹⁵ The point, however, is that the young man then returns to normal life after a short stay in the monastery.¹⁶

The conflict in Roman Catholicism between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* was resolved on an either/or basis. In Burmese Buddhism it was resolved on a now/then basis. In classical Hinduism these two features seem to combine. That is to say, the system of the four *āśramas* provides for *pravṛtti* in the first half of life and *nivṛtti* in the latter half.¹⁷ So as a young man you don't have to face the conflict now; you may retire from active engagement in worldly affairs when you are past a certain age. But once the age has come, it has a finality about it and you cannot come back as in the Burmese case (though there is the legendary case of a king who renounced and resumed worldly life seven times). In other words, the conflict between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* is resolved by not regarding them as simultaneous courses of action but rather as successive

12. See Edward Conze, *Buddhism, Its Essence and Development* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), p. 53.

13. Edward Conze, 'Buddhism: The Mahāyāna', in R. C. Zaehner, ed., *The Concise Encyclopedia of Living Faiths* (London: Hutchinson, 1971), p. 293 ff.

14. See R. C. Majumdar, ed., *The Age of Imperial Unity* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1953), pp. 75-76.

15. Robert Lawson Slater, *World Religions and World Community* (Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 103-104.

16. In China, Buddhism came to represent *nivṛtti* and Confucianism *pravṛtti*, see Kenneth Ch'en, *Buddhism in China* (Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 204.

17. For an interesting iconographic implication of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* see Milton Singer, ed., *Krishna: Myths, Rites, and Attitudes* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1966), p. 147.

stages in a man's life. It is true that later on, perhaps under the influence of the Buddhist example, one was permitted to jump the sequence. The *Jābāla Upaniṣad* declares that the world may be renounced the very day one feels detached from it.¹⁸ One must, however, guard against 'pre-mature revulsion'.

Reconciliation in the Gītā

In this context the *Bhagavad-gītā* presents us with an extremely interesting situation. Hinduism is sometimes referred to as *varṇāśrama dharma* because of its commitment to the institution of the four *varṇas* and *āśramas*. But while the *Bhagavad-gītā* often refers to the system of the four *varṇas*, it is curiously lacking in direct references to the *āśrama* system, even though the preference for a life of begging in contrast to fighting which Arjuna expresses in his moments of dejection early in the second chapter do seem to refer to the institution of *sannyāsa*, the last of the four stages.¹⁹

It is probably not unfair to suggest that the *Bhagavad-gītā* is struggling to achieve a new pattern of reconciliation between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*. The main basis on which the *Gītā* seems to attempt this reconciliation is that *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* are not states of external environmental involvement or detachment but internal mental states of attachment or detachment. It works out a 'synthesis of *nivṛtti* (cessation from work) and *pravṛtti* (tending to work)'.²⁰ Arjuna had begun by arguing in favour of *nivṛtti* against *pravṛtti*—in this case represented by fighting but

the *Gītā* does not advocate the objective *nivṛtti* or cessation of work; its whole aim is to effect subjective *nivṛtti*, or detachment from desires. It would not allow anyone to desist from his prescribed objective duties; but, whatever might be the nature of these duties, since they are performed without any motive of gain, pleasure or self-interest, they would be absolutely without fruit for the performer, who, in his perfect equanimity of mind, would transcend all his actions and their effects.²¹

Reconciliation in Shinto

Shinto of Japan provides us with yet another pattern of reconciliation between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*. To see its full force one needs to go back to the position common in Western spirituality that matter is not evil. Shinto also does not accept the dichotomy of matter as evil and spirit as good. The *kami* and its body—*kamishintai mitama-shiro* or its visible representation are as efficacious and sacred as the spirit itself.²² The Japanese pattern of reconciliation is epitomized by the fact that most Japanese get married with Shinto rites and are buried with Buddhist rites. In other words, *pravṛtti* in this life, *nivṛtti* in the life to come!

Conclusion

The various patterns of reconciliation between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* in Eastern spirituality may now be summarized:

- (1) either *pravṛtti* or *nivṛtti*: the classic case of married life versus monkhood;
- (2) alternation of *pravṛtti* or *nivṛtti*: the classic case of Burmese pre-marital *nivṛtti*;
- (3) *nivṛtti* after *pravṛtti*: the *āśrama* system of classical Hinduism;

18. *Yadahareva virajet tadahareva pravrajat, Jābāla Upaniṣad* 4.

19. Also see *Bhagavad-gītā*, 6.1.

20. Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 1952), p. 509; also see T. M. P. Mahadevan, *Outlines of Hinduism* (Bombay: Chetana Ltd., 1971), p. 86.

21. Surendranath Dasgupta, *op. cit.*, pp. 507-8.

22. See Masaharu Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1963), p. 42; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 20 (Chicago: William Benton, 1968), p. 395; etc.

(4) *nivṛtti* in *pravṛtti*: the resolution of the situation according to the *Gītā*;²³

(5) post-mortem *nivṛtti*, after *pravṛtti* in this life: the Japanese approach

23. We may also include or add here the case of *pravṛtti* after *nivṛtti*. As T. S. Venkateswaran has remarked, 'We can use several images to express the *pravṛtti* or involvement that follows *nivṛtti* or withdrawal. This return characterizes the activities of many *jīvanmuktas*, persons who are liberated and have had *mokṣa* experience and

All these cases may be contrasted with the case of the absence of this dichotomy between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* in the Western religious tradition in general.

yet continue to live and serve society' (Milton Singer, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 151). The resemblance of this pattern to that of 'withdrawal and return' in respect to religious figures identified by Arnold J. Toynbee (*A Study of History*, vol. 3 [Oxford University Press, 1962], pp. 248-263) is hard to overlook.

RŪPA GOSVĀMIN : HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT

PROF. RANJIT KUMAR ACHARJEE

Among the six Gosvāmins of Vṛndāvana, the great teachers who laid the doctrinal foundation of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin occupies a unique position.¹ Rūpa though essentially a passionate devotee well-known for his austere and saintly character, possessed a trained scholastic mind which enabled him to author some learned authoritative texts, besides some books of literary merit. These sacred religious texts prepared the doctrinal foundation of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism especially its Bhakti-tattva. They have remained a source of constant inspiration and guidance to all the subsequent writers and faithful followers of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism. With superb excellence and devotional fervour, he undertook a philosophical analysis of Bhakti as *rasa* which formed the theoretical basis of a new school of Bhakti and a new school of philosophy known as the Acintya-bhedābheda.

Life of Rūpa Gosvāmin

Much authentic information regarding the

exact date and other details of the life of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin is not available. According to an account given in the Bengali encyclopaedia *Viśvakośa*, Rūpa was born in 1411 Śaka (1489 A.D.) in a Karnāṭaka Brahmin family.² But this date does not tally with the dates of publication of his various works as mentioned by many scholars. His ancestors had migrated at about the end of the 14th century and settled down permanently in Bengal. Jīva Gosvāmin, the most outstanding Vaiṣṇava metaphysician and nephew of Sanātana and Rūpa, gives us the genealogy of the family along with the list of the principal works of both Sanātana and Rūpa, wherefrom we learn that their ancestors belonged to Karnāṭaka in south India. As regards his academic attainments, it is gathered that after completing his studies in grammar, Rūpa was sent by his grandfather, Mukunda-deva (his father Kumāradeva had died when Rūpa was a child) to Ratnākar Vidyāvācaspati, brother of Vāsudeva Sārva-bhauma at Navadvīpa for acquiring pro-

1. The six great Vṛndavana Gosvāmins are : Rūpa, Sanātana, Jīva, Gopāla Bhatta, Raghunātha Bhatta and Raghunātha Dāsa.

2. *Viśvakośa*—an encyclopaedia in Bengali, edited by Nagendra Nath Basu (Calcutta: 1318 B.S.), vol. 16, p. 692.

iciency in śāstric knowledge. The profound scholarship shown by him in his later Brindavan days bears eloquent testimony that his training under Vidyāvācaspati was a fruitful one. From their grandfather, who was a high official in the Muslim court of Gauḍa (North Bengal), both Sanātana and Rūpa learned Arabic and Persian languages and became very proficient in both these languages.³ At a comparatively early age, both of them entered the service of Sultan Hussain Sāha, the ruler of Gauḍa. By dint of his hard labour, skill and sagacity, Rūpa came to occupy a very high position in the revenue department of the Sultan.

His professional requirements forced him, so it said, to adopt the Muhammadan name or title Dabir Khās. While performing their official duties, both Sanātana and Rūpa very often imitated Muslim manners and frequently used Arabic and Persian languages in their conversation. Obviously this gave the impression that both of them had embraced Islamic faith. Some eminent scholars such as Dr. S. N. Dasgupta and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan are of opinion that Rūpa along with his elder brother Sanātana adopted the Islamic faith.⁴ Dr. S. Radhakrishnan clearly states that 'they were renegade converts to Islam and outcasts from the Hindu society.'⁵ Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj in his famous book *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* dealing with the life, luminous personality and devotional emotionalism of Śrī Caitanya, puts in the mouth of Sanātana certain utterances which lend support to the fairly widespread belief that both Sanātana and Rūpa were Muslim converts. But in *Bhakti-*

ratnākara, we are told that even before their meeting with Śrī Caitanya, both of them used to study *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* devotedly and used to arrange the performance of many festivals connected with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is also said that his famous work *Padyāvalī*, a Sanskrit anthology relating to *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* was compiled during his service under the Muslim ruler of Gauḍa.⁶ Dr. S. K. De maintains that they 'possessed considerable śāstric knowledge before they met Caitanya' and 'the stupendous learning, as well as the Vaisnava disposition of the two brothers, which undoubtedly prompted Caitanya to select them as the apologists of his faith, could not have been acquired in a day; and they point to the retention of their ancestral faith from the very beginning.'⁷ He further observes 'They kept themselves in touch with the Vaiṣṇavas of Navadvīpa, and had from the beginning an obviously Vaiṣṇava disposition. Rūpa's *Dāna-Keli-Kaumudī*, apparently composed in 1495 A.D. before he met Caitanya, as well as two early *Dūta-Kavyās* bear testimony not only to their retention of ancestral faith but also their early interest in Kṛṣṇa-līlā.'⁸

Dr. S. K. De is of firm opinion that Sanātana and Rūpa did not embrace Islam and they retained their original Hindu faith all along. They probably considered themselves impure on account of their intimate association with and service under the Muslim ruler. It is, however, well-known that during their visits to Puri for having the pious company of Śrī Caitanya, they invariably shared the same hut occupied by Haridāsa who was originally a Muslim, and never entered the temple of Lord Jagan-

3. Sankar Nath Roy, *Bhārater Sādhak* (Bengali), (Calcutta : Karuna Prakashni, 1382 B.S.) vol. 11, p. 73.

4. Dr. S. N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1961), vol. 4, p. 394.

5. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy* (London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1958), vol. 2, p. 761.

6. S. B. Basu, *Bhakta-Carita-mālā* (Bengali), (Calcutta : Indian Publishing House, 1918), p. 137.

7. S. K. De, *Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal* (Calcutta : Firma KLM, 1961), p. 98, footnote.

8. *ibid.*, p. 148.

nātha or the room where Śrī Caitanya lived along with his intimate followers and disciples belonging to higher Hindu castes. It is said that Śrī Caitanya used to visit Haridāsa's hut regularly in the morning and supplied them the *prasāda* of Lord Jagannātha. Had they retained their original faith, as has been claimed by Dr. S. K. De, they should not have refrained from visiting at least the temple of the Lord Jagannātha which Śrī Caitanya frequented along with his other disciples. These events appear somewhat anomalous, and Dr. S. K. De's contention regarding their supposed impurity due to their close contact with the *mlecchas* does not completely clear the cloud of confusion. There is, however, no direct and reliable evidence to prove their straight conversion to Islam. Notwithstanding all this, it was their innate Vaiṣṇava inclination, their great learning and piety which led Śrī Caitanya to select them for the difficult task of writing authoritative texts of the sect, and it is now well-known how they performed this difficult task with selfless devotion and great distinction.

The inner urge for leading a life wholly devoted to loving Kṛṣṇa made Rūpa dissatisfied with the power and position he enjoyed as a high official of the Sultan of Gauḍa. By this time, Śrī Caitanya had appeared in Bengal as a new Messiah. He was hailed as an Avatār and his religion of love created great upheavals in the social and religious life of Bengal. This Neo-Vaiṣṇavism became a popular mass-movement. Rūpa, who was highly inclined to the path of devotion found in Śrī Caitanya's religion of love an ethereal balm for his tormented heart. Rūpa had seen Śrī Caitanya at Rāmakeli and was deeply impressed by his luminous personality and devotional ecstasy. He decided to renounce worldly life and lead the life of a recluse according to the Vaiṣṇava ideal. After settling major domestic problems he left home secretly, probably at the age of 27,

along with his younger brother Anupama (alias Vallabha)⁹ and met Śrī Caitanya at Allahabad on the latter's way back from Brindavan. Rūpa enjoyed the pious company of Śrī Caitanya for ten days and, according to the description given in *Śrī Caitanya Candrodāya* of Karnaṇapura and *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāj, Śrī Caitanya imparted to him necessary instructions on Kṛṣṇa-bhakti—its types, stages, qualities and means, especially Kāntābhāva (the attitude of a consort) of which Rāi Rāmānanda was the chief exponent. It is also believed that Śrī Caitanya transmitted his own spiritual powers into Rūpa which brought about a radical transformation in the latter's personality. Śrī Caitanya had earlier given him a new name Rūpa, and it is by this name that he is now known. Rūpa wanted to accompany Śrī Caitanya to Benares, but he was directed to proceed to Brindavan. After staying at Brindavan for some days, Rūpa left for Bengal on his way to Puri with his younger brother Anupama who unfortunately died on the way. In Bengal, he settled some domestic problems and then set out for Puri to meet Śrī Caitanya. Rūpa stayed there for about ten months utilizing this period in composing two dramas entitled *Vidagdha-mādhava* (about Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvana līlā) and *Lalita-mādhava* (about Dwārakā līlā) under the inspiration of Śrī Caitanya, apart from pursuing other spiritual practices.

Thereafter Rūpa was instructed by Śrī Caitanya to move to Brindavan and to make it the academic as well as religious centre of the new faith and also to produce authoritative texts for the sect. Rūpa settled at Brindavan till his death, 'carrying on with selfless devotion the laborious work which was entrusted to him by Śrī Caitanya himself.' Probably the end came in 1480 Śaka (1558 A.D.).¹⁰

9. *Viśvakōṣa*, p. 692.

10. *ibid.*

Principal works and contribution

Rūpa Gosvāmin was an outstanding Vaiṣṇava scholar having profound śāstric knowledge. He was a man of great literary capacity and a poet par excellence. He authored some important works on Vaiṣṇava Bhakti-śāstra and theology, besides composing several dramas and poems. Jīva Gosvāmin at the close of *Laghu-toṣaṇi*, an abridgment of Sanātana's commentary on the *Bhāgavatam*, gives a fairly exhaustive list of the principal works of both Sanātana and Rūpa. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja also gives a general list of Sanātana's and Rūpa's works which, though not exhaustive, substantially agrees with the one given by Jīva. Rūpa is said to have authored and compiled many Sanskrit works of great value and significance. Some of his principal works are *Harṇsu-dūta*, *Uddhava-saṁdeśa* (both kāvyas); *Dāna-keli-kaumudī* (Bhamikā), *Vidagdha-mādhava* and *Lalitā-mādhava* (both dramas), *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Ujvala-nīlamanī* (Bhakti-rasa-śāstras) *Nāṭaka-candrikā* (Dramaturgy) and *Samkṣepa-Bhāgavatāmṛta* (theology). Rūpa Gosvāmin is also the compiler of a Sanskrit anthological work called *Padyāvalī* wherein he has 'arranged the verses in different sections according to the stages of the erotic career of Kṛṣṇa, and the whole arrangement conforms generally to the rhetorical classification of the Vaiṣṇava Rasaśāstra.'¹¹ Dr. S. N. Dasgupta has attributed authorship of '*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*' to Sanātana Gosvāmin¹², and according to *Viśva-koṣa* the said work had been co-authored by Sanātana and Rūpa.¹³ We do not, however, find any tangible reason to doubt the authenticity of Jīva Gosvāmin's list. Never-

theless, it seems highly probable that Rūpa might have taken the help of Sanātana in writing this magnificent work.

Rūpa's main contribution to Bengal Vaiṣṇavism is his exposition of the theory of *rasa* in his principal Sanskrit works *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Ujvala-nīlamanī*. He thoroughly expounded the theory of Vaiṣṇava Bhakti, its psychology, and rhetoric and sought to establish Bhakti as the fifth Puruṣārtha which has become a distinctive feature of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism. The importance of Rūpa's exposition of Bhakti becomes evident from the fact that Jīva Gosvāmin has devoted a considerable part of *Prīti-sandarbhā* to the subject of Bhakti as a *rasa*. In *Bhakti Sandarbha* also he occasionally refers to the topic of Bhakti as a *rasa*. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's formulation of Bhakti in his *Caitanya caritāmṛta* (madhya-līlā) is virtually a summary of Rūpa's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Ujvala-nīlamanī*. It has therefore been rightly observed by Dr. S. K. De that "The credit for first systematizing its (Bengal Vaiṣṇavism) supreme religious emotion of Bhakti belongs to Rūpa Gosvāmin."¹⁴ For an appreciation of Vaiṣṇava Bhakti as expounded by Rūpa Gosvāmin it is necessary to discuss some of the important root-ideas delineated in his two principal works alluded to above.

Rūpa's conception of Bhakti

Rūpa's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* ('The Sea of the Nectar of Devotional Sentiment') is a massive work which discusses in detail the emotional aspect of Vaiṣṇava Bhakti, its ramifications and significance. The scheme is elaborate as well as complicated and the approach is both literary and religious. Rūpa displays rare analytical acumen in expounding the deep and ineffable devotional sentiment of Bhakti. The first part of the

11. Dr. S. C. Mukherjee, *A Study of Vaiṣṇavism in Ancient and Medieval Bengal* (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1966), p. 179.

12. *A History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 4, p. 394.

13. *Viśva-koṣa*, p. 692.

14. *Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith*, p. 166.

treatise gives an analysis of the different types of 'Bhakti. It opens with a distinction between Sāmānya-bhakti (ordinary religious devotion) and the Uttamā-bhakti (supreme religious devotion). His definition of Uttamā Bhakti is famous : 'Uttamā Bhakti is the harmonious and continuous loving contemplation of Kṛṣṇa without being motivated by any desire for personal gain and also unconditioned by Jñāna and Karma.'¹⁵ In other words, supreme Bhakti, according to Rūpa, is unconditioned and unimpeded love for Kṛṣṇa, which is untainted by any personal desire. Here personal desire includes not only the desire for worldly pleasure (*bhoga*) but also the desire for liberation (*mokṣa*). Rūpa's exposition comes very close to the description of Bhakti as laid down in the *Gopālapūrvatāpini-Upaniṣad*, where Bhakti has been described as the adoring service of the Supreme Lord and it implies centring of the mind on Him expecting no other gain here or hereafter. Rūpa holds that Karma itself is not an *anga* or indispensable means of Bhakti nor is Jñāna. Karma, by which is meant the performance of caste-duties and Vedic ritualistic actions and other duties as enjoined by the orthodox Smṛtis cannot be considered a necessary step towards the attainment of Bhakti. Of course, Bhakti-Karmas done as devotional practices meant for the loving adoration of the Lord form a part of Bhakti itself and therefore should be ardently pursued. Jñāna or knowledge which seeks the absolute identity of Jīva with Brahman, according to Rūpa, is hardly conducive to Bhakti. In other words, Bhakti itself is self-sufficient and all-sufficient for the highest Good of man. But Bhakti should not be confused with mere emotional excitement or eroticism or sentimentalism.

It is a serene and sublime state of immense spiritual love for God. It is transcendental experience of bliss. And the highest goal of life has been interpreted as the everlasting enjoyment of this supreme blissful love to Kṛṣṇa.

The expression *ānukulyena* included in the above aphorism is very significant. Jīva Gosvāmin explains that the word implies that loving devotion 'should be of such as is agreeable to Kṛṣṇa and should not be perverse or contrary.' Again, the *anusīlana* of Kṛṣṇa may be physical, such as reverential prostration to Kṛṣṇa or his image in the place of worship; verbal, such as, chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy name and glories (*nāma-kīrtana*), etc.; mental such as, remembering Him (*smaraṇam*), devotedness (*niṣṭhā*), relish (*ruci*), attachment (*āsakti*), emotion (*bhāva*) and love (*prema*).

The name of Kṛṣṇa included in the above definition has a specific and important connotation. Following the declaration of the *Bhāgavatam* that 'Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord Himself',¹⁶ the Bengal Vaiṣṇava school regards Kṛṣṇa as the highest Reality, and not as an Avatāra. The highest Reality is, not the attributeless impersonal Absolute, but the supreme Personal Godhead endowed with auspicious attributes and powers, and is called the Bhagavat.

Rūpa also gives a unique exposition of Bhakti as both *sādhana* and *sādhya*—the means and ultimate end of human life. The goal of Bhakti, he explains, is not the attainment of liberation, but the attainment of supreme Bhakti itself. He even denounces the desire for attainment of liberation. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, he states that the bliss of Bhakti cannot penetrate into the heart of man so long the craving for the enjoyment for physical pleasures and attainment of liberation is lodged in his heart like

15. अन्याभिलाषिता शून्यं ज्ञानकर्माद्यनावृतम् ।

आनुकूलेन कृष्णानुशीलनं भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.9.

16. कृष्णस्तु भगवान् स्वयम् ।

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.2.28

evil genii. Attainment of liberation (*mukti*) has been considered to be the ultimate goal of human life (*puruṣārtha*) by most of the great teachers of Hinduism including all the other eminent Vaiṣṇava ācāryas beginning from Rāmānuja to Vallabha. Rūpa, however, seeks to establish the superiority of bhakti (devotion) over *mukti* (liberation). He regards bhakti as the fifth *puruṣārtha*, the highest value (*parama-puruṣārtha*).

Classification of Uttamā Bhakti

Rūpa classifies Uttamā Bhakti into three forms, namely, Sādhana-bhakti, Bhāva-bhakti, and Prema-bhakti. Sādhana-bhakti which results from the performance of various religious practices and disciplines is realizable by the physical senses. It is divided into two stages—Vaidhī-bhakti and Rāgānugā-bhakti. Vaidhī Sādhana-bhakti develops from practising of the set of rules and disciplines laid down in the Vaiṣṇava śāstra. A sincere and systematic observance of these disciplines particularly the worship of God, chanting His names, singing songs about His sweetness and beauty and līlās, etc. stimulate the feeling of love for the Lord. Vaidhī-bhakti develops into Rāgānugā-bhakti only when the former is practised and cultured uninterruptedly with *śraddhā* or deep faith in its efficacy. When Bhakti, at first cultivated with the help of external aids, becomes a permanent feature of the devotee's emotional constitution, it is called Rāgānugā. 'Rāgānugā-bhakti consists in an emotional sublimation of intimate human sentiments towards Kṛṣṇa, in terms of the intimate devotional sentiments displayed in different personal relationships (as that of a son, relative, lover, friend, servant and so forth) between the deity and his dear ones in his eternal sport at Vraja.'¹⁷ In Rāgānugā-bhakti, a devotee seeks to imitate through

imaginative concentration the various forms of loving and intimate relationship which Kṛṣṇa had with His eternal *parikaras* (companions or attendants) in their earthly manifestations in Mathura and Vṛndāvana and consequently a devotee comes to possess an ecstasy of vicarious enjoyment. Through a sustained and constant practice spreading over long years, the devotee ultimately identifies himself with such sentiments. Nevertheless, the adoption of Rāgānugā-bhakti does not necessitate the abandonment of the discipline of Vaidhī-bhakti.

Bhāva-bhakti, the second type of Uttamā Bhakti is the mature state of Sādhana-bhakti, but it may also develop independently through the grace of Kṛṣṇa or His Bhaktas. Bhāva-bhakti is based on inward emotion (*bhāva*), which is not yet developed into the *rasa* or bliss of love known as *prema* (intense love for Kṛṣṇa). Bhāva-bhakti is pure and real (*śuddha sattva-viśeṣa*) and is like the dawn before sunrise. It arises from relish (*ruci*) for the love of the Lord and produces an intense longing for the Deity, for His favour or for His friendship. Rūpa Gosvāmin mentions certain important marks which indicate the presence of Bhāva-bhakti in a devotee. Some of these are, placidity of mind (*kṣānti*), distaste for the objects of sense (*virakti*), lack of pride (*māna-śūnyata*), bond of hope of realizing God, eagerness, taste for singing the name of the deity, desire for recital of the attributes of the deity and feeling of joy in those places associated with the life of the Lord, like Mathurā and Vraja.

When Bhāva-bhakti is ripened and the heart of a devotee is purified, Prema-bhakti develops in its all-absorbing depth and profundity. The Bhāva or emotion of love has now solidified into Prema or Prīti which is the profoundest and supreme sentiment of love of God based on the realization of Him as the dearest and nearest one. Prema is marked by an attitude of 'mineness', that is, by a feeling that Kṛṣṇa exclusively belongs to the devotee. It is suggested that

¹⁷ *Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith*, p. 178.

Prema or Prīti cannot develop if the devotee's mind is obsessed by the power and majesty (*aiśvarya*) of the Lord as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. A relationship of love between Kṛṣṇa and his devotee can flower only when he passionately longs to relish His all-round sweetness (*mādhurya*).

Bhakti as rasa

Exposition of Bhakti as a *rasa* occupies the larger and residual portion of Rūpa's famous treatise, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. The same theme is further elaborated with subtler skill and literary embellishment in a supplementary work the *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*. Traditional writers on poetics and dramaturgy (*nāṭya-śāstra*) regard Bhakti as a *bhāva* and not as a *rasa*. Dr. S. K. De has rendered these two terms in English as 'emotion' and 'sentiment' respectively.¹⁸ *Rasa* etymologically means a taste or relish. But in the Vaiṣṇava bhakti-literature *rasa* means 'a thing the taste of which is attended with delicious astonishment on account of its heightened sweetness.' Rūpa regards Bhakti as a *rasa* and of this *Bhakti-rasa*, the most dominant and sustaining emotion is *Kṛṣṇa-rati* which means deep emotional attachment to Kṛṣṇa. A mind having *Kṛṣṇa-rati* is content entirely with matters concerning Kṛṣṇa, and gradually it is elevated to the state of *rasa* or relish as a sentiment. The Upaniṣad describes the ultimate Reality as *rasa* or Bliss.¹⁹ Kṛṣṇa according to Bengal Vaiṣṇavism, is *ānanda-svarūpa*, essentially blissful, and *sat* (existence) and *cit* (absolute intelligence) are His two attributes. The word *rasa* refers not only to the thing enjoyed, but also to the enjoyment itself.

According to Rūpa, there are two classes

of *rasa*, five of them being primary and the remaining seven being secondary. Of the five principal *rasas*—*Śānta* (serenity), *Dāsyā* (faithfulness), *Sakhya* (friendship), *Vātsalya* (parent-sentiment) and *Madhura* or *Ujjvala* (erotic sentiment)—Rūpa gives *Madhura* the highest place which in the context of *Bhakti-śāstra* has nothing to do with vile sensuous pleasure and carnal desires. It is purely a deep and supreme devotional sentiment. And herein lies the appropriateness and significance of the title of the treatise '*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*'. Rūpa has shown that loving devotion or Bhakti is a profound sentiment (*rasa*) to be relished like nectar (*amṛta*). *Bhakti-rasa* is unfathomable like an ocean (*sindhu*) never to be exhausted but flows constantly towards the Lord. Nārada in his *Bhakti-sūtras* also makes a very happy choice in using the word '*amṛta*' to describe the intrinsic nature of Divine Love.

Madhura-rasa or devotion as erotic sentiment also constitutes the subject-matter of Rūpa's another very important work *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* wherein he has delineated the fundamentals of *Śṛṅgāra Bhakti-rasa*, its psychology and rhetoric, taking Kṛṣṇa as an ideal hero. He has also given an interesting exposition of the hero and the heroine, their moods, expressions of love in varying situations, and also of their associates and companions. In short, it is an exhaustive account of divine erotic love of Kṛṣṇa. *Madhura-rati* which is no other than *Kṛṣṇa-rati*, is the central theme of this work. Following Rūpa, we can briefly summarize his views on *madhura-rati*, its different aspects and the stages of development ultimately leading to *Mahābhāva*.

Prema, which is a deep attachment towards the Lord marked by an attitude of 'mineness', ripens into *sneha*—an affection sublimated from Prema. *Sneha* ripens into *māna* characterized by 'affected repulse of endearment due to excess of emotion and causing a variety of amatory feelings.' *Māna*

18. *ibid.*, p. 167.

19. रसो वै सः । *Taittirīya-Upaniṣad* 2.6.1.

deepens into *praṇaya* which inspires confidence in the object of love and dispels all doubts and confusion with regard to ultimate union with Kṛṣṇa. *Rāga* is the developed stage of *praṇaya* dominated by excessive eagerness for the union with Kṛṣṇa. *Rāga* again develops into *anurāga* in which the object of love appears to be more attractive every moment. This indicates the presence of a deep yearning in the mind of the devotee for relishing the charms of Kṛṣṇa. And *anurāga* culminates in *mahābhāva*, supreme realization of love as realized only by the Gopis of Vraja. Among the Gopis of Vraja, Rādhā, the eternal consort of Kṛṣṇa stands out to be the most perfect embodiment of *Mahābhāva*.

In the second part of his *Samkṣepa-bhāgavatāmṛta*, Rūpa has given a brief account of the character and gradation of the Bhaktas or devotees of Kṛṣṇa. Here Rūpa assigns an adorable status to a real Kṛṣṇa-Bhakta in *Vaiṣṇava Sādhanā*. He expounds that adoration of Kṛṣṇa's Bhakta is the best means of the adoration of Kṛṣṇa. By profusely quoting from various Purāna texts, Rūpa tries to establish that the greatest Bhakta is one, 'who is a Bhakta of Kṛṣṇa's Bhakta; and he who worships Kṛṣṇa but does not worship his Bhakta must be deemed an arrogant and misguided person.'²⁰ According to Rūpa, the Gopis of Vraja were perfectly pure and chaste, and they

represent the highest devotees of Kṛṣṇa, and hence those who desire to worship Kṛṣṇa and attain Kṛṣṇa-bhakti must seek the grace of the Gopis and worship them devotedly. However, Rādhā is the greatest of all the Gopis, and hence there is no greater Bhakta of Kṛṣṇa than His eternal consort Rādhā. Therefore Rūpa Gosvāmin advocated the joint worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa which subsequently became a striking feature of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism.

Bengal Vaiṣṇavism has its own distinctive features notwithstanding the fact that it shows the influence of other schools. It has been observed that 'the most outstanding feature of Bengal School, apart from its philosophical aspects, is its *rasa*-cult that brings into the limelight the most fascinating and the most attractive phase of the *rasa*-hood of Brahman, hitherto more or less undisclosed (being only hinted at in the scriptures) and points out ways and means for its realization, which surpasses even the charm of *Brahmānanda* (bliss of realizing *Nirviśeṣa Brahman*)'.²¹ By building up the theory of *rasa* into a philosophical edifice, Rūpa Gosvāmin has made an enduring contribution to the *Vaiṣṇava* movement in India, and has secured an everlasting place in the history of Hindu religion and philosophy.

²¹. Radhagovinda Nath, 'The Acintya-Bhedābheda School' from *The Cultural Heritage of India* (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1953), vol. 3, p. 383.

²⁰ *Early History of Vaiṣṇava Faith*, p. 252.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE IDEA OF SELF—EAST AND WEST : BY YOEL HOFFMANN. Published by Firma KLM Private Limited, 157B, Bepin Behari Ganguly Street, Calcutta 700 012. 1980. Pp. vii+152. Rs. 65.

In his foreword Ben-Ami Scharfstein says, 'This book shows both the boldness and sensitivity

that is essential to the comparison of philosophies. There is little comparative philosophy that does both sides of the comparison such justice and that tries so even-handedly to discover similarities and yet clarify atmospheric or existential differences. This is the kind of comparison that can enrich both traditions by making each more aware

of the other and so, by scrutinizing itself in a new mirror, more aware of itself.'

The author examines the traditional theories of Self as found in Western psychology, and brings out their different shades of meaning, their shortcomings and concludes with the view-point of Buddhist philosophy and the Philosophy of Hume. David Hume, the British empiricist, may be regarded as the pioneer in the empirical study of self, and he was the first to study Self from the aspect of plurality. While Platonic-Aristotelean tradition lost itself in the contemplation of soul-substance, Hume mercilessly attacked it and reduced the unity of Self to an unending series of sensations and perceptions. If the former was immersed in the unity, the latter lost itself in the plurality of experience.

One can find in the study of comparative philosophy two opposing tendencies. One school is very keen on differentiation. It holds that East brought forth 'religious mystical Philosophy', the West 'critical rationalism'; thus East and West can never meet. The other school tends to overlook cultural and semantic differences, and thus overemphasizes similarities. The author of the book does not approve such a division of philosophy. Whether a philosophy is that of an individual or that of a group, it is basically one's mode of being in the world. With this synoptic attitude, Yoel Hoffmann presents in chapters 1-4 an analytical comparison of the central epistemological and ontological concepts as expressed in the writings of Hume and the Theravada. In these chapters he aims at pointing out similarities on the philosophical level between the Humean and the Buddhist analysis of 'object' and 'self'. In chapter 5 the author deals with the different existential attitudes from which Humean and Buddhist world views originate and develop into a philosophical system. In chapter 6 he presents the Buddhist meditational path, and in chapter 7 he compares it with Hume's approach to the problem of knowledge, ethics, and religion.

In conclusion, the book provides a penetrating analysis of the nature of Self from the standpoint of both Western and Indian Philosophy. Yoel Hoffmann succeeds in his book in creating an awareness in the study of comparative philosophy, and I hope that this book will be read far beyond the narrow circle of philosophical experts.

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BOOK OF DAILY THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS : BY SWAMI PARAMANANDA. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, 16 Ramakrishna Math Road, Madras 600 004. 1981 (first Indian edition). Pp. 406. Rs. 20/-.

When we turn to the spiritual life, we generally bring to it a flood of new-found idealism; but not a very clear conception of the ideal; a heart full of enthusiasm and devotion which, however, is vague and undirected; desire for 'God', but no real understanding of who 'God' is, who we are, or how to establish a relationship between the two. Hence arises the need for some external guidance and structuring to prevent the energy of our devotion from dissipated into the 'empty space' of vague sentimentality. And that is the reason behind the existence, in all religions, of prayerbooks, hymnals, breviaries—these give voice and direction to the inchoate longing of the aspirant's heart.

It should not be objected that such aids to devotion are formal and therefore lacking in life and spontaneity. True spontaneity comes after long, long discipline of the mind and hearts: such aids in fact help in this training. Nor need they be imitative, second-hand, mere substitutes for personal experience; by identifying yourself with the thoughts and emotions expressed in such prayers and meditations, you tend to be lifted up towards the state of mind in which they were first uttered by saints and sages. If properly used they are powerful channels giving a definite spiritual direction to your devotion, connecting you to higher states of mind. The thoughts expressed become your own.

The *Book of Daily Thoughts and Prayers* is a modern devotional manual whose effectiveness is attested to by its remarkable popularity. In fact, it is probably the best-seller among the very popular books of Swami Paramananda.

In it, each of the twelve months is dedicated to some particular subjects; for instance, January is given to 'Living Consecration', February to 'Steadfast Resolution', March to 'Power of Holiness'. And within each month there is a development from day to day of the main theme, so that by the end of the month 'a new and defined impression will be made on the character'. Each day begins with a salient thought, to be held in constant mindfulness throughout the day; this is expanded and developed by a brief lesson; a prayer unites it with the aspiration of the heart, driving it deep into the personality and giving it the power to transform. There are also lines to

memorize, selected from the Swami's poems in harmony with the salient thought.

Coming from one of the pioneering giants of the Ramakrishna Order and a direct disciple of Swami Vivekananda, the words of Swami Paramananda convey an undeniable sense of spiritual validity and beauty. Sister Devamata ably edited and arranged the fairest flowers of his teachings into this inspired and inspiring companion to one's daily devotional life, which was first published in America in 1928. It has now been brought out in a beautifully produced Indian edition by Sri Ramakrishna Math of Madras. It needs no advertisement other than itself. Now that it is readily available in this country, it is sure to find its way into the homes and lives of many, many spiritual seekers.

SWAMI ATMARUPANANDA
Mayavati

BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS : BY ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM. Published by Aquinas Publications, Mount Mary, Bandra, Bombay 400 050. 1975. Pp. 147. Rs. 5.

Anthony Elenjittam, a Catholic priest belonging to the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), is well known for his social welfare work, for his numerous books, and for his many years of work in the field of interreligious dialogue among Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and others. *Buddha's Teachings* is one of his recent publications. It contains two parts. In Part One he tells the life-story of Buddha, discusses Buddha's teachings and very briefly describes the thorough training he gave his disciples in purity and selflessness. He gives several of the important parables told by the Blessed One, discusses at length the *trisharana* or three refuges (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha), and concludes with a chapter on the laity and its place in Buddhism. Part Two is a translation of the *Dhammapada*, one of the finest pieces of religious literature in the world, and one which gives the substances of Buddha's teaching in a very inspiring and practical form. The book concludes with two chapters: 'Buddha's Teaching Today' and 'Buddhist Socialism, Secularism and Democracy'.

The whole book is inspired by deep sympathy and understanding, and by a spirit of universality enhanced by frequent comparisons with other religious traditions of the world, especially Christianity and Hinduism. As the author himself says, the book is not meant for scholars or those who want an in-depth study of Buddhism. *Buddha's Teachings* 'has only a modest object in

view, viz., to introduce the basic teachings of Buddha and the classical Buddhist Dhammapada to an average student, and work-a-day man who desires to know the summary of the life and teachings of Buddha in their relevance to our life today.'

SWAMI ATMARUPANANDA
Mayavati

DYNAMIC HINDUISM : BY G. M. JAGTIANI. Published by the author at D/22, Self-Help Housing Society, St. Francis Road, Vile Parle (W), Bombay 400 056. 1981. Pp. 130. Rs. 5.

This dynamic booklet is by a person inspired by the vigorous and liberal message of Swami Vivekananda who preached the world-over harmony of religions. By harmony Swamiji meant that every religion should develop along its own lines and travel towards Perfection assimilating the spirit of the others, without seeking superficial conversions and the destruction of the faiths of others. But in recent times, while the true religious spirit is deteriorating, the proselytizing zeal of some faiths is becoming rampant, using all types of methods to increase their numbers with the main consideration of worldly advantage. Hence this book, which has as its sub-title 'What every Hindu and non-Hindu ought to know', is timely as it inspires confidence in Hindus about the greatness of their non-proselytizing religion, and reminds them of their duty towards their backward Hindu brothers. It also tries to give a true picture of Hindu ideas and ideals to non-Hindus who entertain many wrong notions about this ancient religion.

This is not a theoretical scholarly exposition of Hinduism. It deals in general with the rational, liberal and universal outlook of Hinduism, its role in the world, and its duty in the present social context of the plurality of religions. The author meets the charges against the Hindu society not only by giving a correct picture where necessary, but also by showing that those very charges are more justifiably, and in a greater measure, applicable to those who attack. He tells them; you can remove the mote in the others' eyes only when you clear the beam in your own. However, the author is not a fanatic. He compares and contrasts and shows where Hindus can learn from others. Some of the topics dealt with will give an idea of the book. (1) When are you a Hindu? (2) Universalism of Hinduism; (3) Hindus and Hindustan; (4) Hindus and Idol-worship; (5) Hindus and 'Castes'; (6) Hinduism and Miracles; (7) Warning to the Hindus; (8) Let us Learn from Christian Missionaries;

(9) Dynamic Hinduism; (10) Muslim Tribute to Indian languages. Hindu Universalism.

It is a dynamic book worth reading by all and deserves to be translated and published in other

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NEWS AND REPORTS

VIVEKANANDA VEDANTA SOCIETY OF CHICAGO

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS, 1981

(Third Phase)

From September 20 to November 22, 1981, The Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago, as the third phase of its Golden Jubilee Celebration, held a Parliament of World Religion. In successive weeks, the following were the religions and speakers presented:

September 20, Hinduism, by Swami Swananda, Head of the Vedanta Society of Berkeley, California.

September 27, Judaism, by Attorney William Sulkin.

October 4, Zoroastrianism, by Dasturji Minocher N. D. Homji of Fasli Agiary, Bombay, India.

October 11, Buddhism, by Rev. Saito, Head Minister, Buddhist Temple of Chicago.

October 18, Christianity, by Professor Dubocq, former Professor of Comparative Religions at George Williams College.

October 25, Islam, by Kazi Suleman.

November 1, Theosophy, by Mrs. Anne De Vere, President, Akbar Lodge.

November 8, Sikhism, by Mr. H. Sindhu, Member, Sikh Association of Chicago.

November 15, Jainism, by Manu Doshi, Member, Jain Society.

November 22, Vedanta: Conclusion of Parliament of Religions, by Professor Huston Smith, Department of Religion, Syracuse University. The concluding function of the 1981 Golden Jubilee Year of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago, was the Symposium on Science and Religion held at the Chapel of the Society, on Saturday, December 5, and Sunday, December 6, 1981.

The thesis of this symposium was that modern

science has already reached the level in which it can import a few of the ideas from spirituality. The moderator of this symposium was Dr. Aravinda Menon, Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto, Canada. The first speaker was Dr. John Dobson, Founder of the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers and author of the book, 'Advaita Vedanta and Modern Science'. He showed how close Dr. Einstein's physics comes to the Vedantic conception of Oneness. Dr. Eric Carlson, Senior Astronomer, Adler Planetarium of Chicago, spoke on the 'Expanding Awareness in an Expanding Universe'. He stressed the humility achieved by science in modern times because of the element of uncertainty prevalent in this century. Dr. Clifford N. Mathews, Professor of Chemistry, University of Illinois, Circle Campus, spoke about 'Cosmic Metabolism and the Origins of Life'. He discussed the origins of our planet and how all living forms are inter-related by common descent. He emphasized the unity of biochemistry and the unity of cosmochemistry. The next speaker was Dr. S. Rajalakshmi Sharma, Associate Professor of Pathology, University of Toronto. Her subject was 'Is Science a Play of Consciousness?' She described the following five principles of the play of consciousness: unity in diversity; cycle of creation, sustenance and dissolution; design of mechanism for creation; mind as the source of all knowledge, and destiny (evolution to Self-realization). At the end of the symposium, the four speakers and Dr. Menon, conducted a very interesting discussion based on questions asked by the audience.

On Sunday, December 6, Dr. Aravinda Menon made a presentation of slides and quotations from Swami Vivekananda, entitled 'Swami Vivekananda on Science and Vedanta'. The Golden Jubilee Year of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society came to a close on the birthday of the holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, with a special worship.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Swords or Ploughshares?

An ancient Hebrew sage of the Old Testament foretold the coming of a day when people 'shall beat their swords into ploughshares'. (Isaiah 2:4) If ever the world reached a stage for the fulfilment of this prophecy, it should be now. For the vast advancements in scientific technology have taught nations how to attain prosperity without grabbing the territory or wealth of their neighbours through war. There has been a steady growth in international communication, sharing of knowledge and cooperation. Furthermore, the nuclear revolution has altered the whole meaning and scope of war. Any real war between the big powers would lead to their mutual annihilation or even the destruction of the entire human race.

And yet paradoxically, the most colossal preparations for war in the history of mankind are going on in several parts of the world. Mr. Edouard Saouma, director-general of the FAO, recently stated in Rome, 'The ploughshares are being beaten back into swords, as witnessed by the spiralling arms race. Collective security is being sought, not in food but in guns.' The current escalation of nuclear arms race and the revival of Cold War between the two Super Powers may not trigger off a nuclear holocaust, but they have serious repercussions on the rest of the world. Through political manoeuvring and economic allurements the Super Powers are drawing underdeveloped and developing countries into their orbits of power. The result is that these countries are forced to raise their defense spending year after year. This diversion of wealth and resources to defense beyond legitimate limits is a major obstacle to economic progress in these countries. The Prime Minister of India has repeatedly stressed this point in her recent speeches.

Edouard Saouma has warned the developing countries that unless they accelerated food production, they would be in peril. At the same time, he regrets that international commitments to increasing the flow of financial resources to developing countries are being steadily subordinated to national interests. The director-general rates food and agriculture prospects in the current decade as 'alarming' unless Third World nations mounted a major effort to increase food production and provided for better distribution to the rural poor. He complimented India, with the world's second largest population, for achieving self-reliance in food production. But India is yet to achieve success in food distribution and in abolishing the poverty line.

Meanwhile, a silver lining has appeared on the dark war clouds in the form of peace movements in Europe and America. Massive demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of people in Paris, London, Rome, Bonn and other countries against converting Europe into an area of Super Power rivalry, and the growing consensus of public opinion in the U.S. in favour of a freeze on nuclear weapons are hopeful signs. Whatever be the effects of these peace efforts, the choice before developing countries like India is clear—to make more ploughshares than swords.
