VOL. 90

NOVEMBER 1985

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or all of these the Vision of the Paramatman is Obtained.

ADVAITA ASHRAMA

MAYAVATI, HIMALAYAS

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. 90 NOVEMBER 1985 No. 11

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

INTEGRAL VISION OF VEDIC SEERS*

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

यथा देवा असुरेषु श्रद्धामुग्रेषु चक्रिरे ।
एवं भोजेषु यज्वस्वस्माकमुदितं कृधि ॥

[O Śraddhā] just as the Devas had faith in [their fight with] the mighty Asuras,[1] so fulfil the desires of the sacrificers who seek happiness.

Ṛg-Veda 10.150.3

श्रद्धां देवा यजमाना वायुगोपा उपासते ।
श्रद्धां हृदय्ययाकूत्या श्रद्धया विन्दते वसु ॥

Gods, men and Vāyugopa[2] worship Śraddhā. Śraddhā [is attained only] through heartfelt aspiration. Through Śraddhā wealth is obtained.

Ṛg-Veda 10.150.4

श्रद्धां प्रातर्हवामहे श्रद्धां मध्यंदिनं परि ।
श्रद्धां सूर्यस्य निम्नुचि श्रद्धे श्रद्धापयेह नः ॥

Let us worship Śraddhā in the morning, at noon and at sundown. O Śraddhā, grant us faith.

Ṛg-Veda 10.150.5

---

* The *Śraddhā-sūktam,* Hymn to Faith, begun last month is concluded here. Like *medhā* (intuition) in *Medhā-sūktam,* here faith is deified.

1. This is according to Sāyaṇa's interpretation, but the hymn does not indicate that the gods were at enmity with the Asuras.

2. *Vāyugopa* literally means 'those who are protected by Vāyu (air)', but who they are is not clear.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This month's EDITORIAL shows that, though everyone experiences the ego, its real nature can be known only through its various images, and that this knowledge is a key factor in the transformation of consciousness.

In SWAMI SHUDDHANANDA Swami Muktinathananda of Belur Math brings together a lot of biographical material, extracted from several authentic sources, on one of the foremost disciples of Swami Vivekananda.

Though the FOUR STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS are well known, in the article under that title Sri Saumendra Nath Mukhopadhyay of Calcutta has not only made a new approach to the theme in the light of Patañjali's yoga system but also provided some interesting hints on its *sādhana* aspect.

CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM by Dr. Amulya Mohapatra, Reader in Philosophy, D.A.V. College, Koraput, Orissa, is a lucid summary of the essential teachings of Confucius and Lao Tzu.

In THE SONGS OF ORPHEUS John L. Dobson weaves together some strands of tradition and history interlinking ancient Greece and ancient India. That, in spite of its fictionally autobiographical nature, the narrative is based on solid facts will be made clear in the second part of the article to be published in a subsequent issue. Its author, scientist by training and founder-director of San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers, is a creative thinker and musicologist.

IMAGES OF THE EGO

(EDITORIAL)

The ego—not to be got rid of but to be transformed

Buddha renounced his kingdom and the pleasures of life with a view to finding a solution to the existential problem of sorrow. After six years of struggle when enlightenment dawned upon him under the Bodhi tree he discovered that the ego was the root cause of all suffering. He then exclaimed:

Many a House of Life
Hath held me—seeking ever Him who wrought
These prisons of the senses, sorrow-fraught;
Sore was my ceaseless strife!
But now,
Thou Builder of this Tabernacle—Thou!
I know Thee! Never shalt Thou build again
These walls of pain,
Nor raise the roof-tree of deceits nor lay
Fresh rafters on the clay;
Broken Thy house is; and the ridge-pole split!
Delusion fashioned it!
Safe pass I thence—deliverance to obtain.[1]

This passage, in its original and interpreted versions, has inspired countless people to shun and despise the ego as the greatest evil. Here the ego is spoken of as the 'builder of the tabernacle' and the 'ridge-pole of delusion'. But who within Buddha spoke these words? The ego itself! Not the Supreme Self, for the Buddha did not believe in It. Here in this passage it is Buddha's own ego that is addressing itself. Buddha's ego could thus address itself be-

---

1. Sir Edwin Arnold, *The Light of Asia* (London: Kegan Paul, 1943) p. 115

cause it had attained the highest degree of maturity, strength and illumination, and was therefore ready to transcend itself. Having realized the vastness of Nirvana, his ego had no more use for a tenement or a ridge-pole. If without attaining full maturity, strength, purity and enlightenment, an ordinary person tries to transcend ego-consciousness or pretend to be egoless, his effort is likely to become a kind of spiritual hara-kiri.

There is nothing more maligned, more abused, more tortured than the human ego. And yet all the great achievements of mankind have been achieved by the human ego. To use a Shakespearean phrase, the ego is 'more sinned against than sinning'. Before trying to eliminate the ego it is necessary to understand ego's real value and function. A strong, mature, well-integrated and purified ego alone can overcome lower impulses, withstand the temptations of wealth and fame, achieve great things in life, serve other people without attachment, and attain spiritual illumination. A person endowed with such an ego is an asset to the family, community or society to which he belongs.

It is the weak, ignorant, immature and impure ego that prompts people to take to evil ways, to deceive and slander innocent people, to exploit the poor and the helpless, and sow seeds of suffering and discord wherever they go. This was pointed out by Swami Vivekananda long ago. In the course of a lecture delivered in London, Swamiji said :

> Weakness is the one cause of suffering. We become miserable because we are weak. We lie, steal, kill and commit other crimes because we are weak. We suffer because we are weak. We die because we are weak. Where there is nothing to weaken us, there is no death nor sorrow.[2]

Even to pray to God and depend on God the ego needs tremendous strength. A weak-minded person will not pray; instead, he will simply sit brooding over his past or blaming other people for his misfortunes. About this latter tendency Swami Vivekananda said :

> Those that blame others—and alas! the number of them is increasing every day—are generally miserable, with helpless brains; they have brought themselves to that pass through their own mistakes and blame others, but this does not alter their position....This attempt to throw the blame upon others only weakens them the more. Therefore, blame none for your own faults, stand upon your own feet and take the whole responsibility upon yourselves.[3]

This 'standing upon your own feet' need not or should not prevent us from depending on God. As a matter of fact, only a strong ego can open itself fully to divine grace. It is a mistake to think that prayer, worship and self-surrender are meant only for weak-minded people or that to practise these devotional exercises one has to look upon oneself as weak and worthless. To call forth intensity in prayer, single-mindedness in worship, sincerity in self-surrender and steadfastness in love for an unseen Being, the ego needs an iron will and a spirit of heroism.

What is really evil or troublesome is not the ego but egoism. The difference between the ego and egoism was pointed out on more than one previous occasion.[4] The ego as the source of 'I'-consciousness forms the basis of human individuality, coordinating all mental activities and interpreting all human relationships. Egoism is the attachment of the ego to the objects of the senses and its desperate attempt to protect itself. It manifests itself as vanity and arrogance, jealousy and cruelty, selfishness and greed. These wrong attitudes towards life represent

---

2. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1976) Vol. 2, p. 198

3. *Complete Works* Vol 2, p. 225

4. See, Editorials in *Prabuddha Bharata* June, July, August, 1985.

certain wrong modes of consciousness. By transforming our consciousness it is possible to get rid of egoism. This is what 'purification of mind' usually means. When egoism is to some extent eliminated, it will be possible to deal with the ego directly.

Whatever be the spiritual path we follow, our primary effort should be to eliminate egoism on the one hand, and to understand the ego and develop its inherent capacities, on the other. In other words, our proximate aim should be to transform the ego, not to transcend it.

Yoga and the transformation of ego

Transformation of the ego is only one aspect of the total transformation of personality. As pointed out last month, the human personality consists of different *kośas* or sheaths in the form of the physical body. Prāṇa, mind, intellect and the causal sheath—all held together by the Atman in the form of consciousness which permeates them all. The Upaniṣadic sages gave primacy to consciousness and identified it with the Supreme Reality. *Prajñānam brahma*, 'Brahman *is* consciousness', is one of the greatest metaphysical truths ever discovered. Śaṁkarācārya made this concept more explicit by stating that consciousness alone is real and non-dual whereas all physical and mental objects are unreal and serve only as limiting adjuncts.

The doctrine that physical and mental objects are limiting adjuncts has gained a new significance in modern times with Einstein's formulation of 'limiting velocity' and Heisenberg's 'principle of indeterminacy'. That man's present state of existence is one of limitation has been stated with great clarity by the Cambridge philosopher C.D. Broad as follows :

> ...we should do well to consider much more seriously than we have hitherto been inclined to do the type of theory which Bergson put forward in connection with memory and sense perception. The suggestion is that the function of the brain and nervous system and sense organs is in the main *eliminative* and not productive. Each person is at each moment capable of remembering all that has ever happened to him and of perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe. The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful.

Aldous Huxley, who has quoted the above statement in one of his books, comments upon it : 'According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially Mind at Large.'[5] Huxley's 'Mind at Large' corresponds to the Prakṛti of Sāṁkhya and Patañjali's system. Vedanta replaces it with the doctrine of 'Self at Large' or Brahman which is non-dual consciousness. The ego as a limiting adjunct has a useful function : it serves as a conduit for funnelling infinite consciousness into the mind and the body.

The doctrine that the essential nature of man is consciousness, that the ego is only a conduit for it and that the body and mind are only limiting adjuncts has immense practical significance. In the first place, it shows that man can bring about great changes in his personality by manipulating his consciousness. By transforming his consciousness he can eliminate selfishness, arrogance and hatred from his mind and become selfless, modest and loving. A person may have lived an immoral or sorrowful life, yet he can erase all its bad effects, overcome his limitations and create a new glorious life by transforming his consciousness. Even certain types of illness can be got rid of through this process. It was this understanding that led to the development of yoga in India.

---

5. Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception* (New York: Harper and Row, 1945) p. 23

What is yoga? The fundamental principle involved in it is the transformation of consciousness. Yoga is an integrative system of self-directed disciplines by which transformation of consciousness is accelerated. In this transformation the ego plays a central role. All life is, as the Gita says, a manifestation of Divine Yoga[6] and all changes are brought about by the power of the Divine. The function of the ego is to serve as a conduit for the flow of divine Power. But, owing to ignorance, the ego in most people develops a possessive attitude towards the objects of the world and blocks or restricts the flow of energy into the personality. As a result, though a natural transformation of consciousness is taking place in all people, it is slow, haphazard and mostly unconscious. Yoga is a conscious, goal-oriented effort to accelerate the tempo of this transformation. What ordinary life achieves in scores of years yoga accomplishes in a few years. If ordinary life is evolution, yoga is revolution. For this inner revolution all that is necessary is the opening of the ego more fully and freely to the Supreme Self. The transformation of the ego is thus a key factor in yoga. All the four well-known yogas—Karma yoga, Rāja yoga, Bhakti yoga and Jñāna yoga—have for their central aim the transformation of ego consciousness.

Forms of ego knowledge

This shows how important it is to have true knowledge of one's ego. Yet, few people care to have it. Most people would like to know more about the world and the affairs of other people than about themselves. In one of his last letters the great Swiss psychiatrist Dr. Jung wrote: 'The human mind, still an adolescent boy, will sacrifice everything for a new gadget but will carefully refrain from a look into himself.'[7] We often forget that our understanding of other people and our ability to help them depend to a great extent on our knowledge of ourselves. A teacher with self-knowledge is capable of helping a larger number of students far more effectively than a teacher without self-knowledge is. An executive with self-knowledge deals with his clients and subordinates far more efficiently than an executive with little self-knowledge does. A social worker with self-knowledge can render better service to a larger number of people than a social worker with poor self-knowledge can. Much of the misunderstanding and many of the quarrels in everyday life have their origin in inadequate self-knowledge.

The ego, however, is so complex and puts on so many masks that it is difficult to understand its true nature and mode of operation. Nevertheless, the ego reveals itself, directly or indirectly, in various forms. Western psychologists have paid considerable attention to this subject in recent years, and have developed several concepts to represent these forms of ego knowledge.[8] Some of these concepts deserve our consideration here.

1. *Self-image*. The newborn infant has no ego worth mentioning. His earliest perception of himself, according to psychologists, is in the form of a knowledge of the boundary lines of its body. This awareness of the physical self is known as *body*

---

6. योगमैश्वरम् Gita 9.5; 11.8

7. *C. G. Jung, Letters,* Ed. Gerhard Adler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) Vol. 2, p. 609

8. For a comprehensive treatment of the subject see, Jane Loevinger, *Ego Development* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976). Also, Ken Wilber *The Atman Project* (Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1982)

image; it forms the foundation of human personality.[9]

The growing infant learns the distinction between the me and the not-me. Since he is treated as an 'object' by all others, it takes time for him to regard himself as the subject, to refer to himself as 'I' or *ego*. With the development of 'I' he has to own responsibility for his feelings and actions. As the child's experience broadens, his self-identity comes to include things outside of himself—parents, toys, clothes, playmates and so on. His identification with these external objects gives rise to the feeling of 'mine' or *egoism*.

The feeling of 'I' and 'mine'—ego and egoism—gets further strengthened when the growing child finds himself forced to play an increasing number of roles in society. In the playing of roles he is judged, accepted or rejected by the other members of his society. These social reactions get internalized and build the child's image of himself. A child does not have the power of introspection to understand his real nature and worth; therefore he judges himself by the opinions and attitudes of other people. The resultant picture of himself that takes shape at the back of his mind is known as *self-image*. Once this kind of self-image is formed in childhood, it is difficult to change it in adult life.

This early self-image may be repressed, that is, pushed down into the unconscious, but from that hidden position it goes on influencing a person's behaviour, attitudes and opinions all through his life without his being aware of this fact. Children who have a happy childhood develop healthy, positive, self-images. But children whose lives are filled with sufferings and inhibitions develop unhealthy, distorted self-images which will exert a negative influence in adult life even after they have achieved academic brilliance or professional eminence. New self-images are formed in adult life but the childhood self-image continues its work until it is understood and integrated into the adult self-image through introspection or spiritual illumination.

2. *Ego-ideal.* Whatever be his self-image, every boy has some idea of what he can 'become' (a doctor, engineer, musician or politician) and his capacity to attain it. This perception of one's possibilities is known as the *ego-ideal*. It is an expression of the soul's aspiration and elan. Sometimes under the influence of parents, or by identification with somebody whom he admires, a young person may adopt a wrong ideal—as for instance, a boy with no real aptitude for engineering may be forced to become an engineer. In such a case, the ideal remains outside of him, it does not get integrated into his personality; in other words, it does not become his ego-ideal.

To have a realistic ego-ideal is one thing but to realize it in life is quite a different thing. Not all people succeed in realizing their aspirations. An unfulfilled ego-ideal is one of the major causes of frustration and meaninglessness in adult life. On the other hand, as child psychologist P. Blos has shown, the ego-ideal may propel some people 'toward the incredible feats of creativity, heroism, sacrifice and selflessness. One dies for one's ego-ideal rather than let it die. It is the most uncompromising influence on the conduct of the mature individual; its position is always unequivocal.'[10]

It should be noted here that whereas the influence of self-image is a subliminal or unrecognized one, that of ego-ideal is a more or less conscious one. A person's self-image indicates what he *thinks* he is, while his ego-ideal indicates what he *thinks* he can

---

9. The body image goes on changing but persists all through life. It is neglected in childhood, emerges in adolescence as an object of great attraction, and becomes a source of anxiety in old age.

10. Quoted in *Atman Project* p. 139

be. If the self-image is a positive one it will be a great help in the realization of the ego-ideal; if the self-image is a negative one it will be a great obstacle.

3. *The masked self.* A person may not really be what he *thinks* he is. Self-image does not represent the total personality. There are several elements of human character which are the products of painful or shameful experiences of the past. These are pushed so deep into the unconscious that they do not find a place in a person's self-image. These repressed and unintegrated human traits constitute what Jung had termed the *shadow*. The shadow makes its appearance in dreams, fantasies, strange desires and in other ways. To hide the shadow or to hide even the self-image, the ego puts on several masks and pretends to be somebody else. These social masks constitute what Jung has termed the *persona*. The masked self is the ego as it appears to others. The nature of the mask depends upon the role that the ego has to play in society.

Modern society teaches the ego to put on several masks. The more sophisticated the society is, the more hypocritical life becomes. The hypocrisies of modern life are so well-known, and psychologists and fiction writers have exposed them so thoroughly, that there is no need to enumerate them here. For our purpose it is enough to note here that through hypocrisy it may be possible to attain success in worldly life but not in spiritual life. One cannot approach God wearing masks.

4. *Dream-self.* It is an important psychological fact that the unconscious is the source of power and creativity and everything that is pushed into it will seek expression with greater force. Dreams provide one of the commonest ways for the expression of repressed desires and images. This is the view held by Freudian psychologists who do not recognize the existence of dream-self as a distinct entity. According to them, dream life is important in so far as it provides vital clues to the workings of the unconscious and the lower self.

In India the phenomenon of dreaming received considerable attention even during the period of the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣadic sages recognized the dream-self as a distinct entity or dimension. Moreover they looked upon it as providing vital clues to the existence of the higher Self and the superconscious.

Whether we accept the view of Western psychologists or the view of Indian sages—they evidently complement each other—the important point to note is that the dream-self remains a total stranger to the waking-state ego. It may even work contrary to the interests of the ego. This state of affairs may be all right in worldly life, but not in spiritual life. As long as dream life remains impure or wholly unconnected to one's higher aspirations, spiritual life will remain incomplete. It is, however, possible to contact the dream-self in the depths of meditation and, since the dream-self is only a part of our total consciousness, by transforming the total consciousness it is possible to transform, to re-educate and integrate the dream-self. This is one of the most difficult aspects of yoga.

5. *Fantasy-self.* We have seen that dreaming provides one outlet for the expression of man's repressed wishes and aspirations. But dreaming is beyond the control of the ego. The ego cannot have the dream that it likes and avoid the one that it does not like. It therefore 'invents' another kind of dreaming during the waking state in which it can mentally create or become whatever it likes. In this state, which is known by such terms as day-dream, reverie, fantasy and wool-gathering, the ego changes into a new idealized self which may be called the fantasy-self.

The fantasy-self may have absolutely no

similarity to the ago or no relation to the real world. A poor man becomes in his day-dreams the owner of a five-star hotel and a fleet of cars, a weak-bodied person becomes a great sportsman or military general, a man without much talent becomes a great orator, musician or scientist. The famous American humorist James Thurber has given an interesting account of this self-fantasizing process in his short story *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty.*

Why do people day-dream? Given the proper environment, every individual would try to fulfil all his basic needs and higher aspirations in the real world itself. But most individuals find that the environment they are in is unfavourable and many of their desires and ideals cannot be realized in real life. Under such circumstances, says Karen Horney, one of the most original thinkers among psychoanalysts after Freud and Jung,

> there is only one way in which he can seem to fulfil them, and seem to fulfil all of them at one stroke: through imagination. Gradually and unconsciously, the imagination sets to work and creates in his mind an idealized image of himself. In this process he endows himself with unlimited powers and with exalted faculties; he becomes a hero, a genius, a supreme lover, a saint, a god.
>
> Self-idealization always entails a general self-glorification, and thereby gives the individual the much-needed feeling of significance and of superiority over others. But it is by no means a blind self-aggrandizement. Each person builds up his personal idealized image from the materials of his own special experiences, his earlier fantasies, his particular needs, and also his given faculties. If it were not for the personal character of the image, he would not attain a feeling of identity and unity. He idealizes, to begin with, his particular 'solution' of his basic confiict: compliance becomes goodness, love becomes saintliness, aggressiveness becomes strength....
>
> Eventually the individual may come to identify himself with his idealized, integrated image. Then it does not remain a visionary image which he secretly cherishes; imperceptibly he *becomes* this image: the idealized *image* becomes an idealized *self.*[11]

Karen Horney has here described how man converts an idealized image into his own self. Day-dreaming is not an idle sport indulged in to while the time away, for many people snatch precious minutes from their busy schedule of work or study in order to day-dream--so compelling is its urge. The person who gives himself up to reverie is generally aware of its unreal and futile nature, and yet he clings to it because, as Horney says, it provides 'a solution not only for a particular conflict but one that implicitly promises to satisfy all the inner needs that have arisen in an individual at a given time. Moreover, it promises not only a riddance from his painful and unbearable feelings but in addition an ultimately mysterious fulfilment of himself and his life.'[12]

The primary cause behind day-dreaming is not the desire to escape from conflicts but a dim awareness of the supreme glory of one's true Self, the Atman. This awareness produces in every civilized human being an inherent urge to attain perfection, infinite knowledge, power, boundless love and bliss. Karen Horney calls this the 'search for glory'. Since the fulfilment of such an urge is not possible in ordinary worldly life, the urge finds expression in all kinds of day-dreams.

The problem posed by day-dreaming is not merely the waste of time but the loss of elan. As Horney puts it, 'The energies driving towards self-realization are shifted to the aim of actualizing the idealized self.' However, several psychologists including

---

11. Karen Horney, 'The Search for Glory' in *The Self—Explorations in Personal Growth,* Ed. Clark Moustakas (New York: Harper & Bros., 1956) p. 223. This article also forms a part of Karen Horney's own book *Neurosis and Human Growth* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1950).
12. *Ibid.*

Horney have shown that the fantasy-self exerts some influence on the normal life of the person. It may induce the person to convert his everyday life into a drive for perfection. In that event the fantasy-self and the ego come closer and closer together, though their fusion rarely takes place.

6. *Ideal Self or spirit-image.* Day-dreaming is more or less an unconscious or subliminal activity and the fantasy-self is alienated from the real ego. A different, fully conscious process takes place in spiritual life. Since the real higher Self or Atman cannot be so easily realized, the spiritual aspirant may consciously create an ideal Self or spirit-image endowed with utter purity, beauty, love, knowledge, light. The ego is made to identify itself with this spirit-image so much so that this process does not create self-alienation in the aspirant.

Creation of the spirit-image has an important and scripturally sanctioned place in the path of Bhakti. Here, depending upon his attitude towards the Deity, the aspirant thinks of himself as a servant, friend, child or bride. This process is often put into practice so thoroughly and with such intensity that the spirit-image in due course swallows up the entire ego and becomes the actual Self of the aspirant. Sri Ramakrishna demonstrated in his life the validity of this process to an astonishingly high degree. When he strove to realize Śrī Rāma, he thought of himself as Hanuman and his whole personality changed into that of Hanuman. When he strove to realize Śrī Kṛṣṇa his whole personality changed into that of Rādhā. Those who follow the path of Jñāna often create another type of spirit-image. They visualize the Self as a sphere of light or as a luminous lotus.

Spirit-image has tremendous transforming power, and much of the success in spiritual life depends upon making the ego conform to it.

In this context we may mention that, according to Patañjali, an advanced yogi can create out of his purified ego several new selves called *nirmāṇa-citta* which are like the fantasy-self but are as real as the phenomenal world and are operated by the powerful will of the yogi. On this point Swami Vivekananda says :

> With a view to exhausting their Karma quickly, yogis create *Kāya-vyūha,* or groups of bodies, in which to work it out. For all these bodies they create minds from the egoism. These are called 'created minds' in contradistinction to their original minds.[13]

7. *The witness-Self.* Behind all the selves mentioned above and observing their activities there stands the unchanging, ever-present, silent witness-Self which is none else than the *pratyagātman,* the immanent Self. It is not the ego but the ultimate source and goal of the ego.

Integration of the selves

The ego cannot be seen as the physical body is, nor can it be photographed. Other than the experience of 'I' our understanding of the ego comes to us indirectly through the different images of the self described above. With so many selves or surrogate selves operating in the same person it is not surprising that many people feel alienation and disharmony within themselves, lack of intensity of aspiration, and inability to persevere in any goal-oriented pursuit with undivided dedication. This problem assumes greater importance in spiritual life. Without effecting some measure of integration of these selves it is not possible to make much headway in spiritual life.

All these selves are only projections of one undivided consciousness. Therefore, it is by transforming our consciousness that

---

13. Swami Vivekananda, *Rāja Yoga,* Part II, commentary on *Yoga-sutra* 4.4

integration can be achieved. Transformation of consciousness is mediated through several agents like work, meditation, ideals, love and the spiritual guide. How this takes place will be the subject of our study next month.

SWAMI SHUDDHANANDA

SWAMI MUKTINATHANANDA

The following tribute to Swami Shuddhananda which appeared in a leading journal nearly fifty years ago may serve as a good way of introducing the life of that illustrious monk :

A devoted disciple of the great Swami Vivekananda, in whom the principles laid down by the great Master for the shaping of life and the regulation and governance of the Order were almost incarnate, he was the first to occupy the Presidential chair of the Order after the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. To many younger members of the organization his life and action helped to set the norm for the direction and guidance of the activities of the Mission as well as of their personal lives in accordance with the ideas and ideals of Swami Vivekananda. And justly enough his great devotion to his master, his long and close association with him as well as his intellectual honesty, sincerity of purpose, extreme clarity of thinking and firm hold on principles (which he could contemplate with the utmost dispassion and detachment) eminently fitted him for the role. The Ramakrishna Order owes him an unrepayable debt for his invaluable services in connection with the building up of its great tradition and the bequeathing of it to posterity.[1]

Swami Shuddhananda's pre-monastic name was Sudhir Chandra Chakraborty. Sudhir was born in an aristocratic family of Calcutta in the year 1872. His father, Sri Asutosh Chakraborty was very devout and liberal-minded Brahmin. His mother was an equally pious lady who left an indelible impression on his young mind. About his mother Sudhir later said, 'Sometimes I think of my mother; though she was ever busy taking care of her children, occasionally she would express so much anxiety for my father that I could understand how deeply devoted she was to her husband. Whenever he was late in returning home, my mother would be seen eagerly waiting for him with her eyes fixed on the road outside.'[2]

Sudhir had a strong inclination to religious life from his very childhood. Even as a boy he was fond of reading religious books and seeking the company of holy men. When he was a student Sudhir ran away from home twice in search of a religious vocation, going on one occasion up to Deoghar on foot.[3] Sudhir had a younger brother by name Sushil Chandra who too became a monk under the name Swami Prakashananda and another illustrious disciple of Swami Vivekananda.

Sudhir was a brilliant student and was awarded scholarship for his excellent performance in School Leaving Examination. Then he joined the City College of Calcutta as a F.A. (now Higher Secondary or Pre-University) student. While studying in college, he became a member of the

---

1. 'Swami Shuddhananda: In Memoriam' *Prabuddha Bharata* November, 1938, Vol. XLIII, No. 2, P. 522

2. Pareshnath Sengupta, *Swamī Śuddhānanda O Vivekananda Society* (Bengali) (Calcutta: author) p. 15

3. Swami Jagadiswarananda, 'Swami Shuddhananda' *Udbodhan*, Aṣāḍ, 1356 B.S., P. 285

'Friends' Circle' formed by Khagen (who later on became Swami Vimalananda). As a result of religious discussions with his friends, his attachment to religion became very intense. Since 1890, when he was 18 years old, he began frequenting Baranagore Monastery and Kankurgachi Yogodyana in order to keep company with the direct disciples and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna.[4]

Sudhir began to spend more and more time in religious practices like scriptural studies, discussions, devotional songs and so on. The central meeting place for him and his close friends was the home of Khagen. There was a Debating Club in which they used to deliver lectures in English as well as in Bengali on various religious topics. In those days the famous yogi Shyama Charan Lahiri's disciple Panchanan Bhattacharya of Arya Mission Institute used to give yoga lessons to a large number of young men. Sudhir too used to attend these yoga classes. He would put his whole being into whatever pursuit he was engaged in. Therefore, during the practice of yoga, he would observe strict austerity in food and dress. Instead of wearing a shirt, he would cover his body simply with a *chaddar* (long shawl) and walk bare-footed. Contrary to the prevailing custom, he would even attend his college in such a simple attire for which once he was reprimanded by his teacher Prof. Heramba Maitra.[5]

As Sudhir's longing for God intensified, he could no longer remain contented with his old stereotyped life. Once he hired a boat and went to Dakshineswar along with his friends Khagen, Kalikrishna (later Swami Virajananda) and other young men of his group. They procured rice, pulses, fuel, cooking pot etc. from the temple store and cooked their meal. After spending the whole night in meditation in the sacred place the party returned the next afternoon.

Around this time Sudhir became closely connected with Swami Yogananda and other direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Together with his friends he would spend a long time in religious discussion with the Swamis. About his first visit to the Baranagore Monastery he later on wrote in a letter :

> When I went to the Baranagore Monastery for the first time in the year 1890, I remember to have seen him (Gopal-dada, known as Swami Advaitananda) there. On that day Sri Girish Ghosh and Swami Abhedananda were engaged in various philosophical discussions. I was then studying in the Entrance class. I went and sat near him like other visitors. Needless to say, I could not grasp the drift of their discussion. When I got up, I distinctly remember, Gopal-dada went to a room and handed me a booklet entitled, *Sayings of Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva: Volume* 1 compiled by Suresh Chandra Dutta. Thereafter he said, 'Today we were talking about philosophy. Anyway, read this book and come to the Math another day.'[6]

Sudhir continued to visit the Monastery even when it was shifted from Baranagore to Alambazar. An eye-witness who was closely associated with Sudhir from this time onwards presents the following account :

> I saw Swami Shuddhanandaji first as a devout young man who used to visit the Alambazar Math now and then. At that time he was neither a Sannyasin nor a Brahmacharin, but a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna charged with the fire of purity and renunciation. He used to be accompanied by a band of like-minded young men—eager to have the holy company of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna—men of lofty character, seekers of truth and filled with the spirit of renunciation. One evening I had the opportunity to visit this Ashrama together with Swami Adbhutanandaji (Latu Maharaj). After singing in a group devotional songs and the *ārātrika* hymn of the Master, they sat around

---

4. 'Swamijīr Sannidhane', *Udbodhan, Asvin*, 1370 B.S. p. 498

5. Swami Abjajananda, *Swāmijīr Padaprānte* (Bengali), Belur Math: Ramakrishna Mission Saradapith, 1972, pp. 2-3. Henceforth *Padaprānte*

6. *Padaprānte* p. 4

revered Adbhutanandaji and heard from his lips about the divine life of Sri Ramakrishna. Thereafter in obedience to Adbhutanandaji's order, Shuddhanandaji (then Sri Sudhir Chakraborty) started reading and explaining Sanskrit verses from *Caitanya Candrāmṛta.* That event of my boyhood is still vivid in my memory. Although I could not clearly comprehend his exposition, yet I was then greatly attracted to it.[7]

In the year 1896 Sudhir went to Varanasi to spend a few days in solitude. Swami Advaitanandaji was then staying there and leading an ascetic life. Sudhir was very happy to be able to enjoy the holy company of the Swami. However, he could not stay in Varanasi for long; owing to a sudden attack of fever he had to return to Calcutta.

In the mean time news about Swamiji's triumphal preaching work in the West was very much in the air. With all sincerity and eagerness Sudhir kept himself informed of every piece of available news about Swamiji. Finally, Swamiji returned to India on the 26th January 1897. How Sudhir prepared himself to meet the hero can be best described by quoting from his own reminiscences :

From the moment when in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago Swamiji proved the superiority of the Hindu Dharma and left the banner of Hinduism flying victoriously in the West, I had gathered every possible information regarding him from newspapers and read them with great interest. I had left college only two or three years ago, and I had not settled down to earning. So I spent my time, now visiting my friends, now going to the office of the Indian Mirror, devouring the latest news about him and studying the reports of his lectures. Almost all that he had spoken in Ceylon and in Madras from the time he had set foot in India had thus been read by me. Besides this, I used to visit the Alambazar Math and hear from his gurubhais as well as from those of my friends who used to frequent the Math many things about Swamiji. Further, nothing escaped my notice of the comments concerning him that appeared in *Bangabasi, Amritabazar, Hope, Theosophist,* etc—some satirical, some admonishing, some patronizing, each according to its own outlook and temperament.[8]

Gradually the day drew near when Swamiji was scheduled to arrive at Calcutta, the city of his birth. A huge crowd assembled at the Sealdah Railway Station to receive him on the morning of February, 1897. Sudhir too was present amidst the crowd to have a glimpse of Swamiji for the first time. This event he later described as follows :

The station platform became a surging mass of humanity.... We heard then that Swamiji was coming in a special train, and that there was not much delay for his arrival. There it is! The sound of the train is being heard, and with usual puff, the train heaves into the platform. As the carriage stopped, I was fortunately placed on that very spot overlooking the carriage that brought in Swamiji .... At that moment I could only get a cursory glance of him.... When we came out of the platform, we found that Swamiji's carriage was unhorsed and a band of young men were getting ready to draw it themselves. I also tried to join them, but the crowd prevented my doing so. So giving up this attempt, I began to walk accompanying the carriage from a little distance.... The carriage came and drew up in front of Ripon College. This time I was able to get an opportunity to see Swamiji well. I found him with his head projected out of the carriage and talking with some old acquaintance. That face was extraordinarily brilliant, and it seemed as if it was emitting rays of brilliant light; yet it seemed to be a bit dim because of the fatigue the journey had entailed.[9]

Not being satiated with mere glimpses of Swamiji from a distance Sudhir, alongwith his friend Khagen, went on the same afternoon to the house of Pashupati Babu, where

---

7. Kumud Bandhu Sen, 'Swami Shuddhanandaji' *Udbodhan,* Agrahāyan, 1345 B.S. p. 609

8. His Eastern and Western Admirers, *Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda,* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1983) p. 316 (Henceforth *Reminiscences*)

9. *Reminiscences* p. 317

Swamiji was then resting. Swami Shivananda introduced them to Swamiji with the words, 'These young men are your ardent admirers.' However, Sudhir had to wait for a few more days till he got a chance to talk to Swamiji. The event took place in the garden-house of late Gopal Lal Seal in Cossipore where Swamiji and his disciples, Mr. and Mrs. Sevier, were staying. In Sudhir's own words : 'Swamiji was then sitting inside and I went and prostrated myself before him. There was nobody else in the room. Suddenly, I do not know why, Swamiji asked me, "Do you smoke ?" I replied. "No" to which Swamiji replied, "Very well, smoking is not good, I am also trying to leave it off.' "[10] However, on that day the conversation did not proceed any further.

As Sudhir became familiar with the wonderful personality of Swamiji his longing to be more closely associated with him was steadily increasing. As a result, he started visiting Swamiji as frequently as possible. Needless to say, these meetings went a long way in moulding the future life of Sudhir. Descriptions of two such meetings are presented below to show how Swamiji's intense love of the Upaniṣads was transfused into Sudhir's mind in the course of just two days' conversations.

One day Sudhir and Khagen (Swami Vimalananda) went to meet Swamiji. Haramohan Babu (a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna) introduced them to Swamiji saying, 'Swamiji, these are your great admirers and they study Vedanta with great aptitude.' Hearing Vedanta mentioned, Swamiji asked them, 'Have you studied the Upaniṣads ?' 'Yes, a little', replied Sudhir. 'Which Upaniṣad ?' enquired Swamiji. Sudhir nervously answered, 'Kaṭha Upaniṣad.' Hearing the name of his favourite Upaniṣad, Swamiji at once ordered, 'Well, repeat a few lines. Kaṭha Upaniṣad is very grand, full of poetic beauties.' At this command of Swamiji, however, Sudhir was at his wit's end because though he had turned over the pages of this Upaniṣad, he had not committed it to memory. In order to save his face Sudhir humbly said, 'I do not know by heart Kaṭha Upaniṣad ; but from the Gita I can repeat a few verses.' At the behest of Swamiji, Sudhir recited a few verses from the eleventh chapter of the Gita. Swamiji greatly encouraged him with appreciative remarks.

The next day they again went to Swamiji together with their friend Rajendra Nath Ghosh.[11] Remembering the previous day's predicament, they took a pocket edition of Upaniṣads. As soon as the topic of conversation turned to Kaṭha Upaniṣad Sudhir took out the book from his pocket and began to read the Upaniṣad from the beginning. When the reading was over, Swamiji praised the character of Naciketa in such glowing words that they were deeply imprinted on Sudhir's mind to serve as a constant source of inspiration and encouragement throughout the rest of his life. Later, Sudhir acknowledged this in the following words :

> But by these two days' talk on the Upaniṣads Swamiji infused into my mind something of his intense faith and love of the Upaniṣads. From that day, whenever I got an opportunity, I studied the Upaniṣads with due reverence and am still doing the same. Even now I seem to hear those Upaniṣadic mantras which Swamiji used to repeat at different times, in his own peculiarly fiery, clear, and ringing tone. Whenever I forget the Self, carried away by criticisms and judgement of others, memory brings back to me that familiar Upaniṣadic text which Swamiji used to repeat often in his own sweet and melodious tone: 'Know that Atman alone. Give up all other talks. He is the bridge to

10. *Reminiscences* p. 319

11. A renowned Vedantic scholar who later joined the Ramakrishna Order and received Sannyasa initiation from Swami Virajanandaji ; he was renamed Swami Chidghanananda Puri.

immortality.' On any day when the sky is dark and thick-set with clouds and lightning flashed, I remember his familiar figure pointing to the flash of lightning in the sky and uttering the well-known mantra: 'There the sun shines not, nor the moon nor stars. These lightnings also do not shine there; He shining, all shine, after Him; His light illumines them all.' Or whenever my heart gets filled with despondency that realization is far away from me, I seem to hear Swamiji with his face suffused with bliss, repeating in sonorous voice the message of hope from the Upaniṣads: 'Hear, ye children of immortal bliss! even ye that reside in higher spheres! I have found the Ancient One, who is beyond all darkness, all delusion; knowing Him alone you shall be saved from death over again—there is no other way![12]

Thus two months passed since Sudhir became personally acquainted with Swamiji. As Sudhir's mind was completely occupied with the thoughts and ideas of Swamiji, his studies came to a standstill. Eventually, he could not sit for his B.A. examination. In the meantime, his younger brother, Sushil (later Swami Prakashananda) renounced the world and joined the Alambazar monastery. This raised a great stir in Sudhir's mind. The state of his mind during this period can be best described by quoting his own reminiscences :

My younger brother, Swami Prakashananda, joined the Math prior to me. For quite some time after his joining, the condition of my mind beggared description. I was then staying at home and my urge for spirituality was very intense. However, I spent months together with my mind possessed with the dilemma as to which of the two paths would be propitious for the attainment of my goal—to renounce the world and become a monk or lead a religious life living in home; I was also wondering whether I would be able to be a true monk. My mind was terribly restless but I could not decide anything. I used to visit the Alambazar Math regularly. One day during this period I heard from a monk, 'Look yonder at those Sannyasins of Gajan.[13] Even they are far superior to the householders if they sincerely follow the vows, no matter for how short a period.' On hearing these words I gained such strength in my mind that on that very day I decided to become a monk. There was no more any trace of doubt in my mind.[14]

Sudhir joined the Alambazar monastery towards the end of April, 1897. Swamis Premananda, and Subodhananda were living there at that time but Swamiji was then away at Darjeeling. After four or five days Swamiji returned to the Math together with Swami Brahmananda, Swami Yogananda as well as his own disciples, Alasinga Perumal, Kidi, G. G. Narasimhacharya and others. Swamiji was immensely pleased to find Sudhir at the Math and started calling him affectionately by the nickname 'Khoka' (lad). Sudhir too felt blessed to have been accepted by Swamiji.

As an increasing number of young men started joining the Math, many felt the need for a systematic training of the young inmates. One day Swami Nityananda, a newly initiated sannyasin disciple of Swamiji told him, 'Now many young men have joined the Math to lead the life of renunciation. It would be very nice if arrangements are made to train them according to a specific set of rules.' Swamiji readily approved the proposal and said, 'Yes, yes. It is indeed desirable to frame a set of rules. Call everyone.' When all assembled in the hall, Swamiji ordered, 'Let someone go on writing as I dictate.' Thereupon everybody started nudging one another but none came forward. At last, Sudhir was pushed to the front. Later, Sudhir recorded the incident as follows :

When I came forward to take down Swamiji's dictation, Swamiji casually remarked whether I would stick on, and some one answered that I

12. *Reminiscences,* pp. 327-28

13. A festival of worshipping Shiva dnring which some people wear ochre robes and practise certain religious rites.

14. Paresh Nath Sengupta, *op. cit.* pp. 14-15

would. All the while I was getting the writing materials ready; and Swamiji before dictating the rules remarked as follows: 'Look here, we are going to make rules, no doubt; but we must remember the main object thereof. Our main object is to transcend all rules and regulations. We have naturally some bad tendencies which are to be changed by observing good rules and regulations; and finally we have to go beyond all these even, just as we remove one thorn by another and throw both of them away.' The course of discipline and routine decided upon was of this kind: Both mornings and evenings should be devoted to meditation, while the afternoons after a short rest should be utilized for individual studies, and in the evenings one particular religious book should be read and expounded. It was also provided that each member would take physical exercise both morning and evening. Another rule was to the effect that no intoxicant save tobacco should be allowed. Having dictated the rules, Swamiji asked me to make a fair copy of the rules and instructed me that I should put all the rules in the positive form.[15]

Notwithstanding his numerous preoccupations, Swamiji was ever eager to train the young inmates in various ways. Among other things, he particularly encouraged them to practice the art of delivering lectures. One day Swamiji was conversing on various topics in a hall where Vijaya Krishna Bose, a prominent speaker, was present among the audience. Although Swamiji as well as others present repeatedly requested Vijaya Babu to deliver a lecture on Atman (Self), he did not agree to it. Then someone pointed out that even before joining the Math Sudhir had occasionally delivered lectures in Bengali and in their Debating Society he had trained himself to speak in English as well. Then Sudhir was asked to speak on the same subject. Sudhir narrated his reaction as follows:

> I have never been encumbered much with that inconvenient commodity called modesty. I at once stood up and held forth for nearly half an hour giving out ideas about ātman beginning with those contained in the 'Yājñavalkya-Maitreyi Samvāda' of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. I did not pay any heed whether there were grammatical mistakes or any incongruity of ideas in my speech. Our gracious Swamiji also, without caring for any of these, began to cheer me enthusiastically.[16]

Referring to Swami Shuddhananda, Swamiji remarked later on, 'In time he will be an excellent speaker.'[17]

In addition to oratory, Sudhir was quite an adept in the art of writing as well. In fact, he translated almost the entire *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* from English into Bengali. His mind was so much attuned to Swamiji's thoughts and ideas that his renderings appear as if they were original compositions of Swamiji. Every bit of it is surcharged with Swamiji's spirit. Over the years countless men and women have derived their inspiration from these wonderful translations. It was none other than Swamiji who discovered this talent in young Sudhir and commanded him to begin the translation work. The background of the incident was this: One day Swami Premananda asked the new Brahmacharins of the Math to translate Swamiji's lectures into Bengali. Afterwards Swami Premananda asked Sudhir to read out the translation before Swamiji. Swamiji was extremely pleased with Sudhir's translation. A few days later when Sudhir was alone in the presence of Swamiji, suddenly Swamiji asked, 'Why don't you translate my Raja Yoga?' Sudhir immediately set to work to carry out the order of his Master. That this humble attempt eventually resulted in a monumental literary tour de force is now a historic truth. Sudhir's renderings of 'The Song of the Sannyasin' and

15. *Reminiscences*, p. 329

16. Ibid, pp. 330-331

17. His Eastern and Western disciples, *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1933), 2nd edn., Vol. II, p. 755

other pieces composed by Swamiji are an invaluable addition to Bengali literature. Indeed, the people of Bengal are deeply indebted to him for his immortal service in enriching the Bengali language by translating Swamiji's *Complete Works* in such an exquisite manner.

Sudhir was endowed with a wonderful memory. In particular, whatever he heard from Swamiji would be firmly imprinted on his mind. One day Swamiji held a discourse on the Bhagavad Gita at the Math. After a few days, at the instance of Swami Premananda, Sudhir reproduced from memory the entire talk, which was subsequently incorporated into the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* under the title 'Thoughts on the Gita'. Those who have gone through this article cannot but admire the magnificent memory of Swami Shuddhananda, because the piece can hardly be distinguished from the original writings of Swamiji. However, this was not all. Sudhir endeavoured to communicate the various moods assumed by Swamiji during the course of the said talk so that the readers might grasp Swamiji's ideas more thoroughly. He wrote :

> O Readers! I feel as if I am still seeing the image of that great personality in front of me. Through my humble effort let that image illumine before your mind's eye also. While remembering him the image of a profoundly learned, extremely vigorous and immensely loving personality arises before my mind's eye today. You too try to visualize our Swamiji transcending the barrier of time and space.
>
> When he started he appeared to be a great critic. As he was thoroughly analysing the sequence of causes for doubting the historicity of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna, Vyāsa, the battle of Kurukṣetra etc. it appeared at times that he surpassed even a very stern critic.... Later on, after briefly explaining the harmony of all faiths and selfiess work as outlined in the Gita, he started reading the verses. While reading the stanza beginning with *Klaibyam māsmagamah pārtha* ('O Pārtha, yield not to unmanliness') from the second chapter, in which Srī Kṛṣṇa exhorts Arjuna to fight, Swamiji assumed the mood in which he used to address large public gatherings. Kṛṣṇa admonishes: 'This does not befit thee' (*na etat tvayyupapadyate*)—you are all-powerful, thou art Brahman, all these weaknesses in you do not befit you. As Swamiji was expounding this principle in vigorous language like a prophet, it appeared as if great power was emanating from his inner being. Swamiji continued, 'When you have to look upon others as Brahman, you must not despise even a rank sinner.' But as he uttered the words, 'Don't hate even a rank sinner', his facial expression changed—that image is still imprinted in my heart—and it appeared as if love was flowing from his face in a hundred streams. His whole face was full of love and there was not the least tinge of harshness.
>
> As Swamiji saw that the essence of the whole of the Gita was contained within this single verse (Gita 2.3) he at last concluded, 'One earns the merit of reading the entire Gita just by going through this single verse.'[18]

Sudhir had the rare privilege of studying Vedanta scriptures directly from a knower of Brahman—his own Guru, Swami Vivekananda. This is why the spirit of the scriptures was crystal-clear in his extremely rational mind. Swamiji kept a watchful eye on his disciples and helped them to develop a penetrating insight into the mysteries of the scriptures. Once while teaching Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahma-Sūtra,* Swamiji said, 'Instead of studying the commentaries on the Brahmasūtras, try independently to comprehend the meanings of all the aphorisms.' Sudhir was fortunate to attend this class about which he gave a detailed narration as follows :

> The aphorisms of the first part (*pāda*) of the first chapter were being read. Swamiji was instructing us how to pronounce Sanskrit correctly. He said, 'We do not pronounce the Sanskrit language properly. However, its articulation is so simple that everybody may pronounce Sanskrit accurately with just a little effort. As we are accustomed to wrong articulation

---

18. *Swāmijīr Kathā* (Bengali), (Calcutta: Udbodhan, 1368 B S), 5th edition pp. 72-74

since our childhood, correct pronunciation appears so unfamiliar and difficult to us. Why do we wrongly pronounce the word Atmā ? (In Bengali, the word Atmā is commonly pronounced as *āttā*.) The venerable sage Patañjali remarked in his Great Commentary that those who are unable to pronounce correctly are *mlecchas* (non-Hindus, belonging to non-Aryan tribes). All of us, then, according to Patañjali have become *mlecchas*.' Then the new Brahmacharins and Sannyasins in turn began reading the aphorisms of the Brahmasūtras, pronouncing them as correctly as they could. After that Swamiji showed how the literal meaning of the aphorisms may be deciphered through the analysis of each and every word. In that context he commented, 'Who says that the aphorisms patronize the monistic philosophy alone ? Śankara was a monist—he tried to explain all the aphorisms in the light of monistic philosophy only. But you should try to find the literal meaning of the aphorisms—you should endeavour to understand the real intention of Vyāsa (the author). Take, for example, the aphorism: *Asmin asya ca tad yogam sāsti*.[19] In my opinion the true explanation of this aphorism is that both monism and qualified dualism are supported by Bhagavān Vedavyāsa in it....'

Anyway, the readings continued. Gradually we arrived at the aphorism: *Śāstra drstya tu upadesah Vāmadevavat*.[20] Having explained this aphorism, Swamiji turned to Swami Premananda and said, 'Look, your Lord (Sri Ramakrishna) used to call himself God from this standpoint.' However, after saying so he at once turned his face towards another direction and remarked, 'Nevertheless, he told me on his death-bed: "He who was Rama, he who was Kṛṣṇa, he himself is presently Ramakrishna, but not from the point of view of your Vedanta."' After saying this Swamiji asked us to read another aphorism....

Be that as it may, these words of Swamiji did me a great favour. Having studied a little English, I did not achieve any thing significant except that I particularly learnt to doubt. In the core of my heart I had the impression that the disciples of great men take recourse to various imaginations and exaggerations in order to magnify their Masters. However, after noticing Swamiji's wonderful sincerity and truthfulness, the idea that he might exaggerate anything was completely eliminated. I was convinced that whatever Swamiji said was real and therefore, through his words, I got a new light regarding Sri Ramakrishna. Now I am trying to comprehend what he himself had declared 'He who was Rama and he who was Kṛṣṇa, the same being is presently known as Ramakrishna.' Swamiji was infinitely kind, he has not told us to give up doubts, nor has he instructed us to believe anyone's word all on a sudden. He said, 'Discuss and study this wonderful life of Sri Ramakrishna as far as you can with the help of your little learning and intellect—as for me, I have not yet been able to understand one millionth part of him—the more you try to comprehend that, the more joy will you derive and the more charmed will you become.'[21]

(*To be continued*)

19. *Brahmasūtra* 1/1/19
20. Ibid, 1/1/30
21. *Swāmijīr Kathā* pp. 74-78

The road to good is the roughest and steepest in the universe. It is a wonder that so many succeed, no wonder that so many fall. Character has to be established through a thousand stumbles.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

THE FOUR STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

(*A study of Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad in the light of Patañjali's Yoga*)

SAUMENDRA NATH MUKHOPADHYAY

It is said that the ancient king Janaka once had a very bad dream. He saw himself as a shelterless vagabond, ill-fed and half-clad, begging for alms door to door. He woke up with a perturbed mind but found himself lying comfortably on the royal couch. Next morning he summoned his council of wise men and posed the question : 'Am I really king Janaka, momentarily playing the role of a beggar in dream or am I really a beggar dreaming as the king in this court ?' Serious deliberations followed, but here we need no get into those intricacies. Instead, let us pose Janaka's question in a slightly different manner. Is the world of waking consciousness more real than the dream world ? Most may hurriedly respond, 'Obviously, yes'. And one of the plausible reasons they may put forth is that the waking state is of long duration whereas dreams are momentary. But I believe if we could put the same question to a new-born baby who spends his time sleeping and dreaming during the major part of the day and night with occasional breaks for a feed or other physical needs, the child would say : 'I am the happy little angel in my dream world. Grown-ups live in a gross but illusive world of matter.' For a baby the waking state is momentary whereas sleeping or dreaming is of longer duration. As a matter of fact, the scales of time and space are different in the two states, and do not determine the absolute validity of experience in either state.

Questions of this kind were taken up seriously by the ancient sages in India and, in trying to find answers to them, they made some profound discoveries about the nature of human consciousness. Though the four states of consciousness are discussed in several Upaniṣads, it is in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* that they are treated in a systematic way. Our present discussion is chiefly based on this Upaniṣad which we have tried to understand with the help of the insights provided by Patañjali in his Yoga Aphorisms.

Two manifested states of consciousness

Most of us can easily identify two states of our consciousness : one known as the waking state in which our organs perceive and interact with the outside material world, and the other known as the dreaming state in which we live in an inner luminous world of objects which are for the most part re-creations or symbolic transformations of waking state experiences. The *Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad* calls the self as it appears in the first state Viśva and the self as it appears in the second state Taijasa.[1]

Thoughts are essentially either abstractions of our past experience or expressions of our future expectations. The scope of the inner dreaming state is much wider than what we conventionally understand by the word 'dream'. Though they appear to be separate, the identity of these two states of consciousness becomes clear when their experiences complement each other. What is generally called inattention is nothing but a partial manifestation of the dream state in the waking state. In the dream state, the identity of the two states usually shows up during the fag end of sleep when occasionally some persons become simultaneously aware of the outside world or of the fact of their lying on a bed. A few individuals

---

1. *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* 3,4

may proudly announce that they do not dream at all or hardly ever. What such statements really mean is that they are so insensitive or inattentive that they cannot watch or remember their mental movements. Anyway, a careful study of the two states indicates that waking (the world of matter) and dreaming (the world of thoughts) are not separated by impregnable barriers. Rather, they constitute a continuum. They are really two holographic pictures appearing on the same canvas of consciousness each fulfilling the other. Sigmund Freud saw the close relationship between waking life and dream experiences which he regarded as revealing the real nature of man. We know that many of our conscious and unconscious desires and emotions find expression during sleep. On the other hand, the dream world is the infinite creative source where we unceasingly turn out blueprints of plans for action in this outside material world. Devotees believe that God too has a dream to fulfil in this universe.[2]

The unmanifested third state

The aforementioned two states of consciousness are manifested states, that is, in these states consciousness comes into contact with objects, gross or subtle. The Upaniṣad specifies a third state, the state of deep sleep (*suṣupti*), in which we are neither awake nor dreaming, but remain fully relaxed enjoying real bliss. In this state the focus of consciousness is withdrawn into itself with the result that the phenomenal universe is not experienced. This is the unmanifested (*avyakta*) state of consciousness when consciousness remains as one undivided mass. The Self in this state is known as *Prājña*.[3] Patañjali regards deep sleep as a state in which the mind experiences void.[4] In Advaita Vedanta it is regarded as the causal state, since all the experiences, powers and activities of the mind remain dormant.

It is a state of total quiet wisdom—the beginning and end of the entire creation. It is said that normal human beings usually retire into the third state for about half an hour during a twenty-four-hour cycle but unfortunately they cannot transport the power and wisdom of that state into their wakeful ego-centric personality. Some people believe that dreams just before daybreak often come true. This is probably because the wisdom of the deep-sleep state occasionally trickles through and reach the waking consciousness via the dream world.

The fourth, absolute state

The Upaniṣad goes further and speaks of a fourth state which transcends the three states of consciousness discussed so far. The fourth state known as *turīya* may be better understood through an analogy. If waking is taken as bright day and deep sleep as dark night, then dream consciousness is the connecting twilight; but all these are relative with respect to the Sun, which by itself signifies a fourth absolute state. This is our real Self or Atman beyond all descriptions and quite distinct from the manifestations of the other three states. This is the state to be realized—proclaims the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*.[5] But how to attain this fourth, absolute state of consciousness is the million dollar question for all serious spiritual aspirants.

The Māṇḍūkya way to the Truth

The *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* does not describe the exact technique for the attainment

---

2. See, Śamkara's invocatory verse at the beginning of his commentary on *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad.*

3. *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, 5*

4. अभावप्रत्ययालम्बना वृत्तिर्निद्रा ।

Patañjali, *Yogasūtra* 1.10

5. स आत्मा, स विज्ञेयः ।

Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, 7.

of the fourth state, but only hints at it. What it really does is to expound the mystic word 'AUM' and relate the three letters to the three states—waking, dreaming and deep sleep respectively—and the undivided mystic sound to the fourth state or *turīya*.[6] AUM as a symbol also represents all words (and by implication all objects and all worlds) expressed or otherwise, and therefore AUM is the source, the support and the final sink of all the names and forms of the past, present and the future. Since states determine manifestations and manifestations define states,[7] we should systematically merge the consciousness of one state into the consciousness of the next state with the help of their manifestations and nltimately reach the unified third state as a preparation for the absolute fourth state. AUM also signifies this absolute state which lies beyond all space and time. It may be noted that phenomenal manifestations, be it gross (the outside world) or subtle (the mental world) have not been ignored as an illusive Maya. Rather, these are the only signposts or direction finders available here to lead us to higher consciousness.

The *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* does not elaborate the technique further. But here Patañjali's Yoga Aphorisms come to our help. Patañjali also recommends an identical approach. He first identifies *praṇava*, that is AUM, with the Supreme Lord (*Iśvara*) and then asks us to repeat this mystic word meditating upon its meaning. How does this repetition lead to the realization of the Truth? In order to understand this it is necessary to know the relationship between word, its meaning and referent (the object which it stands for). It is through meditation that this verbal relationship becomes clear and it is through meditation that one goes beyond it and realizes the truth. The science of meditation and the realization of the ultimate Truth have been codified in Patañjali's Aphorisms.

Essence of Patañjali's Yoga

Patañjali's *Yoga-Sutra* embodies a very logically structured system of knowledge which, though based on a definite metaphysical framework, still retains enough flexibility to have an eternal and universal appeal. It has been interpreted differently by various commentators. But for our present purpose, a simple understanding of the first four aphorisms of Patañjali's Yoga will suffice. In fact, the first four aphorisms (*catuḥsūtrī*) represent the essence of Patañjali's Yoga, the remaining aphorisms serving only as a comprehensive amplification of the former.

The first aphorism states, 'Next, Yoga is taught.'[8] Here the word 'next' (*atha*) indicates all the preliminary disciplines (physical, moral and social) to be undergone before taking up yoga.

The second aphorism states that yoga is *citta vṛtti nirodhaḥ*, cessation of mind-waves.[9] This should, however, be taken only as an indicative (*taṭastha*) definition, not an intrinsic (*svarūpa*) definition. For, yoga is not mere cessation of mental waves —if it were so, the third aphorism would have been superfluous—but something more, some positive experience. Moreover, as pointed out earlier, all *citta vṛttis* and phenomenal manifestations remain subdued during the state of deep sleep, but the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* defines a transcendent fourth state. Patañjali too posits a transcendent state and yoga becomes meaningful only if it is understood in terms of this transcendent state. Therefore, cessation of mind

---

6. Ibid, 10

7. पादा मात्राः, मात्राश्च पादाः । Ibid. 8

8. अथ योगानुशासनम् ।

9. योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ।

waves is a necessary but not sufficient condition for yoga.

The third aphorism defines the true state of yoga. It is a state in which the Self, Atman or Puruṣa remains in its absolute nature and there is no subject-object differentiation of consciousness.[10]

The fourth aphorism is the conclusion : it refers to the state in which the transcendent knowledge is applied to the phenomenal world.[11] This state of identification of the Self with phenomenal experience is called Samprajñāta. This aphorism may also be stated in a different way : since consciousness and thoughts (names and forms) are the two sides of the same coin, the subject and object are both one. The immanent and the transcendent are the same reality. The unchanging eternal spirit or the Self appears as the changing spatio-temporal phenomenon or non-self.

The *Īśa Upaniṣad* announces *pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam. Idam,* this, is the same reality as *adaḥ,* That. Here *Idam* refers to *vṛtti* in the language of Patañjali and Maya in the language of Vedanta, whereas *adaḥ* refers to Puruṣa of Patañjali and Brahman of Vedanta.

Samprajñāta yoga—a pragmatic approach

Strictly speaking, Samprajñāta is not yoga, by which is meant the state of absolute objectless consciousness. But since it is an unavoidably necessary preparation and advanced step to true yoga, it is often called yoga. Samprajñāta is really samādhi, by which is meant a state of consciousness in which the whole mind becomes a single *vṛtti* without any other modification and the Self gets fully identified with it. Samprajñāta has four dimensions : *vitarkānugata, vicārānugata, ānandānugata* and *asmitānugata.* Vitarkānugata refers to a state of mind in which the object of concentration is gross, that is, an external physical object. Vicārānugata refers to the state of mind in which the object of concentration is subtle, that is, a thought or an idea within. Ānandānugata means a state in which the instruments of perception, that is, the senses are in a state of rest and peace. Asmitānugata refers to the highest stage where the object of concentration is the reflection of the Puruṣa on the mind-stuff, that is, that pure 'I'-consciousness alone. Vitarkānugata Samprajñāta yoga has all the four dimensions of *samprajñāta.* Vicārānugata is independent of Vitarka and is therefore three dimensional. Similarly, Ānandānugata has two dimensions and Asmitānugata one dimension of Samprajñāta. This is the traditional interpretation of Samprajñāta.[12]

The traditional method of attaining these dimensions consists of a graded series of disciplines which include special bodily postures, breath control and long hours of concentration with closed eyes. Now, is there a more direct and natural way of attaining Samprajñāta in the course of our normal everyday life ? There is. By combining the wisdom of the Upaniṣads with the techniques of yoga we can strike out a direct path to the supreme goal.

The path is simple. Treat every manifestation as an embodiment of that absolute Self which lies beyond all mental conception or description. One should start with gross inanimate objects and, if pursued sincerely, this process becomes self-evolving and automatically proceeds through subtler and subtler realms. Does this path mean that earth, water, fire, son, daughter, parents, love, hate etc. are all divine manifestations ? Precisely yes, and this is the secret hidden

---

10. तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम् ।

11. वृत्तिसारूप्यमितरत्र ।

12. cf. Hariharananda Aranya, *Pātañjala Yoga Darsana* (Calcutta : University of Calcutta, 1967) pp. 41-43

in the fourth aphorism of Patañjali. This is the way taught by the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*—how to transform the waking and dream states into the transcendent state of *turīya*.[13] This has been the instruction of the great seers of Truth. Once Sri Ramakrishna was explaining the meaning of the Vaiṣṇava injunction 'to show compassion to all creatures.' Suddenly he gave his discourse a whole new turn by declaring 'compassion for creatures ! you fool . . . who are you to show compassion ? . . . Not compassion for others, but service of man as a manifestation of God !'[14] Swami Vivekananda worked out this message into a philosophy and manifesto of social work. We must remember that if we serve the poor, the sick or the suffering merely out of pity without looking upon them as God, we ourselves might become poor, sick or will suffer in course of time, because it is a natural law that our attitude of mind determines the direction of change of our being. The *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* instructs us 'Serve the parents as God'.[15] If we treat our parents as the living Divine, our worldly bonds will break and our life will get divinized. Thus renunciation of worldly attachment and attainment of divine consciousness are simultaneously achieved. This is the everpresent path to the everlasting goal. The truth of higher consciousness can be realized by actually living it, not by vain theorizing or logic chopping.

13. cf. सर्वं ह्येतद् ब्रह्म ।

Also cf. ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् ।

Isa. Upaniṣad, 1

सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म ।

Chāndogya Upaniṣad 3.14.1

14. *Life of Swami Vivekananda*—Revised Edn. (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1979) vol. 1. pp. 138-89

15. मातृदेवो भव पितृदेवो भव ।

Taittiriya Upaniṣad

Progressive transformation of waking-state consciousness

What is necessary is to hold on to our Self-awareness and look upon all objects as having their existence inseparable from it. If we keep this kind of awareness at all times in the midst of all our activities through conscious effort during waking hours till it becomes natural with us, we will soon reach a state where the perception of the outside world is internalized, that is, the visible world will appear as if it were contained within me or my enlarged mental space. The difference between the waking and dream states gets reduced now.[16] This merger of outside objective world into mental consciousness is the beginning of a real awakening. It is the first degree of *laya* or dissolution of the world. The outside world of my waking consciousness now appears as a dream, that is, a projection of my mind, and therefore its value and meaning undergo a substantial change !

This process of self-enlargement usually takes place in three identifiable steps as indicated by Sri Narendra Nath Brahmachari.[17] First I start feeling myself to be a mono-dimensional thread of consciousness passing through all the visible names and forms of the universe. Then in the second stage of growth, my mental consciousness takes the shape of a two-dimensional plane whereupon the outside world rests just as teacups rest on a tray. Then comes the third three-dimensional awareness wherein the so-called outside world is contained. However, at this stage the con-

16. According to a modern exponent of yoga, this is what Patañjali means when he advocates *svapna jñāna*, knowledge of dream, as an aid to concentration in *Yoga-Sūtra* 1.38. See, Brahmarshi Sri Satyadev *Yogarahasyam* (Bengali) (Calcutta: Sadhan Samar Karyalaya, 1977) p. 108

17. Narendra Nath Brahmachari, *Protimay Prāṇ-Pratiṣṭhā* (Bengali) (Baidyanath Dham, Deoghar: Dev Sangha, 1954) pp. 80-83

tainer and the contents remain different.

But if we continue this inner process of treating each manifestation as our absolute Self, we will soon realize that the seer ('I') and the seen (and therefore also the seeing process) are essentially made of the same stuff, just as my head, hands and other parts of the body are all made of the same flesh and skin. This organismic, unitive awareness of the external world is really the state of Vitarkānugata Samprajñāta Yoga. This experience leads to real *vairāgya* or detachment. The practice of renunciation without this kind of transformation of consciousness can be regarded only as negative attachment !

Once Vitarkānugata experience is attained, the remaining three stages of Samprajñāta yoga evolve rather easily. If we then pursue the Self with greater love and earnestness, the outside jackets of names and forms cease to attract our attention. This is Vicārānugata Samprajñāta Yoga where we see and feel the vast Self everywhere, unbroken and all-pervading, with all objects reduced to names and forms. Both Vitarka and Vicāra stages of Samprajñāta may be regarded as Yogic Dream State. From this we occasionally drop into the Yogic Deep-Sleep State, which corresponds to Ānandānugata Samprajñāta Yoga, and enjoy bliss. It is also known as Yoga Nidra. This process by which Yogic Deep Sleep overtakes Yogic (wakeful) Dream State represents the second degree of *laya* or merger. Several supernatural powers may manifest at this stage and tempt the Yogi away from further progress. But blessed are those who ignore the powers and forge ahead.

When we get used to the bliss of Ānandānugata Samprajñāta Yoga, it will no longer overwhelm us. We then graduate into Asmitānugata Samprajñāta Yoga where the pure 'I'-consciousness is apprehended. Only then are we fully prepared to receive the gift of grace of the fourth and absolute state, the *turīya*, which corresponds to Asamprajñāta Yoga. In this state the 'I'-consciousness merges into the absolute Self. This is the last degree of *laya* or dissolution which Gaudapada calls *alāta śānti*, 'the extinguishing of the fire brand'. Thus we find that the highest state of absolute existence is attained by a progressive transformation of self-awareness. The *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* describes this process as 'entering the Atman through the Atman.'[18] The Atman is our true nature and to realize it is the supreme goal of life.

---

18. संविशत्यात्मनात्मानं य एवं वेद ।
Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad. 12

Even the greatest fool can accomplish a task if it be after his heart. But the intelligent man is he who can convert every work into one that suits his taste. No work is petty.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM: AN APPRAISAL

DR. AMULYA MOHAPATRA

If there be order in the nation, there will be peace in the world —*Confucius*
Return good for evil —*Lao-Tzu*

The religion of China consists chiefly of the tenets of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Confucianism and Taoism are raligions indigenous to the country, while Buddhism was introduced from India in the year A.D. 65. The founder of Confucianism is Confucius and Lao-Tzu is believed to be the founder of Taoism. These two Chinese prophets, Confucius and Lao-Tzu, are not regarded as Saviours like Kṛṣṇa and Buddha, but are known as great sages and wise philosophers.

Confucianism is not a religion in the customary sense. It is not based on a monastic or priestly order. Confucius did not give a new religion; but he gave to the world a set of principles of social life and individual ethics with a force which was all his own.

The real name of Confucius was K'ung Fu Tzu (K'ung the Grand Master). He was also called K'ung Ch'iu (because of a bump on his head, *Ch'iu* meaning 'hill'). Like the other great spiritual leaders of mankind, Confucius was credited with a miraculous birth accompanied by celestial wonders. Born in about 551 B.C. he was brought up by his widowed mother in hardship and poverty. He was largely self-taught. In his early twenties he worked as a teacher, using his own home as school. He gained rapid fame for his practical wisdom and attracted disciples. He spent much time collecting and editing available literature about ancient customs and beliefs.

Confucius' personal goal, however, was not to teach but to attain public office. He was convinced that only by means of a governmental position could he achieve his major aim : the reform and rehabilitation of the social order. Thus he became Minister of Works and Minister of Justice in his native state. In his fifties, Confucius travelled from place to place throughout China, offering his teachings. He died at the age of seventy-three in 479 B.C.

The teachings and way of life he had commended to his disciples lived on, and made an important and revolutionary impact upon Chinese society.

Teachings of Confucius

Confucius' teachings were taken seriously wherever he went. The heart of his social philosophy may be found in some of the best known passages in his works.

A superior man has nine aims to see clearly: to understand what he hears, to be warm in manner, dignified in bearing, faithful in speech, painstaking at work, to ask when in doubt, in anger to think of difficulties, in sight of gain to remember right.[1]

If there be righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there be beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home. If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. If there be order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.[2]

Confucius' teachings clustered round a number of key concepts. His first concept *li* means 'ceremonial' but also bears the meaning of propriety or reverence. He also spoke of this as the 'right way' or as 'right conduct'. This *li* is the basic principle of one's inner nature and behaviour.

The second concept is *yi*, which means

---

1. John Cogley, *Religion in a Secular Age* (New York: The American Library, 1969) p. 47
2. Huston Smith *The Great Learning* (New York: Harper & Row 1958) p. 160

the best way of doing things. *Yi* is the way things behave when they act in accordance with their own natures, and this is the best way for all things to act.

The third concept is *jen* which means goodwill. It is willingness to do what is best socially. Goodwill consists basically in allowing each person to act in accordance with his own nature. A man of goodwill accepts each person for what he is.

The last concept is *Chih* meaning an ideal to be approached by degrees. In *Chih,* one lives according to habit, without question or reservation. This is a high religious ideal which Confucius was never able to reach.[3]

Philosophy of Confucianism

The philosophy of Confucius is mainly concerned with morality and the socio-political aspects of human life. He is usually regarded as a teacher of morals. It is true that he laid great stress upon man's duty to his neighbours, society and the supreme Being. Although he did not talk about God, he said to his disciple, 'I do not murmur against God nor do I grumble against non-existence of God. If my doctrines prevail it is so ordered of God, if they fail it is so ordered of God.'[4]

Confucius has asserted in several places that all men are divinely good at birth, but many do not remain upto the end. Confucius was devotedly attached to the improvement, well-being and welfare of society. The social ideal of Confucius is peace and harmony.

A virtuous man, according to Confucius, has three awes : 1. awe of Heaven's decree 2. awe of great men 3. awe of saints' words. He said that the life of moral man was an exemplification of the universal order. He held that the highest human attainment was to find the central clue to our moral being, which unites us to the universal order.

'Truth', he says, is the law of God. Truth means the realization of one's being. Absolute truth is indestructible, eternal, self-existent and infinite. According to Confucius the social, economic, political and religious ideals are centred in ethics. Virtue is the backbone of life, and love is the blood of life. Without virtue life cannot stand, and without love life is death. The development of life depends upon the development of virtue. From the ethics of Confucius we derive five constant ideas called 'cardinal principles'. They are, Jen (humaneness), Wi (righteousness), Li (propriety), Chi (wisdom) and Zun (trustworthiness).[5]

Confucius supplied Chinese philosophy with its humanistic foundation. However, because of his reluctance to discuss metaphysical questions, he left the door open to Taoism in later centuries.

Confucianism after Confucius

The literary sources of confucianism are to be found in the so-called 'Confucian canon'. The canon consists of two parts : the Five Classics, and the Four Books which are attributed to his disciples and later followers. Of the Five Classics, the last, namely, *Chun Chiu* or 'Spring and Autumn Annals' was written by Confucius, while the first four were older classics edited by him. These four works are as follows : Book of Changes, Book of History, Book of Poetry, and Book of Records or Ceremonials.

The greatest Confucian teacher after Confucius was Mencius (372-289 B.C.) who was the contemporary of Plato. Through interaction with various other schools, there

---

3. Archie J. Bahm, *The World Living Religions* (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann Pvt. Ltd. 1964) pp. 184-86

4. R. Singh, *Glimpses of World Religions* (Bombay: Jaico Publishing Co., 1957) p. 225

5. Ibid. p. 87

developed what is called Neo-Confucianism. Its greatest teacher Chu Hsi (A.D. 1130-1200) effected a grand synthesis of all the existing strands of Confucian thought into a single system. With the Intellectual Renaissance of 1917 under Sun Yat-sen, Confucianism was held responsible for China's backwardness, and Mao during his last years launched a vigorous attack against it.

Lao Tzu

The founder of Taoism, Lao Tzu, was born probably in 570 B.C. Lao Tzu means 'Old Master' or 'Old Philosopher'; this is, however, a title and there is dispute among scholars regarding the original name of the founder of Taoism. The most accepted view is that the original name was Li Erh. The life of Lao Tzu is shrouded in legends. He is said to have been born in a farm in Honan province, south of Peking, and became the librarian of State Archives at the court of Chou. Disillusioned with the socio-political trends of his time, he resigned his position, loaded all his possessions on to an ox-cart and disappeared beyond the mountains. At the frontier outpost, the gate-keeper begged him to put down his philosophy in words. Lao Tzu agreed and wrote the small book known as *Tao-te-Ching* ('The way and its power'), which consists of two parts, setting forth his views on 'Tao' and its attributes. The book is a guide to the conduct of life.

Teachings of Lao Tzu

The central teaching of Lao Tzu is to harmonize all activities with the unseen natural order of the universe and to be liberal towards all. Like Confucius, Lao Tzu's ideal is to become a sage or in Chuang-tzu's words, a man of 'sageliness within and kingliness without'. According to Lao Tzu, Tao is the course, the principle, substance and standard of all things, to which all of them must conform. In its essence it is eternal, absolute and beyond space and time. Existing before Heaven and Earth, Tao alone is unchanging and permeates everything. Tao embraces all differences and conflicts. Hatred and kindness, taking and giving, reproof and instruction, death and life—these eight things are instruments of correction and rectification of one's life. When love and enmity, profit and loss, favour and disgrace do not affect the sage, he becomes world honoured.

Like Kṛṣṇa, Lao Tzu spoke of non-attachment which he termed *wu-wei*. 'The way of the Tao', says Lao Tzu, 'is to act without thinking of acting, to conduct affairs without feeling the trouble of them, to taste without discerning any flavour; to consider what is small as great and a few as many and to recompense injury with kindness.'[6]

Lao Tzu described the heart of a holy man as consisting of hundreds of hearts. He does not possess a fixed heart. The holy man treats all people as his children. Lao Tzu taught the virtue of simplicity in habits, saying, 'Abandon your scheming, put away your gains, and thieves and robbers will not exist.' He said to his followers, 'Hold fast to that which will endure; show thyself simple, preserve the pure. Thine own keep small, thy desires poor.'[7] One of the most important teachings of Lao Tzu is to return to nature and to live in harmony with the natural order of the universe—physical and moral—which he called Tao. Virtue is achieved not through strenuous effort but by quiet submission to the power of Tao.

Philosophy of Lao Tzu

The philosophy of Lao Tzu is based on a three fold view of Tao. The first, the

---

6. Swami Abhedananda, *Complete Works of Swami Abhedananda* (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Vedanta Math 1969) Vol. 5 p. 86
7. Ibid. p. 87

way of the Ultimate Reality, consists in making contact with the 'Ground of Being'. It is very difficult to grasp the nature of Ultimate Reality, which is similar to Brahman in Vedanta. The second is the way of the Universe or Heaven which may be regarded as corresponding to the Vedantic concept of *jīvātman*. Human beings come up against an inevitability they can do nothing about. The third is the way of Man. This is the philosophy and order of life. It is called the Way of Life too. Taoist philosophy holds that the ideal life is based on a knowledge of nature. Nature acts wholly naturally and intelligently. The wise man trusts nature as he would trust a friend.

The term 'Tao' has been interpreted in different ways. Some have translated it as 'The Way', others have called it 'The Eternal Word or Logos', others again 'Eternal Being'. Some call it 'Reason', others say it is the same as 'Nature' or modern science. The Buddhists use the term 'Tao' for enlightenment. In the sense of 'cosmic order' it corresponds to the Vedic concept *ṛta*.

Lao Tzu says Tao is one. It was in the beginning, and it will remain for ever; it is eternal and immutable. It is omnipresent, immaterial and imperceptible to the senses. It is nameless and indescribable. We look at it but do not see it, and we name it the Equable; we listen to it but do not hear it, and we name it the Inaudible; we try to grasp it but we do not get hold of it, and we name it the Subtle. With these three qualities it cannot be made the subject of description, hence we blend them together and obtain the One.[8]

Lao Tzu never identified Tao with God as his later followers did. The greatest exponent of Taoism after Lao Tzu was Chuang Tzu (369-286 B.C.) who was a contemporary of the Confucian scholar Mencius. He looked upon Tao not as changeless but as a process. With the beginning of Christian era Taoism degenerated into magic, ancestor-worship and esoteric cults.

Lao Tzu and Confucius

Lao Tzu's philosophy stands in strong contrast to the philosophy of Confucius. Confucius stood for good Government, laws of propriety and good manners, whereas Lao Tzu did not believe in moralizing, but in natural spontaneity of life. Confucius wanted to reform the external habits of man, but Lao Tzu wanted to reform the internal bent of heart of the people.

Confucius stated, 'What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others'. But Lao Tzu, like Kṛṣṇa and Buddha, went beyond this in the field of ethics by teaching, 'Return good for evil'.

The Taoist was concerned with a sort of immediate, inner intuitive enlightenment which was very different from the scholarly knowledge promulgated by the Concucians.

Sages such as Lao Tzu and Confucius are often regarded as having taught the people a new way of life. But what they endeavoured was to lead men back to the ancient wisdom. Confucius in particular did not claim any originality for his ideas. He very often regretted that owing to neglect and ignorance, many of the old rituals had gone into disuse. Like Lao Tzu he set out to show men the road to virtue and contentment. Confucius was well known both for his wisdom and for his upright life. Believing that society was suffering from the neglect of traditional wisdom, he took great pains to instil into his disciples the meaning of the ancient rites and codes of conduct.

However, Confucius showed no personal disposition to mystic thought, though he was aware of the fascination that such thought exerted over the mass of mankind. It was

---

8. Ibid. p. 81

not that he denied the existence of a transcendental world of spirit; it was rather that he gave priority to consideration of human government and welfare. As in his teaching so in his private speculations, he adopted the method of rational and logical enquiry. When his disciple Tzu Lu asked him to discourse on men's duty to the spirits of the departed, he replied, 'While still unable to do your duty to the living, how can you do your duty to the dead?' On different occasions he used to say 'I cannot herd with birds and beasts, and if I may not associate with mankind, with whom am I to associate?'[9] His philosophy of humanism is almost similar to the philosophy of several Western social thinkers.

The sage Lao Tzu advised his fellowmen to 'let things alone', to stay where they were, for 'without going out of the door, one can know the whole world. Without peeping out of the window, one can see the Tao in heaven.'[10] His doctrine of passivity follows from his conception of the nature of Tao, and is similar to the Gita concept of non-attachment. Tao is similar to Egyptian 'Maat' and Greek 'Logos' and Indian 'Prakṛti'. The mysticism of Taoism later on merged with Buddhism and gave rise to Zen (Ch'an in Chinese). Since Zen is now one of the most popular forms of spiritual life followed in the West we may regard Taoism as a living faith. Confucianism now survives in Taiwan. Though it is under a cloud in mainland China, the humanism of Confucius continues to thrive through communism.

9. E.W.F. Tomlin, *The Eastern Philosophers*, (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd. 1968) p. 259

10. Ibid. p. 255

THE SONGS OF ORPHEUS—I

JOHN L. DOBSON

[In the following article the author has skilfully interwoven three strands of Greek mythology. The first strand is the story of Phrixus and his sister Helle. Instigated by their step-mother, their father was about to sacrifice them to Zeus when they were saved by their mother Nephele. Brother and sister then rode away through the air upon the ram with golden fleece that Hermes had given them. On the way Helle fell into sea which thus came to be called Hellespont. But Phrixus arrived safely in Colchis, the kingdom of Aeetes, where he settled down after marrying the king's daughter. Phrixus sacrificed the ram to Zeus and gave its golden fleece to Aeetes who fastened it to an oak tree and set a dragon to guard it.

The second strand is the story of Jason and the Argonauts. When he reached manhood Jason went to his step-father Pelias, who had usurped the throne of his father, and demanded his kingdom. Pelias promised to surrender it, provided the young man brought the golden fleece guarded by the dragon. Jason got a huge ship (called Argo after its builder) built and sailed to Colchis in the company of fifty great heroes among whom were Herculas and Theseus. With the help of Medea, another daughter of Aeetes, Jason succeeded in getting the golden fleece.

The third strand is the legend of Orpheus, the most celebrated of the poets who lived before the time of Homer. With the music of the lyre that Apollo had given him, Orpheus enchanted not only the wild beasts but even the trees

and rocks on Olympus. He accompanied Jason as one of the Argonauts. After that expedition he took his abode in Thrace. Once, under the excitement of Bacchanalian orgies, the Thracian women tore him to pieces. The Muses collected the pieces and buried them at the foot of Olympus. In the 6th century B.C. the legend of Orpheus mingled with that of Dionysius and became a mystery cult which emphasized sin, atonement, and the suffering, death and resurrection of a god-man—concepts which were later on appropriated by Christianity as its own. The extant poems ascribed to Orpheus have been proved to be forgeries of Christian grammarians and philosophers of the Alexandrian School, but among them some fragments of genuine Orphic poetry may be found.

What John Dobson has done in the following narrative is to link the three legends of Phrixus, Jason and Orpheus with the great war of Mahābhārata. According to him the Argonauts went not to Colchis but to India. His explanation will be given in the second part of the article to be published in the next issue. At a time when Peter Brook's nine-hour dramatization of *Mahābhārata* has roused considerable interest in the West, Dobson's account has an added significance—*Editor, P.B.*]

Introduction

Fragments of the story which I am about to tell lie scattered far and wide across this world. Like bits of paper strewn upon the wind they have been carried across the Old World land mass from Greece to India and back again. They have been carried by the feet of men, by boat, by camel, by elephant, by horse. Fragments of this story may be read in the Catacombs of Rome, in the history of Egypt, in the cuneiform tablets of Asia Minor. They may be read in the rock carvings of Asia Minor and of India and in the artwork of Egypt and of Greece. In a sense it is a tale of two countries, India and Greece, and great heaps of fragments lie scattered through the epics of those lands.

It is a tale of the long ago. The people of the old Stonehenge had come and gone but Troy was yet to rise and fall. Even the geography of Europe and of Asia were not then what they are now. A great volcanic mountain still stood on an island north of Crete and Vakshu, the Crooked River, still flowed into the Caspian Sea.

Phrixus and the Golden Ram

From prehistoric times, three great trade-routes have connected India with the West. The easiest, and probably the oldest of these, was the Persian Gulf route, running from the mouth of the Indus to the Euphrates, and up the Euphrates to where the road branches off to Antioch and the Levantine ports. Then there was the overland route, from the Indian passes to Balkh, and from Balkh either by river, down the Oxus to the Caspian, and from the Caspian to the Euxine, or entirely by land, by the caravan road which skirts the Karmanian Desert to the north, passes through the Caspian Gates, and reaches Antioch by way of Ktesiphon and Hekatomphylus. Lastly there is the circuitous sea route, down the Persian and Arabian coasts to Aden, up the Red Sea to Suez, and from Suez to Egypt on the one hand and Tyre and Sidon on the other.1

The events narrated below took place in Mycenaean Greece, Twelve Generations before the Trojan War (about 1500 B.C.).

A great stir is now brewing in Greece. People from a distant land have come. Not the usual merchants of the ships and caravans, these are warriors, come in peace, bearing an invitation from a distant king. Word has it they were following a horse let loose beyond the mountains in a distant land, one year's journey toward the rising

1. H. G. Rawlinson, *Intercourse Between India and the Western World*

sun. Their skins are dark and fair to look upon. Their speech is strange and rhythmical. Their bows are powerful and made of horn, but they come in friendship, bearing gifts. They are strong and self restrained, joyful, worshipful and friendly, and they tell of a great sacrifice beyond the mountains, far into the rising sun. Kings from many lands have been invited. Kings from many lands will meet. Great discussions will go on by day and night, and it is hoped that from this sacrifice a great unity will spread through all the lands.

Our king too has been invited but, fearing the long journey, has declined. Yet rumour has it that in the name of the old king, Phrixus and his sister may go. Excitement runs like a wild creeper through the court and through the streets. 'The king would send his daughter.' Nothing but the fearless serenity of the stranger following the horse could have persuaded the old king to send his daughter. It is said that the warrior of heroic composure is the younger brother of the distant king.

Through what lands will the princess go with her brother Phrixus? What wonders will they see in the distant land whence came the wondrous stranger and his friends?

Who are these men, so strangely decked, so courteous and well behaved, so unlike us and the surrounding tribes? And who is this dark and handsome stranger following the wanderings of his horse for many moons? What happy happenstance has brought him to our shores? He studies everything with rapt attention, with an eye of appreciation for every good thing, and his lips are quick to praise and to encourage. He has showed great interest in our feats of strength and archery though he himself has showed us feats of archery the which our bowmen could not match, and his feats of dexterity and strength are the match of the Minoans of Crete. To his hand the king commits the safety of his daughter—to him, the pronunciation of whose name defies our tongues yet falls like sounds of music from their own.

Great day in the morning! Today is the day of the great departure. Today the king's daughter with her brother Phrixus depart for the land of Arya. The court is astir with excitement. Throngs have assembled for the great sacrifice. Burnt offerings will be offered to the gods to secure a bountiful harvest, and the children of the royal house will be sent to join the Horse Sacrifice in the land whence came the stranger. The city is full of bustle, the court is full of music, the pipers play their auloi in pairs but the stranger couldn't stay. His hourse had wandered off and he is gone, but a golden ram has been procured for the prince and princess, and Phrixus knows the way to the land of Arya.

Our sacrifice is full of sound and tumult but the worship of the stranger is of a different sort. Early in the morning, alone and very simply, he offers fragrant leaves and flowers, and the fragrance of incense, the light of a lamp and a bit of food and water. It is all so quiet and so simple and he sits long on the ground with closed eyes. He says that the eyes must be turned inwards to comprehend the supreme Being whom they refer to in their language as That or the Vast. From That all this has come. He says that we have five senses to perceive the five great forms of energy of which all this is made, and that symbolically, in his worship, he offers back those five great forms to That from which they come, in an effort to comprehend. It is all so quiet and so beautiful. When his worship is over he sings in a most melodious voice, songs the likes of which we have never heard. His music is very different from our own and his notes are not those of the aulos.

By now the sacrifice is over and in great peace and joy the day is drawing to a close,

Yet there is a certain sadness, tinged with anticipation, that pervades the court. Mounted on the back of the golden ram Phrixus and Helle have left. A golden ram such as we sometimes see on the caravan route, munching thorns with smiling eyes and drinking pools of water, has borne them away on pillowed feet. After so many days of excitement, since the stranger first appeared, we come now to a time of illumined quiet. But sorrow was to cut our quiet short.

After many days has come the tragic news. Helle is dead—drowned in the sea at the first crossing. Great lamentation has scattered all our joy. The king is on the threshold of collapse. Why had he not sent his daughter with the stranger? Why had he waited till the stranger was gone?

The tragic news was brought by runners. After the custom in the land whence came the stranger, her body has been burned on the shore of the sea and her ashes have been scattered in the waves. And that section of the sea, at the entrance to the Euxine, now bears her name. Phrixus and the others have continued on their way. They had gone too far to bear her body home. They have sent their sorrowed greetings to the king. Now has come a time of lengthened sadness.

For many moons there was no word from Phrixus till one day a merchant came who said that he had passed him on the desert road several moons' journey to the east. That was the last news that the old king heard.

Now many years have passed, and I am grown to manhood. In the days of my youth the old king died, after the departure of his son and daughter and after the death of his daughter in the sea. Out of such great sorrow can a greater joy arise?

Now, once again, the court is astir. Jason would go by boat to the land of Arya. Even now his boat is abuilding. Even now he is gathering a crew. I too would go. What has become of Phrixus? After so many years he had not come. Rumour has it he will not return. News creeps slowly with the caravans but Jason would go himself to see.

Over the years the merchants of the boats and caravans have brought us many tales of the great sacrifice. The brother of the Stranger is now the emperor, and held in high esteem. With them a king is chosen more for wisdom and for virtue than for valour and his skill in the arts of war. The people, in that land, have power to oust a king and choose another, though usually, as with us, kingships pass down through the family line.

The tales of the merchants have raised our curiosity beyond containment. They tell of a land of great wealth, ruled now in wisdom and without war, though in a former time the Stranger and his brothers had been the victors in a great war that had been waged in their country before he appeared on our shores following the horse. They say that that war had destroyed their fighting power and that in that war most of their heroes had died.

After a long and unjust exile, the Stranger and his brothers, five in all, had returned, at the entreaty of the people, to claim their rightful kingdom. They came, in great humility, with all overtures of peace, offering to settle for the return of only five villages. But the usurpers of the throne would not yield so much as one small village without a fight. Thereupon all the heroes of that land ranged themselves on either side, and there ensued a long and dreadful war in which the fighting power of that great land laid itself waste.

Emerging sadly victorious from that great war, the rightful king, the elder brother of the Stranger, set loose a horse with the determination that through whatsoever land the horse should wander, un-

molested, the king of that land should be invited to join his empire. It was then that the Stranger, the younger brother of the king, had been appointed by the king to follow the horse and to do battle against any king in whose kingdom the horse should be forcibly restrained. It was thus that the Stranger had reached our shores. He had been the general of the victorious armies in that long and dreadful war. May the likes of him be ever victorious!

This procedure of following a horse to build an empire is referred to in that land as the Great Horse Sacrifice. Only a king of great wisdom and virtue, resting high in the esteem of the people, would dare to attempt it. At the end of the wanderings and in the presence of the great assembly of kings, the horse and many other animals, one from each kingdom, are sacrificed. The flesh of these animals is cooked and fed to the assembled multitudes. It is a grand affair and much wealth is distributed to the people. Jason would see for himself and we, too, with him.

Our boat is finished and we go—a crew of many men, each to man an oar. From the Aegean through the sea where Helle drowned we are to reach the Euxine, thence overland, carrying our boat, we reach the Caspian, then up the Crooked River to the land of Arya. Early morning joy and anticipation, such as makes the birds sing, fills our hearts. Only the merchants know what lies ahead.

Now the Argo, after many days, sails the deep blue waters of the Euxine but we hold her near the shore rather fearing to be out of sight of land. None of our crew has made this trip before. We sail on instructions from the merchants and once in many days we hail another ship. Sometimes we move by sail. Sometimes we man the oars. By now our limbs have grown so strong that a new joy has come into our movements.

From time to time we put to shore for water, fruits and meat. The sea is salt. We have no need of that. Under the eaves of some great tree we camp. Sometimes we swim or run on the sand. And the songs of the Stranger, echoing in our memories, caress our hearts at night.

We skirt the southern shore. The weather is warm. The sea is blue but not so salt as the waves that wash our shores.

Approaching the eastern shore, after many days, we see the lofty mountains to the north, their cliffs, in places rising straight up from the sea like great walls of stone. Here, at a merchant-camp, we stay to learn the details of our forward journey—how best to go to make small the distance that we must travel over land, carrying our boat. Here in this warm and narrow land, between the mountains and the sea, we pass the coldest part of winter. North of the mountains the weather is cold.

Keeping the shore always to our right and sailing west of north we enter through a passage to another sea whose waters are nearly sweet enough to drink. Finally, several moons from home, we leave the sea, going eastward by streams and lakes, and sometimes by foot, carrying our boat. Sometimes we trudge for days on end, up or down the long valley, thankful indeed that the Argo weighs not much more than her crew. Sometimes, still, the weather is bitter cold and we sleep under the overturned boat thankful that the winter had spent its fury before we left the merchant camp on the shore of the sea. Finally, at the end of our overland trek, we find ourselves at last in an ever widening stream flowing eastward to a sea whose slightly salty waters are fresh enough to drink.

This section is called the Symplegades. Here we were warned to beware of the great floating islands of ice crashing together near the shore in the wind and wave. Here, biding our time, we watch for a clear passage through the ice, and row for the open sea.

Sometimes the ice is close enough to touch and we push against it with our oars to free the ship. The farther we get from shore the less troubled we are by ice. Finally out in the open sea we hoist our sail.

Here we sail south, keeping the mountains on our right. Gradually, as the weather warms, the winds become favourable, bearing us quickly south. In this part of the sea are many islands. On one such we put to shore in search of food, seeing a column of rising smoke. Here, by great good fortune, we find the sons of Phrixus, the dark skinned Orpheus and his younger brother, travelling with the merchants, shipwrecked on their way to Greece, and busy rebuilding their boat.

Orpheus and the Land of Arya

After many moons we find men that speak our language, though haltingly at first, since in that distant land none but Phrixus spoke as we do. Both the sons of Phrixus are fluent in the language of the Stranger and in his tongue they sing. Even their songs are like his own, the likes of which we have heard but once before, when I was very young. But Orpheus and his brother, when they sing, play an instrument with several strings, lending an added charm to all their songs. Their songs are beautiful indeed to hear, and yet so different from our own. It is well known with us that the appreciation of music rests on long familiarity of the notes to the ear. Yet something in their songs makes them immediately acceptable to our ears even when first we hear them.

From Orpheus we learn that the Stranger has died, and all his brothers, and Phrixus has died in the court of Parīkṣit, the grandson of the Stranger. Some years after the Horse Sacrifice, which Phrixus had attended, the emperor, now old, having set the empire in order, set Parīkṣit on the throne. Then, along with his four brothers he undertook a pilgrimage by foot, beyond the northern mountains. First the old king and the Stranger, then their younger brother, the tiger-bellied Bhīma of unmeasured strength, and finally the twins. Lastly their common wife Draupadi followed them to the end. With them that is the way of an old hero. Setting out on foot, they crossed the northern mountains and walked until they dropped. May the likes of them be ever victorious!

After a night on shore, the joy that springs in the heart at dawn and makes the birds sing rouses us from slumber, and, taking on board the sons of Phrixus, we sail again into the rising sun. Our hearts once more, in joyful anticipation, soar like the eagles. At last we have on board one who knows what lies ahead.

Orpheus, more than his brother, carries the rhythm of the language of the Stranger into the language of our own tongues. The ways of Orpheus are the ways of the Stranger. Early in the morning he rises and, after washing himself in the sea, he sits long with closed eyes, seeking to reach the place of the Infinite. He says that the mind must be directed inwards. Not there the sun shines, nor moon, nor star. By Its light, he says, all this is lit. He says that one should meditate on this visible world as beginning, ending and breathing in That, the Vast. That which is beyond this world is without form and without suffering. Those who know it become immortal. I know that great Being of sunlike lustre beyond the darkness. A man who knows him truly passes over death. There is no other path to go. Such is the burden of his songs.

After he sits, he sings or sometimes dances. Orpheus and his brother were born in the court of the Stranger, and at an early age Orpheus became enamoured of his ways. From him he learned both singing and dancing and many other things. The Stranger was the master of all arts. He is said to

have been the greatest archer in the land. He was the master of singing and dancing and of the arts of war and peace, and Orpheus became enamoured of his ways. Now I have become enamoured of the ways of Orpheus and I too will learn to play the Kinnara. It is said that the Stranger learned the arts from the celestials till his skill outreached their own. May the likes of him attain the fulfilment of their desires!

Leaving the sea to the sunset we sail up the broad flowing river. Up the Crooked River we sail our boat, far into the rising sun, till we are deep into the mountains to the east. Then, leaving our boat, we join caravan and go by golden ram across the mountains, south into the land of Arya.

King Parīkṣit is dead by snake bite. Lamentations still stains the splendour of the court. Here the bodies of the dead are burned, quickly to free the embodied being from entanglement. Here it is said that after death a man takes birth again just as one sheds a worn-out cloth to don another which is new. From body to body we go till the goal is reached, the place of the Infinite. They say that the deeds of a man fall back upon the doer like dust thrown up against the wind. Only a man who knows the truth is free. If the killer thinks that he is killing or the killed that he is killed, neither of them knows. That neither kills nor is It killed. Who sees all beings in his own self and his own self in all beings, loses all fear. They say that in him all birth is stopped. He becomes free of the fruits of his actions and reaches the place of the Infinite, the Adorable.

Here in the land of Arya we see many things, we hear many things, we learn many things, but now the long habit of the wayfarer urges us on. We have seen that what we came to see. Almost all the tales were true. The prosperity of the land, the skills and knowledge are beyond the belief of one who has not seen them.

Here in the land of Arya all beings worship the Supreme in one form or another. Some call It Śiva and think of Him as a monk. Others call It Durga and look on Her as mother. Many call It Kṛṣṇa and look on Him in many ways. Parents see Srī Kṛṣṇa as their child. The unmarried, calling Him Govinda, worship him as the beloved. But the Stranger referred to Him only as his friend. It is said that in the great war Srī Kṛṣṇa drove the chariot for the Stranger. Orpheus, avoiding the company of women, worships the Supreme sometimes as Śiva and sometimes as Mother. Śiva rides a bull and Mother rides the lion. Sri Durga be my refuge!

We came to the land of Arya from beyond the icy mountains to the north. Now again we go, once more by boat, down another river to the south and into the warmth of the southern sea.

For many days we sail the southern sea, sailing south of west into the scorching rays of the late day sun, skirting the burning desert to the north. Then, sighting land ahead, we enter, to the north, into a sea of islands. Keeping still the desert to our right, and the midmorning sun behind us, we come to a place where, once again, we must carry our boat across the land. Here for a dozen days together with dearth of drink we carry and drag our boat across the burning sands to the northern sea.

Orpheus, by now, is fluent in our tongue yet carries still the metre of his own, giving his words a quite heroic cast. Always it is he who stirs us when our spirits flag; for he is loved by all. Always his songs are with us when we rest. By now I too can play and tune the Kinnara quite well but cannot match the beauty of his songs.

First we tune the high string to the note that the low string sings when lightly touched at the centre. The low string is to the left. Then we tune the right hand string till, lightly touched one third from the end, it

sings the same note that the high string sings, touched lightly at the centre. Finally the string to the left of the high one, and between the first two, is tuned till, touched at the centre, it sings the same note as the low string sings, touched lightly at one third.

The string on the right is the root note of the scale, and it is played together with the high string beside it. The low string is played with the high string and the string between, but sometimes the string between is played alone. The notes of the scale in which his songs are sung consist of all manner of notes which one hears as arising from these strings. The Aryans speak of the notes arising from one string as a village of notes. Their word is *grama*. The notes of the scale consist of three *gramas*. There is the Sa *grama* on the high and low strings, and a *grama* on each of the others. Ma is the root note. Pa is the string between the two Sa's.

His songs are like a chasing game, led sometimes by the voice and sometimes by the Kinnara, from *grama* to *grama,* though usually the notes that he sings arise in the *grama* of the string that is played. The whole habit of the music as well as its notes are totally different from those of the pipers of Greece. Strangely different yet sweetly acceptable to our ears.

Now, in more familiar waters, north and west we sail toward the land of the Minoans. Now we venture out of sight of land, knowing that north and west will take us home. Soon the fingers of two hands will count the days till we are back. More than a year has passed since we left home, high in anticipation of the unknown. Now we return, high again in anticipation of another sort, the anticipation of the known, though even now we know that the known will not be now what it was then.

Now we sight the land of the Minoans, the sea-girt forests of Crete, where grew the wood of our old ship. We put to shore for water and fresh food. But the land is in turmoil. Rumblings in the earth and the smoking of the mountain to the north have terrified the people. Cutting short our stay we sail north and east toward the Aegean; east to avoid the smoking mountain, north to get us home.

Suddenly, before we pass the mountain or even lose the sight of Crete, with thunderous sounds, the which our ears could not endure, the smoking mountain belched into the sky such a cloud of smoke and stone as rendered darkness over all the sea before the sun had set. Fires as well as darkness filled the writhing cloud, and stone rained on the sea and in our boat, and then, before our unbelieving eyes, waves the size of mountains washed the shores of Crete ere yet the darkness swallowed all we saw. That night was followed by no day. After a time which we reckoned as three days we landed on an island in the sun to mend our boat. There we did our worship and Orpheus again took up his songs.

Soon we are home to a hero's welcome, and heroes indeed we feel ourselves to be. Many lands we've seen, and many seas. Strong of limb we come and new in knowledge, and Orpheus, much sought by all, lives still in his quiet way alone. From him the sons of Jason learn the arts of war just as I, from him, have learned his songs. Dressed in the garb of the land of Arya he dwells now in a cave in Thrace, singing and dancing in the worship of the Vast, the Adorable.

After our return the Minoans came no more exacting tribute, and now, at last, our land is free.

Orpheus is the apple of our eyes, full of stories, full of knowledge, full of beauty, full of song, and with such a heroic bent of mind. Seeing his dance or hearing his songs, addressed to the Supreme, no one remains unmoved. And now, by long association with Orpheus, by singing, by sitting with

closed eyes in contemplation of the Supreme, and by avoiding the confusion that arises in the mind through the association with women, I too have attained a new strength and peace, and now the joy which we saw in the Stranger, the joy which we see even now in Orpheus, that early morning joy which springs up in the heart at dawn and makes the birds to sing has become, with me, an almost constant companion. May all the desires that dwell in the heart cease, and may Srī Durga be my refuge!

(*To be concluded*)

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE TEN SUTRAS OR CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF HINDUISM

THE ROLE OF HINDUISM IN 'ONE WORLD' IDEAL

HINDUISM AND ITS WORLD MISSION ALL BY SWAMI MUKHYANANDA. Published by Centre for Reshaping Our World-View, C/o S.R. Banerji, P.B. No. 7844, Calcutta 700 012. 1984. Pp. 24,40,18 & Prices Rs. 5,5,1 respectively.

Speaking about Hinduism, Sir Monier Williams observed: 'Hinduism has something to offer which is suited to all minds, its very strength lies in its infinite adaptability to the infinite diversity of human minds, characters and human tendencies. It has its highly spiritual and abstract side suited to the philosophical higher classes; its practical and concrete side suited to the man of affairs and the man of the world; its aesthetic and ceremonial side suited to the man of poetic feeling and imagination; and its quiescent and contemplative side suited to the man of peace and lover of seclusion.' Hindnism preaches love for all and malice towards none. Its central principle is unity in diversity, and this diversity includes almost every conceivable field of religio-philosophical speculation and culture. Very often Hinduism is equated with Indian culture as a whole.

Swami Mukhyananda, Acharya, Monastic Probationers' Training Centre, Belur Math, has made a commendable attempt to codify or bring together the basic tenets of Hinduism in these three booklets. In the first booklet he has presented the chief philosophical presuppositions of Hinduism in the form of ten aphorisms. In the second pamphlet the Role of Hinduism in 'One World' ideal is explained. These two booklets contain pithy statements in lucid and elegant language. The third booklet is really a compilation from the works of Swami Vivekananda and hence requires no comment.

People interested in Hinduism—its principles, ideals and mission in the modern world—will get light and delight from a perusal of the booklets which deserve wide publicity specially in the western world.

DR. NIROD BARAN CHAKRABORTY
Department of Philosophy
Presidency College, Calcutta

HINDUISM—WHAT IT IS. BY SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

RESHAPING OUR WORLD VIEW. BY SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

MONOTHEISM VIS-A-VIS MONISTIC THEISM. BY S. M. NANDAR. All the three booklets published by Centre for Reshaping Our World-View, C/o S. R. Banerji, Post Box No. 7844, Calcutta 700 012. 1985. Pp. 31, 9, 46 respectively. Prices Rs. 2,1,3 respectively.

Most of the followers of world religions other than Hinduism, seem to have some clear idea of the creeds on which their respective faiths are based. The Christians, for instance, believe in the Trinity, sin and redemption; the Buddhists have their Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma and Samgha); and Muslims have their Five Pillars. By contrast, Hinduism appears to be a vast, loosely connected, welter of beliefs, philosophies, practices, divinities, traditions and institutions of bewildering complexity. It was Swami Vivekananda who, for the first time in the history of Hinduism, made an attempt to define its parameters by identifying its common bases. After him a few savants like Bhagawan Das made a similar attempt. Yet a simple but comprehensive formulation of the essential principles of Hinduism for the common people of the modern world has all along remained a desideratum. It is therefore reassuring to know that a move spearheaded by Swami Mukhyanandaji, a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order, has come into operation to fulfil this need. Endowed as he is with deep erudition, creative thinking and dynamism, Mukhyanandaji is eminently qualified to undertake this difficult task.

The first fruits of his labour appeared in the

form of three booklets (reviewed above—*Ed. P. B.*). The fourth and fifth numbers in this series are represented by *Hinduism—What It Is* and *Reshaping Our World View*. Of these the first booklet provides all the basic information that a Hindu ought to have about his religion. Besides defining what Hinduism is and who a Hindu is, the author gives the essential doctrines of the Vedas and Smritis and explains the significance of the four values of life, the four yogas, festivals, mode of greeting and other features of the Hindu way of life. Hindu voluntary organizations engaged in preaching work will find this an ideal booklet for mass distribution.

In the second booklet *Reshaping Our World-view* Swami Mukhyanandaji projects Hinduism as a universal religion, and harmonizes it with modern science. Our college students will find this booklet very stimulating.

In the third booklet *Monotheism vis-a-vis Monistic Theism* Sri S. M. Nandar has made a brilliant attempt to contrast the two attitudes towards Reality upheld by the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition and the Hindu tradition respectively. The reader will find many of his religious conceptions considerably clarified by a perusal of this booklet.

S. B.

RELEVANCE OF OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE TO MODERN INDIA. By S.K. Ganguly and A. S. Ghosh. Published by Bharatiya Vidyabhavan, K. M. Munshi Marg, Chowpatty, Bombay 400 007. 1983. Pp. X + 44. Rs. 5.

The usefulness of this book is out of all proportion to its slender size and modest price. It embodies the mature reflections of two dedicated men, one a litterateur and teacher and the other a highly qualified scientist. The main thesis of the authors is that Indian culture has all the essential ingredients necessary for an indigenous paradigm of development which is capable of integrating the best elements of western science and technology.

The authors open their discussion by examining the good aspects and benefits of modern science. One of the most illuminating points in the whole book is the clear formulation of what science, or scientific spirit, really means. The authors also carefully point out the distinction between science and technology, and the distinction between science and spirituality. Science is not anti-spiritual, but 'Spirituality is different from modern science in that it is involved with the totality of human experience, including emotional and intellectual, whereas science is mainly concerned only with the physical world.' The authors add, 'For any scientific pursuit one has to have an objective attitude. Spiritual pursuit is no exception, though in this one has to develop an objective attitude additionally towards emotions and intellect. The training and discipline for gaining such an objectivity is known as *sādhanā*.'

Then follows a clear modern interpretation of the Indian concept of Dharma. Dharma is the sum total of all the laws of the universe. Every being has its own dharma but there is an overall harmony. Growth of science and technology in India must be related to her ancient Dharma. Secularism must be practised not by eliminating all religions but by accepting the universal values which form the basis of all religions. Education in India should similarly be based on a 'comprehensive view of life' which aims at combining the moral, intellectnal and spiritual aspects of human development. The blind imitation of western ways of thinking and living and the indiscriminate application of western technology in India are, according to the authors, the root-cause of this nation's present-day maladies.

The small appendix is complementary to the main theme of the book. If the language is made simpler, and if the basic ideas briefly outlined here are further expanded, this book can serve as an ideal introductory volume for the use of our teachers and college students.

Swami Jitatmananda
Ramakrishna Math
Hyderabad

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: Translated By Winthrop Sargeant. Published by State University of New York Press, State University Plaza, Albany, N. Y. 12246, U.S.A. 1984. Pp. xxiv + 739. $ 10.95 (paper); $ 39.50 (cloth)

This sumptuously prodnced massive volume on the Gita has several unique features. But before discussing them it is necessary to ask, why add one more to the numerous English translations of the Gita? The translator himself raises this question in the Preface and answers: 'My excuse is that, though many fine translations exist, none that I know of presents the original Sanskrit with an interlinear word-for-word arrangement that permits the reader to learn the sound as well as the meaning of each word.... As an added aid, a running vocabulary is provided, referring to the Sanskrit words on each page, along with their grammatical forms. Below

each stanza will be found a readable English translation (of the whole stanza, in which) my object has been to stick as clearly as possible to literal meaning rather than to attempt a masterpiece of English prose.'

The chief merit of the book lies in its thorough literalness which is supported by the parsing and etymological derivation of many of the words. Unlike most of the well-known translators who have followed one particular School of Vedanta, Sargeant has not allowed the pristine clarity of the original meaning to be lost through a partisan translation. This makes Sargeant's work highly dependable. However, the ambivalent nature of several words make it impossible to be totally independent of traditional interpretation, and our translator has followed Rāmānuja in giving notes on difficult words. The value of the book would have been greater if Rāmānuja's interpretation had been contrasted with Śamkara's at least in a few places. There is plenty of blank space on each page and this could have been partially filled up with additional notes for which there is great need.

Sargeant's book has two other unique features. One is the illuminating chapter on the language of the Gita. The other is a beautiful summary of the entire epic *Mahābhārata* which not only places the Gita in perspective but also enables the reader to recapture the mood of the Teacher and his warrior disciple. The Foreword by Swami Samatananda, though interesting and useful in itself, seems to be out of place in a work of this kind. Are we expected to believe that the Gita is based on the Siddha tradition ?

Unless a cheaper Indian reprint is made available, this splendid book will remain beyond the reach of most people in India. But, for people in the West, Winthrop Sargeant has provided one of most readable, useful and reliable editions of the Gita. S.B.

HUMAN VALUES IN MANAGEMENT By Swami Ranganathananda. Published by Punjab National Bank, 5 Samsad Marg, New Delhi 110 001. 1984. Pp. 82. Price not mentioned.

This book of seventy six power-packed pages by a renowned senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order is as timely as it is bold. Above much else, this book catapults two things into the arena of Indian Management—Swami Vivekananda and Advaita Vedanta. Swami Ranganathananda clearly diagnoses the spiritual emasculation of educated Indians in general and of Indian managers in particular, and then beckons them to drink the elixir of Vivekananda's life-giving message. Only those fortunate few among modern educated managers who have savoured Vivekananda literature can realize the significance of Swami Ranganathananda's invitation. Let us also remember that Vivekananda was the founder-manager of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission which is today a highly respected multinational organization having 120 branches and about a thousand monks on its rolls and run with impeccable efficiency.

The book under review is the printed version of a talk that Swami Ranganathananda gave to the officers of Punjab National Bank at New Delhi two years ago. After pointing to the deplorable socio-economic situation in India the author asserts the possibility of achieving through effective administrative and management techniques and better inter-human relationships, our national objectives of total human development and fulfilment for *all our people,* for the first time in our long history. Swami Ranganathananda reinterprets the *puruṣārtha* of *dharma* (the first among the four aims of human life) as the vitalizing and elevating element in the smallest of works—making a person out of an individual, a citizen out of a mere clerk. He also gives precedence to Sarasvati even in the pursuit of Lakshmi—and rightly so.

The author rightly emphasizes the importance of education but it may not be easy to agree with his idea that if all our population were educated, in the usual common parlance, up to the eight standard, then 'there will ensue unprecedented productive and economic activities'.

He is right again in speaking of superordinate goals as constituting *dharma* in the process of management. It is also significant that while the author stresses human values in the beginning, this concern almost inevitably merges into his frequent emphasis on spiritual values in the latter part of the book. The point to ponder is: can one be human without being spiritual too ?

The author discusses at some length the incorporation of spiritual values in contemporary Japanese management, and bemoans the fact that although many of the basic tenets underlying them are similar to or have originated from Indian concepts, we Indians have turned our backs on them. Following Vivekananda, the author rightly condemns the *desāchāra* and *lokāchāra* aspects of Indian tradition which are outmoded and stifiing. The true core of Indian culture is spirituality and selfiessness. Without knowing anything about this latter domain of thought,

educated Indians tend to display lack of self-respect and become apologetic about their culture.

The author's emphasis on lack of self-discipline as one main cause of administrative and managerial inefficiency in India is absolutely correct. He comes out with a gem of a statement: 'Unfree India had more free people than free India has'. This unfreeness of people is because of crass self-centredness. No amount of management training and development can liberate our energies for productivity and national well-being unless this defect in our basic attitude is eliminated. Yes, the statue of responsibility should replace the statue of rights—at least for sometime.

Finally, the Punjab National Bank is to be complimented for bringing out the Swami's lectures in the form of a neatly printed small book convenient for wider circulation.

S. K. CHAKRABORTY M. COM., PH. D., A.I.C.W.A.
Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, TRICHUR
REPORT FOR 1983-84

Situated in Puranattukara, a village in the district of Trichur, Kerala, this centre came into being with the primary purpose of uplifting the local Harijans in the late twenties. Today it stands as one of the foremost religious institutions in Kerala rendering humanitarian service in various fields.

Religious: Daily puja, *ārātrikam* and bhajan were conducted in the temple of Sri Ramakrishna. The Swamis of this centre gave religious discourses in the Ashrama and in the neighboring towns. Apart from the monthly spiritual retreat, an annual five-day retreat was conducted in which 300 devotees took part. Birth anniversaries of religious celebrities were observed with special puja, discourses etc.

Publication Department: The publication department apart from bringing out the Malayalam version of the entire Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature has brought out a number of translations of scriptures like the Gita, the Upaniṣads etc. During 1983-84 reprints of 17 books and 5 new books were brought out. It publishes a monthly journal, *Prabuddhakeralam,* in Malayalam. The Ashrama has its own printing press.

Vivekananda Vijnana Bhavanam: This town branch at Punkunnam has a shrine, lecture hall and a library cum reading-room with 4850 books. Number of books issued during the period 1983-84 was 820. The reading-room received 2 dailies and 19 periodicals and the average daily attendance was 55. Apart from religious discourses, regular free classes were conducted to prepare students for the sanskrit examinations of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Educational: The Ashrama runs a boys' Gurukula oriented to the traditional ideals of Hindu life. There were 137 boys during the year under report, of whom 12 were free boarders. The school, Vidyamandiram had 1246 boys in the High School and 721 pupils (boys: 402 and girls: 319) in the Lower Primary section. Nearly 550 children were daily given nutritious food supplied by CARE. Occasional feasts were also arranged.

Medical: The hospital of the centre treated 12,376 outpatients during the year under report (new cases 5233; repeated cases 6143). The number of indoor patients was 957, and the number of surgical operations conducted was 158.

Harijan welfare work: The Ashrama pays special attention to Harijan welfare work. Apart from providing free board to 12 Harijan students in its Gurukula, it maintains one social service centre and nursery school at the nearby Harijan colony; the nursery children are given free lunch. Some Harijan families were helped to build their own pucca tiled house in that colony.

Destitute relief: A sum of Rs. 7,846 was spent on rendering help to the destitute. Under the Special Nutrition Programme of the Central Government the Ashrama has been distributing 'modern bread' to 200 poor children on all days except Sundays.

Immediate needs: The Math will complete 60 years of its useful existence in 1986. To celebrate this event it has been decided to effect the following improvements:

1. Expansion of its medical service by improving the hospital.
2. Extensions to the school buildings to cope with the ever growing number of students.
3. Renovating the hostel
4. Construction of a prayer hall at the Harijan colony at Puranattukara.
5. Purchasing a van for the Math.

The expenses of the afore-said items may come to about 15 lakhs. Philanthropic people and institutions are requested to contribute liberally to the above scheme and also to the general fund for the maintenance of the Ashrama. Those who pay Rs. 1001 will be treated as life-members.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Need to Protect the Working Child

Among the several ignominious things that are a permanent feature of social life in India, exploitation of children is one of the worst. Though the Constitution provides for free and compulsory education up to the age of 14, none of the states have implemented this provision satisfactorily. At present about 40 million children in India never enter a school and, out of those who are enrolled, nearly 65 per cent drop out after primary education. The main reason for this painful state of affairs is of course poverty. In many poor families children are forced to work either to support themselves or to supplement the meagre family income. According to a UNI report that appeared in the press four years ago, the number of working children in India as on March 1978 was estimated to be 16.25 million.

Child labour in India belongs to three categories. In rural areas children have to assist their parents in farm or household work; this is not considered 'labour'. But there are thousands of other children working for big and small landholders in villages. The second category of child labour is found in urban areas where children are employed as domestic servants chiefly by middle-class families. With no time limit for household chores, children work from dawn to night for which they receive food, clothing and nominal wages. What really attracts the notice of the public is the third category of child labour engaged on a large scale in tea plantations, cashew processing units, *beedi* and match industries and hotels. According to a labour bureau survey, children are forced to work for more than 40 hours a week in plantations and 6 to 8 hours a day in factories. Their wages vary in tea plantations from Re. 1 to Rs. 3.50 a day and in other places, from Rs. 1.22 to Rs. 5 a day.

It is clear that under the existing conditions it is impossible to abolish child labour totally, and the only practicable step is to improve the working conditions of children and protect them from exploitation. Several voluntary organizations are already working in this direction, and it is heartening to learn that a group by name 'The Concerned for Working Children' in Bangalore has, after three years of research and legal drafting, presented a bill to the Union labour minister Shri T. Anjiah and has pressed for its enactment. (*The Times of India* 30 July 1985). Known as the Child Labour Bill 1985, this model bill seeks to prohibit the employment of children below 15 years in all hazardous occupations. The bill recommends the constitution of a National Child Labour Advisory Board and child labour tribunals in the different states. It requires employers to issue letters of appointment specifying the details of employment to the parents or guardians of working children. The bill seeks to restrict working hours to 30 per week and six per day with a five-day week. The children would also be entitled to bonus equal to one month's wages or Rs. 300 whichever is more. The most important feature of this bill is the provision of a development scheme under which the boards are required to make suitable arrangements for the formal and non-formal education, vocational training, career improvement and health care of working children.

We hope the above bill will be enacted soon and more comprehensive measures will be taken to create greater public awareness in this regard so that the inhuman custom of child labour will become a thing of the past by the beginning of the 21st century.