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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

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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. 90 SEPTEMBER 1985 No. 9

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

INTEGRAL VISION OF VEDIC SEERS*

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

ऋतं च सत्यं चाभीद्धात्तपसोऽध्यजायत ।
ततो रात्र्यजायत ततः समुद्रो अर्णवः ॥

Ṛta and *satya*[1] were born of intense[2] *tapas*[3]. From that was born night[4]; from that the watery[5] ocean.

Ṛg-veda 10.190.1

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* This penultimate hymn of *Ṛg-veda* is reputed to have the power of effacing sin (*aghamarṣaṇa*) and is used for that purpose in *sandhyā*, the twilight worship of the twice-born. Actually it is a metaphysical hymn describing the creation of the world. What is the connection between this hymn and sin effacement? The Hindu method of eradicating sin is to expand one's consciousness by simply meditating upon the infinite Reality. Through this meditation the impure self gets a dip, as it were, in the infinite Light of the Paramatma and becomes pure. The name of the *Ṛṣi* or seer of this hymn is also Aghamarṣaṇa.

1. *ṛta* means the cosmic order—physical and mental—governing the universe and corresponds to Dharma, Tao and Logos. *Satya* means truth in personal conduct; it is practised by attuning individual life to the cosmic order.

2. *abhīddhāt* has been interpreted by Sāyaṇa in two ways. One meaning is 'intense burning'. The other meaning is 'from the luminous supreme Self'.

3. As the *Muṇḍaka-upaniṣad* (1.1.9) says, God's tapas is of the nature of knowledge or meditation.

4. Sāyaṇa says, 'night' here includes the 'day' also. Some other commentators take 'night' as standing for Māyā or Prakṛti.

5. *arṇavah*, according to Sāyaṇa, means 'filled with water'.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This month's EDITORIAL discusses ego-development and maturity

In the discourse on TYAGA AND SANNYASA, Srimat Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, elucidates the correct meaning of the term *sannyasa* or renunciation and places the whole scheme of Karma Yoga in perspective.

'Perennial psychology' brings together the basic truths and laws of the mental universe discovered by different cultures. In PERENNIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND THE HINDU PARADIGM OF WELL-BEING a brilliant attempt is made to correlate the Hindu scheme of values with the different levels of consciousness and to show how the pursuit of values brings about a transformation in human awareness. The author Dr. M. Sivaramakrishna, M.A, Ph. D. is Reader in English, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

In the thought provoking article SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CONCEPT OF SOCIALISM Dr. K. Ganesan exposes the foundational assumptions of socialism and persuasively argues that Swami Vivekananda's views on man and society are of a much higher order than these. Dr. Ganesan is the Principal of Vivekananda College, Madras, and is also the head of its department of economics. We hope that this article, originally presented as a paper at a seminar, will stimulate further studies and research in this field.

Swami Chetanananda, spiritual head of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, U.S.A. provides an inspiring biographical sketch of one of the foremost woman-disciples of Sri Ramakrishna in GAURI-MA.

SELFHOOD AND MATURITY

(EDITORIAL)

Maturity and ego-development

Life bristles with problems and difficulties, and no person can possibly hope to lead a problem-free life. But then, there are solutions too; almost every problem of life has its own solution, though it may not be always to our liking. Failures and sufferings in life are caused not so much by any lack of solutions as by our inability to face the problems and find and apply the right type of solution. This inability is to a large extent caused by immaturity. In psychological parlance the term 'immaturity' does not necessarily imply insufficient age or experience but refers primarily to the development of the ego and the way it responds to situations.

Human development takes place along five main channels: physical, emotional, intellectual, egoic and spiritual. Of these the first three are well known. Physical development reaches its peak in middle age and then declines. Emotional development includes the development of primary drives like the sex instinct and also the refinement of their derivatives known as feelings, sentiments etc. Intellectual development means the cultivation of the powers of the mind and the acquisition of knowledge. The ego is that part of the personality which organizes the functions

of the other parts into goal-oriented work, relates the personality meaningfully to reality and defends it against internal and external dangers. The development of the ego is in itself a distinct process. Apart from this, there is spiritual development by which is meant the unveiling of the light of the *pratyagātman,* the unfolding of its powers, and its attunement to the ultimate Reality known as Paramātman or Brahman.

It is the development of the ego that determines the maturity of the personality. Two points are to be noted in this context. Ego development is not the same as the development of all the faculties of the mind or the functions of the ego. It is not necessarily linked to the development of emotions and the intellect. A person may be a brilliant scholar or a highly accomplished artist but may behave in an immature way in dealing with people and situations.

The second point is that ego development is independent of age level. During early infancy the first four types of development may be indistinguishable from one another, but from later childhood onwards ego development follows an independent course. Psychologists like Binet have shown that the mental age (MA) of a person is different from his chronological age (CA). The MA of a five-year-old may be the same as the MA of a ten-year-old. At twenty-five years an Indian youth, heavily dependent on his parents, may not have the maturity of an American youth of eighteen years who has developed self-reliance from boyhood.

This point often becomes pathetically clear in many old people who show a warped, stunted and immature ego. A young man has time enough to rectify his mistakes and overcome his weaknesses. But the old man has little time left to start a new life ; his sands are running out. Wisdom does not grow on a tree, nor does it come to anyone naturally in the course of growing up. The process of acquiring wisdom and maturity should therefore be consciously and thoroughly attempted in youth itself, for, as the saying goes, 'There is no fool like an old fool.'

Maturity and conformity

Before proceeding to discuss what maturity is, it is necessary to point out what maturity is not. During the early years of the present century psychologists tended to measure maturity in terms of conformity and social acceptability. A mature person was believed to be one who lived a well-adjusted life in conformity with the customs and norms of his social group, steering clear of all troubles and interpersonal conflicts. And all those who failed to adjust themselves to the conditions and demands of the society were branded as immature or neurotic. Freudian psychologists in particular identified neurosis with maladjustment, and their sole concern was to make their patients adjust themselves to the society.

This trend was changed, if not wholly abandoned, only with the emergence of the humanistic or 'Third Force' psychologies of Eric Fromm, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow and others in the early fifties. These psychologists have shown that social adjustment is often attained at the cost of creativity and spontaneity and that many of the apparently well-adjusted people harbour a deeply repressed sense of insecurity, meaninglessness etc. Says Eric Fromm:

> The 'adjusted' person...has made himself into a commodity with nothing stable or definite except his need to please and his readiness to change roles. As long as he succeeds in his efforts he enjoys a certain amount of security, but his betrayal of the higher self, of human values, leaves an inner emptiness and insecurity

which will become manifest when anything goes wrong in his battle for success. And even if nothing should go wrong, he often pays for human failure with ulcers, heart trouble or any other psychically determined kinds of illness ... (The) vast majority of people in our culture are well adjusted because they have given up the battle for independence sooner and more radically than the neurotic person. They have accepted the judgement of the majority so completely that they have been spared the sharp pain of conflict which the neurotic person goes through. While they are healthy from the standpoint of 'adjustment', they are more sick than the neurotic person from the standpoint of the realization of their aims as human beings.[1]

In one experiment conducted in 1978, Dr. D.L. Rosenhan of Stanford University, California, planted eight sane volunteers, one of them a psychiatrist, in the public and private wards of some mental hospitals in America. Many of the insane patients detected the fraud and recognized the eight imposters but none of the medical staff ever did. It is now being increasingly recognized that the members of human society constitutes a spectrum with no sharp dividing lines between the neurotic and the normal. This has made psychologists abandon conformity as a criterion of maturity. Mature individuals do lead a well-adjusted social life but without blindly following the herd, without surrendering their conscience to the collective, without craving for other people's recognition.

Under certain circumstances maturity finds expression through non-conformity, non-adjustment, as for instance when one has to hold out against injustice and evil or when one has to deal firmly with immature or erring individuals. Norman Vincent Peale, the distinguished American clergyman and author, after several years spent in teaching the value and means of attaining success and social acceptance, discovered the danger inherent in a life of slavish conformity to a decadent society. In an article published a few years ago in *Guideposts* he wrote:

All my life I have preached and written about the value of positive thinking. And I still believe that affirmative attitudes are supremely important in successful living. But affirmatives alone are not enough. This world is full of hope and joy, but it is also beset by evil, immorality and sin. You can't say 'Yes' to these things, or even 'Perhaps'. You have to say 'No!'—and you have to make it stick.

According to Dr. Peale there are at least three critical areas where the 'power of the positive No!' should be applied. The first of these concerns children and youths. Young people expect elders to correct them and, when they do mischief or make unreasonable demands, parents and teachers must have the courage to say 'No!' to them. Another area lies in interpersonal dealings in society. Dr. Peale cites the example of a business executive who suffered from acute conflict because of his inability to say 'No!' to one of his star salesmen who was found misappropriating money by cooking accounts. When, on the advice of the pastor, the executive dealt firmly with the dishonest salesman, the latter apologized and mended his ways. Lastly, we have to say 'No!' to ourselves, to self-indulgence, to all inherent tendencies in us to follow the wrong path.

The ego and the society

We have seen that maturity refers to ego development and that conformity to other people's ways of life and opinion need not be a sign of maturity. Nevertheless, since the development of the ego takes place chiefly through its interaction with the

1. Eric Fromm, *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (New York: Bantam Books, 1967) Pp. 73-80.

society, an understanding of the nature of this interaction is essential to understand the nature of the ego and the degree of maturity it has attained.

The difference between the ego or the lower self and the Atman or the higher Self was discussed in last month's editorial.[2] It should be noted here that Indian thought as a whole has specialized in the study of the higher Self and has not paid the same degree of attention to the ego. The reverse is true of western thought. The key to understanding the ego lies in its interaction with the society, and in this field western thought has much to offer, although the emergence of ego psychology is a recent trend in it.

In western psychology, during the early years of its development, the mind was regarded as a passive receiver and co-ordinator of stimuli, and investigations were chiefly directed to cognitive processes. Freud brought about a revolution in western psychology. He conceived the mind as a dynamic state and made psychology primarily a study of instinctual drives. However, he went to the other extreme by holding that the nature of human personality was wholly determined by these drives and impulses. It was precisely on this issue that his first disciple Alfred Adler broke away from his camp. Adler looked upon human personality as constituted chiefly by the ego, an organizing and striving agent, through which the drives find expression. Since the death of Freud most psychoanalysts have stressed the importance of the ego.

Meanwhile, sociology was developing fast and a meeting of the two disciplines—psychology and sociology—was inevitable. The pioneering work of Karen Horney and others showed that many of the psychological problems of life (for which Freud held individuals alone responsible) were in fact caused by unfavourable social conditions. Not only the course of a man's life but his very personality is shaped and conditioned by the society he lives in. We not only internalized the values, norms and symbols of the society we grew up in, but these external factors have, without our notice, built the ego's frame-work.

Theories of ego as a social phenomenon

The study of ego development through social interaction has given rise to several theories regarding the nature of the ego. An extreme view is the stimulus-response (S-R) theory of behaviourists like B.F. Skinner. In his controversial book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* Skinner rejects the notion of an autonomous person endowed with freedom and dignity. According to him the human being is almost wholly a product of his environment, and what appears as the self is nothing but a conditioned state of the brain, the sum total of all the responses of the organism to countless external stimuli. Skinner has only articulated the belief of the majority of western scientists, but in recent years some developments in Quantum Mechanics have shaken the foundations of this belief.

Though Karl Marx was a materialist, he did not subscribe to the purely mechanistic view of man held by western scientists. For him labour is not mere

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2. As pointed out in earlier Editorials, Indian thought makes a distinction between ego and egoism. The ego is a simple awareness of 'I', whereas egoism is the identification of this 'I' with the mind, thoughts, emotions and various social factors internalized in the form of *samskāras*. This distinction between ego and egoism can be understood through introspection. But since most people almost always completely identify themselves with their inner and outer worlds, this distnction between ego and egoism is ignored in the following discussion. This distinction is seldom found in western thought.

S-R; rather, it is man's self-expression and a means of attaining self-realization. As is clear from his famous comparison between the bee and the architect, Marx distinguished between instinct and self-conscious activity. Furthermore, Marx conceived man as having two selves: one representing the real or actual man suffering in a competitive world, and the other representing the true or ideal man endowed with great potential for development. Marx also held that man could attain his full humanity only in community through loving cooperation.[3]

The American philosopher George Herbert Mead developed another view of man as a 'social self'.[4] According to him the self is not a content but an activity. The self arises in the context of the social act, which means the act of an individual modified or qualified in its course by the act of another person. To Mead, mental activity is social, and the individual is a miniature society. Just as the society modifies the individual, so the individual modifies society. Instead of saying that the individual preceded society or vice versa, Mead takes the stand that self and society are twin-born.

Furthermore, Mead explains human nature in terms of 'I' and 'me'. The latter is created by social participation in various groups to which a person belongs; the roles he plays in society appear as the 'me'. But the self is not merely a product of all these social roles because it includes the 'I' as well. This 'I' functions as the organizing centre of all influences exerted upon the self. It is in the notion of 'I' as an autonomous functioning of the self that Mead differs from Skinner and others who identify the whole self with the 'me' as a product of the environment.[5]

Another great thinker who studied the formation of the human self through social interaction was the Jewish mystic and philosopher Martin Buber. His doctrine of life as a *dialogue* between 'I' and 'Thou' stands in contrast to the Hegelian-Marxian concept of *dialectic* based on conflict. A distinguishing feature of man is his ability

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3. It was from Feuerbach that Marx got the concept of the 'community man'. Marx developed his ideas on man early in his life and presented them in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscript,* written at the age of twenty-six, but they were studied in depth only in recent years, and that too chiefly by American and European scholars. For an excellent study of Marx's philosophy of man see, Adam Schaff, *Marxism and the Human Individual* (New York: Mcgraw Hill, 1970).

4. George Herber Mead (1863-1931) was one of the few great philosophers America ever produced, although he did not become as famous as his contemporaries William James and John Dewey. His seminal ideas are contained in *Mind, Self and Society,* a posthumous publication compiled from the notes of his lectures taken down by his students.

5. It is profitable to compare the ideas of Mead and Freud. Both of them divided the self into parts. Mead regarded the self as having two parts: one part spontaneous and creative which he called the active 'I'; the other part conventional and passive, which takes the opinions and attitudes of others into account, and which he called the 'me'. If group life is rigid and restrictive, the 'me' dominates the 'I' and individuality is minimized. But under favourable conditions the 'I' can actively and creatively influence and restructure the social process.

Freud divided the self into id, ego and superego. The superego is roughly equivalent to Mead's 'me'. The id is essentially the biological core of the self that the society tries to, but can never thoroughly, domesticate. The ego is a kind of mediator trying to effect a compromise between the individual's biological needs and the demands of society.

Where Mead saw the possibility of harmony between the 'I' and the 'me', Freud saw the potentialities for conflict among the various parts of the self. cf. Broom and Selznick, *Principles of Sociology* (New York; Harper and Row, 1970) Pp. 90-92,

to establish relationships. These are of two types: I-It and I-Thou. The I-It is an impersonal subject-object relation like that of a botanist with a plant. The I-Thou relationship is personal and mutual; in it both I and Thou are treated as subjects, with neither of them becoming an object; it is a self-to-self contact. This is what characterizes most of the social relationships. Buber's view is that it is through the 'Thou' that a man becomes 'I'. 'I became through my relation to the Thou, as I become I, I say Thou'.[6] According to Buber the uniqueness of man is to be found neither in the individual nor in the collective but in the meeting of 'I' and 'Thou'.

Awareness of collective self—its practical consequences.

We have discussed these theories of the self not because of their theoretical significance but because of their practical value. These theories are based on partial truths but they all point to one central truth: that the ego of man is an integral part of the human society. Not merely functionally but even structurally each of us is related to the society in a far more intimate way than we are aware of. What we now are is largely the creation of the society. Even the language we speak has been acquired through social intercourse.

Vedanta recognizes two dimensions of the self: the ego or lower self and the *pratyagātman* or the transcendent inner self. Corresponding to these, there are two dimensions of the cosmic self known as the Virāṭ and Hiraṇyagarbha respectively. All egos are parts of the Virāṭ and all inner selves are parts of the Hiraṇyagarbha (often regarded as the Īśvara or Personal God). It may be difficult for most people to realize the transcendental unity of the inner selves in God. But, even without this higher experience, it is possible to have an awareness of the unity of all mankind at the ordinary empirical level by recognizing the unity of all egos in the Virāṭ.

Three practical consequences follow from this understanding. First of all, selfishness and arrogance are to be understood as not merely unethical but also irrational. Unselfishness and modesty are to be recognized as a natural mode of life—not as superior virtues to be proud of.

Secondly, the antagonism between self-interest and the interest of the community must go. One should see one's own welfare in the welfare of other people. It is not enough to do good to others as obligatory duty or service. Obligation implies compulsion, and service often hurts the dignity of the receiver and creates counter-obligation. Doing good to others can become a spontaneous act free from the above defects only when one feels that by doing good to others one really does good to oneself. The story of a Jewish rabbi narrated by Martin Buber may serve as an illustration of this point. Rabbi Bunam once stopped in a little town where he intended to spend the sabbath and heard of a very pious and learned man who lived in great poverty. Rabbi Bunam

> invited himself to the man's house as his sabbath guest, had furnishings, dishes and food taken to the empty house and even managed to persuade him to accept suitable clothing. When the sabbath was over, Rabbi Bunam, in parting, presented his host with a considerable sum of money. But the latter refused to accept it, saying that he had already received more than enough.
>
> 'The rest', said Rabbi Bunam, 'I did not give *you*, but *myself*, in order to heal the wound of pity which your wretchedness dealt me; only now can I fulfil the commandment of charity. That is why it is written: "Thou shalt surely give him and thy heart shall not be grieved

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6. Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner Sons, 1958) P. 11

when thou givest unto him." He who cannot endure the sight of poverty must allay it until the grievance of his heart is overcome; only then can he really give to his fellow man."[7]

When we meet a poverty-stricken man, the compassion and sorrow we feel is *our* problem, *not his*. We can solve this, *our*, problem in two ways: either we may heal the wound in our conscience by doing something to relieve the man of his hardship, or we may cover the wound with some explanation or ignore it altogether. If we follow the former method we will appear to be unselfish and, if we follow latter, we will appear to be selfish. Both are, however, self-centred attitudes. At first sight, this statement may sound like psychological quibbling. But that it is not so will become clear when we consider the phenomenon of jealousy. The person who feels compassion for the poor may feel jealous of his more successful colleague or richer neighbour.[8] On the other hand, another person who may not be kind to the poor may not be envious of more successful people either. In many social workers, once the initial urge for service gets satisfied, kindness and love give way to ambition, jealousy or hatred. This shows that, in unawakened people, compassion and jealousy are the obverse and reverse of the same self-centred attitude.

What, then, is the right attitude or criterion necessary for social service? An attitude of feeling joy at the welfare of others. Compassion and kindness are negative attitudes and it is easy to feel them. But to seek the welfare of others in a positive way or to feel joy at the success and happiness of others is much more difficult. To have such an attitude one should have the capacity for sharing in larger life. This is the attitude that the mother has towards her child. It is not compassion or pity at the helplessness of her baby that motivates a mother but sharing in her child's life. The mother sees her own welfare as inseparable from the child's. An ordinary mother's sharing is, however, limited. Great men and women are those who are capable of taking a larger share of universal life. This takes us to the third practical consequence referred to above.

Love and kindness to be true and unalloyed must be universal, that is, directed towards all people; such an attitude comes only through sharing in larger life. This sharing is the result of inner growth or expansion from the limited ego-awareness to the awareness of the collective Self or Virāt. A seemingly trifling anecdote may serve to illustrate this principle of sharing. One day somebody brought the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, two choice mangoes. Mother wanted Sister Devamata, an American nun who was on a visit to her, to take those mangoes. Knowing that the mangoes were the last of the season, Sister Devamata refused to accept them, saying that it would make her happier if the Holy Mother had them. Mother's immediate response was in the form of a question: 'Do you think it will give you greater pleasure to have me keep them or give me greater pleasure to have you take them.' The enlightened lady that she was, Devamata was quick to realize the truth which she expressed in her reply. 'It must give you greater pleasure because you have a larger heart to feel it.' To have larger heart means to have a larger share of universal life. The Holy Mother's love and compassion were not based on ordinary human instincts. They were built on a larger awareness and were an

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7. Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim: Later Masters* (New York: Shocken Books, 1948) p. 242.

8. This often becomes a large-scale social phenomenon. Witness, for instance, the communists' concern for the proletariat and hatred for the bourgeoisie.

expression of her conscious participation in universal life. Commenting on this simple incident, Sister Devamata wrote, 'Unbounded was her tender concern for every living thing. No human measure could contain it.'[9]

Dimensions of maturity

We have seen that ego development takes place through interaction with society. Society, however, is a very complex organization with socio-economic, cultural and religious dimensions. It is by making suitable adjustments with this ever-changing, complex phenomenal world that every child has to grow into adulthood. Obviously, ego development is a complex process and must necessarily involve more than one track or dimension. As a matter of fact, it involves several tracks or dimensions. During this growing process the society makes a heavy demand on every person. It is therefore not surprising that few people ever attain maturity in all the dimensions. Few people ever attain full development of their egos. Most people have pockets of immaturity in them. The ego in almost everyone has some of its facets underdeveloped. We now turn to a brief discussion of some of these tracks of ego development.

1. *Autonomy of the self.* Everything that a person has or does has been acquired from the society of which he is a part. The ego is the centre which organizes and gives expression to these powers of the society. To do this efficiently the ego must remain autonomous. This, however, seldom happens. Most people are swept away by the opinions of others, social trends and their own emotions and drives. It is not necessary to be arrogant or rebellious in order to counteract this pull of society. All that is necessary is to have a clear-cut sense of one's own identity or one's own path, and the will-power to stick to it at all costs.

2. *Sense of reality.* According to Freud, the basic instinct in human beings is to seek pleasure and avoid pain, but the ego enables it to operate according to a 'reality principle'. Even without this theory we all learn that we cannot have unlimited pleasure in life. We have a hierarchy of needs and, if we want to have the higher needs fulfilled, we have to reduce or forgo some of the lower pleasures. Moreover, we learn that we cannot grow without participation in collective life and this participation is impossible without sacrificing some of our individual pleasures and preferences.

Above all, we learn that no one can avoid suffering in life. Those who constantly strive to avoid difficulties and suffering will never attain maturity. The maturing individual must learn to take in his stride the many inevitable delays, frustrations, failures, hurts and disappointments of living. Through this process he should develop a high degree of 'stress tolerance'. The work of Hans Selye and others has shown that stress is the chief direct cause of neurosis and psychosomatic diseases. One reason for the alarming increase in the number of mentally disturbed people in modern times is the widespread tendency of young people to seek only comforts shunning discipline and hardship.

3. *Sense of responsibility.* Development of the sense of responsibility constitutes the third track of ego development. A child has little or no social responsibility and knows that it is the responsibility of other people to look after him. If an adult does not outgrow this dependence, he will continue to think that the chief concern

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9. Sister Devamata, *Days in an Indian Monastery* (La Crescenta, California: Ananda Ashrama 1927) p. 215.

of everybody around him should be to take care of him and praise him alone. The sense of responsibility comes with the awareness that the world owes him nothing and he owes everything to the world. The sense of responsibility includes not only a sense of duty, competence and robust pragmatism but an extra quality of the ego known as moral courage. To seek scapegoats for one's own failures is a sign of immaturity. The late U.S. president Harry Truman had a sign on his desk which read, 'The buck stops here', thereby making himself solely responsible for his own decisions and actions.

4. *Self-objectification.* Another dimension of maturity is the ability to objectify oneself: to be aware of one's real motives, weaknesses and capacities, and to see oneself as others see him. The person with insight is able to trace the cause of all his sufferings to himself, but not in a pessimistic way. In other words, he accepts himself. It is only the immature ego that puts on various masks and tries to deceive itself and others.

5. *Evolution of the moral ideal.* Almost every day we have to deal with different types of people and take several small and big decisions. The chief reason why these tasks appear difficult or complicated is our inability to evolve a high moral ideal. This implies three things: acceptance of a clear-cut moral standard, determination to conform one's life and thoughts to it, and faith in the ultimate triumph of *dharma* or virtue. By moral standard is meant not some moral codes borrowed from books but the formation of a norm out of one's own life and experiences. One of the difficult aspects of this inner formation is to find the right place for 'evil' in the scheme of life. At the phenomenal level evil is at least as real and powerful as the good, and encountering evil is an important step in the maturing process. It is not uncommon to find a young man starting his life as a naive simpleton and, after being deceived and exploited by unscrupulous persons and crooks, ending up as a stony-hearted Shylock or a grouchy old cynic. Moral maturity lies in the ability to integrate evil into one's view of life without losing one's essential innocence and goodness.

6. *Development of the parental attitude.* One inseparable aspect of maturity is the parental attitude. In the normal course, this attitude is the result of a slow inner transformation lasting several years. Take the case of a young man who becomes a father at the age of thirty. At first he carries the baby about in his arms, later on walks her or him to the school and, as the girl or boy grows, his fatherhood too grows proportionately so that by the time he reaches fifty he has no difficulty in accepting the twenty-year-old girl or boy as his daughter or son. However, unless he learns to expand this awareness, it may not be possible for him to look upon all twenty-year-olds as his sons and daughters. This problem becomes all the more difficult for celibate people who have no experience of growth in parenthood. Nevertheless, as the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi demonstrated through her life, it is possible to cultivate the parental attitude as a spiritual discipline.

7. *Self-integration.* As William James pointed out, 'The baby assailed by eyes, ears, nose, skin and entrails at once, feels it all as one great blooming, buzzing confusion.' This confusion increases as the child grows for, apart from the increase in inputs like sense-experience and information, he has to deal with various inner forces like instinctual drives and emotions. Later still, as he enters into direct personal relationships with the people around him and plays different roles in social life, his ego develops different dimensions. One of the

difficult problems in the maturing process is to unite all these divergent dimensions of personality into a well-integrated self.

A related problem is to weave one's experiences into a meaningful, goal-oriented pattern which we may call the 'philosophy of life'. Everyone—be he a farmer, barber, soldier, professor or monk—who has succeeded in this task is a philosopher in his own right. According to the eminent American psychologist Gordon Allport, the development of a personal philosophy of life is a hall mark of a mature personality. He writes: 'Finally, a mature personality always has some unifying philosophy of life, although not necessarily religious in type, nor articulated in words, nor entirely complete. But without the direction and coherence supplied by some dominant integrative pattern, any life seems fragmented and aimless.'[10]

8. *Openness to universal life.* All the seven traits of maturity so far discussed become socially beneficial only when the ego communicates freely with Universal Life. In fact this openness to Universal Life is alone enough for the full development and maturity of the ego which will be brought about by the powerful current of Universal Life.

An immature, unawakened ego may be a cause of trouble and division. But as the lives of great religious leaders have shown, an enlightened and mature ego can exert a powerful integrating, strengthening and elevating influence on human society.

10. Gordon W. Allport, *The Individual and His Religion* (New York: MacMillam & Co., 1950)

TYAGA AND SANNYASA*

SWAMI BHUTESHANANDA

In our scriptures we find that great emphasis has been laid on the life of renunciation. It is supposed to be the climax of one's spiritual efforts at reaching the supreme Goal. However, renunciation of everything, known as Sannyāsa, is understood by different persons in different ways. In Vedic literature four *āśramas* or life-stages have been mentioned, namely, *brahmacarya, gārhasthya, vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsa*, the fourth and the last being considered the highest stage. Again, Sannyāsa has been interpreted as a *state* of spiritual realization called *vidvat sannyāsa*. When a man reaches a high state of enlightenment, he behaves in a particular way, and this is considered to be the state of Sannyāsa as distinguished from the *sannyāsa-āśrama* or the fourth *stage* of life that has to be lived according to the dictates of the scriptures. It is a state which a man reaches in whichever āśrama he may be at the time. In the Gītā, *sannyāsa* has been beautifully described thus: 'The renunciation of all actions motivated by self-interest is stated by wise men as Sannyāsa.'[1] As long as the ego has not been eliminated, as long as we think that we are the body, that we are individuals as distinguished from others, we narrow

* A talk given at Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad, on 23-9-1984 by Srimat Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission.

1. काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः ।
Bhagavad-Gītā 18.2

the sense of this Self, and this narrow conception prompts us to do everything for our own gain. Renunciation of this kind of narrow selfish idea is what is called Sannyāsa.

Sannyāsa is not the mere giving up of all activity, which is not possible. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā* : 'Nobody remains even for a second free from doing any action.'[2] We have a body, and for the maintenance of the body we have to work. Even when you are not doing anything, simply sitting quiet, you are not, according to Śaṁkara, in a state of inactivity. The very fact of your thinking that you are sitting quiet without any activity, is in itself an action. Because you are superimposing the body on your higher Self, the condition of non-activity of the body is superimposed on the real Self which is free from all limitations. Therefore, when you sit quiet, you say, 'I am inactive', 'I am not doing anything', as if that were an achievement. Śaṁkara clearly states that it is not an achievement, you are only deceiving yourself.[3]

A man does not attain the state of *naiṣkarmya* (actionlessness) simply by not doing anything physically or mentally, because no man can be at any time without any activity. To consider ourselves to be quiet, to be without any action, is in itself an activity, superimposing a condition of the body on the Self which is without any condition. This is a point that needs to be understood. Unfortunately, our misconception regarding this meaning of Sannyāsa, and regarding the implication of the scriptures in this respect, has been our undoing. Perhaps, for centuries we have been harbouring this wrong conception. The ultimate teaching of the *Gītā*, as Sri Ramakrishna has put it, is *tyāga* or renunciation. Renunciation of what ? Renunciation does not simply mean the renunciation of activity because, on the one hand, it is not possible and, on the other, it is not desirable. Neither should we give up all our activities, nor should we simply perform certain things aimlessly and say that we are active. Nevertheless, Sri Ramakrishna emphasizes that without renunciation nothing can be attained. Renunciation is of utmost importance, both to the householders and to the Sannyāsins.

Now it is to be considered whether the so-called Sannyāsins who have renounced everything have really renounced all activities. Sometimes we take pride in being aloof from all activities. Is it a state that is desirable ? Does it mean any special achievement ? This is a point that has to be understood, and the teachings of the *Gītā* lead us to a correct understanding of it. The Vedas and other scriptures have been misunderstood in this respect. It was once thought that the Vedas enjoined *yajñas*, elaborate sacrifices, and penances as our ideals, as a means to unlimited enjoyment, eternal happiness and so forth. But in the *Gītā* there is a statement which directly contradicts such ideas of the Vedas. This misconception of performing Vedic rites with the idea of gaining comfortable life here and hereafter is censured by Śri Kṛṣṇa, according to whom those people who have this wrong conception do not know the real import of the Scripture.[4]

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2. न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

Bhagavad-Gītā 3.5

3. cf. देहाद्याश्रयं कर्म आत्मन्यध्यारोप्य 'अहं कर्ता ममैतत् कर्म मयास्य कर्मण: फलं भोक्तव्यम्' इति च । तथा 'अहं तूष्णीं भवामि येनाहं निरायासोऽकर्मा सुखी स्याम्' इति कार्यकरणाश्रयं व्यापारोपरमं तत् कृतं च सुखित्वं आत्मन्यध्यारोप्य 'न करोमि किंचित् तूष्णीं सुखमासे' इत्यभिमन्यते लोक: ।

Śamkara, Commentary on *Gītā* 4.18

4. See, *Gītā* 2. 42-45.

Arjuna was afraid that, on account of the sin incurred through the cruel process of war and destruction, he might simply lose his spiritual life. Śri Kṛṣṇa carefully explains that it is not the action that is good or bad but the motive behind the action. If you do a thing from a sense of duty without any selfish motive, your action can never be termed sinful. If one has an unpleasant duty to perform, what is to be done then? The duty should be performed but unselfishly and in a spirit of detachment. In the *Gītā* we read, 'Just as a material pleasure-seeker engages himself in his work whole-heartedly, so does a man of enlightenment engage himself in his work.'[5] The feature that distinguishes the two people is that while the former works for his own self-interest, the latter works in a spirit of detachment with the idea of bringing about the well-being of the world. People think that without any selfish motive no action can be performed, every action must have a motive and that motive cannot be any other than a selfish one. But Śri Kṛṣṇa says clearly that a man of enlightenment does not consider himself to be prompted by any selfish motive.

It is only when we identify ourselves with this body of flesh and bones that we consider ourselves to be limited beings and work for selfish gain. But when a man is enlightened, he ceases to identify himself with his limited body and considers his Self as all-encompassing. This is exactly the teaching of the *Gītā* with regard to Sannyāsa. Sannyāsa is not shirking one's duties, it is not just keeping quiet without doing anything; that will not enable him to reach any goal. Therefore, the *Gītā* never advocates inactivity. Swami Vivekananda has said that the *Gītā* teaches intense calmness in the midst of intense activity. He calls this teaching 'Practical Vedanta'. Vedanta, of course, has been taught from time immemorial in our country. Here even in ordinary people who have no education you will find wonderful traits of Vedanta which they have somehow learnt. Vedanta is in the air as it were. But we have forgotten the true meaning of some of the central doctrines of Vedanta or have given wrong interpretations to them. This kind of misconceived popular Vedanta is useless: it will do good neither to ourselves nor to others. It is not the Vedanta that is taught by the scriptures and particularly emphasized in the *Gītā*.

The *Gītā* is the first interpretation of the Vedas. Before the *Gītā* we did not have such clear exposition of the teachings of the Vedas. As we have seen, there were different kinds of sacrifices and different kinds of ritualistic practices. A sizable part of the Vedas deals with them; but here and there, or between lines, we find one great teaching which can enlighten a man as regards his true self. In the *Gītā* we find all these vital teachings brought together. People do not know their real nature as the Atman, the Self and, considering themselves to be merely bodies, they behave in a manner which makes them constantly afraid of their apparent limitations. The teaching of the *Gītā*, though apparently for the enlightenment of Arjuna, is really intended to enlighten all of us regarding the real import of the Vedas. The real import of the Vedas is to give us knowledge of our true Self and regulate our behaviour in accordance with it.

We talk big, indulge in high theories, but fail miserably in translating the teachings into real life. Therefore, we have to be careful so that there may not be any discrepancy between what we preach and what we practise. Our preaching and practice must go together. The *Gītā* teaches us how to

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5. सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद् विद्वांस्तथाऽसक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥
Gītā 3.25

live in this world : our actions should be motivated in such a manner that instead of entangling us in this world it will free us from bondage. 'Karma Yoga is the secret of success', says the *Gītā*.[6] Karma Yoga teaches us how to work in a way which will not lead us to entanglement in this world but will free us from bondage. In ancient times there was in the minds of people the mistaken belief that if they engaged themselves in activity, they would get entangled or lose their spiritual ideal or state. That wrong impression the *Gītā* has set right. It is now for us to follow the teachings of the *Gītā*. When we do it our whole life will change, we will think and behave differently.

Swami Vivekananda has laid much emphasis on the teachings of the *Gītā* which he has placed in the right perspective. Thus the ancient teaching has received a new impetus through Swamiji's lectures. In his talks we find a wonderful explanation of the cardinal tenets of the *Gītā* and rational ways to make them applicable to our present-day life. Unless our knowledge and actions are relevant to our modern life they have no meaning. Now, how to make our entire life, all our actions, conducive to the achievement of the highest Goal as taught by the *Gītā* which has been so rationally interpreted by Swami Vivekananda ? They are not two different things, but have to be understood together.

Having travelled throughout the world and seen the different societies and their behavioural pattern, Swami Vivekananda came to the conclusion that extremely restless way of life in western countries would bring about their downfall because the people there have not been able to think deeply about what they are going to achieve by these activities. Before taking up any activity its ultimate goal and motive must be considered. What is the goal that we have been trying to reach through these activities? Swamiji did not tell us to work restlessly or aimlessly. Though he preached intense activity everywhere, yet he was careful that activity should not be simply selfish activity without a clear conception of the goal to be attained through this activity.

Swamiji has taught us how in our modern world we can live like a *yogī* without running away from society and without living a secluded life. Wherever you are, you can be a *yogī*. You can perform all activities as a *yoga* by being internally detached from them, by working without any personal gain, doing everything for the sake of others, thinking that others are not different from you. With that knowledge firmly established in your mind if you work for the good of all mankind, you are a *Yogī*, you are a Sannyāsin. Renunciation of selfish action and selfish motive is what is called Sannyāsa. Simply by not engaging ourselves in activity we do not really reach the state of inaction. *Naiṣkarmya*, the state of actionlessness, actually means a state of consciousness in which I feel that I am not affected, I am not changed, by my activity, but remain detached as a mere onlooker. This is a very difficult conception that has to be gradually understood. But this gradual understanding can be achieved through the performance of our activities without any selfish motive. That is the first step through which we are to proceed. We may be engaged in intense activities outwardly and yet we can be free from all activities internally. This is what Swamiji wants us to teach in the modern world in a language that all can understand. We should read the *Gītā* in the light of Swamiji's teachings. Referring to his own Guru, Sri Ramakrishna, Swamiji said that scriptures have to be understood in the light of Sri Ramakrishna's life. Sri Ramakrishna was almost always immersed in deep samadhi ;

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6. योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् । *Gītā* 2.50

but when he was aware of the external world, he engaged himself in work with equal zeal for the well-being of people. He did not do anything for his own gain. There was nothing selfish in him. His ego had been completely eliminated, as it were, and what he did, and said was all for the good of humanity. Let us hope that through our devotion to these Ideals, we will have a real understanding of the message of the *Gītā*, and of Swamiji's and Sri Ramakrishna's teachings. Through their blessings, may we attain that enlightenment which will be for the good of mankind.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CONCEPT OF SOCIALISM

DR. K. GANESAN

In no better words one can introduce the subject of Swami Vivekananda's philosophy of socialism than in the words of Swamiji himself :

> Social reform in India has to be preached by showing how much more spiritual a life the new system will bring; and Politics has to be preached by showing how much it will improve the one thing that the nation wants—its spirituality. Every man has to make his own choice; so has every nation. Before flooding India with socialistic or political ideas the land should be first deluged with spiritual ideas.[1]

Swamiji's socialism, then, is not the conventionally understood ideology, but is a wholly spiritual ideal. This point is to be kept in mind when we try to understand the import of Swamiji's oft-quoted statement : 'I am a Socialist not because I think it is a perfect system, but half a loaf is better than no bread.'[2]

Before elaborating Swamiji's concept further, we can appreciate better the uniqueness of Swamiji's socialism if we make a comparative study of the general ideas of socialism which is offered as an antidote to other forms of socio-political organization.

Social reforms and economic reconstruction are basically an attempt to solve the most challenging problem of the satisfaction of human wants. People have always been striving to achieve a perfect society which will enable them to fulfil all their needs. The different schools of reform that have sprung up, all aim at the realization of this objective.

Very early societies considered self-interest a natural human motive. Capitalism recognized this and contended, as Adam Smith, one of its chief exponents, indicated, that if self-interest was permitted to operate within the market it would make every one better off. In this system the responsibility of the government is only to permit everyone to better his condition in a quite material sense through economic growth. Capitalism is supposed to encourage individualism and competitiveness.

If private individuals are allowed to pursue their own self-interest and to invest their own resources with prospects of rewards commensurate with the risks, it would induce creativity and imaginative action in the world. This would produce better results than any effort to manage the economy by the state. But Capitalism with total laissez-faire policy died, as Paul

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1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* in 8 Vols. (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1973) 3:221 (Henceforward cited as *Complete Works.*)
2. *Complete Works* 6 (1978) : 381.

Samuelson observed, before Queen Victoria died. It is the Mixed Economy that buried it.

In the early puritan days it was believed that man, being a product of the natural course of evolution, was endowed with certain virtues that were in accord with the natural process, such as being industrious and hard working, prudent, temperate and thrifty. These virtues were considered to be essential prerequisites for the prosperity of people and the state and without them, man would not progress or get richer. The system with such men would operate to the best advantage of all if it was left wholly alone. It was individualism that did not deny the role of the spiritual authority of organized religion in the moral education of the masses. It did encourage a rationalist attitude toward social institutions. But at the same time it held crucial to life the notion that religion is absolutely necessary for harmony and morality in life.

But subsequent developments led to a strategic inequality that gave the employer in the capitalist system a much more advantageous bargaining position. The blending of science and industry made large-scale production with the economics of scale possible and profitable which in turn encouraged increased capital investment in labour saving machinery. With this increased investment of capital in labour-saving machinery, workers had to accommodate themselves to the machine and an impersonal employer in the form of large corporations as against the old system where they had been working with a person subject to human feelings and motivations. A man has a conscience but a corporation has only an adding machine. Theodore Roosevelt puts it nicely : 'A few generations before, the boss had known every man in his shop; he called his men Bill, Tom, Dick, John; he inquired after their wives and babies; he swapped jokes and stories and perhaps a bit of tobacco with him. In the small establishments there had been a friendly human relationship between employer and employee.'[3] There was no such relation between the great industrial magnates, who controlled the giant corporations, and the hundreds and thousands of men who worked in their industries or the millions of women and children who were dependent upon these workers for their daily bread. The labour was thus in the unfortunate position of being on the opposite side of an organized aggregate of capital.

This strategic inequality gave the capitalist a better bargaining position. Of course, there had been pari passu a similar development on the part of labour in the form of giant trade unions. These two developments eliminated competition and thereby changed the pattern of distributive justice. This was accompanied by a certain disorganization of the moral forces of society. The sense of right, which is the centripetal force in a society, is the force that drives the production mechanism in the proper direction and influences the distribution system to give to each his share. This sense of right was not being given free play. Even the churches, which were supposed to ensure the cultivation of moral and ethical values, had become largely middle class institutions with a definite financial stake in the capitalist's success, and which were consequently affraid to preach equity and justice. All this led to unequal and unjust division of wealth causing a widening gulf of inequality of income distribution. Thus the whole idea of the principle 'every man for himself' proved to be disorganizing and chaotic.

As a result, the solution for all such nagging problems of inequality of wealth distribution, exploitation of labour, and evils of the concept of economic man, is being sought by many nations through science and social-

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3. Theodore Roosevelt *An Autobiography* pp. 470-71

ism. In the history of the world one rarely comes across a single idea that has taken roots so deeply and grown so quickly as Socialism. Socialism, its protagonists claim, supplies a moral vision, whereas capitalism confines itself to the economic man. In socialism economic growth is obtained by having every individual place the common good before his own interest. It is supposed to be egalitarian in prescribing that differences in talent and function in the world would be rewarded according to a socialist vision. Socialism emphasizes redistribution, as it assumes that there is no problem of production but only a problem of distribution. Naturally, with such an emphasis on redistribution, separating the distribution of wealth from the production of wealth, it bears close resemblance to the concept of charity preached by religions. But it simply cannot deliver its promise of redistribution without paying equal attention to production. Redistribution effort without concern for production will only result in redistribution of poverty and make the poor poorer. It is obvious that in order to distribute there must be something to distribute. Neither production nor distribution is autonomous. Production depends on human incentives. Wealth is generated by human incentives. Therefore human incentives must be recognized and respected. Socialism with its overmuch emphasis on redistribution succeeds only in making people more dependent. Any effort towards distribution unmindful of production will only perpetuate the moral blight of dependence.

As aptly remarked by Charles Reich, 'The real deprivation has not been in terms of material goods but in terms of a deadened mind; a loss of feeling, a life that excludes all new experience. This is the true nature of contemporary servitude.'[4]

4. Charles Reich, *The Greening of America* (New York: Random House, 1970)

Swami Vivekananda had a remarkable awareness of this phenomenon and boldly asserted : 'We may convert every house in the country into a charity asylum, we may fill the land with hospitals but the misery of man will still continue to exist until man's character changes.'[5]

Swamiji strongly condemned the act of making people dependent. He was very particular about the preservation of the innate dignity of the individual, and he would rather have the have-nots realize their immense potentialities and raise themselves without cursing, vilifying, abusing and denouncing the haves. Swamiji was fond of quoting that celebrated verse in the *Gītā* which proclaims the need for working out one's own salvation without making the self depressed.[6] Swamiji said : 'Each one will have to save himself, each one to do his own work ; I seek no help, I reject none. Nor have I any right in the world to be helped. Whosoever has helped me, or will help, it will be their mercy to me, not my right and as such I am eternally grateful.'[7] What a grand conception ! According to Swamiji, 'Material civilization, nay, even luxury, is necessary to create work for the poor.'[8] Thus he wanted work to be created and not just doles to be distributed to the poor. He had tremendous confidence in the dignity and self-respect of the poor and the downtrodden of our nation. Swamiji asked :

> Where nobody looks, no one gives a word of encouragement, where everybody hates—that living amid such circumstances and displaying boundless patience, infinite love, and dauntless practicality, our proletariat are doing their duty in their homes day and night, without the slightest murmur—well, is there no heroism in this ?[9]

5. *Complete Works* 1 (1977) : 53
6. *The Bhagavad-Gītā* 6.5
7. *Complete Works* 7(1972): 487
8. *Ibid* 4 (1978): 368
9. *Ibid* 7 : 359

He believed that 'the only service to be done for our lower classes is to give them education, *to develop their lost individuality.*'[10]

At the same time certain aspects of socialism such as its overriding concern for the poor, the deprived and the underdog and its giving high priority to the relief of poverty, distress and social squalor, appealed to Swami Vivekananda. To quote him :

> I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall... They pay for our education, they build our temples, but in return they get kicks. They are practically our slaves. If we want to regenerate India, we must work for them.[11]

But, thus far and no further. Swamiji would not brook the condescending patronizing attitude assumed by the socialists who see themselves as an enlightened group chosen to transform society and human conditions by creating a movement toward an ideal society. Without the spiritual foundation such a movement could end up, and has ended up, in becoming the worst engine of tyranny.

Socialism holds that it will create a good society first, which will then create good people. But there cannot be a good society without good people. While a good government can improve the people, although with some difficulty, it is certainly impossible for a handful of true believers to transform the whole society into a society of good people by manipulating the masses. All such attempts invariably take the form of coercion and totalitarianism. The people who coerce others forget why they are doing it, and come to regard the condition in itself as legitimate. In this centralized system the state administers the means of production, manipulates distribution and controls the will of the masses. A small group of people see themselves as having been enlightened, and they seek to instruct the masses and impose their preferences on people as consumers and workers. Such an economic arrangement does violence to human rights, the dignity of a person and the integrity of one's conscience.

Instead of liberating the individual as it claims, socialism has led only to the diminution of man and has reduced him to a by-product of the mass. People find themselves serving the system instead of being served by the system. It is the organismic approach in socialism that reduces the individual to a cog in a centrally run machine. It is rightly said that unbridled socialism, with its vertical communication and sanction by hierarchical bureaucratic authorities, tends to become capricious, transgressive and dehumanizing.

Swami Vivekananda correctly anticipated such an ending and he lashed out at the half-baked attempts of social reformers.

> Oh tyrants, attempting to think that you can do anything for any one! Hands off![12] Give them ideas—that is the only help they require, and then the rest must follow as effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, the crystallization comes in the law of nature. Our duty is to put ideas into their heads, they will do the rest.[13] Ay, let every man and woman and child, without respect of caste or birth, weakness or strength, hear and learn that behind the strong and the weak, behind the high and the low, behind every one, there is that Infinite Soul assuring the infinite possibility and the infinite capacity of all to become great and good.[14]

Swamiji in short wanted every one (as observed by Thoreau) 'to be a Columbus to whole new continents and world within,

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10. *Ibid* 4 : 362
11. *Ibid* 5 (1973) : 222-23
12. *Ibid* 3 : 246
13. *Ibid* 4 : 362
14. *Ibid* 3 : 193

opening new channels, not of trade, but of thought.'[15]

For Swami Vivekananda any attempt to plan the economic emancipation of man without any effort to transform him or help him to realize his inherent divinity is futile and meaningless. He prescribes in his lectures on the Mission of the Vedanta, 'Our poor people, these downtrodden masses of India, therefore require to hear and know what they really are. Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature.'[16]

Man is not just a physical being, a biological phenomenon only. He is a divine being in a human covering. So, according to Swamiji, 'All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within and if these are strong and well adjusted, society will arrange itself accordingly.'[17]

Swamiji provides the touchstone for finding out what a good work is and what is not: 'Every action that helps a being manifest its divine nature more and more is *good ;* every action that retards it is evil. The only way of getting our divine nature manifested is by helping others to do the same.'[18] It is because of this inherent divine nature in man that man needs no reforms. To quote Swamiji, 'I do not therefore want any reformation. My ideal is growth, expansion, development on national lines.'[19]

'I do not believe in reform, I believe in growth.'[20] This motivation for growth is what Swamiji wanted to generate. This process of human motivation for the total regeneration of man, is a process of understanding the human self. The human self has an overt as well as a covert entity. It is the covert self, the inner self which is the core of human motivation. For activating this inner self, the recognition of the intrinsic value and innate dignity of human beings is an essential prerequisite. This is what has been so sublimely summed up by Swamiji:

> Each soul is potentially divine.[21] None is really weak ; the soul is infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself ; proclaim the God within you, do not deny Him!...Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature, call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity.[22]

The ennobling heights of Swami Vivekananda's concept get revealed better when it is compard with the views held by economists like John Bates Clark, Richard Theodore Ely and others who presented not only an economic but also a religious solution to the problems of their day. According to Clark the supreme motive and force that drives the production mechanism and causes the process of distribution to give each his share is, in the last analysis, the sense of right in man. He contends that besides the physical wants of individuals that are susceptible of complete satisfaction, there are higher wants that belong to the mental and moral spheres. These 'higher wants are indefinitely expansive and afford undiminished or increased gratification at each successive attainment ... The better a man becomes, the more earnestly he strives after everything that tends to develop character ... The love of right action and the aspiration for worthy character may subordinate every lower impulse.' Consequently, 'the most expansive of all markets is that for the

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15. Henry David Thoreau *Walden*
16. *Complete Works* 3 : 193
17. *Ibid* 5 : 414
18. *Ibid* 6 : 319
19. *Ibid* 3 : 195
20. *Ibid* 3 : 213
21. *Ibid* 1 : 124
22. *Ibid* 3 : 193

appliances for intellectual, aesthetic and moral growth. Here is a limitless outlet for productive energy, and the extent to which it is utilized is the gauge of genuine economic progress.'[23]

To Ely there is no hope of resolving any part of social question simply by rearranging the industrial order. In order to make any part of the socialistic scheme work 'it is necessary to have a moral and intellectual elevation of mankind.'[24]

These western economists talked at the most of a good man, morally and intellectually elevated. But Swami Vivekananda gave us a most sublime spiritual motto:

> First let us be Gods and then help others to be Gods. 'Be and make', let this be our motto.[25] We believe that every being is divine, is God... We believe that it is the duty of every *soul* to treat, think of and behave with other *souls* as such, i.e. as *Gods*, and not hate, or despise, or vilify, or try to injure them by any manner or means.[26]

This vision of the soul as eternally and entirely divine is a far higher ideal and it is his prescription for real social reformation.

In its extreme form, socialism calls for class struggles based on class hatred as the fundamental driving force of economic life. The system assumes a clash of massive social opposites defined in relation to property as the means of production. In short, hatred forms the dynamic, dialectically constructive and creative force of the society. But Swami Vivekananda's socialism preaches love as the very essence of social and patriotic work. He urges the social worker:

> Feel, my children, feel; feel for the poor, the ignorant, the downtrodden; feel till the heart stops and the brain reels and you think you will go mad...[27]
>
> It is love and love alone that I preach, and I base my teaching on the great Vedantic truth of the sameness and omnipresence of the Soul of the Universe.[28]

Socialism, being an inherently gnostic movement, according to Irving Kristol,[29] has the gnostic impulse to radically transform the world. Also because of its morphological structure—the perfect group of the party at the top, followed by the believers and finally the masses in that order—the perfect feel that they have to coerce the other two groups in order to make them perfect. As the perfect group alone is supposed to have the arcane knowledge of how to reorganize the world so as to render it perfect, those high ideals of the perfect, then sanction the most machiavellian means as seen in the real world.

Swamiji was opposed to both these avowed objectives of socialism, namely, the radical transformation of the existing order and the end-justifies-the-means philosophy. He wanted the social and

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23. John Bates Clark, *Philosophy of Wealth* p. 198
24. Richard Theodore Ely, *French and German Socialism* Pp. 244-45
25. *Complete Works* 4 : 351
26. *Ibid* 4 : 357
27. *Ibid* 4 : 367
28. *Ibid* 3 : 194
29. Irving Kristol talks about two movements, the Orthodox and the Gnostic. The Gnostic movements tend to be antinomian—that is, they tend to be hostile to all existing laws, and to all existing institutions. They tend to endanger a millenarian temper—that is, to insist that this hell in which we live, this 'unfair' world, can be radically corrected. Orthodoxy on the other hand, has a very different view of how human beings achieve their full human authenticity. The function of orthodoxy in all religions is to sanctify daily life, and to urge us to achieve our fullest human potential through virtuous practice in our daily life.

Irving Kristol, 'The Spiritual Roots of Capitalism and Socialism' in *Capitalism and Socialism—A Theological Inquiry*, Ed. Michael Novak,

economic reconstruction of India in the context of Indian social thought and terminology. In a letter written to Miss Mary Hale of Chicago, Swamiji observes, 'If it is possible to form a state in which the knowledge of the priest period, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial and the ideal of equality of the last, can all be kept intact, minus their evils, it will be an ideal state.'[30] He was never for radicalism and extremism and was always against ignoring the past. He believed strongly that 'within the old structure is to be found life enough for the rebuilding of two hundred thousand new ones.'[31] With firm conviction he urged:

> Go back, go back to the old days when there was strength and vitality.[32] Try to revive society on the old grounds of universal salvation and equality as laid down by the old Masters, such as Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and Chaitanya.[33]

He wanted not an abolition but only a readjustment of the existing order, not destruction but construction and expansion, not revolution but evolution. He said:

> I fully agree with the educated classes in India that a thorough overhauling of society is necessary. But how to do it? The destructive plans of reforms have failed. My plan is this... Our society is not *bad*, but good; only I want it to be better still; Not from error to truth, nor from bad to good, but from truth to higher truth, from good to better, best.[34]

Regarding the maxim 'the end justifies the means', Swamiji has this to say: 'One of the greatest lessons I have learned in my life is to pay as much attention to the means of work as to its end.'[35] And so, 'Let the end and the means be joined into one.'[36]

Socialism relies on altruism and on the pure spirit of fraternity. Indeed, if there were such a true spirit of fraternity, it would be nice; but our reading of human nature indicates that there cannot be such a society having true fraternity. Such a society could be ushered in only through Swamiji's spiritual socialism. The humanistic and spiritual interpretation of the divine essence of man largely determines the democratic content of Swamiji's socialism. He says to the so-called reformers: 'The one problem you have is to give to the masses their rights.'[37] This forms the basis of his impassioned call for general fraternity. A socialist, in the ordinary sense, would say that the reformers or the peer group should be altruistic, kind, merciful, gracious and helpful to the poor, the miserable and the downtrodden, and thereby create an atmosphere of equality and fraternity. This, however, only results in the division of the society into two groups, the helpers and the helped, but does not bring about absolute equality and fraternity.

Swamiji had an incomparably large-hearted measure to realize this fraternity and equality. His message is:

> Look upon every man, woman and every one as God. You cannot help any one, you can only serve... I should see God in the poor, and it is for my salvation that I go and worship them. The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord, coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper, and the sinner![38]
>
> Is it not a great privilege to be allowed to worship God by helping our fellow men?[39]

Only such an approach to reform and

30. *Complete Works* 6:381
31. *Ibid* 5 : 215
32. *Ibid* 3 : 347
33. *Ibid* 4 : 369
34. *Ibid* 4 : 371
35. *Ibid* 2 (1976):1
36. *Ibid* 1 : 71
37. *Ibid* 5 : 223
38. *Ibid* 3 : 246-47
39. *Ibid* 1 : 77

such an attitude on the part of the reformer can eliminate the distinction and pave the way for true equality and fraternity.

Swamiji was fully confident that India can offer spiritualistic socialism as an antidote to the present evils. His views on this subject, so charmingly expressed in the following words, may serve as a fitting conclusion to our discussion.

> Gifts of political knowledge can be made with the blast of trumpets and the march of cohorts. Gifts of secular knowledge and social knowledge can be made with fire and sword. But spiritual knowledge can be given only in silence like the dew that falls unseen and unheard, yet bringing into bloom masses of roses. This has been the gift of India to the world again and again.[40]
>
> Now when we come to India, if you ask one of our ploughmen, 'Do you know anything about politics?' He will reply, 'What is that?' He does not understand the socialistic movements, the relation between capital and labour, and all that; he has never heard of such things in his life, he works hard and earns his bread. But you ask, 'What is your religion?' he replies, 'Look here, my friend, I have marked it on my forehead.' He can give you a good hint or two on questions of religion. That has been my experience. That is our nation's life.[41]

40. *Ibid* 3 : 222
41. *Ibid* 3 : 108

PERENNIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND THE HINDU PARADIGM OF WELL-BEING

DR. M. SIVARAMKRISHNA

The aim of this paper is to examine the basic assumptions of 'perennial psychology' and their implications in terms of achieving total well-being. To give focus to the discussion of goals and values of this well-being, the four-fold value-system of Hinduism (the *puruṣarthas*) is chosen as a helpful paradigm. Finally, an attempt is made to analyse how this well-being is both individual and transpersonal and how this is likely to concern us in futurist thinking.

I

As a preliminary, one can draw attention to a momentous change perceptible today in our 'cognitive maps' or what A.F.C. Wallace has called 'the mazeways' of human consciousness. A 'mazeway' is a map, or more precisely 'an image of space and time [and] it tells us who we are, where we come from and where we are going.' It 'charts a more personal path by which each of us can make his or her own way through space and time.'[1] In short, it is 'imaging of personal values and cultural forms.'

Contemporary thinking reflects at almost all levels a (sudden?) shift in the basic mazeways. There is today what Fritjof Capra has termed a definite 'turning point'[2] in man's quest for well-being. This is implicitly a 'paradigm shift' involving a movement away from the external to the interior, or more precisely an exciting exploration of inner space brought into being probably by man's perception of the wonder and mystery of the outer. This is reflected in the countless guides for the

1. Quoted, William Irwin Thompson, *Darkness and Scattered Light* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1978), p. 13.
2. See Fritjof Capra, *The Turning Point*

perplexed exiles of a mis-directed techno-scientific odyssey desperately trying the difficult job of 'coming home.' These guides invariably involve the mapping of interior consciousness and ways of heightening it so that, to use William Irwin Thompson's suggestive words, 'time-falling bodies can take to light.'[3]

Whatever the path one advocates or whatever the map one uses, all the explorers who had traversed the path, assume, with minor variations certain grades or levels of human consciousness which are remarkably similar in almost all traditions. The 'forgotten truths of primordial traditions'[4] —as Huston Smith calls them—have given us a spectrum of consciousness which in its perennial psychological motifs is a kind of psychic counterpart to perennial philosophy. Well-being in terms of this basic spectrum of consciousness involves both awareness and transcendence.

Consciousness is unitive and therefore to talk about distinctions and levels is only for analytic convenience. Since human personality is 'a multi-levelled manifestation or expression of a single consciousness,'[5] distinctions drawn for conceptualizing can never be regarded as or reduced to generic differences. Consciousness in its multiple manifestation ranges, in this sense, from the supreme 'level' of cosmic consciousness to 'the drastically narrowed sense of identity associated with egoic consciousness.'[6] Levels vary therefore from the Pure Being of *Brahman* to the 'shadow level' of *ahaṁkara,* the persistently egoic 'I'.

Underlying, as the Common Ground, all levels of consciousness is what Ken Wilbur calls simply *Mind.* This is consciousness without any differentiation, the pure *sat, cit* and *ananda.* This is, as Wilbur says, 'what there is and all there is, spaceless and therefore infinite, timeless and therefore eternal, outside of which nothing exists. On this level man is identified with the universe, the All, or rather, he *is* the All.'[7] In effect, perennial psychology regards this as the only *real* level of consciousness, the great *Hiraṇya-garbha*—or rather not a level as such but the substratum of all levels. Reflected in the state of *turiya* subsuming all other states of *jagrat, svapna* and *suṣupti,* this Mind is the Cosmic Mind before the process of differentiation begins. It is, as Zen Master Seung Sahn has put it, 'the area [in which] a statue can cry ; the ground is not dark or light ; the tree has no roots ; the valley has no echo.'[8] A striking analogy used by Sri Ramakrishna makes this more explicit. He uses the more familiar word, God, for consciousness:

> Satcidānanda is like an infinite ocean. Intense cold freezes the water into ice, which floats on the ocean in blocks of various forms. Likewise, through the cooling influence of Bhakti, one sees forms of God in the ocean of Absolute. These forms are meant for the bhaktas, the lovers of God. But when the Sun of Knowledge rises, the ice melts ; it becomes the same water it was before. Water above and water below, everywhere nothing but water.[9]

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3. William Irwin Thompson, *The Time-Falling Bodies Take to Light* (London: Rider/ Hutchinson, 1981).

4. Huston Smith, *Forgotten Truth The Primordial Tradition* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1976)

5. Ken Wilbur, "Psychologia Perennis: The Spectrum of Consciousness," *The Meeting of the Ways: Explorations in East/West Psychology,* John Welwood, ed. (New York: Shocken Books, 1979), p. 8. Hereafter *The Meeting of the Ways.*

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.,* p. 9.

8. Stephen Mitchell, ed. *The Teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn* (New York: Grove Press, 1976), p. 7.

9. M., *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,* Swami Nikhilananda, tr. (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1981 edn.), p. 191. Hereafter *The Gospel.*

The process of differentiation within an enveloping unity is extraordinarily paradoxical: hence the extremely suggestive image used by Sri Ramakrishna: water, the most conformable of elements. In fact the comment by Huston Smith, using the same image is interesting: 'Spirit is the bedrock of our lifestream, but the waters that course over it are for the most part too roiled to allow the bed to be seen. Where the banks widen and the current slows, however, sediment settles and we glimpse our support. Always in this life some water intervenes to veil....Not only is the bed there throughout; it is truly the bed that we see even when we see it obscurely. Man is Spirit while not Spirit unalloyed'[10] Another equally significant comment is made by Martin Lings. The image of ice and water:

> is all the truer in that the frozen crystallization appears to be far more substantial than unfrozen water; and yet when a large piece of ice melts the result is a surprisingly small quantity of water. Analogously, the lower worlds [the terrestrial and intermediate planes], for all their seeming reality, depend for their existence upon a relatively unample Presence compared with that which confers on the Paradise [the celestial plane] their everlasting bliss; yet here again, everlastingness is not Eternity, nor are the joys of these Paradises more than shadows of the Absolute Beatitude of the Supreme Paradise [the Infinite].[11]

Intimations of this unity, however intermittent they are, conform to what Abraham Maslow called 'peak experiences.'[12] But the undifferentiated consciousness does not correspond to any hypothetical aggregate of these peak experiences. For to admit 'peak' at one level is to concede 'plateau' at another, while consciousness we are discussing is beyond and before all categorising begins. This state is what John Welwood, following Buddhist psychology, (and echoing Upanishadic motifs) has described as 'the larger environment of mind that can never be grasped as an object of thought and at the same time is the basis of thought, that which makes thought possible.'[13] He illustrates the idea thus:

'The gaps between the dots,' he says, 'are in one sense nothing, in another sense they act as the ground that allows the dots to stand out as separate entities.'[14] In other words, 'separate forms, spaces around them and the background environment in which form and emptiness occur'[15] are equally valid points of the mind. 'Can' he asks rightly, 'any one aspect be separated and meaningfully held independent of the whole?'[16]

This consciousness, moreover, is not a metaphysical postulate but a directly experiential state of being. As Huston Smith puts it, 'a substratum linking insentience to sentience does exist; depending on the level of reality on which the question is raised, it is form, existence, being, or the Infinite.'[17] But once we become aware of a personal identity then the *levels* of consciousness 'emerge': in

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10. Huston Smith, *Forgotten Truth The Primordial Tradition*, p. 88.
11. Quoted, *Ibid.*, p. 91.
12. See Abraham Maslow, *Religion, Values and Peak Experience* (Viking Compass, USA; Penguin Reprint, 1976).
13. *The Meeting of the Ways*, p. 38.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Huston Smith, *Forgotten Truth the Primordial Tradition*, p. 68.

Sri Ramakrishna's suggestive image in these levels the 'salt doll'[18] is still maintaining its separate identity from the ocean.

The first level we encounter here is what we call *kāraṇa śarīra* or the *transpersonal* level. The characteristic feature here is its ambivalence. While the consciousness is not *completely* aware of the unitive level, it is also not 'confined to the boundaries of the ordinary individual organism.'[19] Probably this is what Sri Ramakrishna used to designate as the state of *bhāvamukha*: the threshold of unitive consciousness, the All, is simultaneously aware of the pluralistic Many without exclusively focussing on either. 'The world' appears in this state 'as an immense mind in which innumerable waves of ideas' are 'rising,' surging and merging.'[20] This is the 'direct experience and vision of the real nature of that universal consciousness and power as "One without a second", as living and wide awake and as the creator of all wills and actions.'[21]

This level is 'the persistent source of existential, rational, volitional awareness,' 'the internalized matrix of cultural premises, familial relationships, and social glosses, as well as the all-pervading institutions of language, logic, ethics and law.'[22] It is from this ground that myths—the nearest mode through which the truths of unitive consciousness can be expressed—emerge. As such, this is the field of *bījas* or *vāsanās*, in short, of archetypes. The seeds of holistic well-being lie here but the fructifying depends on the transcending or trapping of the psyche in the levels further down—bringing the consciousness to seed if it is trapped or elevating it if it transcends.

What is transcends or is trapped in constitutes the next level of consciousness, the 'Ego-Level.' This is marked by the frontal attack of contingent reality on unitive consciousness. In the image of the Upanishads, the bird of consciousness is caught in bitter-sweet fruits of a basically dualistic character. Even the glimpse of the bird above—the level of unitive consciousness—is lost and consciousness gets enmeshed in what Sri Ramakrishna called, in his infinitely evocative images, 'woman and gold,' or to stretch it in terms of another system, the Freudian and the Marxian syndromes. Dichotomizing no longer remains a seed, Descartian dualism is no longer incipient. There is shift from the inclusive All to the divisive, pluralistic Many. The ego is in short 'split from and therefore trapped in the body'. This relays itself on all levels: epistemologically, between the seer and the seen; mythically, heaven and hell, the sacred and the profane; ontologically between self and organism. This is, in effect, descent into history from myth, into life or (not *and*) death, for, as Norman O. Brown says, 'the consequence of the disruption of the unity of Life and Death in man is to make man, the historical animal.'[23]

Since this level is that of the ego, the most relevant dialectic which explains the corresponding predicament is that of 'Maya.' In fact, the ego is only a layer of Maya. As Sri Ramakrishna puts it, 'Māyā is nothing but the egotism of the embodied soul. This egotism has covered everything like a veil.'[24] The covering is

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18. *The Gospel,* p. 103.
19. Ken Wilbur, *The Meeting of the Ways,* p. 9.
20. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master,* Swami Jagadananda, tr. (Mardas: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1952), p. 390.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Ken Wilbur, *The Meeting of the Ways,* p. 10.
23. Quoted, *Ibid.*, p. 13.
24. *The Gospel,* p. 169.

explicable in terms of several *upādhīs* or adjuncts with which the consciousness identifies itself. In fact, woman and gold are frequent upādhīs on this level. 'Normalcy' in terms of die-hard behavioural psychology is the identification of consciousness with the contents of the first three levels which Sri Ramakrishna described with unerring clarity as those associated with 'the organs of evacuation, and generation, and at the navel.'[25] In these areas, 'the mind is immersed only in worldliness, attached to "woman and gold".'[26]

II

These levels of consciousness have analogues in Hindu conception of 'sheaths' or 'layers' (the sanskrit word is *kosa*). 'The notion that man has several bodies or sheaths of different density or vibratory rate which interpenetrate one another' is quite familiar in Yoga and Tantra. These 'sheaths' which the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* expounds at length are not separate or separable. Moreover, from the purely relativist perspective, these sheaths become subtler and subtler through progressive levels of transcendence. Therefore, the more helpful way is to regard them as 'interpenetrating forms of energy'. As Lama Anagarika Govinda has pointed out:

> These sheaths are not separate layers . . . but rather in the nature of mutually penetrating forms of energy, from the finest 'all-radiating' all-pervading luminous consciousness down to the densest form . . . which appears before us as our visible, physical body. The correspondingly finer or subtler sheaths penetrate and thus contain the grosser ones.[27]

In terms of 'values' or desirable normative ends, these energies and their harmonization is suggested in the Hindu paradigm of the *puruṣarthas*. Well-being is obviously harmonizing of these values implicit in the integration of corresponding levels of consciousness.

In analysing these values and their realization it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that fulfilment on any one level without awareness of the infinite, timeless consciousness which is the ground of all levels is not only futile but positively dangerous. This is the reason why therapy aimed at only one of the levels—for instance the 'ego level'—can never be regarded as total therapy. This is only, as Aldoux Huxley put it, making the troubled individual adjust himself to the society of less troubled individuals. Such therapy instead of bringing in holistic awareness succeeds only in truncating the consciousness.

This is the reason why the Hindu paradigm of ultimate values draws a sharp distinction between the 'pleasant' and 'the good', the 'preyas' and the 'sreyas', 'abhyudaya' and 'nihsreyasa' and exhorts the seeker after the Ultimate Awareness to choose the 'electable' in preference to the 'delectable'.[28] Moreover, 'nihsreyasa' that the Hindu paradigm postulates subsumes rather than rejects the values inhering in 'abhyudaya'. This is clear from the way in which *artha* and *kāma* are placed centrally in the scheme. In their basic sense they are of course assumed to be sex and money. But as Karl H. Potter[29] has shown in his analysis, these are capable of wider interpretation and indicate the

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25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. Ralph Metzner, quoted, *Maps of Consciousness* (New York: Collier Books, 1971), p. 35.
28. See *Katha Upanishad* for relevant discussion.
29. Karl H. Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963; Indian rpt. 1965), pp. 5-10.

attitudes which one has to take towards the contexts in which they cease to be constricting. For *artha* is surely concerned with material prosperity but since this is fenced in with *dharma* on one side and *mokṣa* on the other, it does not indicate its relentless pursuit. Rather, from the point of view of ultimate level of total awareness, *artha* involves the attitude of *minimal concern* towards things material. The ego-level on which the values of *artha* and *kama* operate cannot be rid of its constricting impact unless the higher levels, corresponding to *dharma* and *mokṣa*, are constantly cultivated.

It is also possible to relate the motif of *artha* to esoteric systems such as *alchemy* in which an actual one-to-one correspondence exists between the physical purification and psychic transformation. As analysed by Ralph Metzner, in the 'new alchemy, current knowledge of biochemistry and psychopharmacology would be integrated into an experimentally verifiable understanding of psychophysiological energy systems, rather than being, as now, a mass of separate, unsynthesized data. It will be found, as it was found by the old alchemists, that there are certain laws that are operative at every level of energy organization and corresponding level of consciousness.'[30] In this sense, probably by postulating *artha* as a basic value, the Hindu paradigm suggests—apart from the metaphor of base metal, the crude level, getting refined—an actual physico-psychic process of achieving higher levels of being. In every instance there is exquisite harmonization of the *visual* ('yantra'), the *verbal* ('mantra') and the *physico-gestural* ('mudra').

Similarly, *kāma,* in its positive side, an attitude of passionate concern can be effectively made use of in awakening the egoic consciousness to higher levels of awareness. Sexual relations as contexts in which this attitude of passionate concern manifests itself can themselves be rid of their taints and made to manifest higher levels. In other words, sexual energy, assumed as the most vital of *prāṇa,* can be transformed in conjunction with the ultimate impelling force in the paradigm: *mokṣa.* In fact, in both *Tao* and *Tantra,* systems based on what Ralph Metzner has called 'verifiable experience of definite states of consciousness,'[31] the attempt is unmistakable to make use of subtle centres of sexual energy to yield a consciousness free from polarized sex. Contemporary models of the psyche, such as the Jungian one, reaffirm this when they suggest that 'the male has an internalized female counterpart, the *anima ;* while the female has an internalized masculine counterpart, the *animus.*'[32] In this use of sex as a powerful propeller of unitive consciousness the yogi is 'the androgyne of prehistory reachieved.'[33]

That these levels, those of *artha* and *kāma* are essentially energies or attitudes which can find, impelled by *moksha,* a higher direction and orientation is suggested by Sri Ramakrishna in his own inimitable images:

> God reveals Himself to a devotee who feels drawn to him by the combined force of these three attractions: the attractions of worldly possessions for the worldly man, the child's attraction for its mother, and the husband's attraction for the chaste wife. If one feels drawn to Him by the combined force of these three attractions, then through it one can attain Him.
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> The point is, to love God even as the mother loves her child, the chaste wife her husband, and

30. Metzner, *Maps of Consciousness,* p. 103.

31. *Ibid.,* p. 31.

32. William Irwin Thompson, *The Time-Falling Bodies Take to Light,* p. 31.

33. *Ibid.,* p. 33.

the worldly man his wealth. Add together these three forces of love, these three powers of attraction, and give it all to God. Then you will certainly see Him.[34]

Ramakrishna's idiom is theological but the *method* he suggests is that of experimental psychology meant to explore man, as Medard Boss has put it, 'as an essentially luminating *atman*-being, belonging directly to Brahman, the hidden matrix of all appearing, being, vanishing and non-being.'[35] Ramakrishna's method corresponds more or less to what St. Teresa called 'interior senses', in the sense 'of a seeing, hearing, touching and embracing that are different from the seeing, hearing, touching and embracing that we associate with external sensation.'[36] Understood in this way sex becomes a liberating force and indeed one can visualize the possibility as Teilhard de Chardin did, 'of a human race evolving towards virginity which, far from being a denial of love, will be a magnificent expression of love of another kind.'[37]

III

So far we have seen how the different levels of consciousness, including those that appear to be lower, can in fact be integrated and given a sense of direction by constantly keeping in view the transcendent one. This level of all levels is *moksha* the achieving of which depends on the integration of *artha* and *kāma* understood as positive energies. The principle of integration, it now remains to add, is *dharma*. The relation of *artha* and *kāma* as effective only when linked to *dharma* is brought out by Nitya Chaitanya Yati thus: *dharma* is that condition when we know that there is nothing else to attain. Says Yati:

> The highest of all attainments is to know that there is nothing to attain, because one is with the Absolute, which lacks nothing. In that sense, *dharma* and *siddhi*, the ground and attainment are not two. *Artha* is wealth only when wealth becomes meaningful in its instrumentality to make one happy. Happiness exists when one is entirely with oneself and there is not a second to tempt or threaten. One who has realized that one's Self cannot be differentiated from the Absolute finds the highest meaning in that state. The Absolute is adorably precious and there is nothing that can be equated with it. Hence *artha* and *sukham*, meaningful wealth and happiness, are seen in the attainment of one's original state.[38]

'The attainment of one's original state' is obviously 'moksha' or what, in the initial section of this essay, has been designated, after Ken Wilbur, as the Mind or the ground of all levels of consciousness. If this level beyond all levels is lost sight of then *artha* becomes *greed* and *kāma* becomes blinding desire. In other words *kāma* becomes a trap: while giving us a glimpse of a state in which the 'artificial division between existence, subsistence, and value is sublated,'[39] unawareness of its tentative unity and its implicit experience can only cut us off from the Mind or the Atman-consciousness. Therefore, the crucial paradox: 'Kāma', desire fulfilled at the unitive level, is 'identical' with liberation, or *mokṣa*, which is a state of unity which arises from a permanent negation of the tentative regress to a state of dualistic experience.

We are now able to draw the conclusion that *artha* and *kāma* are energies which either become emotional wastes or modes

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34. *The Gospel*, p. 83.
35. *Meeting of the Ways*, p. 183.
36. William Johnston, *Silent Music* (London: Collins, 1974), p. 149.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
38. Nitya Chaitanya Yati, tr. *The Bhagavad Gita* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1981), p. 343.
39. *Ibid.*

of liberation through their recycling depending on the contingent question: whether we are aware of consciousness as distinct from the contents of consciousness. In short, the Hindu paradigm of well-being by thinking of man's basic levels of consciousness inhering in *artha* and *kāma* as reflectors of the higher unitive levels has shown us the psychologically demonstrable bases for inner transformation.

They Lived with God

GAURI-MA

SWAMI CHETANANANDA

Three types of people are generally found in this world. The first type is mainly interested in worldly enjoyment; the second type enjoys the world but also keeps his mind on God; and the third type is totally devoted to spiritual pursuits. God created human beings with different temperaments and tendencies so that he could play with them in various ways. Gauri-ma, or Mother Gauri, belonged to the thrid group of people. She had completely dedicated herself to God.

One day a holy man was on his way to visit the Divine Mother at Kalighat, in South Calcutta, when he was stopped by an old woman who wanted to pay her respects to him. Gauri-ma, who was then nine years old, was playing nearby with some other girls. Seeing that holy man she felt an irresistible attraction and rushed over to him and bowed down. The holy man asked: 'Your friends are playing and you have come to me. Why?' Gauri-ma replied: 'Oh, they love to play that way, but I don't like it. I felt an attraction in my heart, so I came to you.' The holy man touched the little girl's head and blessed her, saying, 'May you attain devotion to Krishna.'

Later, Gauri-ma found out from the old woman, who happened to be their neighbour, that this holy man had an ashrama at Nimta, in Belgharia, ten miles north of Calcutta. Without saying anything to her parents, Gauri-ma left home and through inquiry found the way there. The holy man was meditating inside his cottage when she arrived, so she waited. After some time he received her cordially and arranged for her to stay in a neighbour's house. The next day was Raspurnima, the full-moon night of autumn when Krishna played with the gopis. The holy man asked Gauri-ma to bathe in the Ganga, and when she returned he initiated her. Meanwhile, her absence from home had been discovered and there was a terrible commotion. Her brother found out from the old neighbour woman that she had gone to Nimta, so he immediately went to bring her back. When he arrived the holy man told him: 'Please don't scold her. She is just a little girl. It is hard to keep a yellow bird in a cage.' Gauri-ma then returned home with the consent of her guru.

Gauri-ma's original name, given by her family, was Mridani, but she was also

called Rudrani. Her monastic name was Gauri-puri. Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother used to call her Gaur-dasi (handmaid of Gauranga). To others she was known as Gauri-ma, since her complexion was golden like that of the Divine Mother Gauri, the consort of Shiva. Gauri-ma was born in 1857, and was fourth child of seven children. She had two brothers and four sisters. Her father, Parvati Charan Chattopadhyay, and mother, Giribala Devi, were both very devoted to God. Parvati Charan was an orthodox brahmin, who would go to his office with religious marks on his forehead, even though he was sometimes ridiculed by his European boss for it. Giribala was very kindhearted and was also quite talented. She composed many devotional songs and hymns, which were published in *Nāmasāra* and *Vairāgya-Saṅgitamālā*. Since Giribala had inherited her father's wealth and property, the whole family lived most of the time in his Calcutta residence.

A palmist once prophesied about Gauri-ma, 'This girl will be a yogini.' Even from her very childhood she was fond of decorating the family shrine and would worship the Lord in her own way. She often gave alms to poor, helpless people. Moreover, she was a strict vegetarian and never craved for good food or fancy clothes. One day she went with her elder brother somewhere by boat and on the way she thought: 'Why do women wear jewellry ? Shall I be unhappy if I do not have any ornaments ?' She had a gold bangle on her wrist, which her family had given her. On a whim, she took it off and bit into it. When she found the gold had no taste, she threw it into the Ganga. Later, of course, she was scolded by her parents. She loved to hear her uncle Chandi tell stories about the holy places of India, especially those of the Himalayan region. This stirred her imagination and made her long to travel to those places herself.

Even as a child, Gauri-ma was fearless and uncompromising, and no external pressure could make her deviate from a resolution which she considered right. She was first sent to a Christian missionary school in South Calcutta, where her academic talents were recognized and rewarded with a gold medal. But she left the school because she could not tolerate the narrow-minded religious views of the missionaries. Other girls also followed Gauri-ma's example, all of them enrolling in a Hindu school. Gauri-ma had a sharp mind and a good memory. During her early teens she learned Sanskrit grammar and memorized many hymns to gods and goddesses, as well as parts of the *Gītā*, *Candi*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Mahābhārata*.

Sometime after Gauri-ma's initiation, a nun from Vrindaban was a guest in her home. This nun had a 'Dāmodar Śilā', a stone image of Viṣṇu, which she worshipped daily. While leaving, the nun gave her beloved Viṣṇu to Gauri-ma and said: 'This image of God is my all in all and is very living. He fell in love with you, so I hand him over to you. My child, worship him. It will do good to you.' Gauri-ma accepted the precious gift and took that image of the Lord as her husband. For the rest of her life she carried Him wherever she went and served Him.

Observing her dispassion for the world, her relatives tried to arrange her marriage when she was ten years old. But Gauri-ma boldly rejected the idea, saying. 'I shall marry that person who never dies.' She was happy with her divine husband, Lord Viṣṇu. When Gauri-ma became thirteen, however, a bridegroom was selected against her will, and a marriage date was set. Gauri-ma was extremely upset, and one day she became so angry that she started throwing away the things which

had been collected for the wedding ceremony. Then she entered her room with her image of Viṣṇu and a picture of Chaitanya and locked the door from inside. Most of her relatives tried to console her and convince her to marry, but she was adamant. That night her mother requested her to open the door and let her in, and Gauri-ma obeyed. Seeing the agony and pain of her daughter, Giribala said: 'My child, since you have real dispassion for the world, I shall not force you to marry. I hereby dedicate you to God. May he protect you from all dangers.'

Giribala knew that her husband and other relatives were so angry with her daughter that they might even beat her, so she secretly sent Gauri-ma to a neighbour's home through the back door. Gauri-ma hid there until her relatives' anger had been assuaged. Thus God saved his devotee from the bondage of marriage.

All people cannot be put in the same category. Some people are meant to lead a householder's life and others are meant for the monastic life. Each is great in his own place. Gauri-ma longed to become an itinerant nun, but it was not easy for a young girl to travel by herself. She waited for an opportunity and prayed to God to show her the way. In 1875, when she was eighteen years old, Gauri-ma left with an uncle, aunt, and some neighbours for a pilgrimage to Gangasagar (the confluence of the Ganga and the Bay of Bengal). Here, on the third day of their stay, she disappeared into the huge crowd of pilgrims. Her relatives and neighbours spent three days searching for her in vain and then returned to Calcutta. Giribala was grief-stricken at the news and fell ill. The family sent messengers to different holy places of India to announce a reward of one thousand rupees to anyone finding the girl.

After running away from her relatives, Gauri-ma hid herself in a bush near their tent. From there she could watch their movements. As soon as she saw them leave she joined a group of monks and nuns who came from the Himalayan regions. She dressed like the nuns so that she would not be recognized. The group visited several holy places, travelling by train or on foot, and finally reached Hardwar after three months. Gauri-ma had heard from her uncle Chandi about Hardwar and Rishikesh, where the ascetics of the Himalayas practise austerities. Now, seeing the panoramic view of the Himalayas and the Ganga, her enthusiasm for God-realization was aroused more than ever.

From Rishikesh, Gauri-ma visited Devaprayag, Rudraprayag, Kedarnath, Badrinath, and then returned to Hardwar. Soon after this she visited Jamunotri (the source of the Jamuna river) and Gangotri (the source of the Ganga), Jwalamukhi, and also Amarnath, which is in Kashmir. She did not come down to the plains for fear of being caught by her relatives. In order to disguise herself she cut her hair and wore an ochre cloth, or she sometimes put on a long robe and turban, such as a man would wear. Furthermore, she tried to hide her physical beauty by smearing ashes and dirt on her body, and at times even pretended to be crazy so that no one would bother her. She carried the image of Viṣṇu around her neck, and in her bundle there were a few articles for daily use, as well as her pictures of Kali and Chaitanya, and two books, the *Candi* and the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. Seldom did she talk, but when pressed for her identity she said that she was married and lived with her husband. Needless to say, she meant that Lord Viṣṇu was her husband.

During her itinerant days, Gauri-ma practised severe austerities, such as fasting, observing silence, meditating, and studying the scriptures. Sometimes she repeated her mantra from sunrise to sunset. She often begged her food from door to door,

but at some places the villagers came forward to provide food and shelter for her. Thus for three years she endured cold, hunger, and other ordeals as she travelled on foot to the holy places of the rugged Himalayan region.

Gauri-ma went next to Vrindaban, the playground of her beloved Kṛṣṇa. One of Gauri-ma's uncles lived nearby in Mathura. Seeing her in a temple one day, he forced her to come home with him and secretly sent word to her parents in Calcutta that she had been found. Gauri-ma guessed what her uncle was doing and fled to Jaipur. From there she visited Pushkar, Sudamapuri, Dwaraka, and other holy places of western India. Once a local ruler invited Gauri-ma to be his guest in the palace, but she refused. Since this ruler had no children, he asked Gauri-ma for her blessings. Gauri-ma pointed to the deity in the temple and told him: 'You won't get a better child than him. Please love him with all your heart and soul, and you will attain peace.'

There was an epidemic of cholera in a certain village near Sudamapuri, and many people had already died when Gauri-ma heard about it. Immediately she went to the head of the village and offered her services to help nurse the victims. She also organized a committee to care for the patients and engaged twelve brahmins to perform a special ritual for three days. In this way the morale of the people was lifted, and within a few days the epidemic subsided.

From there Gauri-ma went to Dwaraka. One day, while she was repeating her mantra in front of the Kṛṣṇa temple, she had a vision of Kṛṣṇa in the form of a boy. A vision is only temporary, however, and instead of satisfying her, it increased her longing all the more. Deeply feeling the pang of separation from her beloved Lord Kṛṣṇa, she again returned to Vrindaban. There she started vigorous austerities. One night she even tried to take her own life in the Lalita kunja (grove), but at that critical moment she had a vision and lost outward consciousness. The next morning some women found her lying unconscious. They knew who she was ; so they devotedly took care of her.

The news spread of her return to Vrindaban, however, and when her uncle found out her he took her to his home. He showed Gauri-ma a letter written by her grief-stricken mother and convinced her of the need to return with him to Calcutta. When Giribala saw her daughter, she wept and embraced her. Gauri-ma's family was very happy to have her back.

It is hard for a person to live in one place who has got the taste of freedom in a wandering life. Moreover, comforts and an easygoing life are impediments to monastic life. One day Gauri-ma told her mother that she was going to Puri to visit Lord Jagannath, and that she would return soon. Thus, Gauri-ma left home again. From Puri she went to Sākshigopal, Alalnath, and Bhubaneswar, and she also visited some monasteries at this time. In 1880, Gauri-ma became acquainted with Radha Mohan Basu, a wealthy landlord of northern Calcutta. He had a large estate in Orissa and also a retreat in Vrindaban. Radha Mohan, a devotee of Krishna, was greatly impressed with Gauri-ma's renunciation and devotion. In 1882, Gauri-ma accepted an invitation to visit his Calcutta home, and it was there that she met his son, Balaram Basu, who was a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. Balaram also was a friend of Gauri-ma's elder brother.

One day, soon after she arrived, Balaram said to Gauri-ma: 'Sister, let us go to visit Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar. You have never seen such a wonderful holy man. He goes into samadhi every now and then. If you do not see him, you will

certainly miss something in your life.' Gauri-ma smiled and replied: 'I have seen many monks in my life, and I have no desire to see another. If your holy man has real power, then let him pull me.'

The pull came at last in a mysterious way. One morning Gauri-ma began her daily ritual to the deity. She first bathed the stone image of Viṣṇu and then was about to place it on the altar when she saw two live human feet there, without a human body. At first she thought that it was an optical illusion, but observing carefully, again and again, she saw only those two human feet. Gauri-ma was frightened. The hair on her body stood on end, and her hands started trembling so much that she dropped the image. She then lost consciousness and fell to the floor. After a few hours Balaram's wife learned that Gauri-ma was lying unconscious, so she went there. Although she called her repeatedly, she could not get any response. Then Balaram came there and realized that Gauri-ma was in samadhi. Some time later Gauri-ma regained a little outward consciousness and pointed to her heart. She felt that somebody had tied a string to her heart and was pulling it. She passed the whole day and night in a semiconscious state.

The next morning, without telling anyone, Gauri-ma tried to leave, but the gatekeeper stopped her. Just then Balaram arrived and asked her: 'Where do you want to go? Sister, would you like to meet the Master in Dakshineswar?' Although Gauri-ma did not answer, Balaram understood that her silence meant assent. He immediately ordered the coachman to get the carriage ready, and they left for Dakshineswar with Balaram's wife and some other women. When they arrived, they found Sri Ramakrishna seated in his room, winding thread around a stick and singing:

O Mother, for Yashoda Thou wouldst dance,
When she called Thee her precious 'Blue Jewel':
Where hast. Thou hidden that lovely form,
O terrible Shyama?
Dance that way once for me, O Mother!....+

Immediately after their arrival, Sri Ramakrishna finished winding the thread and cordially received them. Gauri-ma understood that Sri Ramakrishna had attracted her heart, which he had indicated by the winding of the thread. Then when she bowed down to the Master, she saw the same two human feet that she had seen the previous day on the altar. She was overwhelmed with joy and astonishment. Sri Ramakrishna just smiled. He asked Balaram about Gauri-ma, and then he talked to them about spiritual life. While seeing them off, the Master said to Gauri-ma, 'Come again.'

The next day, after bathing in the Ganga, Gauri-ma went to Dakshineswar with two pieces of cloth and her inseparable companion, Lord Viṣṇu. As soon as she entered the Master's room, he said, 'I was thinking of you.' Gauri-ma told him about herself and about her recent vision of the Master's feet on the altar. 'Father,' she said, 'I did not know that you were hidden here.' The Master smiled and said, 'If you had met me earlier, would you have practised so much austerity?'

Sri Ramakrishna then took Gauri-ma to the nahabat and introduced her to Holy Mother, saying: 'Hello, you were looking for a companion. Here is one for you.' After this Gauri-ma lived at Dakshineswar whenever Holy Mother was there. When Holy Mother had to go to her village home, Gauri-ma stayed at Balaram's house. Gauri-ma would sometimes cook for the Master, and once in a

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+This song signifies the oneness of Krishna and Kali

while she would sing for him in her melodious voice. Sri Ramakrishna had a very high opinion of her and once said, 'Gauri is a perfect soul—a gopi of Vrindaban.' Among Sri Ramakrishna's women disciples, Gauri-ma was the only nun.

One day Kedar Nath Chatterjee introduced his friend, Mr. William, to Sri Ramakrishna. The Master talked to him about God and then requested him to meet Gauri-ma at Balaram's house. When Mr. William first saw Gauri-ma he felt an intense spiritual vibration and addressed her as Mother Mary. He also prayed to her for her blessings. Gauri-ma was impressed with his devotion. She talked to him for a while and offered him some prasad.

Sri Ramakrishna wanted to fulfil a special mission through Gauri-ma. He realized that the women of the society were terribly neglected, especially in the area of education, and it was his wish that Gauri-ma should work among them. One day he said to her: 'The women of Jadu Mallick's family have been wanting to see you. Please visit them.' But Gauri-ma replied: 'That is your business, Father! Why do you praise me so much to others ?'

On another occasion, Gauri-ma was picking flowers near the nahabat when the Master came there with a pot of water. Holding a branch of the bakul tree with one hand, he began pouring water with the other. Then he said, 'Gauri, let me pour water, and you knead the mud.' Surprised, Gauri-ma answered: 'There is no clay here. How can I knead the mud ? This place is full of stone chips.' The Master smiled and said: 'My goodness! What I meant and what you have understood! The condition of women in this country is very poor and painful. You will have to work for them.' Gauri-ma did not like the idea, however. 'It is hard for me to get along with worldly people.' she told him. 'I don't care for all the hustle and bustle. Give me a few girls, and I shall take them to the Himalayas and mould their character.' But the Master shook his head and said: 'No, no. You will have to work in the city. You have practised enough spiritual disciplines. Now you should serve the women with your spiritual energy.'

Gauri-ma regarded Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother as her own parents, and she was very free with them. She recognized the Master to be an avatar and believed that he and Chaitanya were the same. One day Sri Ramakrishna was talking to Holy Mother and Gauri-ma in his room and he started teasing Gauri-ma. He had noticed that Gauri-ma was very fond of Holy Mother, so he asked, 'Whom do you love more ? Her or me ?' Gauri-ma answered through a song:

O Flute Player, Kṛṣṇa, you are never greater than Radha;
When people are in trouble, they call for you;
But when you are in trouble, your flute sounds the name of Radha.

Holy Mother was very much embarrassed, and she pressed Gauri-ma's hand. The Master laughed and left the room.

(To be concluded)

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

YOGA AND THE SUPREME BLISS (SONGS OF ENLIGHTENMENT BY SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA) TRANSLATED FROM URDU AND PERSIAN BY A.J. ALSTON, Heritage Publishers, 4C Ansari Road, New Delhi 110 002, Pp. 214, Price Rs. 75.

Swami Rama Tirtha (1873-1906) belonged to that genre of mystics who have a direct communion with God. His transparent purity, beatific smile, renunciation, child-like simplicity and profound knowledge won him the admiration of his contemporaries both in the East and the West. He was compared to Upanishadic seers like Yajnavalkya and hailed by some westerners as 'another Jesus Christ'. An able exponent of the Vedanta philosophy, he combined in himself the missionary ardour of a St. Francis with the rational demeanour of an Immanuel Kant.

Born at Muraliwala (a village in District Gujranwala, now in Pakistan) in an orthodox Brahmin family which traced its ancestry to Goswami Tulsidas, Swami Rama Tirtha underwent many hardships before becoming a professor of mathematics in the Forman Christian College at Lahore. Soon after, he renounced his worldly ties to realize the truth of the Upanishadic aphorism, *tat tvam asi* (That thou art). He visited Japan and the United States and won many adherents to the Vedantic philosophy. Like Swami Vivekananda, he stressed the ideals of purity, freedom and strength. Though he was well acquainted with European science, philosophy and literature as also with Persian and Urdu mystical poetry, his greatest literary debt was to his own motherland. 'The land of India is my own body. The Comorin is my feet, the Himalayas my head. From my hair flows the Ganga, from my head comes the Brahmaputra and the Indus. The Vindhyachals are grit around my loins. The Coromandel is my left and the Malabar my right leg. I am the whole of India, and its east and west are my arms and I spread them in a straight line to embrace humanity.' What a superb identification with one's country!

Swami Rama Tirtha believed that his creative ability did not lie in his public speeches which enthralled his hearers, but in the poems and articles he wrote in the solitude of the Himalayas. In the book under review A.J. Alston presents a translation of some Urdu and Persian poems of the Swami. It has an excellent introduction, a detailed glossary and bibliography and a complete Index of first lines of translated verses.

Swami Rama Tirtha's poetry is rhythmic and carries a personal human element which borders on mystical rapture. It stems from his very being and reveals both his creative genius and his lofty ideals. It stresses the divinity of human nature and the oneness of mankind.

'In one mirror there was one face:
When the mirror was broken,
The number of faces increased.
Man is one.'

And again,

'Whatever was, is or will be
I am all, nothing is other than me...
I am in front and behind, above and below,
Manifest and hidden, lover and beloved,
Poet and poem, nightingale and rose.'

Most of the Swami's poetry is didactic and provides 'ideational stimuli' to the reader who finds the key to self-realization.

'Apply the key of love
To unlock the secrets of the heart,
And then enjoy the splendour of the spectacle.
Martyr the ego
And render the body like the mule Duldul
Burn up your home and chattels like Nero,
And enjoy the crackling of the flames,
The cup of the heart is overflowing with wine,
So why this thirst for joy in objects.'

At places Swami Rama Tirtha's poetry sounds a Pantheistic note:

'I am drowned in the ocean of your love
There is death in eternal life
And eternal life in death.'

God is seen as the transcendental reality of which the material universe and man are only manifestations.

'Thou art all that truly exists in the idol,
Thou pervadest the flowers offered before it.
How can I offer the Lord to the Lord?
To bring thee food would be an insult.
How can I offer food
To Him who feeds the Universe?'

Alston's translation of Swami Rama Tirtha's poems has a rich literary content and is likely to inspire both the seeker and the scholar.

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CLASSICAL HINDU MYTHOLOGY: A READER IN THE SANSKRIT PURANAS: EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY CORNELIA DIMMITT AND J.A.B. VAN BUITENNEN. Published by Rupa and Company, 3831 Pataudi House Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110 002, Pp. 373, Rs. 30.

The Purāṇas form the quintessence of the Vedic tradition. Although they do not carry the authority of the Vedas, their exoteric character and devotional contents have earned them the epithet of 'the Veda of the common folk.' There are eighteen Mahāpurāṇas in all (and between eighteen and eighty-eight Upa-puranas) which deal with various subjects ranging from religion and philosophy to black magic and lexicography, from polity and sociology to poetics and love-making. Etymologically, the word Purāṇa means ancient, primeval or belonging to olden times. In current usage, it has become the generic title of a set of ancient books which record the legends of antiquity. Supposed to be originally composed by Vyāsa, the Purāṇas gathered accretions in later ages. 'It is as if they were libraries to which new volumes have been added continuously not necessarily at the end of the shelf, but randomly', say the learned editors of this anthology.

The contents of the Purāṇas include mythopoeic and ideational tales and propositions about the creation of the Universe, the solar and lunar dynasties, the genealogy of gods, seers and supernatural beings, the rule of the Manus and the destruction of the world at the end of each Mahāyuga and its re-creation thereafter. In the book under review, these and other religious themes have been lucidly presented through fresh translations of some choice texts from *Viṣṇu, Bhāgavata, Matsya, Vāmana, Kūrma* and *Mārkaṇḍeya* Purāṇas.

The distinctive feature of the book is that it contains many parts of the Puranic lore which are often inaccessible to the English reader. For example, the editors could have expatiated on the life of Lord Kṛṣṇa by culling extracts from the *Bhāgavata,* but since that account is too well known, they preferred to use the *Visnu* and the *Brahmavaivarta* Puranas.

It is argued that the Puranas document the triumph of Hinduism in India and are encyclopaedic in scope. Although each Purana is dedicated to one deity or another, they share certain common features. All the Puranas are didactic, pantheistic, revelatory and epigonic. They are all written in Sanskrit of average quality, 'usually in sloka metre, occasionally in tristubh or prose.' All the Puranas are prognostic and portray a combination of the Brahminical tradition ensuing from the reciters of the Vedas, and 'the bardic poetry recited by the *sutas* that was handed down in Ksatriya circles.' While other Hindu scriptures regard *mokṣa* as the summum bonum of human life, the Puranas give precedence to *dharma* over *mokṣa.* 'It appears that the value of life on earth, rather than release from it, is a principal theme of importance in Puranic thought.'

One may not fully agree with the editor's exegesis of the Puranic lore or gospel. But it is difficult to deny the high literary merit of the book. Every translated passage bears the stamp of erudition. All the six chapters have been neatly planned and lucidly introduced. Chapter I deals with creation myths, hells, heavens, Manus, Manvantaras and similar topics. The next three chapters relate the lives of Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, the three most popular Hindu deities. Chapters at the end present tales of the wives and lovers of gods as also those of seers, kings, sacred rivers, fords, Vedic gods, demons and denizens of the netherworlds.

Well got-up and moderately priced, the book is virtually a boon for those who wish to relish and cherish the Puranic lore.

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ANCIENT BIHAR: HER CONTRIBUTION TO RELIGION AND CIVILIZATION: Published by Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Ramakrishna Avenue, Patna 800 004, 1984, Pp. 150, Rs. 10

Bihar, the verdant heartland of India in ancient times, has many firsts to its credit. It witnessed the establishment of the first historical kingdom of northern India (Magadha) and the first workable republic known to mankind (Vaisali). It was the first home of the Buddha and Mahavira, the site of the first great Buddhist council and the seat of famous dynasties like the Mauryas and the Guptas. It was the cradle of many popular cults and beliefs, the nucleus of social movements and theistic doctrines and the centre of literary and cultural activity. Valmiki's Ramayana, Kautilya's Arthasastra and Megasthenes' work on India were all composed here.

This anthology provides a rich collection of essays on 'Ancient Bihar', then known as Magadha and Mithila, which highlight the contribution of this region to Indian thought and culture through the ages.

Dr. Chakraborty dilates upon the history of Mithila during the reign of Janaka who turned

his kingdom into a centre of Vedic culture and Sanskritic studies.

Essays on Gaya (by Vijay and Upendra Thakur) describe the city's origin and history, and explain how this 'non-aryan centre' came to be influenced by various strands of religious thought—Vedic, Jain, Buddhist, Vaisnava and Ajivika and finally emerged as a meeting ground for all the Hindus.

The growth of Jainism and Buddhism at Rajagrha (modern Rajgir), the metropolis of the Magadha Empire, is vividly described by K. C. Jain and Kameshwar Prasad. Sreyamsanatha, the twentieth Tirthankara is said to have been born at this place. Lord Mahavira spent fourteen rainy seasons at Rajagrha and Nalanda, and made many converts including the learned Brahmin Indrabhuti Gautama. Lord Buddha frequently visited it; his last journey for the Mahaparinirvana started from here. It was at Rajagrha that Mahakassapa along with five hundred Buddhist scholars endeavoured to 'fix the Buddhist canon.' The town suffered a gradual decline in the Post-Mauryan period.

Professor Radhakrishna Chaudhary stresses the Tantric character of the University of Vikramasila and lucidly explains the possible factors that led to its decline. Vikramasila sounded the death-knell of Buddhism 'with all fanfare, not by anybody else but by the over-enthusiastic Tantric Buddhists themselves who had turned monastic life into a business for maintaining themselves in a happy-go-lucky manner', argues the author.

Naseem Akhtar gives a vivid description of Nalanda, the most developed and widely known educational and cultural centre of ancient India. D. S. Mukhopadhyay's essay on Vaisali is both informative and illuminating. Other articles on Pawapuri, Odantipuri, Vihara and the role of religion are equally brilliant.

The book has a number of typographical errors. There is no consistency in the spelling of Sanskrit words and names. Notwithstanding these flaws, it is a scholarly work of high merit. A Map showing the ancient boundaries of Bihar could have further added to its value.

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HINDUISM: A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY: EDITED BY SATYAPRAKASH. Published by Indian Documentation Service, Gurgaon, Haryana 122 001. 1984 Pp. 352. Rs. 275 ($ 55; 27.50).

The Hindu tradition, beginning with the *Ṛg-Veda Samhitā* (or even with the Indus Valley civilization) has shown to this day an enormous capacity to absorb numerous external cultural and social principles. Therefore it defies any popular categorization that the term 'religion' may signify. It has been conveniently described as a way of life Indians have adopted or idealized. Scholars with various cultural backgrounds have tried to analyse and understand the basic tenets of this tradition and savants have tried to expound and interpret it to the modern world. But a lot remains to be explored, researched and understood.

The publishers of this Select Bibliography on Hinduism have tried to supplement research work in the area. They are currently producing several volumes of the Subject Bibliography Series, and the volume under review is the fourth in the series. The Series includes bibliographies on Buddhism, Jainism, Gandhiana etc.

The volume on Hinduism has listed over 11,000 entries from more than two hundred journals and leading daily newspapers. It covers the publications of last twenty-two years (1962-1983). The articles relating to Hindu religious sects, philosophical systems and schools, art and architecture published in English periodicals during this period have been classified alphabetically and arranged according to Subject and Author. Some of the entries, e.g. on Vedanta and Maya, are extremely informative.

The Bibliography is a very useful aid to scholars and social workers and for research work in areas connected with Hinduism.

The printing and get-up of the book are satisfactory.

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JAINISM: A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY: EDITED BY SATYAPRAKASH. Published by Indian Documentation Service, Gurgaon, Haryana 122 001. 1984 Pp. 101 Rs. 60 ($ 12; 8).

The periodical publication of bibliographies in various areas of knowledge is one of the most important ways of promoting research and scholarship. The process is rather slow in the field of humanities. The Indian Documentation Service at Gurgaon, Haryana, has taken up the challenging job of publishing such bibliographies. The Select Bibliography on Jainism is the sixth in the series on Subject Bibliography. The Editor has tried to include articles from various journals, dailies and Sunday editions

of national newspapers published between 1962 and 1983. Thus, it covers a period of about twenty-two years. About nine hundred articles, both research-level and of general interest, have been listed authorwise as well as subjectwise alphabetically. A list of 137 journals and another list of publishers have been appended at the end of the book.

The compilation is very useful to students and researchers in Jainology. It is an indispensable guide to current literature on Jainism published in English.

The printing and get-up of the volume are satisfactory. The jacket of the book depicts an impressive picture of the statue of Bāhubali (Gommateshwara) at Sravanabelugola (Karnataka).

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A SAINT'S CALL TO MANKIND: BY MADAN MOHAN VARMA. Chetana Publishers, 34 Rampart Row, Bombay 400 023. 1983. Pp. 174. Rs. 40/-

The author is to be thanked for his labour of love in collecting the thoughts and utterances of an unpretentious blind Sannyasin going from village to village in northern India with the message of God. He has woven them into a kind of guide book for those who are awake to the Call of the Spirit. The keynote of this approach is that spiritual life is not something separate from life in the world. God grows in the world if only we have eyes to see. To help man to awake to this Presence in the life around and function in the light of its Knowledge is the aim of this book.

The saint 'examines the three natural propensities of man—doing, feeling and thinking —and shows how these have only to be carried to their logical conclusions to be transformed into the truest of action, love and knowledge, karma, bhakti and jñāna respectively, ultimately fusing into one...Truth is all-pervasive and Viveka is the messenger of Truth.'

There is an unusual clarity in defining the terms: 'There is a distinction between karma and kriyā. What is not done but takes place is kriyā; what is done with a motive (good or bad) is karma. The pith of action is love. Action devoid of love is barren. Self-purification is an essential prerequisite of self-realization. We suffer more by a desire for things than by the lack of things themselves. The Lord is hidden but His law is manifest.' (P. x)

If the mind is to be freed, it must first be stilled. One has to rise above circumstances, outgrow the ego. It is in this sense that the saint asks us to make life itself a Sādhanā. Elimination of desire, cultivation of love, surrender to God and living in the present, are some of his instructions. The two chapters, Sparks of Wisdom and Lights on Sādhanā make rewarding reading. 'The best of kriyā shakti is selfless service of fellow-beings, which melts away selfishness and egoism and unites one with the One Life. The best use of bhāva shakti is the kindling of love for God, which draws the devotee closer and closer to the Divine. The best use of vichāra shakti is the awakening of the quest for Truth which culminates in Self-realization.' (P. 112) And then a few home-truths:

A life of sadhana is the best propaganda for sadhana.

Dislike is not renunciation, it is attachment through dislike.

Ego cannot cheat God, it can only cheat itself.

A delightful book lighting up many a corner in the life of the common man.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SARADA DEVI: BY SWAMI APURVANANDA. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, P.O. Kaladi, Dist. Ernakulam, Kerala 683574, 1984. Pp. 239, Rs. 19.

Sri Ramakrishna and his divine consort Sarada Devi were the harbingers of a new epoch in the history of mankind. Many a biography of this divine couple is extant in all the major languages of India and the world. And yet, the inexhaustibility of the significance of their lives makes any new addition by way of biographical study a welcome enterprise.

The present book was first written and published in Bengali under the title *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa O Śrī Mā* and its English translation was first published in 1961. This is the second edition of the much-appreciated book. The lives of both Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother studied separately are available in independent volumes, but the beauty of the work under review lies in presenting the two lives together in an integrated, compact manner. Philosophical and scholastic discussions have been reduced here to the minimum. Yet the writing presents all the essential facts in the lives of these two divine personages. A major portion of the book comprising the first 160 pages, is devoted to Sri Ramakrishna, while the

life of the Mother is depicted in the remaining 79 pages. If the life of the Master was characterized by mystical experiences, the life of the Mother was remarkable for its utter simplicity, universal deep affection towards all her children. Her mercy was denied to none. Mother verily spent her long uneventful life in performing Master's work unobtrusively, silently but with firm commitment. Without Mother's calm and benevolent presence, Swami Vivekananda and his brother monks would not have succeeded to the extent they did in giving a concrete shape to the spiritual movement set by the Master in the last century. The book is replete with instances of how the grace of the Mother purified one and all. Swami Apurvanandaji has written the book with great love and devotion. A brisk reading of the book or a part of it is as refreshing as a bath in the limpid waters of the Ganga at Haridwar.

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NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, VARANASI

REPORT FOR APRIL 1983 TO MARCH 1984

The Home was started in 1900 as an independent institution under the name 'Poor Man's Relief Association' by a few young men who were inspired by the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. The work was begun with a capital of only four annas. These young men used to take care of the poor and the diseased, sometimes collected from the roadside. Swamiji was delighted to see their dedicated service and renamed the institution the 'Home of Service'. It was affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission in 1902. From this modest inception, the Home of Service has now grown into a fully equipped modern hospital taking care of the poor and the suffering as living manifestations of God.

The activities of the year are outlined below:

Indoor General Hospital: The total number of cases admitted during the year was 5,711; of these 2,763 were relieved, 1,503 cured, 582 discharged otherwise, 505 died and 179 remained under treatment at the end of the year. Surgical cases totalled 266, intramuscular injections 52,229 and interarticular injections, aspirations and lumber punctures 32,597. During the year there were 5 ailing destitutes picked up from the city roads in the hospital. The percentage of patients treated free was 34.83 and the average daily occupancy of beds was 161.

Outpatients department: The number of patients treated, including those treated at the branch at Shivala, was 2,04,835 (new cases: 51,525) and the daily average attendance was 660. There were 3,675 surgical cases and 6,760 intravenous and intramuscular injections.

Homeopathy: The homeopathic sections at the Sevashrama campus at Luxa and at the Shivala branch, attended by 10 homeopaths, served 23,226 patients.

Clinical and Pathological Laboratory: 31,294 different tests were conducted in the laboratory during the year in the areas of clinical pathology, serology, chemical pathology, L.F.T. (Liver function tests) and bacteriology.

X-ray, electrotherapy and E.C.G. department: 5,283 X-ray exposures were taken during the year under report. 456 cardiac patients were helped by the ECG section and a considerable number of others by the electrotherapy section.

Invalids' Home: Two separate homes maintained 17 men and 28 women, the men being mostly old and retired monks of the Ramakrishna Order. The women were poor widows who have no one to look after them.

Outdoor relief to the poor: Monthly pecuniary help amounting to Rs. 5,305 was given towards food, house-rent, school-fees etc., to 47 persons. Besides, 95 new blankets were distributed among the needy.

Immediate needs: 1. Funds for the maintenance of 200 beds in the hospital. 2. Endowments for beds: the cost of endowment for a single bed is Rs. 30,000 but Rs. 10,000 or Rs. 5,000 may also be given as partial endowments to perpetuate someone's memory. 3. Endowments for the Invalid's Homes: Similar endowments are essential to maintain the old men and women in these two homes. 4. Donations to meet the accumulated deficit of Rs. 4,46,251.63. 5. Construction of residential quarters for the nursing and other staff: Rs. 5 lakhs. 6. Construction of a bigger cowshed and a fodder store-room for the Sevashrama dairy: Rs. 1,50,000.

Contributions may be sent to the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Varanasi 211 010.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Misuse of Democratic freedom

At a time when the unity of the nation deserves the undivided attention of all the people of India and all regional and sectarian interests ought to be subordinated to this supreme need, it is most unfortunate that some people in a few States have been indulging in acts of violence and destruction with reckless abandon. The dangers before India are real, not imaginary. Secessionist and terrorist groups are active in Punjab. One of India's none too friendly neighbours is hell-bent on creating a nuclear arsenal for itself. The Afghan problem has brought super power confrontation to our door step. The introduction of sophisticated weapon systems into our neighbourhood far in excess of that country's defence needs has made this country more vulnerable. And, as the prime minister has repeatedly pointed out, some foreign powers are trying to destabilize India.

However, India can successfully deal with all these external and internal threats if her people remain united. On the positive side, the liberalization of the government's fiscal policies has generated considerable optimism in industrial circles, and the nation seems to be poised for a big leap in industrial prosperity. Clearly, this is not the time to inludge in parochial bickerings. This is the time to work together in a spirit of brotherhood and let the fruits of prosperity reach the poor and the neglected in every nook and corner of India.

It is a thousand pities that this awareness is yet to dawn on the minds of a large number of people in India. This is clear from the anti-reservation stir and communal disturbances that rocked Gujarat in April this year. The fact-finding panel of the Editor's Guild of India found that the agitation in Gujarat was the 'creation of politicians of all shades and labels'. Worse still was the so-called border dispute between Assam and Meghalaya that took place in the first week of June, which left more than thirty policemen dead and thousands of villagers fleeing to refugee camps. What really happened was a virtual civil war with the police of the two states fighting each other, actively supported by civil officials and the ubiquitous politicians. If in a free democratic country two state governments had to resort to this sort of internecine war, what promise can democracy hold for the poor masses ?

It is not accidental that Punjab and Gujarat, two of the most industrialized states in India, have become centres of socio-political unrest. Industrial prosperity always produces discontent and other social problems. All over India economic prosperity has created a new class, that of the *nouveaux riches*, which includes, among others, liquor contractors, smugglers and kingpins of the Mafia. Communal disturbances are said to be mostly engineered by this class into whose ranks political power seems to be sliding in many parts of India.

Democratic freedom is being misused in India as it is done nowhere else. We have been free uninterruptedly for too long a period to remember the price we had paid for it. We are too myopic to look across our borders and see totalitarian regimes controlling the lives of our neighbours with an iron hand. What is more tragic is that our people are yet to realize the truth that India's social, cultural and religious diversities are really a source of strength, provided of course, we stand united.