

VOL. 90

FEBRUARY 1985

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



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

ADVAITA ASHRAMA
MAYAVATI, HIMALAYAS



Prabuddha Bharata

Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE
RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

Editorial Office

P.O. Mayavati, Via Lohaghat
Dt. Pithoragarh 262 524, U.P.

Publication Office

5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta 700 014
Phone : 29-0898



[Rates inclusive of postage]

Annual Subscription

India, Nepal & Bangladesh	Rs. 15.00
U.S.A. & Canada	\$ 10.00
Other Countries	£ 4.00

Life Subscription (30 years)

Rs. 300	\$ 200	£ 60
---------	--------	------

Single Copy

Rs. 1.50	\$ 1.00	50 P.
----------	---------	-------

Information for contributors,
publishers, subscribers, and
advertisers overleaf.

FEBRUARY 1985

CONTENTS

Integral Vision of Vedic Seers	41
About this Issue	42
Swami Vivekananda and the Moral Ideal —(Editorial)	42
Rosary for Japa —Swami Shraddhananda	52
The Advaita Doctrine of Mahavakya —Dr. Rachappa I. Ingalalli	55
What Ever Happened to Mary Hale? —Swami Vidyatmananda	61
Meditation Techniques in Jainism —Swami Brahmeshananda	68
Reviews and Notices	77
News and Reports	78
Notes and Comments	80



Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. 90

FEBRUARY 1985

No. 2

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

INTEGRAL VISION OF VEDIC SEERS*

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

रात्री व्यस्यदायती पुरुत्रा देव्य क्षभिः ।
विस्वा अधि श्रियोऽधित ॥

1. The approaching Night looks upon all places with her eyes ;¹ she has put on all glories.

Rg-Veda 10.127.1

ओर्वप्रा अमर्त्या निवतो देव्युद्वतः ।
ज्योतिषा बाधते तमः ॥

2. The immortal goddess has pervaded (*aprā*) the wide space (*uru*), the depths (*ni-avata*) and the heights (*ut-avata*); she fights darkness with her light.²

Rg-Veda 10.127.2

निरु स्वसारमस्कृतोषसं देव्यायती ।
अपेदु हासते तमः ॥

3. The advancing goddess has set her sister Dawn (*uṣas*) in her place ; and the darkness vanishes.

Rg-Veda 10.127.3

A simple and beautiful hymn in praise of Night. This is the only hymn in *Rg-Veda* devoted to the Goddess of Night under the name Rātrī. In a few other hymns she appears as a dual divinity, Nakta, with Uṣas (Dawn). Sāyaṇa cites the authority of *Aitareya Aranyaka 3.2.4* to show that the hymn is to be recited at dawn

while offering the milk oblation by a person who has had a bad dream at night.

(1) Stars are the eyes of Night, says Sāyaṇa.

(2) Note that Rātrī is here conceived as a luminous goddess, not as the personification of darkness.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

It is to be regretted that Ethics is one of the most neglected subjects in India and that Swami Vivekananda's vital contribution to it is very little understood. Last month we provided a short introduction to Ethics. This month's EDITORIAL places Swamiji's moral ideal in perspective.

Spiritual seekers will find in ROSARY FOR JAPA by Swami Shraddhanandaji, Head of the Vedanta Society of Sacramento, U.S.A., practical hints of immense value.

THE ADVAITA DOCTRINE OF MAHAVAKYA by Dr. Rachappa I. Ingalalli is a lucid, precise and comprehensive exposition of one of the central doctrines of Advaita. The author is Head of the Department of Logic, Allam Sumangalamma Memorial College, Bellary, Karnataka.

To the followers and admirers of Swami

Vivekananda the name of Mary Hale is familiar but her life, especially the latter half of it, has remained mostly unknown. They now owe a debt of gratitude to Swami Vidyatmananda of the Centre Vedantique Ramakrishna, Gretz, France, for filling up this lacuna with his admirable biographical account WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO MARY HALE which is based on several months of study, research and travel.

Buddhist meditation is well known all over the world. But Jainism never left the shores of India, and its contemplative tradition is not widely understood even in this country. A clear and concise survey MEDITATION TECHNIQUES IN JAINISM has been prepared by Swami Brahmeshananda, a highly trained doctor at the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Varanasi.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE MORAL IDEAL

(EDITORIAL)

A parish priest once asked us, 'Why did Swami Vivekananda deny the existence of sin?' This is not a solitary case. Swamiji's unequivocal denunciation of the doctrine of sin has irked, and often infuriated, many a Christian clergyman. Even during his life-time it troubled the Christian conscience of many people. At the famous Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in September 1893, Swami Vivekananda declared: 'Ye are the children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth—sinners! It is a sin to call a man so; it is a standing libel on human nature.' This verbal bomb must have produced a shock in the hearts of many among his audience. In his subsequent lectures, especially during the first two years of his stay in America, Swamiji

frequently attempted to prove the untenability of the doctrine of sin. Why did he do it? The doctrine of sin is the very bastion of Christian dogma and ethos and, without battering it, he would not have succeeded, as he did, in securing a permanent foothold in the fortresses of religious thought in the West.

Apart from Swamiji's denial of sin, the general lack of sensitivity among Hindus to moral question is a favourite topic for discussion in ecclesiastical forums and inter-religious conferences organized by the Catholic and Protestant churches in India. Nor is it restricted to clerical circles alone. Two years ago a confidential report sent to his government by the British high commissioner in India, and accidentally or intentionally leaked to the press, contained

the strange allegation that the wide prevalence of corruption in Indian bureaucracy was mainly caused by the absence of a strong ethical basis in Hinduism.

Not Christians alone, but many Hindus themselves have been puzzled or confused by Swami Vivekananda's repudiation of sin. They ask, do we not have the concept of sin in Hinduism? What about the word *pāpa*?

Swamiji was perfectly right in his repudiation of the doctrine of sin. Through his study of history and philosophy, observation and unerring intuition he had gained, as few others ever did, a thorough knowledge of the foundations of culture and he knew that the ethos of the West and the ethos of the East were built upon different ethical principles. At least a part of the misunderstanding about Swamiji's stand on the question of sin is caused by a linguistic error. The English word 'sin' is generally translated and understood in India as *pāpa* or *adharma*. This is not quite correct for the two words denote two different principles. To understand them it is necessary to make a brief study of comparative ethics.

Sin and pāpa

If you look up a theological dictionary or encyclopaedia you will find 'sin' defined there as 'disobedience to God'. This may be puzzling to those who belong to or are influenced by Indian religions; when they have done something wrong or evil they may feel repentant or may blame themselves and even God, but they do not think that they have disobeyed God. The Christian notion of disobedience and insubordination is derived from the Jewish belief that morality is not a natural law like the other laws of the universe but a unique kind of obligation supernaturally imposed upon mankind by God through his fiat. God

gave Moses the Ten Commandments and promised to protect the Jewish tribes as long as they followed those moral injunctions. This was one of the first contracts (which constitute the Old Covenant or 'Testament') between God and man.¹ To do something evil or immoral is not a mere error but an act of disobedience to God, a violation of the sacred Covenant. If you read the Old Testament you will find the prophets of Judea berating the people for disobeying the commandments of God and trying to explain the cause of all the misfortunes and sufferings of Jews as divine punishment. Some people seem to follow this old tradition in their evaluation of Indian society.

The view held by Indian religions (Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism) is that morality is a part of the natural order of the universe and is governed by certain universal laws. One of these is the law of Karma according to which every action of man produces a cosmic effect which in the fullness of time returns to the doer as the fruit or *phala* of his deed. However, the return of the *karmaphala* is not like the bouncing back of a rubber ball thrown against a wall. The ball comes to you unchanged, but *karmaphala* is not a duplication of the original karma but is the product of a transformation. A person who performs Vedic sacrifices is believed to attain heaven. A person who serves holy men is believed to get material prosperity. In other words, the fruit of a virtuous deed is the acquisition of merit, known as *puṇyam*. Similarly, the fruit of an evil action is the loss of merit and the acquisition of demerit, known as *pāpam*,

1. The Old Testament speaks of several covenants that God made with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and others. All these show the contractual nature of Judeo-Christian ethics.

in the form of suffering.² Thus *pāpam* is not 'sin' in the sense of disobedience to God; nor is it the transgression of a divine Law, for none can transgress the Law. It simply means personal loss, harm done to oneself, *ātmāparādha*. No sane person will try to harm his own interest unless he is in a state of ignorance. Thus *pāpam* is only a manifestation of ignorance. That is why Swami Vivekananda said, 'We don't have a theory of evil; we call it ignorance.'³

We have seen that according to the law of Karma, an action done here gets transformed into merit or demerit hereafter. How does this transformation take place? To account for this the Mīmāṃsaka philosophers have introduced a strange principle called *apūrva* without explaining what it is. The Vedānta (and also Nyāya) philosophers reject the theory of *apūrva* and hold that the law of Karma is controlled by the will of God who is the dispenser of *karmaphala*. Whatever be the explanation, it is clear that there is a universal moral order or a cosmic justice which balances good and evil, joy and sorrow. It is this universal moral order that is known as Dharma in Indian religious tradition. In the Vedic period the belief was that Dharma was maintained by the law of sacrifice (*yajña*). In the

2. The Mahābhārata says: 'Through good deeds one gets happiness and through bad deeds, sorrow. Everywhere it is work that brings results, and nothing which has not been earned can be got anywhere. Heaven, earthly enjoyments, habits, intelligence—all these are the result of work done here in this world'.

शुभेन कर्मणा सौख्यं दुःखं पापेन कर्मणा

कृतं फलति सर्वत्र नाकृतं भुज्यते क्वचित् ।

तथा स्वर्गश्च भोगाश्च निष्ठा या च मनीषिता

सर्वं पुरुषकारेण कृतेनेहोपलभ्यते ॥

Mahābhārata, Anusāsanaparvan 6.10.13

3. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama. 1973) Vol. 5, p. 282

post-Vedic period this was replaced by the belief that the law of Karma maintained Dharma.

Original sin and original ignorance

Now the question arises as to why all people do not follow the path of virtue. This takes us to the second point of difference between Judeo-Christian and Indian ethics. The belief that man is endowed with free will is widely prevalent in all cultures. But if man has the freedom to choose, why do some people choose vice rather than virtue? Socrates' explanation of ignorance as the cause of this wrong choice dominated western thought until the rise of Christianity when it yielded to a totally new concept. This new concept was the unique doctrine of 'original sin' propounded by St. Paul. According to the Biblical story of creation, Adam disobeyed God and was banished from Eden to the Earth. Paul declared that this 'original sin' was transmitted to all human beings (who are the descendants of Adam and Eve). Thus sin is man's inborn inheritance, and so the natural tendency of every person is to do evil. Though the Old Testament does not speak of the hereditary transmission of sin, this Pauline doctrine is the foundation on which the whole Christian theology has been built. The important point to note is that, according to this doctrine, original sin has entered the very soul of man. To what extent it has affected the soul is a matter of controversy: the more moderate Catholic view is that original sin has only tainted the soul, whereas the Protestants hold that it has damaged the substance of the soul.

In Indian thought evil tendencies (as well as good tendencies) are explained as a natural psychological phenomenon. We have already seen that every action pro-

duces a cosmic effect (which returns as *karmaphala*); it also produces at the same time an effect in the doer's mind in the form of a subliminal impression or 'seed' called *samskāra*. Every person's mind has innumerable such seeds. When a *samskāra* sprouts, it produces a desire or tendency to repeat the original action. According to the theory of reincarnation, when a person dies his mind and *samskāras* do not die but are carried over into the next birth. Thus every person inherits only his own sins, not the sins of his ancestors. Evil is nothing but the recrudescence of the *samskāras* of evil done in the past.

Two more points are to be noted in this context. One point is that, according to the Hindu view, the human personality is trichotomous, that is, it consists of the body, mind and the spirit or Atman. The *samskāras* and evil actions taint only the mind, not the Atman which is ever pure, self-luminous and an essential and uncreated part of Godhead. Evil only veils the Atman or prevents its manifestation but does not taint it. That is why Swami Vivekananda said that 'each soul is *potentially* divine'. The Judeo-Christian view is that the human personality is dichotomous, consisting of the body and the mind—the mind itself being called the soul or spirit—both created by God. Since the soul and mind are one, the impurities of the mind are said to taint the soul.

The second point is that the *samskāras* (as well as the mind) are all the products of Prakṛti which Advaita Vedānta regards as primal ignorance called *māyā* or *avidyā*. Thus the root-cause of all evil is 'original ignorance' (*mūlā-avidyā*). It is clear that if the doctrine of 'original sin' were divested of its mythological garments, it would look somewhat similar to the Vedantic concept of original ignorance.

But Christian theologians have been unwilling to modify the doctrine of original sin in any way, and all attempts to challenge or ignore the doctrine have been treated as heresies and suppressed. One of the earliest to challenge the doctrine was the fifth century English monk Pelagius, and the Pelagian heresy was put down mainly through the efforts of St. Augustine. Even in recent times the famous Jesuit paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin, who made a brilliant attempt to incorporate the doctrine of evolution into Christian theology, was censured by the authorities of his order and his theories were rejected mainly because he had ignored original sin. To appreciate the uncompromising stand of the Church on the question of original sin it is necessary to understand the Christian doctrine of redemption. This takes us to the third point of difference between Christian and Hindu ethics.

Redemption and liberation

The ancient Jewish belief was that man could propitiate God through repentance and sacrifice ('sin-offering'). This simple faith was rejected as inadequate by St. Paul in his attempt to find a theological explanation for the crucifixion of Christ. God was so angry at the disobedience of Adam that no human act of sacrifice could appease Him, and the stain of original sin is so deep that no amount of repentance could wash it off.⁴ Christ's 'kenosis' and

4. In this context it is interesting to note that Islam does not accept original sin. According to the Quran, God forgave Adam. Man is the noblest of all creation. It was not Adam who fell but Iblīs (Satan), and he fell because he failed to show honour to Adam when God ordered him to do so. Islam holds that God pardons anybody who submits himself to Him at any time and that genuine repentance washes off all sins.

self-sacrifice on the cross alone could appease divine anger and effect the reconciliation between God and man. When a person accepts Christ in his heart, through faith, God absolves him from the guilt of original sin. Redemption through Christ is the New Covenant or contract (Testament) of God with man and is the best proof of God's love for men. This is the famous Pauline doctrine of 'justification by faith'⁵. Protestants hold to this original doctrine and believe redemption to be the result of the 'imputation' of the righteousness of Christ upon the undeserving sinner. The Catholic belief is that during baptism the soul is first of all 'sanctified' (that is, freed of original sin) by an infusion of divine grace in the form of a 'habitus' and, after this, the Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity) dwells in the souls of baptized Christians as the 'Indwelling'. Later on the soul receives Christ (and participates in Christ's self-sacrifice) through the Eucharist or Mass. Furthermore, the Church being the mystical body of Christ, when a person becomes a member of the Church his soul partakes of the holiness of Christ.⁶

It was to the nineteenth-century western people conditioned by this complex doctrine of sin and redemption that Swami Vivekananda first preached the Vedantic doctrine of 'liberation' (*mukti*). As already mentioned, the Advaitic view is that evil is nothing but the impure *samskāras* in the mind which are only a product of 'original ignorance'. According to Advaitins, this ignorance can be removed only by true

knowledge. How to gain true knowledge? First of all, the mind must be purified of all evil *samskāras* through Karma Yoga which includes the practice of concentration also. After this, according to the Vivaraṇa school of Advaita, knowledge of the true nature of Self arises spontaneously when the aspirant hears the Word from an illumined Guru; according to the Bhāmati school, true knowledge arises only through prolonged meditation on the Word. It was the second view that Swami Vivekananda popularized. When the original ignorance is removed, the real Atman shines forth of its own accord in all its original purity and bliss and the person becomes freed from all bondage and sorrow. The attainment of this state is *mukti* or liberation.

The theistic schools of Vedānta like those of Rāmānuja and Madhva, hold that God through an infusion of grace directly purifies the soul and liberates it from all bondage. It will be obvious to discerning people that this theistic view resembles the Catholic doctrine of redemption in several respects, though the difference between them are quite as great. Swami Vivekananda did not preach the theistic view of liberation in the West, for the people there already had a well-developed version of it. He popularized mostly the Advaitic view (which emphasizes self-effort) there because he wanted to offer the aspirants who had outgrown the need for theistic supports an advanced conception of Reality. Furthermore, to establish a universal religion was a part of his mission and, as he showed in his lectures on 'Practical Vedānta', this could not be done without providing an impersonal background to the different theistic conceptions of existing religions. Above all, Swamiji wanted to place before mankind a universal moral ideal, a common code of ethics that would free men from bigotry, superstition and

5. Cf Epistle to Romans, ch. 3 and 5.

6. Under the influence of humanism and existentialism, Catholic theology is now moving closer to Protestant theology, and some eminent (mostly German) Catholic theologians like Karl Rahner conceive grace as a dialogue between God and man.

fear and inspire faith in their own intrinsic worth, capacities and qualities.

The four orders of dharma

The moral ideal that Swami Vivekananda held aloft as a part of his mission was rooted in Dharma. The word 'Dharma' is so comprehensive in its meaning that it is difficult to find its equivalent in other languages. Etymologically it means 'that which sustains a thing or person'.⁷ That is to say, it is the inherent property of an object by virtue of which it exists. In this sense it corresponds to *li* in Neo-Confucian Chinese philosophy, and 'form' in Aristotle's philosophy. Water slakes thirst, whereas a stone does not; a pencil cannot be used as a walking stick anymore than a pen can be used as an umbrella. Every object has its own dharma—properties and uses—which distinguishes it from other objects. It was in this sense that Dharma is used in the 'Puruṣa-sūkta' of *R̥g-Veda*.⁸ This naturally implies a cosmic order and Dharma was first identified with the common *physical order* that governs the whole universe. All the laws of science are only the manifestations of one universal Truth or Dharma.

The next stage in the evolution of the concept of Dharma was to identify it with *social order*. In an important, but little noticed, passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* it is stated that, after creating the four castes, God was not satisfied; so he created 'that glorious form: it is dharma...there is nothing greater than Dharma.'⁹ Every person has his own

svadharma which determines his function and place in society called his *varṇa-dharma*. But society as a whole is governed by a universal dharma or social order; it is chiefly in this sense that Dharma is used in the law books of ancient India like *Manu-smṛti*.

Social order naturally implies the principle of justice, and justice cannot be enforced without assuming a universal moral order. So we find Dharma identified mostly with *moral order* in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Man cannot act in any way he likes but he has to face the consequences of his actions; all wrongs will be automatically righted in due course; there is a moral order that ensures justice to all and 'Dharma protects (society) if it is honoured; it certainly destroys (us) when it is violated.'¹⁰

But violations of the moral order are all too frequent and the peace obtained by leading a purely moral life is neither deep nor permanent. So a search for ultimate meaning and fulfilment began and this led to the discovery of a *spiritual order* which harmonizes the individual Self or Atman with the Cosmic Self or Brahman. Dharma came to be identified with this universal spiritual order, and the goal of Dharma became God realization or Self-realization, the mystic experience of the unity of Atman and Brahman. From the tenth century A. D. onwards it is in this sense of spiritual life that Dharma has come to be understood. The *Bhāgavatam* states that its central theme is 'Dharma cleansed of untruth',¹¹ that is to say, pure knowledge and devotion unfettered by the laws of the moral, social and physical worlds. Curiosity about the

7. धारणाद्-धर्ममित्याहुः धर्मेण विधृताः प्रजाः ।

Mahābhārata 12.109.14

8. तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन्

R̥g-Veda 10.90.16

9. तत् श्रेयोरूपमसृजत धर्मम् . . . धर्मात्

परं नास्ति ।

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.14

10. धर्म एव हतो हन्ति धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः ।

Mahābhārata, Vanaparvan, 312.128

11. धर्मः प्रोज्झितकैतवोऽत्र

Bhāgavatam 1.1.2

laws of the physical world, concern for social welfare and uncompromising adherence to moral principles—all these came to be neglected, and the whole national life became a kind of cross-country race for *mukti* or liberation. It was perhaps not accidental that the political downfall of India coincided with this trend.

We have seen that Dharma has four meanings: physical order, social order, moral order and spiritual order. When we spoke of the evolution of these meanings what we meant was the way the social acceptance of these meanings changed in India. It may also be mentioned here that each of the four great cultures of the world seems to have developed one of these orders of Dharma as its dominant concern. The Greeks emphasized the physical order, the Chinese the social order, the Hebrews the moral order and the Indians the spiritual order. Now that the modern representatives of these ancient cultures are being brought closer together by the forces of technology, commerce and internationalism, there has arisen the need for the development of a common ideal which incorporates in it the best elements of all the four aspects of Dharma. It was in his efforts to develop such a universal moral ideal that Swami Vivekananda made one of his enduring contributions to world culture.

Universal moral ideal: its basis

The question now arises: what should be the motive for the acceptance of such a universal moral ideal? The Hindu tradition accepts four values as the main motives or goals of human life: wealth or power (*artha*), enjoyment (*kāma*), morality (*dharma*) and liberation (*mokṣa*). The four orders of Dharma mentioned above may be said to govern these four

realms of value: the physical order governs the value of *artha*, the social order the value of *kāma*, the moral order the value of *dharma* and the spiritual order the value of *mokṣa*. Of these, moral value is the most important for, without it, the rest cease to be values. It is the foundation of all the values: any attempt to enjoy or acquire wealth without morality will create conflicts and may even land the person in jail; spiritual striving too, if it violates the moral imperative, will end in failure.

A moral ideal to become universally acceptable should be able to accommodate all the four values of life mentioned above. The traditional solution to this problem has been to divide human endeavour into two levels, higher and lower, and give people the option to follow one or the other.

The higher level, called *nivṛtti mārga* or 'the path of withdrawal', is meant for monks and ascetics who want to pursue the highest good (*parama-puruṣārtha*) known as *mokṣa* (liberation) unfettered by responsibilities and duties to society. The three chief Yogas—Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna—belong to this level. Those who belong to this level too have to follow certain moral principles of Dharma like *yama* and *niyama* or the four disciplines (*sādhana-catuṣṭaya*) of Advaita Vedanta, but their purpose is only to purify the mind.

The lower level, known as *pravṛtti mārga* or 'the path of involvement', is meant for those who want to enjoy the world or are unable to free themselves from obligations and desires. At this level there is ample scope for the fulfilment of the two values of *artha* (power) and *kāma* (pleasure). Here the main function of the third value Dharma is to keep the pursuit of power and pleasure under control. This it does by dividing the duties of life into

two categories: *kāmya* or optional and *nitya* or obligatory.¹²

This division of duties into two types is usually restricted to religious acts and rites like Vedic sacrifices and twilight worship (*samdhya*). But a similar two-fold distinction may be made in secular activities also. For instance, acquiring costly furniture, furnishings, fashionable dress or a car may be regarded as 'optional' (*kāmya*), for it is possible to maintain oneself with cheaper and simpler things. But educating one's children, looking after one's aged parents, serving the poor and the sick etc. may be regarded as 'obligatory' (*nitya*). In modern times the extension of this distinction into secular life has become very much necessary. In democratic countries the constitution guarantees to all citizens certain 'fundamental rights' like the right to life, freedom, property, contract, education etc. These rights have, however, been used mainly for *kāmya-karmas*. The time has come to enforce certain 'fundamental duties' like service to the poor and the helpless, honesty in work, inter-religious understanding, communal harmony, etc. as *nitya karmas*.

The goal or result of following *pravṛtti mārga* is believed to be *abhyudaya* (welfare or prosperity) and the goal of *nivṛtti mārga* is believed to be *niḥśreyasa* (liberation). For centuries these two goals had been considered mutually incompatible or antagonistic. Those who followed the former had no hope of attaining the latter, whereas those who followed the latter had to forgo the former. Swami Vivekananda removed the contradictoriness of these two ideals and combined them into a single ideal. How did he do it? Simply by changing the meaning of

abhyudaya. The traditional meaning of this word is 'one's own welfare or prosperity'. Swamiji changed it to 'the welfare of others'.

Freedom—life's basic urge

Swamiji expressed this combined ideal through his lectures delivered in India and his letters to his Indian disciples. It found an aphoristic expression in the dictum which he gave as the motto of the Ramakrishna Movement: 'For one's own salvation and the welfare of the world' (*ātmano mokṣārtham jagaddhitāya ca*). Life is integral and there is only one basic striving in life—the struggle for freedom. Mukti, liberation, is not a far off goal but is in the soul of man and is finding its expression through every action of man. In his lectures on Karma Yoga Swamiji pointed out:

Everything that we perceive around us is struggling towards freedom, from the atom to the man, from the insentient, lifeless particle of matter to the highest existence on earth, the human soul...All that we see in the universe has for its basis this one struggle towards freedom; it is under the impulse of this tendency that the saint prays and the robber robs. When the line of action taken is not a proper one, we call it evil, and when the manifestation of it is proper and high, we call it good. But the impulse is the same, the struggle towards freedom.¹³

The goal of both *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* is the same—freedom. Why does a man seek wealth and power? In order to free himself from poverty and helplessness. Why does a person seek sense pleasure? In order to be free from sorrow and unfulfilment. Why does a person try to be moral? In order to be free even from the endless struggle for the other lower types of freedom.

12. For a good discussion on this subject see, M. Hiriyanna, *Indian Conception of Values* (Mysore: Kavyalaya Publishers, 1975) ch. 8

13. *Complete Works* (1977) 1:108-109.

Evil is only misdirected freedom. Worldly life is a struggle for lower freedom ; spiritual life, a struggle for higher freedom. When we realize that all human activities have freedom as their basis, greed and lust and prudery will give way to a holistic striving ; the difference between the sacred and the secular, between *abhyudaya* and *niḥśreyasa*, will vanish ; and our entire life will become a yoga. Since freedom is an inseparable universal attribute of life, by making it the basis of morality it is possible to develop a universally acceptable moral ideal for all humanity. This was what Swami Vivekananda did.

Morality without compulsion

With the exception of Martin Luther (who said man was 'unfree like a block of wood, a rock, a lump of clay, or a pillar of salt'), Calvin and a few others, most of the moral philosophers have understood freedom as a necessary condition for morality. If everything were done or controlled by God or nature, the blame for our actions would go to them, not to us. We feel moral responsibility because we feel we are free.

But the existing moral codes, laws and traditions seem only to curtail this freedom of man. They impose morality upon man as an obligation. Everyman is bound by so many rules and regulations that he is not free enough to be truly moral. Most people act morally not because they freely choose it but because they are bound by certain deeply ingrained habits and attitudes which drive them to act that way. Ethics as it exists now does not deal with what man *is* but with what he 'ought to become'; it does not allow man to be what he really is but is relentlessly driving him to become somebody else.

Is it possible to have a moral ideal which is free from compulsion and

obligation ? Is it possible to construct an ethics which is based on man's essential being ? Two attempts have been made in this direction. One is a recent one made by scientists. Chauncy D. Leake, for instance, has tried to build a theory of the good based on the Darwinian concepts of struggle for existence and survival through adaptation. Our knowledge of biology makes it clear, says Dr. Leake, 'that survival for an individual living thing or for a particular living species is *good* for that individual or species. Whatever is conducive toward the continued survival of that particular individual or that particular species is therefore *good* for it.'¹⁴ Man behaves morally because that is the best way to adapt himself to his environment and ensure his survival. So according to Dr. Leake, ethics is not a value-science but an empirical life-science included in the wider science of biology. This theory, which reduces man to an animal without a soul, does not deserve serious consideration in the present context.

The other attempt was made at least twelve centuries ago by the great philosopher and religious teacher Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. One of the great achievements of Śaṅkara was to free spiritual life from the hold of ethics, to free sincere spiritual seekers from the trammels of religious and social obligations and duties. This he did through his two-level theory of truth: the *pāramārthika* (the absolute) and the *vyāvahārika* (the relative). All social obligations, compulsions and conventions belong to the realm of relative truth. They are based on a subject-object relationship between the self and the world. But at the absolute level the world is an illusion, and there the Supreme Self or Brahman

14. Chauncey D. Leake and Patrick Romanell *Can We Agree?* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1950).

alone exists devoid of the subject-object relationship. Those who have realized this ultimate Reality are therefore not bound by any feeling of 'ought'.¹⁵ Having reached the highest state of 'being' they have no more need for 'becoming'.

Śaṅkara did not create a new theory of ethics ; rather, he retained the older one. What he did was to ask people to go beyond ethics by realizing the Atman. The only drawback of this position is that only a few people at any time can have the direct realization of the Atman and freedom from the sense of 'ought'. (In this group he included all sannyāsins). As regards the rest of the people, they have to remain bound by duties and obligations and follow scriptural injunctions to the letter. Society in medieval India was based on caste (*varṇa*) and 'station in life' (*āśrama*) and was not ready for a root-and-branch reform in Śaṅkara's time.

Social conditions are vastly different now and what Swami Vivekananda did was to strike while the iron was hot. Swamiji's primary attempt was to apply the transcendental ethics of Śaṅkara to the empirical (*vyāvahārika*) plane of existence, but he enlarged its scope to such an extent that he may be credited with the creation of a new theory of ethics of universal relevance in the contemporary world.

Doctrine of the divinity of the soul

To put it briefly, Swami Vivekananda made Atman the basis of the moral ideal. He removed the distinction between the *pāramārthika* and the *vyāvahārika* and looked upon life as one continuous process of unfolding. 'My ideal can be put into a few words', said Swamiji, 'and that is: to

preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every movement of life'¹⁶ The Atman is eternally pure, ever free and immortal and an inseparable part of the Supreme Divine. Ethical life is nothing but the manifestation of the divinity and perfection that are already in the soul. What about sinfulness? 'Sins are very low degrees of Self-manifestation ; manifest your Self in a high degree', said Swamiji.¹⁷ In order to be moral it is not necessary to burden oneself with many rules ; all that is necessary is to remain as one truly is and allow the inner light to radiate through every action and word. We should be pure and good not because somebody says we should be, nor because circumstances compel us to be, but because we *are* really pure and good.

Spiritual humanism

An abstract philosophical concept, however satisfying it may be to intellectuals, cannot become universally acceptable unless it appeals to human emotions, unless it is geared to the practical needs of societies and can inspire people to participate actively in life. The Atman doctrine had not been made out as capable of fulfilling these needs. It had been utilized only to develop a detached stand-offish, stoic attitude unaffected by the troubles of life. It has little practical value in the codes of Manu and other law givers. Indeed, this is one of the charges levelled against Hindu ethics by Albert Schweitzer, John Mackenzie and other critics.

Swami Vivekananda changed the Atman doctrine into a powerful tool for social change. On the one hand, he used it to arouse the conscience of educated and affluent people and, on the other hand, used it to awaken the dormant power in

15. cf निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथिविचरतां को विधिः को

निषेधः ।
Sukāṣṭakam

16. *Complete Works* (1972) 7:498

17. *Complete Works* (1976) 2:300

the poor and the downtrodden. Furthermore, by adapting the complementary doctrine of the Supreme Self or Brahman to the practical needs of the mundane world, he unified human love and divine love, service of man and worship of God, humanism and religion, into one integral discipline capable of bringing about one's own salvation and the welfare of the world. This contribution of Swamiji is too well known to need further treatment here.

So then, the moral ideal developed by Swami Vivekananda is not based on compulsion or obligation but on the freedom and purity of the Atman. It accommodates all the four values of life and eliminates the distinction between the sacred and the secular and between the absolute and the relative. Existential freedom, divinity of the soul and spiritual humanism—these attributes give a universal dimension to Swamiji's moral ideal.

ROSARY FOR JAPA

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

Functions of the rosary

Those who practise japa—the repetition of the Holy Name—often use some kind of rosary or string of beads (*mālā*) made of different sorts of material such as rudrākṣa, tulasī or sandalwood. The rosary is kept hanging on the middle finger of the right hand and the beads are turned by the thumb along with the repetition of the mantra. Primarily, the *mālā* facilitates the counting of the japa-mantra. Its second function is to help the seeker in concentration. The restless mind is bound to have some amount of concentration in the process of using the rosary. The psychological intent is to direct whatever attention the mind can muster to the mantra-japa, letting the rest of the mind wander as it pleases. But, besides these two, there is another function of the *mālā*, namely, to lift the mind more and more to higher spiritual levels.

The contribution of the *japa-mālā* cannot be understood in the beginning of our spiritual life. As our faith and love for the mantra (which is one with God) grows in intensity, this function of the

japa-mālā begins to be comprehended. Then the spiritual seeker uses the *mālā*, but not for counting or concentration of the mind. The rotation of the rosary becomes more and more a part of the power and joy of japa. It seems to the sādḥaka that the whole world has joined in the rotation of the *mālā*. The various experiences of the five senses—*śabda* (sound), *sparśa* (touch), *rasa* (taste), *rūpa* (sight) and *gandha* (smell)—can no longer distract the mind. As friends, they have entered into the rosary, seeking as it were, the closeness of the Divine. Each bead is now a segment of the world of sense experience.

If during the practice of mantra the rosary can help to minimize the distraction of the mind, it is certainly a great friend in our spiritual adventure. When we begin to understand this function of the rosary, then the technique of japa begins to change. The material for the rosary also changes to other objects rather than being confined to tulasī, rudrākṣa, crystal, etc.

In the spiritual tradition of India the name of God is not just a word. It is God in word form. The scriptures, saints and

seers have taught from the earliest time that the divine name or mantra is one with the Deity. In almost all religions and sects of India the contemplation of God with the help of a mantra is well known. It is natural that in the primary stages of practice the Holy Name is taken as just a combination of one or more syllables but, as the seeker's faith and concentration get intensified, the radiant conscious nature of the mantra begins to be comprehended. In the divine name the seeker feels the conscious presence and love of the chosen Deity. Mantra-japa bathes his or her entire body/mind/life system in nectar as it were. They begin to be illumined by the light of consciousness.

Prāṇa as rosary

The *prāṇa vāyu* (air as life force) that is functioning in the body ceaselessly through inhalation and exhalation, forming as if a circle, can well be a substitute for the japa rosary. Prāṇa then becomes a spiritual companion over and above its biological function. The meditator experiences that the mantra is being repeated in harmony with the rotation of prāṇa. The mantra consciousness united with the prāṇa movement transforms the biological prāṇa into divine prāṇa. The biological prāṇa maintains, protects and strengthens the organs, blood vessels, and millions of cells, and so on. The role of the divine prāṇa is to communicate into the blood stream and cellular systems a spiritual power. Prāṇa as a rosary does not keep count of the number of japa but, being animated by the consciousness of the mantra, brings under control the biological passions of the body like lust, anger, etc, and gives them a spiritual turn. Japa with *prāṇa-mālā* does not preclude the use of rudrākṣa or tulasī beads. Just as in the rendering of a symphony several different instruments playing together enrich the

music, so too japa with *prāṇa-mālā* brings a new value and depth to the normal use of the rosary.

Mind as rosary

The mind can be a japa-mala. The rise and fall of the mental waves (thoughts) form the circular movement of a rosary. *Citta vṛttis* (mental waves) then are no longer distractions but rather spiritual associates in the japa sādhanā. The sound of the Name from the throat or heart touches the mental waves and purifies them. The vṛttis are being raised from the level of rajas and tamas to that of sattva. The sādhanā used to be afflicted when the waves of the mind disturbed the japa practice. The distracted mind was looked upon as an enemy, but now there is no ground for that affliction. The mind has now become a rosary for japa, the different mental waves being the beads. Each mental modification is illumined by the light of the mantra. The mind is no more an enemy but a companion of japa. The *citta vṛttis* have abandoned their māyic form and are appearing radiant by that basic reality—consciousness at their back. A hint on this we find in the discussion on 'true desire' and 'false desire' in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Part 8, chapters 1, 2 & 3. As long as the basic Reality, Sat-Cit-Ānanda, which holds and permeates everything, has not been known, all objects of desire, here or hereafter, are indeed *anṛtapidhāna*—covered with falsehood.

On the other hand, for that blessed person who has realized the Paramātman, the Infinite Consciousness, in the heart, the 'false desires' appear to be 'true desires'. The departed ancestors who reside in Pitṛ Loka, or Mātṛ Loka, relatives and friends, whether living or dead, all these glow by the light of the Self and bring great joy to the sādhanā. In the chapters mentioned above the Upaniṣad applies this experience

to food-stuff, fragrance, music, and even erotic objects. These objects were at one time deluding the mind as objects of gross enjoyment, but now they glow as radiations of Paramātman. The same objects or 'false desires', thus transformed as parts of the eternal, become 'true desires'. Just as the mythical philosopher's stone converts base metals into gold, so any object of sense enjoyment conjoined with the light of consciousness becomes a piece of Sat-Cit-Ānanda. When the mind is looked upon as a japa-mālā, the mental *vṛttis* illumined by consciousness become parts of the spiritual reality which is the Iṣṭa-Devatā.

Physical body as rosary

This gross body of ours can be a rosary for japa, the different limbs being comparable to the beads of the mālā. The mantra is repeated in the throat or in the mind and the subtle vibration of the mantra resonates through the different parts of the body. These components of the body have now joined in the aspirant's japa. The head no longer wants to nod or droop. The eyes, ears, nose, hands, and feet have now given up their wanderings. A circle has been formed from the upper to the lower and from the lower to the upper parts of the body. Even segment of this circle is receiving the touch of consciousness. The sādḥaka distinctly feels that his body is no longer a biological unit but through and through filled with consciousness.

Kaṭha Upaniṣad says: 'This body is like a city with eleven gates. Paramātman the birthless and stainless, is its ruler. A person who can realize in meditation the truth of this ruler (in relation to the body) becomes free from grief and delusion, attaining freedom.'¹ For a *japa sādḥaka*, the

iṣṭa mantra as Śabda Brahman, becomes that Ruler. The body is the sporting place of that Being. When the king is in residence in the city, all house and gates and roads and passages show order and tidiness. In a similar way, when the mantra gets established within, all the organs and other parts of the seeker's body glow with the sāttvic light of the great mantra.

The universe as rosary

This universe can become a japa mālā. The sun is one bead, the moon another, the constellation of stars yet another. The sky, the ocean, forests, deserts, mountains are the other beads. Whatever parts of the universe come to the mind, they become beads of this cosmic rosary. The mantra consciousness, after surpassing the prāṇa, the mind and the body, has pervaded infinite space and time. The entire cosmos has been linked with the *mantra caitanya*. As a consequence all creation has given up its material mask and revealed its spiritual nature.

This experience is hinted in a well-known verse in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* which may be paraphrased as follows. The same Brahman-consciousness which, lodged in our heart, lightens our body, mind and prāṇa, is now radiating far and near in all objects and phenomena, in fact, throughout the whole nature. As the sun He is radiating heat and light. He is the glory of the heavenly spheres and He pervades all space. That Brahman is appearing on this earth as agni (fire); He is in the sacred pitcher of the sacrifice; He is in man and in all of the deities; He is in the sky and the birds that fly in the sky, in aquatic creatures, in the vegetation and endless chain of living beings on the earth. He is the desirable result of sacrifices (yajñas). He is shining as the white snow on mountain peaks. He is directing all changes and yet in His true

1. पुरमेकादशद्वारमजस्यावक्रचेतसः

अनुष्ठाय न शोचति विमुक्तश्च विमुच्यते ।

Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.2.1

nature is ever unchanging, the most glorious, the greatest Brahman.²

Beyond the rosary

The Vedas have declared : 'Om, this primary sound is Brahman'.³ Om is Saguna Brahman, Īśvara, the cause of everything, as also, Nirguna Brahman—the Paramātman, beyond speech and mind, beyond all causality. The Purāṇas and Tantras have combined various names and seed-words of God with this primary word. Thus various *iṣṭa* mantras have come into existence which are found suitable for different seekers. The primary assertion of the Vedas has not been abandoned in the diversity of mantras. The seeker has to strengthen the faith that the

iṣṭa mantra is one with *iṣṭa svarūpa* (the true Form of the chosen Deity). When practised with faith and love, the mantra gradually lifts the sādhanā to subtler and subtler experiences.

Ideas of God—formless and with form—become living truths with the help of the mantra. The japa mala or rosary is especially helpful in mantra sādhanā. Along with the increasing spiritual revelations of the mantra, the japa mālā also, undergoes a spiritual transformation. This transfiguration slowly and gradually makes our physical body, prāṇa, mind and the whole of the material universe filled with consciousness. Eventually, mantra-japa dissolves into that infinite supreme unity : Soundless, touchless, colourless, undecaying, and also, tasteless, eternal, odourless, without beginning and without end.⁴

The rosary of beads too vanishes into that indescribable non-duality.

2. हंसः शुचिषद्वसुरन्तरिक्षस-
द्धोता वेदिषदतिथिर्दुरोणसत् ।

नृषद्वरसदृतसद्व्योमस-

दब्जा गोजा ऋतजा अद्रिजा ऋतं बृहत् ॥

Katha Upaniṣad 2.2.2

3. ओमिति ब्रह्म ।

Taittiriya Upaniṣad 1.8.1

4. अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं

तथाऽरसं नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत् ।

Katha Upaniṣad 1.3.15

THE ADVAITA DOCTRINE OF MAHAVAKYA

DR. RACHAPPA I. INGALALLI

A cardinal tenet of the Advaita system is that scriptural testimony (*śruti*) is the only source of true Self-knowledge (*ātmajñāna*). Other sources of knowledge (*pramāṇas*) like perception and reason normally function only in the world of empirical objects. Traditionally, scriptural testimony denotes the Vedas having four subdivisions, namely *samhitā*, *brāhmaṇa*, *āraṇyaka* and *upaniṣads*.¹ However, in the Advaita tradition

only the Upaniṣads, which constitute the *jñāna kāṇḍa* (knowledge portion), are regarded as the genuine source of Self-knowledge. Swami Vivekananda says : 'The Jñāna kāṇḍa of the Vedas comprises the Upanishads and is known by the name of Vedānta, the pinnacle of the Śruti, as it

1. Cf Swami Satprakashananda *Methods of Knowledge* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1974)

Pp 309-10. The author gives a systematic and authentic classified list of the Vedic Texts. According to the classification, there are five Samhitās, eighteen Brāhmaṇas, four Araṇyakas and sixteen Upaniṣads in Vedic literature.

is called.² Among the Upaniṣads specific importance has been accorded to four³ as they contained the *mahāvākyas* or great dictums in the form of cardinal formulas of Advaita Vedānta. The *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (3-1-3) of the *R̥g-Veda* contains *prajñānam brahma* (Consciousness is Reality), the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6-8-7) of the *Sāma-Veda* has *tat tvam asi* (That thou art), the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1-4-10) of the *Yajur-Veda* has *aham brahmāsmi* (I am Reality); the fourth *mahāvākya*, *ayamātmā brahma* (This Self is Reality) belongs to the *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad* (2) of the *Atharva-Veda*. Thus we find that each Veda has its own specific *mahāvākya*.

The object of this paper is to inquire into the logical status of the four *mahāvākyas*. Of the several *vākyas* (sentences) contained in the Upaniṣads, the four *vākyas* mentioned above are qualified as *mahāvākyas*—literally, great sentences or great dictums. Since scriptural testimony (*śruti*) is the only source of Self-knowledge and the cardinal sentences of the Upaniṣads are in the form of the four *mahāvākyas*, the question arises as to whether each *mahāvākya* is necessary for Self-knowledge but not sufficient, or all the four *mahāvākyas* together constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions to yield Self-knowledge.

Prajñānam brahma

The first *mahāvākya* *prajñānam brahma* ('consciousness is Brahman') occurs in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (3-1-3). The context in which this *mahāvākya* is formulated implies a scheme or matrix for the manifold world containing the domains of the gods, the five elements etc. The seer of this

Upaniṣad seems to have had in mind the idea of *prajñā* or consciousness as the basis of the manifold universe when he stated: 'The universe has consciousness as its eye (*prajñā-netro lokah*)'. According to Sankarācārya's interpretation also *prajñāna* is the underlying reality of the world.⁴ But in the formula 'prajñānam = Brahman', the notion of 'Brahman' is ambiguous. Since Reality or Brahman has two aspects, namely, *Saguṇa* (determinate) and *Nirguṇa* (indeterminate), it is necessary to decide in which sense it is to be taken. Contextually, the *mahāvākya* implies *Saguṇa* Brahman. Since the central concept of *mahāvākyas* is 'Brahman', it is desirable to consider certain techniques involved in the definitions of Brahman.

The Advaita system gives two types of definition about Brahman, namely *Svarūpa Lakṣaṇa* (essential definition) and *Taṭastha Lakṣaṇa* (accidental definition).⁵ This kind of distinction in definition is peculiar to the Advaita system but, as a matter of fact, the definitions have universal application. That is to say, all things in the universe can be defined in terms of *Svarūpa-Lakṣaṇa* and *Taṭastha-Lakṣaṇa*. Normally, definitions are the means to precise understanding of the concepts in a given system of knowledge. The soundness of any system of knowledge is also measured in terms of the precise formulation of its definitions. That is why Aristotle said: 'Definition is the beginning and end of all knowledge'. What this implies is that adequate defini-

2. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*: (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1973) 5:456

3. Cf *Pañcadasī* of Sri Vidyāraṇya Swāmi: edited by Swami Swahananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1975) Pp. 122-5

4. *Eight Upanishads*: Volume 2 with the commentary of Sankarācārya. Translated by Swami Gambhirananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1978) Pp. 73

5. *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* of Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra, edited and translated by Swami Madhavananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972) Pp. 151-4

Prof. M. Hiriyanna, *Indian Philosophical Studies* Vol. 1 & 2 (Mysore: Kavyalaya Publishers, 1957) p. 103

tions are an essential ingredient in a system of knowledge. Traditional Indian thinkers have fully realized the importance of the art of defining the terms.

By means of a definition it is convenient to specify the exact nature of a thing under consideration by differentiating it from the rest of the things. For example the term 'cow' is defined as an animal with a dewlap (*sāsnā*). The defining property of the animal 'cow' is *sāsnā* which is a specific characteristic of a cow only. Since the defining characteristic is an essential property of part of the nature of the animal defined, the definition is an instance of Svarūpa-lakṣaṇa. Taṭastha-lakṣaṇa is also a means to distinguish a particular thing from other things, but it does not reflect the essential nature of a thing. For instance, a house in a certain village is distinguished from other houses by referring to some kind of a tree, say a mango tree, by the side of that house, as no other house possesses that characteristic of having a mango tree. The fundamental difference between the two types of definitions is now clear. Only the Svarūpa-lakṣaṇa gives us an idea about the essential characteristic of a thing defined.

Now it is quite interesting to consider the application of these definitions to defining the nature of Brahman. But there is a difficulty to be encountered in the formulation of an adequate definition of Brahman; it is generally expressed in the form of the following argument. The argument is against the feasibility of a definition about Brahman. Since Nirguṇa Brahman is altogether without attributes, there is nothing outside the sole reality of Brahman and it has no characteristics by means of which it may be defined, consequently no Svarūpa-lakṣaṇa is possible. However to a certain extent the said difficulty may be overcome by appealing to the principle of human knowledge *jñānantu pramāṇajanyam; pramāṇaṅca yathābhūtavastuviṣayam* (knowl-

edge is born of the pramanas, it relates to the things as they are.)⁶ And for the purpose of communication of the knowledge of Brahman, a definition of Brahman is indispensable without which no *jijñāsā* or inquiry into its nature can be conducted. Accordingly, Advaita thinkers have devised the techniques to formulate the definitions about Brahman in terms of its Svarūpa-lakṣaṇa and Taṭastha-lakṣaṇa.

The formulation of Taṭastha-lakṣaṇa for Brahman is derived from the belief that the manifold world as an effect owes its existence to God. Consequently the term Brahman is defined as the cause of the world. This definition distinguishes Brahman from other entities like Prakṛti, atoms etc. Saṅkarācārya in his commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtra* regards *janmādyasya yataḥ* (sūtra 1.1.2) ('Brahman from which are derived the birth etc. of this universe'), as an instance of Taṭastha-lakṣaṇa. In that context he refers to the instruction of Varuṇa to his son Bhṛgu: 'Seek to know that from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they proceed and into which they merge; that is Brahman.'⁷

It is fairly clear that Taṭastha-lakṣaṇa only marks off Brahman from certain other entities and does not characterize the actual nature of Brahman. The formulation of Svarūpa-lakṣaṇa refers to certain essential characteristics like knowledge (*jñāna*) and bliss (*ānanda*) without which Brahman as a spiritual Reality cannot be conceived. This kind of definition occurs in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2-1-1), where Brahman is defined as 'Truth, Knowledge, Infinity is Brahman'.

In the light of the above considerations, *prajñānam brahma* is to be taken as a statement implying the essential characteristic of Brahman in terms of *prajñānam*. It may be

6. *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya* of *Śrī Saṅkarācārya*, 1-1-4.

7. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* III-i

objected that if Brahman is the sole spiritual stuff and is the locus of consciousness, then consciousness is the property or quality of that stuff. This argument is advanced by Nyāya thinkers, according to whom consciousness is an accidental property of the individual self (*jīva*) or cosmic Self (*Īśvara*).⁸ Saṅkarācārya refutes this argument by saying that a substance is identical with its essential property (*dravyātmakatā-guṇasya*).⁹

Tattvamasi

We now turn to the second *mahāvākya*, *tat tvam asi*. The importance of this *mahāvākya* is two-fold. Firstly, in the process of communicating spiritual knowledge a competent teacher imparts that knowledge through this *mahāvākya*. Secondly, this *mahāvākya* has been discussed in greater length than the other *mahāvākyas*. The component words in it are *tat*, *tvam* and *asi*; the respective literal meanings are 'that' (*Īśvara* or *Saguṇa Brahman* or *God*), 'thou' (individual self or *jīva*) and 'art' (indicates the existential import of the *mahāvākya*). Thus the literal meaning of the *mahāvākya* is as follows :

Tattvamasi (That thou art) = the individual self is God.

But it is obvious that such a literal sense of the *mahāvākya* does not yield the desired truth because God and individual soul belong to different categories. There are several points of difference between the two entities; omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence are the characteristics of God only and they are absent in an individual. An empirical paradigm like 'This is that Devadatta' (*so'yam devadatta*) is formulated

to bring out the exact sense of *tattvamasi*.¹⁰ In the paradigm 'This is that Devadatta', there are two mutually incompatible properties associated with Devadatta: 'this or the present Devadatta' qualified by present attributes such as his fatness, tallness, maturity etc., differs from 'that Devadatta' observed in the past who was lean, short and immature. In view of such incompatible properties, the proposition 'this is that Devadatta' appears to be false. Or the proposition is paradoxical. But in spite of its paradoxical nature, the principle of personal identity helps to identify the present Devadatta to be the same as the past Devadatta. According to the principle of personal identification, 'a person observed at present is the same person observed in the past if there is the continuity of unchangeable consciousness'. By virtue of continuous awareness, an apparently paradoxical statement turns out to be true. But how are we to understand 'tattvamasi' after the model *so'yam devadatta*? An answer to this question requires the analysis of the Advaita Theory of Meaning.

The meaning of an expression may be either literal (direct) meaning (*śakyārtha*) or metaphorical, i.e. implied meaning (*lakṣyārtha*).¹¹ Since the literal meanings of *tat* and *tvam* lead to a paradoxical sense of *mahāvākyas*, it is necessary to go by their implied meanings in order to establish the non-dual truth of *tattvamasi*. But the implied meaning—*lakṣyārtha*—is itself of three types: *jahallakṣaṇā* (exclusive meaning), *ajahallakṣaṇā* (inclusive meaning) and *jahad-ajahallakṣaṇā* (inclusive-exclusive meaning). In *jahallakṣaṇā* the primary meaning of an expression is to be completely given up, and only its implied meaning leads to the truth. For example: *gaṅgāyām ghoṣaḥ* literally means 'There is a hamlet on the Ganges'. This meaning is

8. *Tarkasamgraha* of Annambhatta. Edited by Y. V. Athalye and M. R. Bodas (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research, 1974) verse 17.

9. *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya* of Śrī Saṅkarācārya, 1-1-4

10. *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* Pp. 99-101

11. *Ibid* Pp. 93-94

evidently wrong for, as everyone knows, villages cannot exist on a stream of water. But the metaphysical sense of the sentence leads to the true sense, namely 'There is a hamlet on the bank of the Ganges.' In the case of *ajahallakṣaṇā* (inclusive sense), part of the direct meaning is retained and interpreted. For instance, *śoṇo dhāvati* which literally means 'red is running'. Here the direct senses of 'red' and 'running' are retained and the implied meaning of red as 'red horse' is conceived so that the true sense of the sentence is brought out as 'the red horse is running'. Otherwise 'red is running' would be a false expression. In *jahad-ajahallakṣaṇā* only incompatible attributes are eliminated to establish consistency so that the sentence turns out to be true. For example, the sentence *so'yam devadatta* becomes a true statement if Devadatta seen in the past without accidental properties such as leanness, shortness etc. is the same as the present Devadatta devoid of present attributes like fatness, tallness etc. It is this *jahad-ajahallakṣaṇā* that is applied in the explication of *tattvamasi*. According to this technique of interpretation, *tattvamasi* becomes a true sentence because the underlying basic consciousness of *jīva* (individual self) is qualitatively identical with that of *Īśvara* (God). Contextually in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6-8-7) *tattvamasi śvetaketu* implies that the pure consciousness of *śvetaketu* is qualitatively identical with the eternal consciousness of God (*Īśvara*).

'Tattvamasi' is an *upadeśa-mahāvākya* because it presupposes a competent teacher who imparts Self-knowledge through the *mahāvākya* to his disciple. While instructing a disciple he teaches the identity of the disciple with the ultimate Reality, Brahman. Hence this *mahāvākya* is called *akhaṇḍārthabodhaka vākya*.

Aham brahmāsmi

The spiritual instruction communicated to

the disciple through 'Tattvamasi' *mahāvākya* triggers off *svānubhava*, Self-knowledge, in the qualified disciple. Such a disciple expresses his *anubhūti* (experience) through the *mahāvākya aham brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman). The true meaning of *aham brahmāsmi* also is to be conceived after the semantic model set up for *tattvamasi*. That is to say, the proposition *aham brahmāsmi* becomes true if according to *jahad-ajahallakṣaṇā* we capture the sense of identity by virtue of the common denominator, the pure consciousness.

Ayamātmā brahma

The fourth *mahāvākya*, *ayamātmā brahma* seems to be not so different from *aham brahmāsmi*. The concept of Atman, from the logical point of view, is not conceptually different from *ātma-jñāna* or knowledge of the Self. For *jñāna* is the very essence of the Atman; that is to say, the Atman is *jñānasvarūpa*. For further conviction about the nature of the *ātman* certain guide-lines have been given. The guide-lines provide a clue to the rediscovery of one's own self (Atman). The possible guide-lines emerge from the domain of experiences, and in the background of those experiences we construct and reconstruct thoughts on the basis of the principle of consistency. The principle of consistency states that our thoughts or ideas are harmonious if our experience is non-contradictory (*abādhita*). We normally employ the sources or means of knowledge such as perception and reason to get appropriate acquaintance with facts or states of affairs. But sometimes our perceptions and inferences go wrong. Therefore we make use of our critical faculty (*vimarśa śakti* or *viveka*) to sort out knowledge from error. According to Advaita logic, the postulation or hypothesis about the existence of self is indispensable. The indispensability or necessity of the self implies a certain module of awareness as the ground for manifold

contingent experiences. When an experiencer of subject possesses the natural ability to report his stereotypes of cognitive and conative experiences, he intuitively feels quite certain about the background awareness without which patches of experiences cannot be accommodated in a unified system of human beliefs. Thus the functions of sense organs and intellect presuppose an intelligence known as the self which is different from them.¹²

The logical investigation of the nature of Atman is found in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (1-12). The Atman has three successive and mutually exclusive states: waking, dreaming and sleeping. But the Atman is also always characterized by the fourth major state of awareness which is common to the other three states. Therefore, the fourth major state of awareness is not successively the fourth state but is simultaneous with the three successive states of waking, dreaming and sleeping. The quantum of happiness or bliss enjoyed in each successive state is directly proportional to the amount of self-identification. The Upaniṣad (verse 7) states that when in deep sleep we are lifted above all desires, we taste the nature of absolute bliss, as in that state of dreamless sleep a man's mind is cut off from its modifications and brought to zero state. Consequently, the Atman is peaceful, all blissful.

But the semantic structure of the fourth Mahāvākya, *ayamātmā brahma* is such that we directly understand the identity of Atman and Brahman, for they are synonymous and do not imply contradictory attributes. Consequently there is no need to apply the technique of *jahad-ajahallakṣaṇā*.

Interrelationship of the four Mahāvākyas

Of the four Mahāvākyas *prajñānam brahma* gives the svarūpa-lakṣaṇa, essential

^{12.} *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya* of Śrī Samkarācārya, 2-3-7; 1-3-12

characteristic, of Brahman; hence it is in the form of a definition. Similarly the fourth Mahāvākya *ayamātmā brahma* gives a synonymous definition of Brahman. In a system of knowledge definitions are necessary but not sufficient. In Advaita system communication of Self-knowledge and intuitive experience of that knowledge are also necessary. The Mahāvākya *tattvamasi* serves to transmit knowledge from the teacher to the student. The resulting experience in the disciple is reported through the Mahāvākya *aham brahmāsmi*. Thus each Mahāvākya is important and necessary, but all the four Mahāvākyas together constitute necessary and sufficient conditions for Self-knowledge.

The function of the Mahāvākyas in human knowledge and culture is unique. They integrate man's subjective experience and objective knowledge into a whole thereby giving meaning to life and enabling man to orientate himself to Reality.¹³ By effecting the fusion of outwardly different but inwardly similar dimensions of Reality, the Mahāvākyas remove the apparent philosophical and existential contradictions of life. Regarding this Prof. Hiriyanna observes: 'The enunciation of this doctrine marked the most important advance in the whole history of Indian thought. It introduced almost a revolution in the point of view from which speculation has proceeded till then.'¹⁴ The significant change of perspective on the Reality introduced by these great sayings is analogous to the transformation of the view about Venus. Two persons A and B hold mutually exclusive views about the planet Venus. Venus is an eastern star for A, and a western star for B. But the discovery that the eastern star is itself

^{13.} Cf Professor M. Hiriyanna: *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956) p. 57

^{14.} *Ibid* p. 58

the western star leads to a transformation of the two views held by A and B.

Swami Vivekananda, the foremost among the modern exponents of Vedanta, emphasized the need for re-interpreting our ancient texts in order to make them relevant to human life. He said :

A broader and more generous conception of life is before us ; and although at first we had been deluded a little and wanted to narrow things down, we are finding today that these generous impulses which are at work, these broader conceptions of life, are the logical interpretation of what is in our ancient books. They are the carrying out, to the rigorously logical effect, of the primary conceptions of our ancestors. To become broad, to go out, to

amalgamate, to universalise, is the end of our aims.¹⁵

The logical implications of this view are : (1) a more comprehensive and rigorous form of unified framework for human knowledge is necessary to accommodate variety of human views ; (2) a unified theory of human knowledge gives scope for the development of each branch of knowledge in a consistent manner satisfying a criterion of universality that 'knowledge is useful if it solves personal and impersonal problems'.

The pragmatic outlook implied in the doctrine of Mahāvākya becomes clearer when applied at the level of interpersonal affairs in order to understand the nature of true human relations.

15. *Complete Works* (1973) 3:271

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO MARY HALE ?

SWAMI VIDYATMANANDA

'All blessings on you and the Sisters and Mother. Mary, you have been always the sweetest notes in my jarring and clashing life.'

This is what Swami Vivekananda wrote to Mary Hale of Chicago on 2 March, 1900. Mother was Mrs. George W. Hale, whom Swamiji sometimes addressed as Mother Church. The Sisters were Mary Hale herself, Mary's sister Harriet Hale, and the two cousins Isabel and Harriet Mckindley. The father of the family was Mr. George W. Hale, whom Swamiji sometimes called Father Pope.

Who were these 'sweetest notes' and what happened to them after Vivekananda's departure in 1902 ? I have counted something like seventy letters in the Complete Works addressed to Mrs. Hale, Harriet Hale, and Mary Hale singly or ensemble ; and since

their publication in the Complete Works a substantial number of additional letters addressed to these three, and the cousins, have come to light. Such a steady correspondence testifies to the closeness of Swamiji's relationship with his Chicago family.

The post-1902 histories of most of Swamiji's western intimates have been well documented—those of Miss Josephine MacLeod (Tantine), Sister Nivedita, Mrs. Sara Bull, Sister Christine, Mrs. Charlotte Sevier, Mrs. Betty Leggett, and Miss Alberta Sturges. The lives even of those not of Swamiji's inner circle have been studied, such as the following : Mr. J. J. Goodwin, Mme. Emma Calve, M. Jules Bois, Mr. E. T. Sturdy, Pere Hyacinthe Loyson, and the Mead sisters of South Pasadena.

But the later lives of the three Hale

women have remained obscure. We do not even know when or where they died, or for that matter their exact ages. The most complete account of what happened to them after Vivekananda's return to India in 1900 and his death in 1902 is given in a single paragraph on page 285 of Marie Louise Burke's *Swami Vivekananda in the West : New Discoveries : Part One : His Prophetic Mission :*

...Harriet Hale's marriage to Clarence Woolley was not happy and ended in divorce. As for Mary Hale, in the early 1900's (after 1902) she married Signor Giuseppe Matteini, a wealthy Italian, very much her senior. They lived in a large and beautiful estate outside Florence, and as far as is known, the marriage was not unhappy. Mr. Matteini died in 1922 and Mary went to live with her mother in a hotel in Florence.

This article, based on research carried on during the past two years in the United States and Italy, will try to complete the chronicle. Since the latter years of Mrs. Hale and Harriet were found to be governed by the events in Mary's life, this investigation will centre on Mary. I shall try to answer the fascinating question of what ever happened to Mary Hale.

*

Who was this family which meant so much to Swami Vivekananda? The patriarch was Samuel Hale, Sr. Born in Massachusetts in 1768, he moved to the west and settled in Kenosha, Wisconsin. He did well in business, became wealthy, and died in Kenosha in 1842.

Mary's grandfather, Samuel Sr's son, was also named Samuel. His wife, Mary's grandmother, was Mary Barnard before her marriage. Then came Mary's father, George W. Hale (1829-1900) and Mary's mother, Ellen, also known as Belle, (1837-1930). Ellen and George Hale had three

children, all born in Chicago. Our Mary Barnard Hale was the eldest, born on 16 December, 1865, then Samuel, born on 6 August, 1869, and finally Harriet, whose birthdate was 7 June, 1872.

In September, 1893, as a homeless delegate to the Parliament of Religions of Chicago, Swami Vivekananda, as is well known, was 'adopted' by the Hale family. A short time later, Swamiji described his hosts in a letter to Swami Ramakrishnananda 'an old couple'. Father Pope was sixty-four and Mother Church fifty-six in 1893. Mary was already nearly twenty-eight, only two years younger than Swamiji.

We are thankful to the Hales for what they did for Swamiji. They were a liberal-minded family. Mrs. Hale and Mary followed the ideals of Christian Science. The presence of an Indian swami in their midst—surely a novelty at that time—gave them pleasure. The Hales offered Swamiji a home when he had none and a base of operations during the early months of his work in America. They took care of his mail, his books, his clothes, and helped him out with money when he needed it. They made no claims on him, but offered him a harmonious family circle in America into which he could retire and find relaxation between lecture trips. Miss MacLeod wrote in 1922 : 'Without them to have nourished and protected him that long year we might never have had him in our midst.' Swamiji, once he had become established as a well-known personality and popular speaker, acknowledged his debt to the Hales in a letter dated 10 February, 1896 : 'I am ever grateful to you ... to you I owe everything I have in this country. May you ever be blessed and happy.'

The Hales, particularly Mary, provoke our interest today also because of the fact that they provoked Swamiji's interest ninety years ago. They were important to him, hence become important to us, his spiritual

descendants. Our search for Mary Hale is essentially a search for him.

Swamiji maintained a vast range of human relationships and all of them supremely well. His gurubhais were his brothers, his men friends, and his sons; and these he loved, scolded, and led. His female 'relatives' he mostly found in the West. In Miss MacLeod he found a mature, wise woman friend. In Nivedita an outstanding protegee. Christine was to him daughter. With Mrs. Sara Bull he established a mother-son affinity. In the Hale girls he found another relationship that completed the circle of human contacts—that of sisters. He could relax with them; they made no claims upon him; they treated him without earnestness in a natural fashion which allowed him to 'be himself'.

Swami Vivekananda provides thus a splendid model of making the whole world one's own: men and women, the young and the old, people of diverse nationalities and religions, the sophisticated and the simple—a model which we may study to our benefit.

Mary interested Swamiji the most. He seems to have had a particular rapport with her. He revealed his inmost thoughts to her; as an inspirer of such confidences Mary deserves our eternal gratitude. Several of his letters to her are masterpieces of self-revelation, hence documents of the first order concerning the mentality of a realized soul. We love her because he loved her so much and felt so easy with her. Of course she, as did her mother, at first took him as simply a wonderfully talented, attractive, and entertaining young man. Only after Nivedita's acquaintance with the Hales in 1899-1900 did Mary seem to have begun to grasp who Vivekananda really was.

Vivekananda's reliance upon women makes his perfect acceptance of the equality of the sexes self-evident. Indeed, a review of the events of his life shows that he

counted on women more, and they did more for him and his mission, than his men associates, at least in the West.

I have often thought how fortunate we are that the telephone had not yet come into general use during Swami Vivekananda's lifetime. He was unable, thus, to telephone Mary Hale and the other members of his western family as in later years he probably would have done. He had to communicate through the written word, communications which were capable of being preserved—as in a large measure they were. If he had telephoned we would not know him as we know him today—the enormous range of feelings, thoughts, and concerns that made Vivekananda a being who, as he himself said, would require another Vivekananda to fully appreciate.

*

What kind of a person was Mary Hale? What do we know about the character of this important Vedanta forebear? Here, taken from pages 281 and 282 of Marie Louise Burke's book already mentioned is a description of Mary:

Mary Hale, in her own blond and statuesque way, was as beautiful as Isabel (Isabel McKindley, her cousin) and, perhaps, as talented. Although neither she nor her younger sister Harriet had to earn a living, for Mr. Hale had retired in 1882 from a senior partnership in a highly successful iron-manufacturing firm and was well off, they were not idle; both were actively engaged in charitable work and busy also, of course, in the whirl of Chicago social life. Both girls were gifted pianists and often played duets together—no doubt at times for Swamiji himself.

This description could fit almost any young woman of an upper-class family of the late Victorian period. Charming, compliant, accomplished; she even had some pretensions to knowing French. But what

was Mary Hale really? She must have been more than merely a gracious young woman to have commanded Swamiji's attention. And her surprising move in later life suggests that there was more to her than mere model turn-of-the-century dutiful daughter.

Three sources exist today from which to extract an estimate of Mary Hale's character: references in Swamiji's letters to her, remarks about her in Nivedita's letters to Miss MacLeod, and a few lines in three extant letters from Miss MacLeod to Alberta Sandwich, nee Sturges.

First a rapid review of what Swamiji wrote to Mary Hale concerning herself.

Writing to the Hale Sisters ('Dear Babies') on 26 July, 1894, Swamiji used the expression 'dear old maids'. Although the letter was composed in a joking style, a letter full of fun, 'old maid' was an appellation which they could not have found attractive. None of the four was married, and already Mary was, as the expression goes, pushing thirty.

The object of life for a young woman of a wealthy family at that period was surely not to follow a profession. It was marriage—and a good marriage—which meant a union with a millionaire or with a man having prospects of becoming wealthy, so as to maintain or if possible extend one's position in society. Such was the hope, destiny, and indeed sole career of the daughter of a family like the Hales.

An effort to help Mary get out and meet new people was apparently put into effect, since on November 18, 1894, a letter from Swamiji to Mrs. Hale conveyed the news that Mary was in the eastern United States staying with some fox hunting squires and was quite happy: 'Sister Mary has improved a great deal from what I saw her last . . . I hope she will marry one of those fellows with long pockets'.

A few months later, taking up again the theme of Mary's marriage prospects,

Swamiji suggested in a playful letter that she should investigate what was available in the way of impoverished foreign aristocrats (22 June, 1895):

Here near my lodgings is the Waldorf Hotel, the rendezvous of lots of titled but penniless Europeans on show for 'Yankee' heiresses to buy. You may have any selection here, the stock is so full and varied. There is the man who talks no English; there are others who can lisp a few words which no one can understand; and others are there who talk nice English, but their chance is not so great as that of the dumb ones—the girls do not think them enough foreign who talk plain English fluently.

On 6 January, 1896, Swamiji again touched on the subject. Mary was now thirty and was apparently visiting friends on the east coast of America, perhaps in a renewed attempt to make new contacts. On this occasion she made the acquaintance of Mrs. Sara Bull. Swamiji, then in England, commented: "I also found at once the differences in culture and breeding between the two countries and came to understand why American girls go in shoals to be married to Europeans."

In twice referring to a possible transatlantic marriage, Swamiji was being something of a prophet. He was also observing a social phenomenon of the time—the interest of the newly well-to-do Americans in old-world 'culture'. The Americans had wealth but felt that they lacked polish, which they sought by making frequent trips to Europe. For example, Swamiji encountered Mr. and Mrs. Hale, there as tourists, when he passed through Florence, Italy, in December, 1896, on his return to India. (He stayed on that occasion at the Hotel Minerva, adjacent to the famous Santa Maria Novella church. The Minerva, its interior now elegantly modernized but the classical exterior facade unchanged, is one of the renowned hotels of Florence to this day.) At home the wealthy Americans of

this period often built new mansions fashioned on European models, bringing home old-world art treasures with which to furnish them. They also united their wealth to European titles. The eminent American novelist of this period, Henry James—brother of William James, the Harvard psychologist, who knew and admired Swamiji—wrote several novels about the clash of American naivete and European sophistication. A transatlantic marriage was to take place not only for Mary Hale. In 1905 Alberta Sturges, Mrs. Betty Leggett's daughter by her first marriage, married George Montagu and eventually became the Countess of Sandwich when her husband succeeded to the title. And Frances Leggett, the only child of Francis and Betty Leggett, in 1916 married David Margesson, nephew of the 7th Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Swamiji's concern was again expressed on 30 May, 1896: 'Four old maids are enough to drive any mother to a convent.' But he added farther on in the same letter what he really felt: 'I am glad you do not marry.'

On returning to England from his trip to the Continent in 1896, Swamiji seriously addressed himself to Mary's situation. Harriet, more than six years Mary's junior, had found a suitable young man in the person of Clarence Woolley and was soon to marry. It was generally accepted in Victorian times that a younger daughter delayed marrying until the older sister had been suitably settled in a home of her own. But Harriet saw her chance and took it. This situation must surely have caused Mary a certain embarrassment. Swamiji's September 17, 1896, letter to Mary is an astute analysis of Mary's 'problem':

...You, Mary, are like a mettlesome Arab—grand, splendid. You will make a splendid queen, physically, mentally. You will shine alongside of a dashing, bold, adventurous husband; but, my dear Sister, you will make one of the worst wives. You will take the life

out of our easy-going, practical, plodding husbands of the everyday world.

Swamiji's message to Mary was that she must either lower her ideal, be practical, marry, and be happy in a worldly sense, or 'take up one idea, clear the deck, and to it dedicate the life ... either enjoy this life or give up and be a Yogi'. He went on: 'Now or never, select quick ... take up anything, philosophy or science or religion or literature, and let that be your God for the rest of your life. Achieve happiness or achieve greatness ... you are neither for this nor for that ... Eating, drinking, dressing, and society nonsense are not things to throw a life upon—especially you, Mary. You are rusting away a splendid brain and abilities ...'

Two years later Swamiji returned to the same theme in a letter to Mary dated 2 March, 1898: 'You are all so kind, the whole family, to me. I must have belonged to you in the past, as the Hindus say. My only regret is that the millionaires do not materialize ...' And again that same year, on August 28: 'How are you ladies, young and old? Going on with the old game with new zest now that one (Harriet) has fallen off the ranks?' Later Swamiji was to meet Harriet's new husband, for he wrote on 6 December, 1899: 'Harriet has scored a triumph really—I am charmed with Mr. Woolley; only hope Mary will be equally fortunate.'

Earlier in 1899 (16 March) he wrote to Mary from India in a lighthearted vein, chiding her for not writing oftener, accusing her of 'out of sight out of mind'. (There are other occasions on which he upbraided Mary for not being as ardent a correspondent as he was—further evidence of his great concern for her.) In the 16th March, 1899, letter he went on to say that he had heard she was on the verge of 'hooking a Willie' and ends in a postscript: 'Write when you find time between dances'.

Swamiji in September, 1899, from Ridgely Manor :

By the by, Mary, it is curious your family, Mother Church and her clergy, both monastic (Mary and the two unmarried McKindley sisters) and secular (Harriet, now married) have made more impression on me than any family I know of...What do you intend to do the rest of your life? Have you thought of any work?

No doubt highly aware of her uncomfortable situation, Mary must have thought Swamiji brutal when he remarked in his Christmas and New Year's letter to her from Los Angeles, dated 27 December, 1899: 'You could not get a millionaire. Why don't you start (settle) for half or one-fourth million? Something is better than nothing.'

Two months later, on 8 February, 1900, Mr. George W. Hale died. With Harriet married, her mother a widow, her brother Samuel seemingly of an irresponsible disposition, and Mary herself nearly thirty-five years old, Mary must have felt her situation to be difficult indeed. An unmarried daughter trying to manage family affairs which until then had been the responsibility of her father, and devoting her future to the care of an aging mother—that was the prospect. Swamiji expressed his comprehension (20 February, 1900): 'Just now I am afraid life begins for you, Mary, in earnest... You have had shelter all your life.'

*

In the autumn of 1899 and the early months of 1900 Sister Nivedita was in Chicago and the Chicago region. She was giving lectures on India in order to raise money for the women's educational work she hoped to organize there. She grew to know Mary Hale quite well. We learn a good deal about the relation of these two associates of Swamiji and something of Mary Hale's character from Nivedita's

letters of this period, written to Mrs. Sara Bull and Miss MacLeod.

Mary Hale met Nivedita in November and was soon to sponsor her as a speaker at the Friday Club and other social groups of which she was a member. But she urged the Irish visitor not to wear her self-designed nun's habit, which identified her too visibly with a foreign religion, but to follow the usual women's fashions of the time. Nivedita replied that Swamiji approved her dressing thus in order to proclaim her role as renunciate and brahmacharini. 'Miss Hale,' wrote Nivedita to Miss MacLeod on November 16, 'urged that Swamiji could make mistakes, that she had often advised and helped *him*. I said that was her relationship and privilege to be part of his life in that way—but I was only a disciple—and to me Swamiji made no mistakes. She was sweet afterwards...' In the same letter: 'I wish I could give you some idea of how much I feel the depth of Mary Hale. She is so silent and strong.'

Within two weeks of their meeting Nivedita was addressing her new friend as 'My sweet Aunt Mary'. We may ask ourselves whether M. H., as Nivedita often referred to her in her letters to Miss MacLeod, appreciated being addressed in this fashion. She was only two years Nivedita's senior.

By December 4 Nivedita was reflecting on M. H.'s character and contrasting it to her own: 'I was right about M. H. It is her power of suffering that is so grand in her. But she doesn't know it herself. She indulges in platitudes of X'tn (Christian) Science—talks of God as "a principle"—and says we are "at the antipodes".'

Nivedita continues her meditations on how opposite she and M. H. are farther on in the same letter:

She is so bent on helping me—I do wish the King (Vivekananda) could realize that there are two kinds of women—the passive, suffering, like Sri Sarada Devi, like (I think I am right)

the Blessed Virgin, like Mary Hale. It is not fair to judge these by the same standard as the active, more hair-brained, brighter women (like herself). The two types give strength to each other—and these (the passive types) are the great foothold and anchorage of the world. But they are not the adventurers. I sometime *suspect* (but I may be wrong) that he demands the other standard from her—and adds thereby to the burden that one can see is heavy. Though why it should be, of course, one cannot judge.

Nivedita's intuition was correct. Swamiji had already urged Mary to become creatively active and was to so urge her again.

A few days later—December 10, 1899:

M.H. and I spent the night at Miss M's. We slept in one room, and I lay on her bed till nearly 3 arguing—and talking. She is dear, so loving—but her attitude to Swami, or rather her conception of him is still a mystery to me. She says my "hero worship" irritates her...

In the same letter Nivedita continued:

Dear M. H. has *no* independence of movement. She is living with her parents still—under orders. Consequently when I want her to do anything I have to implore her many times—not entirely because she is not free—largely because she is utterly undeveloped in free activity and working for a cause. She is one of the women who sit at home and ponder.

On December 26 Nivedita confided to Mrs. Sara Bull, 'Mary ... has a heart that knows everything while she lives in an intellectual atmosphere that is always imposing smaller considerations on it—and so her feeling struggles with her thought like a bird in a net...'

Next follows a letter from Nivedita to Mary thanking her effusively for having given her five different Christmas presents.

On January 9, 1900, Nivedita wrote to Miss MacLeod: 'It seems to me that I have received the last and worst blow of all. One of Swami's earliest friends has been in to say that she and her family would rather

not be identified with my work. They wanted to help but find themselves out of sympathy.'

A day or so later—the letter is dated, or rather surely misdated, "Xmas, 1899" as printed on pages 278 and 279 of *Letters of Sister Nivedita*—Nivedita wrote a long letter to 'My dear Aunt Mary' expressing her reaction to Mary's wish to dissociate herself from Nivedita's campaign. From what we may gather, there had been an argument over how Swamiji wished his work to be carried on in the West—or at least in Chicago. Nivedita was aggressively trying to build up an American women's organization which would contribute money regularly for her projected female educational work in India and was involving the Hales more than they wished. (Swamiji himself seems to have had little faith in Nivedita's scheme but let her carry on with it because she was so convinced of the merits of her plan.) The heart of the dispute was, of course, Swamiji and the very different estimates each woman had of him. Nivedita quoted Mary as having said, 'I know Swami quite as well as you do', and she, Nivedita, had replied, perhaps not quite candidly, '...you know him far better ... there is no comparison between your place in his heart and mine.' Then she went on: '...Swami is the whole personal interest of my life—in this relation of Father... I would sacrifice all for a word of his but to him I am nothing personally ... you are his sisters—I am only a disciple. The whole relationship between you is of equality—mine of inferiority.'

To Mary Hale, Nivedita must have seemed a brash interloper disturbing the cosy family relationship the Hales had long established with the Swami. There must have seemed something not quite ladylike about the emancipated Irishwoman. Nivedita was a new experience for Mary; and her relationship with Swamiji was so different from Mary's that it would not have been sur-

prising had M. H. not resented her. And for her part, Nivedita may well have suffered from a few pangs of jealousy.

January 26, 1900 :

I lunched at the Hale's yesterday, and found myself just as glad to see Mary as though there had been no blow. The fact is, nothing could have been so bad for us as her holding office. She is incapable of action...She has not yet collected one dollar of all that were promised months ago!...Of course...I knew that M. was not a strong worker, but I had not conceived of such incapacity.

Mr. Hale died a few days later, on 8 February. Nivedita wrote Mary a very sweet note of condolence.

Nivedita, in a letter to Miss MacLeod dated 'Easter, April 15, 1900', indulged in a bit of humour at Mary's expense. She

reported some straightfaced teasing she had done, meant to jar Mary's high-minded complacency :

I can't resist teasing Mary.

I: I went to Church 5 hours yesterday, Mary—and then to the Jewish Passover in the evening. That was a good dose of idolatry. Wasn't it?

M: Hm!

I: Yes the Elm St. Church is so interesting, because they revive such an extraordinary number of old ceremonies.

M: I think the world moves—myself!—etc., etc., etc.

Nivedita wrote Miss MacLeod on May 6: 'Every time I see Mary our relations grow a little more artificial.'

To be concluded)

MEDITATION TECHNIQUES IN JAINISM*

SWAMI BRAHMESHANANDA

If one happens to visit a Jain temple one will find images showing Tīrthānkaras in meditation either in the sitting or in the standing posture. Indeed, meditation is so integrally connected with Jainism that it has figured in its art and literature, in fact, in every sphere of its life and culture. Truly it has been said, 'What the head is to the body and the root

to the tree, meditation is to religion.'¹ Just as the head is the centre of consciousness in the human body, so also the centre of vitality in all religions is meditation without which they become lifeless. Nevertheless, in Jainism, with the lapse of centuries meditation got subordinated in importance to other religious practices, so much so that not only non-Jainas, but most of the followers of Jainism themselves have hardly any idea of meditation techniques in Jainism. The fact however remains that Jainism lays the greatest

* The author wishes to express his gratefulness to Muni Nathmalji for permitting him to make use of the material in his various books, on which the historical survey of meditation described in the present article is mainly based.

He is equally grateful to Dr. Sagarmal Jaina, the director of the Parsvanath Jain Research Institute, Varanasi, for guiding and scrutinizing the present work.

1. सीसं जहा सरीरस्स जहा मूलं दुमस्स य ।

सव्वस साधुधम्मस तहा ज्ञाणं विधीयते ॥

Arhat Dagbhali in *Isibhasiyaim*, edited by W. Schubring. L. D. Institute publication, Ahmedabad.

stress on meditation. According to Jaina ethics, *saṁvara* or prevention of the accumulation of new karmas, and *nirjarā* or the washing away of the already accumulated karmas, are the two means of attaining liberation or *mokṣa*. Nirjarā is accomplished through two sets of six external and six internal austerities, *tapas*. Of the six more important internal *tapas*, *dhyāna* or meditation is the foremost. Thus meditation is considered the principal means of liberation.²

What are the original meditation techniques in Jainism? How did Tīrthāṅkara Mahavir meditate? Why has meditation almost disappeared in a religion where it was given so great an importance? What is the form of meditation practised by Jains in modern times? To answer these questions we must briefly review the history of meditation in Jainism.

Historical survey of meditation in Jainism

The history of meditation can be traced from Lord Mahavir onwards. Lord Mahavir spent most of his twelve years of *sādhana* in meditation which often lasted for days, or even for months together. The monks of Mahavir's time were eulogized as *dhyāna-Koṣthopagatah*, 'One who has entered the chamber of meditation'. A four-fold meditation technique was in vogue then, consisting of the following:

1. *Kāyotsarga*—Reducing bodily activities, giving up attachment to the body and

2. (a) संवरविणिज्जराओ मोक्खस्स पहो तवो
पहो तसि ।

ज्ञानं च पहाण्यं तवस्स तो मोक्खहेऊयं ॥

Jinabhadra Kṣama Sramana, *Dhyāna Śataka*, Vinaya Sundarcaran Grantamala, Jamnagar, V. S. 1997.

(b) तद्ध्ययानं निर्जराहेतुः सवरस्य च कारणम् ।

Siddhasena Gani, *Tattvānusāsana*, Part ii, (Surat: Jivanacanda Sakarcanda Jhaveri. 1930) 56.

realizing its separateness from consciousness : these processes are collectively called *kāyotsarga*. We identify ourselves with the body and consider it a conscious entity. Scriptures, however, declare that the physical body is inert and consciousness is different from it. Actually to experience this difference is the aim of *kāyotsarga*. This technique is also called *bheda vijñāna*.

2. *Bhāvanā*. Contemplation of the meaning, importance and significance of the Jaina triratna, namely, right faith, right knowledge and right conduct (*darśana*, *jñāna*, and *caritra*); and of dispassion (*vairāgyam*) is called *bhāvanā*.³ This can be compared to *manana* of Vedanta.

3. *Vipaśyanā*. According to Muni Nathmal, an authority on Jainism, this was the original meditation technique practised and preached by Lord Mahavir. It means to be aware of one's own self. Lord Mahavir taught, 'See the self by the Self',⁴ that is to say, observe the gross body by consciousness. We should begin by becoming aware of the gross and proceed towards the subtle.⁵ As we try to be aware of the sensations and activities of the gross body, our awareness expands and we are able to observe innumerable minute activities and events happening in and around us which we were unaware of earlier. The next step is to

3. पुव्वकयब्भासो भावणाहि ज्ञाप्सस जोग्गयमुवेह ।
ताओ य नाण-दंसण-चरित्त-वेरग्गनियताओ ।

Dhyāna Śataka, 30

4. संपिक्खए अप्पगमप्पएणं ।

Quoted by Yugacarya Mahāprājña, in *Jaina Yoga* (Hindi) (Churu, Rajasthan: Adarsa Sāhitya Sangha Prakāśana). p. 187

5. अलक्ष्यं लक्ष्यसंबन्धात् स्थूलात् सूक्ष्मं

विचिन्तयेत् ।

सालम्बाच्च निरालम्बं तत्त्ववित्तत्वमञ्जसा ॥

Acarya Śubhacandra, *Jñānārṇava*, edited by Pundit Balcandra Sastri. (Solapur: Jaina Sanskriti Sangha. 1977) Pp. 33, 4

observe the subtle body, that is, to observe the constantly arising thought-waves; desires, passions and their subtle motives; the sub-conscious impressions as they appear on the surface of the conscious mind, etc. Finally the pure consciousness beyond these is reached.

4. *Vicaya*. This will be described in detail later in this article.

During Lord Mahavir's time thousands of monks practised meditation in seclusion, in caves and forests, and a large number of them achieved the highest spiritual attainments described in Jaina scriptures, namely, the three types of direct knowledge: *avadhi-jñāna* or the knowledge of objects which are too distant or minute to be known by the senses; *manah-paryaya-jñāna* or the knowledge of the past and present thoughts of others; and *kevala-jñāna* or omniscience. These meditative practices and the presence of so many perfected monks lasted up to the earlier half of the second century after Mahavir's death⁶ (C. 400 B.C.). In the latter half of the second century (C. 300 B.C.) major changes took place.

A twelve-year long famine in Magadha (Bihar) and its adjacent areas claimed the lives of thousands of monks who gave up the body by voluntary fasting. This created an irreparable loss to Jainism and posed a serious problem for the monastic order. Since the vitality of a religious order depends to a large extent upon the unimpeded flow of scriptural knowledge from one generation to another, it became necessary to learn the esoteric traditions and the deeper meaning of the scriptural texts from those few surviving monks who knew them. Emphasis therefore shifted from meditation to Svādhyāya,⁷ scriptural studies. Various

rules were framed to the effect, and monks were enjoined to spend twelve hours a day in studies. Thus the predominantly meditative and mystical monasticism gradually became scholastic and intellectual.

Another reason for this shift was the onset of what may be called the 'philosophical age'. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools of philosophy were established around the 1st century B.C. During the reign of Emperor Ashoka, Buddhism gained ascendancy. These systems of thought and the already existing Vedic Schools started vying with one another for supremacy, and Jainism was drawn into the stream of religious polemics. Debates and discussions ensued in which attacks and counter-attacks were made. All this necessitated the monks' learning the art of debate, logic and rhetoric. Introspective and contemplative monks averse to social activity were forced to bear social responsibility and to engage in the propagation of the tenets of Jainism. Thus started a line of Ācāryas who fortified monastic order. Events of this period indicate that monks acquired psychic powers and used them to influence kings and rulers so that they may support the order.

Although there was thus a shift of emphasis toward *loka-saṅgraha* or social welfare, there was also born during this period spiritual men who continued to lay stress on meditation and emphasized the fact that religion could not be preserved merely by victories in debates or by miracles and occultism or by the patronage of kings. They showed that character was more important than conduct and prescribed greater austerities. Ācārya Kundakunda and Pūjyapāda wrote several valuable books in which the original meditation techniques were described in an unadulterated form. Jinabhadra Suri composed the famous treatise on meditation entitled '*Dhyāna Śataka*'.

Up to Ācārya Kundakunda (1st Century

6. Mahavir died approximately 500 years before Christ.

7. Svādhyāya, like dhyana is one of the six internal austerities and is an important aid to meditation, bereft of the latter, it soon gets reduced to mere book learning.

A.D.) meditation techniques essentially remained unaltered, but adepts were lacking and it came to be believed that the higher spiritual realizations and the acquisition of the three types of direct knowledge was no more possible. Excerpts in meditation hold that for higher and subtler stage of meditation the build of the body, especially of the nervous, skeletal and respiratory systems, must be strong so as to be able to withstand the impact of spiritual experience. As centuries rolled by, the physical frame of people in general became smaller and weaker, and it was held that *śukla dhyāna*, the higher form of meditation, could no longer be practised. This may or may not be true but statements made by Acharyas to this effect had a discouraging influence upon those who otherwise would have at least attempted meditation seriously.

In the 8th Century A.D. Haribhadra Suri, a great scholar and yogi, incorporated the then popular yoga system of Patañjali into Jainism. This was the first point of modification introduced in the original methods of meditation. He further taught that everything done by a monk with a spiritual end in view and without attachment should be considered yoga. While this may be true, it decidedly undermined the importance of meditation and dampened the urge to dive deep into meditation. In the widening of the concept of yoga, depth of meditation was lost.

During the next phase of development, Jainism was influenced by Tantras and Hatha Yoga. This was the period when major changes occurred in Jaina meditative practices. In early Jaina literature there are no instructions about japa. But after Haribhadra Suri such procedures as '*navakār mahākalpa*', and '*padmāvati kalpa*', relating to japa were introduced. Although, mantras had been used earlier for material gain and psychic powers, now their efficacy and use for spiritual gain was also

recognized. From Hatha Yoga Jainism took *prāṇāyāma*. Meditation upon *cakras* and lotuses, the technique of a *piṇḍastha dhyāna* and its *dhāraṇās* and mantras with *bīja* were probably taken from tantras.

Although the seed of devotion in the form of faith in the deva, guru and scripture was present in Jainism from the very beginning, it was influenced by the Bhakti schools of Hinduism including Śaivism. Muni Anandaghana though a yogi, used to worship Tīrthānkara as Beloved and has composed many devotional hymns. In one of the Jaina sects elaborate ritualistic worship of Tīrthānkara as a new born babe is popular.

Definitions and classification of dhyāna

Jaina scholars have given various definitions of *dhyāna*. According to Umāsvāti, restraining the attention of mind on some one object is *dhyāna*.⁸ In Jainism *nirodha* not only means restraint of the mind but also includes control of speech and bodily activities. Accordingly, *dhyāna* is of three types: *kāyika*, *vācika* and *mānasika* or of the body, of the speech and of the mind. According to Jinabhadra Suri, 'The stationary state of mind is *dhyāna* while its moving state is *citta*'.⁹ Acharya Rāmasena extends the definition of *dhyāna* to include other states of mind as well. According to him *dhyāna* is not only the control of thought waves and

8. (a) उत्तमसंहननस्यैकाग्रचित्तानिरोधो ध्यानम् ।

Umāsvāti V. *Tattvārtha Sūtra*, with commentary by Sukhlal Sanghvi, and English translation by K. K. Dixit. (Ahmedabad: L. D. Institute of Indology. 1974) Pp. 9,27

(b) चित्तसेगगया हवइ ज्ञाणं ।

Haribhadra, *Avasyakaniryukti*. (Bombay Agomodaya Samiti.)

9. जं थिरमज्जवसाणं तं ज्ञाणं जं चलं तयं चित्तं ।

Dhyāna Sataka. 2

thinking of a single object, but the state of self-awareness without thoughts also is dhyāna.¹⁰

Lord Mahavir preached, 'See the self by the Self'. On the basis of this scriptural injunction some scholars state that dhyāna means awareness which in Jainism is called *passanā* and is the same as *Vipaśyanā* of Buddhism.

A third meaning of dhyāna is experiencing a moment free from attachment and aversion.¹¹ Acharya Hemchandra states that as long as there is the slightest effort of will to do something there cannot be total dissolution of mind, *laya*. So, relaxing the body and without attempting to control the senses or the mind one must try to experience that moment when there is no attachment or aversion, there are no likes and dislikes.¹² In other words to try just 'to be' is dhyāna.

Derived from the Sanskrit root 'dhyai' to think,¹³ dhyāna etymologically means all forms of concentrated thinking, and it is in this sense that dhyāna is considered an austerity in Jainism. This thinking can be of four types: *ārta*, *raudra*, *dharma* and *śukla*, which may be translated as, sorrowful, violent, virtuous and pure respectively. Of these four types of thinking, the first two are not dhyāna in the sense of meditation but are moods or preoccupations of mind in undesirable thinking which leads to further

bondage. They must therefore be carefully avoided.¹⁴

Constant reflection on how to get rid of an unfavourable thing (*aniṣṭayoga*), how to possess a desirable thing which has gone out of possession (*iṣṭaviyoga*), worry about ailment (*rogacintā*) and hankering after enjoyment (*nidāna*), these are the four types of *ārta-dhyāna*. A constant reflection related to violence, untruthfulness, theft and the protection of an acquisition, are the four types of *raudra-dhyāna*.

Dharma dhyāna:

The third type of thinking called virtuous concentration is the first step towards salvation and every pious Jain is enjoined to practise it. It is of four types:¹⁵

1. *Ājñā Vicaya:* What is the commandment, *ājñā* of an omniscient personage and of one devoid of passion? What sort of commandment it ought to be? To apply one's mind to an investigation of this kind and thus lay bare the commandment in question is called *dharma dhyāna* devoted to a consideration of *ājñā* or commandment.

2. *Apāya Vicaya:* To apply one's mind to a consideration of the nature of defilement like greed, anger, lust etc. and the means of getting rid of them is called *dharma dhyāna* devoted to a consideration of *apāya* or disaster.

3. *Vipāka Vicaya:* What consequences that are being experienced are due to what karmas and what karmas that are accumulated are to yield what consequences? To apply one's mind to a consideration of such questions is called *dharma dhyāna* devoted to *vipāka* or consequence of a karma.

10. अभावो वा निरोधः स्यात् स च चिन्तान्तरा-

व्ययः ।

एकचिन्तात्मको यद्वा स्वसंविच्चन्तयोज्जिता ॥

Remsencarya, quoted by Muni Nathmal in *Mahāvīr kī Sādhanā kā Rahasya* (Hindi). (Churu, Rajasthan: Adarsa Sāhitya Sangha Prakāsana). p. 169

11. दुहओ छेता नियाइ । Acarang Sutra, 8,40

12. Hemacandrācārya, *Yoga Sastra*, edited by G. C. Patel (Ahmedabad: Jaina Sahitya Prakasana Samiti. 1938). Pp. 12, 22-25

13. ध्यै चिन्तायाम् ।

14. आर्तरोद्रं च दुर्घ्यानं वर्जनीयमिदं सदा ।

धर्मं शुक्लं च सद्ध्यानमुपादेयं मुमुक्षुभिः ॥

Tattvānusāsana, 34

15. Adopted from the English translation of *Tattvārtha Sūtra*.

4. *Samsthāna Vicaya*: To apply one's mind to a consideration of the nature of the universe; this is called dharma dhyāna devoted to a consideration of samsthāna or structure (of the universe). This fourth type of dharma dhyāna called samsthāna vicaya has been further classified into four sub-types called piṇḍastha, padastha, rūpastha and rūpātīta by Hemchandra.¹⁶

(i) *Piṇḍastha dhyāna*: (Piṇḍa = a body, corporeal frame). Meditation upon the Inner Self, the Atman, residing within the human body with the help of imagery involving gross elements, earth, fire, air and water, is called piṇḍastha dhyāna.

It contains of five steps called dhāraṇās¹⁷ to be practised one after the other so that a mind unaccustomed to thinking of subtle objects may be gradually trained, step by step to think from gross to subtle and still subtler objects till it is able to meditate upon the pure nature of the Atman.

(a) *Pārthivī dhāraṇā* (*pārthivī* = pertaining to earth). Imagine a calm waveless ocean of milk in which there is a thousand-petalled golden lotus of the diameter of a hundred thousand yojans. Imagine a yellow coloured central stalk as high as mount Sumeru over which a crystal-white throne is placed. The meditator should think that he, like a great yogi, is seated on the throne and is meditating.

(b) *Āgneyī dhāraṇā* (*āgneyī* = related to fire). Next, the meditator imagines that in the region of his navel there is a sixteen-petalled white lotus facing upward. The sixteen vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet are written one on each petal, while in the

centre the *bīja* mantra *hrīm* is inscribed. Atop the navel-lotus there is another black coloured eight-petalled lotus facing downwards, in the region of the heart. The eight black petals represent the eight karmas which are to be eliminated. The next step is to imagine that first smoke, and then sparks of fire and finally flames are arising from the *bīja hrīm*, which starts burning the upper lotus. Flames then advance towards the head where they bifurcate and descend from sides and reunite below to form an inverted triangle of smokeless fire with the letter *ra* written all over it. Finally the fire returns from where it had originated and subsides after burning the karmas and consuming the body of the meditator.

(c) *Vāyavi* or *māruṭī dhāraṇā* (*vāyavi*, *māruṭī* = related to air). Now the meditator thinks that a strong wind is blowing which carries away with it all the ashes left over after the burning of karmas. The wind then subsides and the effulgent Atman of the meditator starts shining free from the defilement of karma.

(d) *Vāruṇī dhāraṇā* (*vāruṇī* = pertaining to water). Now the aspirant imagines the sky overcast with dark dense clouds which start pouring water which washes away the last bit of ashes sticking to the Atman. Now the Atman shines forth completely purified of the least trace of karmas.

(e) *Tattvavati dhāraṇā*: This consists in thinking of the pure, formless, taintless, blissful Atman shining like a full moon free from the bonds of karma, of the body and mind. The meditator thinks that all the marks of a siddha or perfected soul have appeared in him and that he has transcended disease, old age and death and has attained eternal peace.

Each dhāraṇā must be practised over and over again and the aspirant must move on to the next one only when the earlier one has been mastered. This technique

16. पिण्डस्थं पदस्थं च रूपस्थं रूपवर्जितम् ।

चतुर्धा ध्येयमात्मानं ध्यानस्यालम्बनं बुधैः ॥

Yoga Śāstra, 7,8

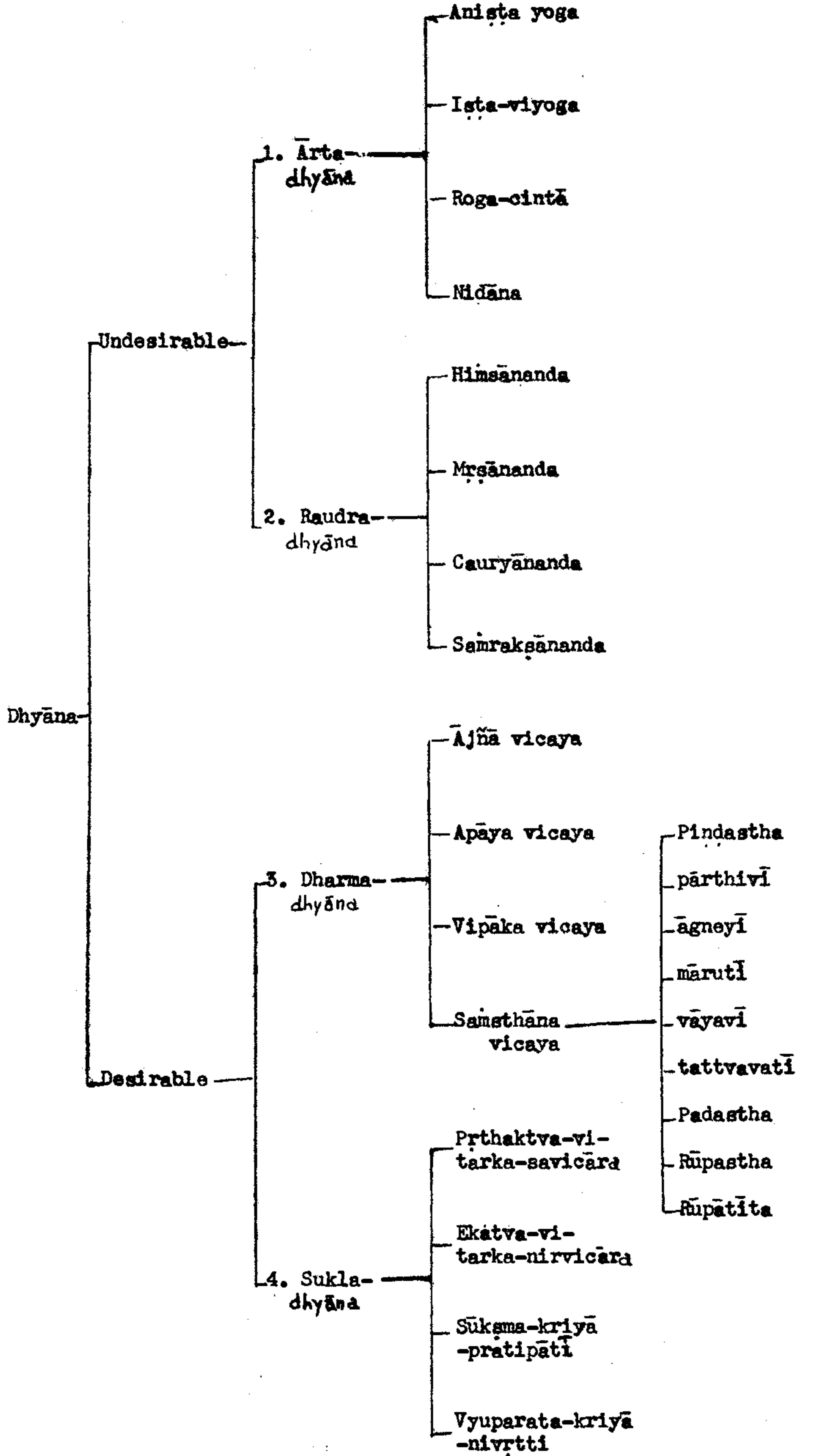
17. (a) पार्थिवी स्यादथाग्नेयी मारुती वारुणी तथा ।

तत्त्वभूः पंचमी चेति पिण्डस्थे पंचधारणा ॥

Yoga Śāstra, 7,9

(b) *Jñānārṇava*, 34,3

Classifi-
cation of
Meditation
Techniques
in Jainism



enables one to practise the higher form of meditation called *Śukla dhyāna*.

(ii) *Padastha dhyāna*¹⁸ : Meditation done with the help of a sacred word formula, a *pada*, is called *padastha dhyāna*. Every letter of the Sanskrit alphabet is considered a mantra of great potency and when meditated upon according to prescribed rules, leads to great good here and hereafter. There are a number of ways in which this meditation can be done; two of these are described below as illustrations.

(a) Imagine a sixteen-petalled lotus at the navel, a twenty-four-petalled lotus at the heart and an eight-petalled lotus in the head. The sixteen vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet are inscribed on the sixteen petals of the lotus at the navel, and the consonants on the petals of the other lotuses. Begin with the meditation of the lower lotus and proceed upwards.

(b) Imagine a lotus in the heart, the five petals of which are respectively of white, red, yellow, green and black colours. The five parts of the most sacred Jaina mantra, the *navakār mantra*, are written on the petals, starting from '*namo arihantāṇam*' on the white petal. The aspirant concentrates on these lotus-petals and the mantras written on them.

(iii) *Rūpastha dhyāna*:¹⁹ (*rūpa* = form, figure). Meditation based upon the visual pictures of Tīrthāṅkara and incidents from his life is called *rūpastha dhyāna*. Imagine, for example, the divine auditorium called *Samavasaraṇa*, in the centre of which Lord Mahavir is seated on a jewelled throne with three umbrellas (*chatra*) over his head and attendants waving *cāmara*; Gods and

goddesses, men, women and animals are peacefully seated in their assigned places forsaking all envy and hatred, and are listening to the soul-enthraling discourses of the Lord. The meditator should think that he is one among the audience sharing the bliss of the divine presence.

In a similar manner other scenes from the life of Lord Mahavir, his austerities, his wanderings, his *bhikṣā* etc. can be meditated upon. The meditator can even imagine that he is the Tīrthāṅkara, the Jina himself. This is considered a very effective method because it amounts to meditation on one's own pure consciousness free from the blemishes of karma and evil tendencies like attachment, aversion, lust and greed.

(iv) *Rūpātīta dhyāna*:²⁰ or formless meditation which consists in meditation upon the pure formless blissful consciousness, the real nature of the Atman.

Śukla dhyāna :

The various types of meditation described so far prepare the meditator for the most important stage in the Jaina path of perfection when he is able to practise *śukla dhyāna* or pure meditation. Intense stillness and concentration of mind achieved with the help of scriptural texts is called *śukla dhyāna*.²¹ Like other types of *dhyāna*, *śukla dhyāna* too is divided into four subtypes. The first two subtypes called *prthaktva-vitarka-savicār* and *ekatva-vitarka-nirvicār* are practised by those who have not yet attained omniscience while the last two types called *sūkṣma-kriyā-pratipātī* and *vyuparata-kriyā-*

20. चिदानन्दमयं शुद्धममूर्तं ज्ञानविग्रहम् ।

स्मरेद् यत्रात्मनात्मानं तद् रूपातीतमिष्यते ॥

Jñānārṇava, 37,16

18. पदान्यालम्ब्य पुण्यानि योगिभिर्यद् विधीयते ।

तत् पदस्थं मतं ध्यानं विचित्रनयपारगैः ॥

Jñānārṇava, 35,1

19. अहंतो रूपमालम्ब्य ध्यानं रूपस्थमुच्यते ।

Yoga Sāstra 9,7

21. *Samavāyāṅga*, edited by Muni Kanaiyalal. (Delhi: Agama Anuyoga Prakasana, 1966) 4. Only the first two subtypes of *sukla dhyāna* are based on scriptural texts as shall be seen in the course of the narrative.

nivṛtti (or *samucchinna-kriyā-nivṛtti*) are possible only for one who has ascended the highest ladder of perfection and has become omniscient or *kevalajñānī*.

Vitarka means śruti or a scriptural text.²² In the first type of meditation the meditator takes up for consideration any one of the *tattvas* or substances like atom, soul etc., described in the scriptures and meditates on its various (*prthaktva*) modes like permanence, destructibility, tangibility, intangibility etc. from various viewpoints. Again in this thinking there is a transition from one meaning to another, from one word to another, from the meaning to the word, from the word to the meaning, and also from one type of yoga²³ to another. Therefore this meditation is called *prthaktva-vitarka-savicār* i.e. meditation on various modes of a single substance based upon scriptural texts and accompanied by conceptual thinking of word, meaning and yoga.

In the second type of meditation, the meditator takes up for consideration only one mode of any object and undertakes reflection dominated by oneness (*ekatva*). Moreover there is no change in the form or transition from the word to the meaning or vice versa. Hence it is called *ekatva-vitarka-nirvicār*. Just as by means of a magical chant the poison of a snake circulating throughout the body is concentrated on the bitten spot, so also by this meditation the wandering mind is made steady on one subject. Ultimately the mind becomes absolutely calm; its fickleness is done away with and it no more wavers, with the result that all impurities concealing knowledge are

washed away and omniscience makes its appearance.

In the third type of meditation subtle bodily activity persists that is why it is called *sūkṣma-kriyā-pratipātī dhyāna*. In the last type called *vyuparata-kriyā-nivṛtti dhyāna*, there is no activity whatsoever, gross or subtle, of body, mind and speech. Through the instrumentality of the fourth subtype of dhyāna all *āsrava* or inflow of karmas and *bandha* or bondage cease altogether; all karma is annihilated and *mokṣa* is attained. In the third and fourth subtypes of *śukla dhyāna* no scriptural knowledge is made use of. Hence these two are called *anālambana* or 'devoid of prop'.

Concluding remarks :

This is a brief review of the meditation techniques as found described in the vast literature on the subject. (The reader is requested to refer to the chart which shows the inter-relationship of the different types of Jaina meditation). Apart from these, there are other methods also for the concentration of mind. In modern times the practice of Japa has become the most popular spiritual exercise with the devout Jainas. The *navakār mantra*, in its complete form with nine *padas*, or its abridged modification is repeated keeping count on the fingers or with the help of rosary.

The subject of meditation is intimately connected with the Jaina concept of the ladder of spiritual ascent or the '*guṇa-sthānas*'. The books on the subject also describe the qualifications required and the special virtues to be practised for the attainment of success in the various types of meditation. Each subtype described above has its own specific psychological effect, when practised systematically. All these, though of great importance and interest, cannot be described in this brief outline, which is meant only to give a general idea and to stimulate further interest in the subject.

22. *Tattvārtha Sūtra*, 9,45

23. The word 'Yoga' commonly means either restraint of the mind or 'union'. In Jaina terminology, however, it means activity or *Pravṛtti*. The activities of body, mind and speech are collectively called *tri-yoga*.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

BUDDHIYOGA OF THE GITA AND OTHER ESSAYS: BY ANIRVAN. Published by Biblia Impex Pvt. Ltd. 2/18 Ansari Road, New Delhi 110 002. 1983. Pp. xvi + 192. Rs. 70.

A spiritual tradition remains alive only when it is constantly rediscovered, re-created and relived from within. It is not the mere repetition of words or actions which keeps it alive. The Hindu tradition has time and again dived deep into the well of experience to renew its thought, but in our present time the danger of superficiality is only too evident. Thus it is rare to find high spiritual attainment and thorough knowledge of the scriptures and scholarship combined in one person. Shri Anirvan was such a rare person in whom there was no dichotomy between the mystic and the intellectual. In our age of undue proliferation of the written word, and of literature on spirituality and mysticism, one is relieved to find a text in which every sentence seems to flow from a deeper source of inspiration, and in which there is a perfect correspondence between spiritual experience, clarity of thought and beauty of expression. Thus even the readers who have had no access either to the person of the author (Shri Anirvan passed away in 1978) or to his Bengali writings, can find in his English articles enough material to inspire their thought and direct their spiritual life.

The present volume is a collection of the English articles written by Shri Anirvan, most of which had been published in different issues of *Prabuddha Bharata*. A bibliography of his works in Bengali is added to the volume. Readers not knowing Bengali will be extremely grateful to the publisher for having collected and brought out these articles which would have otherwise remained inaccessible to many. Till now the only other source in English to know Shri Anirvan's teaching was the presentation by Lizelle Reymond (*To Live Within*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1972) which also contained some of his talks and poems (translations of Baul songs). The Introduction to the present volume by Sri Ram Swarup, who had known Shri Anirvan for many years, gives an excellent survey of his life and thought. It is the fascinating life-story of a man who followed the inner call of the spirit, the eternal call to liberation, if need be even liberation from traditional sannyasa. For Shri Anirvan had the courage even to give up the ochre robe which he had

donned for some years. The scholar will find in him a mind of extraordinary brilliance, and the sincere seeker will find in him an able spiritual guide. The reading of Shri Anirvan's writings does require 'concentrated attention' (p. xvi), because the language is dense, involved and poetical, revealing the depth of the spirit.

The contents of the book relate (1) to exegesis of scriptural texts (Gita and Vedas), (2) to spirituality, and include (3) poems and translations of Vedic hymns. The longest chapter (77 pages) is an essay on 'Buddhi and Buddhiyoga', tracing the origin and history of the term *buddhi* and relating it again with its 'original sense of spiritual "awakening" or "illumination".' (p.1). In what follows the author gives a wholly spiritual interpretation of the Gita which reflects his scholarship as well as his psychological understanding and his transparent spiritual insight (cf his elaborations on desire, on *smṛti* as spiritual memory, on sacrifice, on *samatva*, etc.). His interpretation of the Gita strikes a balance between the need for contemplation and the modern emphasis on *karmayoga* (cf pp. 61 ff.). He is perfectly aware of the actuality of the Kurukṣetra-like situation of our times, in which there is more than ever the need 'to look up to some greater source of illumination' (p. 77), where, just as in Arjuna's case, 'the old trick of escapism will not avail'. (p. 76). Some of his translations and paraphrases of words and verses reveal that rare capacity to penetrate into the essence of the text, as is also evident in his Ṛgvedic translations.

The theoretical background of this method of interpretation is made explicit in the chapters on Vedic exegesis or *Veda-Mīmāṃsā* (cf his voluminous work in Bengali). First of all, the language of the Vedas is more symbolical than rational: 'A symbol is a sensuous expression of a mystical experience...(and) It requires an atmosphere quite different from that of rationalism'. (p. 79). The secret of interpretation lies in the Vedic understanding of the Word (*vāc*) which he analyses in depth. The mantras are 'words rising from the depths' (*ninyā vacāmsi*, RV IV. 3.16) (p. 80) and hence: 'The problem of Vedic exegesis then is the problem of reviving the spirit and recreating the inner experience of the atmosphere in which the mantras took shape. Mere intellectual ingenuity and superficial judgement will not help us, because here we are dealing with things of the

spirit where an interpretation can hope to be true only when understanding has come through spiritual communion and insight'. (p. 92). 'And here, it is the Spirit that must question the Spirit in that stillness of "the ocean where the womb of the Word lies sunk in the depths of the Waters."' (p. 92).

Although he acknowledges some of the positive aspects of modern Vedic studies, he is extremely critical about some of the assumptions of Western Vedic scholars, especially the evolutionary and historical models, and doubts their *adhikāra*. He calls their interpretation 'a new *pūrvapakṣa*' (p. 102)—and his reflections should be taken seriously in the search for a proper hermeneutics of religious texts.

The chapters on spirituality have the freshness of a direct experience which is at the same time conscious of its metaphysical implications. They reflect an integral, universal vision, responding to the aspirations, search for values and experiences of Man, the *puruṣa*, and are based on the Vedas, Upaniṣads as well as other spiritual schools such as Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Kashmir Śaivism etc.

A dominant note in Shri Anirvan's spirituality is the attraction for the vastness of the Void. 'The life-urge rushes on, driven by some hidden force which pushes it from below or pulls it from above, but after reaching a point it subsides into quiescence which to awareness means a fusion of the Plenum and the Void. In itself, this quiescence is simple, colourless and indeterminate; it is the final abstraction of pure consciousness... The sole positive value that can be given to this quiescence of simple consciousness (...) is a feeling of relaxation and

expansion, a sense of a serene poise in the Void. And it may mean a Plenum which, like the consummation of Death, may burst in all its glory at any point of the Prakritic evolution. The Vedic seers expressed this by the imagery of *div*, the luminous expanse, and of *vyoman*, the security of the Vast; their psychological counterparts were given by such terms as *Brahman* and *br̥hat* meaning the evergrowing vastness of consciousness. The imagery of *ākāśa*... is an exact symbol of the deepest spiritual experiences...' (pp. 136 f.)

With all its inwardization, Shri Anirvan's is not a spirituality of escapism which is blind to the responsibilities of the world, but a search for the 'right vision' (*samyag dr̥ṣṭi*) which alone could check 'the mad rush of the collective consciousness, driven by unregenerate impulses...' (p. 144).

The chapter on the mystery of death, written as a homage to Sri Aurobindo, is illuminating, especially the elucidation of the relation between death and *samādhi*. The poems and poetical translations of Vedic hymns have an intense mystical quality and are at the same time faithful to the original.

The book will be inspiring to anyone interested in spirituality and in an authentic and living interpretation of Hindu scriptures. It is to be hoped that if there are any other writings of Shri Anirvan in English (including his letters), they would also be published soon, as well as an English translation of at least a selection of his spiritual writings in Bengali.

DR. BETTINA BAUMER
German Scholar, Varanasi.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, CHANDIGARH

REPORT FOR APRIL 1983 TO MARCH 1984

Spiritual and cultural: In the shrine, apart from daily worship, Rāmanāma Samkīrtana was conducted on ekādashi evenings and special worship and bhajan on holy days such as

gurupūrṇimā and Śri Krishna Janmāshtamī. Religious festivals and the birthdays of prophets were also observed with due solemnity. Satsangs, and discourses on the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (in Hindi), Rāmacharitamānas, the Bhagavad Gīta and the Nārāyaṇeeyam were arranged in the Ashrama. Similar activities were organized in various towns of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

The 9-day public celebration of the birth-anniversaries of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda starting on 19 November 1983 included discourses on Ramacharitamahas, Sabad-kirtan and *nārāyanaseva* as a part of which a blood-donation camp, feeding the local Bal Niketan children and offering various gifts including books and games materials to handicapped children at Saket were organized. A one-day Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Youth Convention was held on the 20th November in which some 300 youths participated.

Medical: The free homoeopathic dispensary served 2,764 cases during the year under review, out of which 454 were new.

Educational: The Vivekananda Students' Home offered accommodation for 38 college boys.

Future plans: The Ashrama proposes to construct a Ramakrishna temple on the pattern of the temple at the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, the projected cost of which is Rs. 20 lakhs. The Secretary of the Ashrama invites donations from the public for the purpose which may kindly be forwarded to him at Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Sector 15, Madhya Marg, Chandigarh 160 015.

CENTRE VEDANTIQUE RAMAKRISHNA
77220—GRETZ, FRANCE

REPORT FOR 1983

In the shrine daily puja was performed and

the meditation hours maintained in the mornings and evenings. The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Christ, the Buddha and other prophets and saints were observed. So were Sri Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Shivaratri and the Kalpataru day.

Every Saturday evening Swami Ritajananda gave a class on the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. The Friday evening talks were given by the youngmen of the Centre and those given on Sunday evenings were by Swami Ritajananda, Swami Vidyatmananda or by guest speakers.

Swami Ritajananda visited Fulda and Dusseldorf in Germany and Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires in South America where he had talks with devotees. Swami Vidyatmananda visited Lisbon and Fatima and met with a group of Lisbon devotees.

The quarterly review, *Vedanta*, published from the Centre had a circulation of about 700.

A quantity of the vegetables produced in the garden during spring and summer of the year was canned and frozen for the winter in a freezer given by a friend. The Centre's dairy had six milch cows, and the 7 hives produced 210 kilos of honey. A good deal of repair and maintenance work was carried out throughout the year, including the replacement of the old boiler.

The number of members of the Centre remained at 206.

“None will be able to resist truth and love and sincerity. Are you sincere? unselfish even unto death? and loving? Then fear not, not even death. Onward, my lads! The whole world requires Light. It is expectant! India alone has that Light, not in magic mummeries, and charlatanism, but in the teaching of the glories of the spirit of real religion—of the highest spiritual truth. That is why the Lord has preserved the race through all its vicissitudes unto the present day. Now the time has come. Have faith that you are all, my brave lads, born to do great things! Let not the barks of puppies frighten you—no, not even the thunderbolts of heaven—but stand up and work!”

—Swami Vivekananda

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Communal Riots: Need for a Lasting Solution

The riots that rocked Delhi and several other cities in the wake of the assassination of Srimati Indira Gandhi attracted more than the usual attention everywhere. A leading newspaper in its editorial of November 14 pointed out: 'The Delhi riots have put the country on notice. India is sitting atop a volcano, the flame from which can start a huge blaze anywhere any time.' Other papers and columnists have sounded similar notes of warning.

One widely recognized feature of the Delhi disturbance was that it was not a communal riot in the strict sense of the term. Thousands of Hindus protected their Sikh neighbours. Few of the social disturbances are wholly communal. A religious conflict may provide the initial spark. Then antisocial elements take over; looting and arson are largely their work. These antisocial elements, known in India as 'goondas' and in sociological circles as the 'lumpen proletariat', constitute a sizable percentage of the population in all cities in India. They inhabit the slums and pavements and consist chiefly of unemployed youths most of whom have migrated from rural areas. Though these people are supposed to belong to one religion or the other, but what they really know is not religion but hunger, poverty, cold and unsanitary living conditions. These uprooted, impoverished, discontented lumpen elements act as a social tinderbox. The majority of them are not criminals but can be incited by 'mastans' or gangster-leaders to take to large-scale violence. It is not religious hatred that incites their passions but class hatred, frustration, envy and the lure of loot.

The menace of communal riots will continue to haunt Indian cities as long as vast numbers of these unintegrated people, the lumpen proletariat, throng their localities, streets and lanes. Instead of losing hundreds of crores of rupees in communal riots, why not invest the same amount in the proper rehabilitation of these people? This, of course, calls for imaginative policy making at the highest levels and more comprehensive urban planning.

It is well known that the initial spark that ignites mob fury is usually provided by some irresponsible social or political leaders. In a democratic, secular country it is difficult to prevent such people from making inflammatory speeches. But it is possible to prevent the building up of social tension by dissipating it before it reaches a critical level. This can be done through inter-religious dialogue. There should be continual dialogue among the different religious communities. To start and maintain such dialogue we need 'buffer-groups'. Such buffer-groups committed to religious harmony and universal brotherhood already exist, but their activities are to be extended widely. Some Hindus seem to think that Hindus have tolerated enough and that their tolerance has been exploited by other communities. Even if there is some truth in this view, the remedy is not intolerance but strengthening the faith and solidarity of the Hindu community. Intolerance will breed violence which will only weaken the country and the intolerant as well.

There is at present an imperative need to reorganize police administration in India and to make the police force most effective not only as the punitive arm of the law but also as the protective arm of the society which all communities can trust at all times. But the police also cannot provide a lasting solution to the problem of communal disharmony.
