



# Prabuddha Bharata

OR

## Awakened India

VOL 93 OCTOBER 1988





*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 of Subscription  
(inclusive of postage)

	Annual	Life (30 years)
India, Nepal & Bangladesh	Rs. 20	Rs. 300
U.S.A. & Canada		
Surface Mail	\$ 14	\$ 200
Air Mail	\$ 28	\$ 450
Other Countries		
Surface Mail	£ 10	£ 150
Air Mail	£ 15	£ 250

# Prabuddha Bharata

Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE  
RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

**OCTOBER 1988**

**CONTENTS**

Visions of Divinity	... ..	361
About this Issue	... ..	362
Kali the Mother of Shri Ramakrishna		
—(Editorial)	... ..	362
Swami Vivekananda's Mission in the West		
—Swami Atulananda	... ..	369
Shri Ramakrishna and India's Message to the World		
—Swami Mumukshananda	... ..	375
Some Literary Merits of the Dhammapada		
—Dr. Yog Dhyan Ahuja	... ..	380
Youth: Today and Twenty-first Century (II)		
—Sanjay Mukherji	... ..	383
Some Voluntary Organisations of India		
—Shri D. K. Oza, I.A.S.	... ..	387
Some Thoughts on the Ramayana		
—R.V.N. Subba Rao	... ..	390
Indian Holistic Experience and Analytical Rationality		
—Raja Ramanna	... ..	392
Ode to Mayavati		
—Dr. S. K. Chakraborty	... ..	397
Reviews and Notices	... ..	398
News and Reports	... ..	399
Prabuddha Bharata: 90 Years Ago	... ..	400



# Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. 93

OCTOBER 1988

No. 10

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

---

## VISIONS OF DIVINITY

### KALI THE MOTHER

The stars are blotted out,  
The clouds are covering clouds,  
It is darkness vibrant, sonant.  
In the roaring, whirling wind  
Are the souls of a million lunatics  
Just loosed from the prison-house,  
Wrenching trees by the roots,  
Sweeping all from the path.

The sea has joined the fray,  
And swirls up mountain-waves,  
To reach the pitchy sky.  
The flash of lurid light  
Reveals on every side  
A thousand, thousand shades

Of Death begrimed and black-  
Scattering plagues and sorrows,  
Dancing mad with joy,  
Come, Mother, Come!

For Terror is Thy name,  
Death is in Thy breath,  
And every shaking step  
Destroys a world for e'er.  
Thou 'Time', the All-destroyer!  
Come, O Mother, Come!

Who dares misery love,  
And hug the form of Death,  
Dance in Destruction's dance,  
To him the Mother comes.

Swami Vivekananda

---

## ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This month's EDITORIAL is on the Goddess Kali worshipped by Shri Ramakrishna as the Divine Mother.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MISSION IN THE WEST is by the late Revered Swami Atulanandaji Maharaj. It was collected by Swami Dhireshanandaji and edited by Swami Vidyatmanandaji of the Ramakrishna Order.

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA AND INDIA'S MESSAGE TO THE WORLD is by Swami Mumukshananda, President, Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot.

SOME LITERARY MERITS OF DHAMMAPADA is by Dr. Yog Dhyan Ahuja, Professor of Philosophy, Metropolitan College, DENVER, U.S.A.

YOUTH TODAY AND TWENTY FIRST CENTURY (II) is the second and concluding

part of the article by Shri Sanjoy Mukherji, a young graduate of the Calcutta University.

SOME VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS OF INDIA is a paper based on the study of some more well-known voluntary organisations, made by Shri D. K. Oza, additional Secretary, Govt. of Tamil Nadu.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE RAMAYANA is a short essay on the subject by Shri R.V.N. Subba Rao of Guntur.

INDIAN HOLISTIC EXPERIENCE AND ANALYTICAL RATIONALITY is a paper presented by Dr. Raja Ramanna, the former chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission, at the MIND AND NATURE CONGRESS held at Hannover, West Germany, May 1988.

ODE TO MAYAVATI is a beautiful poem by Dr. S. K. Chakraborty of Indian Institute of Management, Joka, Calcutta.

---

## KALI THE MOTHER OF SHRI RAMAKRISHNA

(EDITORIAL)

A feeling of unspeakable bliss and sweetness, of assurance and divine power, engulfs even a stray visitor who enters the vast court-yard of the Dakshineswar Kali Temple. The whole atmosphere is fragrant with the smell of sweet-smelling flowers and incense burning in all sides, in Shri Ramakrishna's room, the twelve Shiva temples, the Radha-Govinda temple, and the gigantic temple of Kali, with its tall spires touching the blue of the sky. The mighty Ganga flows washing the steps of the temple stairs leading into the river.

Even forty years earlier, the temple was a quiet beauty, and the temple garden was virtually a forest of big, bushy, tropical trees. Visitors were also few. Today thousands crowd everyday. More incense burns; more garlands of red hibiscus and lotus are poured in all the temples, by the devotees who come from far and near, to feel the palpable presence of Shri Ramakrishna's Mother Kali, *Bhavatarini*, the Mother who saves one from the sufferings of worldly existence. The beautiful image of Kali whose two hands strike terror with



a human skull and a bleeding sword, and whose other two hands offer boon and assurance, looks like a little smiling girl. In the charged spiritual atmosphere of the temple, SHE is the only mighty presence, the living, and the most-beloved Mother. Crowds like shadows pass, craving for Her blessings, feeling blessed, and giving way for thousands waiting for hours in eager expectation to see the Mother. Temple bells toll in tinkling sounds that echo in the vast courtyard. An overwhelming feeling of Mother fills the air. Inspired devotees chant aloud, with a strange feeling of joy, *Jai Ma*, victory to Mother. It is here that a hundred and thirty years earlier, Shri Ramakrishna worshipped, as a temple priest, this stone image of Kali, and transfigured it into a living goddess, the cosmic Mother-Power whose vibrant presence strikes any one who happens to enter the temple even today.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ramakrishna's Kali is not the same blood-thirsty goddess who had awed western pilgrims to India in the earlier days. Professor Max Muller said that Abbe J.A. Dubois, the French traveller-pilgrim who came to visit India during 1792 to 1823, had left "direct reports of eyewitnesses", of some horrible incidents of Indian religion. The *Kalika-Purana* advocated, according to Dubois, "abominable rites" of animal sacrifice and it "specifies those deities to whom these bloody offerings are acceptable. Among them are Bhairava, Yama, Nandi, and above all, the blood-thirsty goddess Kali."<sup>1</sup> Another western author, belonging to Scottish Church College, Calcutta, wrote, after seeing Bengal in 1920s, "Indeed, some of the more popular gods are little better than demons, and their worship is wholly propitiatory. The consciousness of a Hindu

1. ABBE J.A. DUBOIS, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, (1947), P. vi and P. 647.

woman vis-a-vis the horrific image of Kali, whom She fondly addresses as 'Ma', is matter for speculation. ... Her help is invoked by worshippers whose lives are dedicated to robbery, assassination and other violent and anti-social pursuits. ... This mood is fruitful in fanatical and sometimes criminal deeds.... The contradiction does not seem to disturb the mind of the Hindu, but to reassured thinking it is impossible to believe that any mind can accept black and white simultaneously and call them the same." The Author found this attitude "baffling" and "unfathomable", and more so, because of "the many secret or occult practices", mostly Tantric, in vogue during those days.<sup>2</sup>

Even today in the well-known dance-drama of Rabindranath Tagore, *Valmiki-Pratibha*, Kali is portrayed as the favourite of wine-intoxicated robbers on their way to plunder and animal sacrifice.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Tantrasara*, one of the books of Tantric rites, gives the description of the dark goddess in the well-known mantra of Kali, which all Kali-worshippers daily chant. In the *Mahanirvana Tantra* the Divine Mother speaks to Shiva: "The dark-coloured form with terrible eyes, which Thou dost see before Thee, is Kali".<sup>3</sup> Kali is one of the ten chief forms of Divine Mother in the Indian vision, which are, Kali, Tara Shodashi, Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, Chhinnamasta, Sundari, Bagalamukhi, Dhumavati, and Matangi. Kali is also called Mahavidya "who is the *Turiya Shakti*, the Supreme Power, and whose substance is pure bliss". The *Bhagavata Purana* (V. 9.18) speaks of Kali, "who with her followers sported with

2. Margaret M. Uranhart, *Women of Bengal*, (1926), Associate Press, Y.M.C.A. Calcutta, P. 127, 121.

3. Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe), *Principles of Tantra*, (1952), Ganesh & Co., Madras, P. 317.

the severed heads of thieves as if they were wooden balls in sport." The *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* (*Prakriti Khanda*: 19 ; 44-45) gives a similar terror-striking portrait of Kali, "Kali, the goddess, began to roar like a lioness in the battle field ; whereupon all demons fainted. This goddess burst into guffaw of horse-laugh again and again, cheerfully began to drink honey, and danced frantically." This is a picture symbolic of the seamy side of life, with all its destructions, deaths, plagues, and pestilence, which is an undeniable aspect of all life. Hindus learnt to accept the total reality of life as the play of God-head. The spectre of these dark sides of life is represented in these portraits of Kali. And the way to Godhead is through this hell, the dark aspects of life. This is what Ramakrishna's child Vivekananda experienced during his journey through a dark night of the soul, in the Kashmir valley, and this he recorded in his great poem, *Kali The Mother*.

The flash of lurid light  
Reveals on every side  
A thousand, thousand shades  
of Death begrimed and black-  
Scattering plagues and sorrows,  
Dancing mad with joy,  
Come, Mother, come!  
For Terror is Thy name,  
Death is in Thy breath,  
And every shaking step  
Destroys a world for e'er.  
Thou 'Time', the All-Destroyer!  
Come, O Mother, Come!

\* \* \* \*

Brahman, the ultimate Reality, has been realised as Infinite Bliss in the Upanishads. It is *Sat*—the Absolute existence. It is *Chit*—the Absolute Knowledge. It is also *Ananda*—the Infinite Bliss. Ramakrishna's Kali is Brahman. She is all these, and yet she transcends these as well. Kali transcends all arguments and philosophies. When the sceptical scholar-doctor distrusted the Reality of Kali, Ramakrishna sang in the refrain

of Ramprasad, "Who knows how Mother Kali is ? ... Only Mahakal (Shiva) knows HER essence. None else knows". Shankara says in *Ananda Lahari* that only Parama-Shiva knows the true beauty of Mother. Why is Kali black ? The *Mahanirvana Tantra* (XIII, Verse 6), says that "those who have attained the knowledge of the means of final liberation, for them the attributeless, formless, and beneficent Kali-shakti (Or Kali), is endowed with the colour of blackness." Ramakrishna in his own mystic simile used to say that Kali is Infinite Brahman. The sea looks black from distance, but one finds it colourless when one goes to the sea. Similarly Kali, from a distance of ignorance, looks black. After realisation, the devotee sees Her one with Brahman, who has neither form nor colour. *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* says that Brahman and Prakriti are like 'fire and its energy', 'milk and its whiteness', 'Water and its coolness'. Through these very similes Ramakrishna used to impress the oneness of his Mother Kali with the One Ultimate Reality, Brahman.<sup>4</sup>

The first great vision of Mother came in the form of a luminous sea of consciousness which with its surging waves inundated the very being of Ramakrishna and left him unconscious. When he regained external consciousness, Ramakrishna only cried out, "Mother". After the great vision, Ramakrishna saw not merely "a living presence" as he used to see earlier, but "the living Mother Herself, all consciousness, with hands that offered boons and freedom from fear".

God in the form of Kali the Mother, became not only living to Ramakrishna from now onwards, but SHE became his constant companion, sole guide, the only

4. *Brahma Vaivarta Purana*, Book-I, 28, 23, 25 and Book-IV, 73, 48, 50. Quoted in Cheever Mackenzie Brown, *God as Mother*, (1974), Claude Stark & Co., Hartford, U.S.A. P. 127.



refuge, and the very centre of his existence. Hriday, Ramakrishna's nephew, an eye witness of these early days of constant God-consciousness, said:

"Uncle rose from his bed very early in the morning and collected flowers in order to make garlands for Mother Kali. At that time, too, it seemed to me that there was one there whom he caressed and with whom he spoke, laughed, joked and made merry and played the importunate child".<sup>5</sup>

External worship now onwards lost all its formalities. Ramakrishna now began to see Mother both inside and outside, everywhere and everywhen. Hriday saw his uncle's bosom and eyes reddish like those of a drunkard. Leaving the worshipper's seat he would go near stone image, caress the Divine Mother by affectionately touching Her chin and begin singing, laughing, and conversing with Her....Sometimes he even caught the hand of the image and began to dance.<sup>6</sup>

Dakshineswar Temple became, as Ramakrishna's disciple Saradananda wrote, the "fort" of Kali.<sup>7</sup> Whenever Ramakrishna returned from anywhere else, or whenever he would like to go to any temple, he would be drawn, as if by an irresistible force, to the Kali Temple first.<sup>8</sup> For the guidance to any problem, answer to any question, for relieving the burden of his heart, the Kali Temple became the Supreme seat of judgement from where the Mother, the queen of the three Universes, used to guide, console, and teach Her child. Slowly the identifications, became complete. Mathur and others saw in Ramakrishna the very figure of Kali. Totapuri learnt, through Ramakrishna, the message that one with a human body cannot

always remain in the state of one undivided consciousness of Brahman; one has to accept Mother so long as one has to live in this phenomenal world. Girish, the fiery and faithful follower, saw in Ramakrishna's person Mother Kali Herself. At Shyampukur during Ramakrishna's illness, on the Kalipuja night, he, to the surprise of other devotees, put flowers meant for Kali worship, at the feet of Ramakrishna who instantly went into deep samadhi. Everyone present felt the living presence of Mother Kali in the emaciated body of Her beloved son, Ramakrishna.<sup>9</sup> When Ramakrishna breathed his last, Holy Mother Sarada Devi cried out aloud, "Mother Kali, where didst thou go leaving me alone".

\* \* \* \* \*

Haladhari, the erudite cousin-priest of Ramakrishna, had a strong disliking for Kali. He told Ramakrishna that Kali was a "Tamasic deity", unworthy of worship. Like a child, Ramakrishna, for whom Kali was now real and living, rushed to Mother, and asked Her in tears, "Mother, Haladhari a scholar, says you are made of *Tamoguna!* Are you really so?" The Mother did console Her child. In great joy Ramakrishna rushed out of the temple, and jumping on the back of the cousin, reproached him, "you say, Mother is Tamasic. Is that so! Mother is all—She has become all the three *gunas* and again She is pure *Sattvaguna*".<sup>10</sup> Haladhari, the doubting priest, would not relent. Once he told Ramakrishna that the visions he saw in ecstasy were really untrue. Anxious, as before, the child ran to Mother for Her guidance and said, "Should you deceive me so, just because I am unlettered and ignorant?" The cry and agony continued and then another vision was granted to the disconsolate child. He said, "What I saw some time afterwards was a foglike

5. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master*, (1978), Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras-4, P. 168.

6. Ibid. P. 167.

7. Ibid. P. 747.

8. Ibid. P. 719.

9. Ibid. P. 983.

10. Ibid. P. 188.

mist rising suddenly from the floor and filling some of the space in front of me. Then I saw in that mist a beautiful living face of golden complexion, with beard reaching to the breast. The figure looked steadfastly at me and said with a profound voice, 'My child, remain in *Bhavamukha*'. He repeated those words thrice and dissolved in the mist, and the mist too vanished into the void".

"How could the divine form be real?" Haladhari once asked the Mother-intoxicated Ramakrishna, who, as before, went to Mother, and asked, "Is it then an illusion, Mother?" The Mother Herself appeared this time near the worship-jar inside the temple itself in the form of a woman Vaishnava devotee, Rati's Ma, and said to Her child, "Do remain in Bhava".<sup>11</sup>

All doubtings were over. Haladhari's role as the instigator and revealer of hidden truths of Kali the Mother, through Ramakrishna, was over. He left the Kali temple for ever.

Ramakrishna was now placed by his Mother in *Bhavamukha*—an unique point of comprehensive vision. According to his own simile, he sat on the wall on one side of which was the world of divine bliss, and on the other side, the world of human agony. He saw both. On one side he felt the eternal Reality transcending the sense-bound world. On the other side, he saw the myriad forms of matter and life, which were only immanent, phenomenal forms of the one, Noumenal Reality. The world appeared no more as dream, but as visible manifestation of Mother. Ramakrishna spelt out the Great Revelation of the New Religion of Vedanta, "Mother has become everything".

This is the new gospel that inspires modern man to embrace religion in the midst of their very life. God is neither in

heaven, nor is the world illusory, a Maya. "God is everything"—this is the gospel. This is the central message of the Master's Mother-worship, a message which was destined to rejuvenate the sensate culture of today and bring a resurrection of Spirit everywhere. "Light comes to Individuals through the conscious efforts of their intellect"; wrote Vivekananda, "It comes, slowly though, to the whole race through unconscious percolations".<sup>12</sup>

\* \* \*

The destructive and all-loving face of Kali, the co-existence of dark and white in the same entity 'baffled' the Western writer of 1920s. Today, however, the Western Scientists accept both the opposite aspects of matter, its wave-nature and its particle-nature, as neither 'baffling' nor mutually exclusive, but complementary. Niels Bohr's celebrated idea of complementarity on which the New Science of today is founded, justifies the Hindu thinking of Kali the Mother as both destructive and creative.

This symbolism of the Kali image dawned on the vision of Indians who were absolutely fearless, like Ramakrishna, to face Reality in all its terrible and benign forms. Today the new discoveries of science are making it clear, as Nobel Prize winner scientist Isidor Rabi said, that "the novelty of nature is such that its variety will be infinite—not just in changing forms but in profundity of insight and newness of ideas."

Gary Zukov, in the conclusion of his best-selling book on *The new dimensions of modern physics, The Dancing Wu Li Masters*, brought this symbolism of Kali, in order to describe the final experience of Reality according to modern science. He wrote:

12. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Vol. 4), Mayavati Memorial Edition, P. 258.

11. *Ibid.* P. 190.



The 'what we think' of physicists today is that the physics of nature, like human experience itself, is infinitely diverse.

Eastern religions have nothing to say about physics, but they have a great deal to say about human experience. In Hindu mythology, Kali, the Divine Mother, is the symbol for the infinite diversity of experience. Kali represents the entire physical plane. She is the drama, tragedy, humour, and sorrow of life. She is the brother, father, sister, mother, lover, and friend. She is the fiend, monster...She is the sun and the ocean. She is the grass and the dew. She is our sense of accomplishment and our sense of doing worthwhile. Our thrill of discovery is a pendant on her bracelet. Our gratification is a spot of colour on her cheek. Our sense of importance is the bell on her toe.

The full and seductive, terrible and wonderful earth mother always has something to offer. Hindus know the impossibility of seducing her or conquering her and the futility of loving her or hating her; so they do the only thing that they can do. They simply honour her. ... These powerful metaphors have application to the developing drama of physics.<sup>13</sup>

Zukov concludes that "physicists are doing more than 'discovering the endless variety of nature'. They are dancing with Kali, the Divine Mother of Hindu Mythology."

Can we think of life without death as its inevitable end? Can we think of youth without age, adversity without prosperity? Vivekananda writes, "The old idea of the Fatherhood of God is connected with the sweet notion of God presiding over happiness. We want to deny facts. Evil as non-existent, 'I' as zero. The "I" is evil, and the "I" exists only too much. Am I zero?"<sup>14</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

Ramakrishna's Kali is essentially the blissful Mother, and his own life is a continuous play with Her. Kali is *Lilamayee*,

the mistress of divine play, who represents the unpredictable and yet the all-powerful movements and ambiguity of the phenomenal world. "She is the supreme mistress of the cosmic play, and all objects animate or inanimate, dance by Her will", Ramakrishna said of Kali. Pages after pages in the Gospel of Shri Ramakrishna show how Ramakrishna would go into ecstasy in the very name of Kali. Like Ramprasad, but with a far greater intensity of bliss, Ramakrishna sang of Kali and brought an instant flood of Divine bliss. Kali's whirling arms denoted the cosmic play. He sang, "Behold my Mother playing with Shiva, lost in ecstasy of joy!"

Drunk with a draught of celestial wine. She reels, and yet She does not fall. Erect She stands on Shiva's bosom, and the earth trembles under Her tread. She and Her Lord are mad with frenzy, casting aside all fear and shame."

Time and again during these hours of Kali-songs, he went into samadhi, his eyes fixed, his face beaming, sometimes standing with his one hand on the shoulder of a beloved disciple. Coming down a little from the state of ecstasy, many times he danced like a mad elephant. Regaining external consciousness, he used to sing again, himself improvising lines like:

O Mother, dance about thy devotees!  
Dance Thyself and make them as well.  
O Mother, dance in the lotus of my heart.

Ramakrishna is, in fact, the first incarnation of God for whom songs and not sermons, were the most powerful vehicle of preaching. Absolute purity of emotions brought an instant feeling of divinity. His disciple wrote, "Whosoever has heard the Master singing would be convinced that emotion is the very life of music". Music would make him God-intoxicated and this divine obsession with the blissful Mother made him a child whose "doing" appeared

13. Gary Zukov, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters*, (1984), Fontana Paper-backs, London, P. 329-30.

14. *Complete Works*, Vol. 6, P. 148-49.



“purposeless in the eyes of the ordinary people.” His disciple wrote, ... “The vain clamours of him did not reach his ears at all. Although in the world, he was not of it. The external world was now transformed for him into a dream world”.<sup>15</sup> Ordinary people used to call him “mad”. A few like Mathur and Bhairavi Brahmani who knew him intimately knew that this “madness” was due to a special grace of Kali. Like a child he wanted to play with his Mother, instead of being absorbed in samadhi like a dry, ascetic Jnani contemplating on the one unbroken Reality. He prayed to Her:

“O Mother, let me remain in contact with men! Don't make me a dried up ascetic. I want to enjoy your Sport in the world.

Mother, don't make me unconscious with the Knowledge of Brahman; Mother, I don't want Brahmajnana, I want to be merry. I want to play”.<sup>16</sup>

This infinite bliss which Ramakrishna radiated was born of infinite purity which Mother Kali had granted to the absolutely mother-centred Child. Ramakrishna became ‘holiness’ itself, as Vivekananda said, a triumphant symbol of complete conquest of lust and greed in human body. It was Kali who entered, controlled and guided his body and mind. The bleeding sword of Mother cut his last human bondage to sensate pleasures. Her mad dancing on the corpse of Shiva in the midst of ghosts and goblins, had made the son's heart a cremation ground where all worldly desires were burnt for ever. Her hand raised to offer protection, protected him from the least veil of Maya. Today Her hand is poised for giving, through the blessed child,

Ramakrishna, boons of divine life to humanity dying in the deserts of materialism.

\* \* \* \* \*

Why was the worship of God as Mother evolved at all, when the vast Vedic literature was there to lead a devotee through the path of elaborate rituals and sacrifice, to the attainment of Divinity, or when the Upanishadic literature was there to inspire and lead the seekers through the path of clear reasoning, to the realisation of the Self within? The Tantra Scripture which developed the worship of God as Mother in all its forms and aspects, asserts that in this Kaliyuga, the modern times of materialistic culture, human beings have got less longevity. They are more body-centred. Hence the Tantras ask men to worship God as Mother as the easier way for common men to attain divinity. Later Puranas, too, glorified the motherhood of God. *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* says (Book II, 55, 4-5):

“By service to him (Krishna), you shall obtain his world after many births. Worship the supreme Radha, the presiding deity of his life. By the grace (Of Radha), full of compassion, you will quickly attain his abode.”

Again, Shiva says to Durga, “I, the lord of all, am a corpse without you”. (*Krishna Janma Khanda*: 43:8) The suffix “I” in the word Shakti, represents the Cosmic feminine power, the Shakti. Without Shakti, Shiva is *Shava* (a corpse), says the Tantra. Ramakrishna, too, used to repeatedly mention that in this age, worship of God as Mother, leads early to self realisation. In spite of realising God through the ways of Islam, Christianity, Vaishnavism and other Hindu forms of worship, Ramakrishna remained, at bottom, a worshipper and a child of Divine Mother. His own life glorified the superiority of Mother-worship. He had the vision of Radha first, and then through Her grace, he had the vision of Krishna. Similarly he had first the vision of baby

15. *The Great Master*, P. 166.

16. M. *The Gospel of Shri Ramakrishna*, Translated by Swami Nikhilananda (1942), New York, R. K. Vivekananda Centre, P. 66, 373.



Christ in the lap of Madonna, and after a few days he had the vision of Christ Himself.

This glorification of Motherhood was practised not only in India; it was there in the Western tradition also.

The writer of *Philokalia*, the well-known scripture of christianity, belonging to fifteenth century A.D., wrote,

“Shall I show you another path to salvation—or, rather, to dispassion? Through your entreaties constrain the Creator not to let you fail in your purpose. Constantly bring before him as intercessors all the angelic powers, all the saints, and especially the most pure Mother of God”.<sup>17</sup> This Christian glorification of the Motherhood of God, Vivekananda witnessed in the mediterranean region during his western trip. He wrote, “‘Jehovah’, ‘Jesus’ and the Trinity are secondary: the worship is for the mother-She, the mother, with the child Jesus in her arms. The emperor cries ‘Mother’, the field-marshal cries ‘Mother’,

17. *The Philokalia*, Translated by G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard Kallistos Ware, (1981), Faber and Faber, London, Boston, P. 366.

the soldier with the flag in hand, cries ‘Mother’, the sea-man at helm cries ‘Mother’, the fisherman in his rags cries ‘Mother’, the beggar in the street cries ‘Mother’. ... Everywhere is the cry ‘Ave Maria’; day and night, ‘Ave Maria’, ‘Ave Maria’.”<sup>18</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

A hundred and twenty years have passed since Ramakrishna played the historic incarnation-game with his blissful Mother, Kali. Today Kali is worshipped even in Hollywood. The blood-thirsty goddess Kali, who one day was thought to be propitiated by assassins or miracle-seekers, has today been identified with HER son Ramakrishna under whose broad wings of Universal Love, and harmony of all religions, humanity, irrespective of caste, creed, and religion, has been united into one single family of children of immortality. Today when we see all over the world a rejuvenation of different religions, and especially a greater affirmation of the motherhood of God, we turn to Kali the Mother of Ramakrishna.

18. *Complete Works*, Vol. 5, P. 506.

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MISSION IN THE WEST

SWAMI ATULANANDA

Swami Vivekananda, as you all know, was the foremost Indian monk of his time and a world teacher destined to cleanse and stimulate the thought not only of his own country but also of other lands.

When still a youth he scorned a promising worldly career, and renouncing all earthly ties entered the sacred order of sannyasa.

Endowed with a brilliant mind and a strong physique, filled with the monastic

instinct, trained at the feet of one who in intellect and spiritual realisation towered high above the keenest and loftiest minds of his time, Swami Vivekananda became the spokesman of India's highest culture and ideals, and of her passionate love for renunciation.

In speaking about Swami Vivekananda's influence in the West we may pass over the first few months of his career in America, and locate him on the platform



of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago where he made his first public appearance.

It is true that he had met many distinguished Americans before the Parliament began, he had addressed small gatherings of interested persons, he had spoken in salons of cultured Americans, but at the Religious Congress his real work commenced.

When the Swami arrived in America, in July 1893, the great World's Fair was already in progress. But the Religious Congress did not meet till September of the same year. It was then that he gave his first public speech on "The Religious Ideas of the Hindus."

Now we must understand that the Parliament of Religions at Chicago was convened with a very definite object. The object presumably was to bring before the world a clear conception of what men of different climes, of different nations, of different beliefs held to be the highest aim in life. It was to make known to all the world what man thought about himself, about nature, and about God. In short, it was to learn the ideals of the religious beliefs held by people from the different corners of the earth, and then to compare notes, and to settle once for all the netting question, which of the many religions professed by man should stand supreme; which belief would be entitled to proclaim itself paramount and best fitted as a universal religion.

A lofty idea, no doubt. But there was no question in the western mind as to the outcome of the contest.

And there were strange rumours abroad. These rumours, however, did not reach the ears of the masses.

The West, always confident, always cocksure of herself, convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that she led the world in every field of accomplishment; convinced that her civilization, her culture,

her customs, her ideals were the standard after which eastern races should model themselves. The West considering her conquest of eastern nations as a boon to those nations—what she called the less enlightened peoples—felt satisfied that in the year 1893 at Chicago a conquest would be made which would silence once for all the feeble voice of all coloured races.

The West was convinced that they should make the greatest of all her conquests, the conquest of religion. And that—from that day on she would be able to silence with authority all claims of religion uttered by protesting voices.

Christianity, so hopelessly unsuccessful in the East before, would after that memorable day unfurl her banner in every land upon which the sun smiles.

The East would be convinced of the folly of further protest against, of further indifference towards, the religion of the West. The doors would be opened for the missionaries, and the East would be Christianised.

The one point on which the East had not yet submitted was her religion. It was the one rock on which the western sword had broken, unable to withstand the force of contact. All this would soon be changed. Submissive, on bent knees, the head bowed low, the East would sit at the feet of the West to learn from her the message of peace and salvation. The Parliament of Religions was to bring the heathen to his senses.

But the gods smiled. And the *rishis* in celestial spheres rejoiced. For they knew that at last the day had come when their age-long austerities, their *tapasya*, their renunciation, their prayers, their meditations, their life-long *brahmacharya*, would bear fruition. And through the voice of one of their chosen children the entire wealth of their realisations would flood not only the land they had graced and blessed



with their presence, but even the entire world. For the East and the West alike would hear from Swami Vivekananda the glad tidings of deliverance.

And the East would listen, and the West would listen, and the glorious message of brotherly love and compassion would encircle the earth. For once again the command had sounded—and this time in the ears of Swami Vivekananda, the modern saint of India: "Go ye out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

And so the day drew near. The Chicago exhibition was opened, the gates were lifted, and people streamed in by the thousands to see the wonders of the world collected at Chicago. And then in September the Parliament of Religions commenced its sessions.

The West came well prepared. The occidental mind offered its best. Men of distinction, orators, men of learning, and high dignitaries of the different churches faced the vast assembly. And the audience was all-expectant.

The East was represented by men of different oriental faiths, a picturesque gathering they were, these men so dignified, in long robes and bright turbans. A pleasing picture, this array of easterners, their faces so calm and still so expressive, their eyes large and with a mysterious look.

"If they were only Christians," was the sentimental sigh of the church ladies. But they were not Christians. Some of them even were idolators. Terrible thought! For little did they, who lamented the lot of these men, surmise that some of these brown-faced teachers had more of the Christ spirit than they themselves possessed. And far was it from them to expect that there was a great surprise in store for that August assembly.

Many a speaker unburdened his soul in eloquent speech, as one by one they rose

on the platform. The audience listened with more or less patience and attention. But they waited to hear these strange men from the East, who sat there like statues, apparently little moved by what went on before them.

There was one amongst these who had been singled out by the audience as the most striking figure. The West is not blind to beauty. Those brilliant eyes, that perfectly chiselled face, the erect and well-built frame—a majestic figure. This was Swami Vivekananda.

But what would his lips disclose should once they open to speak? What strange superstitious ideas would they reveal to the expectant audience?

They became impatient to hear him. Would he never rise? It was past morning. They had sat there many hours. When would his turn come?

A moment! The chairman moves and bends in the Swami's direction—a few whispered words. At last the figure rises. The face is calm as an unruffled ocean. The eyes look far out into space. Is he inspired?

A few steps forward, and Swami Vivekananda stands before the audience. There is a pin-drop silence. One sweeping glance over the vast assembly and the lips open, "Sisters and Brothers of America."

In a sonorous voice, clear and distinct, the first words are spoken. And these words will go down in the history of religions: "Sisters and Brothers of America"!

An electric shock went through the audience. Here was inspiration indeed, a heart laying itself open before the world. Here, in half a sentence, the culture of an ancient race expressed itself. A world-soul had touched the finest, the noblest string of the human heart. The words were few, but the man stood revealed,



In an instant the Parliament of Religions had found itself. Its meaning, its object, its aim stood revealed in this one expression: "Sisters and Brothers of America!"

Glorious utterance! The East had touched the West. Separating oceans dried up. The world stood united. For one shock moment at least barriers dropped, colour of skin was forgotten, differences in attire were overlooked, peculiarity in manners did no longer count. Man stood face to face with man.

Another moment of silence. The lips open again. But who could sit there unmoved; who could listen? The stirred up feeling was too overpowering, and it gave way in an out-burst of enthusiastic applause.

Swami Vivekananda, the monk from distant India, was the master of the situation. In five short words he had formulated the ideas that half-consciously each one present had struggled to express. Swami Vivekananda, the prophet, had sounded the keynote to which the further progress of the Parliament was to be attuned.

Here was a master who revealed man to man; who with one stroke had cleared the mental horizon who had brought to the surface what is best and noblest in man—the recognition that we are all children of the one Parent, of that very Parent whose blessings had been invoked at the opening of the session.

The rest of the story is known to you all. How during the following sessions the people clamoured for a few words from the lips of the Hindu monk. And how they would sit patiently for hours to hear a few sentences from the sage of India.

And what a message he brought! For he always kept the standard high. The opening sentence was, as it were, the theme of which his following addresses were beautiful variations. Always impersonal, his message was

for his Sisters and Brothers in America. And America then represented the world. For the Parliament of Religions was a world Parliament.

Swami Vivekananda had come to Chicago to share with the world, to give freely to all humanity that which it had taken him all his life to gather. He asked for no recognition, for no reward. He gave as Jesus gave—the Bread of life, without price.

He started no sect, he initiated few disciples. He was contented to sow the seed, that all might reap the harvest. "I do not ask you to become my followers," he said. "I want to help you to become better men and better women." And he spoke from their own scriptures, and he spoke of their own Saviour. And from the Hindu scriptures he used what would illustrate and strengthen their own belief. "I have not come to make you Hindus," he said on another occasion. "I have come to make you better Christians."

But he never tried to hide his own inheritance, that ancient culture, the accumulation of centuries of high thinking and right living, that culture which stands behind every sentence of even the oldest Hindu scriptures. And saturated as he was with the teachings of the sages of his own land, he would pour out story after story, he would quote shloka after shloka from Puranas and Shruti. And this he would often do to explain and point out the beauty and poetry of their own Bible.

It was gracious; it was exceedingly generous. "I do not wish to break down," he said. "I want to erect and strengthen. I preach tolerance, for all religions contain truth."

And in his melodious voice he would chant in Sanskrit and then give in English that beautiful gem from the Shiva Mahimna Stotra: "As different rivers, having their



source in different places, all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take, crooked or straight, all lead to thee." And then from the Gita: "Whosoever comes to me, through whatever form, I reach him. All men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me."

Here was a message for the West—all religions when sincerely practised lead to God! Different religions are so many paths that lead to Him!

And before the minds of those present flitted dark pictures of the past. How in Europe man had slain man for religion's sake; how during the Inquisition thousands upon thousands of human beings, men and women of the same blood had butchered each other in the name of God.

Rack of torture, burning pyre, and guillotine had disappeared, but did not the rancour of religious strife still embitter many a human heart? Roman Catholic against Protestant, Protestant against Roman Catholic? One denomination scorning the other?

Once again Light had come from the East. The Light was now shining before them. And under the soothing influence of that benign Light it was brought home to this vast audience that they were all sisters and brothers, children of one heavenly Father, fellow-pilgrims on their way to God.

And of that heavenly Father Swami Vivekananda spoke to the Christians of the West. And he explained how the same heavenly Father is worshipped in India, and how the Hindus also worship Him as the Divine Mother of the universe.

And then he went farther and told that God is sometimes worshipped as the divine child, and even as the Beloved, the divine Spouse. And then he told them of the final vision of the yogis in samadhi. How in the

solitudes of the Himalayan forest these heroic men had meditated on the ultimate Truth, how they dared to penetrate deeper into the mysteries of Being, brushing aside all human visions till they stood face to face with the Absolute, and God was realised as: "He who is the one life in a universe of death; as He who is the constant basis of an ever-changing world; as the one who is the only Soul of which all souls are but delusive manifestations."

Such revelations were startling. It was new in the West. But gradually the Swami won ground. And those who loved him and followed him understood that he did not destroy but that he led onwards. For no hope was blasted, no vision scorned, no ideal knocked on the head. But there was guidance and advice and suggestion.

The spiritual child was lifted till it could stand; was led by the hand till it could walk alone. Always the next signpost was pointed out. "It is good to be born in a church," Swamiji said, "but not to die there. Reach further than churches can possibly take you. Have your own belief, but try to expand. Let your vision broaden, let your mental horizon extend. Churches and doctrines are the hedges to protect the tender plant. But they must be broken down that the plant may become a tree."

And so he pointed out how the belief in heaven, as held by the Christians, is but a halting place on the way to mukti; how salvation is the stepping-stone on which to reach divine wisdom; how love for God must lead to realisation of God, and how the personal God is but one aspect of Brahman.

And of Jesus he spoke and of Buddha and of Shri Krishna and sometimes of his own master. And he told the Christians that these were all alike, sons of God.

This was the path by which Swamiji led his disciples. They were never the losers;



they were always the gainers. For good they were shown the better; for the small the greater. It was an intellectual and spiritual expansion.

To say that eastern thought was entirely unknown in the West till the advent of Swami Vivekananda is not correct. Western scholars had given us some of the Hindu scriptures in our own language. But to very few the teaching as it stood was intelligible. Theosophy had made us acquainted with two great principles: the law of karma and reincarnation. But their teachings were mostly culled from the Puranas.

It was therefore that we hailed Swami Vivekananda as the first authoritative exponent of the Best of the ideas of the Vedas and the Upanishads. His exposition was clear and comprehensible. It was masterly. He brought order out of chaos. He sifted. And the theosophist's mahatmas and astral bodies and elementals went with the chaff.

"No mystery-mongering," he said. "It weakens the brain. No secret societies. Religion must be open to all." And I remember how I myself had once joined a religious society. But I had to withdraw. For when I asked for the practical application of their teachings and for demonstration of what they claimed to have attained, I found no response. Neither could I get admittance to their esoteric meetings.

What a relief then it was to myself and others to come in contact with Swamiji and other Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission! For with them the practical side of religion meant every thing. And they freely gave their spiritual treasures to one and all.

In the religion of the West renunciation was hardly ever mentioned, much less practised. And the word had held little or no meaning to us till we met Swami Vivekananda. In Swamiji's life and teachings renunciation was the great theme.

"Hate this world," he said. "It is a mire. Cultivate love for the spiritual life." And he quoted: "Not by wealth, not by progeny, but by renunciation alone the goal is reached." "Stand up for God," he said. "Let the world go. Have no compromise. Give up the world; then alone you will be free."

What a contrast with the teachings prevalent in the West at that time—the teachings of health, wealth, and prosperity, that sad aberration of the spiritual ideal, that was gaining a footing in the West in those days! "God is good. We are his children, so let us enjoy the good things of this world." This was the rising religion in America.

These false ideas the Swami had to correct. He had to root them out. And he did it with a will.

"You people in the West have enjoyed enough," he said in California. "Now you go to the jungle, dig a hole, and meditate. Spit on this world if you want God." And he took some of his students and they lived and camped in the woods.

"Now," he said, "imagine that you are yogis living in the Indian forest. Forget your cities, forget everything. Think only of God." "See", he said, pointing to a stream flowing by, "here is mother Ganges." And they lighted the dhuni fire and sat around it. And the Swami taught them how to meditate and to make japam. And facing the stream, he would shout: "Hara, Hara. Vyom, Vyom! Hara, Hara, Vyom, Vyom!", till the sound vibrated in every mind; and the world was forgotten, and the soul soared into regions unknown before.

Those of you who knew Swamiji, how charming was his personality, how full of fun and wit he was. To camp out with him was a constant delight to his disciples. What a wealth of stories he would relate



to them during moonlight evenings around the campfire under the beautiful pine trees of California. During these stories India would live before the mental eye of the students.

And so through hours of seriousness and through hours of innocent enjoyment the students were drawn closer to God. And in their hearts was lighted the fire of renunciation.

It seemed all so easy, so joyous, so free from effort. But in later years the students realised what miracles had been brought within their hearts.

There is a religious sect in America that teaches that because Jesus healed the sick, to use one's mental power of healing diseases is the true mission in life. And then came Swamiji and told them the story of his own master, how during an illness one of his followers had suggested that he heal himself through his own mental effort. The Master had listened. But later he said, "How mean to take one's mind away from the Divine Mother to direct it towards this filthy body."

And Swamiji concluded with the startling remark: "Jesus would have been

greater if he had not used his powers." To some of his hearers, especially to hidebound church members, such remarks were shocking and "they understood not the sayings which he spoke unto them." But those who were really sincere "kept all these sayings in their hearts." To such there was food for thought. And the very startling effect of the words helped them to lift their minds out of the old rut of thinking.

Swamiji was a man of many moods. To judge him by any one of these moods or by one single saying was not doing him justice. Only those who were with him much could get a glimpse of his many-sided nature.

For example, one day he placed Christ after Buddha in regard to greatness as a man. Some Christians did not like it. But had they had a little patience they would have heard how on another occasion he said of Jesus that he was an Incarnation of God. "And the great Incarnations," he added, "are untouched by aught of earth. They assume our form and our limitations for a time in order to reach us. But in reality they are never limited. They are ever-free."

---

## SHRI RAMAKRISHNA AND INDIA'S MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

SWAMI MUMUKSHANANDA

### 1. *Need for a spiritual outlook in modern times:*

Man has made tremendous progress in science and technology which has given him hitherto unimaginable power, comforts and luxuries. But he is still very unhappy, and troubled with worries and tensions, suspicions and fears. The reason for this lies in the fact that though he has pro-

gressed marvellously fast on the material plane, his moral and spiritual faculties such as self-control, unselfishness and spirit of fellow-feeling etc. have not developed proportionately. In comparison with his forefathers he may have turned himself into an "intellectual giant" but he remains the same (if not worse) "spiritual pigmy". Science has placed at his hands immeasurable wealth and physical energy but oftener



than not he misuses them, guided as he is by his untrained sensate passions, non-sublimated appetites and instincts. This is why with all his boast of advancement he finds himself a prey to his passions. Intolerance and suspicion chase away his peace. Ego-centric cravings and a constant restlessness born of a feverish pursuit of worldly happiness, make him fitful and delirious. Rich in the wealth of the world but poor in the virtues of the soul, his heart tossed and torn by doubts and conflicts, he presents a pitiable picture of himself. This causes grave concern for his future. A thoughtful writer has rightly observed, "At the very moment of its grandest triumph when it had won the supreme conquest over material things and subtle forces, the world civilization has turned into a tragedy. Modern man who has long pitied his ancient and mediaeval fathers is now himself to be pitied."<sup>1</sup> While suggesting a way out of the critical situation Bertrand Russell warned us, "Unless men increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow."<sup>2</sup> All this inescapably points to the necessity of a spiritual rebirth of human mind. It is often said that in this era of science, man must accept the logic of "co-existence," because the only alternative to that is "co-extinction." But without an ideal grounded not on mutual fear but on eternal truth and scientific reason, it is not possible to live and let others live for long in peace and amity. The need for a spiritual outlook of life, therefore, was never more pressing than it is today. It is in this context that modern man would do well to look for help from the eternal message of India and Shri Ramakrishna. India's contribution through Shri Ramakrishna towards

the formation or rather the restoration of such a spiritual outlook of man, and towards giving a spiritual orientation to human life, is important and significant.

## 2. *India's contribution to the World in the past:*

Indeed, India's contributions in the domain of religion and philosophy as applied to life, have been immense throughout the history of mankind. Famous historian Will Durant in his "Story of Civilization" rightly observed that although India has sent to the world many precious gifts such as grammar, logic mathematics, etc., yet "these are trifles compared to what we may learn from her in future" and added, "perhaps, India will teach us tolerance and gentleness of the mature mind, the quiet content of the unacquisitive soul, the calm of understanding spirit and a unifying, pacifying love for all living beings".<sup>3</sup> Another Westerner writes in the same vein: "But beyond the political and scientific benefits that India has offered to man and that she will undoubtedly continue to offer as her economy develops, there is something far more significant. In the essential art of living, in the process of man's understanding of himself, in the subtler realms of mind and spirit are to be found India's greatest contributions".<sup>4</sup> Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath, Dr. Radhakrishnan, and a host of others who have studied the history and development of different countries have expressed the same opinion that spiritualization of life is the key-note of Indian Culture and that She has a spiritual message for the world. "India is still living," says Swami Vivekananda, "because she has her own

1. Vide the *Bulletin of Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture*, Cal-29, June 1967, p-182.

2. Quoted in the *Essence of Indian Culture* by Swami Ranganathananda. p. 13.

3. *The Story of Civilisation* Vol: I Our Oriental Heritage, 1954 Edition, p. 391.

4. Edward J. Martin (Vide *Vedanta Kesari*, October 1965, p. 228).



quota yet to give to the general store of world civilization. For a complete civilization, the world, is waiting, waiting for the treasures to come out of India, waiting for the marvellous spiritual inheritance of the race, which through decades of degradation and misery, the nation has clutched to her breast."<sup>5</sup>

### 3. *India in the Nineteenth century and Shri Ramakrishna:*

India's age-old unbroken spiritual tradition got a rude shock in the nineteenth century at the hands of science and rational scepticism that came in the wake of Western culture and Western education. As a result the spiritual light of India was about to get extinguished. More or less, the same state of affairs prevailed in the Western countries consequent to the spread of science and free reasoning. At such juncture, those who tried to keep the spiritual light of humanity burning, did a great service to man. But none was as sincere and successful in this as Shri Ramakrishna and no one's contribution was as great as his. He followed an altogether different method, just the method, that was needed to convince modern man of the validity of religious experience. While others followed a scholastic method, he adopted what may be called the "direct experience method." Others sought to establish the validity of this or that religion on the strength of book-learning and metaphysical arguments in support of God, soul, and spiritual experience. In their attempt to remove or lessen the friction among followers of different religions they made comparative studies of different religions to discover their common foundations. But Shri Ramakrishna affirmed the veracity of all religions on the strength of his direct experience. In fact,

his method was also the age-old method used by the previous saints and prophets of the world. Christ, Krishna, and Mohammad believed in God and made others believe in Him because to them God was a living and vivid reality. Verification is the last and the most conclusive proof of a theory. "The first qualification for knowing, judging and, if desirable, condemning a religion or religions is to have made experiments for oneself in religious consciousness."<sup>6</sup> Shri Ramakrishna did exactly the same type of experiment. He was never satisfied with what the scriptures had said about God or soul until he got those truths realised and verified in his own experience. As we know, he was not a scholar. He had practically no book-learning. Yet his approach to religion, was quite scientific in spirit and akin to modern man's thoughts and aspirations. He began as a priest in the temple of Dakshineswar but doubts like those of ours tormented his heart. "Is there any Reality, as they say, behind this worship, these prayers and rituals, or, are they simply a formality, a blind convention?"—he questioned within himself. So intense was his yearning for the Reality that he withdrew his mind completely from all other thoughts and things in the long run, experienced the Reality in the form of the Divine Mother and also in formless aspect. Not satisfied even with that, he practised all the important forms of spiritual disciplines enjoined in the Hindu scriptures and still later, he practised Christianity and Islam also. He realised for himself the same truth, the same Godhead through all these religions. "His inner life", as Romain Rolland says, "embraced the whole multiplicity of men and God."<sup>7</sup> "He lived in one life", in the words of

5. *Swami Vivekananda on India and her problems*, Advaita Ashrama, Cal-14 p. 13 to 16.

6. Romain Rolland in his *Life of Shri Ramakrishna*, Advaita Ashrama, Cal-14 p. 5.

7. *Life of Ramakrishna*, Advaita Ashrama, Cal-14 p. 13.



Swami Vivekananda "the whole cycle of national religious consciousness."<sup>8</sup> It is indeed a unique phenomenon in the religious history of mankind—the experiencing of God by one single person through so many diverse religions. And yet this is a fact. When in later times saintly scholars flocked around him and confirmed that his spiritual experiences tallied perfectly with the recorded spiritual experiences of the saints and the prophets of the past, Shri Ramakrishna's life came to be regarded as an epitome of the spiritual experiences of mankind. On the strength of his own experience he declared, like one with authority, that God is, and that He can be realised in various ways; and that such realisation is the goal of human life; and since all religions pursued whole-heartedly lead to that realisation there is no ground for any quarrel. What is really necessary is that one should follow any one religion with devotion together with respect for all other religions. These experiences of Shri Ramakrishna have resuscitated not only Hinduism but other religions too. They reaffirmed not only the truths of the Upanishads or the Gita but of the Koran and the Bible also, and have done a singular service in proving the veracity of religion as such. Had he, like others, sought to establish religion on the basis of any scriptural knowledge his words could have not carried this strength of conviction as they do now. As Mahatma Gandhi has observed: "The story of Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life is a story of religion in practice. His sayings are not those of a mere learned man but they are pages from the book of life: They are revelations of his own experience. They, therefore, leave on the reader an impression which he cannot resist."<sup>9</sup>

8. *Letters of Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Cal-14 p. 225.

9. Foreword (p. vii) to the *Life of Shri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashrama)

#### 4. *India's eternal Message to the world through Shri Ramakrishna:*

Those who are acquainted with the spirit of Indian culture will admit that there is nothing very much new in these teachings and this message of Shri Ramakrishna. When Shri Ramakrishna said that the same Divine reality may be realised as Brahman, Shakti, Allah or God, he echoed the famous Rig Vedic utterance; *Ekam sat vipra vahudha vadanti*. (*Rig Veda* 1.164.46). "Reality is one: sages describe it in various ways." When he said that God realisation or in other words perfect spiritualisation of life is the supreme goal of human life and that without this realisation, no lasting peace is attainable, he re-uttered the message of the Upanishads which declare "By knowing Him alone a man can overcome death; there is no other way to the attainment of lasting peace".

(*Svetasvatropanishad* 3.8)

And again "If a man realises the Supreme in this life he attains the true goal of life. If he fails to experience it, great calamity plagues him constantly."

(*Kenopanishad* 2.5.)

Similarly, Shri Ramakrishna's saying that all religions are like so many paths leading to the same destination which is God is a restatement of the voice of the Gita (4: 11) where Shri Krishna says:

"O Partha, whosoever worship me through whatsoever path, I verily accept and bless them in that way. Men everywhere follow my path."

Thus the age-old truths have been revalidated and re-asserted by Shri Ramakrishna and his life, for the good of mankind. Today science and technology have brought human society to a stage where without a spiritual orientation, human life



and culture are threatened. India through Shri Ramakrishna has paved the way to such spiritual orientation of life. He has restored man's faith in spirituality, re-established a harmony among the religions *by proving conclusively the validity of all of them*. And yet he did it all as though, unconsciously. Guided by an inner urge he simply led a life successively practising varied disciplines of different faiths. He never took any initiative to preach his ideas or support them with arguments or ratiocinations. Perhaps he was not quite aware that his experience were going to influence the future of mankind so much. It was left to his worthy apostle, Swami Vivekananda, to interpret this wonderful life and its message of far-reaching significance, in the light of modern thought and reason. Today even in the midst of the gloom of materialism, scepticism, agnosticism and narrow-mindedness, we notice that a large section of the thinking people of the world, who come to know Shri Ramakrishna's life and message, directly or indirectly, feels attracted towards it. They strive and seek for a spiritual orientation of life. Accepting different religions they become more and more liberal and accommodating in their attitudes towards other faiths. They attempt to work for inter-religious dialogues, inter-religious understanding, and inter-religious co-operation, etc. This is how India's eternal message to the modern world as conveyed by Shri Ramakrishna, now silently works.

In this connection it is worthwhile to know the thoughts of one of the great world-historians of our times, Arnold Toynbee. He said, "In the Hindu view each of the higher religions is a true vision and a right way, and all of them alike are indispensable to mankind, because each

gives a different glimpse of the same truth, and each leads by a different route to the same goal of human endeavours. Each is not to be found in any of the others. To know this is good, but it is not enough. *Religion is not just a matter for study; it is something that is to be experienced and to be lived, and this is the field in which Shri Ramakrishna manifested his uniqueness. He practised successively almost from every Indian religion and philosophy, and he went on to practise Islam and Christianity as well. His religious activity and experience were, in fact, comprehensive to a degree that had perhaps never before been attained by any other religious genius, in India or elsewhere...*"<sup>10</sup>

"In the present age, the world has been united on the material plane by western technology. But this western skill has not only 'annihilated distance'; it has armed the peoples of the world with weapons of devastating power at a time when they have been brought to point blank range of each other without yet having learnt to know and love each other. At this supremely dangerous moment in human history the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian way. The Emperor Ashoka's and Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violence and Shri Ramakrishna's testimony to the harmony of religions; here we have the attitude and the spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together into a single family—and, in the Atomic age, this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves."<sup>11</sup> The great historian's observations and warning deserve our careful consideration.

10. Arnold Toynbee in his foreword to *Shri Ramakrishna and his Unique message* (Published by Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London)

11. *Ibid.* (p. viii).



# SOME LITERARY MERITS OF THE DHAMMAPADA

DR. YOG DHYAN AHUJA

“He who is free from craving and from greed, is expert in the knowledge of etymology and words; knows the combination of letters and their sequence, is said to be in his last physical form and, a man of great wisdom”.

(*The Dhammapada: Tanha vaggo*, verse 352).

The Buddhist Canon, the Pali Tripitaka (or the three baskets), consists of various texts some of which are only in prose while some others are exclusively in verse. Again, another category of these scriptures is in mixed prose and verse. The Dhammapada is one of the works that is entirely in Shlokas or verses. The two forms of the Sanskrit *Chhandas* or metres that have been employed in the Dhammapada, are the *Anushtubha* and the *Trishtubha*. However, there is no strict adherence to the regular metrical form nor to the number of syllables or the lines.

The contents of the Dhammapada have been drawn from diverse origins and classified under separate titles. The verses have been grouped together in a somewhat arbitrary way.<sup>1</sup> T.W. Rhys Davids comments, “In almost all cases these verses, gathered from various sources, are here strung together without any other internal connection than that they relate more or less to the same subject, and the collector has not thought it at all necessary to choose stanzas written in the same metre or in the same number of lines”.<sup>2</sup>

1. Dr. P. L. Vaidya. *Dhammapada*. Oriental Book Agency, Poona, 1934, Introduction, p. xxiv.

2. Dr. T. W. Rhys Davids. *Buddhism: Its History and Literature*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, and London, 1896, p. 68.

The *Dhammapadattha Katha* or the commentary on the Dhammapada attributed to Buddha Ghosha, provides narratives connected with the verses uttered by the Buddha. In all there are three hundred and five stories of this nature included in this commentary. During the second and the first centuries B.C., the use of parables played a popular role in the method of teaching in India. Samuel Beal, concurring with Max Muller, suggests that “The parables were invented to suit the text of the Dhammapada rather than vice versa.”<sup>3</sup>

Thinking of the Dhammapada naturally calls to mind the Bhagavad Gita. Both these texts are among the most prominent scriptures of Asia. The Dhammapada is as much the Bible of the Buddhists as is the Gita for the Hindus. Both are in poetry. In both cases the principal speaker is a single and divine personage. While the Gita is of great use in gaining proficiency in Sanskrit, the Dhammapada is equally helpful in the learning of Pali.

The Dhammapada is a basic Buddhist scripture and belongs to the earliest and formative stage of Buddhism while the Bhagavad Gita comes at a comparatively later period in the development of Hinduism. The Gita is mainly an account of Krishna's discourses with Arjuna whereas the verses in the Dhammapada are believed to have been addressed by the Buddha on different occasions to different listeners.

The Bhagavad Gita is a coherent description of the teachings of Krishna placed during eighteen days at the battleground of Kurukshetra. The duration of the contents of the Dhammapada is spread over forty-

3. Samuel Beal: *Dhammapada*: Indological Book House, Varanasi and Delhi (Reprint of 1878 edition), 1971, Introduction, p. 9.



five long years which the Buddha devoted to teaching and preaching. The Gita consists of seven hundred verses divided into eighteen chapters while the Dhammapada contains four hundred twenty three verses placed under twenty six headings.

Even though the stanzas of the Dhammapada may not, in their entirety, be the actual utterances of the Buddha, they do, in their essence, represent his views. These verses are in the form of direct teaching. While reading these verses one enjoys a serene and relaxed effect of the conversational style. With rare exceptions, the verses are plain and intelligible. While simple to understand these are moreover, easy to memorize. As reverend Narada observes, "The greatness of the Buddha lies in his exposition of profound truth in plain terms".<sup>4</sup> The verses furnish some vivid glimpses of the general life of the times. In addition, as reverend Narada points out, They give us a picture of the daily life of the Master as it was understood in the early days of the community".<sup>5</sup>

The stanzas of the Dhammapada are sensitive expressions of deep and tender feelings. They present touching pictures of profound compassion for the predicament of human existence. The figures of speech employed in the composition create lasting images on the reader's mind. Like several other figures of speech, the similes in the Dhammapada are masterpieces of the power of suggestion and illustration. What follows gives some examples of such similes.

"Above reproach like a coin of pure gold". (Verse 230) "Wordless like a broken gong". (V. 134) "Like a bull that grows in flesh but not in wisdom". (V. 152) "Active like a well-bred horse spurred by the whip". (V. 143) "Like a broken bow sighing over the past". (V. 156) "Happiness follows the

pure in heart like the shadow that never leaves". (V. 2) "Subduing the senses just as a charioteer tames the horses". (V. 94).

In the same class are several other similes, which are, likewise, as pretty as picture. A few graphic words or phrases, in their description, enhance the suggestiveness and the fascination of these portrayals.

A preacher without practice is like a cowherd counting the cows of others. (v. 19).

A sage moves like a bee gathering honey, without harming the colour or fragrance of the flower. (V. 49).

The mind flutters like the fish thrown from his watery home on the dry ground. (V. 34).

Death overthrows the infatuated just as flood sweeps away a sleeping village. (V. 47 & 287).

A pandit remains unmoved by blame or praise like a solid rock which stands unshaken in the wind. (V. 81).

Sorrow falls away from one who has conquered craving just as water falls down from the lotus leaves. (V. 336).

Just as a mishandled blade of grass wounds the hand, the badly practised asceticism leads one to hell. (V. 311).

The rust eats the same iron of which it is born. Even so the transgressor is led by his own vicious deeds to evil ends. (V. 240).

In certain instances more than one similes, suiting to the occasion, have been strung together in all aptness.

Patient like the earth, firm like a pillar, and...like a lake unsullied by mud. (V. 95).

The craving of a heedless person grows like the creeper. Like a monkey in search of fruit in the forest, he keeps wandering from birth to birth. (V. 334).

There is a remarkably specific and pertinent application of similes in the method of contrast and comparison.

4. Narada Thera: *The Dhammapada*. John Murray, London, Reprint, 1959, Preface, p. xi.

5. *Ibid.* p. 1.



The virtuous shines like the white peaks of the Himalayas from afar. The evil remains unobserved like the arrows shot in the night (V. 304).

The sorrowless wise one looks at the sorrowing ignorant one like one at the mountaintop looking at those on the ground. (V. 28).

In such cases, juxtaposition lends a peculiar emphasis to meaning and message of the verse.

Mara, the tempter, overthrows an unrestrained person just as the wind overthrows a weak tree.

Mara cannot overthrow a restrained person just as the wind cannot overthrow a rocky mountain. (V. 7, 8).

Passion makes its way into an uncultivated mind like the rain that penetrates an ill-thatched house.

Passion cannot make its way into a cultivated mind just as rain cannot penetrate into a well-thatched house. (V. 13, 14).

A fool benefits not from the company of the wise like a spoon that knows not the taste of the soup.

The thoughtful one soon learns the Doctrine in the company of the wise just as the tongue tastes the soup. (V. 64, 65).

Equally striking and suggestive are the metaphors. These are, though, not as numerous as the similes:

(Lust is a) forest and it must be cut down. (V. 283-344).

Empty the boat and it will go lightly to Nirvana. (V. 369).

Only a few cross to the other shore (Nirvana), the rest keep running up and down the bank. (V. 85).

In a paradoxical allegory lust is likened to mother and ignorance to father. "A true Brahmana, even having killed his mother and father, remains innocent". (V. 294-5).

The parallels drawn in the *Dhammapada*

are equally imaginative and pertinent. These are symbols of harmony, and are pictures come alive.

Long is the night for the wakeful.

Long is the league for the weary.

Long is the cycle of birth and death for the fool who knows not the Doctrine. (V. 60).

Canal makers lead the water.

Fletchers straighten the arrows.

Carpenters bend the wood.

The learned one regulates himself.<sup>6</sup> (V. 80, repeated-145).

The sun is bright by the day.

The moon shines at night.

The warrior is brilliant in his armour.

The Brahman is luminous in meditation.

The Buddha (the awakened one) in his glory, radiates day and night. (V: 387)

There are instances where reduplication adds to the impressiveness of the idea. On the other hand, there are examples of repetition. In some cases of repetition, one or more words are suitably replaced to produce the desired effect. In addition to the instances of partial repetitions, on occasions, complete lines have been reproduced without any change.

Bhikkhu Kassapa, formerly Dr. Cassius a Pereira, expresses eloquent admiration for the 'terse elegance' and 'incomparable beauty' of the original Pali stanzas. In the opening words of his foreword to Narada Thera's edition of the *Dhammapada* he says: "If I were to name any book from the whole Tripitaka as having been of most service to me, I should without hesitation, choose the *Dhammapada*. And it goes without saying that, to me, it is the best single book in all the wide world of literature".<sup>7</sup>

6. The word in verse 80 is 'Pandit', "The learned one". In verse 145 it is 'subbata', 'One of solemn pledge'.

7. In the foreword to the *Dhammapada* by Narada Thera: John Murray, London, Reprint, 1959.



# YOUTH: TODAY AND TWENTY FIRST CENTURY (II)

SANJAY MUKHERJI

The coming twenty first century which is going to step in only after twelve years, promises a different picture of youth we are having in today's society. By 2000 A.D. the capitalist countries are going to be older. Trends of declining birth rate, new styles of "childless culture", and increasing rate of aging population will thin out the ranks of youth groups in these societies. The population of 10-30 age category will be minimum in these developed regions. According to World Bank Report (1984), numbers in the 20-40 age group will increase by 19 millions, which is less than one third of the increase in population in these countries, during 1960 to 1980.

## *Economic Changes*

However, such a change in demographic composition will not affect the economic progress of these nations due to the advent of micro-electronic revolution. New economic structure will encourage 'smart growth, market networks, participative leadership, multiple goals and strategic management'.<sup>9</sup> The popular industries of the coming century will be computers, automation, genetic and space industries, and robot-manufacturing industries. Youths of the new age will, obviously, be much influenced by the roles played by telecommunications, electronic devices, and the new audio-visual media, and, in a broader sense by this newly emerging business and economic system.

## *Social Change*

Consequences of the new technology on employment will have greater impact on

the twenty-first century youth of all capitalist societies. In spite of a high level of education among them, if adequate action is not taken by the Governments or the employers, there is a strong possibility of large-scale unemployment among the youth, especially for the office workers in the coming age.<sup>10</sup>

The nature and pattern of jobs open to these youths will also be changed significantly. Office jobs which could be performed at the offices will be done by the worker staying at their homes. A large number of youth will hold part-time paid jobs, or job itself will be of less hours. It will certainly bring a radical change in the nature and time structure of production. Socio-Psychological changes will happen. In the coming century youths will be brought up and will live in such a family system which would be "de-massified right along with production system and the information society"<sup>11</sup>. Divorce rate will go on decreasing. Remarriage along with children, among the divorced couples may increase. More and more people will go into trial marriage while a tendency to form an expanded family unit is likely to grow. At the same time 'child-free' culture is emerging too. Many young people are choosing the lives of 'singles' in order to live alone. Both these trends could be traced in the societies of future.

The life of the twenty-first century youth of these highly industrialised societies will have a less emotional attachment to life. Only the needs, based on work-related

9. Halal William. E, *New Capitalism* quoted in *The Futurist Magazine* (bi-monthly) Bathseba. Maryland. U.S.A. JAN. FEB. 1988 P. 26.

10. Forester, John. Ed. *The Micro Electronics Revolution*, Cambridge, Massachusetts; MIT Press, 1981, P. 383.

11. Toffler, A., *The Third Wave*, William Morrow & Co. New York, 1980, P. 232.



virtues rather than psychological gratification, will be their main norm and attitude to life. By the end of this century they will, according to some thinkers, turn to alcohol more to ease their strain. Loneliness and increasingly tragic, mental disorder will be the serious psychosocial problem. Vandalism, crime, especially the white-colour crime will increase by this time continuously. In a post-industrial society, the disjunction of culture and social structure is bound to widen. The historic justification of bourgeois society in the realms of religion and culture is gone. The lack of a rooted moral belief system will be the cultural contradiction of the new society, and the deepest challenge to its survival.<sup>12</sup>

However, the emerging trends of building up small units of manufacturing industries as we see in Japan today, suggest some new ways of avoiding these problems both at the social and at the individual level. Small but enterprising youth groups have already started building up small industrial units in many countries. This trend will create less monotonous and more satisfying life for the youth as it will assure an independent life of hard work. With new technology, new psychological needs will grow. According to many thinkers of today, spiritual satisfaction will be the crying need of the youth of the twenty-first century. Societies in many capitalist countries will return to some religious ideas which will satisfy reason and at the same time provide the means of achieving social solidarity, a feeling of oneness with the rest of mankind. New possibilities are also arising with the progress of artificial intelligence technology. It may bring a new impact on man's view of himself, leading him to read and learn his mind as a 'phenomenon of nature'. Thus it will inspire him, for the first time, in the

midst of the new super-industrial civilisation, with the Vedantic idea, 'Know Thyself'<sup>13</sup> Strange though it may seem, youth will be taught this Vedantic idea through computers and silicon chips. As a result, a more self-controlled and rational life-style among the youth is expected by many futurists of today.

### *Political Change*

Increasing disparities between the rich and the poor in the advanced countries are likely to create political ferments and disturb the trading among the capitalist countries. Due to continuous recession and increasing unemployment in these countries many youth, as in West Germany, would hesitate to predict the political future of their countries. Demand for job and job-security might emerge as the most important political demand of the youth. Because of advanced and almost instantaneous global connections, youth movements on global basis, will be intensified on issues like nuclear-weapon-free world, fight against arms race, or apartheid.

### *Socialist Countries*

Socialist countries are on experiments in both their theoretical and practical approach to life and its problems. Orthodox version of socialism is being slowly replaced in Russia by the introduction of Glasnost (new-thinking) and Perestroika (restructuring), and by the new open-door policy of Deng in China. Old Marxist ideas have been rejected or replaced in all the so-called countries including Cuba and Angola, according to the needs and changes due to advance of time.

Youth in Soviet Russia is going to face deep and wide-ranging changes in their

12. *The Futurist Magazine*, July-August, 1987.

13. Bell Daniel. *The Coming of Post Industrial Society: A Venture in Social forecasting* (New York, Basic Books, 1973).



socialistic framework. A new moral and spiritual awareness is intensifying in this country. Implementation of 'perestroika' with some success has already been accepted with a warm welcome. The stagnation of the 1970s and 1980s is replaced by a new wave of enthusiasm. A wider spirit of democracy is expected in the new century. Legal protection for public criticism is being strengthened. The so-long rigid, and socialistic upbringing of the young people is expected to have a more democratic and decentralised approach. In an interview in 'La Stampa' of Turin, Italy, Mr. Abel Aganbegyan, Director of the economic section of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and Gorbachev's chief economic adviser, recently said, 'Under the current Soviet reforms, our social guarantees will be preserved, but a welfare mentality will be discouraged....We are trying to combat egalitarianism. The principle is: Those who work hard should earn more. The people content with egalitarianism were those who worked little and earned a lot.... We are learning to swim in an economic sea that is new to us.' The new incentive to risk-taking, educated, independent, and creative workers, will create a new generation of Soviet youth.<sup>14</sup>

Almost similar changes are expected in China, although China's socio-economic problems are widely different than those of Russia. Despite the new open-door policy, the disparity between the open-door policy and the new economic policy is evident. Chinese economy with high budget-deficit and trade-deficit, is confronted with a series of uncertainties and bottlenecks. It is hard to expect that all these obstacles will be removed before the end of this century, especially when China has to feed more than 1.2 billion mouths per day. Zero population growth as targetted by the Chinese

government, can only be achieved after 2040 A.D. Any drastic action to get the result immediately may yield a fruitless outcome. Since the days of Mao, many of the old values of the great culture have been pushed back in the background. Within the last few years Chinese youths have increasingly become followers of the Western culture. Recent political movements by the university students only show that Chinese youths are looking towards a future which will be free from the present uncertainties and state-restrictions imposed upon them.

#### *Non-Socialist Third World Countries Demographic Change*

A sea-change in population composition is going to take place in the Third-world countries by the end of this century. Number of aged people between 20 and 40 will increase at about 2.6 per cent a year in the developing countries. In absolute terms it will be about 600 million.<sup>15</sup> Existence of such a large number of youths will obviously affect the economy and the social condition to a large extent.

#### *Economic Change*

Agro-based rural economy of most of these countries will face a tremendous pressure due to population explosion. Existing agricultural techniques will find it extremely difficult to produce the triple food output required to provide normal diet to the increased population. UNICEF forecasts that in the year 2000 A.D. one out of every five children will be malnourished, and unfortunately all of them live in this Third World region. According to this estimate, hundreds of millions of human

14. Quoted in *World Press Review*, Jan. 1988, P. 19.

15. World Development Report, 1984: World Bank Report, Oxford University Press, 1984, P. 3 and 7.

beings will starve to death in the underdeveloped countries before the year 2000 A.D., if spectacular advancement in the techniques of agriculture is not achieved. Many of the governments do not favour, due to various reasons, such radical change in the existing patterns of agriculture, and neither the international assistance required for such a change is being available. At the present rate of growth, the industrial output of these countries will be only 13.5% of the world's production in the year 2000 A.D.<sup>16</sup>

Number of employable youths in these countries will be around 300 millions by 2000 A.D. A massive capital investment, available from the capitalist and other advanced countries and also from international funds, may tackle this chronic unemployment and underemployment problem. Many developing countries are trying to do it by importing high-tech know-how from the developed countries, and developing techniques which are intensively labour-saving. This may multiply the problems of youth employment in the long run. In many countries like India, social and political pressure to employ young people, may rise against the policies and machineries of the government. This may also lead to ensure 'guarantee employment scheme', for at least all the educated youth, as the Egypt government has already done for her university graduates.

The youth of South and East Asian countries, however, is expected to have a better economic prospect in the coming century. Poverty would be reduced, according to experts, by about forty percent along with a rapid fall in fertility rate, which will help to reduce poverty by seventy percent in countries like Latin America, North America and the Middle East countries.

16. Castro, Fidel. *The World Economic and Social Crisis*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1983. P. 123.

The over-all economic prospect of the Third-world youth will differ from country to country in varying degree.

### *Social Change*

Unplanned modernisation with the introduction of market economy in traditional societies of many underdeveloped countries may create a serious imbalance. It is now being found that in the African continent, the three waves of culture, the pre-industrial, the industrial and the post-industrial information culture, are making an unbalanced jot. Its effect on the youth and on the societies as a whole, is like a hotch-potch in the realms of the norms, attitudes, and values of life.

Basic problems of the Third-world youth may not be fully eradicated in the coming century. In spite of a strong urge for education and ensuring of universal primary education by many countries by the end of this century, the absolute number of illiterate youth, according to many experts, will go on increasing. It is estimated that almost one billion illiterates will live in these Third-world countries in the 21st century.<sup>17</sup> Chronic unemployment together with a high level of illiteracy may lead to increase in delinquency among the youth. Crime rate may also obviously increase. No amount of Government machinery can mitigate their tensions and conflicts unless they are well-settled in their social and personal life. In case of rapidly developing countries, increasing migration of rural youth to urban areas will expand their social horizon and aspirations all of which may not be realised, creating thus a new kind of conflict in their minds.

### *Political Change*

Political activities among the youth in most of the underdeveloped countries will

17. Ibid. P. 184.



see a new height. Youth, especially in Africa, South Africa, and Latin American Countries, are expected to go in search of a new form of society which will be free from both political oppression and economic starvation. Their struggle for democracy and a just society is expected to rise to a high pitch. Consequently their inter-generational conflicts will be reduced. The governments will survive by conceding to them democratic rights.

### *Conclusion*

Forecasting the future can often be erroneous, especially when new unpredictable movements occur in history. The history of the twentieth century is crowded with instances when the youth emerged as great power bringing new life, freedom, revolutionary actions, new trends of thought in art, music, poetry and even in politics. Changes in youth happen neither by instant illumination nor by an universal conversion. Youth is essentially creative in nature and dreamers by temperament. Once their

tremendous dynamism is inflamed by an attractive and fiery idealism there is nothing that they cannot do. This century has seen the best and the worst use of the youth power all over the globe. The great sacrifices for the sake of gaining independence, and wanton destructions in the name of revolution for perpetuating the whims of life-negating idealisms, both have been witnessed in the last eighty years of history. We may only hope that due to the increase in information-revolution in the coming century, it will be difficult to exploit the youth by feeding them with wrong interpretations of history or brain-washing them with any and every idealism chosen by power-mongers all over the globe for perpetuating their own designs. In fact, it can be fairly hoped that due to the closer unity among nations, as a result of faster communications, youth all over the globe will get more opportunities to know each other better than before, and fight as one single force for common humanitarian and global issues.

---

## SOME VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS OF INDIA

SHRI D. K. OZA, I.A.S.

There has been a certain tradition of non-governmental voluntary work, based upon religious tenets for almost two centuries. Organised urban voluntary work came to India with the Christian missionaries in the eighteenth century and some Hindu missionaries in the early part of the present century followed their example. The Christian Missionaries and their Hindu counterparts created institutions of exceptionally high quality in the field of education and health—like schools, colleges and hospitals. The remaining part of their work was wholly confined to what may be called

“ameliorative work” which would mean helping the physically handicapped, the desparately poor, the destitutes, the shelterless, young women in moral danger, rescuing children who were morally and materially abandoned and, occasionally, disaster relief. Secular groups, mainly upper class women, did similar work on a smaller scale. All such voluntary work was substantially confined to urban areas, and divorced from politics.

In the late Fifties and early Sixties of this century, however, a new kind of volun-

tary work is coming into vogue. In addition to education, health and the "ameliorative work", two different kinds of voluntary agencies have come into existence. Speaking rather broadly, they may be called agencies involved in "economic development work" and those engaged in "awareness raising work". These latter two, "development" and "awareness raising", cannot be strictly compartmentalised; some do both, and often the final result is a mixture of the two elements, not by any means arithmetically measurable.

Here is a study of a few voluntary movements in India. They are: (1) The Chipko movement, (2) Baba Amte's movement, (3) The Sewa movement, (4) The Gandhigram Complex, (5) The Assefa movement, and (6) The Ramakrishna movement. Each of these is discussed in some detail below:

*The Chipko movement* started in the late Sixties, rather spontaneously, in the sub-Himalayan region of the Northern Indian State of Uttar Pradesh where reckless felling of trees had led to an ecological disaster. The meaning of the Hindi word "Chipko" is "to hug hard". The felling of the trees, mainly for use as timber in the urban areas, was undertaken by forest contractors who got their permits to fell the trees in total disregard of the ecological damage it would do. This sub-Himalayan region is known as the District of Tehri Garhwal. The women of this area found in a man called Sunderlal Bahuguna a leader. Mr. Bahuguna is inspired by Gandhian ideals which need not be discussed here. What he did, however, was to ask the women to "chipko" the trees meaning that they should hug the trees when the contractors' men come to fell them, defying the men to hit them with their axe first. This was an extraordinary response to an intolerable situation and the women succeeded in a spectacular way. Firewood is the main source of energy for

domestic heating and cooking over almost the whole of India barring the cities, and the destruction of trees deprives the local people of their only source of such energy. Quite apart from that, such destruction which has been going on all over Himalayas is responsible for recurring droughts and floods. There is a drought or a flood every year in some parts of India, and this is wholly a man-made tragedy. This point is simple enough to understand, but it is this voluntary "Chipko" movement, which was completely non-violent and yet aggressive which showed that those who are poor, if they organise themselves, could combat organised exploitation and oppression. It must be stated that the Government of Uttar Pradesh State, and indeed, the Government of India, were wholly in favour of these voluntary movements. Once it started, the Government of India honoured the leader Bahuguna publicly. This movement has now helped the women of the area to assert their right in many other ways not anticipated when the Movement started with the limited objective of "Saving the trees".

*Baba Amte's movement* started exactly 50 years ago, in what is now the Maharashtra State, almost exactly in the centre of the Indian sub-continent, approximately 60 miles from Nagpur city. Baba Amte, a gentleman who is now 74 year old, saw the ravages caused by leprosy among the poor of that area. Partly owing to an impulse of compassion and partly under the inspiration provided by Mahatma Gandhi, he started treating leprosy patients in a makeshift dispensary. He relinquished what could have been a prosperous career as a lawyer, and over five decades, extended his work from the field of leprosy to the field of education, health-related matters, rehabilitation of the physically handicapped, and above all raising the level of awareness among the poor and the tribals of that area.



Any such work is everywhere opposed by vested interests, but once again it was shown that, if the poor could understand their dilemma and organise themselves, they are capable of defending themselves against those who seek to exploit them. Baba Amte's work has been widely acclaimed by the people and acknowledged by the Government.

*The Sewa movement* started in the Western Coastal state of Gujarat in the early Seventies, and was initiated by a perceptive Mrs. Ela Bhatt who had, in fact, many years earlier started working among the poor women compelled to pull heavy handcarts loaded with sundry cargo in the very big Ahmedabad City. She organised the self-employed women in urban areas. Such women were vegetable and fruit-vendors, flower-sellers, fish-vendors, broomstick and basket-makers, handcart-pullers, beedi-makers (beedi is a simple Indian version of the cigarette), quilt-makers, utensil-hawkers, firewood-gatherers, garment-makers and others. The movement has now spread to women dairy farmers and handloom weavers in the rural areas in Gujarat and to some other States of India. It is always difficult to organise such unorganised self-employed women; the reason for this is the low self image of the women, their ignorance and their poverty. This movement "Sewa" derives its name from its title "Self Employed Women Association" and it has given the organised women a feeling of dignity and personal worth, besides raising their levels of income.

*The Gandhigram Complex* located in the Tamil Nadu of India, approximately 300 miles south-west of Madras City, was founded forty years ago by a distinguished lady Mrs. Soundaram Ramachandran who was inspired by the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. From very small beginnings, the institution has now grown into a full-fledged rural University, and has created innovative

programmes of rural housing, small-scale industry, and public health and family planning.

*The "Assefa"* is the short name for Association of Sarva Seva Farms. It started working in the early Eighties in five South Indian States. Although the movement is barely five year old, its roots go back to 35 years when a Gandhian, Vinoba Bhave, started a movement to tackle the problem of the landless poor in rural India. The problem was by far the most important and politically the most explosive. Bhave, accompanied by a group of his followers, started walking across the sub-Continent from the year 1951 collecting voluntary "gifts of land" (in Indian languages called "Bhoodan") from the rich farmers which he hoped would be given to those who had no land. This movement went on right upto the year 1967. A great deal of land, some of it good, some of very poor quality, and some with doubtful claims of title or ownership was thus collected as gift. Such gifted land was slowly distributed among the poor in some States of India, but those who received such land were hardly capable of putting such lands to the best possible use. The reasons for this state of affairs were poor availability of water or fertilisers or agricultural credit and a little help by way of technical expertise. The *Assefa* movement seeks to organise and serve the recipients of these lands. They are encouraged to form producers' cooperatives, and the *Assefa* assists them in many ways. The work is not merely confined to agricultural inputs; the *Assefa* also tries to provide measures to improve both the health and the educational status of the participants, and, indeed, their level of awareness.

*The Ramakrishna movement* with its twin organisations, the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission, began in the final decade of the last century. Inspired

by the life and message of Shri Ramakrishna, his disciple, Swami Vivekananda, the patriotic saint of India, started this movement in order to preach and practise the gospel of Vedanta, through the worship of God in man, especially the worship of God in the poor and the afflicted both materially and spiritually. The 149 centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission spread all over India and other foreign countries, offer three kinds of service. The first is the service through food, shelter, medicine, health, social welfare activities, rural and tribal welfare works, integrated rural development projects, blind, orphan, and destitute homes. The second is the offering of education both in modern and ancient subjects, at all levels, right from Nursery to Post Graduate level. The third is the dissemination of spiritual ideas through daily rituals, talks, retreats, bhajans, lectures, and publication of religious litera-

ture. According to its latest report during the year 1986-87, 48 lakhs of people received medical treatment through the 8 hospitals, 66 dispensaries and 14 mobile units and other medical centres of the Math & Mission. Through the 1,409 educational institutions of the movement, 1,35,001 students received education during the same period. This is the most well-known voluntary organisation of India having a sound religio-cultural base, which is run and led by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order, assisted by capable and dedicated householders.

These movements are among the best known in the country and they rely primarily upon awareness raising, creating among the poor and the oppressed a motivation for change, and to develop among them a feeling of self-reliance and hope.

## SOME THOUGHTS ON THE RAMAYANA

R. V. N. SUBBA RAO

The Ramayana is one of the greatest treasures of India's cultural heritage. It reflects the ideals and traditions of the Indian society whose foundation is Dharma or righteousness. While Homer's *Illiad* and *Odyssey* stand as the great epics of the West, Srimad Ramayana and the Mahabharata, by Valmiki and Vyasa, are the most prominent epics of the East.

Of these two Oriental epics, the influence of Ramayana is not only extensive, but ever-lasting as well. The temples of Thailand, the life and the belief of the people inhabiting East-Indias, bear ample testimony to the subtle influence which the Ramayana exercised over the ages.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Indian society is largely moulded by the

ideals enunciated in the Ramayana. Rama-Rajya or the rule of Shri Rama had been an ideal which many kings in Indian History had been striving to realise. An excellent example in this regard is that of Shivaji who strove to establish an ideal state on the lines suggested in the Ramayana under the spiritual guidance of his revered Guru Shri Samartha Ramadasa.

The concern for social welfare as embedded in the directive principles of our constitution and its provisions for safeguarding the interests of socially weaker sections, could be traced to Shri Rama's concern for the tribal-king Guhaka and his efforts to identify himself with the poor but devout Shabari.

Gandhiji used to reiterate that the estab-



lishment of Rama-Rajya on the Indian soil, was his ultimate goal. Though the term Rama-Rajya is not incorporated in our constitution, the welfare state which it seeks to establish ultimately is much akin to it.

The family life in India is largely influenced by the Ramayana. Shri Rama and his three brothers constitute an ideal brotherhood. Shri Rama's relations with his wife Janaki, though a subject for bitter comment by rationalists in recent years, are still considered exemplary even in this modern age. Janaki stands out as an ideal wife with her patient suffering, unbending will, purity of character and the courage for sacrifice and standing against the brute-force. The secret of her success lies in her blemishless character. Rama was no heartless or suspicious husband. If he appeared a bit harsh at times, it was because he was as much a husband as a king. As king, his demeanour should be above board. The equality of sexes which is championed in India, and outside as well, is not an entirely new concept. Janaki was no puppet. There were occasions when she asserted herself as his better-half or ardhagini. Had she desired, she could have returned to Rama with Hanuman's help, but had not. She was a woman of self-respect. She wished to be redeemed by her husband whose duty was to protect her from the clutches of the mighty Ravana, as Rama was her 'Bharta', meaning her 'bearer' through her joys and sorrows.

Shri Rama's concern for the lowly, as lowly as the animals and birds, was truly genuine. His performance of the funeral rites for Jatayu, who was elevated thus by him to the higher spheres or 'Urdhwa Loka', was an act of supreme grace. It was no magic for publicity. It was born out of his all-embracing love and compassion for the living and identification with them. His attitude towards the tiny squirrel is another example.

Rama's classic reply to his brother Lakshmana, after winning the battle against Ravana, that he would not like to stay any longer in the kingdom of Lanka, despite the fact that Lanka was a city of gold, is unforgettable. He said, 'Janani-Janma-Bhoomishcha Swargadapi Gareeyasi' (Mother and Motherland carry more value than Heaven). That was why, he made Vibhishana, the brother of Ravana, the king of Lanka. Rama had never a longing for Swarnapuri Lanka. By killing Ravana he only rendered his duty as an incarnation of God, the duty of 'Dushta Shikshana and Shishta Rakshana' (Punishing the wicked and saving the Good).

The Ramayana is an Epic immortal. Its influence transcends the bounds of time and space. The reason is that the Ramayana preaches and exemplifies Dharma, which has an eternal value. That is why, in the prologue to this immortal epic, its author-sage Valmiki claims eternity for his work saying that the Ramayana will last and exert its living influence till the mighty Himalaya and the river Ganga exist. It was no accident that Valmiki had chosen a great personality like Shri Rama to be the hero of his epic. Only a 'Purushottama', the best of men like Shri Rama with all the heroic qualities of head and heart, could have lived up to the tenets of Dharma as envisaged by Valmiki. Shri Rama is 'Dheerodatta' in the thorough sense of the word, a hero of war and peace.

Apart from his public aspect, Shri Rama has enchanting private aspects to his life. He is an ideal husband, son, disciple, brother, friend and what not. He is all in one—an integrated personality and fully evolved soul approximating to Godhood. Any ideal man and any ideal woman are invariably compared to Shri Rama and Sita. It is immaterial for the people of this country, whether Ayodhya was a historical city and Rama as well as Sita were historical personalities. If people of India and

abroad still revere these Ramayanic characters, and erected temples in every village to show their devotion, it is because the quality and standard of life which they had lived.

The gist of the Ramayana is that a man

of Dharma is never let down in spite of severe obstacles. On the other hand he will be aided by 'Pancha Bhoota' all living elements and beings. This is the strong belief that the Indians have at all times and stages which create a wonder to outsiders.

## INDIAN HOLISTIC EXPERIENCE AND ANALYTICAL RATIONALITY

RAJA RAMANNA

It is an old classification that divides the Universe into three sets: Things with consciousness, things without consciousness and God; a classification which, after several centuries of development, including the amazing advances of science, continues to remain valid. The understanding of the relationships between them is a very complex problem and there has been hardly any progress as to whether they are disjoint, or whether there is an intersection between them, or whether they are merely sub-sets of each other. The problem has remained in this state, though it has engaged the best minds over several centuries.

Using a slightly mathematical terminology to avoid contradictions of language, the classifications can be defined as follows:

(1) Sets of all things which have no consciousness, referred to as the "A-CHIT" set, S(A), ("CHIT" meaning Consciousness);

(2) Sets of all things which have consciousness, referred to as the "CHIT" set, S(C); and

(3) God, referred to as the "ISHWARA" set, S(I) and for purposes of this limited discussion defined as a set of all possible sets with the widest possible scope including things responsible for the origin of life. We assume for the time being that S(I) is not merely the union of S(A) and S(C). In Vedantic literature, God does not necessarily

mean an all powerful anthropomorphic Entity.

As is known, the brain is capable of being programmed like in a computer and the lower animals. But the human brain and perhaps those of some of the higher animals have special capabilities which can question their own actions and thoughts. Among these can be included "Will", "Conceptualisation" etc. Wherever the word consciousness is used, it refers to the non-programmable part of our consciousness. As to the demonstration of its existence, we refer to daily experience.

We have defined the Ishwara set as God for making contact with the older literature and repeat that, in Vedantic literature, God does not necessarily mean an all powerful anthropomorphic being and a capricious law-giver. Another definition is given, hopefully without contradiction, so that the relationship between the modern physical view and the Vedantic view can be analysed in a fruitful manner. As seen later, the Ishwara set becomes very significant, if an appropriate interpretation is given to it.

The significance of the relations between the various sets as seen by a mechanist scientist, a quantum scientist and a Vedantist as expounded by the great Indian philosopher, Shankara and others who



came after him, will form the substance of this paper.

### *The Mechanistic View*

This view is based on a model of the Universe as a system which works on purely mechanical principles. Such a view was strongly prevalent in Europe till towards the end of the 19th century. Its importance now is that it is an example of how immediate successes of a theory, covering one branch of knowledge, does not necessarily imply universal validity. It was further believed that there is no requirement for a separate ISHWARA set S(I). Such views gained added strength from the work of Darwin, though it is not clear as to what is meant by "survival of the fittest" and such other non-molecular statements. The strongly materialistic view of nature is not new and is well expressed in the Charvaka philosophy of early Hindu philosophy. It was rejected by the savants of the time to give place later to Buddhistic thought.

In the mechanistic view, since the Universe is made up of physical entities, whose laws of behaviour are supposed to be well understood, consciousness is said to arise from the physics or chemistry of the materials that constitute the body and nothing else. There is, of course, the question as to how life itself originated. Assuming that it did originate by some physico-chemical processes, it is conjectured that the creation of consciousness would have come about by some such similar process. The effect of drugs on consciousness, a fact known over a long period of time, adds strength to this view. The general belief was and is, in some quarters, that it would perhaps take a few more years to understand the details of the physico-chemical processes which constitute life and consciousness.

We recall that physics and, therefore, the rest of science has been defined as the

science of measurement (Kelvin). The supreme position Science holds in defining knowledge arises from the fact that it gives, in a consistent manner, a satisfactory explanation of the behaviour of inanimate matter. The word "consistent" is used here to mean that it avoids problems of begging the question.

Measurement and quantification have led us to believe that the language of science is mathematics. This association has been extremely fruitful in not only explaining scientific facts but even in being able to unify a large body of information in such a way that it can be expressed in a very concise form, demonstrating that they do have a unified origin. All this has contributed to the spectacular successes of the scientific method.

However, these very successes have sometimes foreclosed our analytical powers and our reasoning seems to have become conditioned to search for problems, whose solutions suit the assumptions of the theory and reject those problems which fall outside its scope, as though they are not problems at all. This is often done on the grounds that the problems do not fit into a scheme of quantification or measurability.

We note that, even when one moves from the field of numbers to a more general concepts of sets and particularly in dealing with an infinite number of them, pure logic can lead to inconsistencies of a very fundamental nature. The theorem of Godel demonstrates that mathematics, with all its rigour, is not all that complete as to be able to tackle all types of problems.

Since physics is defined as the science of measurement, it is interesting to ponder over the origin of this word from its root. The word comes from the root MA meaning measurement, from which the Indo-Aryan words such as METRON (Greek) and MATRA (Sanskrit) are derived. But what is strange is that the Sanskrit word MAYA also is derived from the same

root. The word MAYA is normally translated as "illusion" but another translation could be the word "immeasurable".

To erase Western notions of the State of Science in ancient and medieval India, I quote the following Shloka from Sanskrit logic which defines the word "Measurement". It runs as follows:<sup>1</sup>

*Paratvam caparatvam ca  
dvividham parikirtitam:  
Daisikam kalikam capi  
murta eva tu daisikam:  
Paratvam murta-samyoga-  
bhuyastvajnanato bhavet:  
Aparatvam tadapatva-  
buddhitah syaditiritam:*

"Distance and nearness are described as being of two kinds, viz. spatial and temporal. The spatial abides only in measurable things. Distance arises from a notion of preponderance of the intersection of measurable things and nearness is said to arise from a notion of its meagreness."

The idea of "measure", "set" and "intersection" is fully implied and yet as we see later the Vedantist would prefer us to have it that it is Maya (immeasurability) that represents Reality and not that which can only be measured.

### *The Quantum Mechanical View*

The powerful new method of physics, i.e. Quantum Mechanics, does allow for a greater flexibility of interpretation than the mechanistic view of the Universe. The theory has a right to claim to be an universal theory to explain "all" phenomena. However, ever since it was proposed, it has been facing problems of consistency and incompleteness, some of it arising from pre-conditioned notions arising out of mechanistic thinking. It allows, at least to

some physicists, for the Mind or Consciousness to play a part in the completion of a measurement. All descriptions in Quantum Mechanics are based on probability amplitudes and its conversion to an actual measurement requires the mind to operate (collapse of the wave function). There has, of course, been a tremendous amount of effort to avoid the inclusion of the existence of a separate entity called "the mind". Among these are, e.g., hidden variables theory, many world theories, etc. The seriousness of the need to find an explanation of the collapse of the wave function in the measurement process, within the body of physics, is understandable, because if we accept the assistance of something outside that of physics, then science will no longer be an all comprehensive field of knowledge and its very foundations will be in question.

Strangely enough, all the efforts to resolve this problem have not succeeded and have led invariably to a null-type result, i.e., leading to a solution which neither says "yes" nor "no". They seem to require more assumptions than what one started with or lead to inconsistencies which are more severe than the assumption of the existence of a Mind. At least, the Mind is observable, if not measurable. The most recent of the attempts are based on the consideration that Quantum Mechanics works best for isolated particles and, as one moves to conglomerates, a process of "mixing" takes place, leading to classical descriptions, thus eliminating the need for the collapse of the wave function. The theory gives no prescriptions as to where one draws a line between a few particles and a conglomerate. Recent experiments indicate that Quantum Mechanics seems to be meaningful even in macro-systems, e.g., superconductivity, etc.<sup>2</sup> The controversy is

1. Visvanatha 17th cent. A.D.: *Bhasa-Pariccheda* (Verses 121 & 122) Trans. Swami Madhavananda, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas.

2. A.J. Leggat: *Reflections on the Quantum Measurement Paradox*, Foundations of Physics, David Bohm, Festschrift.



not a new one, as the very founders of Quantum Mechanics were aware of it right from the beginning.

The flexibility of Quantum Epistemology rests on the fact that an uncertainty principle operates in the process of measurement itself and the phenomena one is looking for may be disturbed by the very act of investigation. It has even been pointed out that the processes of life may be screened in this permanent way from physical investigation. However, to invoke "Uncertainty", one must show that the conditions that are required for this principle to operate, are indeed fulfilled.<sup>3</sup>

We thus see it is, in principle, possible to decouple some aspects of physical existence from physics through the Uncertainty Principle as also the requirement of a Mind to complete the process of measurement. Another limitation comes from within mathematics, i.e. Godel's Theorem, though some scientists are inclined to believe that it has nothing to do with physical investigations. But the theorem clearly states that, within its own set of postulates, it is possible to show that there are an infinite number of propositions which are true, but can never be proved within its own frame-work. Expressed in not too exact a language it says: "Truth is greater than Proof".

It is not the intention of the paper to discuss the epistemological problems of Quantum Mechanics, as there is already so much literature on the subject. The objective is to point out the long way epistemological problems of Quantum Mechanics has travelled from the mechanistic conception of physics and how the present philosophical approach leans more towards Vedantic thought. Unfortunately, the old literature in Sanskrit has been translated into English by people who have had no

knowledge of Science and even Shlokas, which are fairly simple and straightforward in their purport, are made to look complicated and mystical.

For the purpose of showing the overlap between modern scientific philosophy and Sanskrit thought when properly translated and interpreted, some facts about Quantum Mechanics are summarised below:

(1) Quantum Mechanics is essentially an abstract theory. Non-observables are used and have to be properly interpreted to get useful information. Not all physical quantities, associated with an atomic system, can simultaneously be measured or given numbers. There are definite limitations on the amount of information that can be obtained about any atomic system. The theory itself gives only probabilities. The probabilities used here are different from that used in the tossing of a coin. It can apply even to single events;

(2) How far one has moved from earlier concepts will become clear from a quotation from the writings of Lord Kelvin, one of the great physicists of the last century, and from Dirac on the present status:

Kelvin: It seems to me that the test of "Do we or do we not understand a particular point in Physics?" is "Can we make a mechanical model of it?"

Dirac: The methods of progress in theoretical physics have undergone a vast change during the present century. The classical tradition has been to consider the world to be an association of observable objects (particles, fluids, fields, etc.) moving about according to definite laws of force, so that one could form a mental picture in space and time of the whole scheme. This led to a physics, whose aim was to make assumptions about the mechanism and forces connecting these observable objects, to account for their behaviour in the simplest possible way. It has become increasingly evident in recent times, however, that nature works on a different plan. Her

3. B.D. Josephson, Cambridge: *Limits to the Universality of Quantum Mechanics*, Foundation of Physics, Bohm Festschrift.

fundamental laws do not govern the world as it appears in our mental picture in any very direct way, but instead they control a substratum of which we cannot form a mental picture without introducing irrelevancies.

A typical example of irrelevancies is the beautiful experiment with neutrons:<sup>4</sup>

A beam of neutron is made to go through two holes as in the case of Young's experiment on interference with light. The theory predicts that an interference pattern should appear on the screen. The intensity of neutrons is such that there is a large time difference between the arrivals of the neutrons at the holes and yet an interference correlation appears on the screen. The question usually asked is: how do the neutrons communicate with each other to be able to stabilise the pattern? It seems that the very abstract nature of the theory by itself takes all this into account and makes the question irrelevant.

From all this, we can conclude that it is too drastic to assume that  $S(C)$  is a subset of  $S(A)$  and it is likely that the two sets have a disjoint portion.

(3) We are all aware of the existence of static symmetry, e.g., geometric objects, etc. Expanding on this idea, we can define time-dependent symmetry (dynamic symmetry), where the invariance is not the shape of the objects, but the physical laws themselves. It is thus possible to express all physical laws as abstract symmetries,

either as those arising from symmetry considerations or due to departures from them. A law can arise out of symmetry or asymmetry, i.e., break of symmetry. In this way, it is possible, in principle, to arrive at a situation where all physical laws can be unified by arriving at some sort of an all Supreme Symmetry and departures thereof. Using this possibility, one can define the ISHWARA set as giving rise to sets from the symmetric and asymmetric components of the Supreme Symmetry. The possible existence of a Supreme Symmetry forming an all comprehensive set in idealised symmetry and which contains all that we need to know and from which the measurable world can be projected directly or through departures from Supreme Symmetry, leads us straight to Vedantic thought.

We note here that, since we are talking of physical laws, the Supreme Symmetry has not been given anything more than pure physical meaning. It remains aloof from that which it creates and is not particularly concerned with the welfare of what it creates. It is not clear that it is even responsible for the non-programmable part of our consciousness. The very idea of unity through Symmetry is an example of order coming out of order and, before we commence the implication of modern scientific thought on philosophy, we quote the following polemic from the *Chandogya Upanishad* composed about 3000 years ago:

"...though some hold that chaos alone was before a second, and order came of it, how can it ever be so. Order indeed was alone in the beginning..."

4. H. Rauch: *Quantum Measurements in Neutron Interferometry*, Proc. 2nd International Symposium Foundations of Quantum Mechanics, Tokyo, 1986.

(To be concluded)



# ODE TO MAYAVATI

DR. S. K. CHAKRABORTY

The sun is soft, the mist is blue—  
Thy steep slopes sleep, thy deep valleys dream.  
I—a pilgrim from the vale of bursting noise and void—  
Tread softly to rest my restive soul in thy balmy lap.  
O! my soul—I look around, but only hear—  
The fading song of the flying bird.

Once finite Infinity, a weeping fiery Soul of souls  
Stamped His feet on thee ;  
And lo! He swalloweth the Infinite finity—the snowy Shiva—  
As the buxom white of the cloud engulfeth the comely moon.  
O! my soul—I seek the snow, *but only hear*—  
The fading song of the flying bird.

Many a bright star hath since followed thee  
Unto this point—O thou flaming Star.  
Dids't thou then lift thy veil for them—  
Thy veil of shimmering mist, O mystic abode ?  
O! my soul—the veil stands and I hear—  
The fading song of the flying bird.

The yonder hill sits transfixed in tranquil peace—  
Now beneath the turquoise dome, bathed in eternal music ;  
Then under the starry canopy,  
Draped in dark satin—for ever.  
O! my soul—I drink the silence and hear—  
The fading song of the flying bird.

The sighs of the winds are doleful,  
The prayers of the trees are swelling.  
Yet, my heart, entombed and sealed, cries—  
With no sleep nor dreams, no prayers nor sighs.  
O! my soul—the speechless agony mingles with  
The fading song of the flying bird.

The fragrant King of the Light arrives and departs,  
The sweet Queen of the Dark waits and passes.  
The rhododendrons smile and blush to red,  
The idly fitting bees sip nectar.  
O! my soul—wait I alone amid  
The fading song of the flying bird.

Thou vain snow peaks of the mount far north,  
I seek for thee with passion fair and deep,  
My frail eyes grope for thy grandeur only,  
My stony bosom I crave to carve with thy chaste white forms.  
O! my soul—but all is haze, and I hear—  
The fading song of the flying bird.

I know, I know why this mantle over thy face.  
 The stench and mire of mind I bring,  
 The maze of rotting desires I cast,  
 Hide Thy radiant face yonder—and in me.  
 O! my soul—I feel it all and hear—  
 The fading song of the flying bird.

Yes, I am penitent, I confess.  
 So, depart I now to atone—  
 Leaving my soul bare and low  
 At Thy saving feet, O! my faceless Shiva.  
 O! my soul—I live thus with  
 The fading song of the flying bird.

But wait! come I must again, and—  
 Like the soaring eagle tearing through the skies  
 I'll behold you, O! my glorious Shiva—  
 And hearing the vibrant OM, I'll swoop to lift my spirit pure.  
 O! my soul—far, far above  
 The fading song of the flying bird.

---

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE PATH FINDERS:** BY SWAMI VIJNANANDA. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras-600 004. Pp. 66. Rs. 6.00

In this small book an attempt has been made to present the significance of the message and mission of the Holy Trio, Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda. To those who are new to the teachings of these great personalities, the book presents in a condensed but clear manner, the significant aspects of their lives and teachings. To those who have already been introduced to this literature, the articles present some refreshingly new insights.

There are two more articles entitled,

'What is Religion?' and 'Message of the Gita'.

The last article in the book is on the philosophy of Sri Ramanuja. It would have been helpful if the author had explained why this acharya had been singled out for treatment.

This book was originally published under the title 'At the feet of Sri Ramakrishna'. The presently altered title 'The Path Finders', too, does not adequately convey to the reader the contents of the book.

The book contains some printing mistakes which are expected to be eliminated in the next edition.

DR. KAMALA JAYA RAO  
 (M.B.B.S. M.D. PH. D.)  
 Hyderabad



## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA 125TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS HELD IN RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, MORABADI, RANCHI, 1988

In order to celebrate the 125th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, this Ashrama organised a variety of functions/programmes in the Ashrama as well as outside, involving the youths from urban areas as well as rural areas of Ranchi. Broadly the programmes have been:

1. National Youth Day and National Youth Week.

(a) Youth Day Rally on 12th January at Ranchi and in the adopted villages of Ranchi District.

(b) 2-Day Youth Convention.

(c) Annual Essay, Speech and Recitation competition.

2. Youth Leadership Training Camp.

3. Kisan Mela.

4. Construction of buildings in rural areas for community use.

Brief description of the programmes is as under:

1. *National Youth Day:*

(a) The National Youth Day was celebrated on 12th January 1988 in Ranchi with great enthusiasm by the participation of more than 2,500 youths from the following institutions:

- (a) Central School, Doranda
- (b) D.A.V. School, Doranda
- (c) L.E.B.B. School, Ranchi
- (d) Bangiya Sanskrit Parishad
- (e) Saraswati Shishu Mandir
- (f) S.S.Doranda Girl's High School
- (g) S.S.Doranda Middle School
- (h) Vivekananda Vidyamandir, Dhurwa
- (i) Yogoda Satsanga Vidyalaya, Ranchi
- (j) Divyayan Krishi Vigyan Kendra

The programme comprised of garlanding of the statue of Swami Vivekananda in front of MECON Office building by Sri P.C. Laha, C.M.D., MECON; followed by speeches by Swami Suddhavratana of Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Morabadi, Ranchi, and youth representatives of all the participating institutions. A Youth Rally was organised thereafter where the MECON Chairman-cum-Managing Director was the Chief Guest. Youth representatives took part in Vedic chanting, Bhajans, speeches, recitations, etc. in the rally. The Ashrama distributed sweets to all the participants along with a small booklet, "Flashes from Swami Vivekananda" as a memento.

The *Youth Day* was celebrated in different villages also by 25 Youth Clubs (Vivekananda Seva Sanghas) and the children of night schools in different villages of Ranchi district participated in the function. The programme comprised of *prabhat phery*, sports, *shramdan* and a public meeting at a central place of the villages. The Block Development Officers took part in some of the villages.

(b) 2-day *Youth Convention* was organised in the auditorium of the Ramakrishna Mission on 13th and 14th January, 1988. About 300 delegates participated in the convention, out of that, 200 were from the rural areas. The Convention was inaugurated by Sri S. Prabhakaran, I.A.S. Commissioner-cum-Director Administrative Training Institute, Ranchi. In all about 12 delegate-speakers delivered their speeches on topics like:

(a) Synthesis of Science and Religion in the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.

(b) Swami Vivekananda's ideas on rural development

(c) Problems of Modern Youths and the solution vis-a-vis Swami Vivekananda's teachings.

(d) The duties of the youths to the lesser privileged section of the society.

Guest speakers who addressed the Convention were Sri A. Aich, Youth Officer, N.S.S. Regional Centre, Patna, Swami Nikhilatmanandaji, and Dr. Kedar Nath Labh of Chapra.

(c) As part of the 125th Anniversary Celebration, Recitation, Speech and Essay competitions were organised for students of different schools and colleges of Ranchi from 4 to 7th February 1988. About 500 students participated in the competitions. 60 prizes were awarded.

2. *Youth Leadership Camp*

To strengthen the foundation of the Vivekananda Seva Sanghas, in the rural areas a Youth Leadership training camp of 10 days duration was organised for 30 members of different Vivekananda Seva Sanghas from 22nd to 31st December, 1987.

3. *Kisan Mela*

As part of the celebration, Divyayan organised Kisan Melas in five different villages during the month of January, 1988. There were 4 regional Kisan Melas of 1 day each and the last one was central Kisan Mela. The four Kisan Melas were held in Dibadih (Sonahatu Block), Kulli (Bero Block), Deogaon (Lapung Block) and Mahujari

(Mandar Block). The Vivekananda Seva Sanghas of the respective villages joined with great enthusiasm to organise the melas in their respective areas and villagers in large numbers participated in the melas.

The Central Kisan Mela of two days' duration was organised at the Divyayan demonstration farm in Getalsud village of Angara Block.

The mela was inaugurated by Sri B. Dayal, Joint Director, agricultural department, Government of Bihar. Sri Ram Dayal Munda, Vice Chancellor, Ranchi University was the Chief Guest. About 700 items of exhibits of Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry were on show. There were in all 26 varieties of

items of exhibits. Functions on the 2nd day of the mela included address by Sri Sudhir Kumar Jain, I.A.S., Dy. Development Commissioner, Dr. H. R. Mishra, Vice Chancellor, Birsa Agricultural University. Sri Mahip Singh, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, CMPDI, was the Chief Guest.

#### 4. *Construction of Community Centre*

The Divyayan K.V.K. is engaged in large scale rural development programmes in about 50 villages of Ranchi district. As part of the celebration, a special plan for construction of 25 community centres and 150 dug-wells have been taken up.

### PRABUDDHA BHARATA: 90 YEARS AGO

Arise! awake! and stop not till the goal is reached! Katha Upa. I. iii. 14

Vol. III

OCTOBER, 1898

No. 3

#### AMARNATH

Some party of wandering shepherds, driving their cattle down the glacier at its foot, in those long summer days when time and distance matter little, must have been the first to light on the great Cave of Amarnath.

Or perhaps—for the spot is far indeed from the habitations of men, and no tradition lingers about the country-side, to tell the tale of the wondrous finding—perhaps it was some solitary herdsman who found himself and his flocks in the gorge of the noonday, and turning into the cavern for coolness and refreshment was startled by the presence of the Lord Himself. For there, in a central niche within the vast cathedral, the roof itself dropping offerings of water over it, and the very walls crusted with white powder for its worship, stood the Shiva-Lingam in clear white ice. Stood, as It must have stood for centuries, all unseen of mortal eyes, as It stands today, here, at the very heart of the Himalayas, in this, the secret place of the Most High.

How did he act, we wonder, this simple peasant of our fancy? Had he the gift of vision to know Him, white like camphor Who sits lost in eternal meditation, while the Ganges struggle to free herself from the coils of His matted hair, and all the needy and despised of earth find refuge at His feet?

All that is strong, all that is noble, in the heart of man finds acceptance and response in that austere vision of God that is worshipped here. Surely no race had ever for itself a myth grander than this of Shiva and Uma.

Brooding ever in eternal silence amongst snow-clad Himalayas, there is in Him no trace of wrath, or of the meaner passions of humanity. The asceticism of the pilgrim, the heroism of the hero, the self-sacrifice of the willing victim—these are the roads by which men draw near to Him, and such only the praise they may utter in His Presence.

And they do praise. This people, silent in all else, is expressive in devotion. The surging throng, fills the cave with song and movement. But through it all and over it all, amidst the multitude of voices, and the strangeness of the tongues, there rings that daily prayer of His devotees, that most beautiful of all the world's cries to the Eternal:

“From the unreal lead us to the Real,  
From darkness lead us unto Light,  
From death lead us to Immortality.  
Reach us through and through ourself,  
And Oh! Thou terrible One, protect us ever  
From ignorance, with Thy sweet compassionate  
Face.”

NIVEDITA