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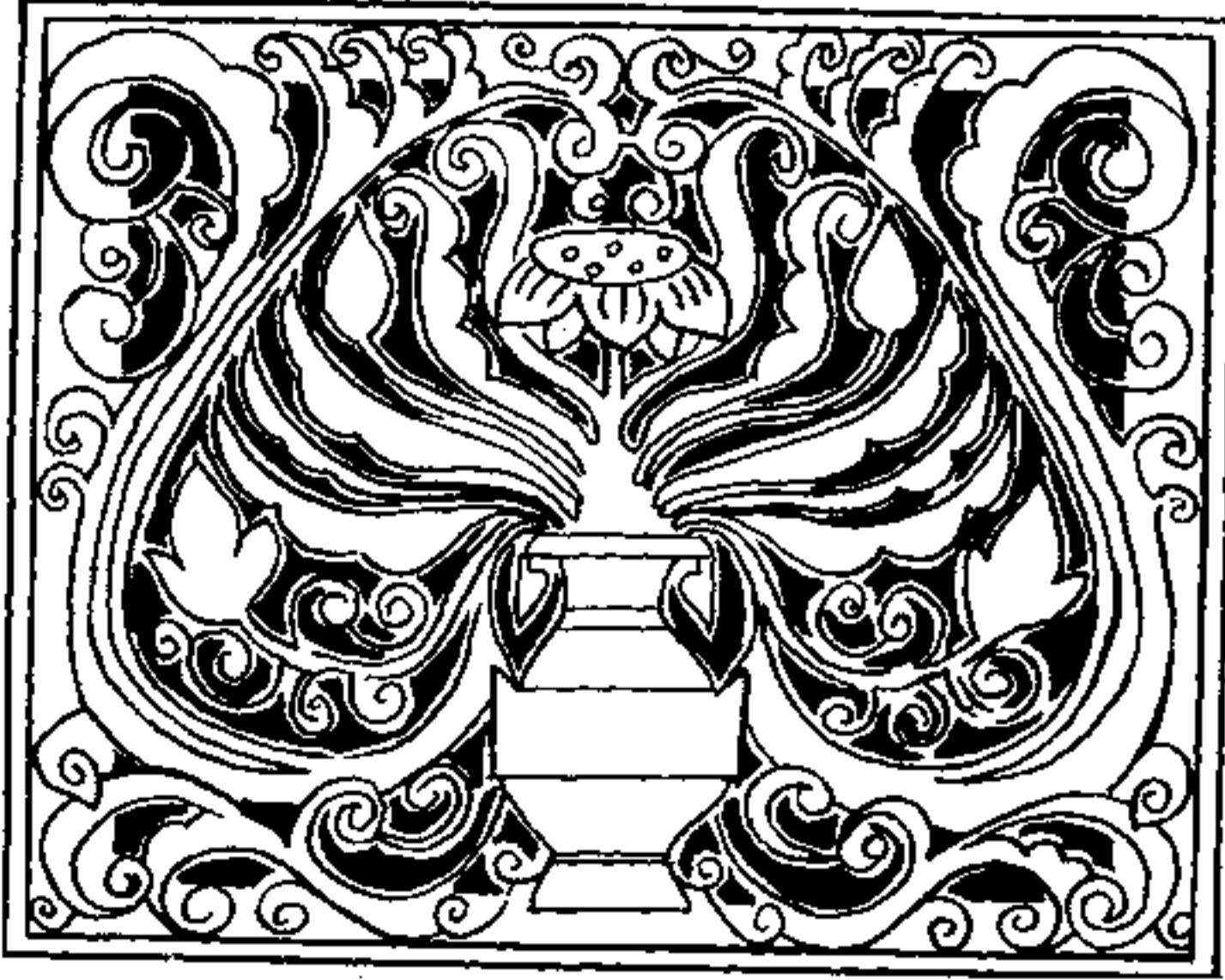
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A Merry Christmas
and
A Happy New Year**

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED.

Vol. 100

DECEMBER 1995

No. 12

DIVINE WISDOM

WHY PEOPLE SUFFER

को वामिहैत्य भगवत्परिचर्ययोच्चै-
स्तद्धर्मिणां निवसतां विषमः स्वभावः ।
तस्मिन् प्रशान्तपुरुषे गतविग्रहे वां
को वाऽऽत्मवत्कुहकयोः परिशङ्कनीयः ॥

(The sages rebuked the guards:) In this sphere* where only persons, who have for long practised the devotional disciplines and served the Lord intensely, can find a place, how is it that perverse ones like these have come in? The Lord is the embodiment of peace and devoid of all enmity and antagonism. How can you suspect that any one with evil intentions against such a one will come here at all, unless you yourself possess these qualities within you in abundance, making you feel the same with regard to others too?

न ह्यन्तरं भगवतीह समस्तकुक्षावा-
त्मानमात्मनि नभो नभसीव धीराः ।

* Vaikuṅṭha, the abode of Lord Viṣṇu, to which the four great sages, viz. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra and Sanatsujāta, had come to meet the Lord but were foolishly stopped at the gate and mocked. As a consequence the two guards had to be born as the notorious demons, Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu.

पश्यन्ति यत्र युवयोः सुरलिङ्गिनोः किं
व्युत्पादितं ह्युदरभेदिभय यतोऽस्य ॥

In the Lord, who holds the whole universe in Himself, wise men see no difference, as one part of the sky is not found to be different from another part. Such being the case, how has fear, which is the result of seeing difference, arisen in you (making you feel the need of protecting the Lord)?

तद्वाममुष्य परमस्य विकुण्ठभर्तुः
कर्तुं प्रकृष्टमिह धीमहि मन्दधीभ्याम् ।
लोकानितो ब्रजमन्तरभावदृष्ट्या
पापीयसस्त्रय इमे रिपवोऽस्य यत्र ॥

Therefore, we have decided to reform you, who are no doubt the servants of the Lord but are possessed of a poor and impure intelligence. You are excommunicated from this realm because of your separatist outlook and are condemned to occupy inferior regions which are under the domination of the evil passions like sexuality, anger and greed.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 3.15.32-4

Frugality: Counter-Consumerism

When December comes our thoughts naturally turn to the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi. Perhaps there is a significance in why she was born in the last month* of the year. May be she wished that we should enter the new year after celebrating her birthday. And 'celebrating' certainly means more than rituals, bhajans, discourses, etc. It means studying her life and teachings to be able to judge ourselves and improve.

There is so much for us to learn from her: from the hardships she suffered; the unobtrusive and graceful manner in which her spiritual awakening occurred in the midst of demanding circumstances; the simplicity of her life despite the renown and wealth that came knocking at her door in later life; the skill with which she adjusted with a variety of characters the likes of some of whom are singly capable of wrecking our nerves; and so on.

Over the years several studies of her personality have appeared, leaving hardly anything 'new' to be said. Therefore we shall dwell on one of her well known but timelessly relevant traits—frugality. This we believe is beneficial to us in a milieu that is changing so fast, drawn by one of the most powerful forces affecting all strata of society, viz. consumerism. Though this was discussed at length in June '95, here we shall take another look in the light of Mother's life. For, her ability to remain perfectly balanced and self-possessed irrespective of

the changes in her financial condition was remarkable.

In stark contrast, rapid and sometimes sudden rise in the earnings of the masses has triggered consumerism. Which in effect has made people impulsively acquisitive and restless. Further, in economically weak societies it has led to an increase in tensions and self-alienation. Consumerism is doing something more and worse. Through its Trojan Horse, the TV, it is breaking down community by allowing hardly enough time for interhuman bonding. Thus this break down together with consumerism, has made strangers of neighbours.

Despite more possessions no one appears to be content or to have a thought for the next person, especially if he is different and lesser than oneself in colour, language, religion, or particularly money. Having become like strangers towards one another, people are trying to overcome loneliness and insecurity with more things, more TV channels, more..., more....

Sadly, consumerism has spawned even greed and corruption. One of our monks narrated the following incident that occurred several years ago when he was staying at our Centre in Bombay:

In the afternoon our Ashrama's office and temple remain closed for a few hours, and during this period visitors rarely come. One day, however, a young man appeared suddenly at that odd hour and proceeded towards the Mother's Temple though it was closed. Nobody felt like

* Her birthday this time is on Thursday the 14th.

preventing him, because he had a morose look on his face. After sitting for some time in the prayer hall, he came back, now weeping. I was surprised. Calling him to a side I tried to console him. However, this only aggravated his grief, for he began to sob. I asked him what the matter was, hoping to lighten him. What he disclosed was quite alarming.

He was a middle level clerk in a government office, not a very well paid job in those days. He and his family resided in a government colony, which usually houses employees of the same class. Most of his neighbours lived noticeably comfortable lives: their homes were well furnished and they seemed to have an unlimited supply of money to purchase new clothings and the latest in consumer wares.

So far so good. But what did it matter to him if others chose to live off what was evidently illegal earning? Yes, it did not matter, and he was not jealous. The problem, however, was his wife. Of late she had started pestering him to help her raise the living standards of the family to that of the neighbours: the contents of some of their rooms she had managed to inventory from her balcony, or by quizzing her children who often went to the neighbour's houses to play with their children or to marvel at a new acquisition.

She had become impervious to all the pleas of this young man, that he was helpless because of his financial limitations, that the pricks of his conscience would become unbearable for him, that he feared getting arrested if he accepted bribes, and so on. She was adamant: He must do something. 'If they can do it, why not you?...?...?' Her chilling threat came yesterday—'You must do something, anything, or I will commit suicide. As things are, I feel ashamed and inferior even to step out of the house....'

What now? I asked him to persuade her to come with him to the Ashrama for a private talk. Then I could even present her some books on Mother. Why had he not, in the very beginning,

got her interested in those very books that had moulded his sense of values? After all, more than nagging advices and arguments, books, i.e. ideas, are the guides next-best to inborn convictions. Well, I do not know what happened later, because he never turned up again.

That young man was being driven to become a victim of one of the extreme effects of consumerism, by giving an indecent burial to his sense of values and morality. He was a prospective member of a vast body of humanity whose number, going by newspaper reports from all over the world, is swelling every minute. Without considering the means or the fairness of their earning, thousands are falling prey to addictive consumerism.

The example above is not to hint that it is all the fault of women: Men as bread-winners being in the majority are much more to blame for the growing menace of illegal earning, greed and violence, which partly are the abnormal products of consumerism. In fact, research has shown that, largely, women are natural conservatives and against corruption. Neither is the fault with the theory that consumerism is necessary for a vigorous economy. The fault or inadequacy is in us—we have failed to recognize the beneficial power of frugality and have lost respect for it. Consequently we are left with little power to sift and see beyond the attractive glitz of consumer goods.

Seen against the wasteful and untempered lifestyle of countless people today, Mother's life demonstrates the worth of frugality. If considered deeply, it may well initiate a movement against unrestrained consumerism. Instances in her life that show how frugal she was are innumerable, and narrating them here is unnecessary. But what is important is to know that frugality is neither anachronistic nor anti-development, and that it is the key

to solve some of the numbing present-day problems—poverty, debt, immorality, starvation, ecological imbalance, etc. Once we grasp the implications and rewards of frugality, we can appreciate how badly we need it now.

To be sure, frugality is different from economic (material) and mental *poverty*. Material poverty is well known, for it easily shows in a person's physical condition. Further, we also see how a poverty-stricken person has defeat written large on his face; and how he always feels insecure and anxious, and is in constant want. Neither is frugality *miserliness*. Someone financially poor may still be noble and helpful to others. He may even be philosophic towards his poverty that has remained unresolved despite his best efforts to alleviate it. A miser, on the other hand, is usually not poor materially, but is invariably poor mentally—his poverty is in his heart. A poor person or one who is frugal may be tight-fisted but never close-fisted like a miser. A miser too is constantly in want and discontented, and so this poverty also shows—more in the eyes and face, and in his behaviour. He is intensely possessive and selfish, a scaled down model, as it were, of the Black Hole of cosmology.

But frugality? Mother's life helps us understand clearly what it is and what it can confer: Frugality shows chiefly as contentment. A frugal person is joyful, never with an expression of helplessness on his face. He is independent and self-respecting; never in debt, and intelligent enough not to fall into the 'buy-now-pay-later' or 'borrow-now-repent-later' schemes. He is always a *giver* where necessary, never a beggar. Again, a frugal person is willing to share and forgo, and though he may be earning well and his savings safely high, he is inclined to limit his *personal* requirements rather than to impose austerities on others.

The cause of a person's frugality is that he has caught hold of some refined ideal—something he finds more valuable than redundant material possessions. By comparing with that ideal, he is easily able to distinguish genuine necessities and reasonable comforts from needless luxuries and wastes. He has mastered the art of exactly identifying his requirements, and then getting and using them properly so as to make them last for as long as possible.

Frugality may or may not have a spiritual goal inspiring it. But what we can be certain about is that it is the best cure for reckless consumerism, discontent, neighbourhood poverty, and abuse of environment. We should practise frugality deliberately, knowing that it is contributing to the well-being of someone somewhere in the world. A morsel less here in a not so hungry mouth means a morsel there for a hungry mouth. By putting this into practice we shall experience an incomparable satisfaction, a point that even a short-term experiment will prove. So, imperceptibly and indirectly frugality can also contribute to the rebuilding of the broken sense of community.

Thus, considering its source and consequence, frugality is entirely different from poverty and miserliness. Arguably it is one of the best virtues we should strive to cultivate. Perhaps we should make it central to our New Year Resolve. □

As the path of the birds in the air or of fishes in the water is invisible, even so is the path of the possessors of wisdom.

—*Mahābhārata*, Shānti Parva, 67.63

Madhusudana Saraswati on the Bhagavad-Gita

SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

RENUNCIATION OF ACTIVITY: NOT FOR ALL

The seventh stage of *turīya* (the Fourth) is that state of spiritual absorption from which, on account of the total absence of the perception of duality, he (the yogi) does not emerge either by himself or through (the efforts of) others, but remains in every way ever Self-absorbed only, as a mass of full supreme Bliss alone, with his bodily functions managed by others—without any effort of his own—as a result of his vital forces being controlled by the supreme Lord. One who has reached that (stage) is called a *brahma-vid-variṣṭha*, the greatest knower of Brahman. It has verily been said,

That one (the yogi), after being established in the sixth stage, should attain the seventh stage. (In the sixth stage) he may perceive only some difference or he may not perceive anything at all. The seventh stage of yoga is called the state of Liberation as a result of dissociation from the body (*videhamukti*). Among the stages of yoga, that is the climax and it is beyond the reach of words and is tranquil,¹

with regard to which it is said in the *Bhāgavata*,

As a person inebriated by wine does not notice whether the cloth worn by him drops down or stays on by chance, similarly, since the Self-realized person has attained his true nature, therefore he

takes no notice of the transitory body, whether it remains lying down or standing;²

Together with its life-breath the body also, which is under divine dispensation, awaits the end of the result of past actions that produced it. One who has ascended the Yoga of Samādhi, who has experienced the Reality, does not accept again that dream-body, together with the universe.³

There is also the Śruti,

Just as the lifeless slough of a snake is cast off and lies on the ant hill, so does this body lie. Then the self becomes disembodied and immortal, (becomes) the Prāṇa (supreme Self), Brahman, the Light.⁴

This is the summary in this connection:

The fourth stage is Enlightenment; the earlier three are the disciplines (leading to it). But the latter three are spoken of as states of *jīvanmukti*.

Here even an unenlightened person who has ascended the first three stages is not eligible for rites and duties, what to speak of one who has realized the Truth, or of the

1. *Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, *Yoga-saptabhūmikā-upākhyāna*, 43.80-1.

2. 11.13.36.

3. *Ibid.*, 3.28.38.

4. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 4.4.7.

jīvanmukta possessed of that (realization)!
This is the idea.

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥

Tasmādasaktaḥ satatam
kāryaṁ karma samācara;
Asakto hyācaran karma
paramāpnoti pūruṣaḥ. (3.19)

Therefore, remaining unattached, always perform duly the duty that must be undertaken. For, by performing (one's) duty without attachment, man attains the Highest.

Since you are not an enlightened man of this kind but are a seeker of Liberation, competent only for action, *tasmāt*, therefore; *asaktaḥ*, remaining unattached, devoid of desire for results; *satatam*, always—not occasionally—; perform duly (*samācara*), fulfil in accordance with the scriptures, *kāryam karma*, the duty that must be undertaken necessarily—those that are defined as *nitya* and *naimittika*⁵, which are prescribed by the Śruti such as '(one should perform the Agnihotra-sacrifice) as long as one lives', etc., and are enjoined for Knowledge by the Śruti, 'The Brāhmins seek to know It through the study of the Vedas, sacrifices, charity, and austerity consisting in a dispassionate enjoyment of sense-objects'⁶—; *hi*, for; *ācaran*, by performing; *karma* (one's) duty; *asaktaḥ*, without attachment, as a dedication to God; *pūruṣaḥ*, man; *āpnoti*,

5. *Nitya-karmas*: Obligatory regular rites and duties such as performance of Agnihotra, Darśapūrṇamāsa and Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifices; they lead to purification of the mind, and not that their non-performance produces sin, *pratyavāya*.

Naimittika-Karmas: Occasional duties, such as obsequial rites.

6. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 4.4.22.

attains; *param*, the Highest, through the stages of purification of the mind and attainment of Knowledge. The idea is that, he alone (who thus attains the Highest) is the real man, none else.

(Arjuna:) Is it not that monasticism, consisting in the renunciation of all actions, is prescribed even for a seeker of Liberation so that he practises *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* with a view to attaining steadfastness in Knowledge? And thus, not only is an enlightened person ineligible for rites and duties but also a dispassionate person who is desirous of Knowledge. And hence rites and duties should surely be discarded by me also who am dispassionate and a seeker of Knowledge.

The Lord dispels this doubt of Arjuna by demonstrating the ineligibility of a Kṣatriya for monasticism:

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन् करतुमर्हसि ॥

Karmanaiiva hi saṁsiddhim
āsthitā janakādayaḥ;
Lokasaṅgrahamevāpi
saṁpaśyan kartumarhasi. (3.20)

Since Janaka and others attained success along with action itself, (therefore) you surely ought to perform (your duty) also with a view to making people undertake their duties, and preventing them from taking the wrong path.

Janakādayaḥ, Janaka and others as well—Janaka, Ajātaśatru, and so on, who were Kṣatriyas well known in the Śrutis and the Smṛtis; *āsthitāḥ*, attained; *saṁsiddhim*, success—steadfastness in Knowledge achievable by means of *śravaṇa* etc.—; *karmanā eva*, along with action itself—but not along with renunciation of actions—, even though they were men of Knowledge. *Hi*, since this is so; therefore you also, who

are a Ksatriya—(here) the words (*kartum arhasi*, ought to perform) have to be supplied from the later portion—*kartum arhasi*, ought to perform your duty, whether you be a seeker of Knowledge or a man of Knowledge; because in the sentence, 'the Brāhmins renounce the desire for sons, for wealth and for the worlds, and lead a mendicant's life'⁷, which enjoins monasticism, one's being a Brāhmin is what is required, just as Kṣatriyahood is required in, 'A *rājā* desirous of sovereignty of heaven should perform the *Rājasūya*-sacrifice'; also because there is the Smṛti, 'A Brāhmin has four stages of life, a Kṣatriya has three, (and) a Vaiśya has two.' In the Purāṇa (text) also,

Of those who were born from the mouth (of the supreme Person) is this duty of bearing the insignia of Viṣṇu (i.e., monasticism). This duty does not befit those who are born from the arms or from the thighs',

it is stated that there is no monasticism for the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas. Therefore it has been rightly declared by the Lord, 'Since Janaka and others attained success along with action itself'.

In accordance with the Smṛti,

7. *Ibid.*, 3.5.1.

All the duties are dependent on the king.
The king is upholder of the duties, etc.,

even as the promoter of the duties of the castes and stages of life a Kṣatriya must undertake work. This He says in, '*lokasaṅgrahamī*', etc. *Lokasaṅgraha* means making people undertake their own duties and preventing them from taking the wrong path. (*Samipaśyan*) with a view to that *api*, also—this word suggests, 'observing the conduct of good people such as Janaka and others also'—, you *eva*, surely, ought to, as a matter of course, perform your duty; this is the construction. Even if you are a man of Knowledge, still, you, whose body has been formed by the results of actions that lead to birth as a Kṣatriya, are like Janaka and others fit for performing your duties under the influence of *prārabdha-karma*, with a view to making people undertake their duties and preventing them from going astray. But (you are) not fit for discarding (your duties), since you have not been born a Brāhmin. This is the idea.

Being cognizant of this kind of intention of the Lord, it has been ascertained by the venerable Commentator that monasticism is for the Brāhmins only, not for others. But it is to be noted that, it has been stated by the writer of the *Vārtika*, merely as a bold assertion, that Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas also can take to monasticism.

(to be continued)

The monk looks for peace within himself, and not in any other place. For when a person is inwardly quiet, there is nowhere a self can be found; where, then, could a non-self be found?

There are no waves in the depths of the sea; it is still, unbroken. It is the same with the monk. He is still, without any quiver of desire, without a remnant on which to build pride and desire.

—*Buddhism*, Sutta Nipata 919–20.

The Struggle and the Way

SWAMI SATYAPRIYANANDA

No matter how, or into how many periods, we divide our civilization's history, human existence has certain changeless characteristics—diversity of temperaments and goals, struggles, personal ambitions, suffering, maturity and so on. However, the quality of existence radically improves only in some. They are those whose attitude towards life has changed on being able to experience something deeper behind those characteristics: universal quest for freedom and knowledge, and response to unselfishness.

These ideas, which Swami Vivekananda has so lucidly expounded in his famous Karma Yoga, form the subject of the following detailed study. The author, staying at Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, has been with the PB for the past few years.

Bhagavan Buddha's first interaction with the sordid realities of the world was the sight of a sick man, an old man and a dead man. The sight of an illumined soul was a great contrast. He understood that these changes occurred to all mankind with the passage of time, and that misery was the lot of the many until they become illumined. He therefore stated the four noble truths—that there was misery, that desire was the cause of misery, that misery can be averted, and that the method for averting misery was to follow the eight-fold path.

Every period of history has given birth to thousands of men and women who have worked hard to make life easier for others. Unfortunately, however, we can only play at driving the ailment from one part of the body to another, like chronic rheumatism.

What an amount of misery there is in this world; and if you travel among various nations, you will find that one nation attempts to cure its evils by one means, and another by another. The very same evil has been taken up by various races, and attempts have been made in various ways to check it, yet no nation has succeeded. If it has been minimized at one

point, a mass of evil has been crowded at another point.¹

Man wishes that life could be smoother, that the millennium would be on earth. But, alas. Man believes that if he were God himself he would have created a better world! Fanciful thinking. We fail to see through our existence in proper light and therefore come to grief. We fail to recognize that this world is well constituted to make man reach the goal. Not realizing that the goal of human life is freedom, we are striving hard to make life on earth a life in paradise. What is fundamental in life is not the misery that man faces at every step, but that ceaseless struggle to overcome misery, apparently. There is scope for man's education from his personal struggles against misery and from the struggles of those around him with the same end in view.

It occurred to me that we should turn to Swamiji, who, even as Narendranath, had to face plenty of struggles, especially after his father suddenly passed away leaving the

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 2, p. 100.

family in debts. It was not very easy for Narendranath to think of a merciful God alongside the existence of misery in His creation. It did not make sense to have so much misery in the creation of a benign providence. But he did get the solution when this dilemma was solved once and for all. And in the West too he had to face many criticisms and oppositions from different quarters. What was the solution? A changed outlook.

If we turn to the pages of *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, and look for the occurrence of the word 'struggle', with the

or put the same ideal before them. Such a course creates only an unnatural struggle.... Our duty is to encourage every one in his struggle to live up to his own highest ideal, and strive at the same time to make the ideal as near as possible to the truth.²

Obviously our present outlook on this world is in error. We judge others by first fixing our attention on the better elements in us and then comparing it with the corresponding darker sides in others. We become blind to the fact that just as there are good elements in us, even so do others have

We judge others by first fixing our attention on the better elements in us and then comparing it with the corresponding darker sides in others. We become blind to the fact that just as there are good elements in us, even so do others have bright points that make their lives worthy of emulation; and even as there are blemishes in the lives of others, so do we too have our defects.

help of a computer, then we find that there is plenty to think about on this topic of 'struggle' and profit. This kind of word-searching—to cull together the views expressed by this man of great insight and piece them together in the form of a garland, is highly rewarding. We get a story that becomes an asset for all mankind.

The first thing we learn is that: **Variation in mankind justifies different goals and different standards of judgement.** Even in today's world we find that people are not wanting who would like to place before all mankind the same ideal and measure each with the same standard of judgement. They do not recognize variety in mankind stemming from difference in abilities and capacities. Says Swamiji,

The different individual characters and classes of men and women are natural variations in creation. Hence, we ought not to judge them by the same standard

bright points that make their lives worthy of emulation; and even as there are blemishes in the lives of others, so do we too have our defects. And these blemishes are to be overlooked, and the good in others should be contemplated by us if we want to progress in our lives. Constantly dwelling on the weaknesses of others does no good to oneself, nor does it benefit others. Dwelling on the good of others, we not only create a better style of interpersonal relationship but we also create a thought-environment for people to flower in. And by constantly dwelling on the bad side of others we degrade ourselves.

As each man is differently constituted in terms of abilities and tastes, he cannot have one immediate goal to aspire for. He must strive for the highest goal through lower goals which are within his easy reach. In such a view every act of man will deserve

2. *Ibid.*, vol.1, p. 41.

appreciation, for, it is an act which will culminate in his attaining the highest goal. There is no need for one to feel himself to be too small or to look arrogantly upon others with a sense of pity. Not to talk of mankind, every form of existence with its chosen mode of struggle will be understood as a striving for the unfoldment of the finite to manifest the Infinite within. When people with varying capacities and abilities strive to attain the same goal the struggle that ensues is 'unnatural', for, it is only natural if one's struggles are commensurate with one's abilities and inclinations.

The second thing that we learn is that **selfishness is the cause of all misery**. In Swamiji's liberal view:

...the householder who struggles to become rich by good means and for good purposes is doing practically the same thing for the attainment of salvation as the anchorite does in his cell when he is praying; for in them we see only the different aspects of the same virtue of self-surrender and self-sacrifice prompted by the feeling of devotion to God and to all that is His.³

Each, the householder and the Sannyasin, is great in his own place, and both these lives, in their ideal state, exemplify the ideal of self-surrender and self-sacrifice. Whereas cold, cruel competition and hatred are degenerating forces, love, self-sacrifice, and self-surrender are healthy and elevating forces. Needless to say, therefore, one should always strive to manifest love, self-surrender and self-sacrifice in one's life. Many lose heart seeing the opposite qualities in many persons in society apparently helping them in their sojourn on earth. But we should carefully analyse and discriminate, and become established in our

conviction that long range gain is for those who persevere in maintaining a healthy standard of living. And having gained that everlasting conviction, one should stick to it amidst all trials and tribulations.

The third thing that we learn is that **the way to rid ourselves of selfishness is to do good works, pushing our little self to the background and placing others' interests before one's own.**

By means of the constant effort to do good to others we are trying to forget ourselves. ...Every act of charity, every thought of sympathy, every action of help, every good deed, is taking so much of self-importance away from our little selves and making us think of ourselves as the lowest and the least...⁴

We have to be ever watchful that our good works are good only if they lead to self-effacement, and are not good if they surreptitiously lead us to self-aggrandizement.

It is not so much that the world around us is in *need* of our charity. It is *we* who are in need of practising a little of charity, rather coming forward to perform little acts of service or worship so that we may overcome this persistent clinging to our own little selves. As a consequence it is *we* who reap benefit from every act of charity, every thought of sympathy, every form of help, every good deed. So we must look upon each such opportunity as an act of God's grace. And when we foolishly decline to acknowledge this special grace of God and cling hard to our own little selves, we land ourselves in a good deal of misery, but blame God for it!

The next thing we learn is that **there is not going to be a day when we are going to**

3. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 46.

4. *Ibid.*, vol 1, p. 84.

become satisfied, not until we have learnt that all our struggle is not for making life on earth pleasant, that pleasure is certainly not the goal of mankind, that knowledge of our real nature and freedom are the goals we are struggling for. Our foolish efforts at amassing wealth and setting this world in 'right' order shows how deeply convinced we are at present that our effort and expenditure of energies are going to be fruitful. Far from it. All our striving is foolish now, because we have not learnt the purpose of these struggles. If all our struggle had progressively taken us anywhere, we should be reaching some level of satisfaction thereby. But, on the contrary, there is only a

From this conception life gets a changed outlook. Our interpretations change and we look at the same incidents with a newer and more sublime insight!

universal dissatisfaction despite man's struggle for thousands of years to make a paradise on earth.

Says Swamiji:

We make an ideal but we have rushed only half the way after it, when we make a newer one. We struggle hard to attain to some goal and then discover we do not want it.... What is the meaning of this universal dissatisfaction? It is because freedom is every man's goal.⁵

Have you marked the eternal cry going on through the ages in every breast? We are deceived by poverty. We become wealthy and are deceived with wealth. We are ignorant. We read and learn and are deceived with knowledge. No man is ever satisfied. That is the cause

of misery, but it is also the cause of all blessing. That is the sure sign. How can you be satisfied with this world?... If tomorrow this world becomes heaven, we will say, 'Take this away. Give us something else.' The infinite human soul can never be satisfied but by the Infinite itself....⁶

This will give us the disposition to make light of the miseries we face, recognizing that there cannot be a creation more perfectly constituted to take man to freedom from all forms of bondage, that we grieve only when we think that our goal is to attain happiness. We shall then habitually see all creation moving forward in a grand way in its pursuit of knowledge and freedom. When the real purpose of creation is lost sight of, then we come face to face with struggles and competition. We become disgusted and depressed, believing all the while that all this struggle and competition is real. On the other hand, when we are ever conscious of the purpose of life, then we relish the game of life, whatever circumstances we are placed in. Instead of wasting our human life and our energies in running after wealth and pleasures which are evanescent, we will then be *practical* and devote all our time and energies to realize our real nature. Misery there exists, so shall continue to exist our attempt to remove the suffering of man, and to do good to the world. But the foundational principle is to realize one's true divine nature. The world is after all like a dog's curly tail which will remain straight so long as it is held straight and will curl once again eventually. Life therefore has meaning only if it is lived as a conscious and perpetual endeavour to express the freedom which is the song of the soul.

From this conception life gets a changed outlook. Our interpretations

5. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 334.

6. *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 240.

change and we look at the same incidents with a newer and more sublime insight! The inborn tendency in us all is to express the freedom that is our nature. But this expression differs from one person to another.

All that we see in the universe has for its basis this one struggle towards freedom; it is under the impulse of this tendency that the saint prays and the robber robs. When the line of action taken is not a proper one, we call it evil; and when the manifestation of it is proper and high, we call it good.... The saint is oppressed with the knowledge of his condition of bondage, and he wants to get rid of it; so he worships God. The thief is oppressed with the idea that he does not possess certain things, and he tries to get rid of that want, to obtain freedom from it; so he steals. Freedom is the one goal of all nature, sentient or insentient; and consciously or unconsciously, everything is struggling towards that goal. The freedom which the saint seeks is very different from that which the robber seeks; the freedom loved by the saint leads him to the enjoyment of infinite, unspeakable bliss, while that on which the robber has set his heart only forges other bonds for his soul. There is to be found in every religion the manifestation of this struggle towards freedom. It is the groundwork of all morality, of unselfishness, which means getting rid of the idea that men are the same as their little body. When we see a man doing good work, helping others, it means that he cannot be confined within the limited circle of 'me and mine'.⁷

In this passage we see that the same goal, namely, freedom, prompts all existence to different types of actions. It is also true that all actions often explained from

narrow standpoints can also be explained in a global perspective as an attempt to gain freedom—only, some of these actions society accepts and calls them good while the others society regards as evil and punishable. It is good when it is compassion (*dayā*), and it is less good when it is ignorance (*māyā*). It is good when it is compassion for all created beings and it is less good when it is love for one's own kith and kin, for in this love we get caught and slip away from the goal. The erring person is not erring in terms of motivation, but he is definitely wrong in the direction he gives to his motivation. Our life's aim is to direct and focus this single motivation, namely, expression of our inherent freedom, along the right channel. To the extent we are able to do this we shall be going beyond relative happiness and misery. We shall be fellow travellers to freedom, the goal of human life. We shall inherit eternal bliss and shall also be sharers of bliss with others.

And there is a message of hope for all. Perfection is our nature, and it is our right to attain to that perfection. All we have to do is to remove the obstacles that stand in the way just as we have in the simile:

Man is like an infinite spring, coiled up in a small box, and that spring is trying to unfold itself; and all the social phenomena that we see are the result of this trying to unfold. All the competitions and struggles and evils that we see around us are neither the causes of these unfoldments, nor the effects. As one of our great philosophers says—in the case of the irrigation of a field, the tank is somewhere upon a higher level, and the water is trying to rush into the field, and is barred by a gate. But as soon as the gate is opened, the water rushes in by its own nature; and if there is dust and dirt in the way, the water rolls over them. But dust and dirt are neither the result nor the

7. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 108–09.

cause of this unfolding of the divine nature of man. They are co-existent circumstances, and, therefore, can be remedied.⁸

Even so, when the obstacles to soul-manifestation are removed the divine nature manifests itself. The co-existent circumstances in one's life which make life miserable need not therefore be over-emphasized. What needs to be emphasized is to direct all our energies in the direction of soul-manifestation.

We get from Swamiji's *Complete Works* a clearer understanding of the meaning of creation in its different phases. **There is the grand concept of evolution.**

In the animal kingdom we really see such

among his fellows in proportion as he can sacrifice for the sake of others, while in the lower strata of the animal kingdom, that animal is the strongest which can kill the greatest number of animals. Hence the struggle theory is not equally applicable to both kingdoms. Man's struggle is in the mental sphere. A man is greater in proportion as he can control his mind. When the mind's activities are perfectly at rest, the Atman manifests Itself. The struggle which we observe in the animal kingdom for the preservation of the gross body obtains in the human plane of existence for gaining mastery over the mind or for attaining the state of balance.⁹

Whatever may happen in the lower strata of nature's evolutions, in the

...progress in the rational human kingdom cannot be achieved, like that in the animal kingdom, by the destruction of others! The highest evolution of man is effected through sacrifice alone. A man is great among his fellows in proportion as he can sacrifice for the sake of others,...

laws as struggle for existence, survival of the fittest, etc., evidently at work. Therefore Darwin's theory seems true to a certain extent. But in the human kingdom, where there is the manifestation of rationality, we find just the reverse of those laws. For instance, in those whom we consider really great men or ideal characters, we scarcely observe any external struggle. In the animal kingdom instinct prevails; but the more a man advances, the more he manifests rationality. For this reason, progress in the rational human kingdom cannot be achieved, like that in the animal kingdom, by the destruction of others! The highest evolution of man is effected through sacrifice alone. A man is great

higher strata at any rate, it is not true that it is only by constantly struggling against obstacles that one has to go beyond them. Rather it is observed that there the obstacles give way and a greater manifestation of the Soul takes place through education and culture, through concentration and meditation, and above all through sacrifice. Therefore, to designate the obstacles not as the effects but as the causes of the Soul-manifestation, and describe them as aiding this wonderful diversity of nature, is not consonant with reason. The attempt to remove evil from the world by killing a thousand evil-doers, only adds to the evil in the world. But if the people can be made to desist from evil-doing by means

8. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 389.

9. *Ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. 154-5.

of spiritual instruction, there is no more evil in the world.¹⁰

In speaking of the soul, to say that one is superior to another has no meaning. In speaking of the soul, to say that man is superior to the animal or the plant, has no meaning; the whole universe is one. In plants the obstacle to soul-manifestation is very great; in animals a little less; and in man still less; in cultured, spiritual men still less; and in perfect men, it has vanished altogether. All our struggles, exercises, pains, pleasures, tears, and smiles, all that we do and think tend towards that goal, the tearing up of the screen, making the hole bigger, thinning the layers that remain between the manifestation and the reality behind.¹¹

Thus Swamiji clearly distinguishes the animal from the human kingdom. Human thinking is to study the laws in the animal kingdom and extrapolate it to the human kingdom. However, it does not work always. In the animal kingdom struggle is in the physical plane. The mind dwells in the planes of eating, evacuation and procreation. These activities are common to the brute man also. Through a series of struggles there is evolution in the animal kingdom, where we find Darwin's theory at work. There is slowly an evolution in the physical body until nature provides the soul with a human body, a human frame, which is very difficult to obtain.

It is not possible to strive for soul-manifestation on a higher plane until this perfect body is obtained. And it is a foolish waste of human life to struggle like an animal even after getting a human body. Man's evolution, therefore, is not in the physical plane, since Nature has developed

for him a perfect body. The struggles are now in the mental, moral, aesthetic and intellectual planes. He has to grow in his mental outlook to accommodate all of creation as members of one universal existence. He has to feel his own presence in all of creation. He has to give up his animal instincts and manifest the divine within. That soul-manifestation was the intention of Nature all along in evolving man out of the amoeba.

Another very important point made by Swamiji makes us look at the phenomena of creation in its proper light. From the amoeba to the brute man and thence to the superman, what is it that creation is attempting to do? **All our struggles are to gain our lost equilibrium.**

To go back to Brahman from which we have been projected is the great struggle of life. Whether people know it or not does not matter. In the universe, whatever we see of motion, or struggles in mineral or plants or animals is an effort to come back to the centre and be at rest. There was an equilibrium, and that has been destroyed; and all parts and atoms and molecules are struggling to find their lost equilibrium again. In this struggle they are combining and re-forming, giving rise to all the wonderful phenomena of nature. All struggles and competitions in animal life, plant life, and everywhere else, all social struggles and wars are but expressions of that eternal struggle to get back to that equilibrium.¹²

Man is infinite; and this limitation in which he exists now is not his nature. But through these limitations he is struggling upward and forward until he reaches the infinite, the unlimited, his birthright, his

10. *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 153.

11. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 420-1.

12. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 258-9.

nature. All these combinations and recombinations and manifestations that we see round us are not the aim or the goal, but merely by the way and in passing. These combinations as earths and suns, and moons and stars, right and wrong, good and bad, our laughter and our tears, our joys and sorrows, are to enable us to gain experience through which the soul manifests its perfect nature and throws off limitation.... That is the one goal that the soul has; and all the succeeding steps through which it is manifesting, all the successive experiences through which it is passing in order to attain to that goal—freedom—are represented as its births. The soul is, as it were, taking up a lower body and trying to express itself through that. It finds that to be insufficient, throws it aside, and a higher one is taken up. Through that it struggles to express itself. That also is found to be insufficient, is rejected, and a higher one comes; so on and on until a body is found through which the soul manifests its highest aspirations. Then the soul becomes free.¹³

Our present state of being bound down by nature both internal and external are indicators of the freedom inherent in us. Nature tries to bind us down with her laws. All living beings resist it and try to assert their freedom. All these frantic cries of helplessness we hear are an echo of that pang of the Soul to express its real nature against nature's effort to keep it bound. The uncultivated man, who is not very remote from the animal, does not so much as feel the pricks of bondage at the mental level, and yet even he struggles at the physical level for a little of physical gratification. As he progresses he begins to feel the pinch of bondage at the mental, moral and intellectual planes and he strives to overcome these.

Finally he struggles to manifest the perfection that is already in him but was so long covered. We have to repeatedly ask ourselves whether we are switching our plane of struggle from the animal-like physical plane and becoming man-like.

As man advances, he gets to understand that the same divine nature permeates the lowest worm and the highest human—the difference being only that in the worm the manifestation is less keen owing to a thicker covering of Maya. In the worm the struggle is to gain better and better physical bodies that are conducive to manifestation of the inherent divinity, while in man the struggle is no more for betterment of the physical frame but for betterment of the other sheaths—mental, moral and intellectual—that must be perfected for the manifestation of divinity. The struggle at the human plane is to learn to understand that multiplicity of bodies is the cause of differentiation, and that so long as the perception of multiplicity exists there will be competition and struggle to grab for ourselves all that Nature presents. This is what we see today rampant at the human level and the national and international levels as well. This self-seeking will lead to misery and this misery itself will teach man to change his plane of reference—if he is to survive at all.

Whether you will it or not, you have to give. The moment you say, 'I will not', the blow comes; you are hurt. None is there but will be compelled, in the long run, to give up everything. And the more one struggles against this law, the more miserable one feels. It is because we dare not give, because we are not resigned enough to accede to this grand demand of nature, that we are miserable.... You are a machine for taking and giving: you take, in order to give. Ask, therefore, nothing in return; but the more you give, the more will come to you. The quicker

13. *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 22-3.

you can empty the air out of this room, the quicker it will be filled up by the external air; and if you close all the doors and every aperture, that which is within will remain, but that which is outside will never come in, and that which is within will stagnate, degenerate, and become poisoned.¹⁴

We must always hold ourselves ready, even to give up our lives for the lowest beings. When a man has become ready even to give up his life for a little insect, he has reached the perfection which the Advaitist wants to attain; and at that moment when he has become thus ready, the veil of ignorance falls away from him, and he will feel his own nature. Even in this life, he will feel that he is one with the universe. For a time, as it were, the whole of this phenomenal world will disappear for him, and he will realize what he is.¹⁵

Is it not a sad fact that we claim to be human and the maximum we can come to is barter (in Swamiji's language we are traders in love!) and the worst—for brother man to kill brother man for the evanescent things of the world?

Man in his ignorance is not even so very conscious of his being under bondage. He believes that his struggles to overcome misery are very human. He does not see that it is a struggle he is undergoing in a wrong direction, that in this struggle he is proving himself to be more a slave than a master. Says Swamiji:

What you call man is a slave. When one realizes all this slavery, then comes the desire to be free; an intense desire comes. If a piece of burning charcoal be placed

on a man's head, see how he struggles to throw it off. Similar will be the struggles for freedom of a man who really understands that he is a slave of nature.¹⁶

Then again, we have been struggling to gain mastery over external nature through developments in science and technology. Intellect has been cultured, leading to the developments of hundreds of sciences. Artificial wants have been created, luxuries have been turned into necessities, and every poor man desires to have those wants satisfied which he cannot purchase, and when he cannot, he struggles, and dies in the struggle. This is the unfortunate result.

Through the intellect is not the way to solve the problem of misery, but through the heart. If all this vast amount of effort had been spent in making men purer, gentler, more forbearing, this world would have a thousandfold more happiness than it has today.¹⁷

This is what the world has realized today and there is a frantic cry for cultivation of human values and value-oriented education. What we need today is a high degree of forbearance based on our correct understanding of our goal. There is need for men and women whose lives will stand as beacon light when man in his poor understanding needs a pathfinder for him.

A few questions should not escape our attention. If the eternally perfect soul believes itself to be under bondage and suffers a thousand miseries, then this Maya must be very powerful indeed. What guarantee then that this soul will ever be able to overthrow the bondage it is in? And if all of us will eventually attain the goal of freedom which is our birthright then what

14. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 5.

15. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 365.

16. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 411.

17. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 414-5.

is the hurry? Says Swamiji,

To everyone of us there must come a time when the whole universe will be found to have been a mere dream, when we shall find that the soul is infinitely better than its surroundings. ...when we shall find that these environments were almost zero in comparison with the power of the soul.¹⁸

There is no other way to vindicate the glory and the liberty of the human soul and reconcile the inequalities and the horrors of this world than by placing the whole burden upon the legitimate cause—our own independent actions or Karma.¹⁹

...there are two components in every action, the one the subject, the other the object, and the one aim of life is to make the subject master of the object.... That is how we are all trying to conquer. What is meant by morality? Making the subject strong by attuning it to the Absolute, so that finite nature ceases to have control over us. It is a logical conclusion of our philosophy that there must come a time when we shall have conquered all the environments, because nature is finite.²⁰

As for the second question:

It is true that every being will become free, sooner or later; no one can be lost.... In the first place, the struggle is the only means that will bring us to the centre, and in the second place, we do not know why we struggle. We have to.... The vast masses of mankind are content with material things, but there are some who awake, and want to get

back, who have had enough of this playing, down here. These struggle consciously, while the rest do it unconsciously.²¹

It is better therefore to struggle consciously. Then, in the first place, we know what it is we are struggling for and, in the second place, we see all creation as existing at different stages in their progress towards the goal. If we struggle consciously, then our passage on this earth will be smooth.

Consciously or unconsciously man is following the call of the divine. That divine voice has been heard by everyone, whether he knows it or not that voice which beckons to itself the sleeping soul. That voice calling for freedom has been with us. We are born here on account of that voice; every one of our movements is for that. We are all rushing towards freedom. Recall the vision of the Cosmic Form in the eleventh chapter of the *Gita*. All creatures from the lowest to the highest are rushing towards that freedom. And in this march towards freedom they are either combining with each other or elbowing each other out of the way. Thus come competition, joys, struggles, life, pleasure, and death, and the whole universe is nothing but the result of this mad struggle to reach the voice.

What happens then?... As soon as you know the voice and understand what it is, the whole scene changes. The same world which was the ghastly battle-field of Maya is now changed into something good and beautiful. We no longer curse nature nor say that the world is horrible and that it is all vain; we need no longer weep and wail. As soon as we understand the voice, we see the reason why

18. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 421.

19. *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 270.

20. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 137.

(Continued on page 917)

21. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 259.

Essentials of Jainism

SHASHIKANT K. MEHTA

This is the text of the talk delivered (on 14 November 1994) by Sri Mehta of Rajkot, Gujarat: he represented the Jaina religion at the function held at Belur Math to mark the conclusion of the year long celebrations commemorating the centenary of the Parliament of Religions, Chicago (1893).



शिवमस्तु सर्व जगतः, परहितनिरताः भवन्तु भूतगणाः ।
दोषाः प्रयान्तु नाशं, सर्वत्र सुखी भवन्तु लोकाः ॥

*Śivamastu sarva jagataḥ
parahita-niratāḥ bhavantu bhūta-gaṇāḥ,
Doṣāḥ prayāntu nāśam
sarvatra sukhī bhavantu lokāḥ.*

May good befall the entire world; may people remain ever engaged in the welfare of others; may all the problems get totally destroyed; may people everywhere be happy.

On behalf of the Jain Religion and Community, I bring greetings and good wishes for the success of this Parliament of World Religions.

Swami Vivekananda established this Belur Math of Shri Ramakrishna on 9th December, 1898, when he made a prophetic declaration. He said, 'The spiritual force emanating from here will permeate the whole world, turning the current of men's activities and aspirations into new channels.' He concluded after seeing his vision, 'Time will fulfil all my expectations.' I feel this is the time, this is the place and, should I add, these are the people present here to

fulfil his expectations. This parliament should be the second homecoming of Swami Vivekananda.

Sri Ramakrishna preached harmony between all faiths. Swami Vivekananda preached unity of all life and gave the spiritual message of Vedanta to the world. The spiritual quest has begun for millions of people on this planet. An amazing counter-revolution against the materialistic culture is taking place. People are in search of the meaning of life, rather than of only the means of life; in search of a personal religion for direct connection with the spiritual, to bring out the God-like potential in each man.

This can be the turning point in the history of religions. It is expected of them to move from religion to spirituality and to transcend rituals and an insulated sectarian existence of the Establishment, befitting the scientific temper of modern society. Science and technology have transformed the world into a global society. It is the duty of religions to give a Global Man for a global society.

As in science, we must evolve a universal language of spirituality, we must demonstrate in life what we preach. (The non-practising philosophers in religion should be honoured with voluntary retirement!)

Vedanta is the science of spirituality. So is the Jain faith. The Jain faith agrees with Vedanta in the divinity of man and the interconnectedness and inter-relatedness of all life.

Jainism is a holistic view of life. It excludes nothing, and prescribes a code of conduct befitting the spiritual aspirations of men in society.

It prescribes ways to build harmony with Five Environments for equanimity and enlightenment in life. They are:

- a) To be non-violent and compassionate with nature and all life.
- b) To be detached from material possessions.
- c) To be ethical in economic life.
- d) To be friendly in social relations.
- e) To be loyal to our culture.

It is not enough to lead a personal life of asceticism. Jainism does not teach a life of escapism. We have a social obligation towards all life. We have therefore to continuously care for the good of all (परहितचिन्ता, *parahitacintā*) and serve all (परोपकार, *paropakāra*). These are the two major duties of man in social life.

God cannot be remembered in exclusion. *Jiva maitri* (friendliness towards creatures) and *Jin bhakti* (devotion towards Jain prophets) are two inseparable aspects of our spiritual life. *Jin seva* (service to Jain teachers) without adequate *Jan seva* (service to people) is a mere ritualistic worship, says Lord Mahavir. He further says that, since all life is inter-related and interconnected, we have to be:

ECO-FRIENDLY, *prakṛti-mitra*, प्रकृतिमित्र
 CULTURE-FRIENDLY, *samskr̥ti-mitra*, संस्कृतिमित्र
 SOCIO-FRIENDLY, *samāja-mitra*, समाजमित्र
 NATION-FRIENDLY, *rāṣṭra-mitra*, राष्ट्रमित्र
 UNIVERSE-FRIENDLY, *viśva-mitra*, विश्वमित्र

This is the portrait of a true Jain: A symbiosis between Man, Cosmos and Nature.

The real strength of Jainism, however, is in its strict adherence to the philosophy and practice of non-violence. The central theme of Jainism is:

NON-VIOLENCE IN ACTION,
ahimsā, अहिंसा
 NON-VIOLENCE IN THOUGHTS,
anekānta, अनेकान्त
 NON-POSSESSION OF MATTER,
aparigraha, अपरिग्रह

With these three foundations man can reach to the height of divinity and society can live with peace and harmony.

The need of non-violence (*ahimsā*) is all inclusive. All animate and inanimate life is to be protected. Man has to be a voice for the voiceless. Non-killing of all life, a non-polluting frugal use of Nature, a strict vegetarian diet, a simple life with a high spiritual conduct are the basics of Jain religion.

Non-violence is the basis of survival of human civilization. Let us look back into history what non-violence can achieve. Mahatma Gandhi brought freedom for India by a non-violent movement. Nelson Mandela brought an end of the colourbar in South Africa. Martin Luther King brought equality of rights for blacks in U.S.A. Lech Walesa in Poland fought the mighty communist regime with non-violence.

If this is the power and might of non-violence of a single leading force, what can not be achieved if all the religious faiths are committed to non-violence and work for the transformation of our civilization from a mundane-materialistic culture to a spiritual culture?

Anekāntavāda is non-violence of thought. It recognizes that knowledge, spiritual or otherwise, has many viewpoints and it is proper to respect all the viewpoints containing elements of truth. Therefore, any fundamentalist approach towards other religious faiths is foreign to the genius of Jain religion. In modern language, *anekāntavāda* is known as the Systems View of Life. We can resolve many conflicts and frictions born out of improper understanding, when *anekāntavāda* is applied to the problems.

Non-possession of matter (अपरिग्रह, *aparigraha*) is non-violence condensed. This aspect of life has the highest philosophy behind it. The wealth you possess is not yours. It belongs to the Lord. Therefore you have to be a trustee of your wealth and give it in as much charity as possible. The Jain community is always in the forefront for all charitable cause. We strongly feel that prosperity comes out of *paropakāra* (helping others) only.

A simple life is a corollary to the philosophy of *aparigraha*. It is a practice through which finally you can easily enter the monastic order, renouncing all material possessions, walking, begging for food, and adopting a totally non-violent way of life.

I am simply delighted to quote Swami Vivekananda at this point. He said, 'Jainism has brought to perfection the Vedanta philosophy of non-violence and asceticism.' The present world needs both non-violence and asceticism.

Swami Vivekananda had a vision of new channels of action in 1898. Let us collaborate in building these channels of spirituality. I lay before this Parliament, in an extremely humble spirit, a few layouts of channels for your kind consideration.

LEAGUE OF WORLD RELIGIOUS FAITHS

We should establish a Vishwa Dharma Samsad which will respect all religious faiths, and also establish a continuing dialogue with the socio-eco-political establishments. In many areas, our eternal wisdom can solve so many problems faced by human society. This will be a People's League with people's patronage. It is not necessary to have any political patronage for the league.

We should also highlight, alternative life styles to the present materialist, consumerist, pleasure-oriented life styles.

SPIRITUAL BROTHERHOOD

(*ādhyātmik birādarī*, आध्यात्मिक बिरादरी)

A Spiritual Brotherhood representing as many religious faiths should be formed in as many towns and cities of the world as possible. This will be a creative minority of *sādhakas* (religious practitioners) who are ready to transcend existing religious establishments, and are ready to demonstrate the unity of all life and foster bonds of harmony and friendship with all faiths, and work for raising the social consciousness to the cosmic level. Swami Vivekananda very rightly said, 'You may be born in any religion, you should not die in it.' I would add, let us live above 'religions', give a spiritual dimension to life, both personally and socially, and die as a *viśva-mānuṣ*, विश्वमानुष, a universal person. THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY, will be the motto of this Spiritual Brotherhood.

TEMPLES OF PEACE

Swami Vivekananda said 100 years ago to build temples of OM where everybody can offer silent prayers.

To foster peace, love and harmony, as many Temples of Peace should be built in as many towns and cities of as many nations as possible. These temples will foster strong bonds between the many ethnic groups

residing in a town or a city. Silent prayers can transform ordinary human consciousness to rise to a divine level.

In 1893 Swami Vivekananda had to go to the World Parliament of Religion all alone! In 1994, the World Parliament is meeting at Thakur Ramakrishnadev's holy place to bring a spiritual culture to the world. The Ramakrishna Mission should undertake more of this kind of work.

ECO-FRIENDLY SOCIETY

We should strongly support all forces who are for saving the ecology of the planet. We cannot save man if we do not save nature.

Similarly, our call should be for a simple standard of life for both the affluent class as well as affluent societies of the West and the East. It is the benevolent duty of all religious faiths to free man from a wasteful luxurious life so that we can take care of the

poor in a righteous manner. A simple life can release enough resources of the earth for the needy.

COLLABORATION OF SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

Science now speaks the language of spirituality and spirituality speaks the language of science. Both must come together, talk, work, walk, and pray together.

The League of World Religious Faiths will have a special task of winning over the world of science for a joint mission to help the descent of divinity on Earth.

Let us be very clear. We are here to uphold the eternal truths and wisdom about human existence. Swami Vivekananda has said very eloquently. 'Truth does not pay homage to any society, ancient or modern. Society has to pay homage to Truth or die.' The choice is ours. □

The Struggle and the Way

(Continued from page 913)

this struggle should be here, this fight, this competition, this difficulty, this cruelty, these little pleasures and joys; we see that they are in the nature of things, because without them there would be no going towards the voice, to attain which we are destined, whether we know it or not.²²

And when we hear the divine voice and allow ourselves to be carried on by that divine life-current, that very moment all struggles end and no misery is too deep to leave a mark. Our outlook on this world

changes too. It is no more a place of terror. It is a place of mirth.

And this world is no more a battlefield where each soul is born to struggle with every other soul and the strongest gets the victory and the weakest goes to death. It becomes a playground where the Lord is playing like a child, and we are His playmates, His fellow-workers. This is only a play, however terrible, hideous, and dangerous it may appear.²³ □

22. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 126-7.

23. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 160.

The Universal Approach of Hinduism

DR. B.R. THAKUR

In this short but lucid essay, the author, Reader in Philosophy, Dr. Ambedkar Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, traces the universal approach of Hinduism. He rightly regards it as an antidote to the so-called secular tendencies of our times.

In modern times there is a craze for secularism. Religion has been declared by psychologists such as Sigmund Freud as a source of hatred and conflict and, as such, inimical to the feeling of fraternity. Of course, riots and other ugly incidents have frequently occurred in the name of religion. This is sad and unfortunate. But before we study Hinduism and try to highlight its universal and synthetic approach, it is to be noted that religion in the true sense of the term is not to be blamed for any such dismal and disintegrating tendencies. For, as Mahatma Gandhi said, 'Religions are not meant for separating men; they are meant to bind them.' In fact, religion is misused by politicians and others to serve their ulterior motives. These selfish persons exploit people in the name of religion for their personal ends and purposes.

Prof. John Hick, who has studied the situation, observed:

Most of us today would say that the tensions between, for example, Muslim and Jews in the Middle East, or Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, or between Muslims and Hindus, or Hindus and Sikhs in the Indian subcontinent are really not tensions between religions but between political com-

munities. They are products of history, politics and economics rather than of theology.¹

Thus, obviously religion in its true essence does not foster disharmony and discord. It is a valuable mode that in any society unites man with man, helping them to create an integrated society, a cohesive organization. Therefore, religion should not be dubbed as responsible for riots and terrorism. Actually, there is only one path which appears to be many. The differences are only in the external coverings, which when removed, the interior of every religion would be seen as strikingly similar to that of every other.

It is against this background that one has to study Hinduism and show that it is not proper to discredit Hinduism in particular and religion in general as factors responsible for disruption and disintegration. Religion, in reality, represents a dynamic higher attitude to life. It is not mere ritualism or ceremonialism. Swami Vivekananda has rightly described religion as 'realization; not talk, nor doctrine, nor theories, however, beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming, not hearing and acknowledging; it is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes. That is religion.'²

1. John Hick, *Philosophy, Religion and Human Unity*, p. 462. (From *Philosophy, Theory and Practice*, Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, 1974)

2. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, vol. II, Mayavati Memorial Edition (1989), published by Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta.

'Dharma' has been understood in this wider sense by Indian scholars. It is not just what is signified by religion in the technical sense. In this connection, Sri Paramahansa Yogananda's observations are quite illuminating:

The word religion is derived from the Latin *religare*, to bind. What binds, when does it bind, and why? The only rational answer we can give is that religion binds us by rules, laws and injunctions in order that we may not degenerate, that we may not have pain, misery, suffering, bodily, mentally or spiritually.³

In terms of this conception of the true nature of religion, it is proper to study Hinduism which among the religions of the world is unique and universal. Indeed the authoritative *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* considers Hinduism as 'a very comprehensive term and has many shades and degrees of varying hues in it....' It is, in fact, 'all tolerant, all compliant, all comprehensive, all absorbing.' Hence, it has been found difficult 'to exactly define what Hinduism means.'⁴

Swami Vivekananda and others have also viewed Hinduism from this perspective. Hinduism differs from other religions of the world in more than one aspect. First, unlike other religions of the world, it has no founder. It was not enunciated by a particular prophet as in the case of other religions, for example, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Taoism, etc. The primordial source

of Hindu Dharma is the Vedas which enunciated certain fundamental rules of Dharma, of righteous conduct of human beings in all spheres of activity. These rules of right conduct were subsequently elaborated and systematized by the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, the *Smritis*, the *Puranas*, the two epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, etc. Moreover, Hinduism is the name given by foreign scholars who thus described the religion of those persons who lived on the bank of Indus. It is geographical in origin and as such does not suggest any sectarian approach.

Another feature worth noting is that Hinduism has accommodated and assimilated religions and customs of different people. Consequently, Hinduism has undergone changes in the course of time. Hinduism of the Vedic period, for instance, evolved in a synthetic way. Hinduism of the post-Vedic period, especially of the Puranic period, is characterized by its division into different sects, for example, Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, etc. These traits were absent during the ancient period. The medieval period of Hinduism is characterized by the Bhakti movement. We see that many saint-poets like Tulsi, Kabir, Surdas and Mira composed religious poems and tried to popularize and enrich Hinduism by the path of devotion. In this way, Hinduism has effectively assimilated various elements into its fold. That is why this religion is quite accommodating and absorbing.

It is difficult to identify any hard or rigid criterion of Hinduism. One may or may not observe Sandhya and chant Gayatri; one may offer oblations, or *harwan*, or may not do so; one may believe in God or one may not believe in a personal God. It is not necessary to profess this or that dogma or doctrine. Similarly, one may visit temples

3. Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, *A Science of Religion*, pp. 17-18, Yoga Satsang Society of India, Ranchi, 1963.

4. *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. IX, p. 256. Edited by James Hastings with John A. Sellnic and Lohis H. Gray. Fourth Impression, December 1956.

A New Approach to an Old Problem

PROF. B.N. SIKDAR

Human suffering has been with us since the beginning of recorded history, and there have been innumerable attempts to find ways of eradicating or at least alleviating suffering. Swami Vivekananda had a new approach to this age-old problem. He wanted to make the Vedantic doctrine of the Divinity of man the basis for a new, radical method of relieving man's suffering. He said that we should teach people their divine nature and thus give them back their lost dignity. In this way they would become strong, and able to solve their many problems.

Prof. B.N. Sikdar, the author of this thoughtful article, was formerly Professor of English, Presidency College, Calcutta University.

1

'I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth',¹ wrote Swami Vivekananda from Washington about a year after his astounding performance at Chicago. These words might seem to be mere rhetoric, were it not for the fact that this straightforward declaration was translated into reality (though not to the extent he wished) by the speaker through his work and much suffering was relieved.

From early youth, till near the end, Vivekananda spoke, wrote and worked for the deprived and the lowly. The sight of suffering always moved him. In his speeches, letters and writings we often hear his anguished outbursts against the misery of the masses. Time and again he severely chastises the rich and the upper classes, charging them with exploitation. The Raja of Khetri (Ajit Singh) was one of the few who helped Swamiji with funds when he was in need on the eve of his departure for Chicago.

In November 1894, Vivekananda writes to the Raja's Dewan in this pungent way:

It is all right for those who have plenty of money and position to let the world roll on as such, but I call him a traitor who, having been educated, nursed in luxury by the heart's blood of the downtrodden millions of toiling poor, never even takes a thought for them. Where, in what period of history your rich men, noblemen, your priests and potentates, took any thought for the poor—the grinding of whose faces is the very life-blood of their power?²

His sharp tongue does not spare the Americans either. He frequently cautions them against vulgar worship of wealth and position, and reminds them of the soul's degradation that wealth and luxury bring about. The theme is treated so forcefully as to lend to it a militant note. A rage of the same intensity was boiling in Jean Jacques Rousseau when, before the outbreak of the French Revolution (1788), in despair at the suffering of the people of France, he declared in his wrath that the savage state

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 5, p. 50; letter to Alasinga from Washington, 27 Oct. 1894.

2. *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 329–30; letter, Nov, 1894, from Chicago.

was better than civilization.

2

To redress as much as was possible in his age of superstition, untouchability, famine and pestilence, of bigotry and sectarianism, Vivekananda set himself to work so tirelessly that despite a robust body, he was cut off in the prime of life. The noblest monument he has left is the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. At present, nearly a century after its founding, it is a large organization that has a splendid record of manifold humanitarian and cultural activities all over the globe. The seal of this hallowed body is meaningful: 'The sun = Knowledge. The stormy water = Work. The lotus = Love. The serpent = Yoga. The

His sharp tongue does not spare the Americans either. He frequently cautions them against vulgar worship of wealth and position, and reminds them of the soul's degradation that wealth and luxury bring about.

swan = the Self. The Motto = May the Swan (the Supreme Self) send us that.³ This is the interpretation of the symbol given by Swamiji in a letter to Josephine MacLeod. His aspiration, which was enshrined in the organization, was, 'to do the highest good to the world, [to] everyone, down to the lowest.'

For this work he wanted dedicated souls (sannyasins) 'who have given up everything—bhakti, mukti, and enjoyment and all.'⁴ That was Vivekananda's own *vow*. With a vow, a person dedicates himself to

3. *Ibid.*, p. 528; letter, 24 July 1900 from Belur Math.

4. *Letters of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1981), p. 111; to his brother-disciples.

the task heart and soul. This pledge of commitment involved his whole being—life as well as honour. Vivekananda wanted a band of missionaries who would help him to make good this vow by doing their best to reach out to all kinds of people. It was a sacred task because Sri Ramakrishna 'came for the good of the world' and had put the burden on his (Swamiji's) shoulders. On Vivekananda's face his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, had discovered signs of a *bhakta*, a lover of God. And it was at his Master's behest that he shunned the path of personal liberation and became a Karma Yogi, spiritually wedded to work for the good of all.

Swami Vivekananda wrote to his followers in 1894 that they were free to regard Ramakrishna as 'a man, or God, or an Incarnation', just as they pleased. But his Master's mission could not wait; they had to carry out his command. And the first quality Swamiji demanded of them was fearlessness: 'Where's the room for fear?—caring for nothing whatsoever is a part of your life.'⁵ Both men and women must come forward because 'there is no distinction of sex in the soul'. Further, he made each one's spiritual life a personal affair, thus saving the Math and Mission from conflict over religious belief. There was to be no dogma. Many bright pages of European and American religious history have been tarnished by conflict of opinions over religious tenets.

3

Swami Vivekananda, inspired as always by Sri Ramakrishna's ideals, devoted himself to uplifting the fallen masses of India, first, by going to the West for help. He would bring back to India ideas for scientific and material improvements in exchange for the spirituality he would teach

5. *Complete Works*, vol. 6, p. 266.

there. Man of action that he was, he struck swiftly to carry out his intention. In America he had to explain existential questions such as, What is soul? What is consciousness? What is mysticism? In India he followed the principle he had laid down: 'One ounce of practice is worth twenty thousand tons of big talk.' He would refer to the *Gita*: 'Thou talkest like a wise man, but thy actions betray thee to be a coward; therefore stand up and fight.'⁶ Religious beliefs or styles of worship were of secondary importance to the kind of life Vivekananda wanted the monks to live. To try to relieve the suffering of the people must be their primary aim. Their creed must be a creed of personal and total commitment. Instead of preaching Ramakrishna's life he preached Ramakrishna's principles, especially the principle of renunciation. For him renunciation had a distinctive meaning—it was renunciation of selfish motives in the midst of work; not renunciation of even selfless work for others.

In the formative period of his life, in boyhood, he had carried out many acts of charity to such an extent they were not approved even by his liberal family. In his early youth he had tangled with a drunken English soldier, then an object of universal awe as a symbol of the might of the British Empire. His hankering for achieving 'something very noble and very big' clashed with an equally strong desire to come to the aid of the suffering. From one holy man to another, from one great man to another, and to the Brahma Samaj also, he roamed here and there seeking relief from the restlessness that acted on him constantly. Impulses pulling him in contrary directions—the current of scepticism sweeping in from the West, the 'young Bengal' movement inspired by the magnetic Eurasian H.L.V. Derozio, and other forces, disturbed Vivekananda's

nights and days.

Rammohan Roy's reform measures smelt strongly of Christian tenets. Under the influence of Western rationalism, Rammohan attacked idolatry, Hindu theology, and cultism. His Unitarian deistic type of theism was not to Vivekananda's taste. In fact, 'his schematic religious creed had, apart from the name of Brahma, practically no specific Hindu content.'⁷ Keshab Chandra Sen's contribution was verily iconoclastic; it became progressively mystifying as he drifted away from humanitarian work. A strong faction headed by Radha Kanta Deb pressed for a status-quo in socio-religious affairs. Only one towering personality, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, was moving heaven and earth to 'Bengalize' society—to introduce widow remarriage, and to abolish child-marriage and the practice of suttee. For this he was subjected to insult, vituperation and injuries. Bengal in the second half of the last century was simmering like a witches' cauldron. In other parts of India too there was confusion, though to a lesser extent.

4

In his youth Vivekananda's exposure to the ideas of the West whose practicality he admired, and his loyalty to the Indian tradition he had inherited, made the problem more acute for him. Too intelligent to overlook the advantages science had already brought to India, he was prevented by some inner urge from going over to Western ways completely, although he was in the mood for change. But for his visits to Dakshineswar, in response to a chance remark of Mr. Hastie, the Christian Principal of his college, he might have gone Keshab Sen's way. It was a fateful day in the history of religion when Vivekananda came to the

6. Cf. *Bhagavad-Gita*, 2.3, 11.

7. *A Cultural History of India*, Ed., A.L. Basham, 1898, p. 367.

small village of Dakshineswar where a poor illiterate priest was serving in the Kali temple. This priest, Ramakrishna, had already achieved fame as a saint.

Sri Ramakrishna was drawn to him immediately, attracted by the signs of spiritual potentiality Vivekananda bore on his person. Soon, between the two highly charged spirits, sparks flew; the dynamo had recognized its transmitter.

On his first visit to Dakshineswar, Naren (Vivekananda's given name) demanded of Sri Ramakrishna a straightforward answer to the question he had asked other holy men: 'Have you seen God? Can you show me God?' Other men had

Like the humanists of the Middle Ages, he brings philosophy out of its closet and mingles it with life in the world... For the common man 'philosophy' once meant accepting misery and learning to die—now it taught people how to struggle and live.

made evasive replies or kept silent. This time Naren was taken aback by the answer: 'Yes, I see Him as clearly as I see you and can show Him to you.'⁸

On Naren's second visit, Sri Ramakrishna touched the sceptic and sent him into a trance. In one tremendous movement of his soul, Naren felt that he had been born again. All his past wrenched away, something external had fallen off. A profound calm filled his mind. He now realized that rationalism is not a strong enough ladder for one to climb to the regions of Truth or the Absolute. On Naren's third visit, he was again to receive that divine touch and lose all external consciousness.

8. Cf. *Complete Works*, vol. 4, p. 179; 'My Master'.

These supra-rational experiences of 'seeing God' were later elaborated by Swami Vivekananda: 'There is no knowledge without experience, and man has to see God in his own soul. When man has come face to face with the one great fact of the universe, then alone will doubts vanish and crooked things become straight.'⁹ Sri Ramakrishna later locked the door to the path of Naren's personal salvation. For, as Swami Vivekananda, his overriding concern would be to work for the spiritual and material welfare of all. With the exception of another short period of crisis after Ramakrishna's death, under the influence of Pavhari Baba, a saint who preferred to live away from the work-a-day world, never again did Vivekananda veer from his Master's injunction to devote himself to the service of humanity. Once for all, *Jiva* became *Śiva* to him.¹⁰

5

Swami Vivekananda once said, 'This quickening impulse cannot be derived from books. The soul can receive impulse from another soul, and from nothing else.'¹¹ That quickening impulse, Swamiji received from his great guru. Also, in his inimitable way, in a homely language, through fables and anecdotes, and in the course of conversation, Ramakrishna imparted to Vivekananda the gist of the Vedantic truths revealed to him through his own mystic power and through the teachings of his Advaita-Vedanta guru, Totapuri. An omnivorous reader, Vivekananda did his own studying too, and found time for meditation also in spite of pressing, manifold activities. He grew certain that

9. *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 133.

10. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, 1952), pp. 181-2.

11. *Complete Works*, vol. 3, p. 45; 'The Need of a Guru'.

Vedanta properly understood could be a factor in developing a better social order and the foundation of a Universal Religion.

Later he meditated on the tragic conditions in his country, and came to certain conclusions. Indians, particularly the lower classes, had lost all sense of individual dignity. The spirit of self-help and independence had been utterly destroyed in them by the crushing pressure of casteism and slavery. For their wretchedness the wretched simply blamed Fate and did nothing to get rid of their misery. To give food and clothing in emergencies is a temporary measure; to make men self-reliant is more vital.

Therefore Vivekananda first set himself to the task of finding a way to give back to the people their lost sense of dignity. Manliness was the one quality he wanted to infuse in all—manliness in 'the business of life and in the duties of citizenship'. 'Every man born here (USA) knows that he is a *man*. Every man born in India knows that he is a slave of society.'¹²

Vivekananda looked at the world around him with a penetrating vision. He saw that neither the gross materialism of the West nor the otherworldliness of Indian culture was right for the people. He arrived at the conclusion that a judicious mixture of the two minus their deficiencies and defects would be best. In the spirit of a scientist he proceeded to formulate a syncretic system of education and wanted the teachers, i.e. his disciples, to train themselves first. *Brahmacharya*, the ancient principle of continence and chastity, comes first. Then obedience; if they learned to obey, 'the command would come by itself'.¹³ No jealousy; and purity of

the body and mind. They were to awaken the divinity dormant in every human being and carry Vedanta to every door. 'Therefore, my friends, my plan is to start institutions in India to train our young men as the teachers of the truths of our scriptures in India and outside India.'¹⁴ The task was arduous and so he exhorted them, 'Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel.... *We have wept long enough*.'¹⁵ Feeling and faith were the two stars to which Vivekananda hitched his wagon.

In this respect the Master teacher was Vivekananda himself. Realizing that Shankara's interpretation of the universe (the theory of Maya) had not been properly understood, he re-interpreted the Vedantic principles to make them easy and practicable. Misunderstanding of the principle of Maya had bred inertia. The dynamism inherent in Swamiji called for movement forward. By virtue of his sharp intellect, broad imagination and sound judgement, he could go straight to the core of a problem. His Vedanta is a positive philosophy. It is living—poetic. 'Out of hopelessly intricate mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of the bewildering Yogi-ism must come the most scientific and practical psychology—and all this must be put in a form so that a child may grasp it.'¹⁶ Like the humanists of the Middle Ages, he brings philosophy out of its closet and mingles it with life in the world. Keeping in view the human limitations he opens a wide, beautiful road through the tortuous labyrinths of the Upanishads. For the common man 'philosophy' once meant accepting misery and learning to die—now it taught people how to struggle and live.

12. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 23; letter to Alasinga, from Chicago.

13. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 134.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 233.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 224.

16. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 104-05; letter to Alasinga.

6

Vivekananda's analysis of historical forces gave him the correct perspective. He said in 1896: 'The British Empire with all its drawbacks is the greatest machine that ever existed for the dissemination of ideas. I mean to put my ideas in the centre of this machine and they will spread all over the world.'¹⁷

Sometime before his death, Sri Ramakrishna transmitted all his spiritual powers to Swamiji. The recipient was indeed not

17. *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 365-6.

unworthy of the gift. In order to achieve the India of his dreams he burnt the candle at both ends, and died before he reached forty.

The UNESCO Charter contains these words: 'It is in the *minds of men* that the defences of peace must be constructed.' Vivekananda wanted to cleanse the *minds of men* of all dirt and dross by stimulating their inherent divinity.

As a man, he showed a determination which never gave way. Like a spendthrift squandering his inheritance, he gave his all for the good of people everywhere. The whole world is forever indebted to him. □

The Universal Approach of Hinduism

(Continued from page 919)

and observe certain rites or one may not. This shows clearly that unlike other religions, Hinduism is quite liberal and flexible.

Hinduism is thus quite catholic and universal. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that some votaries or preachers and priests of Hinduism sometimes behave rigidly. For example, untouchability and such other stigmas have really defiled Hinduism. It is necessary to make people aware of the universal and dynamic spirit of Hinduism. If Hinduism is preached and practised with this universalistic and synthetic outlook, then there would be no difficulty for both Hindus and non-Hindus. Such Hinduism would be quite comparable with the secularism which is often championed by

our politicians these days. Really, Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Shivananda⁵ have exemplified the universal and dynamic elements of Hinduism. This is really quite heartening. We have to acquaint ourselves with the basic tenets of Hinduism evolved through the ages by such sages and saints of Hinduism.

It has an intrinsic undying vitality. It has been re-lived, re-kindled and re-integrated from age to age. It is ancient, yet modern, even young. From time immemorial it is non-dogmatic. It has always assimilated and continues to assimilate the good and noble elements from everywhere, while firmly anchored to its own fundamental tenets. It is embodied in the collective consciousness of the nation. It is a way of life. It is beginningless: *anadi*; it is endless: *ananta*; it is everlasting: *sanatana*. Hence, it is called *Sanatana Dharma*. □

5. The author is possibly referring to the founder of the Divine Life Society, Hrishikesh.

The Concept of Body in Vedanta

SWAMI PITAMBARANANDA

This is an edited version of the paper read at the Interreligious and Interdisciplinary Seminar on 'The Concept of Body' held at Gurudwara Gurugianprakash, Jawaddi Kala, Ludhiana on 8 April 1994. The author is the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Chandigarh.

'Vid' is 'to know'. But today what we think we know is only the external view of things. When we develop the inner vision, we have the 'Vedas'. When this inner vision reaches its culmination, it is called 'Vedanta'—the culmination of transcendental knowledge. In the known history of mankind, this culmination was first reached in the Upanishads. These Upanishads are said to be 108 in number and are included in the four collections called Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda. How many centuries old are these Vedas? Nobody really knows.

These Upanishads are neither dogmatic nor doctrinal. They are revelations, the spiritual truths discovered by the courageous wise men called *rishis*, meaning 'seers'. They do not ask us to believe; they goad us to think, understand, feel, and raise ourselves to perceive and realize those truths for ourselves. The process of valid knowledge of the ultimate nature of things, called Vedanta, has always been threefold: listening to the descriptions of the direct transcendental experiences of the seers; understanding and assimilating the truths and their implications and practical applications through reason and feeling in a tranquil mind; and then discovering them in our own being by raising our consciousness to the required level through meditation. We thus achieve absolute perfection in life by the culmination of this ultimate wisdom.

2. The Bhagavad-gita

The *Bhagavad-gita* is also called Upanishad though it does not form part of the Vedas and comes much later in point of time. But it is an authoritative source of Vedanta as, according to Swami Vivekananda, it is 'its divine commentary',¹ and, according to tradition, it is 'the "milk" taken out by Bhagavan Krishna from all the "cows" in the form of the Upanishads.'²

3. The Vedanta-aphorisms of Vyasa

Another equally authoritative source of Vedanta is the 'Aphorisms of Sri Vyasa'. In these the great sage Vyasa has presented the revelations of all the Upanishads in a harmonious manner, and he has been so successful that anyone trying to understand Vedanta takes recourse to these aphorisms. They themselves came to be called the 'Vedantic View'.

They are also known as *Vyasa-Sutras*, *Vedanta-Sutras*, *Brahma-Sutras*, or *Uttara-Mimamsa*. But the remarkable thing is that Vyasa himself calls them *Sharirika-Mimamsa*—the analytical search for the real nature of the Being who lives in the body. One must here point out the difference between *Sharirika* and *Shariraka*. *Sharirika* means 'bodily', or connected with or

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 4, p. 335; hereafter C.W.

2. *Gita-Dhyana*, 4.

belonging to body. Vyasa does not think that the Being of man belongs to the body though to the non-discriminating it appears to be so. Therefore he calls it *Shariraka*—the real Being in the body.

4. The Final Proof of Vedanta

It should be pointed out here that other than these three sources of Vedanta, i.e. the Upanishads, the *Brahma-Sutras*, and the *Bhagavad-gita*, there is a vast mass of literature known as *Vedanta-Darshana*, which consists of Commentaries on these, and inde-

*Oh! You were talking about the body?
Yes, it's correct that the body is not well.
But when you asked how I am, naturally
I said I am fine, having great joy.*

pendent writings of philosophers and scholars. These contain personal views and interpretations. But Vedanta should not be confused or identified with any of these particular schools, though we can take help from all of them for gradually comprehending the import of Vedanta. However, the final proof or comprehension comes through our own direct experience, as pointed out by Swami Vivekananda: 'This Rishihood, this power of supersensuous perception of Vedas, is real religion. And as long as this does not develop in the life of an initiate, religion is a mere empty word to him, and it is to be understood that he has not yet taken the first step in religion.'³

5. A Bright Example of a Rishi of Our Own Times

Mahapurush Swami Shivananda (1855–1934), a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the second president of the Ramakrishna Order, was a model of Vedanta. In his old age, even when his body was suffering from various ailments, he was

always at rest with himself and disseminating knowledge and radiating joy all around.

Once when his health was very bad and there was no sleep at night, someone, while paying respects to him in the morning, asked, 'How are you, Maharaj?'

Mahapurushji (spontaneously): Very fine, there is full joy.

The enquirer (surprised): But, Maharaj, I heard that you could not sleep all night.

Mahapurushji (with an effort, as if coming down from a higher plane): Oh! You were talking about the body? Yes, it's correct that the body is not well. But when you asked how I am, naturally I said I am fine, having great joy.⁴

On another occasion he said, 'I am not the body; I am the eternal Supreme Being—ever pure, perfect and free. The Master has granted me knowledge of this in the fullest measure. That is why it makes no difference whether the body is well, sick or old. The body will certainly follow its own course.'⁵ And on another occasion,

You know this body is old. That is why there is always some complaint or the other. The body is subject to six-fold change (birth, existence, growth, transformation, decay and death). That is the nature of the body. Now it is proceeding towards the last change, death. Of course, these changes pertain to the body only; the Self which dwells within remains eternally the same. These changes do not affect It at all. The Self which dwells within the body is all right. The body cannot be the self. The Master out of compassion has given me that knowledge. Now it does not matter whether the body lives or goes.

After keeping his eyes closed for a while, the Swami burst out laughing and said, 'Yes, the Master has given me full knowledge

3. C.W., vol. 6, p. 181.

4. *Swami Shivananda*, pp. 155–6.

5. *Saga of a Great Soul*, p. 235.

within....'⁶

And on still another occasion, an old monk came to salute Mahapurushji and inquired about his health. Mahapurushji smiled at his inquiry, pointed to the attendant nearby, and said:

Put your question about this body to him. I care very little about that. Often enough, I have little consciousness of having a body at all. This is the real truth. But when people ask such questions, I answer them just as it occurs to my mind. What I know is that I have dedicated my body, mind, life, and everything at the feet of the Master—all these are his. Now he will do with these just as it pleases him....But that does not mean that I neglect this body. I try to keep it going, just as you all and the doctors desire....Do you know why I do all this?...God-realization has been attained in and through this body; this body has touched Divinity, lived with it and served it. The Master has made this body a vehicle for the propagation of his message for this age. That is why I bestow all this care. Otherwise, this body is nothing but a bundle of flesh and blood.⁷

This, then, in a nutshell, is the Vedantic concept of body. One can understand the full significance of these utterances when it is remembered that these came not from a person living alone in a cave but from the president of a world-wide organization, one who was 'supremely unconcerned, and intensely concerned, about the world. Inclined to be indrawn and withdrawn, he was yet anxious for all and at the service of all.'⁸ It is about such sages that the *Bhagavad-gita* declares:

But those also, who worship the

Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifested, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the Unchangeable, the Immovable, the Eternal—having subdued all the senses, even-minded everywhere, engaged in the welfare of all beings—verily they reach only Myself.⁹

6. *The Purpose of Discussion About the Body*

It is not that Vedanta gives any great importance to the body, but it is we ordinary un-evolved human beings who give supreme importance to it and suffer endless agonies for it. Let us compare animals with men, and then ordinary men with those who have achieved real greatness. We find that animals have their whole life in the body alone, while we, though attached to the body, do have mental, moral, intellectual, artistic, and emotional qualities. When we observe really great men, we see that they are hardly aware of their bodies. That is why we come to Vedanta: to find out the secret of real greatness through a proper concept of the body.

This can be clearly illustrated by an anecdote from the *Chandogya-Upanishad*: Prajapati, the Creator of gods and demons, said that if you know yourself, you will be free from sin, old age, death, grief, hunger and thirst, and all your desires and thoughts will come true. Indra, the king of gods, and Virochana, the king of demons, approached Prajapati as students, and lived a life of discipline with him for 32 years, after which he told them that the self is of the nature of the 'seer' (and not that of the 'seen'). Both of them initially thought the body to be the seer-self. Virochana went back to the demons and proclaimed that the Creator had told him that the body-self alone was to be worshipped and served. Indra, on the other hand, became thoughtful and realized that the body, being subject to birth, chan-

6. *For Seekers of God*, pp. 57-8.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 222-3.

8. *Ibid.*, preface to the 3rd edition.

9. *Bhagavad-gita*, 12.3-4.

ges, defects, decay and death, cannot be the 'self' by knowing which one becomes free from sin, hunger, etc.

He went back to Prajapati and stayed with him for another 32 years. He then thought that the mind could be the self, but soon found out that the mind also is subject to pain, defects and limitations. After another 32 years, he felt that when the mind is withdrawn into 'I', that could be the real nature of the self meant by Prajapati. But again he found out that such a state is only sleep and neither permanent nor permanently desirable. After another 5 years with the teacher he finally realized that the Self is entirely incorporeal and transcendent

If a man knows the Self as 'I am this', then desiring what and for whose sake will he suffer in the wake of the body?...Those who know Brahman become immortal, while others (the ignorant who regard the body as the Self) only suffer misery.

though present in all the three previous states, and it is this 'Self' which is free, perfect and immortal.¹⁰

Vedanta thus teaches us how to look upon the body, how best to utilize it, and how to come out of its clutches and realize our real, blissful, divine, and perfect nature even while living in the body. The *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad* says:

If a man knows the Self as 'I am this', then desiring what and for whose sake will he suffer in the wake of the body? He who has realized and intimately known the Self which has entered this perilous and perplexing place (the body) beset with numerous dangers is the maker of the universe; for he is the maker of all, (all is)

his Self, and he again is indeed the Self (of all). Dwelling in this very body, we have somehow realized Brahman; otherwise we should have remained ignorant, and great destruction would have overtaken us. Those who know Brahman become immortal, while others (the ignorant who regard the body as the Self) only suffer misery.¹¹

In the light of the foregoing observations, let us now discuss the following points:

7. 'I am not the body.'

In introducing Vyasa's *Analytical Search for the Real Nature of the Embodied Reality*, the great commentator Sri Shankaracharya points out:

It is an established fact that the object and the subject which are the contents of 'you' and 'I', respectively, and are of as contradictory natures as darkness and light, cannot logically have any identity...and yet what do we see? The 'natural' human behaviour, evidently based on non-discrimination or wrong identification, is in the form of 'I am this' (body) or 'these (bodily attributes) are mine'.¹²

Thus we find that to feel the body or bodily functions as 'I' or 'mine' is illogical though natural to an unillumined person due to his non-discriminating mind. All the perfected sages including the example quoted above have realized their non-relation with the body. They declare that the aim of perfection in human life is reached only when we realize this truth of our own Being. The *Chandogya* describes this thus:

He who is aware of the thought, 'let me smell this', he is the self; the nose is only

10. See *Chandogya-Upanishad*, 8.7.1-8.12.6.

11. *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*, 4.4.12-14.

12. Shankara's Commentary on *Shariraka-Mimamsa*, Introduction.

the instrument of smelling. Similarly, he who is aware of the thought, 'let me speak', 'let me hear', 'let me think', etc. is the Self; the tongue, the ear, the mind are but the instruments.¹³

8. Why We Live in This Body

This question has two distinct answers in the Vedanta: one for the unillumined, and another for those who know their Self. For us it is desires which make us live in the body and cause this wrong identification. Desires, and work done through desires make us assume body after body in a beginningless, endless chain until we come to know our Self.

The *Mundaka-Upanishad* says: 'He who longs for objects of desires, making much of them, is born along with those desires in bodies in which he tries to fulfil them.'¹⁴

The *Brihadaranyaka* says: 'The self is identified with desires alone. What it desires, it resolves; what it resolves, it works out; what it works out, it attains.'¹⁵

But for a man of true knowledge?

Swami Turiyananda, another disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and a blazing example of Vedanta, when young used to wonder why he was associated with a body although he had no desires at all. One day he came across a stanza which set him at rest:

The ever-free Atman takes up a body to verify that it is free and blissful even while seemingly associated with the body, and not for any desires pertaining to the world.

This is called *Jivanmukti*: Liberation even while living (in the body).

13. *Chandogya Upanishad*, 8.12.4-5.

14. *Mundaka-Upanishad*, 3.2.2.

15. *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*, 4.4.5.

9. How to Use This Body

The *Katha-Upanishad* compares the body to a chariot, and draws a graphic picture of its proper use for reaching the summum bonum of life:

Know the individual self as the master of the chariot, and the body as the chariot. Know the intellect as the charioteer, and the mind as verily the reins.

They call the organs the horses, the organs having been imagined as horses; (know) the objects as roads. The discriminating people call that Self the enjoyer when It is associated with the body, organs, and mind.

But the organs of that intellect which, being ever associated with an uncontrolled mind, becomes devoid of discrimination are unruly like the vicious horses of a charioteer.

But of that (intellect) which, being ever associated with a restrained mind, is endowed with discrimination, the organs are controllable like the good horses of a charioteer.

But he (the master of the chariot) who, being associated with a non-discriminating intellect and an uncontrollable mind, is ever impure, does not attain that goal (through that intellect) and he attains worldly existence.

That (master of the chariot), however, who is associated with a discriminating intellect, and being endowed with a controlled mind is ever pure, attains that goal from which he is not born again.

The man, however, who has as his charioteer a discriminating intellect, and who has under control the reins of the mind, attains the end of the road; and that is the highest place of Vishnu.¹⁶

For this reason the sages ask us to pray:

'May my limbs, speech, vital force, eyes, ears as also strength and all the organs,

16. *Katha-Upanishad*, 1.3.3-1.3.9.

become well developed...¹⁷ and, 'May we hear auspicious things with the ears; while engaged in sacrifices, may we see auspicious things with the eyes; while praising the gods with steady limbs, may we enjoy a life that is beneficial to the gods.'¹⁸

10. *How to Distinguish the Self From the Body*

Vedanta compares the body to the most external sheath and says man wrongly identifies the soul with this sheath.

Do not ask a sage the family of his birth, better ask him for wisdom only. Evaluate the sword; do not weigh the sheath.

The *Taittiriya-Upanishad* speaks of five such sheaths consisting of the body, the vital airs, the mind, knowledge or self-consciousness, and bliss.

When our consciousness is completely externalized we feel the body itself as our 'self'. With a slightly inward vision and sense of detachment from the body, we feel we are the dynamic vitality permeating the body and working through it. When our consciousness is a little more evolved and we are more detached from the body, we really feel the 'mind' and then simultaneously feel that mind to be ourselves pervading the vital and physical personalities through which we are functioning and working. When the tossing of the waves of the mind subsides and we are calm and peaceful, we are able to feel 'self-consciousness', and then we feel we are that self-consciousness which is functioning through the mental, vital and physical sheaths. When the ego in that self-consciousness subsides, we can feel the natural bliss of being or existence which functions through the self-conscious, the mental, the vital and the physical personalities.

17. *Kena-Upanishad*, Peace Chant.

18. *Mundaka-Upanishad*, Peace Chant.

But this blissful self-consciousness also has an unperceived 'I' which is submerged in that bliss filling it. So when this hidden 'blissful I' is also transcended, then only do we realize what we really are—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, transcending all the sheaths and yet immanent in all of them. It is then not the 'I' that is filled with bliss, but that Existence is Bliss itself. It is this real Self that appeared to be embodied in all these sheaths or bodies. It cannot be described in words, but it is that which we really are and can be realized without any shadow of doubt.¹⁹ In the next chapter of this Upanishad we find that this was discovered by the sages through meditation, and that it is open to verification by the same method.²⁰

In recent times this has been verified through the realizations of Sri Ramakrishna. The Master began to describe the death of Akshay (his dearest nephew) as an example. He said,

Akshay died. I felt nothing at the time. I was standing and was witnessing how man dies. I saw there was, as it were, a sword in a sheath and the sword was brought out of it. The sword was not at all affected. It remained as it was and the sheath lay there. I felt great joy to see it.²¹

Another sage declares:

The sense-objects are higher than the senses, and the mind is higher than the intellect.²²

Of the unborn One, whose consciousness is unflickering, there is a city with eleven gates. Meditating (on Him), one does not

19. See *Taittiriya-Upanishad*, 2.1.1–2.5.1.

20. See *ibid.*, 3.1.1–3.6.1.

21. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, 1952), p. 340.

22. *Katha-Upanishad*, 1.3.10.

grieve and, becoming freed, one becomes emancipated. This indeed is that.

When this dweller in the body becomes detached, when He is freed from this body, what else remains here (in this body)? This indeed is that.

Well, O Gautama, I shall tell you of this secret eternal Brahman; and also how the Self fares after death.

Some souls enter the womb for acquiring bodies and others follow the motionless (plants etc.), in accordance with their work and in conformity with their knowledge.²³

If one succeeds in realizing this here before the falling of the body (one becomes freed); (or else) because of that failure one becomes fit for embodiment in the world of creatures.

One should unerringly separate Him from one's body like a stalk from the *munja* grass.²⁴

11. *The Gross, the Subtle and the Causal Bodies*

By another method of analysis, the Vedanta tells us that we have three bodies, i.e., three levels of identification with the non-self. The first, the gross body which consists of 'seven limbs and nineteen mouths to enjoy gross things,'²⁵ The head, mouth, eyes, vital force, the middle part, bladder and feet are the seven limbs, while the five organs of perception, five of action, the five vital forces, and the four internal organs are counted as nineteen mouths through which we interact with the gross objects. The second, the subtle body, also has seven limbs and nineteen mouths by which it enjoys the objects projected in the dream state from the impressions gathered in the waking state. It is, again, due to desires and actions done with desires that we identify

with this subtle body in the dream state. The third, called the causal body, is found in deep sleep. The mind which projects the differences does not function there nor do the gross sense and motor organs; yet the 'I' is present there as the subject enjoying undifferentiated bliss as the 'object'. This 'I' contains the seeds of all desires and actions. The Real Self has to be separated from all these three bodies as the unchanging witness that is present in all these three states without actually being affected by them in the least.

12. *What the Gita says About the Body*

(a) In the second chapter:

'These bodies are said to have an end.' 'It is not killed when the body is killed.' 'Even as a man casts off worn-out clothes, and puts on others which are new....' 'This, the indweller in the bodies of all, is ever indestructible.'²⁶

(b) Then in the thirteenth chapter we get a complete summary of the Vedantic concept of the body. Bhagavan Sri Krishna says:

This body, O son of Kunti, is called *Kshetra*, i.e., Field (the body is so called because the fruits of action are reaped in it as in a field), and he who knows it is called *Kshetrajna*, i.e., knower of the field, by those who know of them.

Know Me also, O descendent of Bharata, to be the *Kshetrajna* in all the *Kshetras*. The knowledge of the *Kshetra* and the *Kshetrajna* is considered by Me to be the real knowledge.

They who thus with the eye of knowledge perceive the distinction between the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* ... they go to the Supreme.²⁷ □

23. *Ibid.*, 2.2.1, 4, 6, 7.

24. *Ibid.*, 2.3.4, 17.

25. *Mandukya-Upanishad*, 3.

26. *Gita*, 2.18, 20, 22, 30.

27. *Ibid.*, 13.1-2, 34.

Udasi Sampradaya

JASBIR KAUR AHUJA

In this article the author, a Senior Lecturer in English at the Government In-Service Training Centre, Patiala, Punjab, describes the activities of the Udāsī Sect founded by Baba Sri Chandji, the eldest son of Guru Nanak Devji. She also refers to the saint Totapuri who at one stage helped Sri Ramakrishna in his sādhanā and discusses whether this was the same Udasi Totapuri who is revered as a saint in Punjab.

The ascetic Order of the Udāsīs was founded by Baba Sri Chandji the elder son of the Jagat-guru, Guru Nanak Devji. Guru Nanak blessed him and helped him in the development of his personality, as per his inborn tendencies. Guru Nanak while leaving for his first Udāsī¹ entrusted Sri Chand to his (Nanak's) sister Bibi Nanaki and said, 'Look sister, I tell you the secret of my heart. This child is Lord Shiva's *bhandāri* (storekeeper). And he has come on this earth because of our love. He has a distinct personality. His religious sect will be popular all over the world.' And then, Guru Nanak initiated Sri Chand when he was only seven years old, with the mystic *satnām* (holy name) and advised him to do *japa*.

When Sri Chand was about twenty-four years old, Guru Nanak advised him to study the Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads and other religious books which would help him in understanding *Guru-Bāni* (hymns of the Guru). Sri Chand obeyed his father's advice and went to Kashmir to study the Vedas under the guidance of Pandit Purushottam Das. Thus he came to respect always the eternal values in the Sanatan Dharma.

As long as Baba Sri Chandji was alive, which was up to the time of the sixth Guru,

1. *Udāsī*: Homeless wandering; used especially referring to Guru Nanak's extensive travels in pursuit of his spiritual mission.

Guru Hargobind Rai, all the gurus used to visit Sri Chand out of regard. Once, when Sri Chand asked Guru Amar Das to give him his (Amar Das's) son, Mohan, this wish was unhesitatingly fulfilled! Sri Chand initiated Sri Mohan in the Japa of '*Ek Oikār Satnām*', as a result of which Mohan remained absorbed in the contemplation of Brahman. Before leaving his physical body, Sri Chand bestowed his *Guru-gadi* (position as Guru) upon Baba Gurditta, a householder and son of the sixth Guru Hargobind Rai. Thus by renouncing his position he left behind for his followers what formed the core of his life, viz. dispassion, or mental asceticism.



The Udasis are usually celibate. Some wear clothes; others go entirely naked except for a loin cloth, and they smear ash on their body. The Udasis congregate in *deras*, or monasteries. Baba Gurditta had four disciples who established four *dhūnās* (lit. hearths; centres of missionary work). They are: (1) Balu Hasna, (2) Phul Sahib, or Mian Sahib, (3) Almast, and (4) Bhagat Bhagwan (Gonda?). They constitute the *Barā Akhārā*, the Senior Assembly. There is also a Bakshis Sangat Sahib which was founded by Bhai Pheru with the permission of Guru Gobind Singh. They have established another chapter called the *Chhotā Akhārā*, the Junior Assembly. Whichever the group, they all pay special reverence to the *Ādi*

Granth, the Original Scripture or the Holy Book of the Sikhs.

Udasis proved very helpful to the Sikhs. Being unbaptized, they escaped persecution at the hands of the Mughal authorities, and when every Sikh was hunted down as though he was a wild beast, and many of them fled to carry on a guerilla war, these Udasis helped them as the custodians of their temples and kept the torch of Sikhism alight. The Nirmala Sadhus also helped the Sikhs in their missionary activities in the Malwa region. The order of the Nirmalas had been created by Guru Gobind Singh.



Macauliffe says,

There are two great divisions of Sikhs, Sahijdhari, and Singhs. The latter are they who accept the baptism inaugurated by Guru Gobind Singh.... The Singhs, after the time of Guru Gobind Singh, were all warriors; the Sahijdharis are those who lived at ease...and practised trade and agriculture. In the Singhs are included the Nirmalas and the Nihangs. The Sahijdharis include Udasis founded by Sri Chand, son of Guru Nanak; the Sewapanthis founded by a water carrier of Guru Gobind Singh; the Ramraiya, followers of Ram Rai, son of Guru Har Rai....²

He further says,

The first schism of the Sikhs began immediately after the demise of Guru Nanak. Some of his followers adopted Sri Chand, his elder son, as his successor, and repudiated the nomination of Guru

Angad. The followers of Sri Chand were termed Udasis, or the solitary; and they now constitute a large body of devout and earnest men. Anand Ghan, one of their number, has in recent times written the life of Guru Nanak. It contains an apotheosis of Sri Chand, and states that he was an incarnation of God and the only successor of Guru Nanak.³

Here it can be safely said that Sri Chand is considered an incarnation of Lord Shiva. In the biography of Baba Sri Chand, K.M. Munshi (late Governor of Uttar Pradesh) writes that at the birth of Sri Chand the astrologers predicted his great future, and the wise believed that Lord Shiva had appeared.⁴ Besides, at the time of delivery, his mother Sulakhni had the vision of Shiva.

Guru Nanak himself was the first Udasi and he undertook four *udasis* in his lifetime. He established the Udasi Sampradaya by guiding Baba Sri Chand at every stage. Such a movement was necessary because in that period fake sadhus and yogis were misguiding society. Guru Nanak was the father as well as Guru of Sri Chand. The latter's abundant reverence for his guru is evident in his composition, *Aarata*, which is full of praise for Guru Nanak, looking upon him as the Supreme Lord.⁵

Udasis are also known as Nanakputras: the principal religious order of the Sikhs. According to Ibbetson and Maclagen, '*Nanakputra* is a synonym for Udasi, and it also means a descendent of Nanak. This is the literal meaning of the term. The Nanakputras were employed in the later Sikh

3. *Ibid.*, p. lxxx.

4. Quoted by Giani Ishar Singh Nava in *Ithas Baba Sri Chand Sahib, and Udasis Samparda* (Punjabi), 1975, p. 4.

5. *Panchbati Sandesh*, Issue 1, July 1994, Punjabi Section, p. 1.

2. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, vol. 1 and 2, 1985; 'Introduction', p. lii.



Sri Guru Nanak Devji Maharaj

He is but one God. He is all that is.
 He is the Creator of all things and
 He is all-pervasive.
 He is without fear and without enmity.
 He is timeless, unborn and self-existent.
 He is the Enlightener
 And can be realized by grace of
 Himself alone.
 He was in the beginning; He was
 in all ages.
 The True One is, was, O Nanak,
 and shall forever be.

period as escorts of caravans, their pure character as descendants of Guru Nanak, ensuring protection from attack.⁶

The Udasis are generally celibate, at least in theory, and when so in practice also they are called *naंगा*, or naked, *udasi*. Maclagan gives some more information:

The Udasis are recruited from all castes and will eat food from any Hindu. They are almost always celibate, and sometimes though not usually congregate in monasteries. They are generally found wandering to and from their sacred places, such as Amritsar, Dera Baba Nanak, Kartapur and the like. They are said to be numerous in Malwa and Benaras. In our Census return, they appear strongest in Jullundur, Rohtak and Ferozepur. It is a mistake to say that they are not generally recognized as Sikhs. They pay special reverence to the *Adi Granth*, but also respect the *Granth* of Gobind Singh, and attend the same shrines as the Sikhs generally....⁷

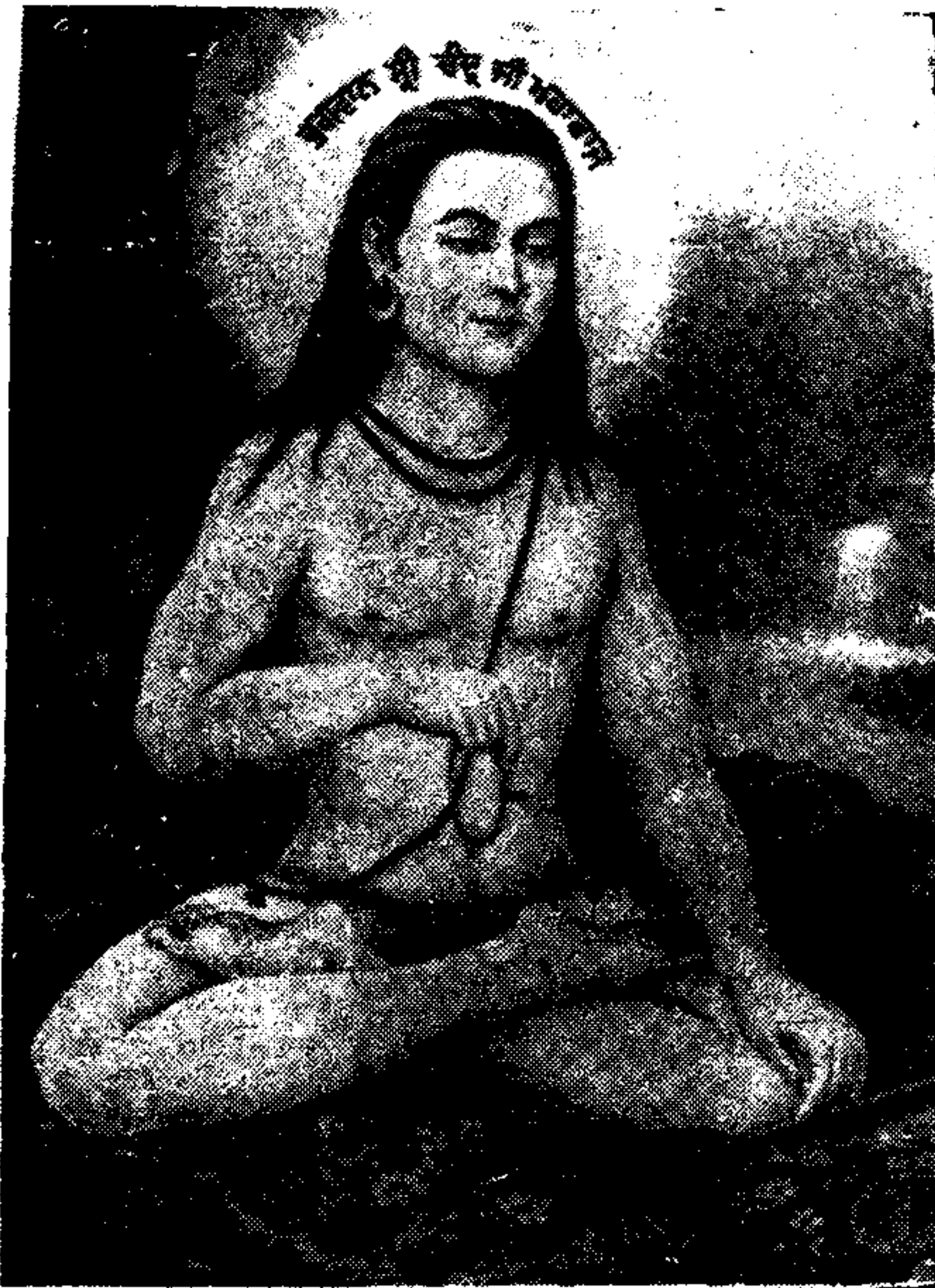
Udasis may be regarded as genuine disciples of Nanak, professing, as the name denotes, indifference to worldly vicissitudes. They are purely religious characters devoting themselves to prayer and meditation, usually collecting in *Sangats*, colleges or convents. Though usually practising celibacy, it does not appear to be a necessary condition among the Sikhs in Gangetic provinces. Many of the Udasis are well read in Sanskrit and are expounders of Vedanta philosophy....⁸



6. *The Punjab Past and Present*, vol. 3, (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1969), p. 218.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 219.

8. *Ibid.*, Wilson: 'Nanak Shahis', pp. 116-17.



Baba Sri Chandji (Sri Chanderji) Maharaj

A hymn (extract) from their service prayer at the Sikh Sangat of Benares indicates the importance of *Nām*, Divine Name: e.g., 'Meditate on the Sahib of the Book (*Sri Guru Granth Sahib*) and exclaim *Wah Guru*.' The people accordingly repeat: '*Wah Guru Wah Guru ki Fateh*' (Hail to the Guru who is always victorious!).

(The priest:) Meditating on Sri Chand,
exclaim *Wah Guru!*

(The people [chorus:] *Wah Guru!*
Wah Guru ki Fateh!

Love and fix thy whole heart upon Him
The World is bound to thee by

prosperity
No one is another's
Whilst prosperity endures
many will come;
And sit with thee and surround thee;
But in adversity they will fly,
And not one will be near thee.⁹

These lines indicate Guru Nanak's principal teaching to repeat the name of the Lord and remain indifferent to the attractions of the world or, in other words, to maintain the attitude of an Udasi in the heart.



Now let us have a look at one particular event which needs the serious attention of scholars and sincere seekers of Truth. Swami Prabhananda quotes Prof. Kapur Singh's Introduction to the second volume of Dr. Gopal Singh's English translation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, where he states: '...a Sikh ascetic, Udasi Totapuri, imparted to Sri Ramakrishna the Sikh esoteric instruction efficacious for removing impediments on the spiritual path.'¹⁰ However, the Swami has not agreed with this idea and has commented, 'For want of supportive evidence, however, this claim cannot be much entertained. The philosophy of Udasi ascetics being the same monastic Vedanta as that of the Dashnamis might have given rise to this confusion.'¹¹

Nevertheless, other opinions have persisted. In the Introduction referred to above, Shri Kapur Singh continues: '...and that is why the most illustrious Chela of the Parmahansa, Swami Vivekananda, so often uttered and introduced into his writings the Sikh mystic formula, *Wah Guru*.' And in the

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 118–19.

10. *Prabuddha Bharata*, January 1991, p. 30.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

next few lines, quoting from *Pothi Punjab Sakhian* (Khalsa College Library, Amritsar, 1780), Kapoor also refers to the impact of Sikhism on Ramdas Samrath, the spiritual guide of Shivaji, when he met the Sikh Guru Hargobind in Kashmir in 1634. In the same manner, Swami Vrijanand of Arya Samaj was influenced by the Sikh philosophy of the Name, which is the true essence of Veda.

No wonder that Dr. Gopal Singh also, in his *Religion of the Sikhs* (p. 56) says, 'According to the Gurus, the doctrine of the Name is the essence of the Vedas, Puranas, Smritis, Shastras. Udasi Totapuri, a Sikh ascetic, imparted the same instruction to the well known Hindu savant of modern times, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, in the final phase of the latter's spiritual quest....'

Now referring to Sri Totapuri, Swami Saradananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, writes, '...while travelling in the north-western part of India after the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) had passed away, the Master's sannyasin-disciples of the monastery at Belur, asked old sannyasin Paramahamsas and came to know that the said Puri was born at some place near the province of the Punjab. The monastery of his spiritual teacher was at Ludhiana, a place near Kurukshetra. His teacher also was a famous yogi and a monastery was established there. It is not clearly known whether that monastery was founded by him or any of his predecessors....'¹²

Referring to Totapuri, Satish K. Kapoor in his article which appeared in the *Tribune* on 14 August, 1988 (pp. iv and v) writes, 'The Naga Monk (Sri Totapuri) lies buried in his *dera* at Ladana.' Prior to this he says, 'Ladana is not to be confused with Lud-

hiana, as has been done by some biographers of Sri Ramakrishna. Ladana is now in Haryana and can be reached from Kurukshetra in about two hours.' (But I think Ludhiana too would take about two hours from Kurukshetra!)

Referring to this article, Shri Mewa Singh from Sundernagar (Himachal Pradesh) writes in his letter, which too appeared in the *Tribune* under the heading 'Totapuri': 'Shri Satish K. Kapoor says that there is no record of Totapuri's original abode except to the effect that he was born somewhere in Punjab.'

According to some of the followers of Totapuri who live in Jogimajra and Rampur villages in the Ludhiana district, the monk was born at Jogimajra village where his *samadhi* (place of burial) is still in existence. Thousands of devotees from all over the country visit the *samadhi* every year and participate in the functions organized there to remember the saint. Gaju Bhagat, an ardent follower of the saint, lives in Rampur village and makes genuine effort to keep Totapuri's mission alive.

So Sri Totapuri has been called an Udasi ascetic, and with equal claim declared a follower of the Shankara School of thought! Thus many questions arise: Who was this Totapuri? How did he become Puri (one of the Orders of Shankara)? Where did he come from? Is it necessary to trace his lineage to the Puris? Would any scholars interested in the cause please render some help in finding out the truth?

Dr. Himadri Banerjee from the Department of History, Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta, has very kindly offered to help in the interest of the cause. He writes in his letter dated 12 June 1994:

I have gathered that the Udasis were all

12. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, 1952), p. 483.

busy in the Gangetic belt even in the eighteenth century. They had already set up their akharas (dhunis) in Barh, Mughyar, Bhagalpur, Rajmahal, Nalhati Chittagong, and Cuttack. Many of these akharas have, however, been converted into Hindu temples and some of them have been taken over by the Sikhs. At Kaliaboda (Cuttack) it is believed that the present Sikh Gurdwara was originally a place of the Udasis. I have got from different sources that in Eastern India Sikhism was first propagated by the Udasis (Nanak-panthis). They had their schools and places of worship. But their role is very little known to common people. It requires investigation.

Further he mentions that Captain Bhag Singh (founder-editor, *The Sikh Review*) once told him that Sri Totapuri had initiated Sri Ramakrishna.



The following extracts from letters in praise of the Udasis, which appeared in the Introduction of Ishar Singh Nara's Punjabi book are relevant in this connection:

a) Letter dated 24 December 1972; Dr. Kala Singh Bedi from Delhi University: 'It is true that Baba Sri Chand was a religious leader and founder of the Udasi sect, but really he was the sincere follower of Guru Nanak Bani...'

b) Prof. Kapoor Singh, in his letter dated 12 March 1959, says that the Udasi Sampradaya is an 'advance battalion of the Sikhs!'

Although the Udasis have been active in various fields, very little has come to light. It needs the serious attention of researchers to unearth the services of the Udasis, because they preached the Holy Message of Guru Nanak and Sri Chandji. Besides, they have proved that the Sikh religion does not approve only the householder's life, as is commonly believed; both the householder's life as well as the ascetic life had the sanction of Sri Guru Nanak Devji.

The influence of Baba Sri Chand's Udasi Sampradaya is so great that not only the Udasi ascetics but also the great personalities from the Sewapanthi, Nirmala Sampradaya and a number of saints of other cults come under its umbrella. □

Bright but hidden, the Self dwells in the heart.
Everything that moves, breathes, opens, and closes
Lives in the Self. He is the source of love
And may be known through love but not through thought.
He is the goal of life. Attain this goal !

The shining Self dwells hidden in the heart.
Everything in the cosmos, great and small,
Lives in the Self. He is the source of life,
Truth beyond the transience of this world.
He is the goal of life. Attain this goal !

—Mundaka Upaniṣad, 2.2.1-2

Practical Vedanta

THE FOUNDATIONS OF A GOOD ADMINISTRATION

Tsu Ling, a disciple of the Chinese saint Chang Chuang, once asked his master: 'Revered sir, what are the characteristics of a good administration?'

Chang Chuang replied: 'My son, for a good administration the king must be very powerful.'

'But sir,' asked Tsu Ling again, 'how can an administration be made strong?'

Chang Chuang answered: 'For a strong administration three conditions are essential. First, there should never be any shortage of food and drink in the country. Second, there should not be any shortage of arms and ammunition. And third, the subjects should have full faith in their king. The administration in such a country can never be shaken.'

'But sir, if for some reason one of the conditions has to be given up, then which of the three can be sacrificed?'

'The condition regarding arms and ammunition can be relaxed', replied Chang Chuang.

'And if one more has to be given up?'

'Then the condition about food and drink should be relaxed.'

'Why food and drink, sir?' asked Tsu Ling, surprised.

'Because death is certain for man. No one can ever escape it. Therefore if some people die of starvation, it will not matter as seriously as if the faith of the people in their king is lost. Once this faith is lost, the entire administration of the country will fall into ruin.'

'If that is so, then what is the aim of administration?'

Chang Chuang replied: 'The aim of administration can't be anything other than looking after the welfare of the citizens. The king should always strive to keep his subjects happy and joyful. He should always remember that he has been put on the throne to look after the welfare of his people and not for enjoying privileges.'

News & Reports

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A PLAQUE DEDICATED TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A plaque in honour of Swami Vivekananda was unveiled in the Fullerton Auditorium of the Art Institute of Chicago on 11 September 1995. An audience of 250–300 special invitees attended the momentous event.

The program started with a brief puja, invocation and bhajans. Then some of the distinguished delegates came on stage to participate in the unveiling. The plaque has been installed on the wall of the main lobby of the Art Institute not far from the entrance of the Fullerton Auditorium. The plaque reads:

On this site between September 11 and 27, 1893, Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), the first Hindu monk from India to teach Vedanta in America, addressed the World Parliament of Religions, held in conjunction with the World's Columbian Exposition. His unprecedented success opened the way for the dialogue between Eastern and Western religions.

The unveiling was followed by brief talks. Dr. James N. Wood, Director and President of the Art Institute, gave the address of welcome. Honourable K.R. Sinha, Consul General of India, who worked very hard to organize this event, spoke on Swami Vivekananda. This was followed by an address by His Excellency Siddhartha Shankar Ray, Ambassador of India. The Key Note address on 'The Growth of Awareness of Indian Culture, Philosophy and Art in America' was delivered by Dr. Stephen Little, Pitzker Curator of Asian Art at the Art Institute. Dr. Little was very helpful in getting approval for the installation of the plaque. The Key Note address was followed by a few remarks from Dr. Pratapaditya Pal, Visiting Curator of Indian, Himalayan, and Southeast Asian Art at the Art Institute. The vote of thanks was presented by Swami Varadananda. The talks were interspersed with devotional songs by Dr. Anup Ghosal. □

Just as God fills the whole world, so the soul fills the body. Just as God sees, but is not seen, so the soul sees, but is not itself seen. Just as God feeds the whole world, so the soul feeds the whole body. Just as God is pure, so the soul is pure. Just as God dwells in the innermost precincts [of the Temple], so also the soul dwells in the innermost part of the body.

Judaism, Talmud, Berakot 10a

Reviews & Notices

THE WAY TO GOD, AS TAUGHT BY SRI RAMAKRISHNA: By Swami Lokeswarananda; publ. The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Gol Park, Calcutta 700 029; 1992; pp. 457; price not mentioned.

The Way to God is a translation of the popular Bengali book, *Tava Kathamritam*, which is based on a series of lectures on *Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita* (The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna) given by Swami Lokeswaranandaji at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta.

There are twenty chapters in the book. The first one after the Introduction is about 'M', the recorder of Sri Ramakrishna's conversations. Various opinions about 'M' and his *Kathamrita* are given to show how savants, saints and illumined souls viewed the great book that was to inspire millions. 'The Magician alone is Real' speaks about the reality of Brahman alone. Drawing analogies from various sources, this chapter provides an excellent intellectual grasp of the Vedantic concept of creation and Creator. Continuing the theme, the chapter, 'He Himself has Become All This,' is a study of the truth that Being, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute appears as Name and Form, that is, the world. The former alone is real, the latter, apparent. Sri Ramakrishna's idea of *nitya* and *līlā* are beautifully explained here and the ideal of the divinity of man stressed.

The next chapter deals with the ripe and unripe 'I'. We are under the false impression that what we call the 'I' in our daily life is real; we follow its whims and fancies and live in constant suffering. It is the true 'I'—the ripe 'I' in Sri Ramakrishna's words—that leads to peace. The need of differentiating between the false ego and the true Self as well as concentrating on the Self is emphasized here. Various anecdotes elucidate the words of Sri Ramakrishna and

also convince readers of the necessity of concentration on the Atman, and that to know the Atman, spiritual practice is needed.

The next chapter assures us that everyone has the potential to reach blessedness, and for this one must perform *sādhana*. The goal of life is to realize God, and by the grace of the guru and the Divine Mother, one can certainly reach that goal. Propitiating *Māyā* by worshipping Her in various forms is necessary so that illusion may be removed, and true Light may shine within. The next topic, 'No one is a Sinner' is impressive. Sri Ramakrishna's repeated exhortation that one should never think of oneself as a sinner but consider the past sins as only errors committed in ignorance is what is elaborately discussed here. There is no sin in God's eye. The futility of scholarship without the desire to know God is the subject of the next chapter. Sri Ramakrishna was the embodiment of truthfulness. He used to say that the greatest austerity in this age is to live for Truth. The next chapter 'Truth alone Triumphs', deals with this theme in detail.

How should one live in this world? The chapter, 'Living in the World', says that one has to live unattached. What does unattached living mean? To live attached to God is the answer. This is difficult since various duties of the world often make us forget God. Hence the need of holy company. No words can suffice in stressing the need of the company of those who have renounced the world in order to live for the sake of God alone. The vexed question of all of us is taken up next: 'Self-effort and Divine Grace'. Self-effort is absolutely necessary, for in the wake of this comes the grace of God. The sweet path of devotion, is the topic of discussion later. Many anecdotes, words of saints and so on are used to show that God loves the simple, innocent love of the devotee and not so much the acrobatics of spiritual life. The ideal of higher ecstatic love is taken up and expounded with clarity next, where the love

of Radha and Krishna, and of Sri Caitanya are dealt with.

'The Path of Knowledge' deals with every aspect of this path. 'The Path of Unselfish Action' teaches us that, surrendering the fruit of all our actions to God, we should perform unselfish work, growing in devotion to Him. This path also leads to the Ultimate Goal. The path of Yoga is further discussed. With this, almost all aspects of the individual spiritual life are covered. The collective aspects of religion, such as the harmony of religions, Sri Ramakrishna as the Incarnation of this age, the companions of His divine play and the Order founded in his name are dealt with in an interesting manner.

The Way to God is a major work in the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature. Rich in beauty, rich in information, rich in inspiration—the work is an excellent supplement to *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. Very few books contain such an elaborate discussion of almost all aspects of spiritual life. Thanks are due to Swami Lokeswaranandaji for his thoughtful, penetrating lectures which ultimately took the shape of a marvellous book. Sri Ramakrishna never went against tradition or scriptures. Whatever he said had scriptural support. This too has been amply corroborated in this book. There is a detailed index. This book will certainly be a help to every discriminating and devout reader.

Swami Sunirmalananda, Belur Math

**HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF
LITERARY CRITICISM IN SANSKRIT:**

By MM Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastri;
publ. The Kuppuswami Sastri Research
Institute, Madras 600 004; 1993; pp. 94;
Rs. 25/-.

The work in hand is a collection of four lectures delivered by Prof. Sastri in January 1931 under the auspices of the Annamalai University at Chidambaram. They were first published in 1945 by the same institute and the book under review is a reprint. In course of these lectures Prof. Sastri introduced Science and Philosophy of Literary

Criticism in Sanskrit. For him creative art and art of criticism are not opposed, they could rather be synthesized. He states clearly that if creation is an aspect of art, criticism is another aspect of it. The history of Indian culture has not shown any divorce between the two, nor has it shown any attempt at divorce between critics and poets, between a *sahridaya* and a *kavi*. The oldest phase of literary appreciation in the context may be traced back to the *Rg-Veda* itself. The Vedic bard expressed that poesy reveals herself only to him who understands her. The expression attracted the great commentator of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and he named the first section of the *Mahābhāṣya* as *Paśpaśāhnikā*. The context manifests the praise of the critic by the poet rather than critic praising the poet. In *Vālmīki* we find the creative artist and the art critic rolled up and harmoniously blended into one. *Kālidāsa* also displays a harmonious unification of the two phases of art, namely, creation and criticism. so do *Bhāmah*, *Daṇḍin*, *Rāja Shekhara* and *Abhinava Gupta*. In *Kāvya-Mīmāṃsā* of *Rājasekhara Bhāvakatva* represents literary appreciation. Criticism and creation are treated as interdependent and they form a single unit.

The new critics of the West represent a *sahridaya* who is a critic with his heart attuned to the work of art, and this at-onement is the result of a certain kind of discipline. In hermeneutic circle such an affinity is obvious. The discipline entails constant study and appreciation or criticism and moving in an atmosphere favourable for the growth of genuine literature. The great secret of poetic genius consists in at-onement of the poet and the critic, in the synthesis of the creative art and the critical art. This synthesis is the High-way of Highways of literary criticism.

Prof. Sastri, in his last three lectures discusses in detail the synthesis between law and liberty and between *Shabda* and *Artha*. The synthesis is achieved by the recognition and the acceptance of the principle of *vyañjanā* or suggestion. Poet Tagore has rightly observed (in his *Sādhana*) that the beauty of a poem is bound by strict laws, yet it transcends them. Law is the first step

towards freedom, and beauty is complete freedom (liberation), which shines as it stands on the pedestal of law. The principle of suggestion, for Prof. Sastri, establishes a synthesis between law and liberty. Likewise it synthesizes *Shabda* and *Artha* which are inseparable pair representing father and mother of the world according to Kālidāsa.

Prof. Sastri has clarified his points through a double-circular graph containing two triangles. *Dhvani*, *rasa* and *unnaya* represent the three important schools of thought in Sanskrit literary criticism. The graph also represents their historical inter-relation. The bigger circle encloses the bigger triangle which stands for *aucitya* (adaptation) and so on.

The lectures are concluded with a self-composed invocation wherein he (Prof. Sastri) pays homage to the *Śivā-śiva* synthesis, to the mother-father synthesis, to the woman-man synthesis and to the synthesis of poesy and criticism, of charm and response, of genius and taste, of poet and critic, of *kavi* and *sahrdaya*.

The work is small but seminal to understanding literary criticism. It is commended to all concerned.

Dr. S.P. Dubey, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

HINDUISM—AN ANALYTICAL STUDY: By Amulya Mahapatra and Bijaya Mahapatra; Mittal Publications, A-110 Mohan Garden, New Delhi 110 059; 1993; pp. 140; Rs. 145/-.

The book under review is another addition to the already existent vast literature on Hinduism, authored by competent scholars and religious leaders, delineating main maxims and important practices of what is commonly known as Hinduism. It is not an easy job to accommodate in a single treatise all the principles and practices, temples and shrines of Hinduism which are known for their wide and complex ramifications. The authors have attempted to accomplish that difficult task in their present work, which seems to be fairly praiseworthy. In all, there are ten chapters which seek to explain the abiding essentials of Hinduism. They are:

(1) Introduction, (2) Scriptures of Hinduism, (3) God in Hinduism, (4) Hindu Social and Moral Philosophy, (5) Hindu Philosophy, (6) Spiritual Disciplines, (7) The Hindu Way of Life, (8) Hindu Shrines, Temples, and Festivals, (9) Reformers of Hinduism, and (10) Conclusion.

The authors summarize the essentials of Hinduism by utilizing some of the Hindu scriptures and authoritative texts which are well-known fountainheads of the same. Educated and enlightened Indians are already generally acquainted with the basic principles of Hinduism and its practices. The need of a treatise on the implications and significance of the cardinal principles of Hinduism, discussing their contemporary relevance is probably more urgently felt than the present approach. The authors claim that the present study has been undertaken from an analytical point of view, as is also evident from their title, but this reviewer feels that the method adopted by them is more or less descriptive rather than analytical. A rational analysis of the principles and practices of Hinduism along with their social significance would have enhanced the book's value, though some insightful reflections are not altogether missing in the present work. The chief merit of the work is the lucidity of presentation of varied aspects of Hinduism, transcending narrow sectarianism and rigid dogmatism. The treatise, this reviewer feels, may prove to be a dependable handbook on Hinduism for those who are interested in having a synoptic view of different aspects of the Hindu Religion. Printing and binding of the book are excellent, though some printer's devil here and there went unnoticed.

Prof. Ranjit Kumar Acharjee, North Tripura

COMPROMISES IN THE HISTORY OF ADVAITIC THOUGHT: By MM Prof. S. Kuppaswami Sastri; publ. The Kuppaswami Sastri Research Institute, Madras 600 004; 1946, 1993 (reprint); pp. 37; Rs. 20/-.

This book comprises two lectures delivered by Mahāmahopādhyaya Kupu-

swami Sastri under the auspices of the University of Madras in 1940.

The central characteristic of the Hindu mind is the spirit of comprehension rather than exclusion. This spirit has enabled us to welcome new ideas from all-over (*āno bhadrā kratavo yantu viśvataḥ*). The new thoughts have been integrated into the master plan of our cultural progress. Prof. Sastri, one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of our century, has shown here accommodations in the tradition from early Vedic period, up to eighteenth century A.D. Such accommodations and compromises make our tradition cumulative—growing as well as retaining the best. This is the secret of the survival of Indian culture through the ages and has been beautifully noted by Dr. Iqbal in his famous expression *kucch bāt hai ki hasī mitaī nahīn hamārī*.

The *R̥g-Veda* (I.164,46) heralds the first important compromise when it says that 'Reality is one, the wise call it by many names.'. This accommodates monism and pluralism, the two major ontological theories. Manu, one of our oldest law-givers, has propounded synthesis between Truth (*satya*) and good (*priya*) in his *Mānava-dharma-Śāstra*, IV,138. The synthesis becomes a key to unlock the secrets of the Upaniṣads (the *Vedāntas*). The *Chhāndogya* (III.xiv.1) tells us that this manifold universe is in reality Brahman. The *Bhagavadgītā* synthesizes all the ways of spiritual life in its *Yoga-śāstra* and advocates the doctrine of *loka-saṅgraha* (maintenance of social order). The text is one of the greatest monuments of compromise in cultural history of man. Bādarāyaṇa and Jaimini talk of *samanvaya* and *eka-vākyatā*. The *Śrīmadbhāgavata* elevates the ideal of *bhakti-yoga* and also endeavours to adjust it to the Advaita ideal of *jñāna* and the doctrine of identity between Brahman and *jīva*.

Gauḍapāda, the grand-teacher of Ācārya Śaṅkara, accommodates his great intuition of Advaitism with sound reasoning (*sat-tarka*) in his *Kārikās* (III.17). Sureśvara (earlier Maṇḍana Miśra) boldly favours integration of knowledge and action (*jñāna-karma-samuccaya*) in his *Brahma-siddhi*. Śaṅkara also effects a legitimate compromise between knowledge and action in his *sādhana-catustaya* theory and gives *karma* an important place at the door of the innermost shrine of Advaitic thought.

In the post-Śaṅkara period also we find compromises of great importance. Sarvajñātma Muni exhibits one of the highest types of accommodative spirits when he views the three theories of causality, namely, *āraṅbha-vāda*, *pariṇāma-vāda* and *vivarta-vāda*, as the three steps of the ladder through which the advaitic thought has to rise to the metaphysical peak (cf. his *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, II.61,70). Madhusūdana Sarasvati, in his *Advaita-siddhi*, seeks comfort in giving vent to his *bhakti* impulse after having perched himself on the high peak of *nirākāra-vāda* and confesses: *Kṛṣṇātparam kimapi tatvamahaṁ na jāne*. Brahmānanda Sarasvati mostly endorses Madhusūdana's views and develops further some of his accommodative theories. He also justifies the *bhāvādvaita* of Maṇḍana in his *Brahmānandīya* (p. 326).

There are many other names taken up by the author of the book who have shown the spirit of integration in the Advaitic system. For details one has to go to the book itself. It is amply clear that the courageous and intentional compromises by the Advaitic thinkers show the comprehensive spirit of our tradition and pave the path of integral view with regard to socio-religious matters so important for today and tomorrow.

Dr. S.P. Dubey, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

The mind is said to be twofold:
The pure and also the impure:
Impure—by union with desire;
Pure—from desire completely free.

Maitri Upanishad, 6.34

CORRECTIONS

In *PB*, July '95: Vol. 100, no. 7
 'Swami Vivekananda's Contribution to India's National Integration'
 by Swami Ranganathananda

1. On p. 668, column 1, para 1:

'The name *Prabuddha Bharata* was given by Swami Vivekananda when he was in America. He asked his Madras disciples to start a journal with that name.'

This portion should have read:

'When in America Swami Vivekananda wrote to his Madras disciples in August 1894 to form a Society with the name *Prabuddha Bharata*, and to start a journal also. Thereafter a journal was started with the same name, *Prabuddha Bharata*, in July 1896.'

2. On p. 668, column 1, para 2:

'For the first issue from the Himalayas Swamiji contributed a message which contains a verse from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.'

This should have been:

'In January 1900 issue of the journal was published a message which Swami Vivekananda had written earlier to Swami Swarupananda, then editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata* and President of Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, the Home of the journal. The message contains a verse from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.'

3. On p. 668, column 2, lines 6 to 9:

'Swamiji himself was one of the greatest contributors to this awakening of India and so he named the magazine *Prabuddha Bharata*.'

This should have read:

'Swamiji himself was one of the greatest contributors to this awakening of India



In *PB*, October '95: Vol. 100, no. 10
 'Reflections on Consciousness'
 by Swami Nityasthananda

On p. 830, column 2, second line from bottom: *psychological* should have been *physiological*.

