

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य चरान्निबोधत ।”

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

## AMBROSIA

29. What will mere studies do? Attain God by dint of renunciation and austerities.

30. In the company of householders *sādhus* must be on special guard. They should be so circumspect as not to allow the slightest doubt to be cast on them. *Sādhus* must devote all their times to religious practices. If they work so hard, the householders will some day be reminded of their duties to the Lord; they might think, ‘Ah, *sādhus* are working so hard to realize God! What are we doing?’ If by the conduct of *sādhus* they get but a moment’s reminding and call on the Lord what a great purpose is served, what benefit brought to society!

31. The garden and its produces belong to the master. The gardener does not own anything. Everything is the master’s. But he offers the master’s things to him with great devotion and humility. This is what is known as *dāsya-bhakti*. Everything of the world belongs to the Lord, we are His gardeners. ‘Thou art my Lord and I am Thy servant’—actuated by this attitude and with faith and

devotion we offer the Lord’s things to Him. This is *dāsya-bhakti*.

32. You read the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, just as school students read history. And here is Bimal (Vimala), a boy of eight; when he reads the *Rāmāyaṇa* tears flow down his cheeks. He tells me, ‘During Śrī Rāma’s times I was Hanumat. Isn’t it, Mahārāj?’ I wonder at his words. Who knows what thoughts sway the depth of his mind.

33. Śrī Rāma is the Lord himself. How can we compare Him with an ordinary mortal? It is the duty of *jīva* to surrender completely to Him. As much you give so much you will get. If you give a quarter, a quarter you will receive; if a half, half will return to you; if the whole, a transfigured whole - you will receive from Him.

34. There are rare mothers who instruct their children to realize God. Such mothers are free themselves. But what do we see usually? Parents themselves are suffering miseries and they want their children to suffer likewise. There are, however, fortunate souls

whose parents warn them and say, 'Don't marry, look at us how miserable we are. If you marry you will also have to suffer. Take the lesson and be wise!' Such parents, though suffering, are not far from being saved. Through God's grace they have understood the situation. But, alas, how many parents understand this! Had it been a fact the world would have been something very different. They do not understand this, hence they suffer.

35. Can one be religious—one who has no faith in the hereafter? He is bound to be an atheist. Most people are charitable because of this belief. People give in charity, and pray to God and meditate on Him because they have faith in a life after death.

36. On special occasions, such as the birth-days of saints and prophets, delicious dishes should be offered to the Lord. You will excuse yourselves and say, 'Where is money, Sir?' Yes, for all other items of expenditure you feel no want of money; and for such good purposes money cannot be found! You call, 'Lord, Lord', keep each a photo, and mimic His words, and there your devotion ends. My devotion is quite different. Your Lord will ever be confined within the framework of a photo. Yours is but a show of devotion.

37. As you think of Lord Viśwanātha (in the temple at Banaras) so will He appear to you. Take Him as a piece of stone, a stone He becomes; think of Him as God, verily He is the Lord. But cast off hypocrisy. It is because of this that you do not progress. If your devotion is genuine there is no reason why you should not progress and realize God.

38. But there are signs to detect sincerity. One is, such people like retirement and avoid useless talks.

39. Why do you feel miserable unnecessarily? To keep calm and serene what an amount of austerity is required! And you pick up petty quarrels and invite miseries! To weaken the mind is very bad. You must

culture strength of mind. One who has true faith in the Lord is not swept off his feet by worldly troubles.

40. If you want to enjoy worldly things even then you will have to perform austerities. Without these you cannot have enjoyment—this is the experience of everybody.

#### LUST AND LUCRE

1. The world runs after wealth and woman.

2. Just look at man's foolishness. He will spend thousands over a lawsuit to vindicate his honour, but will not part with a farthing to give to the poor and the hungry.

3. How much money does a man require? It is enough if he gets food, clothing, and a shelter. If you have more it is an obstacle to God-realization, to praying to and musing on Him. There are a few fortunate souls who understand that money is at the root of all evils. Again money cannot buy a man's heart, whether of your wife, children, relatives, or friends. The less you hanker after money the better is it for you.

4. Monks and devotees of God should exercise special caution with regard to woman. Many complications spring from its neglect. Whenever possible such people should avoid women.

5. Money cannot get us God. Yes, it can help us to build houses and gardens, perform charities and sacrifices. But God can be attained through love alone. 'Land, money, and wife—these three make for bondage.' To follow God one has to cut oneself off from them.

6. Wealth and woman are great attractions, terrible bondages. They generate spiritual doubts. Leave aside the question of human love. Wealth and woman are great drags to our spiritual progress and give rise to bickerings. Whoever can transcend their attractions are free that very moment. *Māyā* plays with their help.



## TWO ANGLES OF VISION?

BY THE EDITOR

### I

The Upaniṣad says that just before death there comes a prevision to man as to what he is going to be in his next birth. Immersed in this thought, the individual soul, surrounded by the fine materials of the body and *samskāras* of the mind, takes a new birth. The *Gītā* also lays a great emphasis on the last thought of man. Man's all other thoughts and activities throughout his life are, as it were, a preparation for this fateful last moment. There is some reason for this peculiar theory. These last days and hours are generally lived in a state of helplessness, owing to diseases and many other attendant causes—man becomes passive, physically and mentally. Naturally therefore the impressions of those thoughts and activities which have been gone through repeatedly and with great feeling and emotion come up automatically to the surface mind in the shape of pictures and visions. The last moment is the resultant of our life's thoughts and activities.

Saints live in God. Their preoccupation in life is with Him. And their only aspiration is to have eternal vision beatific, or get merged in Him after death, as in life. So the last moments of their life have an especial meaning and significance for spiritual aspirants. Those moments reveal the final conclusion of their life-long research. But it happens, not unoften, that these conclusions differ. All saints are of course not equally great; though to us, ordinary mortals, they are more perfect than any we can conceive of. Still there are cases where, between two saints, there is a very high mutual regard and admiration—each being regarded by the other as perfect. In the Ramakrishna Mission there were two saints who belonged to the above class. They were Swami Brahmananda and

Swami Turiyananda. Both of them were very reserved in matters spiritual. For both of them the co-disciples, those knowers of Brahman, even including Swami Vivekananda, had very high regard. Once at Banaras Sw. Brahmananda expressed his heart-felt desire to prostrate before Sw. Turiyananda when the latter was bed-ridden with illness. On many occasions he expressed his unreserved high opinion of Sw. Turiyananda's spiritual attainments. Sw. Brahmananda used to send young *sannyāsins* to him to be trained. Sw. Turiyananda also looked upon Sw. Brahmananda as not only a *Brahmajña* but as Sri Ramakrishna personified; and once hurriedly coming down from the shrine at Belur Math he prostrated himself humbly before Sw. Brahmananda, who was then surrounded by a number of *sādhus* and was talking to them. There are numerous other instances of Turiyananda's reverence for Brahmananda. Neither of them had any doubt about the other's perfection.

When the last moment utterances of such great saints differ it behoves us to exercise the greatest circumspection, and most reverentially weigh their words to see if the contradictions are real or apparent. Sw. Brahmananda said, as all Advaitists do, 'Brahman is true and the world is false—*Brahma satyam, jaganmithyā*.' Sw. Turiyananda, passing away within four months of Sw. Brahmananda's demise, remarked, and let us note that he too was an Advaitist throughout his life, 'Brahman is true, the world is true—the world is based on Truth.' About Brahman being true and the world being based on Brahman or Truth there is no contradiction either between the two or with the Advaitic texts and commentaries thereon. But the contradiction lies in one speaking of the world as true and the other as false. The contradic-



tion is clear enough so far as the expressed words are concerned. Now we are to reason about this flagrant contradiction.

It is profitable to note the distance in time between their passing away and the fact that the utterance of Sw. Brahmananda was reported to Sw. Turiyananda, who had time and occasions to ponder over and discuss about that utterance, though there was nothing new in it. Another fact also is not to be forgotten. Some of Sw. Turiyananda's disciples<sup>1</sup> more than once complained that Sw. Turiyananda seemed to have renounced his position as an Advaitist, to which he emphatically said, 'It is impossible. Advaita is not a thing to be renounced or denounced.' Despite this emphatic denial, his disciples got divided on the issue of their interpretation of his last words, or even his attitude towards the world, some going so far as to say that his attitude towards the world was the same as that of Lord Caitanya which was later elaborated as the Acintya-Bhedābheda-Vāda of the *Govinda-Bhāṣya*. It is difficult to say if the difference has been, or can ever be, resolved. What is attempted below is only a personal view and has a personal value merely.

## II

Before delving into philosophy it is wise to observe the actual attitudes of the two great souls towards the world. For it is unlikely that they would say something and do something else. We do not expect such things from any saint, far less from the children of Sri Ramakrishna. So their actual behaviour is the key to their philosophy. And this behaviour has been moulded by their life-long *sādhana*—meditation and scriptural studies—and by their *anubhūti*, spiritual experience. In India *darśana* (spiritual experience) moulds *vādas* (philosophical theories). Sri Ramakrishna and all his direct disciples laid the greatest emphasis on life based on *darśana*. Hence the importance of the latter's behavi-

<sup>1</sup> Turiyananda had no disciples in the ordinary sense of the word. But there were people who used to look upon him almost as their *guru*.

our in ascertaining their philosophical views.

Their attitude towards asceticism is an important factor. At the call of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda's life of asceticism virtually ended. By asceticism we mean here exclusive devotion to spiritual exercises in solitary places avoiding company of men. Sw. Turiyananda's asceticism continued unabated throughout his life, except for the few years in America and the last few years when his health absolutely broke down under the stress of austerities he practised; and this he did despite the entreaties of Sw. Vivekananda and the orders of the universal Mother to the contrary. What is the idea behind asceticism? World-denial? To devote oneself wholly to the realization of God is understandable, even justifiable. When God is realized the continuance of asceticism seems irrational. But why do some saints, a class of them, continue the practices? Two ideas seem to guide them to take this attitude. One is the very infinitude of God. Nobody can ever say that he has realized God. Such realization would make God finite. The more one meditates on Him, the more is the idea brought home to him that nothing of that infinite Bliss and Beauty, Power and Compassion has been known. The more one gets the greater does the hankering rage. The other idea is that there is nothing in the world worth attending to. It is all hollow noise and running amuck.

The first idea is universal. It is applicable to Sw. Brahmananda also. The second idea—is it less universal? Does any saint find something enjoyable in the world? What sight, sound, taste, etc. attracted Sw. Brahmananda? If nothing of this world is attractive, why do some saints give up remaining immersed in *samādhi*? Not for the world as such but for the sake of something permeating the world, interpenetrating it—one whose presence in the outer world is as sweet as the experience in meditation. Did not Sw. Turiyananda feel this presence? He did. There were numerous instances in his life to substantiate this. Why did he then pass his life in asceticism without showing equal



zest for the *līlā*, the divine sport? One fact is to be noted in this connexion. Sw. Brahmananda was an *Īśwarakoṭi* and *antaraṅga*, an 'inner-circle' perfected soul who came when the Divine incarnated, to play a part in the divine sport. In the picturesque language of Sri Ramakrishna, such souls dance 'with both hands raised', i.e. with an absolute abandon, having no fear or anxiety of any sort whatever. A natural overflowing of the superabundance of inner bliss from his personality and drawing out and tasting the same bliss, lying dormant in others, is the peculiar part Sw. Brahmananda played, in which he stood unique. Sw. Turiyananda with all his wonderful spiritual qualities which drew the admiration of all, even of Sw. Vivekananda, found himself lacking in this excellence; and the memorable words of Sri Ramakrishna were ringing in his ears: 'O Kuśa and Lava, could you have caught me had I not allowed myself to be entrapped?' That is, none can realize Him except through His grace. Sw. Turiyananda exerted himself hard and achieved all that personal exertion could give. But that blissful condition which he observed in the Master in full and in Sw. Brahmananda in such abundance was what he craved for, having been directed inwardly by the Master himself, perhaps without Turiyananda's knowledge. He tried and raved, had no peace, till one day, according to his own confession, Sri Ramakrishna blessed him with his much-desired object—he was accepted as an 'inner-circle' devotee. His life and attitude towards life and the world changed. Can anyone fail to make much of a thing that is attained with such terrible endeavours?

Swami Brahmananda, on the other hand, threw himself into the play with the ease and abandon of the *Vṛndāvana* sport and gathered round him a group of loving spiritual admirers who joined him in the play depending wholly and solely on him and his saving power, who lived and breathed for him, and whose life, without his presence, would be gall and wormwood, would be unbearable. The bond of love divine between himself and

the group was too strong to be snapped at the time of the inevitable final departure from the gross world. Those were too pathetic moments for the departing great. He took leave of them in tears that flooded all the cheeks present. A superhuman effort was necessary for the final leave-taking. Hence the utterance, should we say, a vain attempt at cutting the indissoluble bond, a sort of reminding himself of the hollowness of the world. But the world to which he was bound was not the world of hollow shows which he had transcended long ago. This pathetic scene of a desperate vain attempt we have observed during the last days of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, and even Sw. Turiyananda himself. True to his *Vṛndāvana* tradition, Sw. Brahmananda gave himself freely, like the Master and Holy Mother, to his devotees, so the leave-taking was so poignant, and to make it a little less painful came the Vedāntic maxim of world's hollowness. Even then the pain would have been very great had not the vision of his partnership in the blissful dance with Sri Kṛṣṇa come to drown the pain in that infinite bliss.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> We are talking of the 'pain of separation' and of the 'bond' that binds these great souls to their disciples and followers. This might appear to some to be inconsistent with the knowledge of Brahman that snaps all bonds and ends all pains. Such people need only be reminded of the two categories of free souls, *mukta puruṣas*: the *Brahma-koṭis* and the *Īśa-koṭis*. The former, when they attain final illumination, become indifferent to the world and remain absorbed in Brahman, and after death get completely merged in It; while the latter, when they reach the goal, are filled with an overwhelming compassion for the bound souls of the sorrowing world, and engage themselves in freeing them. It is they who establish the Kingdom of Divine Love on earth with the Lord's accepted sheep. The 'bond' is the bond of Divine Love and Bliss; the 'pain of separation' is Divine Compassion. The pain of these great ones goes with the separation of the soul from the body. It is just a passing phase brought about by the helpless condition of the unenlightened dependants. But the 'bond' remains until the dependants reach the goal. Nāṅy, these *Īśa-koṭis* go on, for ages after the dissolution of their gross bodies, seeking new souls and delivering them from bondage. This is



With Swami Turiyananda it was tremendously different. It was not many years that he had entrance into that inner chamber of the blissful Lord, *ānandamaya puruṣa*. He did not make disciples, as we have seen; so there was no moral obligation as to their future. Still he had his devotees and attendants where love did not reign less supreme and for whose spiritual unfoldment he did not hold himself less responsible than their *gurus*. However much had this apparently unmoved Vedāntist tried to hide it from the devoted circle, the overflowing love and the poignancy of separation from those who relied so much on his lifting power burst the dam and compelled him to use the language of entreaty to human beings, perhaps for the first time in his life: 'If only you permit me to go I go.' Let us remind ourselves that this uncompromising lion of Vedānta roared during these last days and asked for his *kamaṇḍalu* and *kaupīna* and wanted to have the open shade of a tree, like the great Buddha, for his last resting place. Words of entreaty from such a soul! How unbounded was that love and how piercing the pain of separation! Notwithstanding all these, the exuberance of bliss of the newly entered bed-chamber of the Divine Bridegroom enlivening the vast creation, inspiring every nook and corner of it, dispelling the dark opacity of the dead matter of our conception, was too great for him to deny the reality of this world of infinite bliss that engulfed and transfigured him so thoroughly. To him even long, long ago, this world of our matter had ceased to exist. Living creatures and inanimate creation had been changed into spirits, their material bodies being their glass-shells through which he used to observe clearly the joyous movements of

how Christs, Bodhisatvas, and others of this group are working incessantly for the enlightenment of suffering humanity. The *Īśa-koṭis* are not less enlightened than the *Brahma-koṭis* or less blissful than they. Equally great in attainments, absolutely free and immersed in and identified with Brahman, they go about blessing mankind, attracting people by their overwhelming love and compassion.

those spirits. During these last hours, it is but natural that this spiritual vision was exceedingly intensified, which found its vent in that memorable sentence: 'Brahman is true, the world is true; the world is based on the truth of Brahman.' A comparative study of the two lives of Sw. Brahmananda and Sw. Turiyananda leads us to this conclusion. The words differed but the import was the same. Neither of them broke their allegiance to the Advaita. But without impairing it in the least they confirmed the reality of a world of bliss. This to us is the only solution of the controversy raging over the centuries since the days of Śaṅkara on the interpretation of the *Ānandamaya adhikaraṇa* of the Vyāsa *Sūtras*. Let us see if we can find support from reason and the Upaniṣads to this conclusion.

### III

Before taking the plunge it would be profitable if we remind ourselves of an important event in Śaṅkara's life and its deep significance in the interpretation of his philosophical writings. At Banaras he admitted the existence of Śakti. It would be wrong to say, 'he had to.' For it mattered little to Śaṅkara if he had to die of thirst, for did he not offer his body to a *tāntrika* for nothing? He admitted Śakti because he found that his former philosophical position was incomplete but that the admission of Śakti did not bring about any material change in his philosophy and that it only filled in a lacuna in his philosophy, but for which it could not have been perfect. Absolute awareness, by itself, cannot explain the integral truth, and the Upaniṣads do not exclude Śakti. His theory of *Māyā* fits in well with the apparent becoming of Brahman into the world, of the One into the Many.

Now we proceed to examine Śaṅkara's interpretation of the *Ānandamaya adhikaraṇa*. His whole argument rests on his emphasis on the word *abhyāsāt*, 'because of repetition.' The Vyāsa *sūtra* means in short: *Ānandamaya* is Brahman because the Upaniṣadic



section repeatedly alludes to It as *ānanda-maya*. Śaṅkara does not say in so many words that Vyāsa erred; but what he pointed out was that in the Upaniṣadic passages taken into account by Vyāsa in this *sūtra*, there was no repetition of '*ānandamaya*' but of '*ānanda*' only. And nobody can deny this contention of the Ācārya. If this be once admitted then the Ācārya scores over Vyāsa. The abstract absolute Brahman, and not Vyāsa's personal Brahman, is the ground reality of the universe. So far Śaṅkara is perfectly right.

But do we not get allusion to a personal Brahman in the Upaniṣads? Nobody, not even the ultra-Vedāntist, denies it. But there is an attempt to explain It away as Māyic, as coming within the purview of Māyā or world-delusion, hence ultimately unreal. Now reason asks: Do you mean to say by this that Māyā itself is false, or the Māyic form or personality of Brahman is apparent, in the sense it is grounded in the Absolute? If the latter, i.e. if the form or personality is apparent, i.e. changing and changeful, it being the nature of all forms, nobody need contradict it. It is immaterial for our present purpose; though it should be stated here that the universal can have no form, as we understand by a form, and that if it has a personality, it cannot change its character, though forms and functions of the apparent parts and individuals within it are in constant flux.

What really matters is the denial of this Śakti or Māyā. Firstly because it will go against direct scriptural evidence. The passage in the *Swetāśwatara* cannot be explained away. And there is nothing in any of the major Upaniṣads referred to by Vyāsa to controvert the apparent becoming of the world. The dictum that the drift of the creation referred to in the Upaniṣads is not to admitting creation as a fact but to pointing to its real cause or ground is an innovation not supported by the texts. The texts do refer to the ground no doubt but do not deny creation. The reason is simple. Do you seek for the creator

of a square-circle? If creation does not exist, if it is an absolute myth, we gain no point in basing our argument about the existence of Brahman on creation. The fact that such arguments are there in the Upaniṣads proves that they do not regard creation as an absolute myth.

Secondly Vyāsa's interpretation of the Upaniṣads holds the field. There is not one *sūtra* which negatives creation. The only one that can be engineered to this purpose is the one where Vyāsa settles the controversy as to the nature of the *Brahmajñānin* by saying that to such a realized soul there exist no *mahimans*, though others see him full of them. This may be interpreted as the ultimate negating of all *mahimans*, which include creation and destruction. Of course Vyāsa 'said' that *Brahmajñānas* became Brahman minus Brahman's power of creation. But in the above argument we have taken it for granted that if man loses himself completely in and as something he cannot be said to be confined in one part of that something which has no parts. Hence if *Brahmajñāna's* becoming Brahman is a fact, he becomes wholly It or he does not become It.

The question of *mahiman*, power and splendour, is a knotty question and has not been solved by Vyāsa *Sūtras* and all the later too subtle polemical skills of the philosophers of different schools to the satisfaction of modern minds. For the quarrel has been raging over the millennium. But our question is deeper. We are not busying ourselves with the *mahimans* themselves but with the power, Śakti, that makes them appear so. When there is a quarrel about the reality of something then its phenomenality, that it is appearing, is admitted; and this phenomenon needs an explanation. If Brahman is pure 'awareness' it cannot produce any phenomenon. Production of any kind, real or apparent, is impossible for such awareness. This position of the Advaitist remains unchallenged. But the Dvaitist's position, his insistence for an explanation of the phenomenon, is not shaken.



Modern minds admit the question and seek a solution for the phenomenon. No one in modern times attributes any kind of permanent reality to this phenomenon. But the phenomenon demands an explanation. And the moderns say that the knotty problem can only be solved by either attributing dynamism to the 'awareness' or admitting dynamism otherwise—phenomenon must be produced if it does not form a constituent of the reality. To save reality from being a compound we have to admit a Māyā-Śakti. To us it appears that Śaṅkara did nothing else but admitted this Māyā-Śakti, a power in Brahman-awareness that makes appearance possible, that makes the One, without bringing in any real change in It, appear as the Many. This is a philosophical and psychological necessity which Śaṅkara admitted and provided for in his great system. Any truth-seeking philosopher would do the same.

Now if Māyā-Śakti is admitted, is it the same as or other than the 'awareness'? The characteristic of otherness is independent existence—the thing that is other than another must stand independently of the latter. As Māyā, either as the cause of the Many or the universe, or as *it*, cannot stand apart from awareness, it cannot be other than the awareness. But the awareness's essential and the only characteristic being itself, it does not contain the Śakti, for the essence of a thing is that without which it is unthinkable, and awareness without Śakti is 'experienced' in deep sleep, in passive moments, and in *samādhi*. Hence the existence of Śakti has raised a metaphysical problem that is not easy of solution—what sort of existence are we to attribute to this Śakti that cannot be denied? Being the cause of the empirical world, it is itself not empirical though it must be of its kind, for the cause and effect should be of the same kind. It cannot be transcendental, for that must be immutable, which it is not. So either we must admit it within awareness, giving it a sort of quasi-existence, or we must be a pluralist of the Bhedābheda type of the *Govinda-Bhāṣya*.

But can we really have awareness without will, without a direction? It is quite possible to lose sight of direction in the depths of experience of the immensity that is absolutely homogeneous. But at the start there was a direction and as long as the distinction between 'I' and 'Me' existed that direction never changed nor faded. On the contrary the intensity of the will went on increasing until the final coalescence, which, though a sort of experience, is totally different from the ordinary type of it. Again when the coalescence breaks slowly, the separation of 'I' and 'Me' takes place along the same line of direction though in the reverse way. This fact will compel epistemologists to admit a sort of will in the essence of awareness. The nature of will is such that it lies dormant except on occasions. Hence there is nothing to prevent us from admitting the potential existence of will in the coalescence state. Potentiality is not non-existence. Will or Śakti, not being different from awareness or Brahman, non-duality is not impaired; and its existence explains the apparent becoming of One into the Many; and awareness, immutable awareness, remains immanent in the apparent, in the changeful Many.

But is not *nirvikalpa-jñāna* compromised? It is, in the sense of the ultra-Vedāntists. Yet the poles of consciousness being absent what *vikalpa* can we attribute to it in that state? And is it not an epistemological fact that the transcendent awareness as the bed-rock is present in all empirical consciousness? So *nirvikalpa-jñāna* is there in its own right, immutable and supreme; it cannot be compromised. The ultra-Vedāntists, refusing admission of appearance, cannot build a philosophy, which is bound to explain the phenomenon. We are, however, not sure that they do refuse it in the sense their oppositionists would like them to refuse.

Now if Śakti is admitted into the essence of Brahman, the quarrel over *ānanda* and *ānandamaya* is settled. We may take the suffix '*mayat*' in *svārtha*—a necklace of pure gold is pure gold, which remains unchanged.



Of the infinite forms that gold may appear in, necklace is one. Change of name and form does not bring about any change in gold. Appearance is not reality, though it is of it. The difference, then, between *ānanda* and *ānandamaya* amounts to the potential and kinetic states of Śakti. In fact we cannot have an idea of *ānanda* without admitting some kind of dynamism, however slight, in it. And it is well known what great pains the Advaitists have had to take to interpret *ānanda* as a negation of pain—an interpretation which the Upaniṣadic texts would hardly yield. On the contrary, as Śaṅkara himself has explained, the suffix '*mayat*' stands for 'profusion or amplitude of.' *Ānanda* is concentrated bliss and not a negation of pain; and as such it includes dynamism. This world appearance then becomes a spontaneous emanation of the awareness that is concentrated bliss. This is why the Upaniṣad says, 'All these have indeed emanated from bliss, are sustained by bliss, and enter into and disappear in bliss.' It means that this bliss is both the efficient and the material cause of the world appearance.

Effects are involved in the cause. In fact the existence of the cause is experienced through its modes; and effects are nothing but modes. The cause cannot exist except as a mode, which grows, changes, and decays—becomes finer and grosser. We conventionally call the finer state the cause. Otherwise, in a continuous flux of integration and disintegration there is no priority or posteriority. We can start from the grosser and come to the finer, in which case the grosser state ought to be considered the cause, for it is out of it that the finer is produced; or we can start the other way about. And in this universal circle there is no going backward or forward. It is not rational to say that the effects go back to their cause. The contrary is equally true.

Once the above is realized we have to admit that the *idam sarvam*, all this visible and imaginable world—which is generally regarded as an effect—is this bliss or blissful Śakti, which is that basic awareness, apart

from which and independent of which the bliss or Śakti has no existence. The so-called appearance or *nāma-rūpa* (name and form), even in its too flimsy, fleeting, dissolving existence, is nothing but this Śakti or bliss. For the fast disappearing names and forms are eternally being involved in and evolved out of it. They are *mithyā*, false, because we cannot lay our hands on them; for by the time we stretch our hand to grasp any of them it has vanished and something, i.e. some other name-and-form, has taken its place. They are true in the sense that the involution and evolution of one and all of these names and forms are eternal, being the Śakti or bliss, both as cause and effect; they are never total nothings. They are eternal existents, are grounded in the truth, in the blissful awareness, which as pure awareness is the *kūṭastha nitya*, immutably existent, the *nitya-sākṣin*, the eternal witness taking no part in the sportive surge; and as bliss is the eternal surge, flowing on and on, evolving and dissolving worlds, galaxies, and nebulae; electrons, protons, and their antis; microbes and leviathans; men, gods, and demigods; their cultures and civilizations. Thus the Many is equally true, for it is nothing but the surge of *ānanda* or bliss; and it is based on bliss—it is all bliss, *ānandaghana*.

What is myth in this world is our perverted vision of it. That world of *ours* is totally false, does not exist anywhere except in our personal delusion. Both science and philosophy agree in the refutation of the common-sense view of the world. Saints have nothing to do with this world. Piercing through the material frames of the world their visions gaze on the blissful forms and sweet names of the real world, which are all eternal, and so cannot be left behind or transcended, for they are in the essence of reality, which, though above staticity and dynamicity, above immanence and transcendence, plays in blissful 'nonsense' with the two pairs, as if, in an urge for *expression* in our outer world and for *impression* in our inner world of thoughts and feelings, ending in intuition.



# LOGIC OF BEING IN VEDANTA

BY DR. P. S. SASTRI

(Continued from the November issue)

13. Śaṅkara is emphatic in declaring that consciousness is not a non-object in an absolute sense, because it is the object of the concept of the *I*; and that it is well known to exist on account of its immediate or intuitive presentation. Even otherwise, there is no necessary rule that a misperception needs an existent given in perception. Though the sky is not a really perceptible object, we do attribute to it a surface and a colour. As such it is not a contradiction to state that the objects can have a relation with the self, or that the self can be erroneously apprehended.<sup>83</sup> Consciousness as such is not an object. But this consciousness appears as the self because of the many determinate factors like intellect, mind, body, and sense-organs. As a determinate self, consciousness appears to be defined, to be different; it functions as if it were an agent, enjoyer, or object.<sup>84</sup>

There is a consciousness which is a transcendental unity; and this may be viewed as distinct from the agent who is the object of the concept *I*.<sup>85</sup> The transcendental unity is revealed as self-consciousness. In apprehending that this is *x*, I must also have the awareness of this apprehension. If, on the other hand, I am said to have this awareness after the apprehension of the object, how does it arise? It should have an object; and then it can give rise only to the apprehension of that object, and not to the awareness of the original or subsequent apprehension. The awareness of the object implies the self-awareness of the subject.<sup>86</sup> This self-cons-

sciousness being a unique unity that is non-relational<sup>87</sup> it does not contain a subject and an object in it. Then there cannot be the awareness of an object in this self-awareness, for the awareness of itself excludes the presence of the other.<sup>88</sup> To be aware of something as an object implies also the awareness of a subject.<sup>89</sup> The subject and the object are relative to one another to the extent that there can be no object when there is no subject.<sup>90</sup> It is by transcending the dualism of the subject and the object, that we arrive at absolute reality.<sup>91</sup> This transcendence is made possible by the very being of the object. If the object is already determinate prior to the apprehension, it should be capable of being known to all, since an entity is determinate only in relation to a cognizing subject. If it is not determinate prior to the apprehension, no one can know it.<sup>92</sup> If the object can be a determinate existent apart from a subject, then the subject too can exist independently.<sup>93</sup> Then how can two independent existents come into a relation?<sup>94</sup>

14. The subject and the object seem in ordinary life to be opposed to one another as light and darkness. They exclude one another; and one cannot be mistaken for another. This opposition can be explained in two ways. When two things cannot be at the same place, at the same time, or in the same stage, we have one variety of mutual exclusion. It refers to the nature, property, or character of

<sup>83</sup> PVA 288. 3-9.

<sup>84</sup> See *Trimsikā*, 27.

<sup>85</sup> See LS 169.

<sup>86</sup> See *Trisvabhāva-nirdeśa*, 37; MK 3. 31-2, 4. 79-80.

<sup>87</sup> cf. MMK 9. 3.

<sup>88</sup> MMK 9. 4.

<sup>89</sup> See *Pañcadaśī*, 1. 50-2; *Advaita-siddhi*, 453-4.

<sup>83</sup> VSB 38. 1-39. 2.

<sup>84</sup> cf. B 6. 19-7. 2; 38. 3-6; PP 5-15 ff; PPV 18, 49.

<sup>85</sup> VSB 134. 3.

<sup>86</sup> PV II. 513-514; PVA 392. 4-6.

<sup>87</sup> TS 2000-1.



the things. Such an opposition would render the appearance of one thing as another absolutely incompatible with their nature. When two things cannot have the nature of one another, we get at the second form of opposition, exclusion, or negation. This too is based on the nature of things. One cannot appear as having the nature of another; for two mutually exclusive properties cannot have the same relation to the same reality. An identical relation in such circumstances is incompatible with the nature of the things.<sup>95</sup>

Does this opposition mean that two mutually exclusive entities cannot coexist? But when there is a faint light in the room, we have both light and darkness coexisting. Likewise in the shade one can find light and shade coexisting in varying degrees. Such a relative relation subsists also between heat and cold. Can opposition or exclusion then mean that one cannot have the nature of the other? Even this cannot be maintained. The universal and the particular are distinct from one another; but one penetrates into the other. Such an integration ought to be impossible if the nature of the one is not to be found in the other. Then what is the exact relation between the subject and his object? Are these two not mutually exclusive?<sup>96</sup>

Any relation between the cognizer and the cognized may appear to be incompatible. Yet this cannot prevent the appearance of an identity which is the source of the error. Nacre and silver, for example, have no relation of identity at all. Yet there appears an identical ground for both; and this gives rise to error. A similar explanation may hold good of the subject and his object.

Consider the erroneous cognition. That which is apprehended is the ground, the *this* in the cognition; and the *this* is cognized as silver. The *this* is the universal, and it is rendered specific by the particular silver. There is some identity between the two. It is an identity of the universal with the particular; or it may be taken as the identity of an

object under a certain specification or designation. An element or part of the nacre appears as an element or part of the silver. This transference of an element is a case of error. But coming to the subject-object relation, we have the subject or self as the ground, and there appears the not-self. This is not a relation similar to that of nacre to silver. The self being pure consciousness, cannot admit of any not-self in it.<sup>97</sup>

If the self were to be mistaken as the not-self, the self as the ground must admit of designation. It will have to be the *this*. It will have to admit the element of the not-self. Such an element may be natural to it, or accruing to it because of certain conditions. Since it is pure consciousness, such an element cannot be natural to it. The object is non-consciousness, appearing as the object for consciousness. How can the subject of an object become also the object of the act? If the element of the *this* is not natural to the self, it must have a cause. If it has no cause, it cannot come into existence. That is, consciousness which is not a unity of parts and which is the unconditioned principle, cannot of itself evolve into a conditioned entity. And since consciousness is supra-relational (*nirañjana*) it cannot also have a cause. The ether, for instance, has no parts within it; and we do not find in it any evolution brought forth by a cause.<sup>98</sup>

The not-self too cannot be the ground of a mistaken identity; for the not-self is not a conscious entity. Only a conscious entity can reveal itself and make others intelligible. Further, if the object is a conscious entity, it would be the same as the subject and thus it would cease to be an object. One percipient cannot have any immediate apprehension of another percipient; he can only infer the other. Likewise, if the object is a conscious entity it cannot be directly cognized; it can only be inferred.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, an object, which is a non-conscious entity, cannot evolve itself into

<sup>95</sup> PPV 8. 10 ff.

<sup>96</sup> PP 3. 8 ff.

<sup>97</sup> PP 3. 16-17; PPV 9. 13 ff; PPVT 47.

<sup>98</sup> PPV 5. 18 ff; PPVT 48.

<sup>99</sup> PP 3. 18-19.



the form of a conscious entity; for, a non-conscious entity can be the cause of only that effect which is also non-conscious. Can we then say that the not-self accepts self-consciousness as an element within itself? This is impossible since consciousness cannot move like that. Thus it is certain that there is no identity in difference, and that there is no identity, between the self and the not-self even to a very slight extent. We cannot have an element or part of the one in the other; and as such the self and the not-self cannot be related to one another in terms of an identity in difference.<sup>100</sup> Further, the properties of one object cannot appear in another object since no property can give up its ground.

From every point of view it appears, therefore, that the subject and its object cannot get into one another; one cannot have the character of the other. The subject is always known as the object of the word *I*; and it is of the nature of consciousness. It is always the not-this, something which cannot be designated. Consequently how can one of these be mistaken for the other? How can they be identified?

15. This objection is formidable; and yet it can be met. The *I* or consciousness gets itself identified with the ego, the body, the sense-organs, and the like. Such an identification makes the *I* something which can be designated. This designation falsifies its true nature, or at least misrepresents its true nature. That which can be designated is the *this*, the not-*I*; while the not-*this* which is the *I* cannot be designated. In ordinary life we do find the union of the *this* and the not-*this*, and we identify the two as though they together constitute a single datum. Here appear two entities which are accepted not as two, but as one. This is a clear violation of the law of non-contradiction. Whether their identity is logically possible or not, it is a fact of experience that they are treated as a single datum. The ego, the body, and the like are treated as indistinguishable from the *I*. We

can only refer to them as *thou*. Can we not treat them as objects?

An object or thing is that which needs a conscious principle to reveal it, to make it intelligible. The conscious principle is its ground. The conscious principle is that conveyed by the term *I*. The ego and the body are apprehended as almost identical with this consciousness. But they are not in themselves identical with consciousness. As they need a conscious principle to reveal them, they cannot be on a par with consciousness. But since they are directly revealed by the conscious principle, they cannot strictly be taken to be on a par with the other objects of the empirical world. Yet in so far as they are directly revealed by consciousness, they are, in a sense, objects, objects for consciousness. These objects are mistaken to be the integral elements of the subject. Such a subject-object unity tending to an identification is one of the ways through which contradiction seems to function. In this operation of contradiction we find that the properties of one entity are being cognized as those of another.<sup>101</sup>

Even without any such subject-object identity, there can be the cognition of the properties of one as those of another. Deafness, for instance, is a property of the ear; but it is cognized as an attribute of the body or of the person. In like manner, the properties of the subject can be apprehended, through a faulty transference, in the object. The subject is in itself pure consciousness. It is beatitude (*ānanda*), experience (*viśayānubhava*) and eternal (*nitya*). These are not separable from consciousness, for they are the aspects through which we can understand its nature. Though they are not the qualities of consciousness, they are treated as if they are its properties. When the epistemic act, which endeavours to comprehend the self, conditions the self, then these aspects appear as if they are the many qualities of the self.<sup>102</sup>

Such a mistaken identity is a case of the

<sup>101</sup> PP 3. 21-24; PPV 10. 6-9; PPVT 50.

<sup>102</sup> PP 3. 24-4. 4; PPV 10. 10-11. cf. B 156; VPS 12.

<sup>100</sup> PPV 10. 1-4.



violation of the axiom of non-contradiction. When two distinct entities try to appear as one another, they tend to put an end to their mutual exclusion, to their very difference. A successful violation of the axiom of non-contradiction involves a similarity between the two objects concerned. This similarity generally extends only to the parts of the two objects.

But when the self is one of the objects, we cannot have a similarity of the parts. Yet when we treat the self as the agent or doer, this qualification is taken to arise from the ego which seems to condition the self. When the *I* gets itself united to the body, we do not find the appearance of any entity that can possibly relate the two. We need a cause that can bring about this determinate individual. As such it is impossible to say that the entities from the ego to the body are the media through which the percipient is revealed. To put it differently, take the fragrance of a flower, *A*, which is similar to that of an object *B*. When we smell *B* and when *A* is absent, even the argument from analogy would tell us that we are smelling only *B*. When we cognize yellow in the conch we try to find out a cause for this yellow; and we assume the reality of such a cause. In the same way when there is the cognition of the effect of an unconditioned cause of error, we have to assume that this is due to something similar to it, or that there is a cause for it. What cause can there be for the false unity of the self and the body? How can they be united without involving any contradiction?<sup>103</sup>

Contradiction is the appearance of a form where that form is not. Such an appearance lacks reality. It is a mere appearance. An appearance is that which conceals some entity, which prevents an entity from revealing itself truly. Reality being always self-revealing there can be no appearances, on an ultimate analysis. Yet from a relative point of view we do come across appearances, mistaken identities, or contradictions; and these are natural to finite individuals.

<sup>103</sup> PPV 10. 12-16; PPVT 50-1.

Anything that has a relevant necessary relation to the being of an individual consciousness is natural (*naisargika*). We have a contradiction when the self is treated as a doer and as an enjoyer. To be an enjoyer the self must be a doer; for one who is not a doer cannot enjoy the consequences of an action. To be a doer, the self must admit of the contradiction of a relation with love and hate. Without love and hate, none can be a doer. A contact with such qualifications or defects is bound to make the self an enjoyer; for in the absence of enjoyment, love and hate would be inconsistent. In this manner one contradiction gives rise to another and yet another. It is an endless chain of contradictions flowing successively almost without a beginning. It is as beginningless and endless as the relation between the seed and the plant. Hence is the contradiction spoken of as being natural. This contradiction is a natural fact of finite existence. I cannot negate the existence of the *I*; so can I not negate the appearance of contradiction.<sup>104</sup>

16. As long as consciousness does not abide in its own true nature, so long does it tend towards the two-fold grasping of subject and object.<sup>105</sup> When the cognition does not apprehend something as an object, it remains as consciousness only. Where there is nothing to grasp, there is no more grasping and therefore no subject.<sup>106</sup> Only when there is the cognition, does the object appear; and the absence of an apprehension implies the absence of the subject.<sup>107</sup> The cognition as such is dynamic. It is subject to change and it is relative to the dualism of subject and object. It depends on images and ideas. It can be prolonged in a stream of cognitions. Knowledge on the other hand is independent of all distinctions, and is also absolute. Being the basic character of consciousness, it is absolute; and as such it is not conditioned by images

<sup>104</sup> PP 4. 5-7; PPV 10. 18-22; PPVT 51-2.

<sup>105</sup> *Trimśikā* 26.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid* 28.

<sup>107</sup> See LS 10. 563-4; MK 4. 76, 79-80; *Trisvabhāva-nirdeśa* 36; cf. *MVBT* 20-22.



or ideas, nor is it subject to accumulation and decrease.<sup>108</sup> The world then exists for each one of us in the medium of this knowledge. The subject is one who cognizes, who apprehends. Is the cognition other than the object, or are the two identical? If the object depends on the subject and is integral to consciousness, and if the object is other than the cognition, then we have two consciousnesses at the same moment. There can be no object. But if the two are identical, a cognition cannot cognize itself and as such there can be no awareness of an object.<sup>109</sup> As Dharmakīrti said, if perception itself is not perceived, the perception of an object would be an impossibility.<sup>110</sup> We should have an apprehension of the apprehension of  $x$ . Then alone can we have knowledge. Any consideration of knowledge implies a consideration of the problems of truth and meaning. These two problems refer to the external world as well. If reality is outside the cognition or apprehension, we can never cognize it, much less can we analyse it.<sup>111</sup>

17. That which reveals itself and everything else without the help of any external factors may be said to be the nature of Reality. The subject reveals its existence and manifests the presence or appearance of the objects. Both the subject and the object cannot have this character of self-revealing; for, then the object would be identical with the subject and consequently they would then not differ. If both are revealed by something else, these two would become objects only.<sup>112</sup> If there is no activity of revealing and if there is no purpose for such an act, there can be no relation of revealing into which an object is brought. As a result the apprehending subject would cease to be a subject and become an object like a jar or a table. Such an object needs another subject to reveal it; and in the

end we have to postulate something that can reveal the two. This something can be no other than the subject that is always required as a necessity.<sup>113</sup> The object, moreover, cannot be identical with the process of revealing, since such an identity would make the subject multi-shaped.<sup>114</sup> Nor can the act of revealing be other than the subject. If it is other, this act itself would become an object thus needing another act of revealing. This leads us to identify the apprehending subject with the act of revealing.<sup>115</sup>

If we admit that the mind or consciousness reveals itself and also others beside it, do we accept the reality of external objects or do we reject the nature of self and other-revealing activity?<sup>116</sup> If knowledge is not immediate, if consciousness does not reveal the other, the object cannot appear. If the object is said to manifest itself, it must appear always and to all subjects.<sup>117</sup> As such we have to accept the independent existence of the apprehending subject and we have to recognize that the objects depend on this subject.<sup>118</sup> The object can be doubted, examined, or rejected. All these alternatives require the operation of the valid means of cognition which are the means employed by the cognizing subject. The subject, on the other hand, is not an object to which we can direct the means of cognition.<sup>119</sup> The cognition makes the object determinate to a subject, thereby affirming or denying the object and its relations to the other objects.<sup>120</sup> The same means of cognition can be employed for different objects and different means can give rise to the cognition of the same object.

The object may not be identical with the subject. But can we say that it is not essentially different from the subject? If it is not

<sup>108</sup> cf. LS 157.

<sup>109</sup> MMV 16.

<sup>110</sup> PV II. 513-515. cf. Pañcadśī, 3. 19-20.

<sup>111</sup> cf. Bosanquet: Logic, I. 2.

<sup>112</sup> IS 6. 3-8.

<sup>113</sup> IS 6. 10-11.

<sup>114</sup> cf. ATV 210. 7.

<sup>115</sup> IS 7. 1-3.

<sup>116</sup> See ATV 210. 7-9.

<sup>117</sup> PV II. 440; PVA 435. 7-9.

<sup>118</sup> IS 9. 10-11.

<sup>119</sup> IS 10. 15-18; KKK 66. 7-10.

<sup>120</sup> ATV 144.



different, the object is no longer the object,<sup>121</sup> and all objects should give rise to non-different cognitions. But it is not possible to make out a difference between the apprehending consciousness and the object because the former is not a perceivable object while the latter is. There can be no similarity or difference between such terms.<sup>122</sup> Still it is a fact that the object is an object to a perceiving subject; and to that extent it is revealed to a subject. Since the subject becomes aware of it, it is revealed by the subject who makes it intelligible. The object, then, does not reveal itself. As being revealed it comes closer to the subject.<sup>123</sup> It becomes organic to consciousness.<sup>124</sup> Otherwise we cannot know it.<sup>125</sup> It is in this sense that the knowable object is neither different nor non-different from knowledge or consciousness.<sup>126</sup>

When the self is said to have the power or nature of revealing or manifesting itself, we are only recognizing that the self is of the nature of immediacy, that the self is experience, direct and immediate.<sup>127</sup> This self-revealing character constitutes the nature of the self; and the objects directly enter into this other-manifesting power in order that they may be revealed to conscious minds.<sup>128</sup> It is as self-revealing that we speak of the existence of Reality. Existence, however, is not other than self-revelation. The two are identical. The real is that which reveals itself; it is Existence.<sup>129</sup> As Existence it is not a particular which is limited and which therefore is subject to the categories. It is a universal which needs no particulars for its concrete existence, since a concrete existent is always an object while reality can be neither a subject nor an object.<sup>130</sup> But is not such a universal as non-

existent as the horn of a hare?<sup>131</sup> It is a universal in the sense that it transcends all difference, all identity-in-difference. Since such an entity cannot be similar to our so-called universals, we may call it the true universal;<sup>132</sup> or if empirical notions or ideas are to be treated as universals, this Reality is a universal by courtesy.<sup>133</sup> It is the true universal because it is Existence.<sup>134</sup> Such a universal is neither a particular nor an embodied existent.<sup>135</sup>

18. Can Reality be viewed as existence? The term existence is an ambiguous one.<sup>136</sup> It cannot mean that which we affirm since affirmation and existence are not synonymous.<sup>137</sup> It cannot be that which has a form; for non-existence too has a determinate form. If existence were to refer to the form, the form of a thing being exclusive, the existence of one cannot be equated with that of another. There ought to be many existences that exclude one another. Nor can existence be that which is characterized by *is* or *exists*, since these predicates are as well applicable to the non-existence of a thing. When we say that the jar does not exist, its existence is not excluded by the negation. Moreover, we do admit the operative validity of a class concept, though it does not exist in the way in which this pen exists. And we cannot deny the existence of that which operates. Further, a statement like 'there is non-existence' is not self-contradictory. Existence can be a predicate of the non-existent entity under certain spatial and temporal conditions.<sup>138</sup>

Can existence be explained with reference to apprehension? When we say that here the jar does not exist, we have apprehension which is as much positive as any other. If the non-existence of the jar cannot be apprehended, can we ever apprehend the non-

<sup>121</sup> IS 12. 4-5.

<sup>122</sup> IS 2. 21-22.

<sup>123</sup> See however ATV 212.

<sup>124</sup> PT 41. 11-13.

<sup>125</sup> PPV 74. 1.

<sup>126</sup> IS 189.

<sup>127</sup> BBV Sambandha 444; PVA 401. 26-27.

<sup>128</sup> PV II. 479.

<sup>129</sup> B 711. 3-712. 1.

<sup>130</sup> BS 37. 19-24. But see SV I. 1. 4. 115-119.

<sup>131</sup> SV 548.

<sup>132</sup> BS 38. 1-5.

<sup>133</sup> BBV 3. 8. 20-21.

<sup>134</sup> SV I 1. 4. 114.

<sup>135</sup> NMA 291.

<sup>136</sup> cf. Gilbert Ryle: *Concept of Mind*, 23.

<sup>137</sup> But see Kīr I. 137. 8-9.

<sup>138</sup> KKK 562. 3-563. 6; NL 310.



existence of this non-existence which we equate with existence? If one non-existence is not a fact of experience, its negation is equally beyond experience; and then existence itself may not be apprehended. As such even existence cannot be perceptually cognized.<sup>139</sup> And yet the realist Udayana defines an object as that which can be designated; then he classifies the objects into the existent and the non-existent, and defines the existent as that which is not the object of a negation.<sup>140</sup>

Does the self exist? If existence is a predicate of the self, the self by nature ought to be other than existence. And an entity that can be characterized by a predicate is a particular which is subject to the categories. But the self as the ground of all categories cannot admit a predicate like existence. If the self does not exist, it cannot be apprehended and it therefore cannot be real.<sup>141</sup> Existence then must be a synonym of reality. Reality is an affirmation.<sup>142</sup> It cannot have either the predicate of existence or that of non-existence; it is not thus nor otherwise; it is not born, nor does it increase or decrease.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>139</sup> cf. KKK 564-565.

<sup>140</sup> Lakṣhaṇāvalī, 2. 1-3.

<sup>141</sup> KKK 567. 6-8.

<sup>142</sup> NBT 17. 3-4; NVT 484-5. cf. Joseph: Introduction to Logic, 65, 166.

<sup>143</sup> See MSA 6. 1; Ratnagotra vibhāga, I. 9.

Ultimate Reality can then be neither the subject nor the object, though for purposes of understanding the world we can treat it as the subject. We cannot predicate even existence to Reality, and yet we are compelled to accept the reality of the existent subject. According to Raghunātha, existence is no other than being. The two refer to the same entity in so far as that entity enters into a relation with something else. We may or we may not say that the jar is something; but this depends on whether or not the jar occurs somewhere.<sup>144</sup> That is: existence is not a predicate. Moreover, if the subject is by himself active, he should always be doing something or other; he should not cease to experience at any moment. Since this is not empirically true, the activity proper should be treated as something related to the subject. As unrelated to activity, the subject can cognize nothing. But when the subject is related to activity, this activity cannot bring an object into relation with the subject, since a predicate cannot take a predicate upon itself.<sup>145</sup> It is therefore the pure consciousness which is the ground of all logical activity; and from this self-evident ground we derive the laws of identity and non-contradiction.

<sup>144</sup> PTN 48-49.

<sup>145</sup> MMK 8. 1-3.

(Concluded)

## EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROOF OF GOD

BY DR. PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY

(Continued from the November issue)

8. This conception of the cosmic spirit as our over-mind which, moreover, stands to our ordinary waking mind as the latter does to the dream one, helps to get round certain difficulties. Modern psychology has come to

admit such phenomena as puzzled the older hide-bound thinkers who rejected them as superstitions and frauds. Thus any book on parapsychology will inform us of the truth of precognition through dreams and intuitive



flashes, telepathic communication, telekinesis (or movement of objects without physical contact) and the spirits after death knowing of the world and acting upon it sometimes in an apparently embodied state but often in a disembodied one. Psychical research has become a scientific study in a strict sense and extra-sensory perception (E. S. P.) and other paranormal phenomena have to be accounted for and not brushed aside. Naturally we have to break down our old rigid conception of minds as isolated from one another, shut up in bodies, and knowing and acting as much as the bodies allow them. A new horizon is opened up in our conception of the human mind by these researches and we have to admit a subliminal mind beyond the surface one. The cosmic mind operates through ours and it is in us, so it is not difficult to imagine that sometimes what this higher mind contemplates to experience in the future may flash before our minds. We have heard of saints who could have a vision of the three times at once, the past, present, and future. The saint, through his mental discipline, penetrates into his subliminal mind, the deeper reaches of his self. So also are possible those other supernormal phenomena. The miracles performed by the saints in all ages will not appear to be impossible and miraculous if we bear in mind that though this Spirit follows an order in the production of impression upon the individual minds, it is not bound by this order. It may deviate from the fixed laws at times to beguile itself or to awaken the individual minds from their dream state. For these miracles give a rude shock to our narrow materialistic outlook and make us think of a sentient Being behind the world operating it like a magician. The cosmic Spirit enjoys both our materialistic attitude, in which we forget our true Self, and our awakening from it. So miracles are strewn amidst a seemingly rigid causal world.

9. Our next difficulty is about our free-will. We have said above that the Spirit causes us to act just as it does to sense. But then, is our feeling of freedom an illusion? If

so, what will happen to morality? Yes, it is so and yet morality is not jeopardized. The subject under a hypnotic spell also feels free though he acts just as the hypnotizer wishes him to do. The *Gītā* speaks of God 'as sitting in the heart of all born beings and with magic (*māyā*) making them spin about as though set upon a whirligig.' We must not go by what we feel but by what we must think after we have analysed the total situation. Our vanity too stands in the way of accepting a view that liquidates our freedom and reduces us to automatons in the hands of the Spirit. But this conflict disappears if we realize that this Spirit is but our real Self of which we, as individuals, are but fantasy-selves assumed for the sake of sport (*līlā*). Everyone of us should say like this, 'It is I who have divided myself into innumerable dream-selves and am dreaming through them for my pleasure; so I am essentially free.' For one who has realized the truth there is no nightmare of fatalism to harass him; while one who has not, but merely has a verbal knowledge of it, need not be so harassed, for he has the clear feeling of freedom. He is, therefore, a moral agent with his freedom and responsibility intact and must be subject to moral self-praise and self-reproach and to reward and punishment. He is controlled by the Spirit in such a manner that his moral feelings awakened by moral qualities, just as other feelings awakened by sense-qualities, have relation to his will, deliberations, and actions; so that morality and the law of *Karma* rule the human world even as the law of causality does the natural one. In the individual dream mode the Spirit adopts the moral sense of rights and obligations along with a sense of freedom, and so is bound (in that mode) by moral feelings and laws. When an individual knows this secret he is no longer so bound but is a liberated awakened Self and he behaves as one does in a play, he acts his part without any attachment and takes his dues from the world in a sportive spirit. He then freely submits to the laws of moral life taking them as values of a game. The *Gītā* teaches us to do our duties



with the spirit of self-surrender to the cosmic order. Practice of this detached activity, which is no ordinary activity just as play-acting is none, leads to the realization of the true nature of the self and the world, the metaphysical ground of this prescription and mode of life. Detachment is here attachment to the true Self behind the apparent one, and submission is made to the true Self and its cosmic sport, *līlā*. So it is but self-realization and freedom. The *yogin* knows this secret of dying into life; he is in union (*yoga*) with the foundational spiritual principle of his empirical self and the world and enjoys both in a conscious manner as we do our world of imagination and the imaginary self of ours in that world.

So morality or *dharma* is not mocked though it is a principle of life upon this world and as such not ultimately real but a make-believe affair. Yet so long as the world remains, the principle remains. *Dharma* is upheld even by the liberated ones. Moral qualities are created by the Spirit itself who must have a rich and various world, and moral law must be there as rules of a game, otherwise everything would fall apart as haphazard elements. The world is a dream but a systematic one, and moral laws, like causal ones, are principles of order and unity.

10. It may be complained that from the human point of view this Spirit is not a moral one for it takes equal delight in good and bad, human joys and sorrows. It loves sport and aesthetic enjoyment, *līlā rasa*, and is not concerned with the human aspect of the sport. But this complaint is founded on a confusion. If the complainant takes the human point of view, he can find in the world the forces of good contending with and overcoming those of evil, mankind progressing towards knowledge and mutual understanding, and the very many evils helping to draw out the good. And there is always the sense of freedom in one to improve the world. Instead of idly complaining that God is a callous spirit who has created both good and evil and not good only, one should start improving the world

and bringing down heaven upon this earth. God has given man that freedom and power in abundance and, so, he cannot have any cause for pessimism and cynicism. The human material is soft to the touch of beauty, truth, and goodness; the hardest heart melts under kindness. So God is good from the human point of view. If one, however, takes up the transcendental standpoint, and regards the world of sense-qualities, appetites, feelings, beauty, and morals as a dream, one cannot complain, for then none really sins or suffers here and none really does good and enjoys either; it is all a make-believe affair. Thus we see that we find fault with our Creator because of a fault in our thinking, a confusion. We are like children in a drama who take everything for reality and, so, are much troubled by the suspense, the follies and sufferings depicted therein, instead of enjoying them. If they are told that all this is the creation of an author, they think the author to be a very bad fellow. So the difficulties of this nature are caused by our having some verbal knowledge of the transcendental things, which is half-knowledge, and so, dangerous. We must know what we talk about, must meditate upon and realize in direct experience what we hear from the teacher or read in the scriptures. *Sravaṇa* (hearing), *manana* (thinking), and *nididhyāsana* (meditating) are prescribed by the Upaniṣadic ṛṣis and Indian saints for adequate knowledge of reality. However, the half-knowledge and the resulting confusion and conflict are but a temporary stage in the progress of an individual self towards truth and this is the creation of the Spirit itself that leads some to self-knowledge through delusions.

11. Another difficulty to be answered is with regard to the concept of existence. The unsensed sense-qualities do not exist, we have said, only those sensed by individual minds do. They do not exist just as the unsensed parts of dream-objects do not. For the Spirit dreams through the individual minds that are its dream-selves. This Spirit is a marvellous correlation of *sensa* so that it produces in us



the illusion of a substantial world about us. But here common sense is scandalized for it cannot see how the legs of a chair one sits on cease to exist when none perceives them. Does the back of my head vanish when none is about me and I do not feel? Our answer is that the problem cannot be solved but dissolved as it arises out of a confusion which has to be cleared. From an ultimate standpoint the legs of the chair you sit on do not exist, for the Creator does not perceive it through any of his dream-selves. They do not exist just as legs of a chair you sit on in a dream do not if you have not perceived them. If you have realized the spiritual basis of this world which is but *sensa* impressed upon us by a cosmic Spirit of which we are dream-selves, modes, you will not be puzzled by the statement that the legs of the chair do not exist when not perceived by anybody, though one may be sitting upon it and seeing and feeling its seat. But if one has not realized this transcendental view of things one doubts the truth of the statement, for one has the feeling in his mind that even unsensed but inferred *sensa* exist. This feeling is an illusion created by our Creator and it persists in our philosophical speculations. We are aware of the persistence of perceptual image, the rotating fire appears to be an unbroken circle. Since we are used to perceive certain *sensa* in a regular manner, we imagine some of them to be there, though not actually given. Only a few are so given, which suggest to the mind that the others are also there. It is a pervasive illusion, that like the moral one of freedom and responsibility and rights and obligations, has its use in the production and maintenance of a human world where human beings must believe *as if* there are physical substances with sense-qualities independent of being sensed and *as if* there is personal freedom and responsibility.

Now we need not quarrel over the word 'existence.' The unsensed qualities may be said to exist provided we know the difference between this sort of existence and the other sort enjoyed by the sensed ones. And then

we must bear in mind that even this second sort of existence is not ultimate, for it is the projection of a Spirit which really exists while its projections depend on it. This Spirit has two aspects. As one that necessarily creates, it is coordinate with the created world of sense-qualities of which it is a pole or a correlate. But this essentially creative Spirit may be an aspect or moment of One that is pure and adopts the creative mode. It is the substance or essence of the creative Spirit that creates the meaning or referent of the subject of the judgement, 'It is creative of the world.' Thus creation becomes an accidental attribute of this Spirit that merely exists and does nothing. Thus a Spirit without any attribute is the conclusion of our inquiry which has thus led us to affirm a being beyond God. The mystics have realized these two aspects of the Spirit and called them *Brahman* and *Īswara*. *Īswara* is the *Brahman* with the magic power (*māyā-śakti*). So that even *Īswara* exists in a relative sense while *Brahman* really exists. *Brahman* is the bare *That* of our judgements which predicate *whats* to it. All *whats* that qualify the *Brahman* give us only relative names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*) of *Brahman*, the pure Spirit. So there are levels of existence or layers of meaning of the word 'existence.' The illusory, dream, and imaginary *sensa*, though they have some internal differences amongst them, belong to the same kind of existence as the unsensed *sensa* which are intuitively inferred from the sensed ones, for they are not produced on us but only believed by us. However, if we ignore the difference between those which we imagine (either freely or led by the given *sensa*) and those which are actually given to us, and consider them all as produced by the creative Spirit (our imagination itself being controlled by this Spirit), we may speak of only one kind of existence for them, and their creator Spirit correlative to them. This Spirit creates some *sensa* in a regular manner and others in a more or less haphazard one, some appearing to follow the will and free imagination of individual minds, which free activity is only an



appearance from an ultimate standpoint. So God, as necessarily creative, is as really or relatively existing as the sensible world including all that is actually or imaginatively sensed by us. But in His essential aspect, as one that does not necessarily but casually create and assumes other attributes, He exists absolutely. That these attributes are accidental and not essential and so have a relative form of existence when compared to their substratum, must be affirmed on the basis of experience as the mystics have done. We can have an

epistemological approach to this truth when we find that everything can be thought away as contingent except pure consciousness which is the necessary ground of all contingent phenomena. Now, generally we mean by 'God' one who creates the world and individual minds only accidentally for sport (*līlā*). God in His creative aspect exists, as do the world and our selves; but God in His essential aspect, in His own nature or being, exists absolutely.

(Concluded)

## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BUDDHISTIC ŚŪNYATĀ

BY PROF. HERAMBA CHATTERJEE

Buddhism faced the strongest opposition from the Naiyāyikas and the Mīmāṃsakas of Brāhmanical school. Apart from the question of abusive language that has been used against the Buddhists, it is regretted very much that Brāhmanical scholars never hesitated to hit below the belt, when they tried to comment on their views. This will be apparent as we take up the special problem of Śūnyatā.

Not that there was no teacher who paid due respect to the followers of Buddha, but that the fact is otherwise, though there is no denying the fact that their numbers are few. Thus Gauḍapāda, the first systematic expounder of Advaita Vedānta, preaches like Nāgārjuna the 'Ajātivāda'—ultimate non-origination of things<sup>1</sup>. He has shown that there can be neither birth nor death, neither appearance nor disappearance, neither production nor destruction—and this is the highest of all Truths<sup>2</sup>. Identical is the declaration of

Nāgārjuna<sup>3</sup>. Gauḍapāda concluded that no creature is born, there is no origination of it<sup>4</sup>. It is wonder of wonders that this Vedāntic scholar has paid due recognition to the Buddhist doctrine of non-origination.

Śaṅkarācārya, it must be humbly admitted, was not sympathetic towards the doctrine of Śūnyatā. Taking the word in the sense of pure nihilism, he has argued that it is contradicted by all valid means of cognition and is thus self-condemned<sup>5</sup>.

Vimuktātman, after Śaṅkara, also interpreted Śūnyatā in the sense of non-existence. According to him, if Śūnya means 'nothing' then the Śūnyatā of the Mādhyamikas also becomes 'nothing'<sup>6</sup>. If on the other hand the doctrine conveys the sense of 'Māyā', then the

<sup>3</sup> Vide *Mādhyamika Kārikā* 1.1.

<sup>4</sup> *Mān. Kārikā* 4.48.

<sup>5</sup> Śūnyavādapakṣastu sarvapramāṇavipratīṣiddha iti tannirākaraṇāya nādaraḥ kriyate. Nahyayaṃ sarvapramāṇaprasiddho lokavyavahāro'nyat tatva-manadhigamya śakyate apahnotum.

*Śārīraka-bhāṣya* 2. 2.31.

<sup>6</sup> Ato yadi bhrāntiṣyeta aśaṅkhyātireva sā iṣyatām.

<sup>1</sup> Khyāpyamānāmajātīm tairanumodāmahe vāyam. *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā* 4.5.

<sup>2</sup> Na nirodho na cotpattirna badho na ca-sādhakaḥ Na mumukṣurna vai mukta ityeṣā paramārthatā. *Ibid.* 2.32.



doctrine has got nothing new from the Vedāntic doctrine.<sup>7</sup>

After Gauḍapāda, the Buddhists derived sympathy from no less a writer than Śrīharṣa. He endorsed the view of the Mādhyamikas that Śūnyatā means nothing other than relative existence of the world. The Vedāntists also do not believe in the ultimate reality of the world and as such the doctrine of the Buddhists cannot be set aside<sup>8</sup>. He has tried to find out the fundamental difference between the Śūnyavāda and the doctrine of Vedānta. According to the former, all objects, including consciousness, are unreal in the sense that they are indescribable, while, according to Vedānta, consciousness, which is self-luminous (*svaprakāśa*), is beyond the scope of unreality<sup>9</sup>.

Vidyāraṇya<sup>10</sup> also condemned the theory of Śūnyatā as nihilism by taking the word in the sense of negation. His contention is that absolute negation is not possible, as there must be someone to realize the non-existence of things<sup>11</sup>. He has, however, pleaded that if the word Śūnya conveys the sense of Reality that appears as the indescribable manifold world of name and form, then Śūnyavādins have no dispute with the Advaitins<sup>12</sup>.

In *Advaitabrahmasiddhi* Sadānanda has the same argument. He says that if, by the word, the Buddhists do not mean 'nothingness' but the Reality that is beyond intellect,

<sup>7</sup> Asan-māyāmicchasi cet, astu samānagatitā. *Ibid.* p. 165.

<sup>8</sup> Mādhyamikādi vāgyavahārāṇām svarūpāpalāpo na śakyate.

*Khaṇḍana* p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Saugata-Brahmavadinorayam viśeṣaḥ yadādi-maḥ sarvamevānirvacanīyam varṇayati . . . vijñānavyatiriktam punaridam viśvaṁ sadasadbhīyām vilakṣaṇam brahmavādināḥ saṁgirante.

*Ibid.* p. 31.

<sup>10</sup> *Pañcadaśī* 2.30.

<sup>11</sup> Śūnyasyāpi hi śūnyatvaṁ tat sākṣiṇī satīkṣyate.

*Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Vārtika-Sāra* 3.4.73.

<sup>12</sup> Śūnyasya nāmarūpe ca tathā cet, jīvyatām ciram.

*Pañcadaśī* 2.34.

then the propounders of the theory have nothing in dispute with the Vedāntists<sup>13</sup>.

The text *Pratyaktatvacintāmaṇi* has also taken the word in the sense of negation and has argued that the theory does not deserve to be considered critically<sup>14</sup>.

But all these misconceptions about Śūnyatā have arisen out of the negative force of the word, which it is ordinarily supposed to convey. To the Mādhyamikas the term has a very special and restricted sense. On the one hand the term means Relativity (*pratītyasamutpāda*), while on the other it conveys the sense of Reality (*Tatva*) which is release from plurality. An object which is to depend on cause and condition cannot ultimately be designated as real. All appearances (*dharmās*) being relative in nature (*pratītyasamutpanna*) have no real origination (*'paramārthato notpannaḥ'*) and are thus devoid of ultimate reality (*niḥsvabhāva*). These appearances, on the other hand, belong to the Reality—the Absolute—the non-dual harmonious whole in which all plurality is merged (*prapañcaśūnya*). Śūnya therefore does not mean 'void' but 'devoid', so far as appearances are concerned, 'of ultimate reality', and so far as Reality is concerned, 'of plurality'. The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* says about Śūnyatā that things are called Śūnya because they can be described neither as existent nor as non-existent, neither as both nor as neither<sup>15</sup>. This text has further shed new light on the doctrine of Śūnyatā by stating that Śūnyatā may better express the idea of affirmation as big in magnitude as Sumeru mountain than to mean 'mere nothing'<sup>16</sup>.

Nāgārjuna by equating Śūnyatā with *pra-*

<sup>13</sup> Śūnyam nāma kiñcit tatvamasti na vā? Adye nāmamātre vivādaḥ, vedāntamatapraveśāt p. 104.

<sup>14</sup> Ato na cāsmanmatamīkṣitum manāk sa bauddhapakṣaḥ kṣamate kaṭākṣataḥ. 10.34.

<sup>15</sup> Buddhyā vivicyamānānām svabhāvo nāvadhāryate Tasmādanabhilāpyāste niḥsvabhāvāśca deśitāḥ. p. 116.

<sup>16</sup> Varam khalu Sumerumātrā pudgaladrṣṭirnatveva nāstyastitvābhimānikasya śūnyatādrṣṭiḥ.

p. 146.



*Ītyasamutpāda*<sup>17</sup>, means to convey the idea that by the application of the theory of *pratītyasamutpāda* it may be shown that things of the world, that are grasped by the intellect, being dependent on cause and condition for their origination, are all devoid of ultimate reality. This conception being a bit difficult to grasp, Nāgārjuna has warned that a person who cannot properly realize the true meaning of *Śūnyatā* is sure to be ruined<sup>18</sup>. Āryadeva in his *Catuśśataka* has boldly announced that *Śūnyatā* is not nihilism. The doctrine of Nihilism on the contrary trembles at the name

<sup>17</sup> Yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatām tām prakakṣmahe.

*Mādhyamika Kārikā* 24.18.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 24.17.

<sup>19</sup> Asya dharmasya nāmnāpi bhayamutpadyate'sataḥ.

p. 289.

of *Śūnyatā*<sup>19</sup>. Candrakīrti, the most able expositor of the text of Nāgārjuna, refutes the charge that they are nihilists inasmuch as the doctrine of *Śūnyatā* transcends both affirmation and negation. The empirical reality of phenomena is not denied by the *Śūnyavādins* but what has been proved is that they are ultimately unreal<sup>20</sup>. The final point in this connexion has been reached when it is pointed out that, from the absolute standpoint, *Śūnyatā* being devoid of plurality, is *Nirvāṇa*<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Na vyaṁ nāstikāḥ. Astitvanāstitvadvaya-vādanirāseṇa tu vyaṁ nirvāṇapuragāminam advayapatham vidyotayāmaḥ. Na ca karmakartṛphalādikaṁ nāstīti brūmaḥ, kiṁ tarhi, niḥsvabhāvame-taditi vidyotayāmaḥ.

Candrakīrti's Commentary p. 329.

<sup>21</sup> *Śūnyataiva sarvaprapañcanivṛttīlakṣaṇatvāt nirvāṇamityucyate.*

*Ibid.* p. 351.

## JÑĀNA-YOGA IN THE VEDA

BY DR. ABINAS CHANDRA BOSE

### I

The Veda, from *vid*, to know, means knowledge. The Vedas have been traditionally associated with the path of knowledge and looked upon as the repositories of the highest spiritual truths.

The followers of the path of devotion may believe, but one who treads the path of knowledge must know. The Vedic sages were alive to this demand on them. The Yajurvedic sage who quotes the famous Puruṣa hymn of the *Rgveda* (describing the grand manifestation of the Divinity in time and space) adds a stanza of his own beginning with 'I have known this mighty Puruṣa'. (YVS. 31. 18). This 'I have known' is typical of the man who is a votary of *Jñānayoga*. The *Rgveda* says that one's business with Vedic hymns is not merely to recite them but to know their lofty theme—the Eternal (*Akṣara*):

The Eternal of the Vedic hymn, existing in the supreme region,  
in which all the Devas dwell—  
What will he do with the Vedic hymn who does not know That?  
But those who know That, are perfect.  
(RS. I. 164. 39).

Knowledge must follow all spiritual efforts—that is the stand taken by *Jñānayoga*.

The *Akṣara*, the absolute Divine, of the Veda has been traditionally recognized as the Object of search in the path of knowledge. The typical *Jñānayogin* seeks not a personal, but an impersonal Divinity, not emotional but metaphysical satisfaction. The *Bhagavad Gītā* refers to 'The *Akṣara* of which the knowers of the Veda speak' (VIII. 11). The *Gītā*, in pointing out the distinction between *Jñānayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga* (Path of Devotion), refers to the *Akṣara* as the Object of



worship of the former and amplifies the idea of the term:

. . . the *Akṣara* (eternal), the indefinable, the unmanifest, the omnipresent, the incomprehensible, the supreme, the immutable, the ever-steady . . . (XI. 3).

In one hymn the Veda speaks of the Eternal as *mahad-akṣaram*, in the neuter—the great Absolute (RS. III. 55. 1). The *Gītā* paraphrases the term as *Brahma paramam*, supreme Brahman (VIII. 3).

The instrument of knowledge (*jñāna*) is the higher intellect of man called *dhī* in the Veda. It corresponds to what the *Bhagavad Gītā* calls '*buddhi*':

Some have called the sense-organs ultimate, but beyond the sense-organs lies the mind (*manas*); and beyond the mind lies *buddhi* (the higher intellect); and what lies beyond *buddhi* is He (the Divine). (III. 42).

While *Rājayoga*, the Mystical Path, claims to realize the Divine by a direct soul-contact, *Jñānayoga* works with this *buddhi* or *dhī*. Similar terms used in the Veda are *medhā* (talent), *kratu* (wisdom), etc. The term *varcas* implies the brilliance brought by the light of spiritual knowledge, and *ojas* (spiritual vigour) is the power that such knowledge generates.

These terms are found throughout the Vedas and signify the close association of the Vedic spiritual culture with *Jñānayoga*. It is significant that the one mantra taken out of the Vedas to represent them all, and memorized through the ages by the masses of the enlightened Hindus, the *Rgveda* mantra in the *gāyatrī* metre (also occurring in two other Vedas), is a prayer for *dhī* (higher intellect): 'May He arouse our intellect . . .' (RS. III. 62. 10; thrice in YS., and in SS.) Similar passages occur in the Vedas. For example, Pūṣan has been described as 'animator of the intellect' (RS. I. 89. 5). Goddess Saraswatī is the special Patroness of *dhī*—She has been called 'One with *dhī* as her treasure' (RS. I. 3. 10), 'Protectress of *dhī*' (RS. VI. 61. 4), 'One who brightens all intellects' (RS. I. 3. 12) and so on. The term *jyotiḥ* (light) in the Veda also signifies the light of the intellect. The following prayer is typical of the Veda:

God! give us wisdom (*kratu*) as a father to his sons;

Guide us, O much invoked, in this path.

May we live and have light (*jyotiḥ*). (RS. VII. 32. 26; SS., AS).

The *Bhagavad Gītā* which gives a fairly detailed exposition of *Jñānayoga* throws much interesting light on the subject. The *Gītā* says that in terms of *Jñānayoga* Divine grace lies not in making intellectual effort unnecessary, but in arousing the intellectual power. Divine grace is the gift of *buddhiyoga*, power of the higher intellect, through which one approaches God (IX. 10). Through grace (*anukampā*), God, abiding in men's hearts, destroys the darkness born of ignorance by the shining lamp of knowledge (*jñāna*) (X. 11). The *jñānin* is the dearest of all aspirants, he is God's own self (VII. 17-18).

The approach of the path of knowledge to ethics is significant. Ignorance is sin which can be cleansed off only by knowledge. 'Knowledge is enveloped in ignorance and with that mortals are deluded' (V. 15). The way out of this delusion is through knowledge (IV. 35). The worst of sinners is saved by knowledge (IV. 36). 'As the burning fire reduces wood to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes' (IV. 37). 'Verily there is no purifier in this world like knowledge' (IV. 38). This fundamental idea of *Jñānayoga* has been expressed more briefly but more concretely in the Veda: *pāvakā nah Saraswatī* Saraswatī (Goddess of knowledge) is our purifier. (RS. I. 3. 10).

## II

The Vedic Path of Knowledge has been held by successive ages as steep and difficult, owing to its stern demand of *tapah*, the purifying process of spiritual fire. '*Rta* (Eternal Law) and *Satya* (Truth)', says the *Rgveda*, 'were born of perfect *tapah* (austerity)', in the beginning of things (RS. X. 190. 1). The approach to truth is through a culture of the inner spirit. The *Yajurveda* says:

Through *vrata* (self-dedication) one obtains *dīkṣā* (co-secration)

Through *dīkṣā* one obtains *dakṣiṇā* (grace).



Through grace one obtains reverence  
(*śraddhā*),

And through reverence is truth (*satya*) obtained. (YS. 19. 30).

Thus *Jñānayoga* is a process of spiritualization of life. This in the Vedic age took the specific form of *brahmacarya*, a long period of education, aiming at the building up of body, mind, and spiritual character, and instilling the Vedic sense of values. The *Rgveda* says of the *brahmacārin* that 'he becomes a part of the body of Gods' (*sa devānām bhavatyekamaṅgam* RS. X. 109. 5). The education began in childhood and was carried on to early youth, when the man grew a beard. The idea that through this education man rose above his animal self and was born for a second time on the spiritual plane is very clearly emphasized in the Veda. The *Yajurveda*, in the *upanayana* (carrying to the *ācārya* or teacher, initiation) ceremony, makes the child say:

'Now I am approaching truth beyond untruth.' (YS. V. I. 5). The *Atharvaveda* has a whole, highly informative section on *brahmacarya*. Strangely enough it compares the initiating *ācārya* (teacher) to the mother:

The *ācārya* initiating the *brahmacārin* (pupil) makes him, as it were, a child within him (AS. XI. 5).

And for the three days of the initiation (symbolizing the period of instruction) he is said to carry the child, like the mother, in the (spiritual) womb. And when he is born on a higher plane of life, he is a new being, a wonder of the universe! The legend associated in later times with the birth of a God-man corresponds to the description of the new birth of the *brahmacārin* in the Veda:

'When he is born (out of the *ācārya's* spiritual womb), the Devas convene to see him' (AS. XI. 5. 3).

(So did the Devas come to see the newly born Buddha and the Magi the newly born Christ!)

It was realized by the Vedic sages that an essential point in raising man from the animal to the spiritual level was the control, direction, and sublimation of the sex-instinct. That the

loss of Nature's control over the sex-life of man needed to be made good by checks forged by his will was recognized by them. The principle of sublimation was consciously advocated. 'The *brahmacārin*,' says the *Atharvaveda*, 'scatters his virile power on the ridge of the earth,' like the rain of heaven, 'and by this live the four quarters (XI. 5. 12). *Brahmacarya* also included a conscious attempt to cultivate on a non-erotic basis an affectionate relationship between man and woman. The *Mekhalā*, the *brahmacārin's* girdle, a word in the feminine gender, which seems to have symbolized womanhood for him, is described as 'daughter of Faith (*śraddhā*) and sister (*swasā*) of ṛṣis (sages)' (AS. VI. 133. 4). Manu, interpreting the Vedic tradition, instructs *brahmacārins* to show respect to a woman by addressing her 'as *Bhavati* (Noble One), *Subhage* (O gracious One!) or *Bhagini* (O illustrious One!)' (*Manu Samhitā* II. 129). The word '*bhagini*' came to mean sister and in course of time replaced the Aryan *swasā* in the different modern languages of India. Was it because that *bhagini* (the illustrious one) as a courteous term for a young woman was so extensively used by the *brahmacārin* that he called his own sister too by that term?

In the *āśramas* (hermitages) where *brahmacārins* had their education, girls also lived and learnt as members of the same household under the guardianship of the *Ācārya's* wife (or some other lady), and the courteous relationship between young men and women was sedulously cultivated. Kālidāsa, the poet of Vedic Renaissance, shows an *āśrama* of the Vedic type where the ṛṣi offers worship by a *mantra* specially composed by the poet in a Vedic metre (*triṣṭup*). He calls his young disciple and asks him to be an escort to 'his sister' (*bhagini*), pointing to Śakuntalā. The pupil calls her '*Bhavati* (O gracious One!) in the way Manu instructs the *brahmacārin* to address a woman.

According to the *Atharvaveda* the system of education called *brahmacarya* produces the inner fitness for every line of work. 'The king protects his kingdom by the *tapas* of *brahma-*



*carya*; the *Ācārya* through *brahmacarya* wishes to have the *brahmacārin* (pupil); the girl wins a youthful husband by the *tapas* of *brahmacarya*. By the *tapas* of *brahmacarya* the Devas drove away death; and Indra by *brahmacarya* brought heavenly lustre to the Devas' (AS. XI. 5. 17-19).

The intellectual pursuit of the *brahmacārin* had a speciality of its own. It was essentially the working of *dhī*, the higher intellect, in its quest of knowledge. So education began with pupil's questionings. 'Acquire that knowledge,' says the *Bhagavad Gītā*, 'by obeisance, by questionings, by service; the men of knowledge (*jñāninah*), who have seen the truth will instruct you in that knowledge' (IV. 34). The *Yajurveda* had said ages before the *Gītā*: 'For acquisition of knowledge, (bring) the questioning man, for learning through nearness (to an *Ācārya*), the man who questions from all sides': *śikṣāyai praśninam upaśikṣāya abhipraśninam* (YS. XXX. 10) Cf. *paripraśnena* of the *Bhagavad Gītā* with *abhipraśninam* of the Veda). What is the necessity of instruction by the teacher? The question is answered by the *Rgveda*:

One ignorant of the land asks of one who knows it; he travels forward instructed by the knowing one;

This, indeed, is the blessing of instruction (*anuśāsana*), one finds the path that leads straight onward. (RS. X. 32. 7).

To ask (*prcch*) is the process of getting to the path of knowledge. Manu in his chapter on education asks the teacher not to speak to anyone unless questioned. (MS. II. 110).

The following is typical of the Vedic spirit of interrogation:

'Unknowing I ask of those—the sages—as one ignorant for the sake of knowledge:

Who is that ONE who has upheld the six spheres in the form of the Unborn?'

(RS. I. 164. 6).

Elsewhere the *Rgveda* says that 'the other beings seek Him (the Divine, with questionings (*sampraśnam*)' (RS. X. 82. 3; also YS. and AS.). In later Vedic literature too we find *Dharma-jijñāsā*, questionings about spiritual

truths, initiating discourses on the subject. It was an assembly of *jñānayogins*—people treading the Path of Knowledge, led by Gārgī, daughter of Vacaknu, who asked questions of Yājñavalkya, and received conviction about the Ultimate Reality (*Br. Up.*).

The intellectual conviction that comes with satisfactory answers to questions, often directing the aspirant to further search and deeper realization, is part of the achievement of *Jñānayoga*, very much different from the unquestioning acceptance of beliefs at second hand. Even Manu who declares the Veda to be the supreme authority in religion, adds that with the Veda should also be counted 'the traditions carried on by the knowers of the Veda and their conduct, and the practices of spiritual men and one's own satisfaction' (MS. II. 6).

This demand for individual satisfaction (*tuṣṭi*) and the personal realization of the truth give to the Vedic follower of knowledge his special title to distinction. Buddha's lonely adventure in search of the truth had the inspiration of Vedic *Jñānayoga* behind it. It is no wonder that just as the Veda says that one who has not known the *Akṣara* (Eternal) of the Veda profits little by Vedic studies, one can also say like the *Gītā* that one who has known the *Akṣara* or Brahman has little need of the Veda (BG. II. 46).

In *Jñānayoga*, therefore, it is not scripture or conformity to what is believed to be the direction of the scripture that matters but one's personal contact with Reality, one's own sense of Truth. Truth (*Satya*) and the Law of the operation of Truth (*Rta*) are supreme according to the Veda. This has maintained the sincerity, independence, and dignity of the religious pursuit among talented followers of the Vedic tradition, in spite of the ignorance and superstition of the many, and preserved the vitality and power of the religion. 'By truth is the earth upheld,' says the *Rgveda*, and 'the Deity has truth as the law of His being'; 'the Devas are manifestations of Truth'; the ritual derives its meaning from the truth it represents—'speaking truth, truthful in action,



the libation flows.' 'Truth is indeed Brahman (the Supreme Being),' declares the Upaniṣad (*Br.* V. 4. 1). The *Atharvaveda*, describing what upholds the earth, says: 'Truth (*Satya*), *Rta* (Law) that is great and stern, Consecration, Austerity (*tapah*), Scripture, and Ritual, these uphold the earth (so they make *dharma*).' Lord Buddha interprets the ethical side of the Vedic ideal when he says in the *Dhammapada*:

'He in whom truth (*sacca*), law (*dhamma*), non-violence and self-control exist, that spotless wise man is called Thera (the sage).'

*Dhammapada* 19.6

Śaṅkarācārya identified the Divinity with the True, distinguishing it from illusion. Medieval and modern sects, whether accepting the Vedic theism and Vedic ritual or not, have placed truth above all. For example, Guru Nānak says in *Japji: Eka Om Satnāma*. There is one Divine being (*Om*) whose name is Truth.

Swami Dayananda, the Vedic revivalist, is true to the Veda when he enunciates as one of the ten fundamental principles of Aryan life: 'An Ārya should always be ready to accept truth and renounce untruth.' Mahatma Gandhi said: 'Truth is God'; 'That Law which governs all life is God'; (*Yervada Mandir*), using truth and law in the Vedic sense of *Satya* and *Rta* (without possibly knowing this definitely). Swami Vivekananda under the inspiration of his great Master, and following in the footsteps of Śaṅkarācārya said, with a modern accent, that truth is relative, which meant that it was imperative not only to assert truth but to arrive at a precise understanding of it by relating it to its proper context, atmosphere and perspective. Such an understanding will disentangle truth from the confusion created by prejudice, perversity, imperfect knowledge and lack of imagination and apply a higher criticism to religion (from a religious and not an anthropological point of view).

The supreme emphasis on truth laid by *Jñānayoga* makes of it a science—the science of sciences, as the *Bhagavad Gītā* calls it (*adhyātma vidyā vidyānām* X. 32). Joad compliments religion by saying that it has got

answers for questions which science could not find; but to the *jñānayogin* any answer, however heroically accepted by the man of faith, is not knowledge or truth, until it has the sanction of one's own spiritual realization, bringing the necessary intellectual satisfaction. The *jñānin* would rather leave a question unanswered than find a dogmatic answer. Some of the noblest Vedic prayers have been addressed to the 'unknown God'\*—'Who is the Deity we shall adore with our oblations?' (*RS.* X. 121; also *YS.* and *SS.*) The answers that make the different stanzas of the hymn give only partial descriptions of Him. There are certain aspects of the Ultimate Reality, lying beyond the categories of knowledge, which are better left unanswered. For example, in respect of the relation between the uncreated universe and the First Cause, the sage in the *Rgveda* gives a very bold answer:

'He who oversees it in the eternal region,  
He verily knows it—or perhaps He does not  
(*RS.* X. 129. 7).

Yājñavalkya refuses to answer a similar question of Gārgī, saying that the subject is beyond questions (*anatiprasnyām*) and she should not ask too much (*mātiprākṣh*) (*Br. Up.* 3.6.1). Silence reigns on the supreme heights of knowledge and there *jñānayoga* (path of knowledge) often yields place to *Rājayoga* (the Mystical Path).

### III

There is a fundamental difference between the knowledge that science brings and that which is brought by the 'science of sciences'—*Brahmavidyā*. In the former case the intellectual acquisition may have a purely objective importance, leaving the personality of the scientist untouched; but in the latter the knowledge, mastered by the higher intellect, affects the whole personality and transforms the knower into a new man, spiritually alert and active. *Jñānayoga* does not simply satisfy intellectual curiosity, it also satisfies a spiritual hunger. This hunger is the craving for higher knowledge that marks the man in

\*A term used by Max Muller for "Kah" (who),



the 'sāttvika' stage of life. The *Bhagavad Gītā* says that the man of 'sāttvika' (pure) nature is bound by attachment to knowledge, just as the man of 'rājasika' (passionate) nature is bound by the attachment to action, and the man of 'tāmasika' (inert) nature is bound by the attachment to delusion and sloth. 'From sattva is knowledge born.' 'When through all the gates of the body the effulgence of knowledge radiates, then it should be known that sattva is preponderant', 'those settled in sattva go upward'; 'sattva, owing to its purity, is enlightening and health-giving; it binds by the attachment to happiness and to knowledge.\*' (XIV). The Vedic *Jñānayogin* answers to this description. It has been said of the Snātaka (the student who has completed his *brahmacarya*) that 'he shines greatly' (*bahu rocate*—AS. XI.5.26). *Brahmacarya* by its *tapas* brings human nature to the *sāttvika* stage. The qualities of the Brāhmaṇa enumerated by the *Gītā* correspond to those of the *sāttvika* man: 'serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forbearance, and also uprightness, knowledge, spiritual realization and acceptance of the existence of the ultimate Reality' (XVIII. 42).

Quite characteristically the Vedic sages as pursuers of pure knowledge contemplate one divine Essence pervading all reality and often speak of It in the neuter singular as *Sat*, Reality, *Tat*, That, *Akṣaram*, the Eternal, *Ekam*, the One and so on. Masculine terms like "ātman" are also used.

'The Reality is One (*Ekam Sat*), the wise call It by many names.' (RS. I. 164. 46)

'Agni is That, Āditya is That, Vāyu is That . . .'  
(YS. 32. 1)

'The One (*Ekam*) breathed airless by self-impulse.'  
(RS. X. 129.2)

'That which is One has become this all.'  
(VIII.58.2)

'That One (*Ekam*) lords it over . . . this multi-form creation.'  
(RS. III. 55. 8)

When this sense of oneness derives, not from the intellect (*buddhi*) but from an inner

\*Cf. Manu: 'The mark of sattva is knowledge' (XII. 26), 'is *dharma*' (moral conduct) (XII. 38).

spiritual apprehension, we proceed from *Jñānayoga* to *Rājayoga*, the mystical path.

In distinguishing the 'divine' man from the 'demoniac' man, the *Gītā* says among other things that the former is 'established in *Jñānayoga*'. Manu says that the *sāttvika* man attains divinity (*devatvam sāttvikā yanti*—MS. XII.40). The Veda says that 'one who has known the Ātman fears not death', which means that he gets over the most characteristic weakness of animal life (AS. X.8.44). We have quoted above the *Rgveda* which says that the *brahmacārin* becomes a part of the body of Devas (RS. X.109.5).

Thus *jñāna* or spiritual knowledge puts a halo of divinity round man. So it will appear that *Jñānayoga* leads not only to the spiritualization of life but also to the divinization of man!

#### IV

This necessarily makes a spiritual aristocracy. In fact in post-Vedic ages the spiritual aspirants did tend to stand apart almost in individual isolation. But in the Vedic age it was not so. The *Rṣi*, the *Vipra*, the *Brāhmaṇa* formed part of the society and discharged his special duty. We are told of a socio-religious association, *Vidatha*, which the men of talent addressed. Sages of the Veda pray for the power to speak eloquently in the *Vidatha*:

*Brhad vadema vidathe suvīrah*

May we speak greatly in the *Vidatha*  
(synod) with heroes in it.

This occurs as a burden of many hymns. The newly married wife is given a great welcome in her new home with the invitation—*vidatham ā vadāsi*—'Thou shalt address the *Vidatha*.' We can imagine the sage-poets reciting their hymns before the *Vidatha* and holding discourses on the Divine. 'We shall praise Indra in the *Vidathas*', says the *Rgveda* (IV.21.4). In a description of the ideal son we are told by the *Rgveda* that he is fit for work (*karmanya*), fit for the household (*sādanya*), fit for the religious association (*vidathya*) and fit



for the political council (*sabheya*) (RS. I.91.20; YS.).

The Vedic sage not only spoke before his social association, but also went out among the masses (*jana*) of people to give them the holy word (*vāc*). An *Atharvavedic* sage prays to be filled with the sweetness of the bee-honey (*sāraghena madhunā*) in order that he may speak the glorious words before the people (*jana*) (AS. VI.69.2; IX.1.19). The *Yajurveda* amplifies the idea of 'the people' by saying—'so that I may speak the blissful (*kalyānī*) words to the masses of the people, to the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya, to the Śūdra and the Vaiśya, to my own people and the foreigner (YS. 26.2). In another *Yajurveda* prayer the sage seeks spiritual light (*rūc*) for all classes of the people—Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, and Śūdra (YS. 18.48).

The *Atharvaveda* says of the *brahmacārin* that 'he with his sacred fuel and girdle contents the world with his labour, with his *tapas* (spiritual fervour)', and 'lighted by his sacred fuel, clad in black buck-skin, consecrated, long-bearded, he swiftly goes from the east to the northern ocean, and taking hold of the worlds (*lokān saṅgrhya*) frequently brings them near him' (AS. XI.v.4,6). The *Bhagavad Gītā*, prescribing '*loka-saṅgraha*' (III.20) seems to be reminiscent of the *Atharvaveda*. The Vedic sage (*ṛṣi*) has been called the pathfinder (*pathikṛt*) (AS. 18.2.2) and the world-maker (*bhūtakṛt*) (AS. VI.133.4).

The *Rgveda* speaks of the *keśin*, the man with long locks, the prototype of the modern *sannyāsin* (who flourishes with or without merit on the noble ancient tradition). The *keśins* were *munis* :

Munis with the wind for their girdle, wear the soiled, yellow garb,

And go, following the course of the wind where Devas have gone before. (RS. X.136.2)

And treading the Apsaras's path, the Gandharva's and the wild beast's,

The man of locks knows the heart's wish, and is a sweet friend, most cheering. (RS. X.136.6)

The Vedic *muni* who claimed to have found the springs of supreme joy shared it with his

fellowmen not only living in his neighbourhood but across jungles, and became their sweet friend (*swādu sakhā*). His yellow (*piśaṅgā*) garb became the uniform of spiritual aspirants in later ages; only it was not always 'soiled' (*malā*) with travel and labour in the service of men ! The description of the *muni* as most cheering (*mandintama*) is significant: the Vedic sage not only radiated light but also joy, and was distinguished by this trait from the holy men of stoical cults in later ages.

Apart from this direct contact of the sages with the people, the Veda (*Brahman*) and masters of the Vedic knowledge (*Brāhmaṇas*) received great popularity through the ritual. The Vedic *yajña* (sacrifice) was performed at home by man and wife and by other members of the family assembled round the sacrificial fire like the spokes round the nave of a wheel (AS. III.30.6); it was also performed on a large scale in the open at different seasons and at the coronation of kings and other semi-political occasions, and attracted the masses. On occasions of the latter type the presence of great sages who came from their forest retreats provided opportunities for metaphysical discourse. As the Veda alone provided *mantras* for the *yajñas*, the Brāhmaṇa or the knower of the Veda who recited them from memory came to occupy an important place in them. He carried the word of the Veda to the masses of people. 'With the *yajña* they followed the steps of the sacred Word, knowing it harbouring within the *Ṛṣis* (sages), and having acquired it they dealt it out in many places, and the seven singers intone it in concert' (RS. X. 71.3). The Brāhmaṇa, carrying the Veda within him, was held to be immune from capital punishment (See *Śata. Brā.* II.5.7).

The Veda itself distinguishes between the man who possesses Vedic wisdom and another who only knows the Veda by heart (in the latter case the knowledge of the Veda became *aṅgā* material). There are, the *Rgveda* says, Brāhmaṇas and Brāhmaṇas :

'Some through their wisdom leave others behind them, and some walk about only boasting to be Brāhmaṇas' (R. X. 71. 8)



The *Gītā* distinguishes between the *Vedavid* (Veda-knower) and those who take pleasure in the letter of the Veda (*Veda-vādaratāh*). In post-Vedic ages there were people who opposed the ritual; but the Veda itself has stated the extremist view that 'one attains not Indra by sacrifice' (*Indram na yajñaiḥ*—RS. VIII.70.3). The Veda, however, does not consider pure knowledge and ritual to be incompatible with each other. 'Action (including ritual) does not besmirch men' says the *Yajurveda* (YS. 40,—Īś. Up.).

## V

In the comprehensive Vedic scheme of life the pursuit of knowledge does not necessarily imply renunciation of the world; *Jñānayoga* and *Karmayoga* (paths of knowledge and action) go hand in hand; the spiritual interest harmonizes with the political interest:

Where *brahman* (spiritual interest) and *kṣatra* (political interest) move together in harmony,  
That world I would know as blessed, where  
Devas with Agni dwell. (YS. 20-25)

The Vedic sages said: 'We shall remain awake in the state, being stationed in front' (*vayam rāshtre jagryāma purohitāh*) (YS. IX. 23). The Veda has a composite plan of society consisting of the man of knowledge (*Brāhmaṇa*), the ruling and fighting man (*Kṣatriya*), the producer and trader (*Vaiśya*) and the working man (*Śūdra*). (RS. X.90.12; YS.). In a like manner the Veda desires the harmony of *brahmacarya* and *gārhasthya āśramas* (stages of life). The Vedic respect for womanhood contributed to the conception of an idealistic marriage union in a lifelong monogamous partnership in which the highest spiritual values found scope for expression. The *Rgveda* compares the Eternal Pair, the Aśvins, to the married couple: *dampatīva kratuvidā janeṣu*, like a wise married couple among the people (RS. I. 39. 2). Wives of Vedic sages like Lopāmudrā, Maitreyī, Arundhatī, and others shared the spiritual eminence of their husbands.

It was in later ages, particularly among nonconformist cults, that the married state

was considered inferior to celibacy. The Vedic tradition developed the conception of four *āśramas*, *brahmacarya* being followed by *gṛhastha āśrama*, as much under the rule of *Ṛta* (eternal Law) as the first *āśrama*, and then *vānaprastha* (forest life) and *sannyāsa* (total renunciation). It was not unusual for men and women to skip the married state, but no superiority was claimed in the Vedic age by the celibate over the married people, whereas in later ages the very fact that one was a celibate or had renounced worldly rights and duties was believed to have given him a higher spiritual status. This attitude was subjected to criticism by followers of the Vedic ideal. The *Bhagavad Gītā*, for example, insists that both *Jñānayoga* and *Karmayoga* are true paths, that mere abstention from action is not virtue, that self-control is an internal and not an external process, that giving up the fire ritual and action is not *sannyāsa* (renunciation), that it is spirit and not form that matters. Manu speaks of the 'Vedic *sannyāsin*' as one who, having handed over the responsibilities of worldly life to the younger generation, lives at home, free from attachment, pursuing his own higher work (MS. VI.96).

In course of time the Vedic scholars and priests, instead of forming a functional group (*varṇa*), claimed *Brāhmaṇahood* by heredity. This led to the growth of a caste in which there were people who neither possessed the virtues of the *Brāhmaṇa* nor performed the traditional function. Manu shows his exasperation with Brahmins who do not know the Veda (even in a formal way) and says they should not be offered the gift even of water (MS. IV.193)! The claim of heredity too was weak in many cases because, for one thing, marriage with inferior castes (*anuloma*) was widely practised and permitted by the law. Even *ācāryas* (teachers) married among lower castes, as is evident from Manu's instructions about showing respects to an *ācārya's* wife who was not a Brahmin. (MS. II. 210). For another thing, new entrants to the *Brāhmaṇa* caste from casteless nonconformist groups who



returned to the parent body, and also from outside, often included elements of non-Brāhmaṇa and non-Aryan origin. Manu clearly recognizes the admission of *śūdras* to the brāhmaṇa fold: *Śūdro brāhmaṇatām eti*: 'A Śūdra becomes a Brāhmaṇa'. (MS. X.65).

The Veda, however, did not envisage a hereditary *Brāhmaṇa* group, much less caste. The term '*brāhmaṇa*' like 'sage' (*ṛṣi*) meant a man of spiritual knowledge. In the *R̥gveda* Vac, the personified sacred word, says:

Him whom I love I make mighty,  
I make him a *Brāhmaṇa*, a *ṛṣi*, a man of  
talent. (R. X.125.5)

Saraswatī, Goddess of knowledge, 'is the inspirer of the truthful, rouser of those whose intellect works rightly (*sumati*)' (RS. I.3.II). Lord Buddha was truly interpreting the ancient wisdom (as he claimed to do) when he said: 'I do not call one a *Brāhmaṇa* for his origin, for his being born of a certain mother' (*Dhammapada*, 26.4). He describes the true *brāhmaṇa* :

The strong (*uṣabha*, *vṛṣabha*), the noble (*ṣavara*, *ṣravara*), the heroic (*vīra*), the great sage (*mahesi*, *maharṣi*), the conqueror, the unthirsting, one who has completed *brahmacharya* (*nāhātaka*, *snātaka*), the spiritually aroused (*buddha*)—him I call the *Brāhmaṇa*' (*Dham.* 26.40).

If the terms for valour are taken in the literal and not a secondary sense, limiting heroism only to self-conquest, then the description would apply to the Vedic *Brāhmaṇa* too.

That the Veda understood *Brāhmaṇahood* to be an individual acquisition through spiritual brilliance is evident from the description of the *Āṅgirasas* :

'Praising the eternal Law (*R̥ta*), thinking straight, sons of Heaven, sons of Light, *Āṅgirasas* held the rank of sages (*vīpram padam*), and first observed the statute of sacrifice.' (RS. X.67.2)

They are *vīpras* (sages) as 'sons of heaven' and 'sons of light', not as sons of particular parents.

## VI

In post-Vedic ages there grew a tendency in India and abroad for men to dedicate themselves to religion owing to their distaste for worldly life or recoil from its evils and miseries. *Jñānayoga*, for them, was escape from life. When the concept of reincarnation became widely prevalent, it was an attempt for release not only from this life but also from the round of lives that was to follow, taking man from misery to misery. Birth was held to be the infliction of a carnal existence on the soul. And it was held to be a degradation to be born out of the loins of parents. A bold reaction against this morbid attitude towards generation was in evidence in India in the *Tāntrika* movement, which built its ideology on the nobility and holiness of motherhood. This formed the leftist path (*vāma-mārga*) of religion. But the Veda had exalted womanhood and motherhood through its rightist path, affiliating them to *R̥ta* (Eternal Law). To be born man, says the *R̥gveda*, is to share divinity:

'O bounteous Ones, we established our perpetual brotherhood (*bhrātr̥tva*)  
With harmony, in the mother's womb (*mātur garbhe*). (RS. VIII.83.8)

Speaking of the generation of man, the *Atharvaveda* says:

'When they fused the mortal man complete, the Gods entered into him.' (AS. XI.8.13)

It is in the *R̥gveda* that we find for the first time the call to 'the sons of immortality' (*amṛtasya putrāḥ*):

'May all sons of immortality listen, all the possessors of celestial natures.' (RS. X.13.1)

(The Upaniṣad has quoted this from the Veda.)

This makes all the difference between Vedic *Jñānayogins*, exalting man in the flesh, and many later followers of the path, including nonconformists, who were out to heal 'the eternal wound of existence' (as Schopenhauer calls it) and to extinguish the flame of life for ever, or to smother it to allow a higher light to shine. The Vedic sage, conscious of



his divine nature, seeks what is divine and noble in the universe and life. Life, and purer, finer, nobler life, is his cry. He knows death, but instead of being overwhelmed by thoughts of it, welcomes the hundred years or so of life which offer him wonderful possibilities of achievement, material and spiritual. Rudra, God of death, is far from Terror to the Vedic people: He is *Śiva*, the benevolent One; He is invoked as the bringer of perfume and plenty to life (*sugandhim puṣṭivar-dhanam*). The sages pray that they may drop off at the end of life like the (ripe) cucumber (*urvāruka*) from its stem; to drop off, they add, from mortality, and not from immortality. (RS. VII. 59. 12)\*. Old age is an evil, but it could be postponed:

'Like the (overspreading) cloud, old age impairs the form; before that evil comes near, O God! protect me.' (RS. I.71.10)

Poverty and disease may be averted; sweet speech will enliven social life. All the days of our life may be lovely days. (RS. II.21.6). How glorious it is to welcome the rising sun, living for a hundred years (RS. VII. 66. 16)! To hear, to speak, to hold the head high for a hundred years (YS. 36.24)! To think, to rise for a hundred years (AS. XIX. 67.3-4)! To have hair that has not turned grey, teeth that have not decayed, have great strength in the arms, power in the thighs, swiftness in the legs, steadfastness in the feet, have all the

\* Maidens repeat the same prayer with necessary changes desiring to drop off from their paternal home (through marriage, calling Rudra 'the finder of husbands' (*pativedana*), and not from the husband's home (YS. 3.60). To the *Yajurvedic* sage a girl leaving her father's home for her husband's is like an old man leaving this mortal life for immortality!

members uninjured and the soul (*ātman*) unimpaired (AS. XIX.60)! Vedic *Jñānayoga* kept the spirit of man in radiant health by its attachment to the norm of life, and the sturdy joyousness and indomitable energy that belonged to it.

'Men versed in spiritual knowledge (*brahmavidah*)', says the *Atharvaveda*, 'know the living Soul that abides in the lotus that is the nine-petalled (body), enfolded within triple bands (*guṇas*)' (X.8.3.). The analogy of the lotus (*puṇḍarīka*), perhaps the loveliest flower of ancient India, is significant. With spiritual consciousness the lotus-bud of the human body is released from its bonds and blossoms forth in splendour, fragrant with the perfume of the soul. Thus to the Vedic sage the dividing line between body and soul disappears!

Vedic *Jñānayoga* is not only *brahmacarya* (education and character-building) but also *Brahmavidyā* (knowledge of the Divine); it produces not only the *nāhātaka* or *snātaka*, one who has successfully completed *brahmacarya*, but also the *mahesi* or *maharṣi*, the sage, the *Brahmavid*, one who has known the Divinity. In That lies the goal of his quest, the bed-rock of existence, the ultimate support of individual and collective life, the supreme reality, the contact with which enlivens and inspires every moment of life. In That, as the sage of the *Yajurveda* says, 'the universe finds one home' (YS. 22.8; also AS. II. 1.1).

All *yogas* find their final support in *Jñānayoga*. In the last analysis the only redemption is redemption through *jñāna*, awareness of the Divine:

'By knowing Him alone one transcends mortality, there is no other way to go.' (YS. 31.18)

'This is what this Jnana-Yoga teaches. It tells man that he is essentially divine. It shows to mankind the real unity of being, and that each one of us is the Lord God Himself, manifested on earth. All of us, from the lowest worm that crawls under our feet to the highest beings to whom we look up with wonder and awe—all are manifestations of the same Lord.'

—Swami Vivekananda



## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### TO OUR READERS

'A Comparative Study of the Buddhistic Śūnyatā' by Prof. Heramba Chatterjee, M.A., Kāvya-Smṛti-tīrtha, is a short paper of great value, inasmuch as he has ably shown therein by profuse quotations from authoritative Buddhist texts that Śūnyatā is not absolute void but denial of reality to the empirical world, to the *nāmarūpa*. The last part of the Professor's contention has been amply proved but the first part, viz. that Śūnyatā is not absolute void, has not been conclusively demonstrated, especially in view of the fact that a large number of modern Buddhists, both of the East and of the West, hold the contrary view. Denial of reality to *nāmarūpa* is easily conceded. But when that is done the real problem appears: after the negation of the empirical does anything remain at all? Quotations, so far given, do not justify any definite conclusion. Prof. Chatterjee with his immense knowledge of the original Buddhist literature is the proper person to throw more light on the subject, leading to a final solution of this doubtful topic of great importance. As long as crucial quotations are not found, the cautious opinions of the Brāhmanical writers of the post-Śaṅkara period are justified. *Reductio ad absurdum* is no doubt a sort of proof but it is not as convincing as the direct demonstration. The quotation from the *Laṅkāvatāra* is undoubtedly a case in point but more are necessary. If Prof. Chatterjee can succeed in this, he will have done a great service to Eastern philosophy. . . .

Last year Principal Dr. A. C. Bose, M.A., Ph.D., contributed 'Vibhūti-Yoga in the Veda' which drew the admiration of scholars. This year, in the September issue, appeared his 'Bhakti-yoga in the Veda'. Our readers are well acquainted with the painstaking, brilliant research work of the learned Doctor. The same stamp of scholarship is evident in

the 'Jñāna-yoga in the Veda'. To bring out *jñāna-yoga* from the Saṁhitā portions of the Veda is more difficult than to show *vibhūti* or *bhakti yoga* there, for the *jñāna* has its own sections, the Upaniṣads, which are generally found in the Brāhmaṇa portions of the Veda. There are schools in India itself that do not regard the non-Saṁhitā portions of the Veda as authoritative. So it is necessary that scholars should come out to show the existence of *jñāna* in the Saṁhitās. This has been ably done by Dr. Bose in his article, 'Jñāna-yoga in the Veda'.

But Principal Bose's *jñāna-yoga* of the Saṁhitās is not exactly the same as of the Upaniṣads and the author seems to be proud of this finding of his. We have to accede to this. The Saṁhitāic *jñāna-yoga* is more robust and joyous, more dynamic and world-participating and seems to be more true to the original Aryan culture. The *mantra* Upaniṣad *Īśā* represents this type of *jñāna*, which is appealing to a big majority of moderns.

It will be noticed that the writer has departed from the orthodox interpretation of some words and expressions of the Vedic texts. Even without that his thesis would have been proved. But he has drawn out finer, one may say, more modern, meanings from them in that way. The passages, by themselves, can easily yield the meanings they are made to yield here. Whether the contexts would allow such interpretations is a matter where scholars have reason to differ. . . .

SWAMI NISREYASANANDA WILL TAKE CHARGE OF THE *Prabuddha Bharata* AS THE NEXT EDITOR FROM JANUARY 1957. WE HOPE OUR FRIENDS AND CONTRIBUTORS WILL EXTEND THE SAME LOVING COOPERATION TO HIM AS THEY HAVE ALL ALONG BEEN DOING.

### THE FIGHT OR THE SPORT?

Fights are perceptible everywhere in the universe. They give the required zest to life,



which otherwise is not worth living. But throughout the creation there is one fight going on, without which creation would cease to exist, from which all other fights emanate, and of which they are but modes. This is the fight between the one and the many, between unity and plurality, between the good and the evil, Satan and God. It had its origin in the abstract *ṛta* and *nairṛti* whose concretized forms resumed their march from Iran, *via* Egypt, Palestine, Greece, Rome, and Arabia to encircle the world. In the hands of the fighting races the fight led to actual bloodshed. With the introverts it turned into a psychological battle, victory leading to integration of personality, defeat to dementia and disease, mental and physical. India too had a taste of the psychological fight, aggravated by Buddhism, especially Jainism, in the horrible and alluring pictures of hell and heaven, many of which have been incorporated into later Hinduism. But it never led to massacre and loot as an easy way to ascension to heaven.

The Hindu is not only gentle but deep too. His gentleness saved him from squabbles, and his meditateness guided him along the path of philosophy to the core of reality and its mysterious process. Instead of shaking with fear of the supernatural and tyrannizing over the weak and the gentle, the deep Hindu came out of his meditation and danced with joy and called men and gods to partake of the divine life. He did not call it a fight at all, and he summed up his attitude graphically in one word, *niḥśvasitam*, 'breathed.' Curiously enough, the same word occurs in the scriptures of the fighting races as well. But the extroverts had no time to contemplate on the deep significance of the word, which remains buried in the holy pages. The fact is: 'Breathed in' we come to the one, the unity; 'breathed out' the many, the plurality, is born, it surges on and on, creating, carrying, and breaking all, as if in a frenzy. Thus plays reality as life and consciousness. It is a play and not a fight. It is to be enjoyed, not frightened at; to be courted, not shunned.

Without unity life will ebb out, without plurality it will not appear. Appearance of life and consciousness depends on both unity and plurality. Unity gives awareness, variety supplies its objects. God and men of God would have been reduced to blank-faced motionless mummies had there been no Satan or Māra. Evil induces the urge for activity, and good gives the direction and the ideal; both supply the zest to life, and thought and emotion to mind. They are the right and left hands of reality; they are complementary and exciting, not antagonistic and suppressing; they embrace and not cancel one another.

Truth or reality simply is. There is no revelation without appearance, and no appearance without unity-in-diversity. And appearance would not attract our attention were there no disappearance. It is disappearance that lends value to appearance. A thing that permanently is, unchanged and unchangeable, loses its existence and value. This change of unity-in-diversity into diversity-in-unity, this alternating of creation and destruction, this projection of the many in and through the one and the withdrawal of the many into the one, imparts existence, drive, and worth to reality, which would have otherwise enjoyed its dead silence all to itself—would it have enjoyed?—unknown, unsought, unloved. What friend is Māyā to Brahman—Māyā, this interplay of unity and diversity! Śiva would have remained a *śava* (a corpse) had there been no play of the joyous Mother Kālī, whose mad dance on the breast of Her Consort produces the appearance and disappearance of the universe and makes known the great Śiva, the Reality behind unity and diversity. Fleeting plurality with its variegated richness, produced by the incessant changes themselves, reveals the otherwise unrevealable Brahman in reflections of themselves, in their being and awareness. Its spontaneity with a purpose, its regularity with exceptions, its palpable callousness to creation and destruction with a display of wonderful intelligence running through all these, force upon human reason the idea of a joyous humorous sport rather than a terrible gigantic



fight. To men of ordinary common sense Kālī, this play of unity and diversity, appears as a mixture of good and evil, a supplier of bearable lives of little joys and sorrows; to men of larger fractional visions She appears terrible in Her dance of destruction, cruel, bloody, inexorable; but to men of integral vision She is *ānandamayī*, blissful, laughing at and enjoying Her humorous ways, Her planned and feigned madness, Her cynicism and sarcasm at

the foolishness of men being ensnared by Her guiles, Her joy and relish at the understanding by rare personalities of Her tricks and trappings. So this intertwining of unity and diversity is both a fight and a play according to man's temperament and training. But the Reality behind Her is neither, is beyond language and thought, imparting transient reality to the universe and the functions of its particulars.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THUS SPAKE THE BUDDHA. BY SWAMI SUDDHASATWANANDA. Published by Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras 4. Pp. 100. Price As. 6.

The Ramakrishna Math, Madras, must be congratulated for having brought out, this year, this handy booklet containing some of the choicest sayings of the Buddha arranged under appropriate headings. An 'Invocation' from the Poet Tagore, and short extracts about the Buddha, taken from the writings of Mahatmaji and of Swami Vivekananda form welcome features of this timely addition to the popular 'Thus Spake' series.

S. N.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MOVEMENT: ITS IDEAL AND ACTIVITIES. BY SWAMI TEJASANANDA. *The Ramakrishna Mission Saradapitha, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, West Bengal. Pp. 42. Price Re. 1/4.*

This is the second edition of the book we reviewed in these columns last year. This fact of bringing out another edition in a year shows the public demand for and appreciation of the book. It is, as the publisher's note indicates, an enlarged edition with substantial addition of facts in some places and a new chapter, entitled "India's Message of Peace," which has made it 'more comprehensive.' Despite the additions, the price has not been increased. The book gives us a faithful and authoritative account of the 'ideal and activities' of the Ramakrishna Movement. The short lives of the three source-personalities of the movement (viz. Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda), the integral character of the ideal, the incorporation within itself of the important religious ideals in India and abroad, the grand orientation that it has given to the noble secular urges of the modern man, and the part that it is destined to play in establishing a loving brotherhood of man-

kind are some of the beautiful pen-pictures the readers are sure to enjoy, cherish, and profit by. The history of the growth of the movement, together with the facts supplied by the last two appendices and the photos of some of the important centres of its activities, shows us how the ideas are being translated into action by a band of devoted souls.

THE YANTRAM. BY SWAMI PRATYAGATMANANDA SARASWATI. Messrs. P. Ghosh & Co., 20, College Street Market, Calcutta-12.

If today a book were entitled "*Organum*," it would throw the mind two thousand years back and the reader might think of the first book that bore the title. *Yantram* and *Organum*, though of different origin, both mean, 'the instrument.' Therefore 'The Yantram' by Swami Pratyagatmananda Saraswati may be regarded as a far off sequence to Aristotle's '*Organum*.' The intervening links are Bacon's '*Novum Organum*'—the *new* instrument; and Ouspensky's '*Tertium Organum*'—the *third* instrument. When I looked into Swamiji's work, it struck me as 'the right sort' to be called '*Quartum Organum*,' the *fourth* instrument.

Ouspensky writes that his book is the third instrument of thought after those of Aristotle and Bacon, 'but the third existed earlier than the first.' One main subject of Ouspensky's work is what he calls 'Transcendental logic,' but he admits, 'Before Bacon and earlier than Aristotle, in the ancient Hindu Scriptures, the formulae of this higher logic were given, opening the doors to mystery.' Swamiji's book is an exposition of ancient Hindu mysticism. It may, therefore, be argued that '*Quartum Organum*,' the fourth instrument existed earlier even than the third.



This small book is a great work incomparable for its depth of thought and reach of height, behind which looms the towering personality of a Swami, a Yogi, an ascetic, yet steeped in the knowledge of Eastern Philosophy and Western Science.

It is also a remarkable fact that the treatment of their subjects by Swamiji and Ouspensky closely correspond to each other. Their works, though philosophical in nature, find explanatory and illustrative material in the New Mathematics and the Theory of Relativity, including the fourth dimension.

Ouspensky's book has a sub-title and it claims to be a 'key to the enigmas of the world.' Swamiji's book asks if there is a divine purpose and end inspiring the basic scheme of creation, and asserts, 'The question cannot, particularly at this critical world juncture, be evaded or postponed.' He points out that 'in' the nuclear atom, cosmic energy is 'in' as 'mass' and recently we have discovered how to make that 'in' or a part of the 'in' 'out'. The result is that the enormous energy of fission is torn from its 'home' affiliation and the world is threatened with atomic destruction; for, writes Swamiji, 'Energy adversely exiled is atomic death; energy harmoniously brought home is supra-atomic life.' And he continues, 'Modern Science and modern methods must now essay to make that *Prāṇik* control (control by an all-pervasive cosmic principle of renewing and creative activity, more powerful than atomic control) available in an increasingly helpful measure.' For, in such availability lies all hopes of harmonized, creative progress. The consummation of such progress can be reached only by opening what Swamiji calls the *Hylekha*—(the core-picture)—of things by Yoga where the spirit reigns as 'Perfect Power and Perfect Harmony.' This Yoga has been later spoken of as the 'Direct Home Line'—the Mystic Path, or a New Path for 're-orientation, re-valuation and sublimation of the titanic forces let loose.' This is India's message to the West, voiced by Swamiji.

But the difficulty with his book is that it contains merely 'Notes,' which deal with abstruse and technical matters, as the Publisher's note points out. We may take a single sentence as a sample. Swamiji writes on p. 10. 'If by  $dy/dx$  we get the true rate of changing function from the 'rising' *OM* to the 'setting' *OM* in *Gāyatrī* in each of the six phases (mark six), the values obtained must be symmetrical with respect to one another, and, what is all-important, at the Basic Bindu, the  $dy/dx$  must be equal to 0, or, as nearly as possible to zero.' The book abounds in condensed passages like this, which await development and

elucidation at the hands of a Sridhara or Ānandagiri.

In another sentence, poetic and picturesque in expression, the author has put the central idea of the book in a nutshell. He writes on p. 14, 'The Mystic Spring expands into an ocean of manifestation; and the limitless ocean gathers itself into the fathomless spring.' The mystic spring is the *Eternal Bindu*, which has been shown in the book as the be-all and end-all of all objects, of being and of non-being. In the 'preface' to the book, Swamiji writes—'*Yantram* must be traced from the Magnum Matrix (Perfect Power positing itself as the Perfect *Bindu*) down to our appreciated planes of Magnitude, Number and Space-Time.' The First Section of the book describes the *Bindu* as 'the perfect Point of both cosmic origin and end. All movements start and finish here . . . It is that where the 'full' and 'nil' co-exist. The *Bindu* is meta-geometrical . . .', but it has also been shown that the *Bindu* develops into the creative triangle whence starts all creation. The Second Section gives almost the same idea from another viewpoint: it says, 'Every process in creation hinges upon, and tends to converge and merge into the 'origin,' where *Bindu* is. Creative process is 'original.' The Third Section brings to our knowledge a further function of the *Bindu*, which may be read along with its mention in the First Section, thus visualizing *Bindu* in a clear light. The First has, 'It is the Mystery Nexus that connects the Alogical Absolute with what is Perfectly Logical (Pure Reason)'; 'and the Third,' 'The *Bindu* is the mystery point that connects alogical transcendence of the Absolute with its logical and mathematical descent and immanence in creation.' Finally in the Fourth Section the *Bindu* is shown as one of the operative factors of *OM* which as Omnipotence co-ordinates the four Basic Creative Principles.

But while *OM* functions as Omnipotence, Shakti itself becomes *OM*, and creates, sustains, and re-absorbs. *OM* is the first creative sound. Swamiji explains how the 'Rising' *OM* effects the rousing of *Kundalinī* and her ascent along the *Suṣumnā*, that is, brings about the powerful focussing of harmonic resonance vibrations (e.g. supersonically).

Now, to rouse *Kundalinī* is to get into the 'Home-line,' referred to above. We may, therefore, adopt '*OM*' as a Mantra for Spiritual *Sādhanā*. As we repeat it, each of the co-factors, A.U.M. has to be 'done' so that the 'functional tone, symmetry, balance and repose are maintained.' '*OM*' rises from the Primary Axis of *Madhyamā* on which the *Bindu* rests, traces a path of eight phases, and finally merges into the *Bindu*. The figure on the cover of the book shows the path by



means of the mystic lotus as it slowly unfolds and ultimately blooms into a flower. The *Sādhaka* attains fulfilment.

The reader will thus find that the *Yantram* is not merely a theoretical discussion of cosmic principles, but a practical guide on the path of *Sādhana*. He may find the last chapters, V, VI, VII of much help in the understanding of the main text, and they may be profitably studied again after a first reading of the book.

C. C. CHATTERJI.

A DYNAMIC VIEW OF GOD AND MAN. BY AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA. Published by Maharana Pratap Degree College, Gorakhpur. Pages 113. Price Re. 1.

In this short treatise Prof. Banerjea has made a worthy attempt at reconciling the conflicting conceptions of God, viz. God as eternally active and as eternally inactive. These two conceptions are not really contradictory and the conflict is more apparent than actual. Not only that, but on deeper deliberation we might even come to the conclusion that these two conceptions, held separately, are merely imperfect readings of a Supra-personal Infinite, but together they form the correct perspective of God. In this sense one may be said to be the logical complement of the other. Such an absolute, though ever inactive yet appearing to act through some mysterious medium, is called the Sportive Absolute.

In positing this view the writer does not pretend to present something new and original but rather seeks the support of the *Gītā*, the *Bhāgavata*, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, and other Bhakti Śāstras.

From such a consideration of God the author proceeds to show how man, the image of God, can live and act in unison with the Sportive Absolute. He takes the classic example of Sri Kṛṣṇa and convinces the reader of the compatibility of a life of active dedicated service with a life of perfect renunciation and deep meditation.

Prof. Banerjea has succeeded to a large extent in his admirable attempt to refute a static view of God and man and to demonstrate the existence of a dynamic absolute whose ecstatic dance endlessly creates and destroys a million worlds.

While commending such a book to all, we cannot but comment on the poor get-up and printing, and printing mistakes. We believe the next edition will be free from these defects.

B. M. C.

SARASVATICHANDRA. A CRITICAL ESTIMATE. BY R. I. PATEL. *Chunilal Gandhi Vidyabhavan, Surat. pp. 69. Price Rs. 2.*

To make a critical estimate of a book like *Sarasvatichandra* is a hard and steep job. For criticism is not a mere pleading for or against a book, it should bring out its true essence and beauty. According to this standard Prof. R. I. Patel, we have no hesitation to say, has eminently succeeded in this brochure. It forms a part of his brilliant thesis on the Gujarati Novel.

*Sarasvatichandra* written in four parts by Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi, is considered to be 'the greatest Gujarati classic.' In its structure, character, and language it is almost an epic, having for its theme the nineteenth century Gujarat. The learned writer of this estimate vividly points out the inner philosophy and ideal of the book and dwells at length on the individual characters and the author's technique, in such a way that we wish the original novel could be made available to all of us who do not know Gujarati.

Yet we have one word to say regarding Prof. Patel's vindication of the romantic excesses in this classic found in the liberal form of dreams, visions, allegories, and symbols. To express the higher imaginative purpose in a novel does not require romantic excesses always; otherwise we would have come across such excesses in the writings of Tolstoy, Rolland, and others of the West. This romantic excess is a peculiar characteristic of oriental writers, especially of India. It hampers the beauty of famous writings to some extent; and we cannot justify it on the grounds of higher imaginative purpose. The root of this excess is in the very mental constitution of the writer, which he cannot help even when he, like Govardhanram, makes a sincere attempt at harmonizing the best traits of the East and the West.

N. C. P.

MYSTERY OF DEATH. BY SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. Published by Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta. pp. 395. Price, Board: Rs. 8/8, Cloth: Rs. 10.

This is not a book on spirits or spiritualism, a subject for the scholarly treatment of which the well-known author is particularly famous. But this volume, as the title page styles it, is 'a study in the philosophy and religion of the Katha Upanishad,' being a series of lectures delivered by the Swami in America in 1906.

*The Kathopaniṣad* is one of the most poetic and beautiful of the major Upaniṣads. Various approaches have been made in the Upaniṣads to reveal the ultimate reality of Brahman—by the analysis of the three states of existence, the five sheaths of the embodied soul, etc. But the *Katha* does it through a direct question, 'What truly



happens to ā mān after death?' posed by a young Brahmin boy. The answer is not elaborate, we find it explicitly in a single couplet (5.7); and what lies beyond this realm of Death is expressed in such pithy sentences as 'What is even here the same is there; and what is there, the same here' (4.10). One transcends death by realizing this oneness, the Absolute One. The truth is simple, but to reach to that core one has to cut through adamant obstacles, walk 'the sharp edge of a razor.' To grasp and understand the truths of the Beyond neither physiology nor spiritualistic seances will be of any help; a clear conception of the imperishable substance, Ātman, is necessary. Thus we get in this Upaniṣad a complete treatise on the true spiritual life, the qualifications for it, the disciplines, and the goal to be attained.

Swami Abhedananda has very ably, in a simple, homely manner, handled the philosophical analyses and explained using modern scientific language, yet preserving the purity of traditional interpretations, the immortality (p. 82) and omnipresence (p. 110) of the Ātman. But the predominant and recurring note of the author is the practice of religion, to which he makes a direct appeal in the second person. More than Abhedananda the scholar, it is Abhedananda the spiritual gift of the great saint Sri Ramakrishna to the world, that lends weight and flavour to this work.

If the Swami indulges in many places in a rather free rendering of the *mantras*, he is justified in consideration of the nature of his audience and the purpose of his exposition. The lectures have been critically edited and supplied with referencies to the original *mantras* in almost all places. Thus the major part of the Upaniṣad in *Devanāgarī* has gone into the foot-notes. The elaborately drawn 'Contents' does not, however, make good the omission of an index to a philosophical study such as this.

The publishers have done a fine job and a great service to spiritual aspirants in presenting this attractive volume.

A. I.

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY. EDITED BY RALPH B. WINN. *Philosophical Library, Inc. New York, 1955. Pages xviii+318. Price \$6.00.*

American Philosophy has an apparent advantage over the European and Oriental systems of thought in that it did not have a hoary antiquity. Still the earliest immigrants carried with them the tradition current in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of Europe. This tradition was empirical and scientific. Consequently the roots of philosophy in America are to be found in the basic

urges of a pragmatic nature that dominated the early settlers. At the same time those early settlers were actuated by the vision of a great future, a vision akin to that of the promised land. This resulted in a certain idealistic approach to the problems of life. It is therefore natural to find in American Philosophy the twin approaches called transcendentalism and radical empiricism. Both these approaches are intimately connected with life, with outdoor life.

Mr. Ralph B. Winn has collected in this volume a series of papers from contemporary American thinkers. These papers reveal the faith and vision of the Americans today, their political and social movements, their innate love of liberty and tolerant broadness. There is a vigour running through all the papers. The first part of the book covers the fields and problems of American thought. The leading exponents present in this section their views on logic, ethics, values, metaphysics, religion, and semantics. This part takes us directly to the living thought of America. The second part deals with the various schools of Philosophy; and here enough justice has not been done. The last part gives short biographies of and extracts from typical American thinkers.

The book is a valuable addition to our knowledge of contemporary philosophy. And as one thinker remarked in the volume, 'the times are rich in signs, and there are fortunately more philosophers who write than read them'. Probably this explains the omission of some leading contemporary thinkers.

P. S. SASTRI.

THE CHARM OF INDO-ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE. BY JOHN TERRY. *Published by Messrs. Alec Tianti Ltd., 72 Charlotte St., London, W. 1, 1955. Price 15 shillings.*

This is a short history of Moslem architecture obtaining in Northern India, of mosques and mausoleums, between 1199 and 1658 A. D. As the author finds, the style attained its zenith and its synthesis with the Hindu during about a century between the reigns of Humayun and of Aurangzeb. The Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri are the most enjoyable instances. He examines the rise, the excellence and the fall with their structures still extant in Delhi, Agra, Jaunpur, Bengal, etc. but not of Lahore.

There is indeed no charm or instruction in going through a perfunctory short essay of this sort, which is more in the manner of prosaic descriptive notes to a picture album. Much more than what has been done is really expected of an



architect like the present author. The excellence of the photography cannot endow the work with any saving grace, especially when no attempts are made to determine the essential elements of the contributive Hindu and Islamic cultures that synthesized into the *CHARM OF INDO-ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE*. And where some suggestions (P. 3) dart out to the effect that "The Hindu builder was most averse to the use of the arch," that "arch and dome were the keynote of Islamic building", that "the contrast between the small dim individual worship of the cell of the Hindu temple and the large space necessary for community worship in the mosque" etc. the author cannot be said to be on a sure ground; for, Buddhism is but a religious sect of Hinduism and all the Hindu temple architecture together with its adornment is undoubtedly modelled on the Buddhist *chaitya* structures meant for communal worship, the Buddhists were the first builders in stone, and the author himself admits that the Islamic tombs and mosques in Northern India were but adapta-

tions of the Hindu structures that mostly existed already. Besides, the learned author ought to have known that structural conception is as much a material element of Art as its surface decoration or embellishment. In a Hindu temple, inclusive of the Buddhist, decoration and embellishment with statuary of gods, men, creepers, and animals has been of a homogeneous piece with the structural conception. Nor can it be asserted positively that the domes and arches were the exclusive characteristic contribution to the Hindu architecture by the Moslem.

Without the consideration of the art embedded in the "Tiled buildings of Lahore" there cannot be any charm evoked for this subject. In fine, this volume is a good Travellers' Guide rather than any instructive dissertation on *THE CHARM OF INDO-ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE*. The format is excellent but the price is too high for the fare provided.

P. SAMA RAO.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### C. RAMANUJACHARI

We grieve at the passing away at 81 of C. Ramanujachari, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras, on the 4th November after a protracted illness of several months. Graduating from the Presidency College, Madras, he joined the Secretariat as an ordinary clerk and rose to be the Under Secretary of Law and Education, from which post he retired in 1932. Since then he had been the Secretary of the Home, which he, along with his illustrious cousin, C. Ramaswami Iyengar, served with the unflinching devotion of a Vaisnava that he was.

The two cousins came under the influence of Swami Ramakrishnananda when they were quite young and truly imbibed the Mission ideal of dedicated service. They enjoyed, rather exceptionally, the love and blessings of the Presidents and senior monks of the Ramakrishna Mission, especially of Swamis Brahmananda and Ramakrishnananda, who used to call them endearingly Ramu and Ramanuju.

Himself a good actor, Ramanujachari gathered round him a troupe, got Girish Chandra Ghosh's dramas translated into Tamil, and staged them and other dramas with wonderful success, and brought to the Students' Home money to the tune of seven and a half lakhs of rupees. He had a fine taste for

music and compiled and translated into English the famous *Kritis (Kirtanas)* of Saint Tyagaraja. This love of music led him to organize the Music College at the Annamalai University.

Ramanujachari's was a surprisingly successful life. Whether in the Secretariat, or in connexion with the Ramakrishna Mission activities, or as a dramatist, he was crowned with success everywhere. In the Madras town there are quite a number of the R. K. Mission educational institutions; with almost all of them Ramanuju was deeply connected; and all of them, he had the satisfaction to note, are well established and running smoothly.

Ramanuju was indeed a hard and devoted worker in the Lord's vineyard. May he now enjoy the 'eternal vision beatific'!

### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION'S FLOOD RELIEF WORK IN WEST BENGAL

The public is aware of the devastating floods in different parts of West Bengal. The Ramakrishna Mission, despite its limited funds and heavy load of permanent work, has started relief work in several areas. Here is a brief report.

24 Parganas: Up to the 26th October, from the Ukhila-Paikpara centre of Sonarpur Thana, 138 mds. of rice, 28 mds. 16 srs. of dal, 7 mds.



30 srs. of flattened rice, 2 mds. 22½ srs. of molasses, 2 mds. of salt, 500 lbs. of milk powder and 1 md. 7 srs. of sick diet were distributed among 342 families of 16 villages.

Howrah: From the Rajapur centre of Domjur Thana, 31 mds. 4 srs. of rice and 950 lbs. of milk powder were temporarily distributed up to the 8th October among 419 families of 5 villages. The Govt. taking up relief in that area, our work was discontinued.

Murshidabad: From the Kamnagar centre of Beldanga Thana, 100 mds. of rice was distributed in one week among 550 families of 10 villages. On being told that the Government alone would give relief in that region, the Mission had to withdraw.

Burdwan: From the Ketugram centre of Katwa Sub-division, up to the 3rd November, 351 mds. 23 srs. of rice, 32 mds. 20 srs. of dal, 14 mds. of salt, 204 lbs. of milk powder etc. were distributed among 656 families of 13 villages.

From the Nadanghat centre of Purbasthali Thana in Kalna Sub-division, up to the 3rd November, 187 mds. 35½ srs. of rice and 33 lbs. of milk powder etc. were distributed, among 290 families of 13 villages. The work has since been closed.

From the Asansol centre and the Pandaveswar centre of that Sub-division, up to the 31st October, 20 mds. 32½ srs. of rice, 1200 lbs. of milk powder, 103 new blankets, 180 pieces of new and 20 pieces of old clothes and a little cash were distributed among the flood-affected refugees at Asansol and the sufferers of 6 villages of the Burdwan District and 9 villages of the Birbhum District.

We shall continue the work as long as circumstances permit. We appeal to all generous hearts to contribute liberally in aid of the sufferers. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses: (1) The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah. (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4 Wellington Lane, Calcutta 13. (3) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta 3.

(SD). SWAMI MADHAVANANDA  
General Secretary  
RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

## THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA KANKHAL

### REPORT FOR 1955

The following is a brief report of the activities during the year under review:

*Indoor Hospital:* The in-patients of the year totalled 1,437 with a daily average of 32 occu-

pied beds. 149 were treated as surgical cases, of which 18 were major and 131 minor.

*Outdoor Dispensary:* The total number of patients treated in the outdoor department was 73,844 of which 22,963 were new and 50,881 old cases, the daily average attendance being 202. Of these 511 were minor surgical cases.

*Clinical Laboratory* attached to the hospital examined 2,396 samples of blood, sputum etc.

*Library and Reading Room:* The total number of books in both the Sevashrama and patients' libraries was 4,235. During the year 44 new books were added to the library. 1,093 books were lent. The reading room received 18 journals and 8 newspapers, all gifts except a journal.

*Feeding of Daridranārāyaṇas:* As usual, nearly 3,000 persons were sumptuously fed on the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

To propagate the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, subjects and passages were selected from his writings and distributed, and competitions held among the students of the local educational institutions in delivering speeches and recitations in both Hindi and English. Competitions were also organized in both classical and light music and prizes distributed to the winners.

*General Relief:* The Sevashrama distributed 4,725 lbs. of skimmed milk powder and 300 gallons (1,125 seers) of cotton seed oil received from the Indian Red Cross Society, New Delhi. From the Co-operative for American Remittances for Everywhere, Inc. (CARE), New Delhi, the Sevashrama also received and distributed 100 Family Food Packets, 2,520 lbs skimmed milk powder, and 1,540 lbs butter oil.

The free milk canteen in the Sevashrama continued the daily distribution of milk to poor and needy children (325 on an average) and to indoor hospital patients (38 on an average). This milk distribution is expected to continue in future also.

The Local Self Government Engineering Dept and the State Health Board of Uttar Pradesh have sanctioned Rs. 1,40,000 towards water supply and Rs. 15,000 towards electrification.

The State Government granted Rs. 23,000 for the construction of X-ray Block and quarters for the medical staff. The Indian Red Cross Society also contributed Rs. 5,000 towards the construction of the medical quarters.

*Finances:* Income Rs. 80,055.11.0 and Expenditure Rs. 57,865.14.9. Surplus Rs. 22,189.12.3.

#### *Immediate Needs:*

	Rs.
(1) To meet the deficit incurred in constructing the cattle shed	1,800
(2) Resident doctors' quarters	14,000



(3) Kitchen block with store room and dining hall	...	...	25,000
(4) Administrative block with library hall	...	...	30,000
(5) 50 steel bedside lockers	...	...	3,500
(6) Endowment of 33 beds in the indoor hospital @ Rs. 8,000 per bed	...	...	2,64,000
			Rs. ... 3,38,300

**THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SISTER  
NIVEDITA GIRLS' SCHOOL AND  
SARADA MANDIR**

Report for 1953-54

The Primary School which follows the kindergarten method has classes I to IV, with two sections for each class. A great deal of oral training enters into the prescribed course of studies.

The Secondary School, known as the Nivedita Vidyālaya, has six classes, standards V to X, with sections. It was affiliated to the University of Calcutta in 1949 and since then it has been receiving a recurring grant from Government.

Nivedita Chattri Sangha is a union of the students. They organize various meetings, debates, variety entertainments, etc. throughout the year on several occasions. A wall-paper is brought out fortnightly by the Sangha, and the boarders of Sarada Mandir issue a Manuscript Magazine annually.

The Industrial section was started in 1898 by Sister Nivedita herself, with the exclusive aim of helping poor ladies to become self-supporting. Since then it has been conducting classes in tailoring, sewing, embroidery and knitting, free of tuition fees. In 1949 it was recognized by Government and has been receiving a recurring grant ever since. Students have since then been appearing in the Lady Brabourne Needlework Diploma Examination.

Sarada Mandir has been serving a very useful purpose as a house for the Brahmacharinis, dedicated to the cause of women's education and also as a residential boarding house for students living away from their parents. At present there are 24 dedicated workers working in the different departments of the institution.

Out of 30 boarders of the Mandir in 1953, four enjoyed free boarding and lodging and two were exempted from establishment charges; and in 1954, five were given free boarding and lodging and two

were charged at concession rate. Both in 1953 and 1954 more than seventeen per cent students enjoyed free studentship and concessions besides stipends from the Poor Fund.

Numerical Strength—(Primary and Secondary) :

	1953	1954
Total number of students on the rolls	613	621

Industrial Section:

Total number of students	46	49
Total number of honorary workers	4	4

Out of the 26 teachers 14 were honorary in 1953 and 10 in 1954.

School Final Results :

	1953	1954
Appeared	23	22
Passed	23	21

The Holy Mother Birth Centenary was celebrated in November, 1954, for seven days with special pooja, homa, bhajans, a procession to 'Mother's House', dramatic performances, children's meeting and lectures. Rev. Swami Madhavanandaji was the chairman for the general meeting in which several eminent women spoke on 'Women as the best educators'. An Industrial Exhibition also was arranged and kept open for the public during the period of celebration.

A long felt want was fulfilled when a second-hand school bus was bought in August 1954. Students were taken to many places of interest.

Important visitors to the Sarada Mandir were, the Dowager Maharani of Mysore in April 1953, and Sri K. M. Munshi, Governor of Uttar Pradesh and Sm. Lilavati Munshi, in 1954. Sir Jadunath Sarkar presided over the Sister Nivedita Memorial meeting.

Our needs: Our Free Primary school depends on the liberal help of the generous public for its upkeep and maintenance. We feel the need of serving free tiffin to the children of this section, most of whom come from very poor families of the locality and are undernourished. A sum of Rs. 20/- per month is the approximate amount required for this purpose.

There is an urgent need of shifting the Industrial Section to a separate building as its progress is being hampered for want of sufficient accommodation. For this we need Rs. 50,000/-.

A piece of land has been purchased for extending the school. A building has to be constructed, the approximate cost of which is estimated at Rs. 1 lakh.

We hope the generous public will come forward to help us.

**THE HOLY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY**

The 104th birthday of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, falls on 23rd December, 1956.