

VOL. LXXI

NOVEMBER 1966

# Prabuddha Bharata

OR  
AWAKENED INDIA



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

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

NOVEMBER 1966

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXXI

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No. 11



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:0:—

## LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

( 109 )

Sri Ramakrishna Math

Belur, Howrah

11 May 1922

Dear Sriman—,

My love and blessings to you all. I am greatly delighted to learn that you have started for Kedar and Badrinath. May your visit be all smooth. May you attain to great joy and be blessed in life. Uttarākhaṇḍa throbs with purity; it is a place covetable to the gods even. Of course, the greatness of the place does not generally appear to be revealed from the hill people and their behaviour. But to one who takes to the attitude of renunciation and faith it becomes revealed to some extent; one is able to perceive it by the grace of the Divine Mother Umā and Lord Maheśwara.

What to write you more? May you have great joy; attain to great renunciation, faith and devotion. At the present all goes well here. We feel greatly distressed at the passing away of Maharaj. The Master is ever present and Maharaj, too, is with Him. This is more real than anything else.

Your well-wisher,

Shivananda

( 110 )

Sri Ramakrishna Math  
Belur, Howrah  
12 May 1922

Dear Sriman—,

I learnt all from your letter. There is no doubt that you have verily been blessed by Maharaj; you are fortunate indeed. You will surely attain to good if you can act according to the instructions that have so graciously been given by Maharaj to you.

I was at Dacca for one month and a half. Many had then been initiated there in the name of the Master. You too might have had your initiation if you could conveniently come at that time. I felt inspired by the Master that time and Maharaj too was then staying at Calcutta. All of us now feel somewhat dispirited. About initiation I do not find any response from within at the present; it will be decided later on if I feel so afterwards. Do not be disheartened; carry on with the instructions given by Maharaj.

There is nothing wrong in regard to the religious discourses and discussions that you have at the Sri Ramakrishna Society there. But you should also see that the studies of the boys are not hampered in any way. Nobody will object to a sort of education that builds the character of the boys and makes them dutiful. May Master bless you; may you become more and more steadfast in your faith and devotion towards Him. This is the innermost prayer of my heart.

Well-wisher,  
Shivananda

( 111 )

Sri Ramakrishna Math  
Belur, Howrah  
16 June 1922

Dear Sriman—,

I received your letter a few days before. The only easy and at the same time sure way to control the mind is to repeat the name of the Master by sitting in front of His portrait with your eyes fixed towards Him. You need to have a firm belief that the Master is looking at you, listening to your *japa* and is eager to bestow His mercy on you. By this very way you will be able to control your mind, your faith on the Master will be firm and you will attain to peace.

There is nothing to write you more. Have my affection and blessings; may Master be merciful to you. He will surely be so. He is not merely a human being—He is God incarnate, the ever wakeful living Lord. He bestows His mercy on anybody who takes refuge in Him and prays with a bleeding heart.

Your well-wisher,  
Shivananda

## HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

[ EDITORIAL ]

*View of Integrality in the Study of History* : The well-known adage that every man is a 'child of his age' contains like all such sayings a modicum of truth. He thinks anew, feels anew and discovers afresh. One historical period comes to an end and there begins, slowly at first like the faltering steps of a child and then galloping like a runaway horse, another change that is to lead the years of the future. It is strange and rather astonishing how our ideas and evaluations of history keep changing with the passage of time. Concepts of Manu's India, Akhenaton's Egypt, Plato's Greece and Harvey's England have continued to change as man's views changed with the time. In every epoch we create the future while at the same time we re-examine the past which appears different to men in each period of history.

But not all that can see this change, much less others can feel it. To convert the concepts of the past into something as precious and useful as the science of heritage, separating them from the heaps of fabricated or antiquated details and giving them as roots a historical consciousness is not the job of everybody and all. It is a study of the anthropology of history and it requires the geniuses of Novalis and Schelling, Voltaire and Montesquieu. Zeal of Thales or the penetration of Hölderlin is a faculty that is comparatively rare among men. Thomas Carlyle while enunciating the different characteristics of his different 'Heroes' says of the different virtues which they are required to be endowed with. The 'Hero of Divinity', according to him 'alternates between the highest height and the lowest depth; the 'Hero as Prophet' is an 'original man'; the 'Hero as Poet' is a 'great heart, clear

deep-seeing eye'; and the 'Hero as King', is the *Konning* which means *can-ing*, Able man'. But Carlyle has not given any portrayal of a 'Hero of History'—the hero in whom all the extremes meet. Perhaps he could not think of such a character who could be a mystic as well as a philosopher, a prophet of divinity as well as a 'prince among men'—a rare blending that would have within it the sharpness of Śaṅkara and the vision of Shakespeare, the feel of Buddha, and the ability of Bismarck, the flight of Plotinus and the discrimination of Plato. Such a universal character is one whom we can call the hero of the entire humanity. History when interpreted by such persons cannot but be startling and revealing, for by their integral vision they can penetrate the veil of the past truly and so can read the inscrutable face of the future correctly. Interpreting history is not writing or analysing the historical details; 'a true interpreter is both a mystic and a philosopher. 'The Arabians say', writes Emerson, 'that Abul Khain, the mystic and Abu Ali Seena, the philosopher, conferred together; and on parting the philosopher said, "All that he sees I know"; and the mystic said, "All that he knows I see"'. In interpreting history one must combine within oneself this 'knowing' and 'seeing'; one is to 'know' the past and 'see' the future or 'know' the future and 'see' the past. One may be a sceptic in one's search or a philosopher in one's questioning; but one must be a mystic in one's generalizations and also a sculptor of the facts in carving out the true image of history.

In dealing with the views of Swami Vivekananda on history, one meets with all these characteristics. From out of the

jarring sound of human mixture around him he could signify the correct tune of his time and reproduce that in a language of biblical plainness and uncanonical ease. His revelations are always comprehensive, appealing and alive. Whether in entertaining soliloquy or in his language of homely conversations he speaks with ease, knows the world and makes positive assertions: never falters or shrieks, but is bold and solid, likes to feel solid ground and the stones underneath. His great historical merit lies in the facts that he was the first Hindu monk to go over the western world to propagate the doctrine of active human unity, the first world teacher to put his message of harmony and tolerance on a solid and verifiable historical background and the foremost of the humanists to initiate an active struggle to overhaul and remake the mind of the world. In one of his lectures at Detroit in 1894 (as quoted by the *Detroit Free Press*) he says: 'I am the first monk to come over to these western countries—it is the first time in the history of the world that a Hindu monk has crossed the ocean'. (*The Complete Works*, 1959, vol. VIII, p. 211) This does not mean that all the other teachers and prophets were unhistorical in their outlook or arbitrary in their teachings. The celebrated saying of Christ 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's' testifies to the fact that he was aware of the developments of the then Roman empire; St. Paul's missionary journeys to Ephesus, Corinth, Athens and Rome made him face the history of his time. Buddha's silence with regard to the nature of the soul and universal reality is considered by many as significant and deliberate as it sought to bypass the barren controversies of the time. His spiritual mission did never make him complacent about the political developments of his time. In *Mahāparinirvāna-Sutta* one finds Buddha defending the

cause of Vajji confederation against the invasions from Magadha. When Vajji was about to be unlawfully grabbed by the Magadha king, Buddha encouraged the Vajjis and said that so long they were united and democratic no power on earth could defeat them.

But the historical perspectives of the time of Christ, Buddha or the other teachers were quite different from those of the nineteenth century world. Christ stood against the Jewish fanaticism, St. Paul had to deal with the Gentiles of Greece and Rome, the opponents of Buddha and Śaṅkara were somewhat limited in their number staying within the definite perimeter of India. But the world of Swami Vivekananda was much wider, much complicated, much sophisticated; it was the entire world of the materialists united together and roused to the fury of passions. Multitude of obstacles stood between the century and the aim, every description of restraint and impediment hindered the spontaneity of right thinking; there were the traditions of the past decaying down, old aristocracies wearing a semblance of intellect and originality, religious forms forbidding new movement and advance. Therefore the challenge which Swami Vivekananda encountered was a challenge thrown out to all the religions of the world. It was a blunt repudiation of what had hitherto been preached and professed by all the saints and prophets of history. To fight such a multifront battle against things that tend to fractionize human power and arrest the flight of the human soul one must be able to grasp the historical perspectives of all the races and cultures and this has exactly been the reason that makes Swami Vivekananda an interpreter of history. In Europe after Thales, the first scientific investigator of history, eighty-four generations had passed and Asia had had a history that was profound and diverse in its

different phases. So the task was far more complex than that of any of his forbears. The crown and consummation of Swami Vivekananda's achievement as a spiritual teacher would be highlighted by the fact that he was the first to study religious history of the world in terms of an empiric science and lay the foundation of a general science of Religions. None but a person who was endowed with an insight and experience both evolved out of a testament of compelling faith could bestride the world at that difficult and decisive phase of that century.

*The Spiritual Missions of Swami Vivekananda and St. Paul*: Yet the spiritual Odyssey of Swami Vivekananda from the old world to the new was in many respects similar to the great spiritual mission of St. Paul to the citadel of Roman empire. Both were fired by a divine will to undertake their respective missions and both were able to alter the course of world history. From out of the martyrdom of one there grew a greater city than Rome where a golden cross could shine dedicated to his name, but by remaining unshaken in faith and undimmed in hope through life's severest trials and bitterest disappointments, the other exhausted his life which he had sown to be quickened by the power of God in the soil of the world history where that would continue to bear fruit until the end of time amidst the ever-deepening gratitude of generations yet unborn. In March A.D. 61 Paul entered Rome as a fettered prisoner, saw it divided between abject degeneration and unspeakable depravity. Everywhere wretched slaves far outnumbered the free population, vice stood forth in all its bare and revolting hideousness; moral degradation and absolutism reached their saturation point. The St. Paul of India, on the otherhand, reached the shores of the other hemisphere in 1893 i.e. only seven years after the passing away of his Master Sri Ramakrishna as a lone, nameless pilgrim.

No blaze of glory shone on his arrival, no multitude of admiring and adoring brethren received him. A stranger to a foreign land, he had no shelter to put up, no help to bank upon and no cathedral aid to make his divine mission impressive except his bleeding heart and a tormenting conscience to lead him to his aim. But what he saw in the cockpit of the new world were almost the same as those were experienced by his great counterpart about two thousand years ago in Rome. Behind the hidden glitter of western life there were the same impoverishment and rightlessness of the millions, social disparity, racial discrimination, tension, violence, scramble for supremacy among the nations and bitter religious intolerance to make the religions more bitter. In one of his letters to the Hale sisters he puts forth his comment: 'Nowhere have I heard so much about "love, life, and liberty" as in this country, but nowhere is it less understood'. (ibid., Vol. VI, p. 261) Writing in the same vein he remarks in *The East and The West*: 'I have seen your Parliament, your senate, your vote, majority, ballot: it is the same thing everywhere, my friend. The powerful men in every country are moving society whatever way they like, and the rest are only like a flock of sheep'. (ibid., Vol. V, p. 461) About 'progress of civilization' in Europe of his time he said: 'In London this "progress of civilization" regards unfaithfulness in conjugal life, and in Paris, the running away of a man, leaving his wife and children helpless and committing suicide, as a mistake and not a crime'. (ibid., pp. 531-32) Although not in imprisonment like Paul, Swami Vivekananda was at times the loneliest and the saddest of the individuals for all these pernicious developments. His anguish was all the more telling not because he was a teacher of religion but because his religion was of a different order. His nostalgia for the present and longings for a new future



had never been an exercise in escapist imagination. It was rather an active affirmation of a prospective spiritual rebirth of the humanity almost crushed under the heavy weight of nineteenth century political materialism that made him feel anguished and sad. His ideals of harmony and human unity were not mere catchwords. Days in and days out he had seen them experimented and verified in the life of his great Master, Sri Ramakrishna; he had been the witness to the great moments of that God-intoxicated life. So following the suit of a conventional monk he could never be a passive onlooker to these pageants of western life. Like Paul he too was commissioned by his Master to a historic spiritual mission. Like the German philosopher Dilthey (1833-1911) he knew: 'Life is the fabric of the intersection between people under their environment, the fabric being dependent on time and space'. It is one we ought to meditate upon both as physicians and as philosophers; a twirling veil like that of an odalisque always keeps it covered and one has to set this aside with the zeal of an anthropologist to be able to unearth its anatomy. He had read Spencer and Fichte to get a trace of the past and not for any heritage; he had studied Comte to examine and not to accept the ancestry of the contemporary European mind which sought to grant an overriding certificate of naturalization to the natural sciences. Relativity of history is a weathercock that changes with the winds of history and the change becomes perceptible in the altered fabric of civilization. Like the pressure-belts in the atmosphere, human history too has its own pressure-belts of diverse denominations where each one has its invariable reaction upon the other. Any movement there is all-encompassing, integral and whole; there is no East or West, North or South in it. No part of it could be parcelled out or isolated. His image of

history was, therefore, integral; it was like that of a general science that included within its fold Political Science, Sociology, Education, Philosophy, Religion and the Natural Sciences. Since it is an integral whole it is also self-equilibrating in its process, self-repeating in its movement and cyclical in its motion. Upholding this view of history he said in one of his class talks: 'It is my particular fancy that the same Buddha became Christ. Buddha prophesied, "I will come again in five hundred years", and Christ came here in five hundred years.... Mohammed came five hundred years after, five hundred years after came Luther with his protestant wave and this is five hundred years after that again'. (ibid., vol. VIII, p. 180) Therefore if history could repeat itself again and again before Heraclitus, Herodotus, Thales and Plato it is sure to repeat after Toynbee, Fisher, Darwin and Reincourt. Reflecting himself again on this idea of historical changes he wrote in his letter to Mr. E. T. Sturdy, in 1895: 'I fully believe there are periodic ferments of religion in human society, and that such a period is now sweeping over the educated world. While each ferment, moreover, appears broken into various little bubbles, these are eventually similar, showing the cause or causes behind them to be the same.... Again, it has always been observed that as a result of the struggles of the various fragments of thought in a given epoch, one bubble survives. The rest only arise to melt into it and form a single great wave, which sweeps over society with irresistible force'. (ibid., p. 347)

With all these arrows into his quiver the heroic Hindu monk was like the imperial archer who had set out on his mission in the west. But in immensity and proportion his task appeared to be more difficult than what it had been to St. Paul. St. Paul found his converts from among the masses.

To quote from F. W. Farrar's *The Life and Work of St. Paul* 'The condition of the lower classes rendered them more hopeful subjects for the ennobling influences of the faith of Christ'. (Cassel & Co. Ltd., London, 1890, p. 584) But Swami Vivekananda had to stand before the stubborn intellectuals of the time who had been propping up the machines of a spurious and perverted philosophy. In the name of religion people, for centuries, had been enjoying themselves smiting 'the jaw bones of lions', in the name of philosophy catering for the proud and consuming everything ungodly. Some new psalm was thus necessary—a psalm that could make theological statement of an astounding scientific truth: the universal uniqueness of man. This is not to say that religion was not there at the time. Psalms were already there as they could be during the days of Reformation in Europe. Only wanting were the men like Luther, John Knox, John Wesley and Cromwell who could read the psalms truly and thus hasten the age of a new Reformation in Europe. In the midst of apparent religiousness of the time, platitudinous sermons and services in the churches and temples there were thus millions of so-called lost sinners who would long for a verse as this to liven up their spirit:

So the Lord awaked as one out of sleep  
and like a giant refreshed with wine,  
He smote his enemies in the hinder parts,  
and put them to a perpetual shame.  
To Swami Vivekananda these lost sinners in both the hemispheres were not altogether lost. Through their indignation, faithlessness and scepticism he heard a voice of new awakening to hearken to his call. The need was to mobilize and marshal up these new forces all over the world against the militant savagery, organized greed and global disharmony. The worlds separated by creeds and divided by dogmatic dead traditions were to meet again for a his-

torical barter and exchange of love. Hatred could never serve as the basis of a broad new One World. The task before him was not that of a mere reformer or a teacher but that of a sculptor of the spirit of the man yet to come. He had the entire world as his studio with centuries of history, generations of sophism, the broken hearts and the shattered values as his raw materials. Such a task could not but be a stupendous one.

Both the Apostles of Truth worked for a kingdom not of this world. It was the revelation of the eternal principles and not the elaboration of a few practical details and so it was never meant to be enforced by violence or promulgated by the sword. But in revealing truth, in protesting against the crime, in insuring their ultimate victory they followed different courses. Perhaps their different historical perspectives demanded such different ways and outlook. One raised no voice and refused no tribute to a Gaius or a Nero; while the other was trenchant in his criticism of the prevalent prejudices, bold in his protest against the vices of the time and fearless in his pronouncements of the naked truth. With absolute dependence on a divine dispensation one stooped low to conquer, but the other with an absolute faith on the Infinite Self rose high above the worldliness of the world to make his way through. One achieved his silent victory by an obscure martyrdom of life; the other fulfilled his mission by fighting hard against opposition, fanaticism and intolerance. 'It struck me more than once', said Swami Vivekananda in one of his speeches subsequently, 'that I should have to leave my bones on foreign shores owing to the prevalence of religious intolerance.' The height of intolerance would be amply evident from the remark of Robert Ingersoll to him: 'Fifty years ago you would have been hanged in this country if you had come to preach. You would have been

burned alive or you would have been stoned out of the villages'. (*The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 187)

Thus the two stalwarts of the spiritual world resemble each other in many respects and the seeming differences in their outlook and ideal persisting due to the passage of time and changes of history make them all the more similar in their historic roles. If one is the Tennyson's sailor boy who 'whistled to the morning star', the other is like Tennyson's Ulysses who is a born adventurer and who would find it 'dull to pause and ponder', to 'rust unburnished and not shine in use' and who would never falter in his faith in the divine destiny of man. If one had been a martyr to the cause of world Christianity, the other was a martyr to the altar of world's harmony.

St. Paul had to launch on a full tide of impassioned oratory to defend the causes of Christianity—before Festus, the Roman governor and Agrippa, the king. He had to deliver to the full bench of royal dignitaries the testimony which was the very object of his mission. When he began to narrate the great revelations of Christ, excited Festus burst out, 'You are mad Paul, those many writings are turning your brain'. To this Paul exclaimed, 'I am not mad, your Excellency; but I am uttering words of reality and soberness.' Thus interrupted by Festus he asked Agrippa, 'King Agrippa, dost thou believe the prophets? I know that thou believest'. Agrippa however did not choose to be entrapped into a discussion. In a bantering answer to the appeal of St. Paul he said, 'You are trying to persuade me offhand to be a "Christian"! (F. W. Farrar: *The Life and Work of St. Paul*, Cassell & Co. Ltd., London, 1890, pp. 559-560) Yet St. Paul's intense conviction upon his mission and the majestic stream of eloquence made the atmosphere of the house tense and heavy and it could

hardly be ignored by his judges. He scored an unseen victory upon them.

But the historic encounter of Swami Vivekananda is well known to the modern world. It was a repetition of the same history; yet it was so singular in its record and so unique in its characteristic. To deliver his message he stood before a Parliament of Religions, a congregation, 'varying from seven to ten thousand' of selected delegates and accredited representatives of different religions that the world had ever had. 'Many of the greatest philosophers of the world were in daily attendance. More than one thousand papers were read by the different delegates. This gives some impression of the vastness of the undertaking and also of its vast importance'. (*The Life of Swami Vivekananda: By His Eastern and Western Disciples*, 1955, p. 301) But 'the best known and most conservative of the metropolitan newspapers proclaimed him as a Prophet and a Seer'. '*The New York Herald* spoke of him as "undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions"'. (ibid., p. 311) In the words of Sister Nivedita, 'when he began to speak it was the religious ideas of the Hindus, but when he ended, Hinduism had been created'. (ibid., p. 308) No message could ever make such an irresistible universal appeal to men unless it could have within it a tune of history and time. But was that Parliament of Religions of 1893 planned to be the same as it came to appear? Could its progenitors ever conceive of such a revolutionary outcome? Those who are familiar with its early history, know it to be altogether different.

Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 which opened up a new chapter in the history of Religious movements of the world was, to echo the words of Swami Vivekananda himself, carefully planned by its organizers as a 'heathen show' that could add to the pomposity of the fabulous

Columbian Exposition of America. It just happened that the quadri-centenary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus was approaching at the time. Towards the close of the nineteenth century nations of the west had attained a measure of wealth and political supremacy that had hitherto been unprecedented in world history. Britain held an empire which was world-wide and all-powerful; France's territory stretched beyond Europe to many parts of Africa and Asia; the Germans too had lately built an empire of considerable importance; the Russian empire extending over the two continents was no less significant than any other and the Republic of America claimed suzerainty over the entire western hemisphere. Emerson signified America as a 'beacon lighting for all the worlds the paths of human destiny' and Whitman wrote:

Have the elder races halted?

Do they droop and end their lesson,

Wearied over there beyond the seas?

We take up the task eternal.

Thus the sense of America's pre-eminent position as a rising new world power induced the American people to think of a grand Columbian Exposition that might give suitable expression to their supreme position. Unlike previous world fairs which were short-period trade shows, the planners of this Exposition resolved to make it a long-period and many-purpose celebration wherein all the nations of the world could participate. Accordingly, the Exposition included some twenty auxiliaries or congresses within it covering a wide range of subjects such as Commerce, Finance, Women's progress, Public press, Sunday rest and Religion.

The first of this kind of Expositions was the exhibition held in Hyde Park, London in 1851 to commemorate Queen Victoria's twenty-fifth year of accession to the throne and it was witnessed by over six million people. But the Paris Exhibition of 1889

which was visited by thirty two million people and cost about one hundred forty-four million francs put up a new record by outbidding the British show. The 984 ft. high Eiffel Tower was first opened to the public for the occasion. Therefore by all means and purposes Columbian Exposition was to surpass anything of the kind ever recorded in the history of the world.

The time Swami Vivekananda reached the shores of the other world American mind was being rocked by a new arrogant thought-wave. Like the German Professor Hegel's view that Teutonic phase was the greatest of the phases of world history another similar doctrine upholding Anglo-Saxon racial superiority had been exerting considerable influence there. Admiral Mahan's book *The Influence of Sea Power on History*, published in 1890, preached 'As goes America so goes the world' and with this came forward others like John Burgess, the political scientist, John Fiske, the philosopher and the Christian Father Josiah Strong who could discover new logic behind the doctrine of race prejudice and thus push it further forward. To add to this situation some anti-Asiatic legislations were enacted in 1882 by the U.S. Congress, American control was extended over Pearl Harbour in Hawaii in 1887 and the Jim Crow Laws came into being. In every respect the entire atmosphere was surcharged with the obnoxious odour of prejudice, arrogance, intolerance and perversion. But history was predestined to move in a different course. As the world knows the 'heathen show' proved to be a great 'world show'.

St. Paul's Epistles during the period of his captivity in Rome became the practical manifesto of future Christianity. Of St. Paul Swami Vivekananda remarked, 'Saint Paul's greatness lay in that he had galvanized into life an obscure Nazarene sect of great antiquity, which furnished the mythic personality as a centre of

worship.' Paul was not an 'eye witness' to the revelations of Christ but to echo the words of Swami Vivekananda again, 'only of St. Paul could history be sure.' (*The Life of Swami Vivekananda: By His Eastern and Western Disciples*, 1955, p. 586)

Swami Vivekananda on the other hand, by his exhortations before the historic Parliament, laid the foundations of a new One World of new imagination long before the present world organizations like U.N.O. and the others came into reality.

Jesus of Nazareth became the Christ of history after about three hundred and ninety years of his advent. St. Paul carried his message to Europe during A.D. 61-63; but Christianity came to be a predominant religious movement only during the reign of the Roman Emperor Theodosius the Great in 390. In 317 an edict of toleration was issued by the associated Emperor Galerius; in 324 Constantine the Great, a Christian convert, became the sole ruler of the Roman world, and from the outset of the fifth century onward the only priests or temples in the Roman empire were Christian priests and temples. (cf. H. G. Wells: *A short History of the World*, Watts & Co., London, 1930, p. 147) The fact was almost the same in the case of Buddha. Credible evidence affirms that Buddha passed away about 543 B.C. and it was Emperor Aśoka who after his accession to the throne in 269 B.C. transformed Buddhism from a local sect into one of the world-religions. (cf. Smith: *The Oxford History of India*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1921, pp. 48, 93 and 94)

On the other hand Swami Vivekananda, the 'dynamic counterpart' of Sri Ramakrishna, had carried his message to the western world in 1893 i.e. just seven years after the passing away of the prophet of harmony and within a period of next ten years he was able to set forth not any new religion but a new movement of resurrection that could find millions of adherents

in India, America, England and Western Europe by being able to establish an organization of brotherhood no less important than the one initiated by Buddha. The active networks of Ramakrishna Mission centres of today spreading out in India, Pakistan, Burma, Singapore, Fiji, Mauritius in the East and in U.S.A., Argentina, Great Britain, France, Switzerland in the West are but visible portents of that great historic movement. Romain Rolland writes about the mission of Swami Vivekananda as the 'meeting of India and Europe', Sister Nivedita finds in it 'the meeting point not only of East and West but also of past and future' and Christopher Isherwood thinks of it as 'the starting point of change in one's ideas and life'. Commenting on it Isherwood writes, 'Indeed, one may claim that no Indian before Vivekananda had ever persuaded Americans and Englishmen to accept him on such terms—not as a subservient ally, not as an avowed opponent, but as a sincere well-wisher and a friend, equally ready to teach and to learn, to ask for and to offer help.' (*Ramakrishna and His Disciples*, Methuen & Co, Ltd., London, 1964, p. 323)

*Conclusion*: Signifying this great repetition of the past history in recent times Romain Rolland, in his book *The Life of Ramakrishna* (1947 edition p. 12), mentions Sri Ramakrishna as 'the younger brother of Christ' and Swami Vivekananda as 'St. Paul of the Messiah of Bengal'. (ibid., p. 306) Reconciling this fact of repetition in the role of Swami Vivekananda he writes further: 'He was the St. Paul of the Messiah of Bengal. He founded his Church and doctrine. He travelled throughout the world and was the aqueduct, akin to those red arches, which span the Roman Compagna, along which the waters of the spirit have flowed from India to Europe and from the Europe back to India, joining scientific reason to Vedantic faith and the past to the future.' (ibid.) Rolland

further compares Swami Vivekananda with St. Christopher—the carrier of Christ. (ibid., p. 269) According to the Christian legend St. Christopher was a giant who carried people on his shoulders across a river and one day the Christ Child came to him. No doubt the two roles have been combined into one in the life of Swami Vivekananda. As St. Christopher he carried the afflicted humanity on his shoulders across the widening gulf of history and as St. Paul he enshrined Sri Ramakrishna in the heart of the modern world making him the Messiah of entire

human race irrespective of the differences of rank and religion.

Before Swami Vivekananda history of Religions had been a deserted castle occasionally visited by weary explorers on tip-toes and in silence. But he reached the vast castle and forcing its gates open with his vigorous knocking let in the herd of realities, the turbulent torrent of contemporary thinking, which from that time on, gave new breadth and meaning to all the Religions of the world.

Let the power-drunk, mad, modern world recall those Chronicles of the past.

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## THE UNIVERSE: ITS ONTOLOGICAL STATUS ACCORDING TO ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

SRI M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

The term 'philosophy' literally means the love of truth. Mere love, however, will not carry one very far. It must be translated into action. The necessary effort has to be put in to discover the truth and transform it into a way of life. The truth that the philosopher has to discover is not the ordinary kind of truth relating to the phenomena that take place within the framework of nature. This is left to the scientists. The philosopher has to take the universe as a whole and discover its origin and final destiny. The universe, of course, includes not only nature but also man and God. How to reduce these three entities that are given in experience into a unity is the problem that faces the true philosopher. (How according to Advaita Vedānta the *jīva* is non-different from Brahman was set forth by the present writer in the article entitled 'The Finite Self: Its nature and destiny' in *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1966.) The final truth can be only one and not many. Pluralistic

systems which posit more than one ultimate reality really offer no solution. They simply restate the findings of our perceptual experience. They therefore hardly deserve to be called philosophical systems in the true sense of the term. Śrī Śaṅkara says in one of his poems: 'What can be learnt from ordinary perception need not be taught by scripture. Dualism and pluralism are given in common perception and hence they do not require to be learnt from Śruti. Non-dualism, on the other hand, is not given in perceptual experience and consequently only that can be the purport of the Upanishads.' (*Svātmanirūpana*, stanza 54)

The human mind does not rest satisfied with pluralism. It refuses to believe that the highest truth can be more than one. And hence it regards the pluralistic conclusions as only presenting a further problem to thought. It is convinced that difference is given only to be overcome in a higher unity. It is so constituted that

nothing short of the final truth will bring intellectual satisfaction to it. As long as this is not reached it will not feel that it has come to the end of its search. The efforts that are made by some philosophers to somehow organize the many truths that they have discovered into some kind of unity, will bring no lasting satisfaction. Since they will not stand examination, such solutions will appear to the thorough-going thinker as only half-way resting houses. At their best they are only compromises between unity and diversity, monism and pluralism and hence are never wholly satisfactory. Compromises may be all right in the practical concerns of life and in the sphere of politics where, owing to the play of contending forces and conflicting interests, we have necessarily to be satisfied with the second best. But compromises are most dangerous where our highest spiritual interests are involved. This is the most essential point in Śrī Śaṅkara's criticism of other systems of thought like Buddhism, Jainism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṅkhya. He repeatedly states that no one who cares for his true spiritual welfare can have any truck with these. It is suicidal to rest satisfied with anything but the highest truth if we are keen on realizing the *summum bonum* of life. Nothing liberates like truth and only the ultimate truth can bring absolute and complete release from bondage. We have to take reason as our guide and proceed in this voyage of discovery. We have to think to the bitter end and resist the temptation to rest satisfied with anything that falls short of the final truth.

Compromises have no place in this relentless pursuit. They may suit the inclinations of some thinkers and may be permitted as a sort of concession. We must not forget that there is wide difference between individuals in their mental make-up. Not all of them have the courage and the daring to scale the dizzy heights where

Absolute Truth sits enthroned. An open mind, free from preoccupations of every kind, a clear vision and the readiness to follow reason and accept any conclusion she might force on us are also necessary and it is not every philosopher who can lay claim to them. It is well known that some thinkers start their investigations with a mind already wedded to certain beliefs. Such interested attempts will not carry them to the final goal. It is no use taking to philosophy with a view to secure respectability for our political, religious or ethical convictions. Philosophy is an autonomous pursuit and it has to be carried on independently of extraneous and irrelevant considerations. In such a pursuit we may have to throw overboard many cherished dogmas. True philosophy goes beyond not only politics, religion and ethics but also beyond logic. Transcending all the dualism, it culminates in a unique experience in which there is no experient apart from the experience. Such a unique experience goes clear beyond differences of every kind. In it there is no subject apart from the object, no knower apart from the known and no enjoyer apart from what is enjoyed. This state is what is known as *Brahmasākṣātkāra* or *aparokṣānubhūti*. It goes without saying that in the light of this experience all compromises like identity-in-difference, unity-in-diversity, the one-in-the midst-of-many and the concept of the organic whole look pitifully incomplete.

As instances of such incomplete views regarding the nature of ultimate reality, we may state those of Śrī Madhva, Śrī Rāmānuja and Sri Aurobindo. Madhva's philosophy is rooted in difference. He recognizes five kinds of difference as ultimate, the difference between *Īśvara* and *jīva*, the difference between *Īśvara* and insentient things, the difference between one *jīva* and another, the difference between *jīva* and insentient things and finally the difference

between one variety of insentient things and another. These differences are beginningless and consequently have no end. They cannot be dismissed as the products of illusion. The universe, though different from Īśvara, is completely under His control. It is real and not to be treated as illusory. Madhva seeks to establish the reality of the universe by means of a dilemmatic argument which may be stated somewhat as follows :

If the doctrine of the illusoriness of the world is true, then Advaita philosophy falls to the ground; if that doctrine is false, then the universe is real.

The doctrine of the illusoriness of the universe must be either true or false.

It follows that either Advaita philosophy falls to the ground or that the universe is real.

In any case, the reality of the universe is established beyond doubt. If Advaita is false it follows that the doctrine of illusoriness which it propounds is also false. If the doctrine of illusoriness is granted to be false, it is quite clear that the universe is real.

Madhva does not make any attempt to bring God, Nature and Man into any kind of organic relationship. He simply states that Nature and Man are fully under the control of Nārāyaṇa. What kind of control it is and how it is exercised are not made clear. In support of his doctrine of difference he falls back on the testimony of perception and certain statements to be found in the Purāṇas. His philosophy is rank pluralism though it goes by the name of Dvaita. Evidently he uses the term in the sense of 'more than one'.

According to Śrī Rāmānuja, God is not featureless. He is characterized by attributes which are both infinite and auspicious (*ananta kalyāṇa guṇa*). Matter (*acit*) and soul (*cit*) constitute His body. He is the *śarīrin* and both the universe and the finite souls are the *śarīra*. God and His

body are in inseparable relationship. There is no soul without body and no body without soul. The relationship is, therefore, organic and is known as *aprthaksiddhi*. Before creation both *acit* and *cit* are unmanifest. Para Vāsudeva makes these manifest by an act of His will (*samkalpa*). Their manifest condition is what we call the universe. Para Vāsudeva dwells in it as its inner ruler. He guides and controls it from within to suit his own purposes which are inscrutable. The universe is quite real, as real as God Himself. It can never be dismissed as an illusion or conjured away as a mere trick of thought. We perfect ourselves by utilizing the opportunities for service that it makes available. It is therefore the vale of soul-making. In support of his views he relies on the section of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, several passages in *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā* and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.

A few passages from Sri Aurobindo's *Life Divine* will serve to give us a clear idea of his views in regard to the question of the reality of the universe : 'The physical universe is the external body of the Divine Being'. (p. 9) 'Matter is a fit and noble material out of which He weaves constantly His garb, builds recurrently the unending series of His mansions'. (p. 9) 'The world is real precisely because it is present in our consciousness'. 'The mind receives the sense of the unreality of the world only when it proceeds straight to the Nirguṇa Brahman, by-passing the intermediate transitions, matter, life and consciousness'. 'In Cosmic Consciousness, matter (the world) reveals itself as the figure and body of spirit'. (p. 40) 'There is one Lord and Self and the many (the world) are only His representations and becomings'. (p. 47) 'An Omnipotent Reality is the truth of all life and existence. From that all variations (the names and forms of the world) begin, in that all variations consist and to that all variations



return'. (p. 51) 'Sat (Brahman) and Asat (the universe) are not opposite and destructive of each other, but represent the last antinomy through which we look up to the unknowable'. (p. 53) 'It is mere impatience of heart and mind to seek the one to the exclusion of the many. To know God really we must know Him everywhere, equally and without distinction'. (p. 54) 'However high we climb, even though it be to Nirguṇa Brahman, we climb ill if we forget the base. Not to abandon the lower to itself, but to transfigure it in the light of the higher to which we have attained is true divinity of nature'. (p. 56)

According to Śrī Madhva, God creates the universe while according to Śrī Rāmānuja and Sri Aurobindo He manifests himself in the forms of the many. In either case we have to face difficulties. If God is the creator of the universe, is He, like the mason and the carpenter, only its instrumental cause (*nimitta kāraṇa*)? If that is so, then he would need, like the mason and the carpenter, some material out of which He could fashion the universe. The primeval matter, called Prakṛti, though it may be under the full control of God, would still be a factor to reckon with. It will offer resistance and in creating the world out of it, God cannot have it all His own way. His will cannot find unrestricted play. Such restrictions will detract from His omnipotence.

To get over this difficulty, Śrī Rāmānuja and Sri Aurobindo make out that God is both the instrumental and the material cause of the universe (*avhinna nimitta upādāna kāraṇa*). Both *acit* and *cit* which contain the potentiality of the universe are already implicit in God who, by His resolve, makes them explicit. Since the universe is only the manifestation of what is already contained in Para Vāsudeva, the latter is rightly regarded as the indwelling ruler who guides and controls the universe in accordance with his own

purposes. He does not stand outside of the universe as Madhva's view would imply, but enters into it and acts as its 'friend, philosopher and guide'.

This makes a definite improvement on the view of Madhva and carries a great appeal to religious-minded people. But as a philosophical thesis it cannot stand examination. If God enters into the universe and makes Himself manifest in its multitudinous forms which are open to perception, then no special effort would be needed to know Him. Knowledge of the universe would be equivalent to knowledge of God. The experience of the visible world will be identical with the experience of Brahman. In that case, the texts of the Upaniṣads which state that Brahman has to be sought after and known (*so anveṣṭavyaḥ vijijñāsitaavyaḥ*), that to know Him one has to make a heroic effort and turn his mind inward (*Kaṣcāt dhīraḥ pratyagāt-mānam aikṣatāvṛtta cakṣuḥ amṛtatvam icchan*), that the internal Self, abiding in the hearts of man should be drawn out with firmness as we do the rind from the reed (*taṁ svāt śarīrāt pravṛhet muñjādīva iṣṭkām dhairjeṇa*), that He is hidden behind the five sheaths (*Kośas*) and has to be got at by eliminating them,—all these will lose all point. It is clear that the theory of God's manifestation in the form of the universe comes into sharp conflict with important texts of the Upaniṣads. If God can be known by merely studying the universe, then the physical sciences will serve the purpose and we can dispense with metaphysics altogether. This will mean surrendering the game of philosophy completely.

A certain statement of the Upaniṣad, 'All this is Brahman' (*Sarvam khalu idaṁ Brahma*) seems to lend support to the view that Brahman is fully manifest in the forms of the universe. There is also the statement in the *Gītā*, 'Vāsudeva is all' (*Vāsudevasarvam*) which seems to lend

additional support to the view stated above. There is also the following stanza in Śrī Śaṅkara's *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*: 'The universe is an unbroken series of perceptions of Brahman; hence it is in all respects nothing but Brahman'. (Stanza 521) But closer examination will show that the support is only apparent and not real. If we take these texts in their proper perspective we will find that what they mean is something quite different. 'All this is Brahman' or 'all this is Vāsudeva' cannot possibly mean that Brahman and Vāsudeva have spread themselves out and they are there for all to see. Such a view would lead to a sort of crude pantheism. Stocks and stones would have to be placed on a footing of equality with gods and men for, as Sri Aurobindo says, 'We have to see God everywhere EQUALLY and without distinction'. Such a view stands self-condemned. No one would be prepared to say that God is as much manifest in inanimate things as in a great yogin. If there is difference in the degree of manifestation, what is it due to? Does it mean any partiality on the part of God or has it to be attributed to the capacity of the manifested things to reflect the greatness of spirit? The former explanation is not acceptable to any one for God can neither have preferences nor exclusions. The latter view, if rightly understood, will lead to the conclusion that matter is more a hindrance than an aid for spirit to manifest itself. The theory that the universe is the manifestation of God would then have to be given up.

What the statements mentioned above, therefore, mean is that Brahman or Vāsudeva is all and not the other way. If we have eyes to see and an intellect to discriminate, we will realize that Brahman or Vāsudeva is the sole reality, only that it is hidden behind the names and forms. The latter are not organically related to Brahman but only superimposed on Him

by our congenital ignorance. If we refuse to be deluded by these appearances, then with the eye of discrimination we will see that Brahman is the sole reality. Interpreting the *Chāndogya* text 'In the beginning this (universe) was only Being (*Sat*)' Śrī Śaṅkara writes: 'In the beginning, that is, before creation, this universe was answerable only to the idea of Being. By implication it means that even now it is nothing but Being. This may be elucidated by an example from everyday life. In the morning a man sees the potter spreading out clay for making jars and other things. Then having gone away to another place and returning in the afternoon, he sees in the same place many products in the shape of jars, saucers and other articles of diverse kinds. He says: "all these, jars, saucers and the rest, were in the morning clay only". Even so, Śruti, the External Witness, states that prior to the appearance of names and forms this universe was only Brahman'. Pots, jugs, saucers and so forth are only forms that are imposed on clay. They have their origin in clay, are sustained by clay and ultimately dissolved in clay. Though these names and forms may disappear, the clay will remain as the abiding reality. In the same manner we have to treat the manifest universe as only a superimposition on Brahman due to our ignorance. In the latter part of the stanza cited above from *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, Śrī Śaṅkara makes this point quite clear: 'See the universe with the eye of discrimination and a composed mind. Ordinary people will be deluded by the names and forms but the man endowed with discrimination will see nothing but Brahman.' In several other stanzas of the same poem he emphasizes the notion that the names and forms which constitute the universe are only superimposed on the sole Reality which is Brahman.

Does, then the universe manifest Brahman or conceal Him? Madhva, Rāmā-

nuja and Aurobindo will answer in terms of the former alternative while Kant and Śaṅkara will answer in terms of the latter. We are reminded of the lines in Browning's poem 'Bishop Blougram's Apology':

Some think creation is meant to show  
Him forth;

I say it is meant to hide Him all it can.

Sri Aurobindo writes: 'An Omnipotent Reality is the truth of all life and existence. From that all variations (names and forms) begin, in that all variations consist; to that all variations return. An unknowable which appears to us in many states and attributes of being, in many forms of consciousness, in many activities of energy—this is what the mind can ultimately say about the Reality that is presented to our senses. It is in and through these states, these forms, these activities that we have to approach and know the unknowable'. (p. 52) This would mean that Brahman and the world are not discontinuous but continuous. They are neither opposed nor mutually destructive.

But Kant and Śaṅkara take quite the contrary view. By a searching analysis of the processes involved in perceptual knowledge, Kant has shown that the thing as we ultimately know is quite different from the thing-in-itself. The distortion arises from the interpretation of the sensations in terms of time and space and other categories of the understanding. These are all extraneous to Reality and by imposing them on the latter, the human mind twists it out of shape. It will be remembered that Buddhist logicians also took the same view. They said that between the *svalakṣaṇas* and the *sāmānyalakṣaṇas* there is a hiatus due to the imposition of categories like *jāti*, *guṇa*, *karma* and *sambandha* on the former.

In his celebrated introduction to the *Sūtra Bhāṣya* known as *adhyāsa prakaraṇa*, Śri Śaṅkara shows how all our empirical knowledge is vitiated at the source by the

non-self which is another name for *avidyā* or ignorance. The true Self cannot get into direct touch with the reality that is outside of us. It can do so only indirectly through the mind and the sense-organs. These want the physical body as their base of operation. The body cannot function unless the notion of the Self is superimposed on it. The resulting knowledge is thus mediated by the functioning of the body, the mind and sense-organs. All these belong to the category of the non-self. It is thus vitiated at the very source. Through such knowledge we can never hope to know Reality as it is.

One or two examples will serve to make the point clear. The Upaniṣads state categorically that here there is no difference whatsoever and he who sees difference even as it were, is condemned to the cycle of endless transmigration. But what exactly does our perception show? It shows a world of infinite variety and difference. Madhva has drawn our attention to five kinds of difference which are given in perception and which he considers ultimate. The Upaniṣads again present reality as absolutely changeless and permanent, never undergoing any kind of transformation. But what is the verdict of perception? It presents reality as ceaselessly changing, never remaining the same even for two seconds. It shows everything to be in a fever of change and flux as being the only reality. Here are two instances of very sharp conflict between perceptual knowledge and the pronouncement of Śruti. The former is the realm of appearance and the latter of reality.

To bring it nearer home, we may consider a few examples of illusion with which we are familiar. A belated traveller places his foot on some object, imagines it to be a snake and takes fright. When light is brought and the place is scrutinized, there is no snake there but only a piece of rope. Walking along the bed of the river

at dusk a man sees a shining object in front of him and believes it to be a silver coin. When he picks it up, he discovers that it is not silver but only a shell. Going to a museum one sees the figure of a huge elephant and gets the feeling that the animal is real elephant. But going nearer he finds that it is not a live elephant but only the image of one made of wood. In all these cases, the reality is one thing and its appearance quite another. In the first instance we take the latter to be real but later we discard it. In the beginning the appearance hides the reality from our view, but later it is replaced by the reality. In the state of ignorance we are deluded by appearances and later, when correct knowledge dawns on us, we discover the reality behind the appearance. The two are mutually opposed and one shuts out the other. As long as we see the elephant, the wood out of which it is made, is hidden from our view. When we go near and discover that it is mere wood, the elephant disappears altogether. In the same manner, the silver hides the shell and later disappears leaving the shell as the reality. In *Svātmanirūpana*, (stanza 94) and *Śataślokī* (stanza 22) Śrī Śaṅkara has given these familiar examples. The rope appearing as the snake is mentioned very frequently in his writings.

What we have to note is that when the mistake is corrected, it is the appearance that vanishes. The underlying reality remains intact. The 'whatness' of perception is found to be wrong while its 'thatness' remains quite unaffected. That means that the mistake has arisen at the stage of interpretation which is the work of the mind. The mere sensation gives the impression of some object and by interpreting it in terms of one of the categories of the understanding we come to know *what* exactly it is. It is here that we are likely to go wrong and mistake one thing for another. This happens in cases of ordi-

nary illusion. But there is another variety of illusion which is more fundamental. It arises from deep-lying causes. There is a foundational ignorance planted in the inmost recesses of the heart from time immemorial. The Upaniṣads speak of it as '*hṛdaya-granthi*'. It is also known as '*mūla ajñāna*'. It is common to the whole race of human beings. Since it is universal in its incidence, it is regarded as the adjunct (*upādhi*) of Īśvara. Under its spell, we miss Brahman which is the sole reality and see in its place the universe of infinite variety and endless change. Just as ordinary ignorance, induced by sleep, becomes the substratum for the appearance of dream-objects, even so primeval ignorance, induced by beginningless sleep, serves as the substratum for the appearance of the objects that we see in the state of waking. Ignorance or *avidyā* is therefore the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*) of the universe. When we come to the waking state, the temporary ignorance caused by sleep is dispelled and the dream-objects are dismissed as false. In the same way, the rise of the saving knowledge removes the foundational ignorance root and branch and in that state of enlightenment the seer dismisses the shows of the world as illusory (*mithyā*). *Jīvanmuktas* see nothing but Brahman everywhere. Whereas ordinary people miss Brahman and see in its place the universe marked by variety and change, those who have received illumination see only Brahman and the universe completely disappears from their view. In the state of ignorance, the universe leaps into being and in the state of enlightenment it disappears leaving not a trace behind.

Śrī Śaṅkara has referred this point in several philosophical poems: 'The sun is shining bright; darkness has completely disappeared; wise people have their eyes wide open and, what a surprise, they see nothing of the world'. (*Yogatārāvalī*, Stanza

27) 'When I was in the state of ignorance and enveloped in illusion, I saw the world of diversity all around me and took it to be real, now that the sun of the saving knowledge has dawned, lo! I see nothing of the world'. (*Svātmanirūpaṇa*, Stanza 152) 'When the states of the mind are merged in the non-dual Brahman, nothing of this phenomenal world is perceived and only the talk of it remains'. (*Viveka-cūdāmaṇi*, Stanza 398) 'When the seers realize Brahman as their very self, their illusion disappears and they express their wonder that they see nothing of the world'. (*Dakṣiṇāmūrtivarnamālā stotra*, Stanza 24) 'In the state of *asamprajñāta samādhi*, the diversity of the world completely drops and in its place the yogins see the Atman, which is Pūrṇa, beyond the three states, non-dual and the sole reality, shining in all its native splendour'. (*Svarūpānusandhānāṣṭakam*, Stanza 6) 'Like the silver in the shell, the world appears as real only so long as the non-dual Brahman, which is the substrate of all, is not realized'. (*Ātmabodha*, Stanza 7) 'The world appears as real only so long as the identity between the knowing principle in man and the Supreme Consciousness is not realized. With the dawn of that realization, the world fades out'. (*Haristuti*, Stanza 40) 'Realize the Atman that is Pūrṇa and note that the world is sublated in that consciousness'. (*Upadeśapañcakam*, Stanza 5) 'Just as dream-experiences are contradicted the moment we come to the waking state, even so the world, though it is presented to perception and is the scene of all our activities, proves unreal when a higher consciousness has dawned on us'. (*Aparokṣānubhūti*, Stanza 56) 'Just as the perception of a lion in a dream awakens us and makes us realize that it is false, even so by means of the disciplines, intellectual, moral, religious and spiritual, that we practise in the waking state we transcend it and dismiss it as illusory.

There can be a transition from the unreal to the real, *satyaprāptiḥ asatyād api bhavati*'. (*Śataśloki*, Stanza 38)

Merely because the waking experiences are likened to the dream-perceptions in certain respects, we should not rush to the conclusion that Śrī Śaṅkara has reduced the former to the level of the latter. Nothing could be more erroneous than such a conclusion. Śrī Śaṅkara has brought out very clearly in his criticism of Buddhist *Vijñānavāda* that our waking experiences occupy a higher ontological status than our dream-perceptions. The latter, though real, are experienced only by one individual and even he does so only for a brief moment. But the former are the same to the same individual at different moments and the same to different individuals at the same time. Dream-perceptions are purely subjective while the waking experiences are objective in as much as they are open to the perception of any one at any time. The world that we see in the waking state is already there waiting to be perceived and will continue to exist even after we have ceased to take note of it. In other words, it is God's creation (*Īśvara-sṛṣṭa*). But the lion that we see in the dream comes into being with the starting of the dream and ceases to exist the moment the dream breaks up. Its existence is strictly bound up with its perception. It is therefore the creation of the *jīva* in the state of sleep (*jīva-sṛṣṭa*). In later Vedānta, they speak of *sṛṣṭiḥ-dṛṣṭiḥ* and *dṛṣṭiḥ-sṛṣṭiḥ*, the former to denote the objects of waking state and the latter the objects of the dream-state.

And so, what is the ontological status of the universe? Is it absolutely real or absolutely false? In Śrī Śaṅkara's opinion, it is neither. Since it ceases to be perceived in deep sleep and in *samādhi*, it cannot be treated as absolutely real. Only what remains uncontradicted at all times and in all levels of knowledge can be deemed

as real. His criterion of reality is non-contradiction (*abādha*). Nor can the world be dismissed as absolutely unreal for it is perceived. His epistemological view is that whatever is perceived, even though it be by just one individual and only for a brief moment, must be treated to be so far real. Thus he grants a modicum of reality even for illusions like the mirage. Only mere words like the sky-lotus which have no objects corresponding to them are dismissed as absolutely false. The universe, therefore, is neither real nor unreal. It is *sadasad vilakṣaṇa*. It comes under the category of *anirvacanāya*. It is empirically real but transcendently ideal. It is *vyāvahārikasatvā* and not either *prātivāsika* or *pāramārthika*. Illusions and dream-perceptions come under the former category, because they just appear for a moment and soon cease to be. Brahman whose realization falsifies everything else and which itself is never falsified in any subsequent state comes under the latter category. Since its essence is Pure Consciousness we can never imagine a state which negates it. 'The knower's function of knowing can never be lost, because it is immortal'. (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka* IV. iii. 30)

States of the mind may come and go but the consciousness which illumines them will never go out. If there are no *vṛttis* and the mind has become quiescent, consciousness will show that the mind has ceased to function and consequently there is no particular knowledge. This is the idea which sage Yājñavalkya sought to convey to his wife when he said, 'After attaining (this oneness) it has no more consciousness'. Similarly we pass through the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. What lights up these states is the witness-consciousness (*sākṣin*) which does not identify itself with any of these. When the yogin passes to the fourth state (*Turīya*), consciousness suffers no contradiction, but continues to shine and reveal the Atman as pure, non-dual and *Pūrṇa*. The Atman is only another name for Brahman. Ontologically it occupies the highest place in Advaita metaphysics while the universe which is only an appearance thereof under the limiting conditions caused by foundational ignorance is assigned a lower place. Both are not equally real. Brahman is absolutely real while the universe is only relatively real: **BRAHMA SATYAM JAGANMITHYĀ.**

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## THE JOYS OF LITERATURE

PROFESSOR WILLIAM E. HOOKENS

'There is so much writing done, and yet when it comes to reading what has been written today it is such a disappointment! One thinks of the old piano that lies undusted in a corner, because there is no one to play on it! And why should anyone want to play on a piano when canned music can be had at practically all hours of the day and night?

I am reminded of the article I read

during the early years of the last World War—and it was such a relief reading a literary article instead of the usual war-stuff that was being regularly churned for six long years till one nearly was sick of it! I am also reminded of the times when people took a pleasure in writing and whether they wrote letters to friends or to the press, they took much pleasure in writing. Their handwriting was good. Today

it is all so different. Calligraphy is something that few know about unless they happen to be Edmund Blundens—and it is such a delight reading what has been written, because every letter has a uniqueness all its own and there is no sameness about the same letter, although it is used a dozen times or more! Every time there is a variation—and so beautifully varied as to strike the eye and yet on the whole the impression is one of supreme pleasure! The typewriter cannot do this!

The writer of the war-article was a Frenchman and he moaned the fact that reading, like writing, was being bypassed for other activities. He became nostalgic about the past when people not only loved to read but also took pleasure in teaching others to read. And lo! what collections of books there were in the private libraries of people who were not that rich to buy themselves a mansion or the latest car but who took a pride in possessing the best books of the day in the best editions. These books lasted though there were not as many book-reviewers nor fanfares. People were thoughtful and life was zestful.

One looks in vain for writers who matter in the modern syllabuses and scholars like Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Sir Stopford Brooke and Sir Walter Raleigh are pitifully no more in the picture as though they were ancients with no use for the present. And courses in English literature are being watered down... Sir Arthur's two books on Reading and Writing are almost unread today though there are cheap reprints of the same. Few remember Arnold Bennett as the novelist who also wrote *How To Live Twenty-Four Hours a Day*; and in recent years we have a writer who goes farther and writes on *How To Live 365 Days a Year*! We are very much in the 'Reader's Digest' Age, in which everything is cut and dried, and all that we have to do is to swallow things whole! What a number of critics on Shakes-

peare, and how few to compare with Coleridge, Bradley and Raleigh, not to mention the late H. B. Charlton who was my teacher!

It seems that Science is to a great extent responsible for this change of attitude towards life. Whereas people were inclined towards life and its mysteries, today there are probers after the mysterious! No more are Alleluiahs sung to the Most High—and not even the Clergy are as zealous as they used to be. Unconvention, unorthodoxy has eaten into the people,—and sorrows and wrinkles tell a tale! Even primitive people have lost their simplicity, sincerity and love for things natural—and there seems to be sophistication setting in everywhere! Oases have dried up, and there are no springs anywhere near! No trace of cows or greenery but large tracts of factory-ground with smoky buildings, din and an atmosphere of feverish speed! Cars all over the place and no Hazlitt-type of walkers anywhere! No simple buildings but skyscrapers all over! Yet life seems moribundly the same and the suicide-rates are growing! Where there is no effulgence of the Spirit or the Mind there is deadness. Poetry vanishes and there are bucketfuls of prose all over, with wit and satire to boot!

Much has gone to change the even tenor of life; and whereas Science has brought men close to one another, Politics has separated them! One sees the violent changes that have practically effaced the appearance of good literature and the poor stuff that goes under the hallowed name. Propaganda is not literature. Yet there are men and women, boys and girls who are absorbed in what they read and discover things for themselves. They congratulate the writers on the good work done and the writers, in their turn, live up to the dictates of their conscience and write truly! So sincere and fearless they are, that they suffer martyrdom for a cause that

can never die and which other writers take up and lo! Truth, Good and Beauty are justified and untruth, evil and ugliness are exposed; Writers worth their salt serve no one but the cause of Truth and what they write has sterling worth. There is no devaluation!

'There is', says the busy person, 'so much to read and write—but all cannot be readers and writers! And where's the joy of being a bookworm when one can see and hear and feel? There is much today that demands work and speed—and reading and writing are leisurely activities, to be taken up by those who can afford this luxury! For others—countless others, it is money, not values that matter!'

There is much truth in this. But man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth! Money talks, but money is muck unless it is made use for a higher purpose! Men and women with imagination make all the money they can, because they are not slaves or pawns to money or mammon but masters! Life is certainly a big rush, but only those who can keep up with the speed or tempo of modern living know the joys of the mind or the imagination. Mere senses are of no avail unless the interpretative power of the mind is present. Animals also see and feel but nothing worthwhile is done of what they see, hear or do. There are so many animals the world over—have they created anything new? Have they done anything worthwhile? They have lived, according to their nature, and have died. Man alone has lived and continues to live though he has been dead centuries ago. The Spirit of man can never die—and it is this that keeps History, Philosophy, Religion alive. This sense of undyingness or this immortality, gives zest to living, sense or significance in ordinary duties of life.

Animals know no sense of hospitality, kindness, love. They are guided by in-

stincts; but man lives by reason and in men there is the glow of poetry in the good we do, feel or see! Life's rubs become softened and he lives to overcome all that confronts him! Jealousies, revenge do no one good but all a world of harm. They are cancers that eat into humans and make life unbearable! An unavenging Hamlet would have lived to see life all beautiful. A jealous Othello meets his end early and so does the ambitious Macbeth as well as his wife. One needs to have a Prospero's wand to see evil routed and good in the ascendent! Shakespeare, next to the Bible, is Life writ large—with characters and situations and atmosphere and plots that writers are known to love and understand! The joy of reading Shakespeare is that one feels so exhilarated! There are joys and tears, fights and reconciliations—but there the verities of Life are brought out and, what is more there is Shakespeare's own belief in the Laws of Life! Every cause has its effect—and no one knew it more than this 'myriad-minded' genius, as Coleridge rightly called him. A good thought or deed has its own reward as an evil thought or deed brings its own punishment. To read literature is to read Psychology, Philosophy, History, Religion—and literary men are above boundaries. They stand apart from the ordinary run of men. They are pinnacles—Beacon-lights for all men!

The world has changed and will change, but the fundamentals are the same! This gives a security to life and absoluteness to literature! Words are not mere words but have impact of life in them. And there are as many conversions of men and women through the written-word as through the spoken voice. Words are Things and those who know their use make it Reality. Or would we be reading Shelley's poems on the 'Skylark' and the 'West Wind', Wordsworth's 'Immortality Ode' and the 'Prelude', Keats's 'Endymion' and



'Nightingale', or Byron's mighty lines on the thunderous roar of the waves of the dark blue sea? Words have an impact and the voice from the cloud that said: 'Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?' went home, and there was Saul who was on his way to Damascus, benumbed with fear and struck with blindness! The words went home and there was born that instant Paul—the Christian Convert, St. Paul!

Literature is no mere juggling of words but the epitome of life, the life-force of the Spirit. Those who have felt the influence of literature are legion. Keats was a surgeon but he gave up surgery for poetry and he continues to be in the lineage of Shakespeare and the man who begot Tennyson. Shelley was a scientist, but his love for poetry made him a great poet, and there is no literate person in the world who has not heard of or read him in the original or through translations. R. L. Stevenson was an engineer but his desire for *Treasure Island* not only made him a great novelist but a poet as well. As for Thomas Hardy, he was an architect but he preferred to use his skill in forming the architectural grandeur of the novel and poetry. W. S. Maugham who was with us till yesterday, was a surgeon, as A. J. Cronin is, and he took infinite pleasure in writing. He wrote dramas, short stories, novels, essays—but no poetry. The nineteenth

century Jesuit-priest G. M. Hopkins continued to be a poet and to write on the Wreck of the Deutschland and other themes, as his friend Robert Bridges wrote on the 'Beautiful' and made of it a 'Testament'!

Man, woman and child are never the same once there is literature before them! They see themselves as sinners no more but resurrected humans. Their hearts and minds are touched and lo! there is the music of the spheres. There is a transformation, a miracle, as in Keats's discovery of *Chapman's Homer*. No more are they cold, dry or inhuman but bring to life all that is dying or dead. They see eternity in a flower and hear the voice of the Infinite by placing a seashell they have found in the beach to their ears! Life gains in dimensions and all narrow horizons vanish. They find themselves prophets in their own country. No more are they unknown Miltons and Hampdens, but come to life and all that they say, feel or do comes to live! And no man born of woman can still them once they are activated by the Spirit. They see Life at all levels—in both growth and decay. To such are given the gift of words . . . to use . . . not as they like . . . but for the Glory of God and men! And the dedicated souls that they are to Truth-in-Beauty, they see their greatest treasure on earth and in heaven—their selves!

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## JAINA VIEWS ON CAUSATION: AN ADVAITIC APPROACH

DR. DEVAPRASAD BHATTACHARYA

The Naiyāyika and the Jaina admit causation but they differ amongst themselves. The difference comes to a head on the question of God as the first cause. The Nyāya recognizes God but the Jaina does not recognize Him. The Jaina thinker

asks the question why God will have to be admitted. It may be that pots are embodied and have their authors; similarly, earth and so on are also embodied and are effects and, as such, require their authors. The Jaini asks whether this embodiment

is due to the conjunction of parts. The ether, according to the Naiyāyika is conjoined with objects as high, low, middle etc. But the Naiyāyika does not accept the ether as an effect. Even the inherence in the parts cannot explain causation. Potness resides in the pot by way of the relation of inherence. But in spite of the inherence of the potness in the pot the Naiyāyika does not say that potness is something that is really caused. The causality may be due to the parts but here this suggestion is not happy because the *probans* and the *probandum* are the same. How one can be established by the other? *Sāvayava-buddhiviṣayatva* may be called in. Even our soul becomes *sāvayava-buddhiviṣaya*. But the Naiyāyika does not admit the effecthood of the soul. The soul is eternal. Moreover, the Jaina repudiates the suggestion of any event. The suggestion of only one agent fails in the case of a construction of a big building. If many agents are suggested then there will remain open every possibility for difference of opinion among many agents. If the world follows only from one agent then all other agents are rendered useless. Any way, the Jaina arrives at the conclusion that God in any form of cause is useless. (*vide Sarva-darśanasāṅgraha*, Chapter on Jainism)

Jacobi finds some points of contact between Sāṅkhya-yoga on the one hand and Jainism on the other. Soul and matter are acknowledged in the systems. There is really no distinction between soul and soul, all distinction gathers from the contact of a soul with matter. Matter is 'a something that may become any thing.' But Sāṅkhya-yoga reached this conclusion on very different grounds from Jainism. Sāṅkhya utilized the Brāhmanical thoughts and ideas; whereas Jainism worked on uncritical popular beliefs and animistic ideas. Jainism explains the material world with primeval dispositions or *lokasthiti*. 'Sāṅ-

khya probably based on cosmogonic theories contained in the Upaniṣads was intended as a philosophic system which in the course of time became the theoretical foundation of a popular religion. But Jainism was, in the first place, a religion, and developed a philosophy of its own in order to make this religion a self-consistent system.' (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Articles on Jainism by Jacobi, Vol. VII, p. 465 ff.)

Jainism argues if existence and consciousness cannot be denied, because they are experienced or felt facts, causality holding as it does unity and plurality within itself cannot equally be denied, because causal activities are felt facts and are based on concrete experience. Jainism holds that causality has to be admitted as real because it is not unreal. Logical difficulties as to the relation between unity and plurality, identity and difference, cause and effect are all offshoots of abstract logic and are out of all touches with life and concrete existence. The Reality is not simple; it is a complex structure comprehending identity and difference within itself transcending them both and synthesizing them in separate category. For Jainism it is not necessary that the Reality must either be identical or different. Jainism has for it *syādvāda* which literally signifies assertion of possibilities and seeks to ascertain the meaning of things from all standpoints. Things are neither existent nor non-existent absolutely. A thing may be said to exist in a certain way and non-existent in another way and so forth. *Syādvāda* examines things from seven points of view, hence the doctrine is also called *saptabhaṅgīnaya* (sevenfold parallogism). 'Syād' which signifies 'may be' denotes all these seven possibilities, there having been no eighth alternative. (S. Diwakar: *Nyāyavatāra*, The earnest Jaina work on pure Logic) A thing is and is not from different points of view. Jaina thinker adopts a practical

point of view and thus he can make a difference between appearance and reality. A thing can be viewed against at least four different aspects of it, substance, place, time and form. (*Vide*, Jhaveri : *The First Principles of Jaina Philosophy*, pp. 44-45) Jainism considers the being as it is found in our ordinary experience and does not care for the transcendental being of the Brāhmanical schools. Substance is with attributes and modifications (*guṇaparyāyavat dravyam*) and cannot be found in isolation. If viewed from the standpoint of substance (*dravyārthika-naya*) everything is immutable but from the view point of modes or modification (*paryāyārthika-naya*) everything is changing. There may be natural or artificial modifications. A living organism grows and suffers many changes, on the other hand a lump of gold assumes different forms. As to substance and modifications following observations can be made. Substance is beginningless and endless and continues to exist throughout the eternity. It is a composite of appearance, disappearance and permanence. It is, as Umāsvāmin points out '*utpādavyaya dhrauvyalakṣaṇam sat.*' It may, again, be likened to subserving some functions and purposes from the ordinary standpoint. Modification means production and destruction. A thing comes into being and passes out of it. This is the modification of a thing. Modification may again be of two kinds : (i) of the essential qualities of the thing or *svabhāvin-paryāya* ; and (ii) of the alien qualities of the thing or *karma-bhāvin-paryāya*. Water becomes muddy not because of anything in water but because of something foreign to water. Modification or change is reduced on an analysis to a surrender of the precedent states and appropriation of the consequent ones and throughout these there is some continuity always. Thus the real can have different causal functions either all at once or one by one

dependent on the availability of the relevant conditions. (*Vide* : *Critique of the Organ of Knowledge or Pramāṇa Mīmāṃsā*, pp. 76-77)

Hemachandra observes, 'A real is neither of the nature of substance, nor of the nature of mode, nor a combination of both so that the defects pertaining to all these propositions would become insuperable. It is, on the contrary, a *sui generis* multiform entity comprising as its moments, continuity, origination, and cessation.' (*Critique of the Organ of Knowledge or Pramāṇa-Mīmāṃsā*, pp. 76-77) According to Jainism everything is linked up with every other thing. Permanence and change are both real inasmuch as Jainism takes note of the empirical being. Objects come into being and endure at least for two moments. The Reality or Being is a one-in-many. Jainism takes a common sense view of Being which is complicated and amenable to changes. Matter is definite in point of sheer existence and indefinite in respect of qualities and modes. Being is thus that which is produced, continued and destroyed. Clay is permanent but the different forms and colours of clay are all indefinite. 'Since the nature of Being is intrinsically indefinite and made up of contradictory attributes of originating, continuance and perishing any proposition about an existing thing must somehow reflect the indefiniteness of Being, i.e., any metaphysical proposition is right from one point of view and the contrary proposition is also right from another' (Dr. Hermann Jacobi : *Studies in Jainism*, pp. 50-51)

Jainism accepts neither *satkāryavāda* nor *asatkāryavāda*. There is no meaning in the production of the effect which is already present (produced) in the cause. In case it is not produced it cannot lay any claim to existence or non-existence after production. Jainism refutes *asatkāryavāda* by pointing out that if the effect is completely absent from the cause, the effect

cannot appear in the cause at all. The Buddhist view is also wrong. Buddhists believe in complete destruction. But Jainism does not believe in any complete destruction. After every destruction there is still something. Jainism does not believe in any practical efficiency of the Buddhists as a mark of the existent object. According to Jainism a momentary cause cannot carry itself to the second moment of existence and give rise to a new effect. Jainism erects a compromise of the *satkāryavāda* with the *asatkāryavāda*. The cause and the effect are to some extent different and to some extent non-different from each other. The effect is partly present in and partly absent from the cause. Jainism holds that the Reality is integral and partless whole and it cannot be divided in piecemeal. However, observations made by Mrs. Stevenson may prove illuminating in this connexion. 'One of the great questions amongst the schools is as to whether an effect is the same as its material cause or pre-exists in that cause and is only made manifest by the operation which that cause undergoes (this is *satkārya* doctrine of the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta); or whether the effect is something new and did not exist before (which is the *asatkāryavāda* doctrine held by the Vaiśeṣika). On this point Jainism shows its usual comprehensiveness and believing that both views were linked together from time without beginning, says that an effect pre-exists in the cause in one sense and is a new beginning in another. If you look at an effect such as a jar as a mere substance, the substance is the same as in the loose earth of which the jar is made; but if you look at the jar as a modification, it is new and did not exist when the earth was in the condition of loose particles. (Mrs. Stevenson: *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 90) Just as one and the same man may be called a brother, a father, a friend and a husband with reference to different con-

texts, so the same Reality manifests itself in different forms. According to Jainism time, space, soul, and *pudgala* are the ultimate constituents of the entire universe. These four are resolvable into the not further analysable atomic structure. Differences in names and forms of the worldly objects are accounted for by the differences in the arrangements and combinations of these four primary ingredients. *Kāla*, *svabhāva*, *niyati*, *karma* and *udiyama* (time, external nature, necessity or destiny, action and self-assertion) are the causes for the diversities in nature. Each one of them has connexion with the rest and performs and moulds the substance conjointly. Time means succession; change and causality can have meaning only in temporal succession of states. External nature is a cause in the sense that any growth or development is possible only if the external nature supplies the needs felt in the cause of development. *Niyati* is necessity. The form or rigour of necessity is revealed in mathematical formula,  $2+2=4$ . *Karma* implies motion which again is equivalent to the change of relative positions. Substance itself is the cause and reaps the results of actions. *Udiyama* or the effort consists in the desire to realize a definite end. (Nahar and Ghosh: *An Epitome of Jainism*, 1917, p. 231 ff.)

According to Jainism causality is a relation of intrinsic determination. It means neither synchronism nor succession exclusively. Causation holds good of qualities and modes. Qualities and modes of a permanent substance change constantly. The underlying substance is timelessly continuous. Sometimes the cause and the effect are synchronous as the clay and the jar and sometimes successive as beheading is followed by death. Inner necessity and universality characterize the cause and the effect. Identity and difference being aspects of the same Reality do not repel each other. The relation of

identity-in-difference obtains between the cause and the effect. Causal connexion is discovered by reasoning and observation (of something in agreement and something in disagreement). The causal relation is internal and is the ground of all relations and, as such, is of basal importance. It is internal in the sense that neither the cause can happen without being followed by the effect nor the effect can happen without being preceded by the cause. Jaina views on causality happen to be a repudiation of the *Ekāntavādin Mādhyamika* position on causality.

Jaina views on causation come under heavy fire at the hands of Śaṅkara. A thing cannot at one and the same time be the repository of contradictory attributes. A thing cannot be heated and cold at the same time. A thing cannot be existent and non-existent at the same time. (*na hi ekasmin dharmiṇi yugapat sadasatvādīnām viruddha-dharmānām samābeśaḥ sambhavati, śītoṣṇavat—* Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahma-Sūtra*, II. ii. 33) Jainism cannot explain the certainty of any piece of knowledge, because according to them the nature of an object is uncertain and so the knowledge corresponding to the uncertain object is also uncertain like doubt or indecision. Thus the *syādvāda* of Jainism leads us directly into the uncertainty and doubt.

Furthermore, *syādvāda* having universal application will be applicable to certainty itself and the certainty of one point of view will be reduced to uncertainty and absurdity from another view-point. For them who recognize the multiformity of everything, certainty is sometimes uncertain and uncertainty is ten times certain. No certainty can be reached where everything is rendered uncertain. Here we can easily manage to find that Jainism with its characteristic *syādvāda* can be accommodated with Advaitism which pronounces that objects with names and forms are all indescribable, since they are made up of contradictories. We find Jaina assessment of Reality and objects is possible only on the pre-supposition of the indescribability of objects. If the objects were not indescribable but of persistent character throughout all the times Jainism could not have formulated their theory of seven-fold parallogism. It is only *Māyā* or indescribability as such that unites the contradictories and makes up a thing. Since objects are creatures of *Māyā* we cannot claim any genuine creator or God or the first cause. Metaphysically, is there any sense in the assertion of the creator of a square-circle? From the empirical standpoint Jainism is all right and evinces keen insight in to the nature of objects. This is also in conformity with the Advaitic position.

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## BUDDHISM

PROF. SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKHERJEE

Buddhism and Jainism rose in India in the 6th century B.C., a cardinal epoch in the history of human thought. They revolutionized the Indo-Aryan's outlook on life. The former, moreover, cast its magic spell on countries far beyond the natural fron-

tiers of India, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, China, Japan, Java, Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Thailand, Tibet and Vietnam, and did much to divert the thought-current of humanity along new channels.

The ground for the rise of Buddhism

and Jainism on the Indian soil had already been prepared in the sixth century B.C. A slow revolution in the field of religious thought had been taking place for a long time. The ritualistic religion of the Vedas had become complicated, mechanical, and lifeless. Religion had become more a matter of form than of faith. The barren and meaningless ritualism of the day could no longer assuage the spiritual cravings of the masses. Free speculation was in the air. A 'new feeling of pity for animals and the desire not to hurt life' had become manifest on all sides. Some of the Upaniṣads had already preached the futility of rituals. Ethical ideas and the idea of non-violence had come to the fore. The latter can indeed be traced to the Vedic Age. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, for example, states explicitly that bloodless sacrifices are superior to those in which blood is shed. Later on, the Sāṅkhya and the Yoga schools of philosophy paved the way for the Buddhist doctrines. Bolder spirits raised the standard of revolt against the traditional religion. The movements for reform culminated in the western part of the Madhyadeśa (The Middle Country, i.e., the Upper Gaṅgā Valley) in the rise of theistic systems which preached that devotion to Kṛṣṇa and Vāsudeva was the only means of liberation. The reform movements took a definitely anti-Brāhmaṇical turn in the eastern part of the Madhyadeśa and led to the rise of Buddhism and Jainism.

Gautama, the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was born about six hundred years before the advent of Christ. His father Śuddhodana, who belonged to the Śākya clan of the Kṣatriyas (the warrior caste), was the king of Kapilāvastu in Nepal Terai. Siddhārtha was the prince's real name, Gautama being his family name. His mother died a week after his birth and he was brought up by his aunt (mother's

sister) and step-mother Mahāprajāpati Gautamī.

Gautama married Yaśodharā (Gopā was her other name) and his son Rāhula was born of this wedlock. Gautama was of a religious temperament from his boyhood. He found the pleasures and ambitions of the world unsatisfying. The ideal of the mendicant life had an irresistible attraction for him. Śuddhodana's efforts to turn his son's mind to secular interests were unavailing and at the age of twentynine he (Gautama) left his home, donned the ascetic's garb and 'started his career as a wandering seeker of truth.' This was the 'great renunciation' or *Mahāviniṣkramaṇa*. (Dr. S. Radhakrishnan : *Gautama The Buddha*, second Indian Edition, p. 10) Gautama became the disciple of two Brāhmaṇa ascetics (Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta). They instructed him in their own doctrine and discipline. But the contents of their teaching seemed unsound to him. In any case, he might have learnt from them the need for belief, good conduct and the practice of meditation. Determined to attain illumination through austere asceticism and torture of the flesh, Gautama with five disciples retired to Uruvela, 'a pleasant spot and a beautiful forest', which soothed his eyes and stimulated his mind. 'It is a general assumption in India,' observes Dr. Radhakrishnan, 'that a holy life is led most easily in peaceful and beautiful landscapes which give a sense of repose and inspiration. Her temples and monasteries are on the banks of rivers or tops of hills, and all her emphasis on piety never made her forget the importance of scenery and climate for the effort of religion'. (Dr. S. Radhakrishnan : op. cit. p. 11). At Uruvela Gautama gave himself to religious practices including fasting, meditation and also mortification of the flesh. But illumination remained as elusive as ever. Austerities brought him to death's door. Yet

there was no glimpse of the riddle of life. Gautama concluded that asceticism was not the way to enlightenment. He tried to find out an alternative. Buddhist legends tell us that at this critical juncture when Gautama had lost his faith in old beliefs and not yet found anything on which he could pin his faith, he was assailed by *Māra*, the tempter. By terrors and temptations the latter tried in vain to shake Gautama from his purpose. These legends indicate that Gautama's 'inner life was not undisturbed and continuous'. It was with a great mental struggle that he broke away from his old religious moorings to try new methods. He persisted in his meditations and was at last rewarded with pure self-possession and perfect equanimity. He realized that the whole universe is 'a system of law' composed of striving creatures, happy or unhappy, noble or otherwise, 'continually passing away from one form of existence and taking shape in another'. In the last watch of the night 'ignorance was destroyed, knowledge had arisen' as he 'sat there, earnest, strenuous, resolute. Gautama had at last reached the journey's end. He had attained '*Bodhi*' (Illumination, Enlightenment) and became the Buddha, the Enlightened One. The word Buddha, it should be remembered, is a title like Christ or Messiah. It is not, however, confined to one individual.

Gautama first converted his five disciples who had borne him company in the years of his asceticism and preached his first sermon in the 'Mrigadāba' (the Deer Park) at Sarnāth in Varanasi. The event is known in Buddhist history as '*Dharmachakra pravartana*', i.e., setting in motion the wheel of religion.

Buddha taught his followers the four 'Noble Truths' (*Ārya Satya*) concerning suffering, the cause of suffering, the destruction of suffering and the way that leads to the end of suffering. That way did not lie in indulgence in sensual pleasures or

in the practice of asceticism. There was a golden mean, a 'Middle Path', called the 'Noble Eightfold Path', which consisted in: Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Efforts, Right Mindfulness and Right Contemplation. These and these alone were the paths that 'opened the eyes, bestowed understanding, led to peace of mind, to the higher understanding, to full enlightenment, to Nirvāṇa' or liberation. *Nirvāṇa* literally means the blowing out of the desire for existence and should not be confused with extinction. It is a tranquil state which can be reached by only those who are free from all desires.

The Buddha did not merely preach, but himself lived the kind of life which he asked others to live. He adopted a mendicant missionary's life 'with all its dangers of poverty, unpopularity and opposition'. He travelled far and wide for forty-five years and converted saints and sinners alike. Monks and Brāhmaṇas, hermits and outcasts, noble ladies and fallen women became his disciples. Much of his time and energy was given to instructing his disciples and the organization of the Buddhist Order (the *Saṅgha*). He died in Kuśīnagara (modern Kāsi in the Uttarpradesh of India or somewhere in Nepal) at the age of eighty. Gautama, the Buddha is a rare combination of 'spiritual profundity and moral strength of the highest order and a discreet intellectual reserve'. He is, in fact, one of the very few epoch-makers that history knows of, one with a message for his contemporaries as well as for the posterity.

Buddha's teachings were not written down in his life time. The disciples met at Rājgir within a few weeks of the Master's death and compiled his sayings and sermons. They were divided into three parts, viz., the *Vinaya Pitaka*, the *Sutta Pitaka* and the *Abhidhamma Pitaka*. The

first deals with the rules of conduct to be followed by the Buddhist monks. The second is a record of the sayings and doings of the Master while the third or last is a record of metaphysical disquisitions on various subjects. *Piṭaka* literally means a basket and the three *Piṭakas* are collectively called the *Tripitaka*, i.e., Three Baskets. They are all written in colloquial Pāli, the language in which the Master delivered his message to humanity. The meeting at Rājgir was the first Buddhist Council. The second Buddhist Council met at Vaiśālī a hundred years after the Master's death. The third Council met at the Maurya capital Pāṭaliputra during the reign of Emperor Aśoka Maurya (C. 273-232 B.C.). The fourth or last Buddhist Council convened by Emperor Kaniska met in Kashmir in the 1st or 2nd century A.D.

Buddha did not accept the authority of the Vedas. Nor did he believe in the caste system. Vedic rituals and sacrifices were meaningless to him. He preached that man made his destiny by his own actions (*karma*), that gods and goddesses had no hand in the matter. He, however, believed in the theory of the transmigration of the soul. *Ahiṃsā* (Non-violence, Non-injury to living beings) occupies a very prominent place in Buddhism. Buddha, we have seen above, favoured the Middle Path between the two extremes of sensuality and self-mortification. This is nothing new or original. Lord Kṛṣṇa too spoke in the same vein to Arjuna :

'Yoga is not for the man who over-eats or for him who fasts excessively. It is not for him who sleeps too much, or for the keeper of exaggerated vigils. Let a man be moderate in his eating and his recreation, moderately active, moderate in sleep and in wakefulness. He will find that Yoga takes away all his unhappiness'. (*Bhagavad Gītā* VI, 16, Vide Translation

by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, p. 65)

There are also many similarities between Buddhism on the one hand and the Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems of Brāhmaṇical philosophy on the other.

The Buddhists became divided in course of time into two principal sects, viz., the Hīnayānists (Followers of the Lesser Vehicle) and the Mahāyānists (Followers of the Greater Vehicle). The Hīnayāna creed was the original religion preached by the Master. The beginnings of the Mahāyāna creed may be traced to the 2nd century B.C. It took a definite shape during the reign of Emperor Kaniska, who ruled in the 2nd century A.D. The Mahāyāna school of Buddhism is, in fact, a half-way house between the old or Hīnayāna Buddhism and modern Hinduism. The Mahāyānist doctrine is immensely human and practical. The Mahāyānist monks were not recluses burying themselves in their cells each seeking his personal salvation. The active philanthropy preached by the Buddha in every *Jātaka* parable was revived by them. 'It (the Mahāyāna creed) was', says Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 'essentially a religion of the service of man, though at the same time it produced great scholars too'. (*India Through the Ages*, Second Edition, p. 41) Its gorgeous rituals, its cult of '*Bhakti*' or devotion to a personal saviour and its programme of active humanitarianism made an almost irresistible appeal to the emotions of man and it became a very popular religion. It made a god or rather the king of the gods of Buddha, too high above us to be approached directly by mortals. The 'Bodhisattvas' or Buddhas in the making became intermediaries between man and the Buddha. The worship of the 'Bodhisattvas' practically superseded the worship of the Buddha in course of time and the votive statues of the former almost drove those of the latter out of the field.



Buddhism, only a local sect of Northern India in the beginning, first became an all-India religion through the powerful patronage of Emperor Aśoka Maurya and finally crossed the frontiers of India and won many adherents in foreign lands. The Buddhists account for about a third of the world population today; but Buddhism has practically died out in the land of its birth. The ethics of Buddhism has, however, become the common heritage of all Hindus and the great Hindu reformer Śaṅkarācārya adopted the social principles of Buddhism by ignoring caste distinctions in the monastic Orders—there were ten of them—founded by him. It was for this, perhaps, that his Brāhmanical opponents condemned him as a Buddhist in Hindu garb. Thus Buddhism has disappeared from India more in a material than a spiritual sense. Besides, the prevalence of Buddhist thought in Indian universities must have done a lot in substituting scientific investigation of cause and effect for a blind acceptance of scriptural authority. Buddhism injected new vitality into the life and thought of India and enriched its life and culture. It gave a popular religion without complicated and unintelligible rituals. It attracted people to itself by its simplicity, by its emotional element, its simple ethical code, the use of Pāli, the language of the people, in its scriptures and its popular method of teaching by parables and its congregational worship.

Image-worship and temple-building in India probably owe their origin to the Buddhists. The earliest statues of the Buddha were set up to commemorate a

great teacher that the Buddha was. But they began to be worshipped as representatives of the Godhead before long. The monastic system, i.e., the banding together of the spiritual aspirants into a fraternity of monks, who have renounced the world, obeying a common head and living together under a common code of discipline was unknown in pre-Buddhist India. The system undoubtedly owes its origin to Buddhism.

Buddhism created a vast and varied literature in the spoken language of the day and thus threw open the portals of the temple of learning and knowledge to the masses. Indian sculpture and architecture would not have been what they are but for Buddhism. Vedic Aryans had totally ignored the fine arts, which, introduced by the Buddhists, continued with growing volume in the later Hindu period. The dedication of cave temples begun by the Buddhists was followed by the Hindus and the Jainas in the later period of Indian history.

Buddhism brought India in close contact with foreign countries. It is the greatest gift of India to the world. Essentially a universal movement, independent alike of theology and ritual, it was 'a force irrespective alike of country and caste', which the ancient East as a whole could accept without any difficulty. Indian monks and scholars carried the message of the Blessed One to foreign lands from the 3rd century B.C. onwards. Foreign countries looked upon India as their holy land, the cradle of their faith, 'a pilgrimage to which was the crowning act of a pious householder's life'. (ibid., p. 22)

# GEORGE BOOLE'S PROPOSITIONAL LOGIC

SRI R. D. MISRA

A special characteristic of Boole's calculus is that it admits of two interpretations: in class logic as well as in propositional logic. In both of his monumental works, he suggests a convention whereby 'X=1' may be taken to mean that the proposition X is true and 'X=0' that the proposition X is false. In accordance with this usage, the truth-value of more complicated propositions can be represented by functions of small letters, e.g. the truth-value of the conjunction of X and Y by 'xy' and the truth-value of the exclusive disjunction of X and Y by 'x+y'. Evidently, we have here all that is needed for an interpretation of Boole's system in terms of the truth-value of propositions, with 1 for truth and 0 for falsity. (G. Boole: *The Mathematical Analysis of Logic*, p. 51)

Boole clearly recognizes the two distinguishable meanings of the word 'or': inclusive and exclusive, although he favours only the latter one. His successors have called the inclusive sense as the 'logical sum'. In fact, Boole's often misconstrued notation for disjunction can be worked out only due to the fact that the alternatives, with which he is concerned, are all of the mutually exclusive kind. This is presumably, because his system is based on the method of dichotomy. Venn and his followers have rightly credited Boole's expressions to have the merit of great clarity and precision, since one of the things that symbolic language can and should do is to improve upon popular vagueness, by keeping distinct such meanings and not merging them together. (*Mind*, 1, 1876, p. 489 & 3, 1878, p. 135) Boole's system, however, has no symbol for implication nor yet one for negation, and both of these operations are introduced by means of more complex formulae.

In his view, propositions either assert a

relation among things or a relation among propositions. All propositions may, therefore, be divided into two great classes: Primary or Concrete and Secondary or Abstract. (G. Boole: *The Laws of Thought*, p. 52) An assertion in respect of the properties of things is the assertion of a relation among things. To say that 'Snow is white' is logically equivalent to saying that 'Snow is a white thing', and hence all such propositions are Primary. But an assertion respecting facts or events, their mutual connexion and dependence, is generally equivalent to the assertion that such and such propositions, concerning these events, have a certain relation to one another in respect of their mutual truth or falsehood. All such propositions are Secondary. The distinction in practice is nearly, but not quite co-extensive with, the familiar distinction between categorical and hypothetical propositions. All Secondary propositions express a relation of dependence between two or more Primary propositions. Every Primary proposition, however, may give rise to a Secondary one which asserts its truth or declares its falsehood, e.g. the Primary proposition 'The sun shines' may yield the Secondary proposition 'It is true that the sun shines'. Generally the epithets 'if', 'either', 'or' etc. indicate the Secondary nature of a proposition, but they do not necessarily imply that such is the case.

All Secondary propositions, thinks Boole, have an essential connexion with the notion of time. (ibid., p. 163) Thus while the application of a Primary proposition is limited by the word 'some', that of a Secondary proposition is limited by the word 'sometime'. To say 'sometimes injustice triumphs' is equivalent to saying that there are times in which the proposition 'Injustice now triumphs' is a true proposition. There are other propositions, however, where truth is not thus

limited to particular periods, and all such propositions true throughout all times are 'eternal truths'. But the forms of language, in which both kinds of propositions are expressed, manifest a common dependence upon the idea of time, in one case as limited to some finite duration and in the other as stretched out to eternity. The truth of a proposition thus both implies and is implied by the occurrence of an event.

In order to express both Primary and Secondary propositions Boole uses the same symbols and holds them to be subject to the same laws, for the difference between the two cases is 'a difference not of form but of interpretation'. (ibid., p. 54) In both cases the actual relation, which it is the object of the proposition to express, is denoted by the sign of equality. Even those critics of Boole, who hold that the equational form cannot be regarded as the primary one, have at least this much to concede that it is a form in which a proposition may be expressed. Boole has really done a considerable service to the cause of symbolic logic by discovering such relations between propositions and terms.

While examining the second interpretation of Boole's calculus, a defect in his treatment of particular propositions may be pointed out. His symbolism lacks the quantifiers of the later systems. In his treatment, letters primarily represent classes; thus we may compare his  $x$ 's and  $y$ 's to Russell's  $a$ 's and  $b$ 's. But owing to the fact that Boole has no symbol for class-membership, no symbol for individual, no incomplete symbols like existential quantifier, and consequently no expression of the form 'There exists at least one  $x$  such that  $x$  is ...', he is faced with the problem of expressing the particular propositions solely by relations of equality among classes. But to do this satisfactorily is almost impossible. Schroeder, whose system resembles that of Boole in many respects, used inequalities. But Boole does not do even that presumably

from his desire to keep as close to ordinary algebraic equations as possible.

Regarding the distinction between Primary and Secondary propositions, in so far as it coincides with that of Schroeder, it seems quite genuine. A proposition which asserts a quality of a proposition, or a relation between two propositions, may fairly be called Secondary. Thus 'P is true', 'P is necessary', 'P implies Q' etc. are all Secondary ones. Now Boole agrees so far with this as to call such cases Secondary propositions (i) which ascribe the quality of truth or falsehood to propositions, and (ii) those which assert a relation of disjunction or implication between two or more propositions. But he does not count as Secondary (iii) propositions of the form 'For all values of  $x$ , if  $x$  is... then  $x$  is ...', nor the corresponding disjunctives. There seems to be no good ground for this distinction and Boole's error undoubtedly arises from the fact that he does not clearly recognize the distinction between propositions and propositional-functions, and between real and apparent variables. If Boole had carried his analysis further and declined to regard equations, expressing identity between classes, as ultimate, he would have seen the facts otherwise. Primary propositions are really by no means common, and the great number of the so-called Primary propositions are really assertions about the formal equivalence of functions.

As regards the connexion of Secondary propositions with time, it is true that the propositions asserting relations between events do contain an essential relation to time. But when Boole tries to make propositions like 'P is true' refer to time, his doctrine loses all its plausibility. It lacks still further when we remember that a vast number of hypothetical propositions are not about events at all, but about essentially timeless objects. Take, for example, the proposition 'If 3 includes 2 and 2 includes 1 then 3 includes 1'. It is surely preposterous to offer as the meaning of this proposition as 'The class of moments at which it is

true that 3 includes 2 and 2 includes 1 is identical with some part of the class of moments at which 3 includes 1'. The absurdity is due to the fact that the notions like 1, 2 and 3 are timeless and the relations between them are timeless too.

Further, Boole identifies eternal truths with propositions which are true at all times. But this seems to contain a double error. First, all propositions, if true at all, are true independently of time. When we say that a proposition about X is sometimes true, we mean that a function involving x and t gives true propositions for certain values of t. This is disguised by the facts (i) that all assertions about events really involve reference to the time at which they happen; and (ii) that this reference is often not made explicit in speech and writing. Take, for example, the statement 'Nehru is dead'. Now this seems to stand for a proposition and to be true sometimes and false at others. But the fact is that, since the death of Nehru is an event, this form of words is incomplete, for it contains no explicit reference to time. The same form of words as used by me, and as used by somebody else prior to Nehru's death, does not stand for the same proposition, and, therefore, the fact that my statement would be true and the other per-

son's verbally identical statement false, does not prove that any same proposition has been false and has become true.

Secondly, a proposition, which is always true is an assertion that a function involving time gives true propositions for all values of t. Thus, for instance, the proposition 'If amber be rubbed with silk, it becomes electrically charged' means 'If at any time amber be rubbed with silk, it then becomes electrically charged at that time'. Such propositions are always about events. An eternally true proposition is one about the timeless qualities or relations of timeless objects. The whole of mathematics and logic provides an example of this.

To conclude, it may be observed that a logician, eager to break new grounds in symbolic logic, is always torn between two ideals: first, that of establishing a symbolism as simple and fruitful as possible and, secondly, that of recognizing every distinction among propositions and of analysing the different kinds as fully and accurately as possible. Boole and Frege illustrate the striving after the first and the second of these ideals respectively. It was only the merit of Russell and Whitehead's system to hold the balance evenly between them.

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## YESTERDAY AND TODAY

SRI J. M. GANGULI

Things change and transform,—but the change is not always towards a higher order as the evolutionists sharply conclude from their observation of some stages of natural phenomena. Hasn't man evolved from lower forms of life?—is a strong point in their hypothesis, but wider, deeper and more patient observation often belies their argument. In nature growth and decay, rise and fall, forming and breaking—go on

cyclically, there being little in the process to suggest that the transformation is for the better or for the worse. The young plant grows, dresses up with soft thick foliage, flowers and brings out fruits, and then stands stultified, looks down and begins to wither. And so goes the living world. The child grows, develops physically, mentally and emotionally, blossoms into youth, ripens into maturity and then takes

the reverse order, shrinks, wrinkles and lies down to rise no more. And out in the universe, the sun shines bright and brighter and then cools and is lost in gloom; the thin hydrogen integrates and through years and years of gradual aggregation forms the nebulae and then bursts and breaks and thins again, changing and transforming all the time, but not necessarily evolving to something higher and better or more purposeful. Whether the universe pulsates or goes through a steady repetitive process the evolutionists cannot derive from that any evidence that could give colour to their way of thinking and postulating. But that does not discourage them from being dogmatic when they apply their theory to man. Through generations man has been evolving to a higher order is their assumption. It is from ape to man and from man to a better man, more developed in intellect, intelligence, culture, skill and all round capabilities, and this thinking has led them to many emphatic assertions. Civilization has been progressing; culture today is more advanced than yesterday's; and so man is superior to his ancient forefather. The picture of a South-Seas island inhabitant or of an Australian aboriginal placed by the side of the picture of a well-dressed modern man is enough verification of the above to many. Yet there are points to consider.

Leaving aside what is happening in the outer universe, how galaxies, stars and planets form, break and reform, if we look at this small planet, it becomes difficult for us to ascertain how the trend of evolution has been, whether it has been straight upward or whether it has suffered ups and downs and its course has been zig-zag. In the past there were mammals bigger than those of today. Aborigines exist even today in several parts of the earth, while in the civilized parts are also found humans who are inferior in physique, intellect, skill and intelligence to

those in the uncivilized parts—a fact which does not indicate a straight upward trend in evolution. Ancient architecture and handicraft often compare very favourably with the modern. Not merely many ancient architectures show greater aesthetic sense, better judgement of proportion, and subtler ideas than the modern productions, which 'sell' more by means of advertisements than by merit. And so do also paintings and handicraft. Many ancient majestic statues can look contemptuously on uninspired efforts of many modern sculptors.

What such relics reveal in particular are the patience, devotion and concentration of the artists and they are so glaringly missing today. Art today is more of a business than a creation, more a profession than work of love and inspiration. And therefore it cannot face Time and defy it. Intensive advertisement and propaganda are needed to keep it going. But when one stands in front of an ancient monument, a temple or a statue, instead of hustling past, clicking the camera and remarking casually 'A fine piece' one goes into meditation. The creator of it stands before him, his heart exposed inside the heart of his creation. The visitor stands away, hesitant to go near and touch the subtle touches of the creator on his creation.

For a creation like this the business methods of the producer or the trade union mentality of the workers and artisans will not do; there must be love, devotion and concentration. And are not love, devotion, keenness, sentiments and ideas the criteria of culture and advance? A visit to a museum where specimens of ancient fabrics, embroidery, stone work, sculpture, woodwork, etc., are kept, will be revealing to those, who persevere in their faith that today must bring the new dawn after yesterday's gloom.

More impressively a look back into the

history and literature of periods of human evolutions which have sunk into antiquity is revealing. The sweep of vision, the depth of thought, the keenness and patience to go below the surface, the interest in abstraction of truth from matters of experience, the attitude to think—all these of the past stand out in marked contrast with what they are today. I know that a remark like this would stir up vehement disagreement in some quarters, but without wanting to defend nor meaning to be rigid on the scope of the remark, I would urge one consideration to the quick oppositionists. For deep thinking, close observation, and philosophical probe one requires a quiet living. With one eye on the watch on the wrist and the other scanning now and then the appointment diary, meditation, philosophic insight and concentration on abstraction are hardly possible. It is true that our civilization provides many pleasing amenities and very many comfortable facilities for work, both physical and mental; but it has imposed on us so many conventions, social obligations and inevitable musts in daily life. For the modern man there is no time for concentration and thinking which the yesterday's thinkers could have in their forest or cave seclusion or in their simpler life in the quiet environment that they built around them even in a metropolis.

No wonder their thoughts, their originality, their vision have stood pre-eminently over the horizon of human imagination. One has to stand in front of Buddha's image in his supremely meditative pose to realize why, restless that we are, we cannot meet his eyes and look down into them. And so had sat those who expounded Sāṅkhya, Vedānta and the Upaniṣads and other great thoughts. The sad absence of anything reaching up to the heights of their ideas and philosophies for over two thousand years should call for a revision of the conventional ideas about human

evolution. Moreover, those ideas and philosophies should have led later thinkers to deeper penetration if the evolution law of development had followed a direct course. Same thing is found in the West. Without the ancient Greek philosophies European philosophy is hollow. Besides the more ancient religions, Christianity and Islam are also about two thousand years old. Why during this long period no Son of God was born in Europe?

Let me not be misunderstood if I say that the ancient religions are deeper in thought, more rational in outlook and more comprehensive in philosophy than the religions of the current era. The latter ones have stood more on faith and heresay miracles than on intellect, and hence they have spread more among the unthinking masses than among rational thinkers. The book-based religions serve assertive statements and declarations which have to be accepted with humility. The philosophy which aims at answering whys, wherefors, wherefroms, and wheretos, not simply about matters pertaining to man's life but also about the wider world, the vaster creation of which man is a tiny bit, forms no chapter in such books. For that one has to descend deeper into the past beyond two thousand years. Why, one is impelled to ask, no conception, no religion or no philosophy, grander in concept and more exciting in originality has evolved during this long era, in which a man's pastime has been no better than re-writing, translating, re-arranging and re-comparing different interpretations of the master thoughts of another age?

Leaving religion and philosophy let us come to literature and see the current trend. Why the great epics have disappeared and the classics of even recent yesterday? An ever increasing number of books and periodicals are published today, but, according to an American friend,

the periodicals and book publishers want 'strong stories' with 'slant to sex and crime', and these are on display on shop windows. For anything different one has to go and search in university libraries. And periodicals devote three-fourths of space to advertisements and fill up the rest by some light, humorous materials which are generally of unhealthy taste. The American's remarks apply to other countries as well.

The return in dollars, pounds or rupees is what matters and that consideration rules the mind and rules the ruling civilization. This is the general picture. But this picture does not satisfy; it provokes thinking. Should Yesterday be damned and should the glamour of Today be allowed to tickle our vanity? The cause and effect link between the two may hold the key to something of very worthwhile significance.

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## BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ AND KANT

SRI GUNAKAR JHA

Mind occupies an important position in the whole of human constitution. It is only because of the function of the mind that man can control the nature. Man's condition at the time of birth is most pitiable but for his mind he can surpass all conditions and control everything. *Gītā* considers man as oscillating between the two extreme poles—crass matter and divinity. All creatures of the nature can be put in between these extremes. But only man oscillates. Other creatures remain static in their respective positions. They remain where they are. But man makes a choice and therefore can either attain to divinity or can go back to the crass matter. Animals cannot go back; man can do so. And, that is why, man at times becomes more ferocious than the animals.

Now this function is possible because of the mind playing its unique role. Kant thinks that mind prescribes laws to nature. We live more in humanized nature than in the natural nature. We can know only the phenomena. All the laws of the nature can be discovered in the mind if we concentrate upon the *apriori* conditions of the mind. In philosophical

and physical plane, the dictates of the understanding should be followed. In the ethical plane, the dictates of good-will determine our conduct. Good-will is self-determining and self-determined. It is *sui generis*. It is self-luminous. It is not guided by love, affection, sympathy, etc. Hence actions guided by love, affection, etc. are pathological and not purely ethical. Kant has, therefore, the concept of 'duty for duty's sake'.

When we look into the teaching of the *Gītā* we find that *Gītā* surpasses Kantian teaching which is too rigorous and unpracticable for the common man. We can compare Kantian 'understanding' to that of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, 'Just as the mighty air moving everywhere is contained in space, so all things are contained in Me'. (Ch. IX. 6) Again it is said "The whole world is sustained by God'. (Ch. X. 42)

If we pause a while and think about the peculiar situation which has given rise to the teachings of the *Gītā* we find that perplexed Arjuna shrinking back from the war against his own kith and kin. Lord Kṛṣṇa enkindles his reasoning faculty and makes him (Arjuna) understand that

everything emanates from Him and would return to Him. But how can everything come from a man (Kṛṣṇa) and return unto him? We can here refer to the metaphorical meaning and not the literal sense contained in it. The episodes of the *Mahābhārata* are eternal. Life is complicated and not smooth and, therefore, the whole life is a scene of the *Mahābhārata*. Arjuna is the symbol of ordinary man swayed by attachment. Kṛṣṇa is the symbol of inner reason which controls his outer sentiments. This inner reason is all powerful. The entire cosmos is its creation. To realize this inner reason is to realize God. God is nowhere but within ourselves. *Gītā* here goes a step forward than Kant and claims to know even the *noumenon*.

Further, Kant would regard the extirpation of sensibility as essential. *Gītā* is more logical than Kant in realizing that sensibility should not be neglected or extirpated but should rather be regulated under the guidance of reason. The very first chapter of the *Gītā* shows that the horses are running riot and are controlled by Kṛṣṇa who is sitting on the chariot. The horses here symbolize the sense organs of ours trying to run after their respective sense objects but they are properly controlled by reason. *Gītā* makes it sufficiently clear that those who are guided by the dictates of senses, etc. are ultimately destroyed. 'If a man constantly contemplates on objects of enjoyment he becomes attached to them. This attachment leads to lust, lust begets anger, anger gives rise to infatuation, infatuation causes loss of memory, which in turn leads to loss of intellect and it ultimately results in destruction'. (Ch. II, 62, 63)

*Gītā* is also conscious of the fact that for the time being one can be guided by reason but unless there is constant meditation, one is liable to lapse in the old habit of thinking. To liberate the mind from bon-

dage constant meditation is essential. That brings equanimity, serenity and suppleness of the mind. Arjuna was seen to lapse in sentiments for many times but was protected by the constant guide, Lord Kṛṣṇa (reason). *Gītā* is very conscious of a blending of reason and sentiment.

*Gītā's* duty for duty's sake always reminds us of a broad harmonizing synthesis. If the duty is performed under the influence of consequences, there is every likelihood of man's inclination to sentiments and once this inclination starts, man will lose his balance and will eventually be destroyed. So *Gītā* says: do your duty without caring for the results.

For Kant there is no need of such blending of reason and sentiment. He neglects sentiments, elevates reason and so his duty for duty's sake becomes 'categorical imperative'.

Further, *Gītā* believes in the psychological study of man. It divides man under three basic categories: those who are guided by reason, those who are guided by devotion and those who are guided by work. Liberation, according to *Gītā*, can be attained by either of the ways.

The *Gītā* insists upon the unity of the life which cannot be resolved into parts like philosophic wisdom, devoted love or selfless action. Work, knowledge and devotion are complementary to one another both when we seek the goal and after we attain to it. All may not proceed on the same line but that which we seek is the same. True knowledge is personified as a being whose body is discrimination and whose heart is love. *Yoga*, too has its phases, as knowledge and meditation. Selfless service is the ancient road that leads one from darkness to light.

The *Gītā* speaks of liberation which rests not in isolation of the immortal spirit from the mortal human life, but in the transfiguration of the whole man. It is attained



not by destroying but by transfiguring the tension of human life. The body, life and mind are not dissolved but are rendered pure to become the means and mould of the divine light. According to Sāṅkhya system, even those who are qualified for the highest wisdom or liberation on account of their merits do not give up the world. Merging themselves in the body of Prakṛti these souls continue to serve the interests of the universe.

The *Gītā* makes out that the one reality which is of the nature of undivided consciousness is called Brahman, the supreme Self. That is the ultimate principle, the real

Self in us as well as the God of our worship. This God is personal God who is responsible for the creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe. He is the enjoyer and Lord of all sacrifices; he is the source and sustainer of all values. He enters into personal relations with us in worship and prayer.

The *Gītā* speaks of *Ānanda* as the culmination of our development and we grow into it from the level of *Vijñāna*.

Thus *Gītā* sees the life and universe in a more realistic way than others and paves the way for better understanding among ourselves.

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

Prof. M. K. Venkatarama Iyer M.A., formerly Head of the Department of Philosophy, Annamalai University, makes a thoughtful study on 'The Universe: Its Ontological Status According to Advaita Vedānta'.

Professor William E. Hookens is the professor of English and the Head of the Department of English at Sri Nilkanteswara Government Post-Graduate College, Khandwa, Madhyapradesh. In his present article he reviews 'The Joys of Literature.'

Devaprasad Bhattacharya M.A., D.Phil (Cal) is the Senior Lecturer in Sripat Singh College, Murshidabad, West Bengal. His present article on 'Jaina Views on Causation: An Advaitic Approach' is an important analysis on the subject.

Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookherjee, M.A.,

Head of the Department of History, Surendra Nath College, Calcutta presents in his article a short but lucid historical account of 'Buddhism' and describes it to be a great culmination of Indian national life.

Sri R. D. Misra, M.A., Lecturer, in the Department of Philosophy, Kurukshetra University, studies in his article here the merits of 'George Boole's Propositional Logic'.

In his short article on 'Yesterday and Today' Sri J. M. Ganguli, M.Sc., LL.B., of Calcutta draws a comparison between the past and present of human progress.

In 'Bhagavad-Gītā and Kant' Sri Gunakar Jha of the Department of Philosophy, B.S. College, Dinapore, Patna, compares the 'categorical imperatives' of Kant with the view of life as depicted in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**METHODS OF KNOWLEDGE.** By SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. 1965. Pages 366. Price 50 shillings net.

A unique feature of Indian philosophical enquiry has been the stress placed on an enquiry into the methodology. Knowing how is as important a problem as knowing what. Almost all the systems of Indian philosophy devote proper attention to an examination of the means of knowledge called the *pramāṇas*. It is probably only the *Brahma-Sūtras* that do not take up this epistemological enquiry; and Śrī Śaṅkara too does not tell us at any one place anything about the importance of these *pramāṇas*. In later times the Advaita Vedānta took upon itself the epistemology of the Bhāṭṭa School of Mīmāṃsā. This has led to the belief that in Advaita the metaphysical truths are the basis for an epistemological enquiry. The Swami accepts this position in the present work. (p. 63) This is debatable. The *adhyāsa-bhāṣya* of Śrī Śaṅkara appears to point out that it is the epistemological or empirical situation that led him to the theory of the Absolute.

In the present work Swami Satprakashananda, Head of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A. undertakes a lucid and thorough examination of the perceptual, non-perceptual, and transcendental methods of knowledge according to Advaita Vedānta. Closely following the *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*, the learned author explains and examines the six means of knowledge. The treatment of perception (*pratyakṣa*) is masterly. He points out how the Vedāntic approach removes some of the difficulties faced by the western thinkers. But it may be pointed out that a reliance on *vṛttī*, which follows the Vivaraṇa school, is bound to land us in a kind of representative theory. This can be overcome if *vṛttī* is interpreted as an epistemic act and if an image of the object is not necessary for a perceptual experience. But the Swami takes the *vṛttī* as a 'modification of *antaḥkāraṇa* in the form of the object'. (p. 88) This is the '*tadākāra vṛttī*' which squares well with solipsism; and Advaita Vedānta is not solipsistic. Notwithstanding this difficulty the Swami has clearly explained the basic identity of subject, object and means in a perceptual experience.

After establishing the self-validity of knowledge, the author examines erroneous perception briefly. Then he examines inference, comparison and postulation. The last one is *arthāpatti* which appears to be a kind of implication. A brilliant discussion centres round the way of apprehending non-existence.

The second part of the book spread over the last five chapters is devoted to an examination of verbal testimony. This is the most valuable part of the work in that it is a rational and convincing presentation of the validity of Vedic texts. The Vedic texts are the nucleus of a faith; and since they embody the highest spiritual experiences possible to souls, one can believe in them as true. There is 'reason implicit in faith'. (p. 191) The verbal testimony is the means of suprasensuous knowledge, as the other *pramāṇas* give us empirical knowledge.

In this part of the book again the author follows the Vivaraṇa school. He shows convincingly that the revealed Śruti is the only means to the knowledge of nondual Brahman. Interspersed in this account is a brilliant exposition of the concepts of *ṛta* and *karma*.

There is no contradiction between the Śruti and sense-perception. As the Swami observes: 'The Vedic dicta are not meant to be accepted as dogmas. It is by reasoning on them that their true meanings have to be found and grasped before they can be followed as guiding principles with inner conviction.' (p. 245)

The last two chapters present a brilliant exposition of the *mahāvākyas*.

The present work supersedes all similar works including Dr. D. M. Datta's *The Six Ways of Knowing*. Written in an easy, racy style, it presents complicated epistemological and metaphysical problems with a rare clarity. The work is a *must* for every genuine student of philosophy.

The Appendices give a brief account of the Vedic texts, the six Vedic schools of philosophy, yogic dualism, and the yogic method of meditation.

Now that this book is available no one can say that he cannot understand the epistemology of Advaita Vedānta.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CHERRAPUNJI

REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1959-1964.

This branch of the Ramakrishna Mission in the Khasi Hills area was started in 1931. The activities which it conducts at different places are mainly educational. The Report reveals the following institutions and their activities:

*The High School, Cherrapunji:* The High School, started in 1938, stands as one of the few full-fledged and organized high schools in the whole of Khasi Hills outside Shillong. It attracts students, not only from the different parts of the Khasi Hills, but also from places like Naga Hills, Mizo Hills and Manipur. So far 240 students have passed Matriculation examination from this institution and a good many of them have distinguished themselves as men of character and ability. The roll strength as on July, 1964 was 503 and the percentages of passes in the Matriculation Examinations from 1960 to 1964 were 79%, 70.6%, 68.2%, 88.8% and 72.2% respectively. A library, reading room and a science wing were added after 1947. The library contains 10,000 books at present. In the Technical Section of the High School weaving, tailoring, type-writing, carpentry and photography are taught as vocational subjects. The students are made to follow a disciplined life of prayer, study, sports, literary and other extra-curricular activities in the school.

*Nursery and Primary Schools, Cherrapunji:* One nursery-primary school was originally started in 1931 as a part of the then Middle English School and later on two more branches were opened in two other parts of the village namely, Maraikaphon and Pomsohmen.

*The Students' Home, Cherrapunji:* The Students' Home is run under the direct supervision of the Mission. Boarders are kept under the affectionate care of the monastic members, and prayer, study, work and games form the daily routine of the home. Special care is taken to inculcate in the minds of the students the respect for the religious sentiments of all communities. Total number of boarders during 1963-64 was 109 and the number of the students enjoying concession was 100.

Attached to the Home there is a dairy with 65

heads of cattle. The yield of milk is used in the Students' Home.

*The Ashrama, Cherrapunji:* Regular religious classes and *bhajan*s in Khasi language are conducted at the Ashrama and birthdays of great saints including those of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are duly observed.

*The Sohbar Sub-Centre:* One Middle English School and a Students' Home of 8 boys are run at this sub-centre. The Technical Section teaches weaving, carpet-making, basket-making, poultry and bee-keeping as vocational subjects. All the sections functioned successfully during the period.

*The Shella Sub-Centre:* Educational activity in the Khasi Hills had its origin at Shella with the opening of a free primary school in 1924. Religious classes, devotional songs, *Durgā-pūjā* form items of activities of this sub-Centre. The Middle English School with its primary section, the Free Reading Room and the Community hall of the Centre continued to operate properly.

*The Nongwar Sub-Centre:* The Middle English School, the Adult Night School, the Library and the Free Reading Room at this sub-Centre all worked regularly during the period.

*Schools at other places:* There are M. E. and Primary schools with a boys' hostel at Laitduh, M. E. and Primary schools at Mawkdok, Laitdiengsai, Nongkynrih, Wablong and one M. E. school at Wahkaliar. Besides, each of the places as Mawsahew, Laitryngew, Laitmawsiang, Ryngimawsaw, Laitlyndop, Ladmawphlang, Swer, Umblai, Mawmluh, Mawsmal, Mawkma, Mawrah, Laitkroh, Myllem and Mawshamok has one nursery and one primary school there.

*Other Activities:* Regular internal inspections are maintained in all the schools for better efficiency, educational tours and seminars are organized to give an opportunity to the tribal students to acquire better knowledge of the country and its culture.

The Mission organizes scientific bee-keeping in South Khasi Hills where villagers are persuaded to adopt scientific methods of bee-keeping.

The Mobile Children's Library has been started by the Mission with the help of the Social Welfare Board. Books and medicines are taken to different schools in the interior with the help of a jeep. All the sections worked properly during the period.