



Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. 85

SEPTEMBER 1980

No. 9

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

INTEGRAL VISION OF VEDIC SEERS*

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

को ददर्श प्रथमं जायमानम-
स्थन्वन्तं यदनस्था विभर्ति ।
भूम्या असुरसृगात्मा क्व स्वित्
को विद्वांसमुप गात् प्रष्टुमेतत् ॥

पाकः पृच्छामि मनसाविजानन्
देवानामेना निहिता पदानि ।
वत्से बष्कयेऽधि सप्त तन्तून्
वि तत्तिरे कवय ओतवा उ ॥

इह ब्रवीतु य ईमङ्ग वेदास्य
वामस्य निहितं पदं वेः ।
शीर्ष्णः क्षीरं दुहते गावो अस्य
वर्त्रि वसाना उदकं पदापुः ॥

1. Who saw the Creation? [Before creation] how did the boneless one¹ carry the bony?² Where then was the life (*asuh*), the blood (*asrk*) and the self (*ātmā*) of this earth? Who went to the wise man to ask this?³

Rg-Veda 1.164.4

2. Immature and ignorant, I ask about those truths which are not known even to the gods.⁴ Over the young (*baṣkaye*) calf the sages have spread the seven threads in order to weave (*otavai*).⁵

Rg-Veda 1.164.5

3. Let him declare here who knows this : the hidden abode of this beautiful bird (*veh*). From his head the cows draw milk; wearing his dress they drink water with their feet.⁶

Rg-Veda 1.164.7

* More selections from the celebrated *Asya Vāmasya* hymn, which is full of interesting riddles and obscure symbolism.

1. According to Sāyaṇa, *anasthā* (the boneless one) refers to Prakṛti, the unmanifested primal cause of the universe. Note that the word is in the feminine gender.

2. The 'bony one' means the manifested universe—physical and mental.

3. In other words, before Creation the Supreme Being alone existed without a second. Who then would ask whom?

4. Or, says Sāyaṇa, 'I ask about those hidden worlds of the gods.'

5. The real meaning of the 'calf' and the 'seven threads' is not clear. According to Sāyaṇa, 'calf' means the sun; the 'seven threads' stand for the seven forms of some sacrifice or the seven metres of the Vedas.

6. The import of this verse is obscure. Sāyaṇa interprets 'bird' as the sun, and 'cows' as the rays. The second line thus means: 'The sun's rays send down rain and dry up the waters of the earth.'

ABOUT THIS NUMBER

Vṛtti and *samskāra* are the gross and subtle aspects of all mental processes. The former was discussed last month. This month's EDITORIAL discusses *samskāra*.

Meditation on one's Chosen Ideal and contact with an illumined teacher gradually bring about great changes in the consciousness of the spiritual aspirant, the most important of which is imbibing their spirit of love and compassion. This is the central theme of a remarkably beautiful and thought-provoking article, COMPASSION, THE LAW OF LAWS by Margaret Bedrosian of the University of California, Davis.

Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender are the three basic disciplines taught by Sri Aurobindo. In the fourth instalment of INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO, Sri M. P. Pandit discusses Surrender—its meaning and practice.

Prof. Ranjit Kumar Acharjee of

Ramakrishna Mahavidyalaya, Kailashahar, North Tripura, has prepared a PROFILE of Dr. Radhakrishnan whose birthday falls in this month.

INFLUENCE OF SANKARA AND BUDDHA ON VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY by Dr. Tapash Sankar Dutta, Head of the Department of Philosophy, G. C. College, Silchar (Assam), is a synopsis of his doctoral thesis.

In the seventh instalment of IS VEDANTA A PHILOSOPHY OF ESCAPE? Dr. Vinita Wanchoo clears a good deal of misunderstanding about a much maligned concept—pessimism. Apart from its philosophical merit, the discussion may prove to be a consolation to many people.

Continuing his story of ST. TERESA, BRIDE OF THE SUN, Swami Atmarupananda recaptures the joy of renunciation, love and holiness that animated the convents newly founded by St. Teresa.

CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION—III

(EDITORIAL)

Dissociation of awareness

When you sit for meditation and close your eyes, almost the first thing you notice is that your awareness is not continuous. It does not consist of a single, homogeneous stream but flows as different, sometimes disconnected, streams of thought. Psychologists call this phenomenon 'dissociation'. By dissociation is meant, not the appearance of various pictures in the mind, but the emotional sectioning of the mind and the identification of the self with each division.

Dissociation of awareness is man's

response to the diverse challenges of life. An average person has to play a number of roles in day-to-day life : as a son, father, husband, worker, boss, tax-prayer, citizen, artist, thinker, etc. In a normal person all these diverse activities are held together by the common bond of self-awareness. There is in man a unifying centre known as the self which gives identity to his existence, continuity to his experience, and wholeness to his personality. In the Upaniṣads the self is often compared to the hub of life to which the spokes of life-activities are attached.¹

1. Cf. *Prasna Upaniṣad*, 6.6.

However, under certain abnormal conditions produced by stress and emotional conflicts, dissociation becomes so strong that the self is unable to integrate the contradictory streams of thought. The person in whom this happens comes to have a divided personality and lives in mutually incompatible worlds. When this process is carried to an extreme, it may result in neurosis or something worse. It was as an explanation of neurosis that the phenomenon of dissociation was first discovered by the French psychologist Pierre Janet in the middle of the last century. However, as already mentioned, mild forms of dissociation occur almost every minute in a normal person, and are a big problem in meditative life. Spiritual aspirants must understand the nature and cause of dissociation.

The immediate cause of dissociation is the presence of obstructions in the mind which prevent the free and uniform flow of awareness. What are these obstructions? Western psychologists call them by various names: instincts, drives, impulses, complexes. In Indian psychology these are called *samskāras* and are regarded as latent impressions produced by earlier experiences, including those of previous births. These 'impressions' are not like dots on a paper. They are rather like fields of mental forces. Just as a river is divided into different branches by big rocks or sandbars, so the stream of thoughts is divided into different branches by *samskāras*.

Investigation into the way compulsive emotional drives operated led Freud to two important discoveries. One is that the mind is not fully conscious and a major part of it consists of the 'unconscious'. The other discovery is that most persons are unaware of the operation of their own emotional drives because these are excluded from the conscious mind and are kept in check in the unconscious by a process which Freud called 'repression'. When a person controls

his emotions and impulses consciously, it is called suppression. But when the control is effected unconsciously, the process becomes repression.

These basic ideas of Freud were known to the ancient Indian sages. They regarded the whole mind as intrinsically unconscious and the Puruṣa or Ātman as the only source of consciousness. Only that part of the mind which is illumined by the light of the Puruṣa was regarded as the conscious mind (*manas*), the remaining part of the mind with a preponderance of *tamas* being regarded as the unconscious (*citta*) which was understood to be the storehouse of *samskāras*. A higher part of the mind with a greater degree of *sattva* was further marked off as the *buddhi*, the source of spiritual intuition and true will, and the empirical (*vyāvahārika*) self of man.

Two types of samskāra

According to Patañjali, *samskāras* are of two types: *karma bījas* which give rise to desires, instinctual impulses and emotional drives; and *vāsanās* which give rise to memory.² These two groups of latent impressions play an important role in the two basic functions of the mind: conation and cognition, respectively.

Every action produces an impression in the mind known as the *karma bīja*. When this sprouts, it produces an urge to repeat that action. It is this urge that we call instinct, desire, impulse, etc. Every person does thousands of actions and so his mind

² Cf. *Yoga-Sūtra*, 2.12, 13 and 4.8, 9. Commenting on *Yoga-Sūtra* 3.18 Bhoja says in his *Vṛtti*:

द्विविधाश्चित्तस्य वासनारूपाः संस्काराः ।

केचित् स्मृतिमात्रोत्पादनफलाः, केचिज्जात्या-

युर्भोगलक्षणविपाकहेतवः, यथा धर्माधिमाख्याः ॥

See also Hariharananda Aranya's notes (in Bengali) on *Yoga-Sūtra* 2.12 and 4.8, 11.

becomes the storehouse of thousands of seeds of karma. The sum total of all these seeds of karma is called *karmāśaya*. According to Patañjali, it is the *karmāśaya* that is the cause of rebirth, and determines the type of body (*jāti*) the soul will assume in the next birth, its longevity (*āyus*) and experiences (*bhoga*).

When action leads to experience (*bhoga*), the latter leaves another impression in the mind known as *vāsanā*. Flowers when handled impart their distinctive fragrance to the hand. In the same way, experiences of pleasure and pain leave their own 'smell', *vāsanā*, in the mind. When these sprout, they produce the *memory* of those experiences. Action and experience are interlinked. Hence *karmāśaya* and *vāsanā* are interlinked. If one is roused, the other is roused too. When *vāsanās* are roused, they give rise to memories, and memories rouse *karmāśaya* which produces desires or impulses to act. Actions give rise to experiences, and experiences produce *vāsanās*. Thus action and experience, *karmāśaya* and *vāsanā*, constitute a cycle which repeats itself endlessly. The task in spiritual life is to break this cycle at some point.

Spiritual aspirants must have a clear understanding of the difference between *karmāśaya* and *vāsanā* not only theoretically, but also in actual life. A good deal of conflicts, worries and struggles can be avoided if the difference between impulse and memory and the nature of the *samskāras* which cause them are understood.

Karmāśaya is the result of karma, and it sprouts into desires or impulses to act. *Vāsanās* are the result of *bhoga* or experience, and they sprout into memories. Karma is characterized by the polarity of virtue (*dharma*) and vice (*adharma*). Similarly, *bhoga* or experience is characterized by the polarity of pleasure (*sukham*) and pain (*duḥkham*). *Karmāśaya*

alone is the cause of rebirth. *Vāsanās* produce only memories, and are not directly responsible for rebirth. But in each birth it is the memories which rouse the seeds of karma and determine the course of a person's life.

By themselves, memories are harmless. It is the impulses connected to them that create all the trouble. Take, for instance, the case of a person addicted to smoking. Every time the memory of the pleasure of the experience or even a cigarette comes to his mind, he feels an urge to smoke. But if through medical advice and fear of cancer he succeeds in controlling that impulse, he can think about smoking or cigarettes without feeling the urge to smoke. Or suppose a person B is rude to A. Later on A finds that whenever the memory of B comes to him, the impulse of anger too rises in him. But suppose A pardons B. Then, when the picture of B rises in him, it does not rouse anger in him.

It is the hooking of instinctual impulses to memories, the linking of *karmāśaya* to *vāsanās*, that is the root cause of all our emotional problems. This linking is of the nature of an invasion. Like surface-to-air missiles, impulses from the unconscious invade the memories which appear in the conscious mind. When this happens we act without thinking about past experiences or future consequences. Says the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, '*Vāsanā* is the sudden seizing of an object without thinking about the past or future owing to deep-rooted habit.'³

The first struggle in spiritual life is to break the connection between memories and impulses. This is what purification of mind really means. In a purified mind instinctive impulses do not operate.

3. दृढभावनया त्यक्तपूर्वापरविचारणम् ।

यदादानं पदार्थस्य वासना सा प्रकीर्तिता ॥

Memories in the form of pictures and ideas appear but they are not tied down to impulses. Like white clouds which do not rain but disappear in the blue, these memories disappear after remaining in the field of consciousness for a short while.

Purification of saṃskāras

Purification of mind really means the purification of *saṃskāras* which, as we have seen, means breaking the connection between *karmāśaya* and *vāsanā*. How to do this?

One method is to weaken the power of the impulses through abstinence, avoidance, withdrawal and other forms of *tapas* or austerity. Another method is to increase the number of good *saṃskāras* through virtuous karma. Something like what physical chemists call the Law of Mass Action operates in mental life also. When *dharma saṃskāras* (good impressions) increase, they keep in check *adharmā saṃskāras* (bad impressions). These two methods—*tapas* and virtuous karma—are unavoidable disciplines during the early stages of meditative life.

Patañjali speaks of a third method which may be practised along with the other two. This is to change the connection between *karmāśaya* and *vāsanā* by changing the connection between impulses and mental images. Images exert a great influence in the mind. If bad impulses, when they arise in the mind, are connected to the image of a holy man or holy woman, they immediately get controlled. Similarly, bad images cease to appear bad when connected to good emotions. This process of changing the connections between mental images and impulses is called *pratipakṣa-bhāvanam*.⁴ This is to be done through proper self-

analysis, but this becomes effective only when the new connections are tested in action.

A fourth and higher method is to detach the will. The connection between images and impulses is consciously made by exercising the will. This connection is supported by the will. If the will is detached, the *saṃskāras* break apart. However, detachment is not easy. It becomes possible only when supported by other disciplines. A story is told about the great French impressionist painter Matisse. A visitor to his studio pointed to some unholy pictures hanging on the wall and asked Matisse: 'Don't you think these have a demoralizing effect on people?' The artist calmly replied, 'My dear man, it is not a woman, it is only a picture.' An artist sees only a picture in a woman, whereas an ordinary man sees a woman in a picture—this is the difference between the two. This does not of course mean that all artists are holy sages. But in them the creative urge becomes so strong as to produce a certain degree of detachment—*aesthetic detachment* as it is called. However, owing to a lack of systematic moral discipline, most artists are not able to sustain this detachment for long.

All impulses can be reduced to three types of instinctual reactions: 'towards', 'against' and 'away from'—*rāga*, *dveṣa* and *bhaya*, as Indian psychologists call them. The terms *dharma* (virtue) and *adharmā* (vice) can be applied only to these impulses and the actions that result from them. Memories, that is the various images and ideas that rise in the mind, are neutral. By themselves they are neither good nor bad; it is their association with impulses that makes them good or bad. When we speak of purification of mind what we really mean is freeing the memory from the hold of impulses, or *smṛti pariśuddhi*, purification of memory, as Patañjali calls it.

When bad memories appear, one should

4. *Yoga-Sūtra*, 2.33.

not get upset but should calmly proceed to free them from bad impulses through self-analysis. Further, one should understand that mental images appear living only because they are charged with consciousness through association with the self. When the self is disconnected from the mental images by detaching the will, they get deflated and disappear.

Action of *saṃskāras*

Normally, the action of *saṃskāras* can be noticed only when they sprout into *vṛttis*. Memories and impulses are all different forms of *vṛttis*. Says Swami Vivekananda: 'These feelings have to be controlled in the germ, the root, in their fine forms, before even we have become conscious that they are acting on us. With the vast majority of mankind, the fine states of these passions are not even known—the states in which they emerge from the subconscious. When a bubble is rising from the bottom of the lake, we do not see it, nor even when it is nearly come to the surface; it is only when it bursts and makes a ripple that we know it is there.'⁵ By the practice of purification and meditation, the spiritual aspirant comes to have greater insight into the subtle workings of the mind and the way *saṃskāras* sprout and operate.

How do the *saṃskāras* sprout into *vṛttis*? What activates the *saṃskāras*? Just as the recording in a magnetic tape is activated by the electric current in the tape-recorder, the *saṃskāras* are activated by the cosmic energy flowing through the mind. Regarding the nature of this cosmic energy Indian sages hold different views. According to the Sāṃkhya-Yoga school it is *rajas*, the mobile element of the three

guṇas, that manifests itself as all movements in the cosmos. The *Gītā* says, 'This lust, this anger, arises because of *rajas*.'⁶ Commenting on this line, Vedānta Deśika says, 'Watered with *rajas* the seeds of subtle impressions left by the experience of objects of senses sprout into desire and anger.'⁷

In the Vedas and the Tantras the cosmic energy is called *prāṇa*. By *prāṇa* is meant not the air we breathe, points out Swami Vivekananda, but 'the sum total of all forces in the universe, mental and physical, resolved back into their original state.'⁸ The *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha* says, 'The tree of mind has two seeds: one is the latent impression, the other is *prāṇa*. When one of these is weakened, both get quickly controlled.'⁹

According to yogis, the movement of *prāṇa* in the psychophysical system depends upon the activity of two main channels known as *idā* and *piṅgalā*. *Prāṇāyāma* is an exercise for controlling these channels. When the activity of these channels is controlled, the mind becomes calm. However, it should be noted that *prāṇāyāma* only stops the sprouting of the *saṃskāras* but does not destroy them. When the effect of *prāṇāyāma* wears off, the *saṃskāras* sprout again.

Prāṇa activates both *vāsanās* and *karma bījas*. Memories produced by *vāsanās* affect only the surface of the mind like ripples, whereas the impulses and desires produced by *karmāśaya* affect the whole

6. *Bhagavad-Gītā*, 3.37.

7. विषयानुभववासनाबीजानां कामक्रोधादि
-अङ्कुरोत्पादने रजोगुणः सलिलसेकः ।

Tātparyacandrikā on *ibid.*

8. *Complete Works*, 1.148.

9. द्वे बीजे चित्तवृक्षस्य प्राणस्पन्दनवासने ।

एकस्मिञ्च तयोः क्षीणे क्षिप्रं द्वे अपि नश्यतः ॥

Laghu Yoga Vāsiṣṭham, 28,34

5. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1977), vol. 1, pp. 241-42.

mind and split it into different streams. Thus it is the *karmāśaya* that causes dissociation of awareness. *Patañjali* makes it clear that meditation can control only the gross *vṛttis* that appear on the surface of the mind.¹⁰ The deep division in the mind caused by emotional conflicts are to be overcome by controlling the activity of *karmāśaya*.

The five states of saṁskāras

In order to control the activity of the *saṁskāras* we must know how they operate. All the *saṁskāras* do not exist in the same state. According to *Patañjali* a *saṁskāra* may exist in any one of five states.¹¹

The first state is called *prasupta* (dormant) in which the *saṁskāras* remain undeveloped. A child is born with hundreds of *saṁskāras*, but most of these remain dormant during childhood. As it grows older more and more *saṁskāras* become active. According to *Patañjali*, in each birth only those *saṁskāras* become active for which favourable conditions exist in that particular birth.¹² The rest of the *saṁskāras* remain dormant. This shows that environment is also important in the operation of *saṁskāras*. Good and favourable conditions at home and in the society awaken the best *saṁskāras* in man.

In the second state called *udāra* (expanded) the *saṁskāras* are freely expressed. When conditions are favourable our latent tendencies get free expression, provided they are approved by the society. Many of our normal simple desires belong to this category.

When certain desires become strong but are disapproved by the society, they are repressed, that is, kept in check in the unconscious. This repressed condition of the

saṁskāra is called *vicchinna*. In this state the *saṁskāras* are in a turbulent condition but are prevented from sprouting by the powerful influence of other *saṁskāras*. Repression is one of the important discoveries of Freud, but he could not correctly explain how it takes place. According to Yoga psychology, a strong *saṁskāra* can repress a weak *saṁskāra*. For instance, fear *saṁskāra* may repress lust or greed *saṁskāra*. Since this process goes on in the depth of the unconscious, the person does not become aware of it.

Repression caused by conflicts raging in the depths of the unconscious drain a lot of mental energy and weaken the mind which becomes unfit for meditation. Through careful self-analysis and constant mental alertness spiritual aspirants should get rid of repressions by finding out the hidden conflicts and their causes.

The fourth state in which *saṁskāras* exist is called *tanu* (attenuated). If desires and impulses are consciously and intelligently controlled, the concerned *saṁskāras* lose their impetuosity and become weak. Without intruding into the conscious mind they then remain in seed form in the *known* depths of the unconscious, always within the reach of the conscious mind. This conversion of *saṁskāras* into the *tanu* state is the result of long practice of disciplines and purification.

In the repressed (*vicchinna*) state the *saṁskāras* remain powerful and active and are beyond the reach of the conscious mind. But in the attenuated (*tanu*) state the *saṁskāras* lose their power and are always under conscious control. In the yogi most of the desires and impulses have been reduced to the *tanu* state. As a result his mind remains calm and he enjoys *śama sukham*, the joy of self-control. Repression is unhealthy and leads to mental disorders. But yogic suppression conserves psychic energy and enables the aspirant to rise to

10. *Yoga-Sūtra*, 2.10, 11.

11. *Ibid.*, 2.4, and Vyāsa's commentary on it.

12. *Yoga-Sūtra*, 4.8, 9.

higher levels of consciousness, though during the early stages it may entail a certain amount of struggle.

The change of *samskāras* into the *tanu* state does not mean their destruction. Just as seeds sprout when the ground is watered, so also the attenuated *samskāras* will become active if they are stimulated. However, if the seeds are roasted in fire, they will not sprout again. In the same way, if the *Samskāras* are subjected to the light of higher consciousness, they get reduced to a deactivated condition known as *dagdha-bīja* ('burnt seed'). Such *samskāras* cannot sprout again even when the mind is brought into contact with sense-objects. Through repeated spiritual experience the yogi burns up his desires and impulses and reduces them all to the *dagdha-bīja* state. There is no other way to destroy *samskāras* completely.

In a fully illumined sage, the entire *karmāśaya* has been irreversibly deactivated, and so he is free from desires and impulses. But the memories produced by *vāsanās* will remain in him. Sri Ramakrishna says that just as a burnt rope may retain the shape of a rope but cannot bind anyone, so a fully illumined soul has only a semblance of desires.

Dissociation and the three states of consciousness

We began with a discussion on the phenomenon of dissociation of awareness and how it is caused by *samskāras*. There is yet another type of dissociation of consciousness which is more radical and at the same time

a natural one. It is the division of consciousness into the three states : *jāgrat* (waking), *svapna* (dream) and *susupti* (deep sleep). This dissociation is not caused by *samskāras*. It is a spontaneous process connected to the rhythms of life, the exact cause of which is one of the great mysteries of life.

Waking, dream and deep sleep represent three entirely different states, each with its own notions of time, space and the self. The dream state is not a continuation of the waking state, any more than the deep-sleep state is a continuation of the dream state. Between two states a rupture in the continuity of consciousness takes place. Consciousness seems to undergo cycles of projection and withdrawal. What is common to all the three states is the awareness of 'I'. This shows that the self has different dimensions and, corresponding to these, there are different levels or layers in the personality structure of man.

In ancient India the three states provoked deep interest and were the subject of much study and investigation. Spiritual aspirants must have a deep understanding of the three states, for these have a direct bearing on meditative life. True spiritual experience is regarded as a state different from the above three states. It is a state which reveals the real nature of the self and its relation to the Supreme Spirit. The light of this experience burns up wordly desires. As in the case of other experiences, spiritual experience too leaves its impressions or *samskāras* in the mind which act as a check on wordly *samskāras*.

(to be continued)

COMPASSION : THE LAW OF LAWS

MARGARET BEDROSIAN

At the beginning of every spiritual journey is the experience of wonder, whether it be from natural beauty, natural catastrophe, human creativity, or human suffering. Perhaps the most moving experience of wonder, however, comes from the devotee gazing with deep reverence and intrigue at the picture of a holy man or woman. The gaze opens up the greatest of questions : where does the poise, the peace, the serene love that radiates from the figure of the saint come from ? The look emanating from the eyes of the holy man seems so radically different from the vision we experience ; and the more we gaze, the more preoccupied and abstracted we become. Finally, our response becomes love for this Ideal and a commitment to finding the source of this loving and peaceful look. Having fallen in love, the devotee's personality begins to be transformed as he tries to model his life and view of the world after that of the Ideal. We see this pattern very clearly when we read of Sri Ramakrishna's magnetic effect upon any who came to him : to see him, to experience his divine gaze, was nothing short of transforming.

But if the devotee wishes to learn how to see the world as his Ideal sees it, to read the text of human experience accurately, he must not only rely on the external presence of his Ideal or the likeness as captured by a picture. Rather, the devotee must internalize the alphabet of the spirit, the divine energies which create, sustain, and destroy the universe. Because of his deepening love for the Chosen Ideal the task becomes easy : the more the devotee dwells on the beauty of the beloved Ideal, the more he understands that it is the Ideal who unifies and gives significance to the diversity of the external world.

The ability to understand the seeming disparities of life thus becomes perfected when the devotee turns inward to find the reflection of his Ideal. In the friendly solitude of meditation, the devotee—though he may not appreciate it yet—is under the direct and compassionate care of his Ideal, of God. Like a mother nurturing her child, the Lord nurtures our meditation and protects us from all worldly cares as we in turn try to concentrate on His indwelling presence. Eventually, having perfected our love of Him, with heart and mind in complete harmony, nothing obstructs our inner eye from gazing once more on the beloved Lord.

Just as when we are in the external world, we never feel lost, no matter how strange the place we are in, as long as we are with a loved person, similarly, to penetrate deeper into the world within is to come increasingly close to the feeling of being utterly at home. The deeper one goes, the more one sees that what one used to value in the world—harmony, creative energy, unity—has its source here, in God. Not blocked by the warring senses, which divide and distort our vision, the inner eye discovers the force that maintains world order : universal compassion, God's detached and unconditional love. Finally, striving successfully to become one with this force, the aspirant opens his eyes and experiences the joy of inclusiveness ; wherever he turns his gaze, he sees the same indestructible principle bringing life and joy to the world : What is within is what is without !

But right at this moment, perhaps when his joy of discovery is greatest, the disciple may recognize that his journey to Self-knowledge is not one-directional : the new

world that his disciplines have opened up to him does not exist for the mass of mankind. Whereas the disciple now experiences the deathless unity underlying everything, the mass of mankind still lives under the illusion of its own death. The temptation to leave this suffering behind, to completely merge with the Transcendent must be great, but the greatest Teachers of mankind have shown us that to succumb to such a temptation reflects a lesser understanding of one's ultimate spiritual duty, of one's responsibility to the Truth. Thus, Buddha spent forty tireless years teaching in the world after His *nirvāṇa*; Christ became a fisher of men; Ramakrishna after attaining the perfection of long spiritual disciplines spent years yearning for His disciples to come to Him; and Holy Mother, after the passing away of Ramakrishna, carried on her life and duties in the world as she always had, but armed with the deepest Knowledge. These inspiring lives teach us that the greater one's understanding of the Truth, the greater one's commitment and responsibility to serve that Truth in the world.

As these great Teachers of mankind have repeatedly illustrated, even though the Ātman dwells in every creature, only when their lives somehow touch ours is our sense of identity transformed. We see the dynamics of such transformation when we examine the role of the spiritual guide and his unconditional love for his disciples. The spiritual teacher first of all values each person for the only reason one *ought* to be valued: for the sake of the divine Ātman within the individual. Grounded in the experience of unity, he sees the disciple with different eyes than other people do; he does not love us *more* than others, but he loves us *better*, more effectively, because from a truer level of identification.

Among the transforming agents with which we can compare the teacher's per-

sonality are first of all the magnifying glass. The sun of Truth burns through the magnifying glass of the teacher's mind, heart, and eyes, and his gaze enlarges the disciple's self-concept. Or like a great compassionate mirror, the teacher's personality reflects our true identity and our true destiny, to become as free and radiant as he is. And finally, the teacher's personality acts as an energizing force for the disciple: clearly seeing the field of the world for what it really is and understanding the relations of the parts to each other, he can prescribe the most beneficial directions of growth for us, something we may not do as well.

The example of the teacher helps illustrate that compassion is the highest form of discrimination acting in the world. Since true discrimination is the ability to distinguish between the Real and the unreal, to distinguish between the two is ultimately to experience oneness, the ever-present unity of God. We see that discrimination is necessarily wedded to compassion in the life of Śaṅkarācārya. Not only did this great saint perfect the austere path of Jñāna-yoga, but he also wrote hymns of the deepest love for God and spent years of his brief life founding ten monastic orders in order to help others find the same beatitude as he. In short, the experience of unity makes impossible any other attitude than love without an object—both toward the God within and the God without. Even the old notions of heaven and salvation no longer hold the same meaning as previously because the reality of God pervades even what used to be our mundane lives.

All of the above helps us understand what Kṛṣṇa implies when he tells Arjuna that of the four kinds of devotees (the world-weary, the seeker for knowledge, the seeker for happiness and the man of spiritual discrimination), 'the man of discrimination/I see as my very Self./For he alone loves me/Because I am myself:/The last

and only goal/Of his devoted heart.¹ This love for God is qualitatively different from previous love : after all, what can God gain by it in any ordinary sense? But being objectless because it is itself the goal of human life, this love perfects the human potential of the devotee. Like a dam lifted from a river, his love now becomes free, all-embracing, and begins in its turn to transform the lives of others less advanced in the life of the spirit. The closer we come to God, the more we *can* give, the more we *want* to give.

Understanding the Teacher's love and the love of the perfect devotee helps prepare us to understand the wonderful compassion of God Himself. As one of the greatest embodiments in myth of the many faces of God, Śiva helps lead us to a deeper understanding of our relation to divinity. Often, of course, he is portrayed as the austere Lord of Yogis, deep in cosmic meditation on the snowy mountain Kailāsa. At other times, he is described as the joyful dancing God, whose impassioned movement is the creation of the universe itself. But in addition to these depictions, there is another which we cannot help but find deeply moving; Śiva as the God of humility and spiritual transformation. What the world sees as useless, Śiva sees as *useful*. Hence he becomes newly relevant to the world right now, a world of tragic wastefulness, both material and human.

Sister Nivedita, in *The Cradle Tales of Hinduism*, describes the Great God in the following manner :

In matters of the world, He is but simple, asking almost nothing in worship.... His offerings are only bael-leaves and water, and far less than a handful of rice. And He will accept these in

any form. The tears of the sorrowful, for instance, have often seemed to Him like the pure water of His offering....

He keeps for Himself only those who would otherwise wander unclaimed and masterless. He has but one servant, the devoted Nandi. He rides, not on horse or elephant, but on a shabby old bull. Because the serpents were rejected by all others, did He allow them to twine about His neck. And amongst human beings, all the crooked and hunchbacked, and lame and squint-eyed, He regards as His very own. For loneliness and deformity are passwords sufficient to the heart of the Great God, and He, who asks nothing from anyone, who bestows all, and takes nothing in return, He, the Lord of the Animals, who refuses none that come to Him sincerely, He will give His very Self, with all its sweetness and illumination, merely on the plea of our longing or our need!²

As we learn, the eye of Śiva's compassion sees value and usefulness everywhere. Aside from the reorientation Śiva brings to our attitudes toward others, He also teaches us how to value ourselves. Few can say that their lives haven't been blemished by feelings of alienation, of feeling outcaste and lonely, cut off from the mainstream of life. We all experience times of feeling inadequate to life's demands, when we indulge in lower levels of identification. Śiva, however, teaches us strength as well as humility; whatever we have, comes from Him—talent, poverty, disease, good fortune—and coming from Him, it is blessed. Furthermore, if He, who is perfect, can love us unconditionally, no matter how imperfect we may feel, how can we allow anything less from ourselves? To put the situation in its bluntest terms: how can we relegate ourselves to the ashcan of humanity if Śiva, the Great God, elevates His nearest devotees from out of that very bin?

To fully appreciate Śiva's compassion, we must see it reflected in the world, in His

1. *The Song of God: Bhagavad-Gita*, trans. Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood (New York: Mentor Books, 1954), chap. 7, p. 72.

2. Sister Nivedita, *Cradle Tales of Hinduism* (Calcutta; Advaita Ashrama, 1972), p. 28.

detached and perfect concern for the well-being of each part of the whole. Three examples taken from our daily experience illustrate the omnipresence of God's compassion. First, watching a previously loving, nurturing mother cat become cranky, punitive, and distant from her kittens may strike us as being a form of natural cruelty. But actually, the mother cat is only showing her love in a different form; rather than allow the kittens to remain dependent on her and run the risk of losing her and being left defenceless, God's compassion operates through the mother cat and insures the self-reliance of the offspring.

In another ordinary example, we see the housewife take care of her home with a kind of sensitive love for the objects of the house. Under the care of such a person, the consciousness underlying each room and object shines through with gratitude; to walk into such a home is to feel the nurturing presence allowing the little voices of objects that many neglect brought together into a harmonious, living whole.

And finally, Time itself is one of the greatest forms of God's compassion. We know that to grow, we must move through time. But God is infinitely compassionate for He allows us infinite time and opportunity to come to Him—we have lifetimes if we need them. Yet, at the same time, within each moment we also have the potential to move closer and closer to Him.

In the end, we stop where we began—in wonder. We remember again the story

of Ramakrishna crying out to Mother, 'Where are my boys? When will they come to me?' This story teaches us that God yearns for us everywhere as much, even more, than we yearn for Him. He seeks our love without an object, our compassion toward His creatures, as much as we seek Him. He draws us to Himself through every form, every creature, every task—no matter how seemingly great or small. There is no object that we handle, no work that we do, no life that we touch that does not manifest God's presence and which does not call for our response to Him. Therefore, we see now that the Way has become the Goal: service does not end with realization—it actually becomes perfected because now it is grounded in pure compassion.

As we once more look in wonder at the image of our beloved Ideal, we sense that the compassionate look in His or Her eyes is the beginning of the spiritual life, the nurturing force behind that life, the goal and unifying principle of all existence. We thus read in *The Voice of the Silence*: 'But stay, Disciple... Canst thou destroy divine COMPASSION? Compassion is no attribute. It is the law of LAWS—eternal Harmony; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of law eternal.'³

³B. Christmas Humphreys, ed., *The Wisdom of Buddhism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 228.

INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO—IV

SRI M. P. PANDIT

Process : surrender

In a sense surrender marks the beginning of the path, but as it progresses it well-nigh becomes the path itself. Only the surrender must be of the right type. For there are more than one kind of surrender.

There is a surrender that is born of helplessness. One is faced with a situation in which one's own resources are found to be utterly inadequate. At such a moment of crisis man turns to the Divine for help and surrenders himself to the Divine Will.

There is another type of surrender in which one is moved to give oneself to the Divine out of sheer devotion, an inner compulsion of love. There is no outer compulsion. A spontaneous movement of the soul to deliver itself into the compassionate Hands of the Divine takes the form of a central surrender.

The surrender may be genuine at the outset but as time passes it may settle down into a passive, tamasic attitude abandoning all initiative, all effort under the specious plea that one is surrendered. This is clearly a self-deceptive cover for inertia and laziness. One becomes a prey to various kinds of suggestions and imaginations and runs the danger of being made a plaything in the hands of hostile agents, wandering far away from the Goal. Such a surrender has to be guarded against.

The Integral Yoga asks for an active surrender. That means an attitude and an action of constant vigilance and readiness always to be receptive to the right guidance and follow it. One is ever alert to distinguish between the right and the wrong suggestion or impulsion, support the working of the divine *yoga śakti* and in all ways to constantly identify one-

self with the Divine Will. It is not enough to know what is the Divine Will; it is necessary to open oneself in all one's being to the working of that Will, to let it instrumentalize one's nature. In other words it is a dynamic surrender, assuring action on all levels, at all times, in tune with the workings of the Higher Will.

The surrender must be on all levels, in all the parts. It is not enough if there is a resolve in some central part of the being, say in the mind or in the heart. The resolve is only the first step. The determination to surrender needs to be extended and rendered active in all the other parts too. Man is a multiple being and the surrender, to be effective, has also to be multiple.

The mind must cease to play its own tune. It must forsake its habitual thinkings and fancyings and build a silent base in itself for the Higher Truth to enter and stand upon. A quiet and calm mind freed from its restless movements, released from its mechanical rounds and liberated from its habitual reactions can alone surrender itself to a higher Intelligence. This calls for a steady and prolonged discipline of meditation, contemplation and active orientation.

Similarly the emotional being's pet notions of what is right and what is wrong have to be given up. Its habit of responding to excitations—outer or inner—must be contained and the heart must learn to respond only to the impulses of the Divine Power. The emotions can no longer be allowed to be driven like a leaf in a blowing wind by every circumstance. One must be moved only by the Divine breath.

And even more vigilance and control is required when we come to the region of the vital, the pranic dynamism, which is normally driven by ego and desire. The vital

is not merely the seat of petty desires and greeds. It is also capable of large movements of courage, heroism, ambition, aggrandizement. It is always a matter of touch and go whether one takes the direction of the *asura*, the demoniac and the titanic, or the *deva*, the godly and the divine. By enforcing on it an active surrender to the Divine, the vital can be turned into a powerful warrior for the Divine. All its strengths and capacities are placed at the service of the Divine and the individual becomes more and more a channel for the Śakti. Here is the touchstone of one's surrender. Whether the surrender has been full and all consuming or made a cover for the assertion and enlargement of one's ego is demonstrated by the way one functions at this level of his energies.

The surrender must be translated in the physical too. Sri Aurobindo says, 'You must keep the temple clean if you wish to install there the living presence.' If the being is to be surrendered entirely, the body also must give itself in every detail. That calls for a continuous growth of consciousness, awareness in the body, so that no room is left for other elements to enter that are not in line with the requirements of the Divine Power. The body must be trained to remember and give itself constantly to the Divine so that no other

impulsion except the Divine's may move it.

It is to be noted that all these movements of surrender in the various parts of one's being stem from the basic surrender of the psychic being deep within to the Parent Divine. The more one gets to the psychic depths and lives from there outward, the easier it becomes for the other parts to surrender themselves to the Divine. Thus an inward orientation of one's life in thoughts, feelings, aspirations, activities is a necessary discipline before the detailed working of surrender becomes possible.

The Mother underlines the need for what she calls the detailed application of the will to surrender. When this will is applied to works, it is called consecration. Works done in a spirit of surrender and sacrifice are automatically sacred, consecrated and become steps for liberation, for identification with the Divine, and eventually for union with the Divine.

To submit one's will to the Divine Will on each level of one's being and be solely moved by that Will is the way of surrender. One is always tuned in consciousness to the Higher Consciousness and ready in nature to act up to the direction from above or from within. And this movement is done not as an imposed discipline but as a need in the being, an act of joy rendering the Will of God in one's own person.



S. RADHAKRISHNAN : AN AMBASSADOR OF INDIAN CULTURE

PROF. RANJIT KUMAR ACHARJEE

Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-monk, the preacher and teacher of Indian culture, was the first outstanding personality of modern India who preached to the Western world the perennial message of Indian culture, at least a decade before the birth of S. Radhakrishnan. Swamiji, with his profound and penetrating spiritual insight and rare intellectual acumen, demonstrated to the Western world the strength and vitality of Indian culture, and carried its eternal and universal message to different corners of the world, proving beyond doubt that Indian culture, religion and philosophy have got a definite contribution to make to world civilization. In India, we are gradually coming to realize the significance of Swamiji's spiritual victory in the Western world and the fact that he gave a new direction to our national life and infused into it a sense of dignity and self-respect, thereby laying the foundation of Indian nationalism. Thereafter, a number of religious leaders of India, including some with doubtful authenticity, have visited the Western world with the mission of preaching the message of our ancient cultural heritage.

S. Radhakrishnan, the philosopher-statesman of modern India and a world-renowned

scholar, was mainly an academic thinker and not a religious leader in the traditional sense of the term. He examined Indian culture as a whole from various angles, including the religious and scientific, the mystic and the mundane. Though his professional life was spent in various capacities as a professor of philosophy in different Indian and foreign universities, as an academic administrator, as a diplomat and ultimately as the president of the largest democracy in the world—his constant aim was the propagation of the meaning and message of the spiritual culture of India. And he accomplished this self-appointed mission with such rare distinction and devotion that most intellectuals and scholars of the West now judge Indian tradition and culture on the authority of Radhakrishnan. His deep insight into the essential nature and uniqueness of Indian culture has earned for him recognition as the most powerful and vocal exponent and able ambassador of Indian culture.

Radhakrishnan, as we all know, was educated in the Western system, which enabled him to become conversant with the fundamentals of Western philosophy. He assimilated all that was best in Western tradition, but he did not neglect for a single

moment his own cultural heritage. His training in Western analytical method and his vast knowledge of Western thought helped him to evaluate and reinterpret the vital points of Indian culture and establish their relevance to the contemporary world. Hence we find that his principal works are mainly interpretative in character, though not without flashes of originality. In his writings, Radhakrishnan used Western concepts and methods to expound Indian thought without distorting the original Indian perspective, and made the intricacies of Indian metaphysics intelligible to Western intellectuals. He played a most important role in gaining for Indian philosophy an independent status in world thought and recognition from the world's leading philosophers like Bertrand Russell, who had for long regarded Indian philosophy only as a theology.

Radhakrishnan's own thoughts and ideas, which are mainly discussed in his original work *An Idealist View of Life*, conform to the traditional Vedanta; and his general philosophical outlook has been technically termed 'the Advaita of Integral Experience' by modern scholars like Ruth Reyna.¹ His philosophical outlook is unmistakably dominated by the spiritual idealism of the Upanishads, which he reinterprets so as to adjust it to the changing social outlook and world situation.

Radhakrishnan, has, however, brought about this adjustment gracefully, without distorting the essential character of Indian philosophy and culture. He expounds the basic principles of Indian philosophy and culture by revealing their inner beauty, harmony and vitality, and seeks to establish that these are still very relevant to our present society and can serve as a beacon-

light in the doom and darkness engulfing our modern world. About the practical implications of his thoughts and ideas, Dr. D. M. Datta has very rightly remarked :

His idealism, moreover, is not idea-ism but idealism. It is the presentation of an ideal that can harmonize the flesh with the soul, individuals with individuals, nations with nations. Like Eucken, he is a philosopher of life. His central interest is life and not metaphysics. Metaphysics is to him, as to the ancient Indian philosophers, only a rational preparation for the solution of life's problems.²

In this article we propose to discuss the role played by Radhakrishnan in disseminating the life-giving elements of Indian culture, leaving aside other important aspects of his philosophy. In his role as a cultural ambassador of India, he carried the message of the soul of India not only to the academic circles of the West but also to the educated public outside the universities. About his influence in the latter field one writer says :

And it was here that Radhakrishnan's special gift as a speaker came out. In recalling the Indian esoteric claims out of his intimate spiritual experiences and profound scholarship for the benefit of his audiences he was lavish in his spontaneous outpouring of soul. The audiences swayed at times to his chant; and one felt as if the barrier between the East and West was gone.³

Before discussing Radhakrishnan's contribution to the enrichment of Indian philosophy and culture, it is desirable to cast a cursory glance over the concept of Indian culture and its essential features, for very often scholars indulge in academic,

2. Dr. D. M. Datta, *The Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy* (Calcutta: Calcutta University, 1961), p. 136.

3. B. K. Mallik, 'Radhakrishnan and Indian Civilization' in the compilation *Radhakrishnan—Comparative Studies in Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1951), pp. 261-62. Hereafter, *Comparative Studies*.

1. Ruth Reyna, *The Concept of Maya from the Vedas to the Twentieth Century* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962), p. 51.

sometimes even in acrimonious, debates over this issue. Some thinkers even go to the extent of saying that India, in view of its racial, linguistic, geographical, sociological and religious diversities, had never been a nation and hence it is not legitimate to speak of Indian culture. It is also pointed out that India has passed through waves of foreign invasions by the Sakas, Huns, Turanians, Iranians, Turks, Pathans, Mongols and, last of all, different European races, who came over here with their distinct cultures which of course ultimately mingled with the cultural mainstream of this country. So Indian culture should not be identified with Vedic culture. Space does not permit us to enter into a detailed discussion of this issue.

Culture, by which we mean the 'outer expression of the inner genius of a people,'⁴ is a synthetic process in which many factors are wonderfully harmonized or blended together, resulting in a unified and coherent way of life, and this is particularly true in respect of Indian culture. In the eloquent words of Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji :

As a matter of fact, the great culture of India is basically a synthesis—a synthesis of not only blood and race, but also of speech and of ways of thinking (of which the different speeches are the outward expression) as well as of cultures—material, intellectual and spiritual—which give ideologies and determine attitudes and actions. The geographical background is also to be taken into consideration, because Man, in any area of the world, is a product as much of his geographical, economic environment as of his racial and cultural bearings and moorings.⁵

This idea is beautifully conveyed in Tagore's famous poem 'Bharata Tirtha'.

Of all the known cultures of our globe,

4. H. N. Datta, *Indian Culture* (Calcutta: Calcutta University, 1941), p. 4.

5. *Cultural Heritage of India* (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1975), vol. 1, Editor's Preface, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.

Indian culture is perhaps the oldest with the possible exceptions of ancient Egypt and China. It has seen the rise and fall of many ancient civilizations of the world, like Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome, but Indian culture is still active and alive, a fact that is certainly due to its inherent vitality. And the secret of its extraordinary vitality and longevity lies in its adaptability—its wonderful power of assimilation. Indian culture never disdained to enrich itself with all that was good and noble in the ideologies of other cults and sects. It is for this reason that Indian culture retained its true spirit in spite of so many foreign invasions and a lot of social and political changes and upheavals.

Whenever we speak of the culture of any people, we have to emphasize its dominant motif or central ideal which motivates the life of the people. Greek culture emphasized intellectual values, Roman culture emphasized materialistic values, Judaic culture emphasized moral values, and Japanese culture emphasizes aesthetic values. Indian culture has all along emphasized spiritual values. This spiritual motif has pervaded all its diverse aspects—religion, philosophy, literature, art, polity, sciences—in fact, every sphere of intellectual and practical discipline. This essential feature also distinguishes Indian culture from the modern scientific and materialistic culture of the West. India has never put material enjoyments and prosperity higher than spiritual values.

Radhakrishnan in all his important philosophical books, speeches and writings very clearly asserts that one of the basic teachings of Indian culture is to recognize the spirit in man as a centre of divine light. Every individual is potentially divine and it is the ultimate destiny of every individual to discover the spirit in him and 'to realize the deepest energies of the human spirit'. So, for a proper understanding of

man, it is essential that he should be viewed from the spiritual standpoint. Regarding the nature of the ultimate Reality, Radhakrishnan follows the fundamental doctrine of the Upaniṣads that Brahman or the Absolute is the supreme spiritual Reality, both manifest and unmanifest, actual and potential: *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ* ('this world is pervaded by God'), *sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma* ('all this is indeed Brahman'). The universe is the outcome of an evolutionary process originating in the spirit and 'each individual is a spark from a great flame, a ray of the One Light, differentiated within the body of the cosmic spirit. The spark is an encloser of divine potentialities which become manifest through life in the empirical world.'⁶ This implies the spiritual oneness of the universe and the divinity of man.

In his works, in academic discussions and in public speeches, Radhakrishnan was never tired of emphasizing the paramount need of giving a spiritual basis to our social structure. A close and careful study of our ancient social institutions, customs, ceremonies, rites and rituals bear clear evidence of their profound spiritual significance. According to the Indian view, civilization itself is a march of the human spirit. Radhakrishnan writes: 'The chief purpose of social organization is to foster the spiritual freedom of the individual, human creativeness, to help him to think, feel and adore as he chooses, without the constraint of oppressive laws and customs.'⁷ For he thinks that 'any social order built on the ruins of spiritual freedom is immoral.' Hence he passionately asserts:

6. S. Radhakrishnan, *The Brahma Sutra*; quoted by R. P. Srivastava in *Contemporary Indian Idealism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), pp. 139-40.

7. S. Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), p. 59.

From the beginning of recorded history, Hinduism has borne witness to the sacred flame of the spirit which must remain for ever, even while dynasties crash and empires tumble into ruins. It alone can give our civilization a soul, and men and women a principle to live by.⁸

Evidently, the spiritualistic interpretation of life and the universe offered by Radhakrishnan as an ardent advocate of Indian culture comes into conflict with naturalism, materialism, agnosticism, scepticism and determinism. Radhakrishnan in his works, especially in *The Idealist View of Life* and *Religion and Society*, examines these doctrines and demonstrates their inner contradictions and barrenness.

The realization of the spiritual nature of man and of the ultimate Reality underlying the universe has made religion the foundation-stone of Indian culture and civilization. By religion we in India do not mean magic, witchcraft or superstition, though these might have become mixed up with religion in the course of its growth. Again, dogmas and creeds, rites and rituals do not constitute the essence of religion. Religion, according to Indian tradition, is a spiritual discipline, a way of life, a law of life, based on the discovery of the essential truth of human existence in the Supreme Reality. Further, 'Religion is a spiritual change, an inward transformation. It is a transition from darkness to light, from an unregenerate to a regenerate condition. It is an awakening, a rebornness.'⁹

As a discipline, it teaches man to free himself from lust and greed, hatred and fear, ill-will and infatuation, and imparts courage to follow truth and fight all sorts of evil and injustice which threaten the very existence of the civilized world. From the etymological meaning of the word *dharma*,

8. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

9. S. Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Culture* (New Delhi: Orient Paperbacks, 1968), pp. 57-58.

which is the Sanskrit equivalent of the term 'religion', it follows that religion must act as a supporting or uplifting force which fosters solidarity. Religion, in view of its pervasive character and far-reaching implications, was considered by the ancient sages and seers and the leaders of our cultural heritage as something of supreme importance from which man could be alienated only at the risk of individual demoralization and social disintegration. Thus we see that all our duties of life, our social and political institutions, birth, education, marriage, death, etc., are all coloured by religious sentiments. Religion again is the source of inspiration in Indian art, literature and culture.

Radhakrishnan, with his profound scholarship and spiritual insight realized that no social system or economic theory of political ideology could save human civilization from disintegration and destruction. He found that no force other than religion could save mankind from the grim tragedy which it is facing. Therefore, in almost all his enlightening works and words, he gives a scholarly and inspiring account of the various facets of India's rich cultural heritage so as to show how these are still relevant to our present social, political and international perspectives. The need of the present age, Radhakrishnan thinks, can be fully satisfied only by a 'religion of the spirit which will give purpose to life, which will not demand any evasion or ambiguity, which will reconcile the ideal and the real, the poetry and prose of life, which will speak to the profound realities of our nature and satisfy the whole of our being, our critical intelligence and our active desire.'¹⁰

In the course of his restatement of the

10. S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead, ed., *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin), p. 483.

Indian view of religion, Radhakrishnan does not forget to mention its spirit of tolerance and catholicity, which has its roots in the Vedas, Upaniṣads and *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The famous Vedic dictum '*ekam sad, viprā bahudhā vadanti*' ('Reality is one, the sages call it variously') epitomizes the Indian view. It was not unknown to the Indian genius that the Absolute could be described and approached in various ways. There may be different revelations of the Divine, but they are all forms of one and the same Reality. The various modes of approach are all valid and ultimately lead to the same goal, that is, God-realization. So, in order to create a 'brave new world' — to usher in a new era of peace, prosperity and freedom from hatred, ill-will and spiritual blindness—inter-religious understanding is a vital need. It is the crying need of the hour. Radhakrishnan draws our attention time and again to this important fact and advocates true religious revival through inter-religious understanding—a truth so ardently advocated earlier by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. In the illuminating words of Radhakrishnan :

If we are to create a spiritual Unity which will transcend and sustain the material unity of the new world-order, we need inter-religious understanding. The new religious situation will be not an endless homogeneity but an organic unity where we will have sympathetic understanding and appreciation of other faiths.¹¹

In another place, Radhakrishnan affirms his deep faith in the essential spiritual truth of all religions. He says :

My religious sense did not allow me to speak a rash or profane word of anything which the soul of man holds and has held sacred. This attitude of respect for all creeds, this elementary good manners in matters of spirit, is bred into the

11. *Religion and Culture*, p. 69.

marrow of one's bones by the Hindu tradition, by its experience of centuries.¹²

Nor does he visualize any real conflict between science and religion, which often has become the subject-matter of controversy in the modern world. Notwithstanding the limitations of scientific enquiry, Radhakrishnan could not afford to ignore its importance and utility in the practical life of man. Both science and religion agree in their primordial quest. Radhakrishnan writes :

The essential aim of all scientific disciplines is the knowledge of reality, *tattva darsanam*—that you should have a personal insight into Reality. That is the purpose of science. It is wrong, therefore, to think that science leads us one way and religion leads us another. They both go the same way. They both tell us that if we are earnest students of science there is a purpose in this world, that the universe is proceeding from stage to stage until at last, in the words of the Christ, humanity is redeemed and the Kingdom of God is established.¹³

Indian culture has also cherished some other important moral values, such as self-discipline, truth, non-violence, *karuṇā* (compassion) and *maitrī* (friendliness) which received due appreciative recognition in the writings of Radhakrishnan. He elucidates them faithfully in his earlier works and lectures, and shows how we have banished them from our individual life, from the conduct of our state affairs, and also from international relations. In his later works such as *Religion and Culture*, *Our Heritage*, *Living with a Purpose*, *The Creative Life*, etc. which are principally based on the speeches he made as the Vice-President and the President of India,

¹² *Comparative Studies*, 'Introduction'.

¹³ S. Radhakrishnan: *Speeches and Writings* (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, 1965), p. 80.

he examines these ideals and shows how they can rescue us from the depths of doubt, disbelief and disquiet prevailing today.

Every nation has its cultural heritage which gives it power and direction in its onward march towards peace and prosperity. All that is old is not necessarily useless and worn-out. History is an organic process and hence a nation or a race should not miss the link with the past. In the words of Radhakrishnan :

Even as human personality depends on the persistence of memory, social life depends on the persistence of tradition. Tradition is society's memory of its own past. If we tear off the individual from his traditional root he becomes abstract and aberrant... To forget our social past is to forget our descent.¹⁴

Our present civilization is at a crossroads. In the past India created a great culture, and at present she has an equally important role to play in evolving a new culture for the whole world. Radhakrishnan, like other great Indians such as Tilak, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, and Rabindra Nath Tagore, firmly believes that 'Indian culture possesses the capacity for rejuvenation and can without loss of continuity bring about a radical upheaval,'¹⁵ so urgently needed for saving mankind from doom and despair. We feel, as Radhakrishnan felt so passionately, that

If our civilization is to function, we must cease to be blind and thoughtless. We must not allow the values of the spirit to recede beyond the horizon of man. We must strive to be human in this most inhuman of all ages.¹⁶

¹⁴ *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 328.

¹⁵ *Religion and Society*, p. 63.

¹⁶ Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1953), vol. 2, p. 448.

INFLUENCE OF BUDDHA AND SANKARA ON VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY

DR. TAPASH SANKAR DUTTA

There is no denying the fact that the combined legacy of the two great architects of Indian thought and culture, Buddha and Śaṅkara, has influenced the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda very profoundly. In Śaṅkarācārya he saw tremendous intellectual power, throwing the illuminating light of reason upon every experience. That is why he considered Śaṅkara's exposition of Vedānta scientific. In Buddha, on the other hand, he saw a great universal heart and infinite love, making religion practical and bringing it to everybody's door.

It is a fact that Swamiji could not accept Buddha in toto. Buddha had appealed to the entire human race to accept the life of a beggar-monk with a view to getting rid of the suffering in which the human race was involved. Vivekananda could not accept Buddha's emphasis on that particular point. In the philosophical thought that has emerged from Buddha's ethical teaching there is no recognition of a soul. In Buddha's teaching of religion, there is no place for God. Swamiji could not agree with him on those matters also.

In spite of his disagreement with Buddha in very many ways, Swamiji could not but show regard for his deep universal love for all living beings. He says:

... I do not endorse all his philosophy. I want a good deal of metaphysics, for myself. I entirely differ in many respects, but, because I differ, is that any reason why I should not see the beauty of the man? ... Bereft of all motive power, he did not want to go to heaven, did not want money; he gave up his throne along with everything else and went about begging his bread through the streets of India preaching for the

good of men and animals with a heart as wide as the ocean.¹

The influence of these two great thinkers of ancient India can be found in the two divisions of Swami Vivekananda's philosophy. For his philosophy has two subdivisions—one of them may be termed *Jñāna Kāṇḍa* and the other *Karma Kāṇḍa*. The two subdivisions taken together constitute the entire philosophy of Vivekananda. The philosophy of Vivekananda that has emerged from *Jñāna Kāṇḍa* is exactly the same as the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara.

Sri Ramakrishna realized the Vedantic truth that the Divine is in all beings and all paths ultimately lead to the Divine, and handed down this truth to his favourite disciple Swami Vivekananda. The disciple, deriving his inspiration from the Master, tried to give a new shape to Vedānta. According to Vivekananda, the different schools of the Vedānta are not antagonistic to one another but stages in the final spiritual fulfilment. The philosophical positions of Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Advaita were to him not absolute systems but stages in spiritual growth. To quote Swamiji, 'In these three systems we find the gradual working up of the human mind towards higher and higher ideals, till everything is merged in that wonderful unity which is reached in the Advaita system.'² By solid reasoning Śaṅkara extracted from

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1978), vol. 4, pp. 135-36.

2. *Complete Works*, vol. 3 (1973), p. 397.

the Vedas the truth of the Advaita Vedanta and on it built up the wonderful system of Jñāna, expounded in his commentaries. He unified all the conflicting descriptions of Brahman and showed that there is only one infinite Reality.

The Advaita Vedanta of Śaṅkara is popularly known as Māyā-vāda. In the Jñāna Kāṇḍa section of Swamiji's philosophy we find expounded and exemplified this same Māyā-vāda. In fact, Swamiji may be said to be a modern exponent of this doctrine.

According to Swamiji, Māyā is a statement of the fact of this universe, of how it is going on. It is not a theory but a statement of fact. Śaṅkara points out that there is only one Reality and that Reality is Brahman. But on account of Māyā the world appears to be different from Brahman. Swamiji has beautifully summed up the fundamental truth of Advaita Vedanta in the following lines :

There is but One—the Free—the Knower—Self!
Without a name, without a form or stain.
In Him is Māyā dreaming all this dream.³

There is only one Reality and that Reality is Brahman or Ātman. It is without name, form or stain. The world of multiplicity which appears to us is the product of Māyā. In truth it does not exist. But as long as we are circumscribed by this material existence we are bound to see this illusion. The root cause of this illusion is in Brahman which is the one and only Reality. Swami Vivekananda accepted these basic ideas of Advaita Vedanta.

On the other hand, in the second part of his philosophy of life, that is, in what we have called Karma Kāṇḍa, we find an altogether different view. Here we note a separate melody of Vivekananda. A Māyā-

vādi sannyāsi need not have any feeling for suffering human beings who are subjected to the illusion of ignorance. But in Swamiji's philosophy we find that the bright sun of intellectuality of Śaṅkara has combined with the heart of Buddha, the wonderful, infinite heart of love and mercy. It is really a wonder to see that in Vivekananda's philosophy these two conflicting faculties of Śaṅkara and Buddha meet and mingle.

The question naturally arises, how is it that the contradictions of the two great thinkers of ancient India got resolved in Vivekananda? We may say in reply that Swamiji wanted to satisfy the demands of both head and heart. It is because of this fact that he could not but show deep feeling for the entire human race whom he, as an exponent of Śaṅkara, regarded as belonging to the realm of Māyā. The real philosophy of Vivekananda has emerged as a result of the synthesis of Māyā-vāda of Śaṅkara and the great humanism of Buddha.

It would not be out of place to mention here that, like Vivekananda, Kant also could not but accept what his intellect refused to accept. His tremendous intellectual power did not allow him to accept any rational proof for the existence of God. But he could not at the same time deny the existence of God. In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, he pointed out that though we cannot have knowledge of God, we cannot but accept Him as the upholder of justice for the vindication of our moral life.

Like Kant, Vivekananda also had to satisfy the demands of both head and heart. His rational thinking convinced him that Brahman alone was reality and everything else was false. And yet Vivekananda could not help getting involved in relieving the miseries and problems of humanity. A vast sea of compassion flowed through his heart. He refused to be persuaded by its logic

3. *Complete Works*, vol. 4, p. 394.

and plunged into the great mission of removing the distress of worldly men.

Out of the synthesis of Jñāna and Karma evolved what Swami Vivekananda called Practical Vedanta. Its basic ideas are as follows.

These diverse creations of God, these multi-natured human beings are but manifestations of the Supreme God. So we are bound by a divine family tie. Service of man is therefore service of God. We come across this idea again and again in his speeches and writings. The Supreme Lord alone exists from eternity to eternity. He is immanent in the husband, the wife; His immense power plays through the children. He lives in the sinful as much as in the good. He is in life and also in death.

Out of this perspective emerges the concept that Brahman is immanent in everything in this phenomenal world. This awareness is identical with the deep perception that is embodied in the Upaniṣad: *sarvam khalu idam brahma*—'everything is Brahman'. Vivekananda had this great realization. He said, 'Whatever is visible, whatever is audible, whatever you perceive, all these are His creation. In fact, they are the off-shoots of that one soul. To be more precise it is the Lord Himself.'⁴

Man's dominant tendency is self-love. All his efforts are aimed at protecting his self-interest. It is solely through the expanding of his mental horizon that a man can outstrip the conflict of interest between the self and the non-self. Through this process self-love can be sublimated. At the same time, it is also true that man's actions do not always tend towards self-interest. Even common men at the exigency of circumstances may act as if completely free from self-motivation. Self-abnegation for the

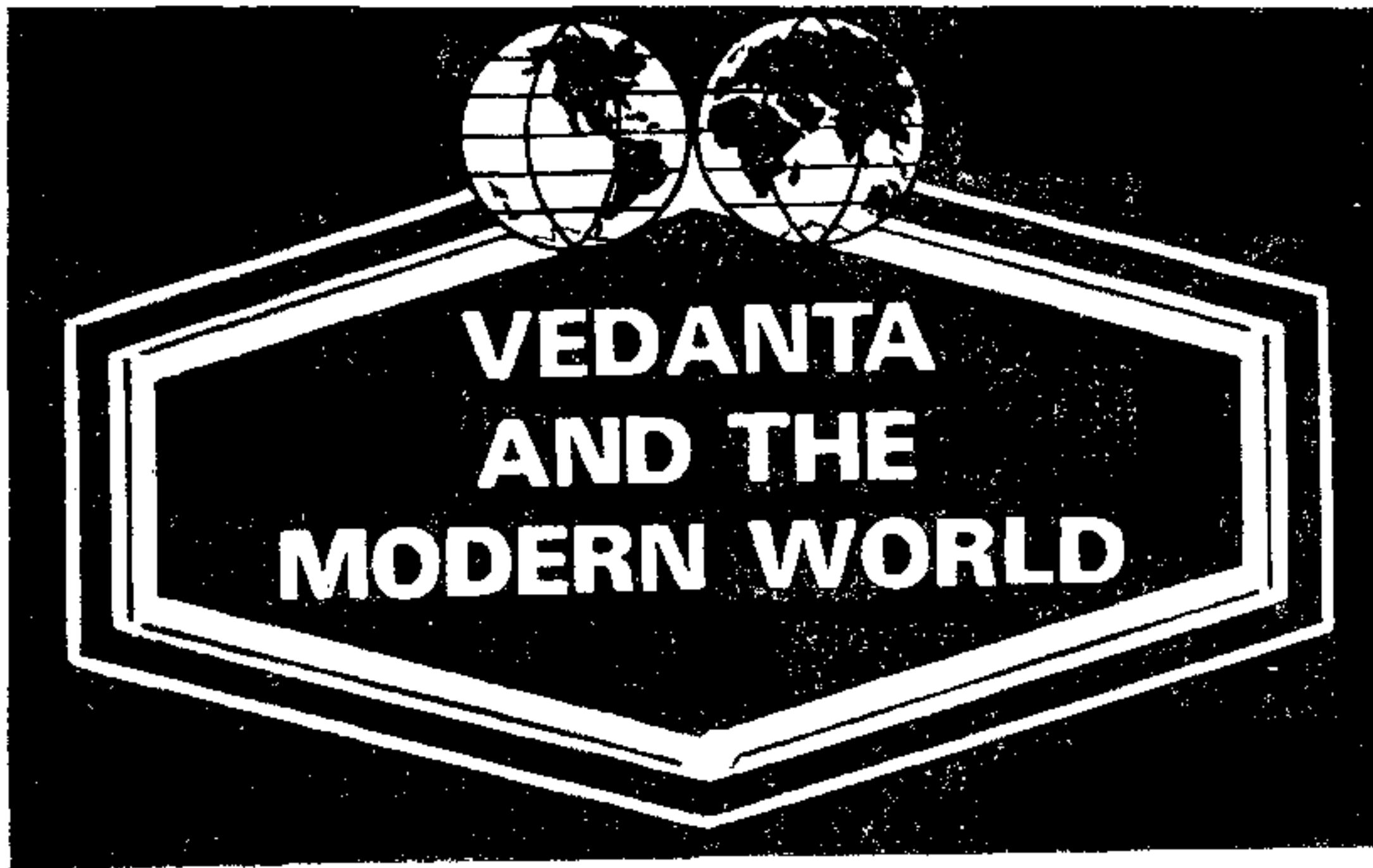
sake of a friend is not a rare thing. Self-immolation for the sake of one's dear kinsmen and complete renunciation of self-interest for a beloved one are not rare. Mother is a symbol of selfless love so far as her dear ones are concerned. So, even in very ordinary men altruism finds full play.

How can we reconcile these two tendencies in man—to be selfish and to be altruistic? The Upaniṣad says that the husband is dear to his wife not because of the greatness of the husband but because of the Self. The Mother's love for her children is not dependent upon the merit of her children but on something else—the Self that subsists in them. It is due to all-embracing Ātman that all things become endearing. Kinsmen, relations, friends, even ordinary human beings become dear because of the all-pervading Ātman. It is just because of this that a man is guided by the instinct of love for his fellow-beings. Vedanta philosophy of all denominations has this great common concept of the immanent divine Self. This identity with fellow-beings is the motive-force of love. It is this love based on the concept of the Supreme Self that unites Jñāna and Karma in Swami Vivekananda's philosophy.

Even in day-to-day life, in spite of self-love, the ego or self increases its horizon. That single ego becomes twain through marriage, and after the birth of children it becomes many. Thus the self outgrows its ego-nature. Finally, through higher spiritual experience the entire world is encompassed by the liberated self. Gradually expanding, it transforms itself into the universal Self and the source of perennial love—that sublime love which is God Himself. This identification of the individual self with the universal Self immanent in fellow-beings inspires the spirit of living for the universal good of mankind. It was this expansion of his self into the universal

(Continued on page 395)

4. *Jñāna-yoga*, in Bengali (Calcutta: Udbodhan Office, seventeenth edition), p. 187.



IS VEDANTA A PHILOSOPHY OF ESCAPE?—VII

DR. VINITA WANCHOO

(Continued from the previous issue)

PESSIMISM AND ITS CAUSES

It is because of the tendency to consider optimism as a virtue and pessimism as a vice that the characterization of Vedanta by the latter is, *ipso facto*, a condemnation of it. But the evaluation of the optimism or pessimism inherent in any worldview cannot be made by understanding the terms in a simple or unitary sense. There are different shades or types of both attitudes, and it is necessary to distinguish clearly what might be termed 'lower' and 'higher' varieties of both. The optimism which has no basis in fact or is divorced from realism is no virtue. A superficial contentment with fortune's goods, a happy-go-lucky attitude looking only on the sunny side of life is called by William James the outlook of the 'once-born' type of nature, having no sense of morbidity and consisting in a quasi-pathological incapacity of feeling sadness or momentary humility.¹ Such an emotional state of happiness based on blindness and insensibility to contrary facts is an instinctive weapon of self-defence.² Nor can this

lower type of optimism be sustained till the end.³

The counterpart of this is the lower pessimism which is mere cowardice, weakness or inability to face the hard demands of reality. As opposed to this there is higher pessimism which is indicative of a courageous and imaginative nature and which may be considered a great virtue, consisting in the realistic facing of the sad facts of life, a correct appreciation of evil and its hold on human existence, acceptance of the burden of evil and the use of it for spiritual progress. William James calls this the outlook of the twice-born consciousness. It is the deliberate religious policy to regard much of what is evil as due to the way men take phenomena, the ideal being to think unhappiness not only painful but also mean and ugly.⁴

James, while calling optimism healthy-minded since it is actuated by the pleasure-principle, admits that it is a 'one-eyed' view of the world. On the other hand pessimism, which he describes as an index of sickness

1. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 81.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

3. See *ibid.*: The purely naturalistic outlook, however enthusiastic in the beginning, is sure to end in sadness; i.e. the end of every positivistic, agnostic or naturalistic philosophy is pessimism.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

of soul, is a completer view. It is a product of high culture, of an experienced and mature mind which has savoured all the joys and sorrows of life fully.

Indeed, the outlook of the twice-born, holding as it does more of the evil in solution, is a wider and completer outlook. The 'heroic and solemn' way of theirs is a higher synthesis of morbidness and healthy-mindedness. Evil is not evaded but sublated in the higher religious cheer of these persons.⁵

Religious belief may conduce to an augmentation of optimism, since it promises supernatural happiness, but it also deepens pessimism in regard to the world. The sign of a well-rounded religion or philosophy is, therefore, the presence in it of a strongly marked pessimistic element, for which reason it becomes a philosophy or religion of deliverance.

In this connection, another classification of pessimism must be kept in mind. There is an empirical pessimism and a philosophical pessimism. Men suffer many actual ills and evils in life, and they seek remedies for each particular ill with the help of scientific knowledge; religion also provides certain cures and consolations. Philosophy's approach is different. It concentrates not so much on the immediate and, it may be, temporary remedy for each specific ill, as do the other approaches, but on the problem of understanding the very presence of evil and suffering in this world; and any solution philosophy offers is not relative but absolute.

The non-philosophical mind is concerned with the immediate 'why' and 'what' of particular sufferings. This is the sphere of empirical pessimism and it must be faced by all men.⁶ It deals with what may be

5. *Ibid.*, p. 478.

6. The Vedanta classifies this under three heads: suffering due to one's own carelessness, due to the elemental world (floods, earthquake, etc.), and due to supernatural agencies (providence, sudden death, etc.).

called 'physical' suffering. But philosophical pessimism is for a few rare minds, and is a sort of mental unease arising from the awareness of the very existence of the problem of evil and suffering. These two are largely exclusive of each other, since the general problem does not strike the un-philosophical mind ordinarily, while philosophic attention is largely given to that problem alone. This is the reason for the differences in the nature of the solution arising from the empirical and the philosophical standpoints.

There are a number of possible psychological motives behind the pessimistic outlook. Men may drift into pessimism due to indifference to progress and weariness and distaste for exertion; or it may be the outcome of a carping, fault-finding disposition,⁷ the expression of a temper of revolt which instead of accepting facts grumbles about them and passes judgement against them.⁸ A third type of pessimism is due to disappointment of personal desires or idiosyncracies. None of these motives, singly or in combination, gives the true explanation of Vedantic pessimism. That the first is not the motive is proved by the supreme exertion demanded by Vedanta in spiritual life. Instead of the second motive of revolt against the 'given' we find Vedanta teaching 'anāditvam' (beginninglessness) of the world and making the best use of it. Nor is it due to personal frustration that the Vedantin turns towards Ātman and away from the world, but because of the rise of discriminatory knowledge (*viveka*).

Vedantic pessimism is philosophical in the fullest sense and not empirical. It is the motivation for investigation into truth. Vedanta takes a realistic stand about suffering. If man had been completely happy there would be no philosophical thinking at

7. James Sully, *Pessimism*, p. 422.

8. Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. 1, p. lxxv.

all. At the same time, if there had been only suffering, then too there would be no philosophy, because if suffering were inherent in human nature it could not be changed. Vedanta, therefore, holds that there is suffering in life, but it uses the term 'suffering' in a strictly technical sense, subsuming under it both happiness and misery as understood by the common man; that is, Vedanta goes behind the experience of both happiness and misery to raise the question about the ultimate truth sustaining both. For common unphilosophical people Vedanta does not deny a large measure of happiness found in pursuit of the goals of *artha*, *dharma* and *kāma*⁹ and in amelioration of misery in many ways; but it itself deals with the universal aspect of suffering and does not consider that removable by finding remedies for each ill, or by inaction in life¹⁰ or by mere ending of life.¹¹ It searches for a philosophical explanation and an absolute remedy which are only achievable by moral elevation and true knowledge. Thus it is the *philosophical* 'evil', not the empirical, which is found to be the starting point of the world-process. Evil is of the nature of nescience and it can terminate in a good and positive reality.

The important thing to note is the manner of operation of pessimism in Vedanta. The greater the knowledge, the greater is the sensitivity to and dissatisfaction with the world-experience in Vedanta. In the absence of any tendency to shirk the duties of the world, Vedantic pessimism or condemnation of pleasures and pains must be understood as having its basis in the perception of a higher conception of bliss obtained by self-conquest, in comparison with which the world's pleasures and heaven's joys are insignificant. 'Discontent with the actual

9. Cf. C. K. Raja, *Some Fundamental Problems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 376.

10. See *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

11. Due to karma and *punarjanma*.

is the pre-condition of moral change and spiritual rebirth, and Vedantic pessimism is a condition of philosophy.¹² It is no ignoble pessimism which gives a man a sense of the imperfection of his present moral life, disgust with futility, smallness and ignorance. William James remarks¹³ that there are two things in the mind of the candidate for conversion (i.e., Vedantic *sādhaka*): the present incompleteness and wrongness, and the positive ideal he longs to attain. With the majority the former is more distinct than the positive ideal, so 'conversion' (i.e. Vedantic *mokṣa*) tends to be a process of struggling to get away from wrongness rather than of striving towards the positive ideal; but in the Vedanta true *sādhana* means *viveka*—illumination of the consciousness which is striving by conviction in the greatness of the *Ātman*. 'It is important to note that *mokṣa* is not based on any general aversion to intercourse with the world or such feelings as a disappointed person may have, but on the appreciation of the state of *mukti* as the supremely blessed one.'¹⁴ The Vedantic stress on sorrow and finitude may be understood as motivated by a desire to call attention to some 'genuine' good in place of a false or 'spurious' good; that is, 'pessimism' here points indirectly to the infinite and eternal. It may be called a 'true' pessimism, since it is not due to the morbidity or melancholy of a sick mind but the result of philosophical reflection, as demonstrated by the positive-negative relation of the highest life to the mundane world in the Vedantic view. The cause of the trouble being discovered by analysis, the mind is prepared for and pro-

12. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 146; cf. Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. 2, p. 310.

13. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 205 ff.

14. S. N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 76.

vided with means of removing it by developing a certain attitude towards the world.

The continued existence and growth of the Vedanta philosophy is evidence for the correctness of the explanation of the theory and practical effect of Vedantic pessimism given above. Radhakrishnan remarks :

We cannot . . . understand how the human mind can speculate and remodel life when it is filled with weariness and overcome with hopelessness. A priori, the scope and freedom of the Indian thought (and Vedanta in particular) is inconsistent with ultimate pessimism, unless it be understood to mean a sense of dissatisfaction with what is or exists, and in this sense all philosophy is or has to be pessimistic.¹⁵

'At all events,' says Barth, 'there is enough faith in life in the Upaniṣads and later Vedanta to support a genuine search for truth.'¹⁶

Pessimism and intellectualism

It has been explained in what sense Vedantic pessimism is intellectual. But the critic raises an objection against the intellectualist method of Vedanta and its abstracting approach which, according to him, ends in intellectual hopelessness. Since the Absolute is beyond the reach of mind and language, pessimism arises from this belief in the limitations of intellect. Also, the mind is cut off from the outside world and confined to itself. It is to be noted that the stand of Vedanta and specially of Advaita, in which knowledge, love and possession of all things are averted only in so far as they subsist in Ātman, is really the standpoint of complete idealism which denies independent reality to the manifold world and makes all things spring from spirit consisting of knowledge. Only when reason fails does the Vedantin become

conscious of the other possibilities of his nature.¹⁷ His life is an unceasing search for truth in a religious spirit. Never does he lose confidence in the existence of an answer to life's problem, which is the end-in-itself and the absolute good.¹⁸ Pessimism regarding the failure of intellect is the beginning of 'spiritual optimism'.

The pessimism resulting from the intellectualistic exclusiveness of Vedanta has been the subject of much adverse criticism. But it is a matter of historical record that not only has Vaiṣṇava Vedanta opened its truth to all classes and sections of people and become the source of spiritual inspiration to them, but even Advaita, far from adopting a patronizing attitude and looking down upon the majority who are in ignorance, has received the assent of the majority among both the philosophic and non-philosophic alike. The non-dualistic unity, when it became a living reality for the advanced few who had made themselves eligible for it, had such an influence on them as to make them the spiritual leaders of the less developed mankind. Hence, the illumined did not become either despondent due to their inability to share their privilege with the less advanced or arrogant in the consciousness of their own superiority.

More creditable to ancient believers was the fact that in spite of their exalted position based on superior knowledge and sanctity they never looked down with disdain on the less intellectual. It was recognized from early times that the religion of a man cannot and ought not to be the same as of a child, nor of an old man that of an active man.¹⁹

17. Cf. S. N. Dasgupta, *Indian Mysticism*, p. 172.

18. E.g. Advaita insists on pure *jñāna-mārga* because it implies that reality is of intrinsic value; were it effected by human activity it would become relative.

19. F. M. Müller, *The Vedanta Philosophy*, pp. 15-16.

15. *Indian Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 50.

16. A. Barth, *The Religions of India*, p. 84.

It was this universal recognition and spirit of toleration and the spiritual helpfulness resulting from it which was the greatest factor counteracting any pessimism which could, theoretically, result from 'intellectual exclusiveness'. The common man did not feel the sense of exclusion from the highest state, since truth was open to all who aspired after it and no one was debarred from it. The pure and elevated qualifications required also did not, in fact, create despondency, since they operated uniformly for all men and did not give any unearned advantage, such as special opportunities for education, etc. to any section. The caste-principle which excluded the lowest class from the highest truth of Vedanta must be admitted to be the cause of such pessimism, but not the so-called intellectualism of that system. 'But in principle, this [caste] exclusion was wrong and clearly contradicted by the true spirit of Vedanta.'²⁰

Pessimism and the doctrines of karma and punarjanma

The critic holds that the Vedantic world-view governed by the two laws of karma and *punarjanma* (rebirth) cannot but produce an idea of an endless, wearisome repetition of a futile process, since each life but gives rise to another, the working out of karma to more karma, leading nowhere. It must be conceded that he who holds the *samsāra* doctrine to be final cannot avoid a resultant gloom and depression. But Vedanta always insists on the provisional nature of the fleeting, the unsubstantial and the suffering, which must, in the end, give way to a bright end.

The karma doctrine of Vedanta holds out the greatest truth in the realm of the self: that its success and happiness are with-

in itself, to be worked for through purification of thoughts, emotions and actions. And infinite quest for perfection is allowed by the doctrine of *punarjanma*, which connects all moments of experience, and past, present and future existence into a meaningful teleological process. The supreme value of truth or *mokṣa* strengthens the optimistic outlook only by the help of these two doctrines. 'It is thus the poverty of man's present spiritual equipment taken along with the greatness of his final destiny which explains belief in a plurality of lives.'²¹

If we are to be optimists that there is some goal to be reached by all individuals in a temporal process, then the notion of a series of successive existence in the course of which all are gradually purified and made fit for heaven would seem to be the one least open to objection.²²

The critic holds that the cheerlessness of the goal of annihilation in pure identity as well as of the doctrine of *samsāra* mutually reinforce each other. It might be argued that the doctrine of *samsāra* taken by itself is certainly pessimistic, but in the main, historically and psychologically, it has been transformed into an inspiring conception through its connection with the highest value of man (*paramārtha*). The critic further objects that since the laws of karma and *punarjanma* are purely laws of determinism in the empirical field, while *mokṣa* is the idea of transcendental freedom,²³ the affirmation of the latter is a logical denial or an implicit condemnation of the former. Certainly Vedanta envisages *mokṣa* as the ending of karma and *punarjanma*, but this is not so much an admission of logical

²¹. Mactaggert, *Some Dogmas of Religion*, p. 113.

²². G. L. Dickinson, quoted in S. Radhakrishnan, *The Brahma Sūtra*, p. 206; cf. Paul Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, p. 314.

²³. Cf. Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, p. 209.

²⁰. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

falseness of these laws, as the critic likes to believe, as the idea of 'going beyond'. As physical science harnesses natural laws to its own purposes, the pursuer of Ātmavidyā controls these moral laws instead of being controlled by them, that is, he turns them from their nature as 'destructive' forces to more beneficial and useful purposes, when his attention is turned towards *mokṣa*. As the law of gravity holds good within the earth's field but not in the cosmic field, similarly Vedanta asserts that karma and *punarjanma* operate in the field of *samsāra* but not in *mokṣa*.

The psychological value of the connection of these moral laws with the conception of *mokṣa*, in the form of inspiration and consolation, has been greater than the value of more scientific doctrines. Instead of the 'one life, one chance' theory of salvation, it stresses the many chances each has to attain that good.²⁴ The despair that might result from the idea of the inexhaustibility and inescapability of these laws is counterbalanced by the hope resulting from the idea of dispassionate operation of these laws by which the lowest soul may raise himself to the highest position by acting in the right way.²⁵ The idea of the working out of the laws of karma and *punarjanma* in the shape of the final conquest of matter by spirit is no pessimistic outlook; and in spite of the conception of 'eighty-four lakhs of lives', the Vedantin derives true encouragement from the thought that to be born in human form is itself evidence of the long distance covered on the path to the goal. The immense vista enhances rather than depresses the value of his effort and action through *tapasyā*.

Another element of psychological value inherent in these doctrines is the support they give to the instinct for life and abhor-

rence of death in man. This is enhanced by the possibility of improving the future by self-effort, through the operation of the law of karma. The sense of the continuity of self through *punarjanma* is thus supported by the evolutionary principle of Karma ending in the attainment of true immortality or *amṛtatva* of the self. And this is a source of optimism for the Vedantin.

Critics are intolerant of the pessimistic resignation and acquiescence to fate which they find to be the necessary result of these doctrines. The ethical possibilities and actualities of these doctrines will be dealt with later, but here it is appropriate to point out that the causal explanation of inequalities of life afforded by these laws is psychologically satisfying, as evidenced by the absence of bitterness. Among other attitudes resulting from these laws are patience and persistent endeavour in making use of life's possibilities, toleration and sympathy towards the less fortunate. The sense of despair created by vast, incomprehensible fate is balanced by the belief that life is self-chosen and possible to improve. The ideal attitude towards life's problems is that of equanimity, detachment, contentment, which is no ignoble or pessimistic attitude in spite of the condemnation of it as mere 'stoic indifference'. The important point about the karma doctrine is that, paradoxically, it inspires us both with hope for the future and resignation towards what may occur in the present. This is not pessimism but the very opposite of it.

In their actual operation the doctrines of karma and *punarjanma* have not always been interpreted in a synthetic way. The best Vedantins have been able to balance the elements of past and present to determine the future; *prārabdha karma* (karma which has already begun to bear fruit) compounded with *puruṣakāra* (self-effort) has been productive of the highest type of *kriyamāṇa karma* (that which is presently

24. Floyd Ross, *The Meaning of Life in Hinduism and Buddhism*, p. 36.

25. Cf. *Bhagavad-Gītā*, 6.38.

being performed). But the unphilosophical mind was not able to attain such a true balance. In certain periods and individuals the over-emphasis on *prārabdha* has produced that mood of fatalism about which the critic complains. Again, the tendency to understand karma as a mechanical law converted it into mere soulless fate and was productive of a sense of helplessness. Failure to keep in mind the tri-dimensional aspect of karma doctrine converts this law of moral and spiritual harmony into a

'reign of terror'.²⁶ It is difficult to decide, however, the true relation of cause and effect in this situation. Is the one-sided interpretation of the laws of karma and *punarjanma* the cause of the pessimistic outlook, or does the pessimistic outlook generated by socio-historical factors lead to that one-sided interpretation?

(to be continued)

26. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 130.

How They Walked on the Razor's Edge

ST. TERESA, BRIDE OF THE SUN

SWAMI ATMARUPANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

Though the years at St. Joseph's passed in tranquillity and forgetfulness of the world, Teresa wasn't completely deaf to mankind's cry of suffering. 'I would have laid down a thousand lives to save a single soul ...' she wrote during this period. She told her daughters that each was to look on herself as a sacrifice for the world, especially for the ungodly, for those who couldn't pray or wouldn't. Her purpose for St. Joseph's was a precise one: to conquer God's Kingdom and radiate its glory on earth among men.

Yet her main emphasis was on the refrain she had learned as a young woman while reading St. Jerome to her Uncle Pedro: 'All is nothing.' She prayed for the welfare of the world, yes, but she saw that world 'as though in a dream'. Love, which gives the sense of value and reality to whatever it touches, had been withdrawn from the

restless world of the senses and given wholly to God.

Then one day in the summer of 1566 a Franciscan friar came to St. Joseph's. He described with great pathos the terrible state of religion in the world, how people were perishing for want of spiritual food. His words lanced Teresa's heart, and the unbounded love for God which had been contained within its limits flowed out over the earth. This love, which had been purified of all sensuality by detachment, returned a wonderful new sense of reality and value to the world—the reality of God and the value of serving Him in it. Teresa had passed from 'all is nothing' to 'all is God'.

The miseries of the world outside the cloister began to weigh heavily on her. What

could she do, a poor, enclosed nun? One evening the Lord appeared to her and in all tenderness said by way of consoling her, 'Wait a little, daughter, and you will see great things.'

In February 1567 the General of the Carmelite Order came from Rome to visit Castile, and April found him in Avila. He was deeply moved when he visited St. Joseph's and met these thirteen dedicated nuns leading a life of strictest discipline, for he had come to Spain mainly to encourage a reform of the Carmelite Order. Here at St. Joseph's he found the Carmelite ideal being lived in all its purity, and in Teresa of Jesus he found a woman of indomitable courage, contagious enthusiasm, and deep spirituality. He gave her authorization to expand the Reform in Castile by founding more convents and two monasteries for Discalced friars. This was the answer to her prayer for the means of serving God which had ended her autobiography. This was the beginning of the 'great things' promised by God.

Teresa was once again overwhelmed. She was now fifty-two; and her health was bad as always. Moreover, she had no money, no support, and no houses for new foundations. How and where was she to begin?

* * *

Dawn, 13 August 1567. Three carts jolted through the bumpy streets of Avila. Teresa, accompanied by two nuns from St. Joseph's and four from the Incarnation, was starting out for Medina del Campo. Also in her party were the chaplain Julian de Avila and servants, who rode behind the carts on muleback. Dawn, the holy hour which had witnessed Teresa's birth, her quest of martyrdom with Rodrigo, her flight to the convent with Antonio, and the foundation of St. Joseph's, now found her in her old age setting out as Mother Found-

ress of Carmel after four and a half years of quiet retirement.

All Avila thought her mad: what business had a nun to go gallivanting about at this age? They were right: she was indeed mad, mad with divine madness, but never was there a more down-to-earth woman: in her was harmonized the mad idealism of the knight errant—or should we say 'dame errant'?—with the practical common sense of the simple peasant woman.

Hesitation was foreign to her. Though the Bishop of Avila and others looked at her askance for starting out on new adventures, she had commissioned Antonio de Heredia—prior of the Mitigated Carmelite friars in Medina del Campo—to search out a house for her second foundation. The chaplain, Julian de Avila—one of the most lovable characters in the life of Teresa, who accompanied her on most of her journeys—has left a colourful description of their arrival, after two days' travel, in the busy market town:

The Medina del Campo foundation! What a business! We arrived at Medina at midnight... There we were in the streets, friars and nuns, laden with the sacred vessels and vestments necessary for saying the first Mass and fitting up the chapel: we looked like gipsies who had been robbing churches; if we had run into a police patrol we should have spent the rest of the night in jail....

We had to wake up the caretaker and summon him with all urgency to open the house and clear it for us. O Lord! We had scarcely got in when we thanked God with all our hearts: He saved us in the nick of time from six bulls for the next day's bullfight which were dashing madly across town to the arena.

It was nearly dawn. You should just have seen the prioress, the sisters, all of us, some with brooms, others on ladders busy putting up hangings or fixing the bell in place. We had no nails

and it wasn't the moment to go and buy any. Mother Teresa made good use of those she found in the walls; somehow or other the place was cleared and the porch began to look more or less presentable.

As soon as it was daylight, we joyfully pealed the bell for Mass, one stroke after another. Those who heard the peal came in to find a convent sprung up during the night. They were left speechless with astonishment. Soon there were so many people that our little porch was filled to overflowing.

The house selected by the well-meaning but highly impractical Antonio de Heredia had looked depressingly dilapidated at midnight. Now, in the light of day, what was Teresa's horror to find that the house consisted of only a few half-crumbling walls! The place was not fit for human habitation, so they took up residence in the upper part of a Medina businessman's house for two months while the convent was thoroughly repaired.

During this time Teresa one day asked Antonio de Heredia's advice on the founding of a Discalced Reform for friars. She was surprised and amused that the fifty-seven-year-old friar offered himself as the first friar: 'I took it for a joke and told him so ...' He insisted, but Teresa was still doubtful of his capacity, so she asked him to think it over for a year while following the Primitive Rule in private.

Another day, however, a young friar named Juan de San Matias came to see her. He also belonged to the Carmelite monastery in Medina. Teresa was much pleased at their very first meeting, for his sincerity and spirituality were evident. She begged him to join her Discalced Reform, and when the five-foot-tall friar agreed, she exclaimed in delight: 'Daughters, I have a friar and a half!' Though Antonio was tall and Juan very short, Juan in time proved

himself to be the friar and Antonio the half. This Juan became the great St. John of the Cross, whose figure has dominated all subsequent Catholic mysticism. As Julian de Avila summed up: 'In this town of Medina del Campo, a sort of fair where you find everything, the Mother found the cornerstone of her monasteries of 'Discalced friars.'

Once the house in Medina was ready and the nuns had taken up their residence, Teresa was free to continue her work as Mother Foundress. In April 1568 she founded a Carmel in the small town of Malagon; in August, at Valladolid. St. John of the Cross and Antonio de Heredia—now Antonio de Jesus—founded the first Discalced monastery in Duruelo on November 28. In May 1569 Teresa opened a convent in the historic city of Toledo....

August 1570 found Teresa back at St. Joseph's, Avila. It was always a joy for her to return to this her first Carmel, and cause for rejoicing among her daughters, because they felt strength in the presence of their brave Mother whose spirit no difficulties could dampen. She was happy to find the house as recollected as she had left it. And to add to her pleasure, she was presented with two novices.

One, a peasant girl named Ana Garcia, had lived on such intimate terms with God in her childhood that when her village playmates called her, she would apologize to Him, saying: 'I'm going to play, but I'll come back straightway.' As she began to mature, she scared off her first suitor by appearing before him in bizarre attire. At the age of twenty she had a vivid dream in which she found herself in a small convent, poor and silent but permeated with the love of God. She asked for something to drink, and a nun dressed in coarse brown frieze

gave her water: never had she tasted anything so cool and refreshing. When Ana told her priest about the dream, he recognized the convent as St. Joseph's in Avila. Going there, Ana Garcia found the house true to her dream in every detail. She became Ana de San Bartolomé, the faithful and devoted little sister who was to be Teresa's constant companion in later years.

Ana de Lobera was as talented and cultured as the other was simple. So remarkable was she for her brilliance and beauty that her friends nicknamed her 'the queen of women'. One day she gave alms to a beggar on the street and continued on her way. After proceeding a few steps, however, the look of sorrowful love she had seen on his face moved her so much that she turned her head to catch a glimpse of him again. But he had disappeared. From that time on she detached herself from her former pleasures, and at the age of twenty-five entered St. Joseph's. There she found in a picture of Christ the exact face and expression of that beggar. Thus Ana de Lobera became Ana de Jesus.

Teresa always had a special love for novices, and such jewels as the two Anas made her praise God's goodness in sending them. Not all who sought entrance into her Carmels, however, were so perfect. Now that her Reform was well known in Castile, women who were of no use in the world also sought refuge in her houses. At the Convent of the Incarnation she had seen only too well what degradation takes place when a convent becomes a boarding house for women who can't find husbands. So, though compassionate, she was unyielding in the matter of selecting only the best for her Carmels. 'I won't have nuns who are ninnies,' she would exclaim. To one influential benefactress who insisted that Teresa accept two candidates she wrote: 'I can find subjects everywhere, but I haven't dared to take one . . . for I want

them perfect. . . . I shall not accept either of the two of whom you speak to me. I find in them neither sanctity, courage nor talents sufficient to be an advantage for the house.'

When anger was needed to protect the purity of her Order, hers was short-lived but terrible in its clarity of perception, leaving no doubt as to what displeased her. This didn't indicate a lack of self-control: she used anger as an artisan uses a precision tool to accomplish a definite purpose. Once the desired effect had been produced, she was quick to forgive and forget; but the same will which had expressed itself through anger continued to work now through gentleness, until success was assured.

This adamant hardness manifested only when the welfare of the Order was in question. Otherwise, Teresa's mother-heart reached out and embraced all: 'Her tact and sweetness', said one of her daughters, 'always attracted me to her. Her wonderful life and the way she spoke would have moved the heart of a stone.' If she hurt any of her daughters, Teresa would prostrate herself at the offended one's feet, begging pardon. When writing to the prioresses whom she herself had formed, Teresa would sign: 'Your Reverence's unworthy servant'.

In October 1570 Teresa left Avila for the university city of Salamanca, where on November 1 she made her seventh foundation. Here Ana de Jesus was professed. Christian nuns are considered to be the brides of Christ, and in these Carmels a nun's profession was truly a bridal feast. Such festive occasions brought out all of Teresa's natural warmth and gaiety. When she saw Ana de Jesus carrying a beautiful statue of the Child Jesus, her joy poured out in spontaneous verse:

How happy is this shepherdess
For she has today given herself to a shepherd

Who is royal and will continue to reign.
 As to myself Gil, I am afraid.
 I shall never dare to cast eyes on her again
 For she has taken a husband
 Who is royal and will continue to reign.

Then her spiritual fervour overflowed in dance. As a young lady she had been a stunning dancer, but that self-conscious mastery of technique couldn't compare with this ecstasy in movement. The Spirit flowed through her limbs, giving them an ethereal grace and liquidity of movement as she turned round, clapping her hands in the way that Spanish girls dance even now. The nuns were carried away with her and all accompanied her 'in a perfect transport of spiritual joy'.

Many years afterwards when Ana de Jesus went to France to found Carmels there, the French nuns were astonished to see venerable Mother Ana 'more like a seraphim than a mortal creature, executing a sacred dance in the choir, singing and clapping her hands in the Spanish way, but with so much dignity, sweetness and grace that, filled with holy reverence, they felt themselves wholly moved by divine grace and their hearts moved to God.' The nuns of Carmel carry on this sacred tradition to this day.

In the spring of 1571 Teresa was back in Salamanca for a short stay, after having made another foundation at Alba. On Easter evening, after feeling sad all day, she asked a novice to sing for her at the after-dinner recreation time. In a pure voice, penetrating in its clarity, the young girl sang :

May my eyes behold thee,
 Good and sweet Jesus,
 May my eyes behold thee,
 And then may I die.

Let him who will, delight his gaze
 With jasmine and with roses ;
 If I were to see thee,
 A thousand gardens would lie
 before my eyes.

The sublime words of the song, their rhythm in the original Spanish, the angelic novice, and the beauty of the April evening could not but send a pure mind like Teresa's into deep ecstasy, and she fell into the arms of Maria de San Francisco. She was carried to her room where she remained for a long time without external consciousness. When her mind returned to earth, she was in pain, the bones of her hands were as if dislocated, and she felt in every bone of her body an intense burning sensation. She gave expression to this pain of spiritual longing in verse :

I live without true life in me
 And, living thus expectantly,
 I die because I do not die.

Is it any wonder that when recreation time came and the nuns saw their Mother hurrying off to her room, they would hold her back and say, 'Isn't Your Reverence staying with us?' If she spoke, all were illumined by her words ; if she laughed, the whole convent roared ; and if she was in a more obviously spiritual mood, the whole atmosphere would be surcharged. For Teresa, joy was an expression of purity and spiritual freedom. She disliked 'gloomy saints', nor did she like people to pray until they exhausted themselves. Once when Teresa was leading the games and songs during recreation time at a convent, the prioress complained to her that the nuns would do better to spend their time in prayer. 'Go daughter,' retorted Teresa. 'Go and contemplate in your cell while your sisters and I make merry with the good Lord here !'

In October 1571 Teresa was unexpectedly chosen as prioress of the Convent of the Incarnation, her joining house which followed the Mitigated Rule and which she had been so happy to leave in order to start her Reform. Teresa was horrified, and so were the Incarnation nuns who had been denied

their right to elect a prioress of their own choosing: they had no desire to be 'reformed' like the Discalced. But a high Church official, impressed by Teresa's genius for leadership and organization, felt that she alone could save a fast-deteriorating situation. Spain was now becoming a poor country, and people could no longer support the country's innumerable monasteries and convents. Huge houses like the Incarnation literally faced starvation. The novitiate at the Incarnation had been closed and many of the one hundred and thirty nuns were contemplating a return to the world to escape dire poverty.

When Teresa arrived for the induction ceremony, she was met by jeers and shouts of rejection. Suddenly, in the midst of the tumult, a single voice was heard: 'We want her and we love her!' More nuns gained courage and rallied round this new voice. Soon the two parties began abusing each other and came to blows. Finally, with the help of the police, Teresa was formally inducted. Throughout the commotion she had remained calm and unconcerned. Seeing this, the nuns began to whisper, 'Maybe she is a saint!'

When the first chapter-meeting was held, Teresa addressed the nuns:

My ladies, mothers and sisters: ... This election has greatly distressed me, both because it has laid upon me a task which I shall be unable to perform, and also because it has deprived you of the freedom of election which you used to enjoy and given you a prioress whom you have not chosen at your will and pleasure, and a prioress who would be accomplishing a great deal if she could succeed in learning from the least of you here all the good that is in her.

I come solely to serve and please you in every possible way that I can and I hope that the Lord will greatly assist me to do this ... See, then, my ladies, what I can do for each of you; even if it be to give my life-blood, I shall do it with a right good will.

I am a daughter of this house and a sister of you all...

Could they resist any longer? She was so natural, so unaffected and humble! Hostility vanished when she installed an image of the Virgin Mary on the prioress's seat, gave Her the convent keys, prostrated and said, 'Ladies, here is your prioress, Our Lady of Mercy.' The statue remained there throughout Teresa's three-year term, and every evening Teresa surrendered to Her the keys.

(to be continued)

(Continued from page 383)

Self that enabled Swami Vivekananda to combine in him the greatness of Śamkara and Buddha. He says:

We want today that bright sun of intellectuality of Śamkara joined with the heart of Buddha, the wonderful infinite heart of love and mercy. This union will give us the highest philosophy. Science

and religion will meet and shake hands. Poetry and philosophy will become friends. This will be the religion of the future, and if we can work it out, we may be sure that it will be for all times and peoples.⁵

⁵. *Complete Works*, vol. 2 (1976), p. 140.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MODES OF VALUE : BY A. H. JOHNSON. Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. 1978. Pp. 244. \$5.00.

This book contends that value is a simple un-analysable quality which characterizes many 'objects'. The various ways in which value characterizes entities are carefully examined with the help of numerous illustrations. A representative sample of entities which most people regard as valuable is considered in the light of their comparative merit. There is a parallel discussion on the opposite of value and what it characterizes. The following are among the topics discussed : pleasure, beauty, honesty, ugliness, pain, hatred of fellow man, art, drugs, violence, sex, democracy, university, persuasion, a philosophy of life.

This is an introduction to moral science and treats moral rules as social principles which are meant for the good of everybody. *Why* be moral? Because, as Hobbes has shown, without a moral code of conduct life would be 'poor, nasty, brutish, and short'. Morality is to everyone's interest alike, but this does not make it identical with self-interest. Being 'moral' is being 'rational'; and being rational is doing what is supported by the best reasons. But why be rational? This question does not make any sense. Morality and rational life must go together.

The author makes clear distinctions in the use of the word 'good'. He makes valuable comments on the relations between 'good', 'morally good', 'good man' and 'right'; his discussion of the uses of 'duty' as opposed to those of 'obligation' is excellent. Whoever treads the path of violence will never for all that establish a more just society, let alone world peace. Whoever uses the weapons of terror, even of mental terror, to achieve one's own selfish ends, whoever wounds or kills innocent people in order to overcome their present difficult circumstances is not more noble than other violent criminals, for the end never justifies the means. The ethics of our present technological age needs a proper understanding of obligation to one another.

There is enough in this book to keep one thinking about values of life from an ethical point of view for a long time, and the presentation is not only analytical but skilful and interesting. Prof. A. H. Johnson deserves profuse congratulations on his excellent book and the philosophical world is grateful to the Philosophical Library for producing this valuable book.

It grows in interest toward the end and leaves us with a sense of self-realization.

PROF. K. S. RAMAKRISHNA RAO
Head, Dept. of Philosophy
Government College for Women
Mandya, Karnataka

REBIRTH—THE TIBETAN GAME OF LIBERATION: BY MARK TATZ AND JODY KENT. Published by Rider and Company, 3 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 6JD. 1978. Pp. 231 (with a full-colour poster gameboard). £4.95.

We hear about 'many a truth told in jest'. Truth can be learned through play, for man is not only a thinker (*Homo sapiens*) and a worker (*Homo faber*) but also a player (*Homo ludens*). Play forms an important aspect of learning in childhood. Even in adult life play has an important place. Some Hindu schools of thought regard the whole creation as *līlā*, God's play.

Three points distinguish play from all other activities. One is that play is an acting out or imitation of actual life's situations and, like them, involves an element of uncertainty or surprise. The second point is spontaneity—play is not an act of compulsion. The third point is joy. Though modern man's attitude towards play has considerably changed—cricket and soccer have now become sublimated forms of war between nations—nevertheless, the essential purpose of play remains the same, namely, entertainment. In other words, play is a form of art like music and dance and, like the latter, could become a means of approaching and understanding Reality.

Many of the indoor games popular in modern times—cards, chess, ludo, snakes-and-ladders—are mostly ways of 'killing time'. However, some of the ancient Hindu games like the *Golokdham* had a religious value. The book under review is a detailed description of a Tibetan religious game called *Rebirth* played on a gameboard using dice. The publishers have prepared a big poster-size full-colour gameboard consisting of 104 squares, and the main part of the book is devoted to a detailed commentary on each square. A lengthy Introduction gives a lucid account of the history of the game and the philosophical principles involved in it.

The game of *Rebirth* was invented in the early part of the thirteenth century by Sa-Pan a great Sanskrit scholar of the Sakya sect in Tibet. Tibetans regarded it as an educational game, inculcating in children the Buddhist map of the world and an understanding of the workings of

Karma. It was also enjoyed as an amusement and was played by both monks and lay people. Modified versions of the game spread to Nepal, Bhutan and Korea. The game is still played by Tibetan refugees in India and other parts of the world.

The gameboard consists of 104 squares, each square representing a realm or state of one's birth. The throw of dice determines in which world the player will be born. It is not a straight ascent from the hottest 'hell' to 'Nirvana'. At any stage he may slip and go down to a lower plane. Once he attains 'Nirvana', he has no more 'rebirth' and he wins the game. Each square contains instructions about the place where each number of the die will lead to. A large number of people can play this game.

The authors have made everything so clear that even a child can play the game with the help of the book. Indeed, we hope religious-minded people will gift this book to children and thus help them to exercise their intellectual and moral faculties. However, the book presents a difficulty. The inscriptions on the gameboard are all in Tibetan script, and unless the player constantly refers to the book, he cannot know where exactly he is supposed to be in the Buddhist world. This robs the game of much of its interest, unless of course, one happens to be a devoted Tibetologist. We suggest the publishers get the gameboard redrawn giving English equivalents of Tibetan terms on every square.

P.B.

FROM HOLY WANDERINGS TO SERVICE OF GOD IN MAN : BY SWAMI AKHANDANANDA. Publishers: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Ramakrishna Math Road, Madras-600 004. 1979. Pp. xvi+186. Rs. 6/-.

Hindu scriptures say that man's effort to realize God passes through three stages: to see God as an external Being, then to see Him as the Spirit within himself and finally as the Spirit pervading everything. For a fully enlightened person, service of man becomes literally the service of God, and Swami Akhandanandaji was one such great spiritual luminary and lover of humanity. The book under review is a collection of the great Swami's reminiscences of the days of his youth when he renounced the world and became a monk.

The first chapter contains his reminiscences of his Master Sri Ramakrishna. In it we can get an idea of how by the touch of the Master he was transformed from a deeply orthodox Hindu aspirant into a universal man ready to do the

work that was ahead of him. Apart from this, the chapter gives us a glimpse into the wonderful personality of Sri Ramakrishna and his simple but enchanting way of imparting spiritual instructions to his disciples and devotees, and his power of changing even ruffians like Manmatha.

The second chapter contains a thrilling account of his wanderings in Tibet and other places. A sample of his adventurous spirit and utter dependence on God is revealed in the following account (p. 23): From Gangotri I passed through the Mahapitha of Chandravadani and visited Kedar and Badrinarayan. In my descent from Chandravadani hill by a perilous path, I lost my way and sat in a dense forest in meditation of the Master. On getting up, I moved forward with the name of the Master on my lips, without caring whether I was on the right track or wrong. Down the steep hill it was impossible to arrest my motion. I took hold of shrubs, my feet slipped and I tumbled down into a corn field. Two hill men were roasting sheafs of wheat for food. They were taken by surprise to see me and said, "How is this? Where do you come from? Who led you here? No other human being has come down this way." On hearing that I came from the seat of Devi Chandravadani, they said, "Mother Chandravadani must have held you by the hand and brought you here." I had actually felt that somebody led me here by the hand. I had slipped down as much as two miles.

His experiences in Tibet are not dealt with in detail. But his account of his wanderings in Gujarat and in other places of northern India is given in full which reveals not only his great heart but also the social conditions prevailing in those areas. These holy wanderings were a great education for him, and his heart began to bleed more and more for the poor and the ignorant. He came to discover that the path to one's own salvation consists in working for the salvation of others. He took upon himself the vow of service. Like Rantideva of the Puranas he asked himself, 'Is there any way in this world whereby I may get into the bodies of all beings and myself suffer all their troubles?' For more than forty years he was fully engaged in feeding, clothing, educating and serving the poor. It was he who laid the foundation for the educational work, relief operations and other philanthropic activities for which the Ramakrishna Mission is now well known. 'Forty years were spent as if it were forty days,' he once remarked. The statement gives a clue to the intensity and dedication with which he conducted the work of service.

His intense work of serving the poor started in Murshidabad district and culminated in the establishment of the famous orphanage in Sargachhi, West Bengal, where he remained till the last days of his life. This book concludes with the story of the early phase of his activities in different parts of Murshidabad district. Throughout the book one note that touches our heart is the vibration of Swami Akhandananda's heart in response to the appalling misery of the people and the attitude with which he did his utmost to alleviate their sufferings. The book will be an eye-opener and a real guide to those who sincerely wish to do some service to their suffering brethren.

The uniqueness of Sri Ramakrishna is further revealed by his unique disciple and his pioneering work.

The illuminating introduction by Swami Tapasyananda adds to the importance of the book.

Some printing errors remain which should be rectified in the next edition.

SWAMI JAGADATMANANDA
Sri Ramakrishna Vidyashala
Mysore

MALAYALAM

ARSHA BHARATA PARAMPARYAM: BY SWAMI SAKHYANANDA. Published by Vivekananda Vijnana Bhavanam, Punnamm, Trichur-680 002, Kerala. Distributed by National Bookstall, Kottayam-1, Kerala. 1979. Pp. xvi+372. Rs. 15/-.

When India became independent our historians and research scholars began to have a new look at the country's ancient history. The conjecture that the Aryans destroyed Indus valley culture was challenged on the basis of new data, and a section of scholars suggested that these ancient cities might have been buried underground by floods. Such sites and cities as Indraprastha, Hastinapura, Ahichhatra, and Kausambi mentioned in *Mahabharata* were excavated, and were found to be seats of advanced culture. Recently, Ayodhya of the *Ramayana* also has been excavated and here too deposits of ancient culture were discovered, indicating that many narrations in the epics and Puranas may, after all, be true.

Further researches and explorations into India's past have thus become very much necessary now. The new publication *Arsa Bharata Paramparyam* in Malayalam written by Swami Sakhyananda assumes importance in this context. Containing a brief survey of Indian cultural heritage, the work can serve as a basic guide to further explorations

and investigations. It is an abridged version of a much detailed work by the author on the subject entitled *Bharata Caritra Darsanam* which is awaiting publication. What makes the present work unique is that the author's researches are almost entirely based on astronomical data and the literature of epics and Puranas.

The present book contains thirteen chapters with an appendix on the application of astronomical principles in historical research. Coming from the pen of an ascetic, it is but natural that the book should have more space and attention given to the evolution of various philosophical schools and the growth of the institution of sannyasa in India, than to other aspects of culture like art, literature, etc.

The most outstanding problem which the author has discussed is the origin and evolution of Advaita philosophy—and its practice in our national life. He traces the origin of this philosophy to Sadasiva-Mahadeva, the first Rishi-teacher of humanity. In the line of Teachers started from Him come Sadasiva Yogins and Vyasa Munis. Parsvanatha, Mahavira and Buddha who rose between 2400 and 1800 B.C. also belong to the class of these yogins. According to an equally daring speculation of the author, the Adi Samkaracarya who wrote the great commentaries and Kaladi Samkaracarya were two different men. The former was a disciple of Govinda who himself was a disciple of Gaudapada. It was this Adi Samkara who founded the ten great monastic orders. The author assigns him to 500 B.C. Kaladi Samkara, according to the author, lived in the South as the head of Sringeri Math in the early part of the eighth century A.D.

Thus, Swami Sakhyananda tells us that Samkara, like Vyasa, was the tutelary name of a position which started as early as 500 B.C. I am inclined to take it further back to an unknown prehistoric period when the real and most original Samkara, (Mahesvara, Paramesvara) rose up filling the entire universe with the force and vigour of his thought.

According to the author the legend that Parasurama of the house of Brighu colonized Kerala with people whom he brought from the North, might be a historical truth. The author suggests that a wave of migration of Saiva Brahmins took place later from Karnataka towards Kerala, and he calls these new immigrants 'Sivadvisa-Nambis'. This community, so we are told, got into trouble with the Buddhists, when they sought the help of Vedic Brahmins called Nambudiris, who came and settled in Kerala some time around A.D. 325. According to the author, Sri Samkaracarya of

Kalady was born in one of the families of Sivadivija Nambis and not in a Nambudiri family.

The history of India from the tenth to nineteenth century is only briefly surveyed in this work. This is the period of Muslim invasions and therefore Vedantic movements had to lie low. The author takes up the thread again with the rise of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and devotes some space to this movement of Modern Renaissance under Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.

History is after all an uncertain subject in the absence of authentic records. Under such circumstances we can only infer what happened long ago and therefore some of the data in the chronology may not be acceptable to others. For instance, the author has suggested A.D. 325 as the probable date of migration of Vedic Brahmins to Kerala on the basis of a chronogram, 'Yajasthanam samrakshyam'. But this chronogram signifies only the date of Mezhatol Agnihotri,

a great Brahmin who is said to have conducted ninety-nine Vedic sacrifices. It is not improbable that Vedic Brahmins had come still earlier. In fact, what is called Sangam literature, generally assigned to the first three centuries of the Christian era, contains many references to Vedic Brahmins and sacrifices in Tamilakam. Yet, with all these little shortcomings, the work is an outstanding contribution to the study of the history of Indian culture and should serve as a guide to scholars and students of our age-old national traditions and history. No one can read this book without feeling the power and vitality of Hindu religion coursing through the arteries of the nation from immemorial times.

V. T. INDUCHUDAN
Representative,

'Indian Cultural News Journal'
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Govt. of India

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION IN AFRICA

REPORT FOR MARCH 1977 TO SEPTEMBER 1979

On 25 October 1979, Swami Nihareyananda completed twenty years' service in Africa. Though the main centre of his activity during these years has been the United Cultural Institute, 35 Rhodes Avenue, Salisbury, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), his field of work has been very large indeed. During the period under review, the Swami did almost continuous preaching work in Africa, America and Europe.

Swami Bhashyananda, the Spiritual Head of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago and host of Swami Nihareyananda during the latter's extended stay in the U.S.A., arranged for the Swami regular lectures and classes in the Chicago temple itself and in the monastery in Ganges Township, 135 miles away in Michigan State. Programmes were also arranged in outlying areas, in addition to the Mission's established Centres in the U.S.A. The Vedanta groups in the following cities were visited, and texts like the Upanisads, Gita, Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali and Bhakti-Sutras of Narada explained: Cleveland, Pittsburg, Detroit, Easton, (Pennsylvania), Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, Louisville, Atlanta, West Palm Beach, Daytona Beach, Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, Denver, Kalispell (Montana), Lafayette (Indiana), and Vermont in the U.S.A.; and Toronto, St. John, Halifax, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Calgary in Canada.

Many were visited twice, and some even five and six times. The Swami also responded to invitations from Honolulu once and Princesstown in Trinidad twice.

Preaching was also continued in the Republic of South Africa, as before, in Johannesburg, Kimberley, Cape Town, Grahamstown, East London, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Estcourt, Ladysmith, Dundee, Newcastle and Bethal. Some places were visited twice and others thrice. In Zambia the main city visited was Lusaka where talks were given in the local Vedanta Centre. Talks were also given in London and Paris, as time permitted, and in the Ramakrishna Mission, Vacoas, Mauritius. Wherever a proper projector was available, the full length, black-and-white film on Mirabai was shown by the Swami. The Rhodesian capital, Salisbury, and the city of Bulawayo were visited once and discourses given.

From the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, P.O. Box 11326, Johannesburg, a monthly Bulletin is being posted to about 200 friends and well-wishers for the past 18 months. The first part contains short notes on philosophical topics, and the latter part quotations from Ramakrishna Mission literature, mostly *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. This Bulletin informally links together all the members of the Vedanta Societies in the three territories: Zambia, Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa.

LASA PAGE : COMMENTS

Alienation of Tribals

The recent tribal unrest in Tripura has sent shock waves all over the country. What took place was something like the pogrom of Jews and the Huguenots in Europe. Bands of tribal youths (many of them teenaged school boys and girls) armed with guns, arrows and machetes descended upon non-tribals (mostly Bengali refugees from the erstwhile East Pakistan), slaughtered men, women and children with ruthless ferocity, and set fire to whole villages. The non-tribals naturally retaliated in some places, and the resulting carnage left hundreds of people dead and thousands homeless.

What really unites the peoples of India is neither language nor race. A common culture is the only thread that unites the linguistic and racial diversities of the country. Though tribal insurgency in some of the northeastern States may have been instigated by vested interests, its basic cause is the inability of the Government to integrate the hill tribes into the common socio-cultural stream of the nation. In Tripura this cultural alienation was aggravated and brought to a crisis by economic exploitation. Unlike the Harijans who eke out their living in cities and villages pocketing all kinds of ignominies, the Girijans of the northeastern hills are a fiercely independent race. It was the attempt of non-tribals to rise by exploiting the tribals in their own land that invited the swift and devastating retribution.

At the time of Partition, the tribals constituted roughly half of the population, and they roamed freely on the hills following their primitive method of agriculture. Soon the persecution of minorities in East Pakistan led to a continuous influx of refugees into Tripura, reducing the tribals to a minority group and creating a severe pressure on land. The new settlers gradually came to own most of the agricultural land, often through fraudulent means. Added to this was the exploitation by unscrupulous money-lenders and traders. The laws belatedly enacted by the Government for the protection of tribals were not strictly enforced, and there were complaints about discrimination against tribals in educational and administrative fields.

What is tragic about the Tripura massacre is not only the death of so many innocent people, but that it was thought to be necessary in a democratic country in order to open the eyes of the nation. The Government should take drastic steps to end all forms of exploitation of tribals and depressed classes. This, however, is not enough. The whole nation must wake to its responsibility in integrating these neglected children of India into the mainstream of socio-cultural life and giving them dignity and a sense of belonging. We believe that Hindu religious leaders and organizations have a more significant role to play in this great task of national integration than political leaders and parties.
