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Prabuddha Bharata

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No. 4

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

INTEGRAL VISION OF VEDIC SEERS*

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

य आत्मदा बलदा यस्य विश्व
उपासते प्रशिषं यस्य देवाः ।
यस्य छायामृतं यस्य मृत्युः
कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥

Let us worship with oblation the divine Ka¹ who is the giver of the soul², the giver of strength; whose commands all [beings], even the gods, obey;³ whose shadow is immortality, whose [shadow] is death.⁴

Rg-Veda 10.121.2

* The hymn to the Hiranyagarbha is continued here. Hiranyagarbha literally means the 'golden womb' or 'the golden egg'.

(1) For the meaning of Ka see note on the first stanza published last month. Sāyaṇa refers to a story given in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (3.21) to show how Prajāpati got the name Ka. The story, also given in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 2.2.10.1-2, is as follows. Prajāpati appointed his last son Indra the lord of all the gods. But they would not accept him. Indra then asked his father to give him the fire or splendour (*hara*) that is in the sun which would make him the lord of the gods. In answer Prajāpati asked, 'If I give it to you *who* shall I be (कोऽहं स्याम्)?' And

Indra replied, 'You shall be what you say "Who" (कः)'. From then on Ka became the name of Prajāpati.

(2) According to the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.6.1) passage तत् सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत्, the Supreme Spirit enters and indwells all being as the Atman. In this sense He may be said to be the 'giver of the soul'. Sāyaṇa also gives an alternative meaning, 'purifier of the soul'.

(3) Compare भीषास्माद् वातः पवते (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.8.1) : एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गर्गि (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.8.9.)

(4) Immortality and death, Nirvana and Samsāra, are the two poles of universal existence. Theistically speaking, both depend on God's will.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This month's EDITORIAL discusses seeking God through meditation. Though it is a continuation of the editorials of November and December 1982 and January 1983, it may be read independently.

The Vedantic theory of creation is based on three basic concepts; projection, evolution and Karma. In CREATION AND MAN IN VEDANTA Dr. Leta Jane Lewis, Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages, California State University, Fresno, California, gives a clear and concise exposition of these concepts in the light of modern thought.

Swami Tathagatananda, spiritual head of the Vedanta Society of New York, has drawn the profile of ANQUETIL DUPERRON, the remarkable French genius whose transla-

tion of the upanisads opened the doors of Indological studies for the first time.

In THE UNCERTAINTY PRINCIPLE AND THE OMNIBJECTIVE REALITY Swami Jitatmananda of Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad, traces the origin and development of Heisenberg's famous concept and points out its closeness to the Vedantic concept of Maya.

TWO PHASES OF THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT IN KARNATAKA by Prof. S. S. Raghavachar, Professor of Philosophy (Rtd.), University of Mysore, is a comparative study of the Vaisnava and Virasaiva movements that spread through Karnataka in the medieval period. The article contains several strikingly original observations made by the learned author.

SEEKING GOD THROUGH MEDITATION: BEYOND THE GOLDEN THRESHOLD

(EDITORIAL)

The basic question

Why should we seek God? Why should we seek an unknown Being and undergo tremendous struggles and sacrifices which are unavoidable in this quest? Why not remain satisfied with the known world, its security, its comforts, its peace? Spiritual aspirants seldom ask themselves this question. Most of them practise Japa, meditation, worship etc. not because they are fully convinced of the rationale of these disciplines, but because they are drawn to it either by the force of social customs or by the force of their past Karma or of some unknown intuitive urge. God may remain unknown, but the reason for seeking Him should not

remain unknown. There are two reasons why it shouldn't be. For one thing, our aspiration and effort, unless they are based on clear understanding, will not be sincere, intense or long-lasting. Secondly, faith becomes strong enough to overcome doubts only when it is raised to the conscious plane by repeated questioning, in accordance with the well-known principle of 'fixing the post' (*sthūnā-nikhanana nyāya*). When a stake or post is driven into the ground it is shaken now and then to widen the hole. In the same way, our faith in spiritual realities must be given a good shaking occasionally in order to make it deep and strong. Therefore spiritual aspirants should ask them-

selves once in a while, 'Why do I seek God?'¹

This question is raised repeatedly by Swami Vivekananda in his speeches and writings.² He offers two answers. One is that seeking God is a natural teleological urge inherent in the soul, a higher manifestation of the evolutionary elan of universal life. Each soul is an integral part of the Supreme Self and must return to that infinite divine source. Each soul is potentially divine, and seeking God is only another name for the unfolding of the perfection and divinity already present in the soul. Every person is being propelled Godward by the spiritual forces of the cosmos, and religion is only a struggle to be aware of this fact and to be in harmony with the cosmic spiritual rhythm.

The second reason for seeking God is that it is the only solution to the existential problems of man like fear and guilt, love and hatred, insatiable thirst for happiness and clinging to life. Life is characterized by three attributes: limitation, contradiction and impermanence. This world cannot give us lasting satisfaction because the security, comforts and peace that it offers are limited, impermanent and are a mixture of contradictory qualities. We can get everlasting fulfilment only by transcending our limitations and realizing the absolute, immutable Reality known as God.

Three stages of spiritual journey

A seeker of God should also have a clear understanding of the stages he has to pass through. The imperative exhortation of

the *Kātha-Upaniṣad*, 'Arise! Awake! Realize the Truth with the help of illumined teachers!'³ indicates the three stages which are known by different names in different religious traditions. The famous prayer in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 'Lead us from the unreal to the Real, lead us from darkness to Light, lead us from death to Immortality',⁴ may also be taken as referring to these three stages. In the former passage self-effort is stressed, whereas in the latter passage divine grace is sought by the seeker—that is the only difference.

The first stage marks the aspirant's entry into the spiritual path. The exhortation 'Arise!' is an appeal to turn away 'from the unreal to the Real'. It calls for exercising the faculties of reason and will in a new way—in discrimination and detachment. A seeker at this stage does not know the Real, but he can know what is not real: anything that is impermanent cannot be real. The objects and experiences of the sense-bound world are impermanent and hence unreal. Reasoning in this line is discrimination. The practical counterpart of discrimination is detachment—detachment of the will—from the impermanent, the unreal. These two disciplines purify the soul. Hence mystics call this first stage 'Purgation'.

Purgation is only the negative aspect of the first stage. Its positive aspect is directing the soul towards the Real through aspiration, yearning for God. Aspiration becomes effective only when it is expressed through some practical technique like prayer, worship, self-analysis, selfless service, etc. As these techniques undergo refinement, they all assume the nature of *dhyāna*,

1. The great twelfth century French mystic St. Bernard used to ask himself after joining the monastery at Clairvaux, 'Bernard, what have you come here for?'

2. As for instance, in his introduction to his commentary on the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali and in his lecture 'Unity, the Goal of Religion'.

3. उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान् निबोधत ।

Kātha Upaniṣad 3.14

4. असतो मा सद्गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय,
मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय ।

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.3.28

meditation. Meditation is a state of mind in which a single *vṛtti* or thought-wave is maintained consciously. This cannot be done unless one's 'I'-consciousness is held at a particular point or centre. The very word 'con-centration' implies the centring of thoughts. Unity, awareness, centricity—these are the chief characteristics of the meditative state. All spiritual techniques end in this state.

The second stage is indicated by the Upaniṣadic exhortation 'Awake!'. In the first stage the aspirant tries to rise from engrossment in worldly pursuits, but he is not awake. He is still groggy with sleep and the intoxication of sense enjoyment; he is groping in the darkness of ignorance and his struggles are a form of sleep-walking. Long practice of meditation with intense aspiration leads to the awakening of the 'I'. Awakening means to be fully self-aware. The 'I' that is fully self-aware is not the ordinary ego but the *pratyagātman* or 'inner Self' also known as the *jīvātman* or 'individual self' and *kṣetrajña* or 'knower of the field'. It is self-luminous and fills the heart with its effulgence. Hence awakening is a movement 'from darkness to Light' as the second *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* prayer indicates. This is the first genuine spiritual experience that comes to the true seeker. In yoga books it is called *prajñāloka*, 'the light of Prajna': Sri Ramanuja calls it *ātmāvalokana*, 'perception of the Atman'. In the Advaita tradition the individual self is regarded only as a reflection of Brahman, the supreme Self, on the *buddhi*, the intellect; and hence the awakening of the self is understood as the awakening of the *buddhi* (*buddhi-prabodhanam*). The celebrated Gāyatri is a prayer for this awakening of the *buddhi*. Christian mystics call this stage 'Illumination' and Sufi mystics, *marīfa*.

In an earlier editorial three types of space were discussed: external or physical space (*bāhyākāśa*), mental space (*cittākāśa*) and

the space of consciousness (*cidākāśa*).⁵ In the first stage the seeker knows only the external space and the mental space. Entering the second stage of spiritual journey means entering *cidākāśa*, the space of consciousness, which has two aspects: the 'little space' (*daharākāśa*) in the heart and the 'supreme space' (*parama vyoman*), the infinite consciousness of the Divine. The heart is a chamber with two doors. Meditation opens the first door and the aspirant finds himself in the 'little space' in the heart filled with the radiance of the Self. That is the golden threshold of spiritual life.

Ordinary meditation can only open the first door and lead you up to the golden threshold. Beyond the heart lies the 'supreme space', the door to which remains closed. That is to say, the first spiritual awakening gives you the knowledge that you are the luminous self (*jīvātman*) separate from body and mind, but it does not give you the knowledge of the Infinite. The door to the Infinite can be opened not by ordinary meditation, but by a higher type of meditation the course of which is determined not by your effort but by the will of the Divine.

When this door opens and the seeker comes into touch with the Infinite, he enters the third stage of spiritual journey, known as 'Union' in Christian mysticism, and *haqīqa* in Sufism. This stage is indicated by the third exhortation of *Kāthopaniṣad*: 'Realize the Truth with the help of superior teachers!' Indeed, it is at this stage that the seeker needs the guidance of a guru most, for he is entering a wholly unknown territory and the chances of getting stuck or losing one's way are more here than at the earlier stages. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* prayer, 'Lead me from death to immortality', also refers to the third stage, for immortality cannot be

5. See, Editorial, *Prabuddha Bharata*, January 1983.

attained without the experience of the Infinite.

Beyond the golden threshold

All spiritual techniques end in meditation, and meditation leads to the golden threshold of the heart. True seeking begins only from now, for all the struggle has till now been only to identify the *seeker*. This is the point from where different religious traditions diverge and lead to different goals. At this point the aspirant has to make a crucial decision, as his ultimate destiny will depend upon the final path that he chooses.

The vast expanse of *cidākāśa* that extends beyond the golden threshold is trackless. In that effulgence of the Supreme Spirit no paths can be discerned. Rigid rules, well-defined techniques and conceptual frameworks do not obtain there. How then does the seeker proceed further? Like a navigator or a pilot he has to proceed in a certain direction. But he cannot choose any direction he likes. His direction is determined by the way his soul is oriented to the ultimate Reality. The two main orientations of the soul are known as Jñāna Mārga and Bhakti Mārga. It is a mistake to try to understand Jñāna and Bhakti in terms of worldly knowledge and love, and it is also a mistake to think that everyone may choose either of these directions as he pleases.

A clear understanding of the differences between Jñāna and Bhakti is of much practical importance in the advanced stages of spiritual seeking when it becomes necessary to follow one or the other with great intensity.

Vedanta accepts the ultimate Reality as having a two-fold nature : the Impersonal, *nirguṇa* (without attributes) and the Personal, *saguṇa* (with attributes). The Personal is also regarded as both anthropomorphic, *sarūpa* (with human form) and

non-anthropomorphic, *arūpa* (formless). Jñāna is the orientation of the soul to the Impersonal and Bhakti is its orientation to the Personal.

Another fundamental principle of Vedanta, accepted by all schools, is that the ultimate Reality is the Supreme Self of the universe, of whom the individual selves are parts or reflections. However, in Jñāna Mārga the Supreme Self is regarded as absolutely one with the individual self and is not objectified in meditation. In Bhakti Mārga the individual self is considered to be distinct from the Supreme Self and the latter is treated as an object of experience. This does not, however, mean that God is an object as a picture or a pot is, for He is the Self of all selves. His relationship with all beings is a subjective-objective one the exact nature of which can be understood only in the depths of mystic experience.

Thirdly, Jñāna and Bhakti are both experiences but of two different types. According to Vedanta, we perceive objects when the mind goes out through the senses and assumes the forms of the objects which are then illumined by the Atman. However, our perceptions are seldom passive experiences but willed, purposeful, intentional acts. Jñāna is non-intentional, witnessing type of cognition, whereas Bhakti is intentional cognition. Jñāna is seeing, Bhakti is looking; Jñāna is hearing, Bhakti is listening. Bhakti is not mere cognition but the union of wills—the individual will and the divine Will.

The fourth principle of Vedanta is *purṇatā*, fullness or wholeness. In itself the soul is incomplete and unfulfilled, and one of the main motives for seeking God is the attainment of *purṇatā*. In Jñāna Mārga this is attained through self-expansion. The Jñānī tries to expand his consciousness until it becomes one with the Infinite. In Bhakti Mārga perfection is attained through self-surrender. The Bhakta opens his heart to Grace which transforms and deifies the

soul and, ultimately, makes it one with the divine Being.

What, however, are the actual mental processes involved in wading through the infinite expanse of *cidākāśa*? This takes us to the fifth principle of affirmation and negation. In Vedānta the practical techniques of Jñāna and Bhakti are spoken of as *neti, neti* ('not this, not this') and *iti, iti* ('this, this') respectively. But there are no clear indications or detailed descriptions regarding their nature or method of operation. How does one practise *neti, neti*? The popular notion is that it is a form of discrimination. The aspirant is supposed to discriminate between the permanent and the impermanent and reject the latter, saying *na idam brahma iti* ('This is not Brahman'). But it is not as simple as that. To discriminate between two categories it is necessary to have knowledge of both of them, and the wholesale rejection of the one without an understanding of the other will lead us nowhere. It is held by Vedāntins that the self alone is permanent, but the Buddhists deny it. The problem is all the more difficult in the path of affirmation. To assert an object or experience to be *idam brahma iti* ('This is Brahman') is not possible without a direct experience of Brahman beforehand. The truth is, *neti, neti* and *iti, iti* are advanced spiritual techniques which operate at the deeper levels of mystic experience. The secrets of these interior processes are to be learned directly from an illumined Guru or through intense prayer and self-surrender to the Supreme Teacher, the Lord seated in the hearts of all.

Neti, neti is a process of transcendence. The Atman is regarded as a luminous ladder and the seeker moves to higher and higher steps. That is to say, he continually rejects and transcends lower levels of consciousness. And the higher he goes, the more his self expands. *Iti, iti* is a process of continuous transformation of lower consciousness into higher consciousness. No experience is

rejected; each experience merges into the next resulting in a progressive intensification of experience. In Yoga books spiritual progress attained through the former method is referred to as *bādha-mukha*, and progress attained through the latter method is referred to as *laya-mukha*.

These terms and the points discussed above assume vital importance only after the aspirant has crossed the 'golden threshold'. Beginners may find these discussions too theoretical or abstruse. However, some of the great teachers and mystics have expressed and expounded their higher experiences so lucidly, often with the help of images and allegories, that even beginners can have some idea of the deeper mysteries of spiritual life. We now turn to some of these descriptions. Since it is proposed to discuss the *neti, neti* technique in greater detail in a future editorial (to be devoted to a study of meditation in Jñāna Mārga) our attention here is restricted to the *iti, iti* technique.

Spiritual experience in the path of iti, iti

With the exception of a few sects which emphasize divine Name more than the Form, in all Bhakti schools meditation means meditation on a beautiful Form of God. Most people practise meditation by visualizing the picture of a god, goddess or Avatar. Now, how does this kind of meditation proceed? What changes take place in the experience of the meditator? Swami Saradananda, one of the great monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, has given a simple and clear account of what happens in the advanced stages of this kind of meditation:

We have said before that the devotee accepts as his Chosen Ideal some particular form of God and continues to think of and meditate on that form. He cannot in the beginning bring before his mind's eye, at the time of meditation, the complete picture of his Chosen Ideal. Sometimes

the hands of that mental picture, sometimes the feet, and sometimes only the face appears before him. These again dissolve, as it were, as soon as they are seen; they do not continue to stand before him. As a result of practice, when meditation becomes deep, the complete picture of that form appears before his mind's eye. When meditation gradually becomes deeper, the picture continues to stand motionless before him till the mind begins to stir. Afterwards, according to the greater intensity of meditation, the devotee becomes conscious of the movement, the smile, the speech and ultimately the touch of that *living* form. Then the devotee sees with his eyes open or shut, the benign presence of that form and its graceful movements whenever he wills. The devout aspirant gradually comes to have the visions of various divine forms springing from his own Chosen Ideal—as the result of his faith that 'his Chosen Ideal has out of His own accord assumed all forms'. The Master (Sri Ramakrishna) used to say, 'A person who has the vision of one such form in that living fashion gets easily the vision of all other forms.'⁶

It should not be forgotten that this simple and frank description is based on Swami Saradananda's own experience the profundity of which is beyond the reach of ordinary aspirants. Some people with strong powers of visualization often mistake their own vivid imaginations to be direct *sākṣātkāra* of the Deity. Such vivid, 'lucid' images, called 'eidetic images', are produced either naturally by the memory or by psychedelic drugs like LSD and marijuana, and have no spiritual value. The living, luminous divine Forms that appear in the depths of meditation are the result of a transformation of consciousness, and are experienced only after the seeker has crossed the 'golden threshold'. Any vivid form that appears in the form before the awakening of the *buddhi* and the experience of the inner Self should be regarded as only an eidetic image.

⁶. Swami Saradananda *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master* (Madras: Ramakrishna Math, 1970) p. 90

Śrī Rāmānuja speaks of direct vision (*darśana*) as vivid memory (*smṛti*)⁷. But he qualifies this statement by propounding three conditions or tests to ensure the genuineness of a spiritual experience. One is that the memory should be steady (*dhruvāsmṛti*). By steadiness Ramanuja means not merely the fixation of memory that takes place in good concentration, but also the spontaneity of its occurrence. The second condition is that the higher meditation called *upāsana* (which Ramanuja identifies with Bhakti Yoga itself) should be practised only after the aspirant has gained *atmāvalokana*.⁸ This is not an intellectual understanding but the direct perception of the unmistakable effulgence of the inner self (*pratyagātman*). Thirdly, the conversion of memory into direct perception is the result of intense devotion which can be generated only by a advanced Bhakta who has reached the stage of *parā-bhakti*.⁹

Madhvācārya and his followers have clearly pointed out that the spiritual Form of the Deity that appears in direct (*aparokṣa*) experience during the advanced stages of meditation is quite different from the physical or mental images held in memory during the preliminary stages of meditation. The true, purely spiritual Form of the Lord is called *bimbarūpa* (because the individual Atman is its *pratibimba* or reflection). It shines in all its luminous splendour in the depths of the heart and its direct vision, known as *yogyātmadarśana*,

7. सोऽयं स्मृतिर्दर्शनरूपा प्रतिपादिता, दर्शनरूपता च प्रत्यक्षतापत्तिः ।

Śrī Bhāṣya 1.1.1. *Laghu Siddhānta*

⁸. See, Ramanuja's commentary on Gita 2.53, introduction to Ch. 6, and *passim*.

⁹. In Ramanuja's scheme *para-bhakti*, *para-jñāna* and *parama-bhakti* are the three advanced stages of devotion that follow *atmāvalokana*. The direct vision of the Deity takes place at the second stage.

alone confers *mukti* or liberation to the soul.¹⁰

Sri Ramakrishna who accepted both the Personal and the Impersonal as equally real, used to say that the Form of God are produced when the infinite Brahman congeals, as it were, into those Forms. The important point in a true vision is the sense of intense reality, and this can come only through a transformation of consciousness. Swami Saradananda refers to this point when he continues his description :

One thing is clear from what has been said before. One who has the good fortune to have the vision of such living forms feels that those forms in the realm of ideas experienced during meditation have as real an existence as those of the things and persons of the waking state. Thus, as the feeling deepens that these experiences of the world of ideas are as real as those of the external world, the conviction that the latter also are a projection of the mind is intensified. Again, during deep meditation, the experiences of the realm of ideas become so powerful in the mind of the devotee that he does not have the slightest knowledge of the external world for the time being. This condition of the devotee has been designated by the scriptures *savikalpa samadhi*. Although owing to the strength of his mental power, the external world vanishes from the mind of the

10. हृदिस्था या हरेर्मूर्तिः जीवो यत् प्रतिबिम्बकः ।

यद् वशे वर्तते जीवः सा तु जीवकला स्मृता ॥

Quoted by Madhvacharya. For a perceptive analysis of this point see, Dr. B.N.K. Sharma *The Brahmasutras and their Principal Commentaries* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1978) Vol. 3, p. 436-7.

devotee at the time of such *Samadhi*, the realm of ideas still persists. The devotee becomes conscious of exactly the same misery and happiness in moving with his Chosen Ideal during his meditation as we feel daily in moving amidst the things and persons in the external world. All his ideas, without any exception, that arise at that time in his mind have only his Chosen Ideal for their object.¹¹

This is by far the clearest possible account of what happens in the path of *iti, iti* beyond the 'golden threshold'.

The three streams

The process of *iti, iti* is actually a cognitive experience; it is a result, rather than a technique. The real technique is opening of the soul to grace through aspiration and self-surrender. This couples individual yoga with Divine Yoga. Beyond the golden threshold the seeker's *sadhana* gets more and more divinized, and he is led by the unerring Will of the Divine. In the direction of *iti, iti* there are three streams along which the Divine leads spiritual aspirants into His infinitude and plenitude. These are the stream of Light, the stream of Sound and the stream of *bhāva* (devotional mood). Each soul is guided along one of these depending upon the soul's elemental constitution. It does not matter which stream one follows, what is important is to get into any of them. The current of divine Grace then carries the soul to the shores of the Infinite—from death to Immortality.

11. *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master* p. 91.

CREATION AND MAN IN VEDANTA

DR. LETA JANE LEWIS

Vedanta tells us that knowledge of our origin in its relationship with the universe can considerably benefit our spiritual lives. 'But,' the sceptic may object, 'since no one was present at the time of creation, we cannot know what happened then.' On the whole, Westerners looking into man's origin feel that positive answers, if any, are to be found only in the account of Genesis or in the conjectures of science. Of course science has made remarkable discoveries about the universe. For instance, it has found that apparently solid matter is almost empty space containing minute 'solar systems' composed of variously charged and uncharged particles. But despite its exciting progress, science cannot tell us where the particles' energy comes from or how life and consciousness became associated with dead matter. In the words of Professor Joseph Kaplan, for years chairman of the physics department at UCLA and one of the United States' foremost physicists:

One has to be extremely careful in these days of such continuous and strong impacts of science on society not to mistake quantity for quality. Physics gives the answers to how things happen, but not to why things occur or where they come from. There is no reason to believe that if physics has failed to answer these questions in its long search for the answers to questions about the inert universe, that it will succeed, or that biology will succeed, when it discusses life itself. In fact, it is highly unlikely that science will ever answer such questions.

Yet these are good questions, and they will be asked. Where will the answers come from? I feel that they will come from the part of man's experience which can be brought together under the word 'religion.' How then are we to live during the years ahead? Certainly not by science and technology only, but by religion playing its part. Are we ready? I do not know, but I hope that we are.¹

1. Joseph Kaplan, 'What is Life?' in *Vedanta and the West*, XV, no. 6 (November-December, 1952), p. 164.

Although science has failed to answer the most important question regarding man and the universe, many people intuitively feel that there must be some truth—even scientific truth—in Genesis' sketchy account of creation. But, unfortunately, this account is open to literal and symbolical interpretations, the accuracy of none of which has ever been proved.

'Since no one was present at the time of creation', the sceptic may persist, 'how is it possible to know how it occurred?' To such a person, Genesis and religious explanations in general are at best dubious hypotheses. In answer, the sages might smile gently and explain that when Joseph Kaplan spoke of experience in connection with religion, he meant verifiable contemporary experience. It is not necessary to have been present at the hypothetical first moment in time to know how the universe was created and by whom. In their deep meditation sages from ancient to modern times have experienced the truth regarding creation, and it is possible for anyone willing to undergo the proper disciplines to do so today.

As the result of spiritual disciplines culminating in the perfect concentration of profound meditation, the sages have learned the essentials about man and creation. They have seen that the real Self (not the little ego) is one with divine Existence, that is, with the impersonal God, known in the *Upanishads* as Satchidananda Brahman: absolute Existence, absolute Knowledge, absolute Consciousness, and absolute Bliss. They have realized that Brahman is Existence itself and, therefore, immortal, transcending the changes of time, space, and causation. They have seen that nothing but the impersonal God exists, that there can be nothing outside of Brahman.

Because nothing but the impersonal God

exists, he had to be the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe.

In the *Chandogya Upanishad* we find the following explanatory passage :

In the beginning there was Existence, One only, without a second. Some say that in the beginning there was non-existence only, and that out of that the universe was born. But how could such a thing be? How could existence be born of non-existence? No, my son, in the beginning there was Existence alone—One only, without a second.²

The *Mundaka Upanishad* gives a metaphorical account of creation :

As the web comes out of the spider and is withdrawn, as plants grow from the soil and hair from the body of man, so springs the universe from the eternal Brahman.

Brahman willed that it should be so, and brought forth out of himself the material cause of the universe.....

The Imperishable is the Real. As sparks innumerable fly upward from a blazing fire, so from the depths of the Imperishable arise all things. To the depths of the Imperishable they in turn descend....

From him are born breath, mind, the organs of sense, ether, air, fire, water, and the earth, and he binds all these together.

Heaven is his head, the sun and moon his eyes, the four quarters his ears, the revealed scriptures his voice, the air his breath, the universe his heart. From his feet came the earth. He is the innermost Self of all.....

All creatures descend from him.....

From him are born angels, men, beasts, birds; from him vitality, and food to sustain it....

In him the seas and the mountains have their source; from him spring the rivers, and from him the herbs and other life-sustaining elements...

Thus Brahman is all in all....

He, the self-luminous, subtler than the subtlest, in whom exist all the worlds and all those that live therein—he is the imperishable Brahman. He is the principle of life.....

Him the sun does not illumine, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor the lightning—nor, verily, fires kindled upon the earth. He is the one light that gives light to all. He shining, everything shines.

This immortal Brahman is before, this immortal Brahman is behind, this immortal Brahman extends to the right and to the left, above and below. Verily, all is Brahman, and Brahman is supreme.³

Now, the objection might be made that God, being spirit, cannot be the material cause of the mountains and seas. In response to this objection, the sages could ask a simple question 'Where does life come from?' Finding no other possible source, even a materialist would be forced to answer that life must come from matter. 'From *dead* matter?' the sages could reply. 'How can life come from *dead* matter? Perhaps we should reexamine matter.' In their meditation the sages have seen that all life is Brahman, the only existent being. Penetrate into the atom and you will find energy. Penetrate still farther, and you will discover consciousness. Ultimately, apparently dead matter is living spirit not yet become manifest.

God did not create matter from nothing saying a magic 'Presto chango.' Nor did he mould matter as a potter moulds a clay pot. Being within the universe, he caused creation in the way that plants grow. In the *Chandogya Upanishad* it is written that God thought, "Let me grow forth." Thus out of himself he projected the universe; and having projected out of himself the universe, he entered into every being. All that is has its self in him alone. Of all things he is the subtle essence.⁴

When they experienced the absolute Brahman as beyond time and destruction, the ancient yogis realized that matter, being of the same essence, must also be

2. *The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal*, trans. Swami Prabhavananda and Frederick Manchester (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1957), p. 68.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-46.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

indestructible. There never was a time when the stuff of the universe was not. So the sages reasoned that creation could not have had an absolute beginning in time. They concluded that, through infinite time, Brahman had projected a beginningless series of universes and will continue to do so through endless time. In the cosmos, as on our little earth, matter assumes a constant succession of forms, which appear, flourish for a while, and then disappear.

According to Vedantic cosmology, periods of evolution, during which the universe is born, runs its course, and then disappears, are followed by periods of involution, during which the universe rests in seed form in Brahman until, after a tremendous period of time, it is again projected forth. Although all parts of the cosmos go through this process, some Vedantic thinkers suggest that all may not go through the same phases simultaneously. Swami Vivekananda explains :

Some of these philosophers hold that the whole universe [we would now probably say the cosmos] quiets down for a period. Others hold that this quieting down applies only to systems: that is to say, that while our system here, this solar system, will quiet down and go back into the undifferentiated state, millions of other systems will go the other way, and will project outwards. I should rather favour the second opinion, that this quieting down is not simultaneous over the whole of the universe, and that in different parts different things go on. But the principle remains the same, that all we see—that is, nature herself—is progressing in successive rises and falls. The one stage, falling down, going back to balance, the perfect equilibrium, is called *Pralaya*, the end of a cycle. The projection and the *Pralaya* of the universe have been compared by theistical writers in India to the outbreathing and inbreathing of God; God, as it were, breathes out the universe, and it comes into Him again. When it quiets down, what becomes of the universe? It exists, only in finer forms, in the form of cause, as it is called in the Sankhya philosophy.⁵

⁵. Swami Vivekananda, *Works*, 1968, II, p. 434.

Although present-day astronomers usually speak in terms of universes rather than the smaller solar systems, they would probably tell Swami Vivekananda that their telescopes corroborate the idea of numerous stages of development in the cosmos.

At the close of a cycle, all is quiet in Brahman for a vast period. Then a primal vibration occurs. A single vibration, the symbol of which is Om, disturbs the equilibrium. Through this vibration, which grows in extent and intensity, sending forth countless smaller vibrations, God projects the universe. These vibrations must be the source of the energy in the atom. They do not cease but continue to sustain creation until, after countless ages, the universe returns to Brahman. At first they create subtle forms, which are followed by grosser and grosser forms. In *How to Know God*, Swami Prabhavananda sums up Patanjali's explanation of the process from the standpoint of consciousness, which is at the core of matter prior to the primal vibration.

...creation is here described as an evolution outward, from undifferentiated into differentiated consciousness, from mind into matter. Pure consciousness is, as it were, gradually covered by successive layers of ignorance and differentiation, each layer being grosser and thicker than the one below it, until the process ends on the outer physical surface of the visible and tangible world.⁶

Vedanta assumes that, like most things given sufficient time and space, evolution moves in a circular pattern. Creation first sinks downward away from Brahman until it reaches the bottom of the circle, and, then, it follows the upward curve until it returns to its source. In doing so, evolution goes from the fine to the gross (at the bottom of the circle) and back again to the fine. As Swami Vivekananda said, 'All this universe

⁶. *How to Know God: The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, trans. Swami Prabhavananda and Frederick Manchester (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. 40.

was in Brahman, and it was, as it were, projected out of Him, and has been moving on to go back to the source from which it was projected, like the electricity which comes out of the dynamo, completes the circuit, and returns to it.⁷

Man's history parallels that of the universe in which he lives. Uncreated, the soul is of the same eternal divine essence as the impersonal God in whom it has its being. Of the soul, Swami Vivekananda wrote, 'Projected from Brahman, it passed through all sorts of vegetable and animal forms, and at last it is in man, and man is the nearest approach to Brahman. To go back to Brahman from which we have been projected is the great struggle of life.'⁸ Like the universe, the soul was projected from Brahman, and, forgetful of its divine nature, it may have lived in various forms in previous universes. Swami Vivekananda describes the individual's cyclical evolution as follows :

The idea is that his beginning is perfect and pure, that he degenerates until he cannot degenerate further, and that there must come a time when he shoots upward again to complete the circle. The circle must be described. However low he may go, he must ultimately take the upward bend and go back to the original source, which is God. Man comes from God in the beginning, in the middle he becomes man, and in the end he goes back to God.⁹

Having reached the end of their individual cycles and found God there, the sages know that the soul's journey ends in God. They have experienced their own divinity and seen divinity beneath layers of spiritual ignorance in everyone and everything in the universe.

All will eventually go back to God but not necessarily at the same time, for each individual runs his own course, has his own history. There is no guarantee that anyone

will reach his final destination when this universe returns to Brahman at the close of the present cycle. Instead, there will always be some souls who rest in Brahman to reappear when a new universe appears. After the fall away from God has become complete and the soul has reached the bottom of the circle, evolution, of course, is upward with only temporary setbacks.

Swami Vivekananda further explains the evolutionary process :

It is a constant struggle against nature. It is a struggle against nature, and not conformity to nature, that makes man what he is...¹⁰ It [evolution] is really the process of refinement of matter allowing the Real Self to manifest Itself. It is as if a screen or a veil were between us and some other object. The object becomes clear as the screen is gradually withdrawn. The question is simply one of manifestation of the higher Self.¹¹

Because cruelty and selfish competition block the upward evolutionary process, natural selection and survival of the fittest have no place in it. Patanjali spoke of evolution as the 'infilling of nature.' Swami Prabhavananda elucidates :

Patanjali explains the Hindu theory of evolution of species by means of an illustration from agriculture. The farmer who irrigates one of his fields from a reservoir does not have to fetch the water. The water is there already. All the farmer has to do is to open a sluice gate or break down a dam, and the water flows into the field by the natural force of gravity.¹²

Since the soul's evolution involves lives prior to our present births, reincarnation is axiomatic. At the bottom of the cycle, the soul entered simple organisms in which life-functions were carried on unconsciously. Consciousness slowly became manifest in

7. Swami Vivekananda, *Ibid.*, p. 258.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 259

9. Swami Vivekananda, *Works*, 1965, I, p. 197.

10. Swami Vivekananda, *Works*, 1968, VI, pp. 35-36.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

12. *How to Know God*, pp. 204-6.

more refined organisms until self-consciousness was attained in man. Saints have completed the cycle by reaching God-consciousness, as we are all destined to do. Thus, the soul gradually manifests itself assuming higher and higher identities until perfection is attained.

From the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* we learn how continuity is maintained from birth to birth. A pertinent passage describes how, at death, 'the self remains conscious, and conscious, the dying man goes to his abode. The deeds of this life, and the impressions they leave behind, follow him.'¹³ The soul leaves the physical body in the fine, or mental body, in which are stored up the memories of its past incarnations as well as the impressions, the tendencies, which characterize it. When the soul is to incarnate again, it naturally seeks by the laws of affinity the body which is appropriate to its nature. So the incarnating person will gravitate toward the parents who can give him the genes and chromosomes best suited to him.

According to the law of karma, which is intimately involved with reincarnation, we determine our own fate. Swami Prabhavananda writes: 'In Sanskrit, a mental or physical act is called a *karma*. Karma is also the word used to describe the consequences of this act, and hence to describe what we call our "fate"—since our fate is nothing but the sum of the consequences of our past actions in this and previous lives.'¹⁴ Swami Vivekananda elaborates:

According to the philosophy of the Yogis, all virtuous actions bring pleasure, and all vicious actions bring pain. Any man who does wicked deeds is sure to reap their fruit in the form of pain.¹⁵... When we suffer, it is because of our own acts; God is not to be blamed for it.¹⁶...

Wheresoever there is a cause, there an effect must be produced; this necessity cannot be resisted, and this law of Karma, according to our philosophy, is true throughout the whole universe. Whatever we see, or feel, or do, whatever action there is anywhere in the universe, while being the effect of past work on the one hand becomes, on the other, a cause in its turn, and produces its own effect.¹⁷

Perhaps the sages developed the concept of karma by observing that there never is a cause without an effect or an effect without a cause. They seem to have understood long before Einstein that whatever we send out into the universe will curve back and return to us.

By thus asserting the divinity of man in an evolving universe, Vedantic cosmology creates the most positive and hopeful of all philosophies. Since the Divine is the one Reality, it must eventually prevail over the apparent pain-bearing realities. The truth of our divinity must, in time, eradicate all of the false limitations superimposed upon it.

Through personal experimentation, the Vedantic sages have discovered that the ordinarily slow evolution through which the Divine manifests itself in the individual can be accelerated by means of appropriate disciplines. Central to these disciplines is finding the Divine somewhere and concentrating upon it until one's entire consciousness becomes absorbed in it. But finding the Divine can be easier said than done. In spite of the fact that nothing exists apart from the divine Existence, our vision is so faulty and the Divine, for the most part, so imperfectly manifest that we do not see it. Consequently, we must seek it where it is most evident. And it is nowhere more evident than in those who have reached the pinnacle of evolution. Saints and sages manifest most clearly the divine superconsciousness, which inanimate nature, the lower forms of life, and we ordinary human

13. *The Upanishads*, p. 108.

14. *How to Know God*, p. 46.

15. Swami Vivekananda, I, p. 246

16. *Ibid.*, p. 319.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

beings manifest only in varying small degrees.

The objection may now be made that saints who live in the presence of God are rare and difficult to find. But a strong magnet can find a needle in a haystack. In spiritual life this magnet is the aspirant's intense longing, which draws the saintly spiritual teacher to him. This longing may not be voiced as prayer, but, voiced or not, it is a type of prayer. Such a sincere prayer is inevitably answered through grace, which usually takes the aspirant as disciple to a saint in whom the Divine is clearly manifest. The aspirant experiences the saint's holy consciousness to the limited extent of which he is capable and is uplifted by it. Then, to help the aspirant deepen this awareness, the saint teaches him to concentrate on Consciousness in the pure manifestation which appeals to him most, perhaps that of the personal God, a Jesus Christ, or a Buddha, and to assimilate his own consciousness to it.

As the seeker's spiritual life deepens, he begins to see God in the people he contacts and to worship Him there. 'You may in-

vent an image through which to worship God, and that may be good, but a better one, a much higher one, already exists, the human body, and to worship at this altar is far higher than the worship of any dead symbols.'¹⁸ This love of God in man naturally expresses itself in action. 'The best way to serve and to seek God is to serve the needy, to feed the hungry, to console the stricken, to help the fallen and friendless, to attend to those who are ill and require service.'¹⁹

When his spiritual life reaches fruition, the inquirer has come full circle. What for him at the outset was only a working hypothesis guiding his spiritual endeavour has become unassailable Reality. He knows from experience that there is nothing outside Brahman, in whom all creation exists, that he is and always has been divine, and that all humanity is one in the ultimate supreme Unity.

18. Swami Vivekananda, II, pp. 313-4.

19. Swami Vivekananda's Eastern and Western Disciples, *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1960), p. 474.



ANQUETIL DUPERRON—CULTURAL MISSIONARY

SWAMI TATHAGATANANDA

Anquetil Duperron (1731-1805) was the greatest linguist of the 18th century. Besides French, German and English, he knew many other European languages. He had a great command over Persian and Sanskrit and was conversant with the major Indian languages. Before him no westerner had travelled so widely through India and had studied so precisely the Indian manners and customs, temples, geography, agriculture and industry. He discovered the *Zend-Avesta* in the original and translated the Upanishads into French and Latin, and thereby immensely helped and inspired western scholars like Schopenhauer, Schelling, Michelet, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Andre Chenier, Darmesteter, Barres and others to understand the soul of India. He thus opened a new era in the history of human understanding. Greeks and Romans had commercial and political interest in India. Missionaries were busy in spreading their religion and converting people. But Anquetil had been burning with the passion of possessing the texts containing the secret and sacred lores of India. He also wanted to enrich France with India's ancient and esoteric works, and the knowledge of her culture.

Born in Paris on December 7, 1731, Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil Duperron made brilliant theological studies at Sor-

bonne and was sent to continue his studies (1751-52) in the Dutch Jansenist Seminary in Holland for the purpose of especially studying Hebrew and Arabic. (It may be mentioned that these seminaries run by Jansenists began to teach oriental languages for the purpose of missionary work and political interpreters). Anquetil returned to Paris in 1752 and there kept himself busy in studying the oriental manuscripts kept in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*. As a young man with an adventurous spirit, he was prone to austere living. He was encouraged by his admirers to learn the Indian languages which were almost unknown in Europe at that time.

In 1754 he saw in Paris a facsimile of four leaves of the *Vendidad Sade*, which had been collected at Surat by George Bouchier in 1718 and subsequently brought to Europe by Richard Cobbe in 1727 and kept at Oxford University. It was a great occasion in Anquetil's life, for he became determined to decipher those leaves. After serious thought he soon decided to go to India to get help in this quest. As he could not afford to go there at his own expense, he enlisted himself as a private soldier under the French East India Company. On November 7, 1754 he left Paris for India along with a gang of ruffians—a party of liberated prisoners

who were notorious (at that time that was how soldiers were recruited). He was given a free passage in the ship, a seat at the Captain's table and a cabin. His equipment consisted of only two shirts, two handkerchiefs, one pair of socks, one mathematical case and a Hebrew Bible. On board he was told that the King of France had granted him a pension of Lbs. 500.

After a painful voyage of six months, the survivors reached Pondicherry on August 10, 1755. Anquetil set himself immediately to work, studying Persian and Indian languages with great intensity. For six years he had to undergo much suffering, physically, mentally and economically. Yet, despite the inhospitable tropical climate, ill health, strained political relationships between the French, English, Dutch and the native Indians, and himself becoming a prisoner of war, Anquetil's determined spirit could not be dampened. The war between the French and the English had made it almost impossible to travel long distances in India. From Chandannogore in Bengal to Surat one had to go all the way down the Coromandel Coast, then all the way up the Malabar Coast. While travelling this route, Anquetil was exposed to every type of risk. He did most of the journey on horseback, sometimes on foot, and sometimes in a primitive boat. During this time he closely studied Indian manners and customs, visited temples and village workshops. He Indianized himself in dress and food in order to know the people intimately. He visited Puri but could not enter the temple of Jagannath. He visited the sculptured rocks of Mahabalipuram and became the first European to mention these. He was also first to describe to the West the monuments of Ellora in Hyderabad. During his travels, he also halted at Plassey in March and paid homage to the Nabab Sirajud Daula in

1757. (The Battle of Plassey between the Nabab and the British subsequently took place on June 23, 1757). He crossed the Damoder and reached Kamarpukur on the 20th of May. At Surat he managed to obtain *Avesta* manuscripts and also other manuscripts from which he compiled the *Pahlavi-Persian Dictionary*. He completed the translation of the *Vendidad* (a part of *Avesta*) on June 16, 1759. The Surat period, which spanned approximately two years, from 1758 to 1760, was undoubtedly Anquetil's golden height. In spite of infinite troubles, intrigues, serious illness, ill-will of people, especially the betrayal and treachery of the *dastours* (Persian scholars) who taught him, the stupendous work he accomplished is extraordinary. These works are preserved in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. There are some 2500 pages written in Anquetil's own handwriting, including transcriptions of the *Avesta* texts and other translations and annotations done in this period. At this time Anquetil disguised himself in order to enter the Parsi temple at Surat and thereby learn more about the rituals, manners and customs of the Parsees. It was after returning to Paris that Anquetil fulfilled his long-cherished idea of publishing his French translation of the *Avesta* in 1771. In spite of all its defects which were later discovered, this work is surely one of the greatest monuments in the history of erudition and scholarship.

While in India, after the *Avesta* translation was completed, Anquetil decided to study the Sanskrit language and read the Vedas. He wanted to go to Benares for this purpose, but his frail health and the political uncertainty of the time compelled him to abandon the idea. He only kept himself busy in studying Sanskrit and in collecting Sanskrit manuscripts of the Vedas from Surat, Ahmedabad and neighbouring places. Along with the Vedic lore and other Sanskrit books, he

acquired three famous Sanskrit dictionaries—*Amarakosha*, *Viakaran* and *Nāmamālā*—as well. Conclusively, he collected more than 180 manuscripts of different Indian languages and seven Persian dictionaries. He also made collections of Indian grains, flowers, leaves and many other natural curiosities. The serious rivalry between France and England, the conquest of Pondicherry by the British, and the constant worry of losing his literary wealth compelled him to return to France. After much deliberation about his return voyage, and after being rejected by the Swedes, the Dutch, the Portuguese and even the Moors, he was forced to conclude that it was best to trust the enemies of his people, and so he travelled back to France aboard a British ship.

He sailed from Surat on March 15, 1761, and after a very unpleasant navigation of eight months, he reached Portsmouth, England on November 17th, where he found himself a prisoner of war. As soon as he was set free in January 1762 he paid a visit to the professors and students at Oxford who became jealous of his achievement and reputation. The most violent attack came from William Jones (1746-94), who later recanted it. Anquetil returned to Paris on March 14, 1782, and on the following day he deposited his greatest treasures, dearer than his life, which he had so carefully collected in India, in the Royal Library of France. However, Anquetil had to face limitless hostilities and jealousies almost to the end of his life.

Anquetil was not only a pioneer in the study of Iranian literature, but also of Hinduism. In 1775, he received a Persian version of fifty Upanishads done in Delhi in 1756-57 from his friend, Le Gentil, a French resident of the Court of Shuja-Uddaulah in Faizabad. It was

brought to France by M. Bernier. Dara Shukoh had heard of the Upanishads during his stay in Kashmir in 1640. At his initiative Pundits from Benares came to Delhi and translated for him (and perhaps with him), these fifty Upanishads into Persian. The translation was completed in 1657, and Dara was murdered by his brother, Aurangzeb, two years later. It was this translation which Anquetil received. Anquetil subsequently absorbed himself in translating these Upanishads. He worked hard under the most trying circumstances for forty years in his attic. Politically, this period was rocked by wars. The French Revolution, Napoleon's march on Egypt, the collapse of the French colonial system and hosts of other distracting incidents took place at this time. However, Anquetil's dedication was not prompted by egoism, and, as a genuine seeker of Truth, he withstood all difficulties carrying out his work in the spirit of love and service. Every word of these fifty Upanishads he translated with meticulous care. On March 18, 1787 he completed his translation in French, which he then rejected. In order to achieve greater clarity and faithful rendition he wrote a Latin translation by 1796, which contained nearly seventeen hundred printed pages. In 1801 and 1802 two extensive volumes of the work in Latin were published in Strasbourg. This translation was not very helpful to the readers. Max Muller records his opinion about the translation in this way. "This translation, though it attracted considerable interest among scholars, was written in so utterly unintelligible a style, that it required the lynx-like perspicacity of an intrepid philosopher, such as Schopenhauer, to discover a thread through such a labyrinth. Schopenhauer, however, not only found and followed such a thread, but he had the courage to proclaim to an incredulous age the vast treasures of thought which were lying buried beneath

that fearful jargon.”¹ This is a quotation from the Sacred Books of the East, Vol. 1, Introduction, by Max Muller, p. lix.

This work, Oupnek’hat (for Upanishad) became for Schopenhauer a prayer book for daily use. He praised it as “a production of the highest human wisdom...” Max Muller says in his introduction to the Sacred Books of the East: “Schopenhauer not only read this translation carefully, but he makes no secret of it, that his own philosophy is powerfully impregnated by the fundamental doctrines of the Upanishads.” Another quotation of Schopenhauer from the same Introduction, states: “From every sentence deep, original, and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit. Indian air surrounds us, and original thoughts of kindred spirits. And oh, how thoroughly is the mind here washed clean of all early engrafted Jewish superstitions, and of all philosophy that cringes before those superstitions! In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupnek’hat. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death.”²

He also correctly predicted that the Wests’ acquaintance with the Vedic lores will afford them the “greatest privilege which this still young century (1818) may claim before all previous centuries, (for I anticipate that the influence of Sanskrit literature will not be less profound than the revival of the Greek in the fourteenth century).....”³

Schelling is another great German philosopher who was deeply influenced by Upanishadic thought. As an inspired

teacher at Berlin University, Schelling transmitted his ideas to Max Muller, who was his student there. Max Muller’s interest in the Upanishads was greatly enkindled by Schelling.⁴

The immortal success of Anquetil is here. He was the blessed pioneer who lit a beacon of hope for erring mankind through his publication of the Upanishads. “No edition of the Upanishads in any language preceded his, except Sir William Jones’ English translation of the Isha Upanishad (London 1799)”⁵ After his great work was completed Anquetil passed away in 1805.

In France Anquetil was exposed to undeserved and irrelevant criticism by various scholars. To quote from G. Sarton’s article in *Osiris*, “The most violent attack came from a young Englishman, William Jones (1746-94), destined to become one of the greatest orientalisists of his time, the founder of the Bengal Asiatic Society of Calcutta and one of the founders of Sanskrit philology. At the time of the publication of Anquetil’s *Zend Avesta* he was only twenty-five years old. Being incensed against the author because of his disparagement of Oxford scholars, he published a caddish letter in French, wherein he undertook to pull him to pieces. Jones’ impertinent booklet was read by many scholars and his cruel remarks were whispered around. It emboldened other attacks. Among Anquetil’s antagonists were the abbe... Xavier de Feller, Christoph Meiners of Gottingen, John Richardson, the Persian lexicographer, Diderot, Grimm, who attacked him repeatedly, even Voltaire.”⁶ It may be noted that William Jones’ remarks were due to his immaturity. It speaks highly of his integrity of character

1. Friedrich Max Muller, gen. ed., *The Sacred Books of the East* (London: Oxford University Press Warehouse. 1879). Vol. 1. p. lix.

2. *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 1. p. lxi.

3. *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 1. Pp. lix-lx.

4. *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 1. Pp. lxii, lxv.

5. R.E. Hume, *Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921).

6. See his article in *Osiris*, Vol. 3. Pt. 1. 1937.

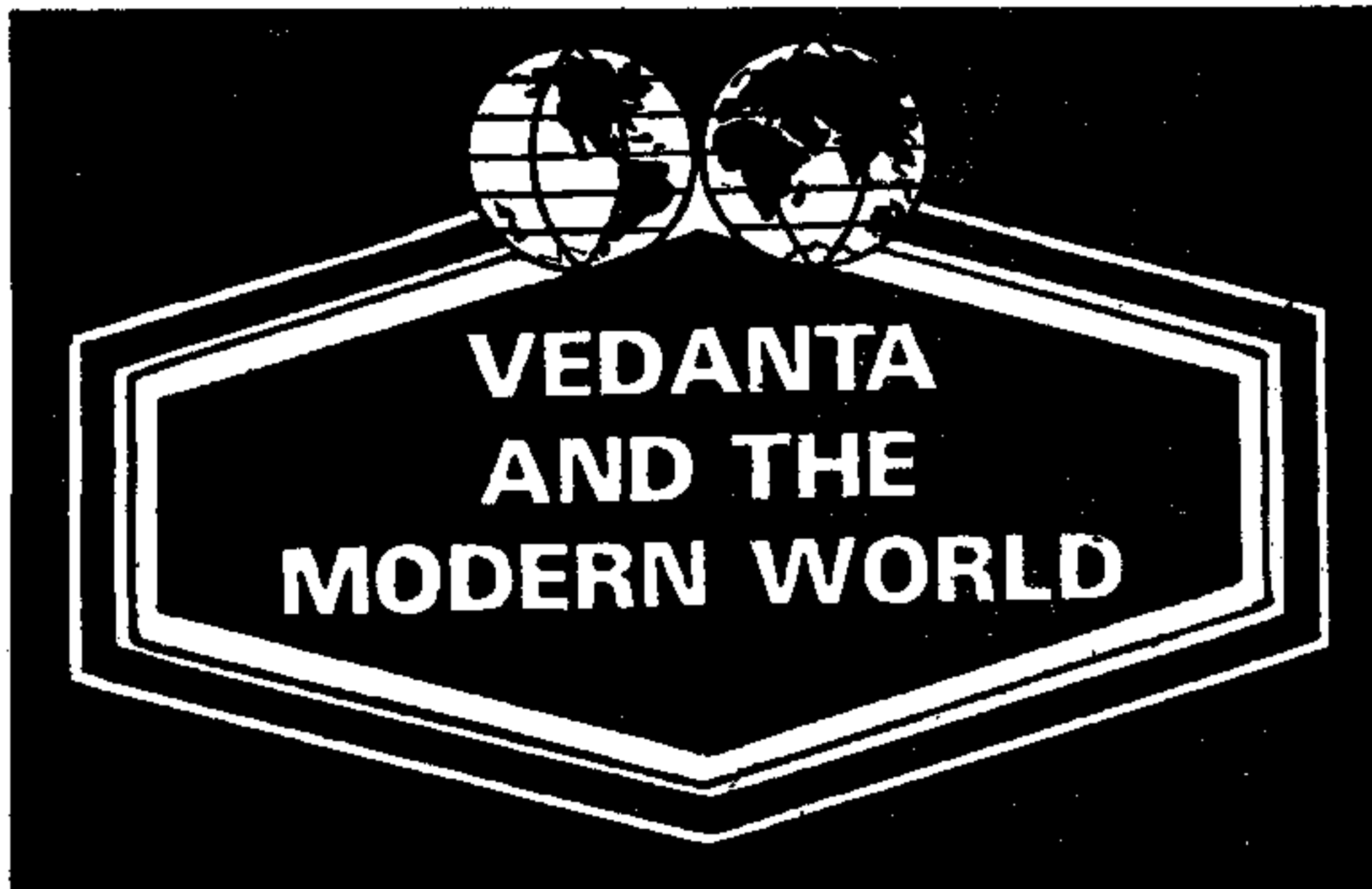
that after having recognized his error, he finally recanted. Anquetil also did not carry bitter feelings in his mind towards Jones, and he later praised Jones for the monumental service of laying the foundation stone of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 1784. This speaks well of Anquetil's broadmindedness.

Anquetil found himself a stranger in that chaotic and reckless world to which he returned after so many years of adventure and fervent meditations. He refused to take gifts from his friends and remained very poor till his death. Towards the end of his life his poverty became extreme. He has described it simply but impressively in the Latin dedication he wrote, in the Second Volume of his translations of the Upanishads, to the wise men of India: "Anquetil salutes the sages of India," he begins, "O sages, do not slight the work of the man who is of the same nature as yourselves. I beg of you, hear how I live. My daily food consists of bread and a little milk, cheese and well-water, and costs less than four *sous*, which constitutes one-twelfth of an Indian rupee. The comforts of a warming fire in winter, of a mattress, of sheets, are unfamiliar to me. Without regular income, without love, without employment, no more or less infirm than accords with my age and the trials I have suffered, I live in poverty on the returns from my literary works—without wife, without children, without servant, bereft of all worldly goods, all alone, completely free... with unceasing effort I

aspire to God, the highest and most perfect Being. With perfect peace of mind I await the dissolution of the body which is not far off for me."

More than a humanist, Anquetil was a philosopher, a hero and a saint. His intellectual genius was stirred up by his deep humanity and devotion. In spite of all the attacks against him, he was without jealousy and bitterness, ready to forgive those who had offended him, generous like a saint. He loved all, especially the poor of all nations. "Anquetil was a living, active-minded man, alive at every pore and swayed and tossed by his impulses of youth. In his enthusiasm and simple-mindedness, he may well be compared to our great missionaries...Perhaps the title of Scholar-Missionary is that which suits him best, and in this capacity he showed an intrepidity and a resource which places him far above the most placid President..." "When we think of his starting off for the East as a recruit of the French East India Company, and of that wonderful march of his from Behar to Pondicherry, we are reminded of those Chinese pilgrims who braved countless dangers to visit Buddhist shrines."⁷ Anquetil was a true pilgrim in his quest of ancient Truth and a missionary of culture of the highest order. His literary contribution to the world, sanctified with supreme self-sacrifice, is indeed great.

7. Quoted in 'Bengal Past and Present', *Journal of the Calcutta Historical Society*, Vol. LXXVII, Pt. II, Serial 144, July-Dec. 1958. Pp. 83-98.



THE UNCERTAINTY PRINCIPLE AND THE OMNIBJECTIVE REALITY

SWAMI JITATMANANDA

In 1926 the picture of the subatomic world of electrons was one of 'Standing Waves' of Schrodinger and 'Probability Waves' of Max Born. The hard reality of electron had already melted to wave-particle duality. In 1927 Werner Heisenberg, in an epoch-making discovery, finally showed that not only the electron-picture is a blurred one, but that the electron itself is not knowable through any possible scientific experiment. This discovery was epoch-making in the sense that it shook the very foundations of the 'exact sciences' which since the time of Laplace (1749-1827) claimed that things do and must happen in a 'deterministic' and 'certain' way according to the law of cause and effect (often called Laplacean determinism). Classical or Newtonian physics holds that the universe is like a perfect clock. Once we know the position of its parts at one instant, they would be for ever specified. This deterministic view was expressed by Laplace in an oft-quoted passage:

We ought then to regard the present state of the universe as the effect of its antecedent state and the cause of the state that is to follow. An intelligence knowing at any given instant of time all forces acting in nature, as well as the momentary positions of all things of which the universe consists, would be able to comprehend the motions of the largest bodies of the world and those of the smallest atoms in one single formula, provided it were suffi-

ciently powerful to subject all data to analysis: to it *nothing would be uncertain*, both future and past would be present before its eyes.

Heisenberg showed that subatomic entities like the electron can never be measured or determined in a 'causal way'. There is and must always be an element of 'uncertainty' or 'indeterminacy' in our knowledge of the electrons. This discovery is known as the Uncertainty Principle or the Principle of Indeterminacy. It postulates that if we try to determine precisely the momentum or the velocity of the electron, we will know almost nothing about its position and vice versa. Einstein's Theory of Relativity had shown that in order to know a thing in its true nature we must know the mass (space-dimension) and the velocity (time-dimension) of the thing. In the subatomic world where the so-called electron and other particles move at an incredibly high speed, sometime nearly the velocity of light, it is essential that we must know the velocity of the particle. Since with the increase in velocities the mass of these particles also increases, knowledge of the velocity of the electron is a must. In short, to know an electron we must know (a) where it is and (b) what its velocity is. And here comes the eternal and the unsurmountable block in the progress of quantum physics. These two things can never be known together. If one is known

fully the other is bound to remain totally unknown.

In order to illustrate this principle, Heisenberg made his celebrated 'Gedanken experiment' or 'thought experiment'. Heisenberg imagined a super microscope of extraordinarily high power, powerful enough to see the electron moving round the nucleus. When we seek the shadow of a thin hair on the wall by means of ordinary light we see no shadow, because the hair is so thin that it cannot obstruct the light waves of ordinary light. In other words, to see something we have to use a light whose wavelength is smaller than the thing. Heisenberg thought of gamma rays to spot out this elusive electron, because gamma rays have got the shortest wave length and this is just what he needed to see an electron which is extraordinarily small. But unfortunately the gamma ray which has the shortest wavelength has also got much more energy than ordinary light. Einstein had already shown in his study of photo-electric effect that electrons are knocked out whenever ultraviolet rays meet them. And the ultraviolet ray is comparatively much more powerful than the gamma ray. So when the super-powerful gamma ray from Heisenberg's super-microscope is focused on the fast-moving electron in its orbits, it illumines the electron no doubt, but at the same time it violently knocks the electron out of its orbit and changes its direction and speed (its momentum). And this change in direction and momentum occurs in an uncontrollable and unpredictable way. Heisenberg put the whole imaginary hunt for the electron with gamma rays in the following equation:

$$\Delta Q \times \Delta P \geq h$$

where Q is the uncertainty about the velocity of the electron, P is the uncertainty about its position and h is Plank's constant which is a definite number (6.63×10^{-27} erg. sec.). The equation simply says that when Q , the uncertainty about the velocity,

is zero (that is to say, when we know the velocity with perfect precision) then P , the uncertainty in our knowledge about the position of the electron, must be infinite, because the multiplication of ΔP by ΔQ must be greater than or equal to h . Had h been equal to zero (which it is not) then we could simultaneously have both the uncertainty about position (ΔP) and the uncertainty about velocity (ΔQ) also as zero. That means we could know both the velocity and the position of the electron with perfect precision. But since h is a fixed quantity, either of the uncertainties must always remain.

Heisenberg's equation, it must be remembered, is not meant for a single electron but is a statistical average of lots of measurements regarding the position and momentum of a vast number of electrons taken together. The individual electron is a 'blur', a 'misnomer', a non-entity. When a vast crowd of people bifurcates along two roads, an observer standing high up on a distant building can only say that 60% of the vast crowd has gone by one road and the rest by the other road. The observer can never say from such a distance which particular individual went by which road. The world of electrons is somewhat like that. In fact the real nature of the electron is enshrouded in mystery to such an extent that scientists today have been forced to conceive the idea of an 'electron cloud', which is made of various electron waves round the nucleus. 'Electron cloud' is a purely mathematical concept which scientists use to express in language what they find in experiment. In other words, concepts in quantum theory are not exact descriptions of what happens in the quantum world of electrons, but represent a hypothetical language to express what they have found experimentally. Niels Bohr's remark on this aspect of quantum physics is unforgettable: 'It is wrong to think that the task of physics is to find out how Nature

is. Physics concerns what we can say about Nature.¹

Two aspects of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle at once demolished the two old pillars of classical physics: (1) causality and (2) the objective description of reality. The first one says that the Newtonian laws of cause and effect do not apply in the quantum world of subatomic particles (or waves). The second one says, we cannot observe anything without changing it. A purely objective description of the subatomic world is impossible. As physicist John A. Wheeler has said, the detached observer-scientist of classical physics is no more a detached observer looking through a microscope at something separate from himself. But he is also the participator in the quantum drama. He is both the 'actor' and 'participator' as physicist James Jeans puts it, in the great drama of existence. Reality in the quantum world is no more purely objective but is connected with the 'subjective' element of the physicist. To describe this phenomenon Michael Talbot in his recent book *Mysticism and New Physics* uses the word 'omnijective'. Realities like electron in the subatomic world have always an 'omnijective' existence for the physicist, that is, the objective reality is inextricably connected with the subjective consciousness of the scientist.

Naturally with Heisenberg's uncertainty principle the entire world of physics was thrown into a state of convulsion. The discovery was certainly unexpected and iconoclastic. Praise and ridicule equally poured on Heisenberg. And the whole flock of quantum physicists including Einstein, Wolfgang Pauli, Max Born, Niels Bohr and Schrodinger gathered in Germany at what is known as the Solvay Congress to discuss the probable consequences of the new quantum physics. The whole congress

was dominated by Niels Bohr who by his concept of complementarity gave a new interpretation of quantum phenomena which was acceptable to most of the scientists except Einstein who refused to accept the uncertainty principle *as final*. Since the ideas of Bohr and Heisenberg were developed at the Physical Institute in Copenhagen, the native place of Bohr, the new interpretation has come to be popularly known as the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Physics.

Physicists after 1927 had no way but to think in a totally revolutionary manner about the subatomic world. They had to abandon their accustomed ports and set sail in an unknown sea in search of the reality of the subatomic world. The old materialistic concept of a separate and independently existing external reality ceased to have any meaning for the new scientists. Scientific materialism and its ardent votaries listened with awe to this high priest of New Physics, Heisenberg, who declared: 'It may be easier to adapt oneself to the quantum theoretical concepts of reality when one has not gone through the naive materialistic way of thinking that still prevailed in Europe in the first decades of this century.'² Heisenberg openly asserted that the new findings of quantum physics were incompatible with the philosophy of dialectic materialism. He wrote: 'We cannot possibly expect those thinkers who a century ago introduced dialectic materialism to have foreseen the development of quantum theory. Their concepts of matter and reality could not be possibly adapted to the results of the refined experimental technique of our days.'³

But materialism dies hard. Heisenberg was doubted and distrusted by several well-known physicists of those days. They said

1. Heinz R. Pagels, *The Cosmic Code, Quantum Physics as the Language of Nature*. (New York: Bantam New Age Bantam Edition, 1983). p. 67.

2. Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962) p. 202.

3. *Physics and Philosophy*, p. 139.

'The poetic nature of your spirit led you to unlimited sphere of theories where a poetic nature is the most dangerous comparison of all.' His theory was dismissed as 'atomystics' and speculation until subsequent experiments proved it to be correct.⁴ 'The Copenhagen interpretation led scientists,' writes Heisenberg's biographer, A. Hermann, 'far beyond the frontiers of physics'.⁵ But intellectual opposition continued until it turned out to be a semi-political antagonism. Two German physicists Lenard and Stark backed by the nationalist government opposed Heisenberg's appointment to the chair of physics from which his teacher Sommerfeld had just retired. They even propounded a new physics known as 'German Physics' which was only the 19th century physics extended by some new data. And this they propounded against Heisenberg's quantum theory. But all opposition finally ended in acceptance. Heisenberg wrote, 'A new scientific truth does not usually make its way because its opponents are convinced and proclaim their conversion but rather because these opponents gradually die out and the up-and-coming generation is acquainted with the truth from the start'.⁶ Quantum physics standing against a materialistic world view started its voyage to further regions of human intuition.

Primacy of Consciousness over Matter

However successful Heisenberg was in establishing his uncertainty principle—that the act of observation by the scientist

alters the condition of the quantum particles observed—Einstein refused to accept it. In 1933 Einstein propounded that there must be a 'hidden variable' somewhere which is responsible for this uncertainty. As a rule, Einstein believed, there cannot be any indeterminacy in the world of physics. However, until the time of Einstein's death, no such 'hidden variable' nullifying Heisenberg's uncertainty principle was found. In 1961 Nobel physicist Wigner proposed that it is the 'consciousness of the scientist which is itself the hidden variable'⁷ that decides which outcome of an event actually occurs. The question of measurement arises only when human observation intervenes. Wigner asserts that it is impossible to give a description of quantum mechanical processes 'without explicit reference to consciousness'.⁸

Wigner's assertion that the consciousness of the scientist is directly responsible for the ultimate knowledge of the external reality brings modern physics almost at the door of Vedanta. Vivekananda clarifies the Vedantic idea of the act of observation and the inextricable connection between the observer and the observed,

'...The Vedanta also shows that what is called intelligence is a compound. For instance, let us examine our perceptions. I see a blackboard. How does the knowledge come? What the German philosophers call 'the thing-in-itself' of the blackboard is unknown, I can never know it. Let us call it x. The blackboard x acts on my mind, and the mind reacts. The mind is like a lake. Throw a stone in a lake and a reactionary wave comes towards the stone; this wave is not like the stone at all, it is a wave. The blackboard x is like a stone which strikes the mind and the mind throws up a wave towards it, and this wave is what we call the blackboard. I see you. You as reality are unknown and unknowable. You are x and you act upon my mind, and the mind throws a wave

4. Armin Hermann, *Heisenberg* (Reinbek near Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag gmbH, 1976). Pp. 121-22.

5. *Heisenberg*, p. 40.

6. Biophysicist Lyall Watson writes humourously about this new truth of Quantum Physics: 'Experiments about electrons boil down in the end to experiments in professors.' See, his *Lifetime* (New York: Bantam Books Inc. 1979). P. 314.

7. Michael Talbot, *Mysticism and the New Physics* (New York: Bantam books, 1981) p. 33.

8. *Mysticism and the New Physics*, p. 34.

in the direction from which the impact comes, and that wave is what I call Mr. or Mrs. so-and-so. There are two elements in the perception, one coming from outside and the other from inside, and the combination of these two, $x + \text{mind}$, is our external universe. All knowledge is by reaction. In the case of a whale it has been determined by calculation how long after its tail is struck, its mind reacts and the whale feels the pain. Similar is the case with internal perception. The real self within me is also unknown and unknowable. Let us call it y . When I know myself as so-and-so, it is $y + \text{the mind}$. That y strikes a blow on the mind. So our whole world is $x + \text{mind}$ (external), and $y + \text{mind}$ (internal), x and y standing for the thing-in-itself behind the external and the internal worlds respectively.⁹

Physicist John A Wheeler believes that the term 'observer' should be replaced by the term 'participator'. This replacement, he believes, will give a radically new role to consciousness in physics. Instead of denying the existence of the objective reality 'he further asserts that the subjective and the objective sort create each other. They are "self-existing systems" and brought into being by "self-reference."¹⁰

On January 25, 1931, *Observer* published an 'Interview with Max Plank' by J.W.N. Sullivan. In answer to the question, 'Do you think that consciousness can be explained in terms of matter and its law?' Max Plank answered that he did not. 'Consciousness', Max Plank continued, 'I regard as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing postulates consciousness.'¹¹

Wolfgang Pauli, the Nobel physicist famous for his Exclusion Principle, writes

in words which are, in fact, interchangeable with the words of Vivekananda.

'From an inner centre the psyche seems to move outward, in the sense of an extraversion, into the physical world...'¹²

Wigner's and Max Plank's idea of the importance of consciousness, Talbot's concept of 'omnijective reality', Wheeler's concept of subject and object as 'self-existing systems', Pauli's idea of the outgoing of the psyche towards external creation—all these bring us to the core of New Physics, which after these discoveries stand totally against the *scientific materialism* of classical physics of Descartes, Laplace and Newton which was based on a strict division between mind and matter.

Swami Vivekananda was never tired of asserting the oneness of mind and matter in his exposition of Vedanta. 'Mind becomes matter and matter in its turn becomes mind, it is simply a question of vibration.'¹³ Nobel physicist Erwin Schrodinger in his celebrated books *My View of the World* and *Mind and Matter* establishes the fact that the dualism of mind and matter can never be resolved on the material plane but only on the psychic plane, which according to him is the only eternally existing substratum of the Universe. Schrodinger echoes Max Plank and drives home directly the Vedantic principle that Consciousness creates matter and not vice versa.

'Attempt to resolve the dualism of mind and matter was also attempted in the West in the past, but the attempt was carried always on the material plane and therefore, it failed.' Schrodinger offers his comments on this attempt... 'It is odd that

9. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1976). Vol. 2. Pp. 457-58.

10. *Mysticism and the New Physics*, p. 35.

11. James Jeans, *Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1932), p. 12.

12. W. Pauli and C. G. Jung *The Interpretations of Nature and the Psyche* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press 1955) p. 175 quoted in Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* (An Overview of the New Physics) (New York: Morrow Hill Paperbacks, 1979) p. 56.

13. *Complete Works*, (1978) Vol. 6. p. 34.

it has usually been done on material basis. ...But this is no good. If we decide to have only one sphere, it has to be the psychic one, since that exists anyway.¹⁴

The New Columbuses move towards a New Continent of 'Atomysticism'

In the deep forest of Walden, forty miles away from a main city of America, was living alone an old saintly man spending his time in meditation and reading books like the Gita and the Upanisads. He was Henry David Thoreau, an outstanding name in the intellectual and social circles of American life in the mid-nineteenth century. In order to see this *rishi*-like life of Thoreau, his friend Emerson came one day, walking like his friend all the way up the forest path. After a few cordial words Emerson put to him, what he thought, one pertinent question. 'How do you live here without newspaper?' The *rishi* lifted up his eyes and wondered—'Where is the news? During the last two thousand years there have been only three items—Crucifixion of Christ, Columbus' discovery of America and the French Revolution. Others are variations on old themes.' Had Thoreau been living today he would have included Quantum physics as the fourth important news of history.

One late afternoon, in the early summer of 1922, two physicists were walking along the slopes of Hain mountain in Germany. The elder one, Niels Bohr, was already a veteran physicist; the other was a young university student of twenty. The younger one was putting strange questions to the elder leader. Heisenberg, probably born with some powers of 'seeing' things beyond sensory level, was bombarding Bohr's support of the planetary model of the atom

which was offered in 1913 by Ernest Rutherford. On this model Bohr was trying to erect his theory of Hydrogen spectrum. The young physicist's queries began to shake the foundations of Bohr's dream, and Bohr agreed finally that atoms are not real 'things'. In describing the atomic phenomena, Bohr agreed that physicists had already moved far far away from the Newtonian Physics describing an atom like the movement of a car or the path of a projectile. It was already clear to both of them, even in the early twenties that 'there can be no descriptive account of the structure of atom,' for all such accounts must necessarily be based on classical concepts which, as they saw, no longer held good. Startled at the strange outcome of the long talk, Heisenberg suddenly put the question to Bohr, 'If the inner structure of an atom is as closed to descriptive accounts, as you say, if we really lack a language for dealing with it, how can we ever hope to understand atoms?' Bohr hesitated for a moment and then said, 'I think we may yet be able to do so. But in the process we may have to learn what the word "understanding" really means'.¹⁵ That was a very profound utterance. There was an imperative need for all quantum physicists to switch over to a new kind of understanding, which would distinctly differ from sensory-perception understanding of this gross world as Newton understood it. Heisenberg intuitively felt that, 'this walk was to have profound repercussions on my scientific career, or perhaps it is more correct to say my real scientific career only began that afternoon'.¹⁶ The 'New Understanding' had not yet revealed its true nature. But it was heading for a holistic perception of an all-pervading unity which is the theme of Vedanta.

14. Erwin Schrodinger *My View of the World*, (London: Cambridge University Press. 1964) Pp. 62-63.

15. Werner Heisenberg *Physics and Beyond* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers. 1971) p. 41.

16. *Physics and Beyond*, p. 381.

That was the evening when Heisenberg felt that, in order to explore the undiscovered continent of the atomic world, he and his colleagues would have to sail on uncharted seas like Columbus. Heisenberg wrote, 'If I were asked what was Christopher Columbus' greatest achievement in discovering America, my answer would not be that he took advantage of the spherical shape of the earth to get to India by Western route. ...His most remarkable feat...was the decision to leave the known regions of the world and to sail westward, far beyond the point from which his provisions could have got him back home again.'¹⁷

Einstein, in his Relativity Theory had already made a final departure from the old moorings of Newtonian Physics, which had so long asserted that 'time and space are real independent realities'. Yet Einstein's strings were being pulled back by one anti-current: it was his unwillingness to accept what Heisenberg urged, 'We must get away from the idea of objective process in time and space'. Heisenberg mustered the courage of a desperate sailor and started sailing to the unknown all alone. But this time his ship of knowledge was sailing not towards the West, but towards the East, where people had known thousands of years before that the true nature of Reality could only be known by the intuitive power of a purified mind. The only pole-star for Heisenberg's ship in this voyage in the non-objective world of atoms became what he called Sommerfeld's 'atomysticism'.¹⁸ Heisenberg realized that Physics had already rejected the hard, material reality of the atom and entered into the field of mystical perceptions. But what would be the pole-star in this journey of the New Columbus? Heisenberg felt lonely and even felt rejected

at times by his own leaders and colleagues. "You are moving on very thin ice," Einstein warned me, "for you are suddenly speaking of what nature really does. In science we ought to be concerned solely with what nature does."¹⁹ But despite warnings, Einstein (probably without his knowing it) in fact led Heisenberg to the right path. During those days of heated discussions with Bohr, Einstein, Pauli and Schrodinger, came the moment of revelation in the life of Heisenberg. 'One evening, after midnight when I suddenly remembered my conversation with Einstein and particularly his statement: "It is the theory which decides what we can observe". I was immediately convinced that the key to the gate that had been closed for so long must be sought here, right here.'²⁰ Heisenberg intuitively stumbled on a basic postulate of Vedanta—that the subjective shapes and decides the nature of the objective. And following his line a large number of Quantum Physicists are increasingly ceasing to be only experimentalists and materialists and are turning into what Sommerfeld called 'atomystics'.

Einstein's view that 'it is the theory which decides what should be nature of the experiments' reminds us of what Vivekananda told Western people in 1890s. 'We first perceive, then reason, later. We must have this perception as a fact and it is called religion, realisation.'²¹ This 'Atomysticism' was the beginning of Heisenberg's intuitive exploration of the atomic world which ended in his epoch-making discovery of the 'uncertainty principle'. Einstein also told him categorically that physics no more believes in '*experiment-observation-inference-method*'. 'It is nonsense all the same' Einstein continued: 'It is the theory which

17. *Physics and Beyond*, p. 70.

18. *Physics and Beyond*, p. 72.

19. *Physics and Beyond*, p. 68.

20. *Physics and Beyond*, p. 77.

21. *Complete Works* (1972) Vol. 7. p. 75.

decides what should be the nature of the experiment'.²²

The indeterminism of the wonderland of Alice

The idea of indeterminism—that the sure cause-and-effect relation does not apply to the quantum or subatomic world—had an equally startling effect on the world of science. Einstein, the staunch vanguard of strict determinism, was insisting on proving that classical causality must ultimately prove true even in the quantum world. In 1935 Einstein, along with two of his associates Podolsky and Rosen, formulated a mathematical paradox known as EPR paradox. Through this formulation Einstein tried to prove the falsity of quantum indeterminism. But, quite contrary to all his expectations, this EPR effect ultimately resulted in the formulation of another epoch-making discovery of modern science, namely, Bell's Theorem, which supported both theoretically and experimentally, that the local causality (that there must be a sure effect for a cause in a certain limited area) is a limited, and in fact, a false concept. A hand grenade thrown in a Calcutta street may break the glasses of a few Calcutta windows. This is common knowledge. But, nobody believes that the same hand grenade may also break window glasses in a California street. And this is exactly what Bell's theorem suggests. This we will discuss in detail in the section on Bell's theorem.

Vedanta describes the ultimate creative power of the Universe the Primeval Energy, or Maya, or Shakti as *aghatana-ghatanā-patīyasī*, which means that it is capable of making things happen in this relative world of space-time-causality without any cause. It also means that things may not happen in the same relative world despite a sure cause. It may be hard to believe this through ordinary logic, but it is neverthe-

less true. This is an age-old postulate of Vedantins. Vivekananda explains this idea:

'Cause and effect are all Maya, and we shall soon grow to understand that all we see is disconnected as the child's fairy tales now seem to us. There is no such thing as cause and effect and we shall come to know of it. Then if you can, lower your intellect to let any allegory pass through your mind without questioning about connection.'²³

In fact, when Vivekananda first read *Alice in Wonderland*, he commented that the book was one of the profoundly Vedantic visions of life. Causality or determinism in this world is as unreal as the relative space-time-world itself. Niels Bohr admitted that today physicists feel 'the necessity of a final renunciation of the classical ideas of causality and a radical revision of our attitude towards the problem of physical reality...'

Einstein could never accept the unsurmountable incertitude regarding our knowledge of the electron movement. If we know a base ball, or an automobile, why not the electron also? The oft-spoken protest which would come out of his lips was, 'God does not throw dice.' Einstein was so antagonistic to quantum indeterminacy that his friend Paul Ehrenfest, a physicist from Leyden in Holland, said, 'Einstein, I am ashamed of you. You are arguing against the quantum theory as your opponents argue about your relativity theory.'²⁴ And when he stood obstinately on his idea that God does not play dice Niels Bohr one day gave Einstein his unforgettable answer, 'Nor is it our business to prescribe to God, how he should run the world.'²⁵ Yet, Einstein did not budge an inch. And when he died, Max Born, Einstein's disciple, wrote that he died with a sense of tragedy.

²². *Physics and Beyond*, p. 63.

²³. *Complete Works*, Vol. 7 p. 88.

²⁴. *Physics and Beyond*, p. 80.

²⁵. *Physics and Beyond*, p. 81.

TWO STREAMS OF THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT IN KARNATAKA

PROF. S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

Vīra-Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism formed the two outstanding phases of the great Bhakti movement that took shape in medieval Karnataka and laid the basic structure of Karnataka culture. Worship of Śiva had been there even before the emergence of Vīra-Śaivism, but the distinct formation of a complete system of thought and way of life centring on a passionate devotion to Śiva was the work of the great saints and sages of Vīra-Śaivism. Contemporaneous with this crystallization of Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism shaped itself into a vigorous and comprehensive view of life under the leadership of Ramanuja and Madhva. Ramanuja made Karnataka his second home and established in it active centres of spiritual culture. Madhva is Karnataka's contribution to the rich heritage of Indian philosophy, and the major domain of his activity was Karnataka. I propose to discuss some of the leading philosophical ideas and springs of cultural inspiration characteristic of these two phases of Bhakti movement in Karnataka bringing out their basic affinities and divergences, if any.

The ideal of life

Bhakti movement involves a fundamental conception of the Ideal life. It censures the life of hedonism and conceives the purpose of life as the love of the Divine. It also involves a transvaluation of religious values from this standpoint and rejects religious formalism and excessive adherence to external and traditional ritualism. The inwardness of life consisting of the soul's yearning for God takes the first place in spiritual life. As the supreme object of spiritual love is God, who is looked upon as the immanent principle of all life, moral life shifts its centre of gravity

from ceremonial uprightness to the comprehensive principle of the love of all life as the embodiment and manifestation of the central divine Reality.

In the intellectual sphere also a corresponding revolution in orientation takes place. Philosophy as the analysis and criticism of categories is subordinated to the ideal of philosophy as the search for God, the Reality of realities. Mere intellectualism is abandoned and a fervent contemplation of the Highest comes to constitute the meaning of Jñāna. Such a Jñāna is no cold exercise of the intellect but the complete dedication of all the powers of the spirit to the one rapturous endeavour after the Ultimate, which is the integral Infinite of reality and value, *satya* and *ānanda*. God as the supreme value renders a loveless apprehension of God an impossibility. Even as formal righteousness yields place to the loving service of all that lives, with the living consciousness of the all-permeating Divinity, knowledge as the abstract reconstruction of reality is replaced by the exciting adventure of the spirit in man towards the abundance of life that lies in the living communion with God.

Thus there is a transformation of both the ideals of conduct and of thought under the sublimating inspiration of the ideal of love. The two aspects of life are also integrated into the one ideal of worship, which is at once an activity and a contemplation under the one overmastering passion for communion with the Divine. There is no scope for either a pursuit of spirituality bereft of activity or for an absorption in works without the practice of the presence of God. The ideal of Bhakti furnishes the central principle for organizing the entire spiritual life, doing away

with the imperfect ideals of thought and conduct and superseding the false antagonism of contemplation and action. Without it, the culture of the soul would lose its way in impoverishment and fragmentation.

Common metaphysical ground

The metaphysical tenet common to all the schools of thought forming the Bhakti movement may be broadly characterized. It constitutes the core of philosophy of both Vīra-Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. The ultimate Reality, according to the movement, is the infinite Spirit named Brahman in the Upaniṣads and Īśvara in the later theistic systems. Īśvara is absolute in existence, in consciousness and perfection. He transcends the cosmos and is also its sustaining ground. He is both cosmic and supracosmic. All the philosophical schools of Śaivism including even Kashmir Śaivism and the two versions of Vaiṣṇavism are opposed to the view of the world of finite existence as merely phenomenal or illusory. Vīra-Śaivism also in its final analysis rejects the illusionist conception of the world. Hence the ultimate principle is not abstract or merely transcendent and acosmic, but has inherent in itself a concrete, cosmic and creative dimension also. Śiva and Śakti constitute the two aspects of the one indivisible Absolute. From this fundamental position regarding Īśvara, certain inevitable corollaries follow with regard to the ontological status of the physical universe and individual selves. It is true that in Vīra-Śaivism the deduction of these corollaries take divergent directions in the works of the different mystical philosophers and a consolidated and unambiguous statement of the doctrines concerning the matter is not easy. But the initial affirmation of the Absolute as once transcendent and immanent, timelessly immutable as well as creative, supracosmic as well as cosmic, is never abandoned or

modified by any principal exponent or treatise.

Theological divergence

While so much is common to both Vīra-Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, when we come to the theological characterization of God, differences become noticeable. In Vīra-Śaivism the supreme Deity is named Śiva and the term carries an immensity of mythological and Puranic associations. In the same way, the alternative designation of God as Viṣṇu, has its own rich conventional significance. While philosophy seems to point to a fundamental affinity of outlook, theologies break up the Bhakti movement into two different tendencies. The two Gods of traditional Hinduism, bear different sets of distinctive names, are believed to be endowed with different divine forms, are said to be surrounded by two different sets of devoted divine beings and are glorified in two distinctive groups of religious narratives. This huge volume of theological material backing up the devotion to these two deities splits the devotional religion into two rival camps.

While originally in traditional Hinduism God Śiva was looked upon as responsible for the cosmic activity of destruction, God Viṣṇu was considered the agent of preservation. As long as this distinction of functions was strictly believed in, there was no room for conflict. But this was an unnatural equilibrium. A triad of Gods, Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva is no monotheism. Hence two attempts were made to exalt one of the Gods to the position of the Supreme Deity. Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism are the results of these attempts. In Śaivism the conception of destruction underwent appropriate sublimation and came to signify the destruction of all that was evil. In this process of redemption from evil, the creation and preservation of the world of mortals naturally came to be

considered subordinate movements. No cosmic activity attributed to God remains outside the realm of the activity of conquest over evil and the establishment of the good. Corresponding to this exaltation of the function associated with Śiva, a similar enrichment of the notion of preservation ascribed to Viṣṇu took place. Preservation or protection came to be conceived in the spiritual sense of fostering the individuals in their march towards perfection, and there is no cosmic function of the Godhead that is not included as a subordinate phase in this comprehensive work of soul-making.

When the two Gods are thus understood in this widened perspective, there remains nothing to distinguish them. Only the differences in time-honoured symbols associated with the worship of them remain and also the differences in mythological background mingling with the two conceptions. What is only secondary in the two total complexes of ideas, sentiments, inherited rituals and stories serves to maintain the vanishing line of demarcation between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. But the problem of doing away with the conventional material is not easy of solution. The two bodies of tradition have many elements of great beauty and spiritual worth and to discard them all would impoverish the Bhakti movement itself. The great challenge is to achieve universality of religion without the attenuation of content.

There are two ways of meeting this challenge. There should be a progressive minimization of the mythological appendage. This appears to be the way that has been mostly adopted by Vīra-Śaivism. The other is to translate the mythological material into universally intelligible philosophical concepts and principles, so that the symbols, rituals and the pseudo-historical narratives are rendered vehicles of devout reflections on the grandeur of God and the sublimity of man's longing for Him. Vaiṣṇavism has largely followed

this method of solution. Hence in Vaiṣṇavism as a whole the mythological background and the theological presentation of religion exhibit a tendency to persist. In Karnataka the Haridāsas (minstrels of Hari) dwell more on the glories of divine Avatars and the beauty of the divine Form than the Vīra-Śaiva Vacanakaras (composers of maxims). It looks as if the traditional matter entered the substance of Vaiṣṇavism deeper and formed a comparatively more tenacious adjunct, than the Śaivite mythology in relation to the essence of Śaivism.

There is one remarkable feature about some of the Puranic stories and forms associated with the deities that has aided the process of de-mythologizing. The meaning emerging from the literal interpretation of a particular legend and the spiritual meaning extracted by the allegorical interpretation of the same are often found to coincide. This makes the choice of interpretation a matter of minor importance. It goes to indicate that the original inspiration behind the legend also proceeded from deeper and more universal ideas. When the whole import of this situation is grasped, the phenomenon of theological divergences does not figure as an insurmountable barrier to unification of vision.

Differences in sādhanā

The distinctive contribution of Vīra-Śaivism in its theory of Sat-sthala in the realm of Sādhanā.¹ A significant plan of spiritual endeavour is embodied in this

1. In Vīra-Śaivism the Divine is addressed as *sthala*. The one *sthala* becomes divided into *linga* (the Worshipped) and *anga* (the worshipper) each of which again undergoes a threefold differentiation. The interrelationship between these six categories is graded into six stages or *sat-sthala*. These are, in the ascending order: *bhakta-sthala*, *mahesa-sthala*, *prasādi-sthala*, *prāṇalinga-sthala*, *saraṇa-sthala* and *aikya-sthala*.

theory. Its three principal features may be noted at once. (a) It takes account of the whole nature of man and inculcates a discipline of activity, emotion and contemplation. (b) While it starts with the outward practice of religion dominantly consisting of deeds of piety, there is a progressive internalization of religious life culminating in the purely inward and contemplative realization of God. (c) In the initial stages of spiritual life the devout contemplation of God as the 'wholly other' is commended and as the spirit progresses and matures an ever-increasing integration of the worshipper and the supreme object of worship takes place as a matter of spiritual evolution. The process culminates in 'unitive' life.

A corresponding provision in Vaiṣṇavism is, of course, inevitable for the theory of Sadhana is an integral part of the Bhakti movement as a whole. In the Vaiṣṇava schools the Gītā furnishes the framework of Sādhanā. We have the four paths of Karma, Jñāna, Yoga and Bhakti. The Vaiṣṇava traditions of both Ramanuja and Madhva, attach the greatest value to Bhakti and regard it as the ultimate means of God-realization. The process starts with Karma-yoga, progresses through Jñāna, reaches the stage of intuitive realization named Yoga in the narrower sense and culminates in the supreme ardour of Parā Bhakti.

The main principles inculcated in the Satsthala programme are there in the Vaiṣṇava Sādhanā also. There are two conspicuous points of difference. (a) In the Vaiṣṇava conception of spiritual progress, no gradual growth out of an initial dualism to an ultimate monism seems to have been envisaged. Divine transcendence and Divine immanence are equal verities and undergo no alteration of importance and validity in the course of the spiritual maturation of the Sādhanā. (b) In the final stage of 'unitive life' also the individuality of the finite soul

abides as the bearer of the fullest life and in the rapture of the greatest union with God. The opposition to the Advaitic idea of Mokṣa or final liberation is more marked in Vaiṣṇavism than in Vīra-Śaivism. If Advaita is adopted at this stage an appropriate revision of fundamentals is called for, and Vīra-Śaivism so revised would be only a re-edition of the unqualified Non-dualism of Śaṅkara. A doctrinal decision on this question is no matter of minor importance from the standpoint of the philosophical identity and the unique historical role of Vīra-Śaivism.

Social norms

In the practical sphere of social ethics the Bhakti movement as a whole strikes a revolutionary note in Hindu culture. While early Hinduism contains no glorification of violence and is not without regard to human life as such, irrespective of social distinctions, it did not advocate the principles of *ahimsā* (non-violence) and equality with all the force that they merit. Jainism and Buddhism took up these partially recognized ideals and championed them with utmost zeal as principles of conduct worthy of unconditional observance. Bhakti movement preached the God of infinite love and tender mercy as immanent in all that lives and working for the perfection of all souls. Owing to the impact of the ethical teachings of the heretical religions and as a practical deduction from its own conception of God, the Bhakti movement liberated the ethical consciousness of Hinduism from the old insufficiencies and boldly and emphatically proclaimed the ideals of Ahimsā and equality. Compassion towards all life and the transgression of social gradations in the realm of the love of God became common traits of the religion of Bhakti all over the country. Differences among the different versions of the Bhakti cult lie only in the degree of

vehemence with which they break away from the older moral conventions of not recognizing the absoluteness of Ahimsā and the democratic fraternity of devotees. But the direction of teaching is fundamentally the same. All life is entitled to equal valuation and all men are equally entitled to practise the glorious life of devotion to God.

While these teachings are incorporated in the lives and teachings of the two sects of Vaiṣṇavism, particularly in the tradition of the Alvars (saints of the Viśiṣṭadvaita school) and Haridāśas (saints of the Dvaita school), they are asserted with exceptional force in the Vīra-Śaiva doctrine and practice. The consequence is that Vīra-Śaivism opposes the cult of sacrifice, liberalizes the sentiment of humanity so as to embrace the whole of mankind without the distinctions of birth or sex, and affirms the equal spiritual potentialities of all. The social order founded on such principles would be truly a new one, translating into reality the lofty ideals of Hinduism. But the conservatism of man is deep-rooted and the old hierarchic social system still persists with the result that the Vīra-Śaiva community has become an exclusive caste within the complex of castes, claiming for itself the highest rank in the social pyramid. Social discriminations have penetrated into the Vīra-Śaiva society itself modifying the original democratic ideology.

In Vaiṣṇavism the revolution never proceeded so far and no open repudiation of the caste order ever took place, though the forces undermining the inherited inequalities of status and social valuation have been actively functioning all along. There is an unresolved spiritual conflict in the social philosophy of the Bhakti movement. The rights and wrongs of the case are clear from the standpoint of Bhakti but the social realities are yet to rise to the requirements of the ideal of Bhakti. The religious consciousness is in advance of

the moral power. The transformation of the actual into the ideal condition requires great care, for it happens not infrequently that the technique of social change adopted might involve the destruction of the very ideals which are being pursued. It is not that the end justifies the means; rather the means must demonstrate by its own intrinsic moral quality the superiority of the end.

Modes of communication

Consistent with the general humanitarianism of the Bhakti movement, its great saints both in Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism have laboured hard to spread the gospel of divine love among the masses. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the Gītā that he who carries his message to his devotee is practising the highest form of devotion. This has to be done in the medium of the masses, and hence the Bhakti movement has been an inexhaustible source of great devotional literature in the vernaculars. This is true of Vīra-Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. The immense body of this inspired literary production is a priceless heritage of Karnataka. The habit of according the second place to non-Sanskritic literature is done away with completely, and the outpourings of Śiva Śaraṇas, Alvars and Haridāśas are placed on a footing of equality with the Vedas from the standpoint of sanctity, and are even placed higher on the ground of their universal accessibility. The highest thoughts of God are clothed in the language of the most moving poetry and are placed at the disposal of all. God literally comes to the common man in the words of the saints. The saints have been the greatest educators of the common man in Karnataka. We can never be too grateful to them.

Personal conduct

There is a phenomenal correspondence between Vīra-Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism in

their teachings concerning the first and last things. Both of them insist on a righteous mode of earning one's means of livelihood. The prescription in Vīra-Śaivism is crystallized in the precept of *kāyaka*, honest bodily labour to maintain oneself. Ramanuja while explaining the notion of *āhāra-śuddhi* in the course of his commentary on the *Gītā*, maintains that 'pure food' signifies what remains over after one has met all the sacrificial obligations of life, out of what one has earned through righteous means. Honesty of source, as well as the prior fulfilment of ethical obligations through it, confers on what remains the required sanctity.

Both in Vīra-Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism the ideal of Self-surrender to God is accorded the highest place in the scheme of Sadhana. In Vīra-Śaivism what follows *śaraṇasthala*, is the fruition of the whole course of Sadhana in 'unitive life'. *Aikyasthala* is the phala and not sadhana. Hence the offering of one's totality of being to the supreme in the act of self-surrender is the supreme phase of Sadhana. Vaiṣṇavism takes inspiration from the final message of the *Gītā* and regards *prapatti* or *śaraṇāgati* as the ultimate point of human effort in winning the redemptive grace of God. This

is so in the doctrines of both Ramanuja and Madhva. Though the former elaborates the conception of *prapatti* a great deal, Madhva also does accord to it all the pre-eminence intended in the teachings of the *Gītā*.

There is a great tradition in Indian thought of compressing the entire teaching of a school of thought in a single formula. Advaita Vedanta sees in the *Tat tvam asi* ('That thou art') of the Upaniṣads the whole content of philosophy and the completest guidance for spiritual development. Hence it is called a Mahā-vākya. Similarly Vaiṣṇavism sees in the devotional formula *Aum Namō Nārāyaṇāya* the entire philosophy of Vaiṣṇavism and the whole process of spiritual realization. To understand it thoroughly, it is said, is to comprehend Reality; and to perform the adoration it signifies, in word, deed and thought, is the complete Sadhana. Analogous to the Vaiṣṇava tradition, Vīra-Śaivism, takes its stand on, and promulgates, the great mantra, *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*. The formula enshrines in itself the entire treasure of spiritual knowledge, and to live the mantra with the totality of one's personality is the road to the completest and highest self-fulfilment in Śiva.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RIDING THE OX HOME (A HISTORY OF MEDITATION FROM SHAMANISM TO SCIENCE): BY WILLARD JOHNSON. Published by Rider and Co., 17-21 Conway Street, London W1P 5HL. 1982 Pp. 262. £ 5.50.

The title of the book along with the Japanese scroll picture of a monk rapt in meditation on the back of an ox printed on its cover in the Sino-Japanese Ch'en/Zen tradition of Buddhism, might suggest to the reader that it is a book exclusively devoted to the interpretation of Zen tradition. That it is not has been made clear

by the author in the subtitle of the book 'A History of Meditation from Shamanism to Science'. Though to each chapter of the book is appended a revealing interpretation of one of the ten 'Ox-taming' pictures symbolically signifying the different stages of progress on the way to attaining Buddhahood otherwise known as Sunyata or Nirvana, the scope of the book is much wider than the presentation of Zen technique of meditation; it is in fact a trans-cultural history of meditation, i.e., a descriptive account of meditation and its meaning in different cultures.

Taking the word 'Yoga' (as derived from its original verbal root *yuj*) to mean 'to harness' our sensory oriented consciousness which behaves like a turbulent horse under ordinary empirical conditions, the author goes on to explain (Chapter-1) how meditation as a 'mental technique or praxis' (p.3) can be used to explore the infinite potentialities of the inner depths of our consciousness which are basically non-sensory in nature. He perhaps rightly observes that meditation challenges the assumption that we know only through the senses, thereby opening up a whole vista—the possibility of 'extra-sensory perception' and of influencing the world through non-motor means technically known as psychokinesis—in the domain of para-psychology. The ultimate goal of meditative practice, the author opines, is to achieve ecstasy which is usually taken to be an altered state of consciousness transcending its ordinary empirical modes. From the perceptive knowledge gained in meditative ecstasy, we can get greater access to the contents of our deeper self, including dream, fantasy, imagination, vision and creative thought. Furthermore, through meditation our psychic powers can be activated and consciously controlled to reach beyond the sway of the physical senses. One can apply these mental potentialities reached and developed through meditation to any of the goals one chooses to attain in life. 'Meditative ecstasy thus has no intrinsic meaning or goal; meditative states and practices exist devoid of doctrinal content; their practice is non-inflationary; being neutral, they can be practised in any system of thought applied towards any goal' (p. 235). To liberate meditation from its popular cultic connotation and religious association as exclusively leading to Godhead only and to reinterpret it to suit our present-day and its more secular needs appears to be the main objective of the book. To substantiate his point of view the author very aptly quotes (and he quotes profusely from the spiritual literature of almost all the religions of the world ranging from the *Rg-Veda* to the modern Euro-American interpreters and practitioners of meditation) from the *Bhagavadgītā* that meditation is a technique of action (*Yogah karmasu kausalam*).

It should be noted here that this is not just a 'how-to-meditate' sort of book giving practical guidance to those who wish to take up meditation for themselves but is the outcome of the author's extensive research on the subject and of his own personal experience. It investigates the origin

of meditation in human history: how meditation developed in Shamanism which is characteristic of archaic human communities (Ch. 2), and what different world civilizations have done with it (Chs. 3-6). He then explores the possibility of what science can learn about meditation (Ch. 7) and what we might use it for (Chs. 8-10). So this book surveys the entire field of meditation using evidence from all human cultures and civilizations, taking no single dogmatic point of view but seeking to sketch a map of its meaning for the entire humanity. Its trans-cultural approach is intended to free us from limited viewpoints on meditation, so that we may better understand it and make our own choice of technique. The author, following Patricia Carrington's book *Freedom in Meditation* (New York: Anchor, 1978), gives a long list of possible applications of meditative ecstasy that a modern man can achieve: as an adjunct to psychotherapy, in combating physical illness, to counteract insomnia, as an aid to increased creativity, to counteract excessive ego-concern, and so on (p. 178). This, however, does not exclude the possibility of gaining a deeper self-knowledge in meditation, for 'gaining increased self-knowledge remains for many its ultimate application' (p. 193), and he devotes an entire chapter to it (Ch. 9). The visions sometimes experienced in meditative ecstasy, thinks the author, should not be dismissed as pathological aberrations of consciousness—a break with reality—but should be taken as revealing different aspects of our multi-dimensional self. He agrees with Carl Jung, the Swiss depth psychologist, that visions and dreams are eruptions of the hidden aspects of our self into our consciousness and comments: 'What depth psychology stresses today, ancient Indian psychology discovered centuries ago when meditators observed the psyche's productions in meditative ecstasies to formulate the postulate of the Hindu-Buddhist notion of reincarnation' (p. 198). Again, imaginative identification with the objects of meditation can similarly expand and deepen our knowledge of the self's potentialities. This is illustrated in the Christian tradition by the imitation of Christ, and in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition by the monk who identifies himself with the gods whose power he wishes to incorporate into his self-structure, so as to use it for the benefit of others in rituals and healing actions performed for them.

However, in his zeal to confine meditation only to the attainment of practical goals and to avoid metaphysical issues (p. 198), the author

tends to identify the 'self' with the 'mind' as understood by modern Western psychologists (especially Jung) and thinks that dreams, fantasies and visions experienced during meditative ecstasies are able to enrich our knowledge of the self. This view will perhaps be vehemently controverted by all those who belong to Indian meditative traditions. The Self, in all Indian systems of thought (barring the solitary exception of the Cārvāka materialists), is essentially transcendental in nature, going beyond the limits of our body, senses, mind and the intellect; and a study of meditation is bound to be inadequate without a metaphysics of the self. An exploration into the depths of our mind by the analysis of our dreams, fantasies and visions can never take us to the knowledge of our *self* unless we are able to transcend the *mind* itself by our meditative practices. Absence of a discussion on the metaphysic of the soul thus remains an obvious lacuna of this book which is otherwise written so scholarly and seriously on meditation.

This, however, does not deprive the book of its intrinsic merits. In order to substantiate his point of view that meditation can possibly become a powerful force in the evolution of human consciousness, the author has drawn materials from a wide variety of modern academic disciplines—psychology, anthropology, physiology and para-psychology, not to speak of the *Yoga-Sutra* of Patanjali, the Interior Castle of St. Teresa of Avila and the *Walden* of Henry David Thoreau. A book consisting of 246 pages in total (minus its Index) drawing on such a bewildering variety of disciplines is bound to be sketchy on some points, and yet the masterly handling of those materials has made the book extremely readable. The book is a good example of how matter-of-fact scholarship can be transformed into pleasant reading by the adoption of an elegant style of writing. The Index, analytically listing the major concepts and themes along with the proper names of the authors and the titles of their books, is a valuable addition to the book. Both academic researchers and general readers interested in the study of the history of meditation will find the book equally informative and interesting.

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HOLY WANDERINGS: IN THE LAP OF THE HIMALAYAS: BY SWAMI AKHANDANANDA. Translated by Dr. Narendranath B. Patil. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600 004. Pp. vii + 109. Rs. 5.

At the age of seventeen the author, who was a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, set out as a wandering pilgrim and visited almost all the *tirthas* in the Himalayas and spent almost a year in Tibet. His memoirs first appeared in *Udbodhan*, the Bengali journal of the Ramakrishna Order, and later on this was brought out as the book *Tibbater Pathe Himālaye*. The book under review is the translation of a part of that book. It contains his account of his wanderings in the Himalayas excluding Tibet.

The travel started from Risikesh. After visiting Tehri Swami Akhandanandaji went to Yamunotri and then to Gangotri. Then seeing the temple of Chandradani he proceeded towards Rudraprayag and ultimately reached Kedarnath. Throughout the journey he travelled on foot and took a vow of not keeping money with him. The journey through the terrains and snow-capped mountains was very thrilling, and the author has given a vivid description of it. Apart from elevating description of the scenic beauty of the places and legends of the temples, the narrative is made lively by a number of anecdotes and episodes. Though he moved alone absorbed in the thought of God, he met many people, priests, and monks during the journey, and his keen and alert mind recorded their manners and customs. Many years later when he wrote the book, he wove his memories into a rich tapestry full of the images of heroism, pathos, love and compassion.

More than fifty years have passed since Swami Akhandanandaji wrote the original book in Bengali. The nature of the places and the condition of the people of the Himalayas have changed considerably. Yet, the book does not seem dated. For the book deals with eternal verities and the essential characteristics of human life which do not change. As such, the reader will find the book as absorbing as the latest travelogues brought out for modern Indian pilgrims and Western tourists, and far more spiritually and aesthetically rewarding than any of them. As you read the book, religious India, spiritual India, comes vividly before your eyes and this India, the true India, is immortal. It is the capacity to create this lasting impression

on the minds of the readers that makes Swami Akhandanandaji's travel account unique.

SWAMI SOMESWARANANDA
Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Patna

PATH OF DEVOTION: BY SWAMI PARAMANANDA. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600 004. 1981. Pp. 105. Rs. 8.50.

This was the first published work of the author who was a prolific writer. An eminent disciple of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Paramananda was an influential spiritual teacher who did pioneering work in spreading Vedanta in America. The present book is a collection of spiritual maxims selected from his letters and organized into book form by his illustrious disciple Sister Devamata. The book has been translated into several languages. Based as they are on direct experiences and deep understanding of life and the ultimate Reality, the teachings contained in this book have great value. They inspire, guide and elevate. Indeed, thousands of people, especially in the West, have derived solace and spiritual certitude from this book which occupies a unique place in the literature of the Ramakrishna Movement.

There are five chapters in all. In the first, captioned Devotion, the author describes what true devotion is: 'Always keep your eyes fixed on Him and pray with childlike simplicity' (p. 15). To rise above all worldly things, feeling God's presence always and everywhere, and being humble make one a true devotee. 'Purity', which forms the second chapter, is necessary because it is the real strength. During the course of sadhana ups and downs are inevitable, but 'stand firm on purity and faith; then strength is sure to come and the path will become clear to you' (p. 29). And this attitude makes the devotee steadfast (3rd chapter) and 'bold enough to face everything' (p. 40). Like his master, Swami Paramanandaji too insists on having faith and self-confidence because weakness is a great obstacle on the path of devotion. This bracing attitude is further elaborated in the chapter 'Fearlessness'. And the last chapter 'Self-surrender' exhorts the aspirant to dedicate his life, body, and soul to the great cause. The test of self-surrender is heroic optimism. Says the author, 'When miseries and difficulties come, say "All right, come on" and stand up like a hero. The Mother will not fail to fulfil the prayers which are said from the heart with unselfishness.' (p. 74)

The present reviewer does not deem that he is competent enough to comment on such a brilliant work which springs from the author's deep spiritual realizations and convictions expressed so simply through the glowing flame of divine love. He can only point out the significance of some of the author's views. The author writes: 'The true devotee worships his Ideal, not because he desires anything from Him, but because...he is his Beloved whom he loves for the sake of love.' (p. 22) In worldly love it is seen that when we love someone we also expect love in return from that person, and thus love becomes a commodity which rests on the give-and-take principle. This expectation makes us psychologically dependent on that person and, when our expectation is not fulfilled, we become frustrated. But love, in essence, is spontaneous, it is sublime. So when the author asks us to love but not to expect anything in return, he warns us not to be psychologically dependent, for psychological dependence is the root of all misery. To give up this feeling of dependence is true renunciation. One depends on something because one thinks it as pleasurable. The author rightly says: 'There is no real happiness in earthly things.' (p. 49) The author asks us to have proper understanding (p. 76). We know pleasure is something subjective, that is, it is not present in any object outside, yet we imagine that it is objectively present in something outside. Thus imagination and reality bring a conflict in us, and this is maya. And what is purity? The conception of purity varies according to person, time and place. But the author provides a universal criterion when he says: 'Unselfishness and purity are inseparable' (p. 30). Purity makes us free and impurity binds us. Earlier we have seen that psychological dependence binds us. So to give up this feeling of dependence or expectation—by which we become unselfish—is purity. If one indulges in sense-pleasures, one becomes dependent on the senses, and so it is impurity.

The book printed by photo-offset on good quality of paper with hard cover and plastic jacket, is quite attractive. In the whole book the reviewer can point out only one minor defect: the transliteration of Sanskrit passages in the Appendix sounds unfamiliar. It is better to follow the accepted phonetic and diacritical rules.

No spiritual aspirant who treads the path of devotion can afford to miss out this beautiful little book of unfailing inspiration.

SWAMI SOMESWARANANDA

BHAGAVADGITA

With the Commentary of

Shankaracharya

Translated by

Swami Gambhirananda

Pp. XXII+826

Ordinary : Rs. 45.00

Deluxe : Rs. 55.00

The translator, a senior monk and one of the Vice-Presidents of the Ramakrishna Order, needs no introduction to those who have studied his *Eight Upanishads*, *Brahma-Sutra-Bhashya of Shankaracharya* and *Chandogya Upanishad*. The elaborate Introduction by the translator and the Word Index have added to the value of the book.

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Manager

but positively in terms of maximizing social justice. Over-stressing productivity might lead to the eclipse of the aims of social justice. This is an area which has to be guarded keeping in mind the fact that changes or even revolutions are nothing if they are only technological and not social and ideological as well. The key variable here is the *consciousness* of peasants. The strength of the anthropological approach to the study of peasantry lies in stressing this *consciousness* factor along with the attention paid to the factor of productivity.

This review would remain incomplete without a brief mention of some of views on Indian peasantry. One view is that caste is an inhibiting factor in terms of peasants uniting on the basis of class. Another view, ably presented by Walter Hauser of the University of Virginia, stresses that the critical issue for India historically and in the contemporary present has been and continues to be, who gets what from whom on what terms and what consequences on the land? Indeed, most of the social tensions in India have their roots in land ownership. Can nationalization of land solve many of the peasant problems which simmer on the surface?

The great merit of the volume is that it systematically calls attention to some of the main current issues in the field, which in turn points to sets of realities we all should take cognizance of. The great drawback of any such study is that it contains the views of those who are not peasants themselves. In that sense it is the study of the peasantry without the peasants! The views presented are like shots in the air. The sound dies down and everything becomes the same again. Mahatma Gandhi proclaimed long ago that a peasant might be illiterate, but in many ways he is no less knowledgeable than those who have the knowledge of letters. Let us be bold enough to acknowledge that the peasants' knowledge is equal in value to the learned knowledge of scholars.

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TELUGU

MANISADAM: BY DR. BODDUPALLI PURUSHOTTAM. Published by Sri Girija Prachuranalu, Vidyalandkar B-31, Guntur-522 006 (A.P.). 1981. Pp. 108. Rs. 5.

A bouquet of four plays, the book *Māniṣādā* is a unique attempt to bring into the focus of Telugu literature the way some of the literary masterpieces of ancient India had their origin.

The first play 'Māniṣādā' describes how the ṛṣi Vālmiki, moved by the pathetic sight of the curlew bird killed by a hunter, expressed his sorrow in the form of a verse, and how this led to development of the great epic the Rāmāyaṇa with pathos as its dominant sentiment. With the help of plenty of footnotes the author elucidates several ideas relevant to the theme. The second play 'Bhāgavatāvirbhavam' describes how Vyāsa even after compiling the four Vedas and writing the Purāṇas etc. suffered from restlessness, and found peace only on listening to Nārada's exposition on the glory of Bhakti to the Lord, which induced him to write the *Bhāgavatam*. The reader does not fail to have a glimpse of the depth of the author's own feeling of Bhakti reflected in the dialogues. 'Vyāsāgamanam' the third play, is again on another incident in the life of Vyāsa. One day, failing to get alms for seven days in Kāśī, he cursed the city in exasperation, but at last found solace in the Divine Mother's words. The last piece is on 'Natkīruḍu', who was a great poet in Pāṇḍya kingdom. Even though cursed by Śiva on account of his own egoism, he realized and appeased the Lord through unswerving devotion and attained the everlasting State.

The reviewer regards this book as an ideal one to be introduced among students for its literary and ethical values. Dr. Purushottam's diction and style are remarkably clear, free-flowing and elegant. The printing is neat and flawless.

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NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

NEW DELHI

Report for 1981-82 and 1982-83

Started on a humble scale in 1927, this centre has been rendering religious, cultural and medical service to the people of the Capital from its present premises established in 1935. A brief resume of its activities during the two-year period ending with March 1983 is given below.

Religious work: Regular discourses on scriptures and other topical themes were given in the Mission auditorium, and also in different institutions in Delhi. Functions organized to celebrate the birthdays of great teachers and *Ramanama sankirtana* on *ekadashi* days were well attended.

Cultural work:

Free Library and Reading Room: During the two-year period 1,075 new books were added to the library, located within the premises of the Mission, bringing up the total number of books to 31,063. On an average 340 people used the library every day, the number of books issued being 9,868 in 81-82 and 7,606 in 82-83. The newspapers received in the reading room in 81-82 and 82-83 were 13 and 14 respectively and periodicals 90 and 107.

University Students' Section Library: Opened in 1962 and maintained with financial assistance from the University of Delhi, this section of the library is meant to be used by the students of that University alone. 285 boys and 214 girls were enrolled during 1981-82 and 240 boys and 202 girls in 1982-83 respectively.

Preaching work: On Sunday evenings the Bhagavad-Gita was the main subject of discourse. A special meeting, 'An Urgent Think-Together', was organized in the Mission premises on the subject 'Eradication of Untouchability—What You or I can do', to deliberate on the evil of untouchability and the associated problems of conversion. The Saturday evening discourse on *Ramacharit Manas* in Hindi was continued as usual by noted Ramayana exponents. On *Ramanavami* and *Tulasi Jayanti* special functions were arranged. Classes on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and Vedanta literature on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were conducted in Hindi and Bengali

regularly as was a weekly class on Bhagavad-Gita especially for women in English.

Youth Convention: A three-day Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Youth Convention was held from 9 September 1982 with 541 youth and 234 elder delegates participating, the latter only in the concluding joint session. It had Giani Zail Singh, President of India, as the Chief Guest at its inaugural session. Besides several monks of the Ramakrishna Order, many other distinguished guests were present, including monks and nuns of other orders, the final session being graced by the presence of Sm. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, as the Chief Guest.

1,500 students participated in the annual Recitation and Speech Competitions for School and College Students organized as a part of the birthday celebrations of Swami Vivekananda and among them 196 were adjudged best and given prizes.

Medical work: The Free Tuberculosis Clinic at Karol Bagh, set up in 1933, acquired its present premises in 1938. The number of outdoor cases in the clinic during 81-82 was 4,876 (3,120 new cases) and 5,503 (3,795 new cases) in 82-83. The Domiciliary Service Unit maintained close liaison between patients and the Institution and advised patients and their contacts on matters of isolation and disinfection at home and brought the contacts to the clinic for necessary examination and advice. During 81-82 4,876 patients (not covered by the Central Government Health Scheme) received free antibiotics, vitamins etc. The corresponding figure for 82-83 was 5,503.

A Medical Diagnostic Centre comprising a clinical and an investigative wing was in the process of being launched to render service to the poorer section of the community.

The Homoeopathic Dispensary in the Mission premises, working since 1929, served 29,332 and 23,864 patients during 81-82 and 82-83 respectively.

Flood Relief work: Cooked food in packets was distributed to 200 families affected by the flood resulting from the unprecedented rains during July 1981 as a flash relief measure around Jaipur city. 500 selected families of Chaksu and Lalsot tehsils were given two sets of essential utensils like iron pots and pans for cooking and aluminium plates and tumblers for general use. 1,000 woollen blankets were also given away to the needy.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Child Malnutrition

Malnutrition is children's most serious enemy. It kills more children than any war, earthquake, flood or other calamity ever did. A child's first reaction to inadequate nourishment is to save energy by reducing play and study. This curtails the child's development. Similarly, an undernourished mother feels less inclined to work and provide more nourishment to her baby, and may delay taking it to a clinic as far as possible. In a report on 'The State World's Children' the UNICEF's Executive Director James P. Grant suggests four simple steps which, if followed on a massive scale, could reduce child malnutrition and infant mortality by half before the end of this century. These four simple nutrition measures are: (maintenance of) Growth Charts, Oral Rehydration Therapy, Breastfeeding and Immunization—code-worded GOBI for easy remembrance.

What makes malnutrition a difficult problem is its invisibility. The negative effects of undernourishment on a child's growth can be so gradual that it may escape the notice of its mother. A mother who does not realize her child is undernourished will take no steps to improve the diet. A monthly growth chart will enable her to find this out. For instance, if a child who has had measles loses weight or fails to gain weight, this will show up the following month in the growth chart—and as soon as a mother sees this, her spontaneous reaction will be to give the child more food. Experimental projects have shown that even rural women can be taught to have their children weighed every month at the nearest community health centre and to have this recorded on simple cardboard growth charts.

The average child in a poor community gets between 6 and 16 attacks of diarrhoea every year which kills more than 5 million children every year—one child every 6 seconds! Diarrhoea leads to dehydration which leads to loss of weight, and if children lose 15% of their body weight, in a few days they will die. It has now been discovered that adding glucose to a salt and water solution increases the body's rate of absorption of fluid by 2500 per cent. Cheap oral rehydration tablets can be made available in all villages and slums, or mothers can be taught to make rehydration solution at home.

As regards breastfeeding, its benefits over bottle-feeding are so well known that most governments are taking active steps to encourage it. Infectious diseases are closely related to malnutrition, both as cause and effect. Six common contagious diseases (diphtheria, measles, poliomyelitis, tetanus, tuberculosis and whooping cough) kill an estimated 5 million children every year. Nation-wide projects for child immunization have to be launched.

We hope government agencies and voluntary social organizations will take immediate steps to mitigate the scourge of malnutrition by bringing to fruition the simple scheme envisaged by the UNICEF chief.
