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# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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# THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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# BULLETIN

## OF THE

# RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

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VOL. XIX

JANUARY 1968

No. 1

### JAINISM AND EARLY INFLUENCES OF THE INDIAN AHIMSA RELIGION IN EUROPE

CHEDOMIL VELYACHICH

*Dr. Chedomil Velyachich holds the Chair of Oriental Philosophy at the University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia. He visited India as a Visiting Professor of Philosophy at the Calcutta University. Of the several books written by Dr. Velyachich, Oriental Philosophy (2 volumes) deserves special mention. He also contributed an article to the centenary volume 'Vivekananda: The Cosmic Conscience' (1963) under the title 'Oriental Influences and the Interest for India in Yugoslav Literature and philosophy'. The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. Velyachich at the Institute in February 1964.*

**I**T IS not the purpose of this survey to discuss the well-known aspects of Christianity as one of the *ahimsā* religions. Such aspects may be mentioned at a few points where fresh and closer contacts with the East could have influenced their stronger affirmation on the surface of westernized Christendom. Thus the review of the last period comprised in this paper, that of the Middle Ages, may seem sugges-

tive of the conclusions that the most comprehensive message of *ahimsā* ever preached in the history of Christian civilization, the poetic message of St. Francis of Assisi, was inspired by the spirit of eastern mysticism, widespread at his time in southern Europe.

#### THE INDO-IRANIAN AND THE INDO- EUROPEAN CIVILIZATIONS

The origins of this atmosphere of spiritual



communion have, however, to be sought for in pre-Christian contacts between the two branches sprouting from the same protohistoric trunk, the Indo-Iranian and the Indo-European civilizations. Though sufficiently confirmed by historical evidence, it has still not been stressed strongly enough in the elaboration of the ancient history of ideas that the first direct spiritual contacts of Greek culture with India took place, at the time of Alexander the Great, when some Jain ascetics were approached by some philosopher from the intellectual retinue of Alexander. These were Onesikritos, a disciple of the Cynic, Diogenes, and nephew of Aristotle, and Pyrrho, 'the Sceptic', founder of the *anekānta* philosophy in Europe. At that time the common name for Indian sages was coined in the Greek language as 'gymnosophists', or 'naked sages'. In some Greek texts they are also referred to as 'gennoi', which is an obvious transcription of Jain. W. W. Tarn in his *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (Cambridge, 1951, p. 381) traces the term in Greek historiography to the 'Trogus source' that means not later than the first century B.C., where he also believes to find a direct reference to 'some Greek who read Jain writing' in connexion with the specifically Jain dating for Candragupta's accession. In this case as well as in that of Ptolemy and Dionysius, Tarn points out the fact that Indian terms in Greek literature at that time 'are nearer the Sanskrit forms than are the Greek names in use since Alexander's day, and suggest as their ultimate source a Greek acquainted with Sanscrit'.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON INDIA

The earliest information on India in Greek history go as far back as the origins of Greek historiography itself. Already Herodotus (fifth century B.C.) quotes, as a source of his information on India, Skylax,

a seaman, who in the service of the Persian king Darius, investigated the navigability of the river Sindhu. Herodotus' knowledge of this country was very poor, but it still strikes our attention at least in one characteristic observation. Speaking about extreme differences in customs of various regions and tribes, he quotes Skylax who gives the example of some nomadic tribes eating raw meat, while others refrain 'from killing any living being' (III, 99-100). Already in the next generation after Herodotus, an extensive report on India, probably mainly on Indian civilization, was written in three books by the Greek physician Ktesias who came from the medical school of Knidos and lived seventeen years at the royal court of Artaxerxes Mnemon in Persia in permanent close contacts with his Indian subjects. Fragments from his books have been quoted often for a long time.

The main source of information on India for later Greek and Roman historians, and even in Middle Ages, was the book of Megasthenes who soon after the campaign of Alexander the Great came as envoy to Pāṭaliputra, the capital of Candragupta (called Sandrocottos by Greek historians).

The first extensive information on contacts with Indian 'gymnosophists' at the time of Alexander's stay at Taxila is referred also by Megasthenes from a still older report of Onesikritos. From this testimony which is the most interesting for our subject, Strabo quotes among others (*Geography*, XV, 63-65): 'Onesikritos says that he himself was sent to converse with these sophists; for Alexander had heard that the people always went naked and devoted themselves to endurance, and that they were held in very great honour, and that they did not visit other people when invited, but bade them to visit them if they wished to participate in anything they did or said;...and that he found fifteen men at a distance of twenty stadia from the city, who were in different

postures, standing or sitting or lying naked and motionless. . . . Onesikritos says that he conversed with one of these sophists, Kalanos (the original form of this name is often interpreted by modern authors as Kalyāṇa), who later accompanied the king as far as Persis and died in accordance with the ancestral custom, being placed upon a pyre and burnt up. . . . And Onesikritos adds that Kalanos bade him, if he wished to learn, to take off his clothes, to lie down naked on the same stones, and thus to hear his teachings; and that while he was hesitating what to do, Mandanis (usually referred to as Dandemis by other Greek authors), who was the oldest and wisest of the sophists, rebuked Kalanos as a man of arrogance . . . and that Mandanis called him and said that he commended the king because, although busied with the government of so great an empire, he was desirous of wisdom, . . . but that he might be pardoned if, conversing through three interpreters, who, with the exception of language, knew no more than the masses, he should be unable to set forth anything in his philosophy that would be useful; for that, he added, would be like expecting water to flow pure through mud. . . . At all events, all he said, according to Onesikritos, tended to this, that the best teaching is that which removes pleasure and pain from the soul; and that pain and toil differ, for the former is inimical to man and the latter friendly, since man trains the body for toil in order that his opinions may be strengthened. (This appears to be a fairly adequate and subtle definition of *tapas* well distinguished from *duḥkha*). . . . Onesikritos says that, after saying so, Mandanis inquired whether such doctrines were taught among the Greeks; and that when answered that Pythagoras taught such doctrines, and also bade people to abstain from meat, as did Socrates and Diogenes, Mandanis replied that he regarded the Greeks as sound-minded in general, but that they were wrong in one respect, in

that they preferred custom to nature; for otherwise, Mandanis said, they would not be ashamed to go naked, like himself, and live on frugal fare; . . . and that they (Indian gymnosophists) regard disease of the body as a most disgraceful thing; and that he who suspects disease in his own body commits suicide through means of fire, piling a funeral pyre; and that he anoints himself, sits down on the pyre, orders it to be lighted, and burns without a motion. . . .'

As far as the identification of the sect is concerned, we find a better specified statement in Clemens Alexandrinus (second century A.D.), based also on Megasthenes (Stromateis, I., p. 305 A.B.):

'There are two sects of these Indian philosophers—one called the Sarmanai and the other the Brachmanai. Concerning this distinction between *brāhmaṇas* and *śramāṇas* which has remained basic for all later Greek authors, let us remember first that it corresponds literally to the expression very often used by the Buddha. While the second group is called here *sarmanai*, we shall find in later and deeper studies of their teaching (particularly in Porphyrios) the name *samanēans*, without *r*, corresponding to *pāli* and Jain *prākṛt*. At the time when the term *gennoi* for Jains came in use, we find that Strabo, by mistake, uses the word *germanes* instead of *sarmanes*. Connected with the Sarmanai are the philosophers called Hylobioi (living in woods), who neither live in cities nor even in house. . . . Among the Indians are those philosophers also who follow the precepts of Boutta, whom they honour as a god on account of his extraordinary sanctity.'

In Pseudo-Origenes we find the following fragment from Megasthenes (*philosophumena*, 24): 'Throughout life they go naked saying that the body has been given by the Deity as a covering for the soul. . . . With regard to the Word, which they call God, they hold that it is corporeal, and that it wears

the body as its external covering... Dandamis, accordingly, to whom Alexander the Makedonian paid a visit, is spoken of as a god because he 'conquered in the warfare against the body....'

Understanding these words as a suggestion to the cosmologic theory of the 'naked ascetics', McCrindle (*Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian in Indian Antiquary*, 1876-77) was inclined to recognize a hint to the theory of the 'three sheaths, *kośa*, which constitute the subtle frame', i.e. the theory 'according to which the soul is incased in a sheath, or rather a succession of sheaths'. He vaguely considered it to be a doctrine of the Vedānta school of philosophy'. If we admit this analogy as materially justified, then it seems to me that it would be more proper to interpret it in terms of the Jain theory of matter as *puḍgala*, of the subtle substances considered as *dharma* and *adharma* in their Jain meaning, of their 'influx', *āsrava* to the *kārmāṇa-śarīra* on one side and the 'purging off', *karma-nirjarā*, of *leśyā* on the other.

Apart from this hypothesis which may appear rather speculative, it seems not so difficult for us today as it was supposed by Dandamis himself, to remove by a proceeding of pure historical analysis from the quoted passages the 'sheath' of mistranslation, or the other 'sheath' consisting of an obvious Stoic 'colouring' and understanding of the essential teaching in Onesikritos' own comparative interpretation. What remains seems to confirm more convincingly, in essence, the hypothesis of the Jain origin of the Indian teaching, recorded for the first time by a Greek philosopher.

This appeared obvious already to Colebrook in his *Observations on the Sects of the Jains* when he refers to the passage from Clemens Alexandrinus, quoted above, and comes to the conclusion:

'Here, to my apprehension, the followers of Buddha are clearly distinguished from the

Brachmanes and Sarmanes. The latter, called Germanes by Strabo, and Samanaeans by Porphyrios, are the ascetics of a different religion, and may have belonged to the sect of Jina, or to another. The Brachmanes are apparently those who are described by Philostratos and Hierocles as worshipping the Sun; and by Strabo and by Arrian as performing sacrifices for the common benefit of the nation, as well as for individuals.... They are expressly discriminated from the sect of Buddha by one ancient author, and from Sarmanes or Samanaeans (ascetics of various tribes) by others.'

Speaking about essential differences among various schools of Indian 'philosophers', as he calls them in another passage (XV, 1, 70), Strabo seems to distinguish clearly enough the *digāmbara* from the *śvetāmbara* sect: 'In classifying the philosophers, writers oppose to the Brachmanas the Pramnas. This term refers obviously to *pramāṇa* (Sanskrit) and contains a stress on the importance of *anekānta-vāda* logical and epistemologic theory against the Brāhmanic dogmatism and *lokāyatika* theories... and they say that the Brachmanas study natural philosophy and astronomy, but that they are derided by the Pramnas as quacks and fools; and that of these, some are called "Mountain" Pramnas, others "Naked" Pramnas, and others "City" Pramnas or "Neighbouring" Pramnas,... and that the "naked" Pramnas, as their name implies, live naked, for the most part in the open air (living 'naked in the open air' reminds us of the original meaning of the attribute *digāmbara*), practising endurance for thirty-seven years; and that women associate with them but do not have intercourse with them; and that these philosophers are held in exceptional esteem.—They say that the "City" Pramnas... wear white clothing, white linen or cotton garments, contrary to the account of those who say that Indians wear highly coloured garments.'

Thus, knowledge about various trends of

Indian philosophical and religious thought was fairly extensive at the time of the Roman Empire. However, the very first impression made by the 'naked ascetics' and the proof of their utter despising of the worldly life, confirmed by their *vinaya* regulation allowing them to commit suicide after a certain period of *tapasyā* and in special circumstances—remained the strongest for many centuries. To confirm it, Strabo, in continuation of the quoted passage says that he might add to the accounts here given that of Nikolaos Damaskenos. He says that at Antioch, near Daphne, he chanced to meet the Indian ambassadors who had been despatched to Caesar Augustus. . . . And they were accompanied also, according to him, by the man who burned himself up at Athens; and that whereas some commit suicide when they suffer adversity, seeking release from the ills at hand, others do so when their lot is happy, as was the case with that man; for, he adds, although that man had fared as he wished up to that time, he thought it necessary then to depart this life, lest something untoward might happen to him if he tarried here; and that therefore he leaped upon the pyre with a laugh, his naked body anointed, wearing only a loin-cloth, and that the following words were inscribed on his tomb: 'Here lies Zarmanochegas, an Indian from Bargosa, who immortalized himself in accordance with the ancestral customs of Indians.' 'Zarmanochegas' or 'Zarmarohenes' is referred to in some later texts (Dio Cassius) simply as 'Zarmaros', while the ending 'henes' seems to some modern authors to be the nobility title *khan*. Applying more imagination, we could venture to translate it as '*śramaṇa*' (*zarmano*) '*mahārāja*' (*khan*). As the practice of self-immolation is concerned, the problem appears more complicated, because according to the Jain *vinaya jalanappavesa* ('entering fire') is referred to (in *Sthānāga*) among the 12 types of death not regularly

permitted to monks. Otherwise 'a monk took recourse to voluntary death with the permission of his teachers when he found that he could not sustain his body', and there are various forms of suicide found in the Aṅgas, where we also find reference to 'the maximum period of mortification of twelve years', or less. (For references on the Jaina *vinaya* cf. S. B. Deo, *History of Jaina Monachism*, Poona, 1956, pp. 200-202.) The period of particular interest for our scope in the history of Jainism, from the fifth century B.C. to the first century A.D., is a period of at least 8 schisms, the last of which resulted in the secession of the *digambara* sect. It might be interesting to study more in particular how far the tradition of self-immolation by fire reaches back in Indian tradition (since its existence in Buddhism, in East-Asian countries, is usually considered to be a later adopted purely Chinese custom). As for the Jain canon, it condemns 'entering the fire' as a belief in a purifying quality of the fire itself, which is obviously an anti-Brāhmanic attitude in doctrines. His tomb in Athens was still in Middle Ages a popular place of pilgrimage. Schiller, in his famous ballad 'Der Ring des Polykrates' revokes this particular motive from ancient oriental literature.

Even those authors who do not speak much of India and have not a very high idea of Indian civilization were struck mainly by the Jain aspects of those 'sophists'. Such is the case of Cicero, in his *Tusculan Disputations* (V, XXVII, 77):

'What barbarous country more rude than India? Yet amongst its people those, to begin with, who are reckoned sages pass their lives unclad and endure without show of pain the snow of Caucasus and the rigour of winter, and when they throw themselves voluntarily into the flames they let themselves be burnt without a moan.'

This was an outstanding aspect of the oriental fashion in the times of the Roman

Empire. This kind of popularity was due on one side to a fairly extensive literature on India, and, on the other, to a number of western *yogis* belonging to different philosophical school, mainly to the Neo-Pythagorean, but also to the Cynic and Stoic ones. The founder of the Neo-Pythagorean school Apollonios of Tyana, was the most prominent representative of the so called 'Indo-Hellenic' wisdom at the beginning of the Christian era. His biography, including extensive accounts on his long stay in India and initiations in Indian monasteries, was written by Philostratos. His followers are sometimes compared to the rival school of the Cynics to whom they reproach to be influenced by debased practices of Ethiopian and Egyptian origins and not by the pure Indian tradition directly. However, some of the most famous Roman *yogis* came from the Cynic school. One was a Peregrinus in the second century A.D.—Another, Salustrius, in the fifth century A.D., is remembered among others for the fact that at a time when Christianity turned intolerant against ancient religions, under Julian the Apostate, it happened that the last chief of the Platonic Academy in Athens, Damaskios, who himself had to emigrate with his followers to Persia, helped Salustrius, a disciple of Indian teachers of Alexandria to escape to Dalmatia where he was protected from persecution by a local ruler, Harkelinos.

The most popular source of information on India as a fabulous country was at those times the novel about the life of Alexander the Great and his Indian campaign by Pseudo-Kallisthenes. Besides this popular book we find another, written in the third century, which remained the deepest and philosophically most precious document on the influence of the Indian ethics of *ahimsā* in the West. It is the book on 'abstinency' (*De Abstinentia*) by Porphyrios, the most illustrious disciple of Plotinous and his

follower as chief of the Neo-Platonic school. The book is a unique apology of vegetarianism, based on the explanation of the teaching of *ahimsā* according to the living tradition in Indian schools of the 'Brachmanes' and 'Samanaeans'. The distinction of the traditional ways of living and of religious beliefs between these two main groups of Indian philosophers is very carefully elaborated. A new source of information on the spiritual life of India at this time was the Syrian Gnostic Bardesanes (*Bardaisan*), mainly for non-orthodox (*nāstika*) teachings and the rapidly progressing Buddhist influences which at the time of Megasthenes, i.e. before Aśoka, had not yet (gained the upperhand) in India.

In the early Christian literature, records on Indian philosophy and its influence in the West are found in Palladios (*Dicta Sancti Ambrasi de vita Bragmanorum*, (fourth century A.D.), in St. Hieronymos, the first European biographer of Buddha, and in several others.

If we try to recapitulate the main trends in the historical sequence of the early testimonies mentioned above, and to arrange in a systematic order the salient points resulting from their analysis—the following components can be singled out in favour of the quoted texts very explicitly even in connexion had been the earliest and the strongest:

I—Historically, the distinction between the *brāhmaṇas* and the *śramaṇas* appears in the quoted texts very explicitly even in Megasthenes (beginning of the third century B.C.). At that time already the followers of the Buddha are distinguished as one specific sect among the *śramaṇas*. Alexander Polyhistor and Strabo (first century B.C. and A.D.) note more and more differences among various *śramaṇa* orders, some of whom are explicitly called 'followers of the Buddha' while others have specific characteristics of the Jains,

At the time of the early Gnosticism, since Bardesanes, typically Jain tenets, both in ethics and in cosmology, became most apparent. This was coincident with the appearance of the Manichaeism religion in the area of the Christian world. This particular coincidence became essential in the period of Middle Ages, as a link for the influence of the *ahimsā* religion through the later Neo-Manichaeism.

II—Systematically, the following characteristics stressed in Greek, Hellenistic, and early Christian testimonies appear to be most important:

(a) *Śramaṇas* referred to in the earliest reports and often in later documents are a sect of *naked sages* (gymno-sophists).

(b) They are famous for their *tapas*, extreme ascetic austerities, which unlike the practices and theory of the orthodox *yoga* schools culminate in

(c) *suicide* allowed by their religion after a determined period of *tapasyā*, or in case of disease, or even to escape too strong temptations.

(d) They are *śramaṇas* and explicitly not *brāhmaṇas*; but they are also sufficiently distinguished from Buddhists. The distinction between those naked and the others wearing white garments has also been noted.

(e) The first philosophical theory transplanted directly under Indian influence to Greece was the *anekānta-vāda*, defined as the theory of *epoché*, i.e. 'refraining' from apodictic judgements in logic and epistemology, by Pyrrhon of Elis, who accompanied Alexander the Great to India, and lived later as a typical *sannyāsin*, highly esteemed for his moral rigorism. I have outlined the specific thesis in other papers, first in 'Greek and Roman sources of information on India' (*Antiquito Vivante*, XI. 1, Skoplje, 1961).

(f) Gnostics found that the doctrines of the 'warfare against the body' and of matter as 'external covering', corresponding

to Jain *puṭṭhala* and *kārmāṇa-śarīra*, are analogous to Gnostic and Manichaeism cosmology which under the direct influence of Iranian Mazdaism attributes all worldly creation to the Devil.

#### THE ASPECTS OF AHIMSA RELIGION

Both the ethical aspect of the *ahimsā* religion and the corresponding cosmological theory of world and matter being of sinful Satanic origin reappeared in their Manichaeism version as a challenge to medieval Christianity in the movement of the Patarini, or Cathari. Their most important and most authentically Indo-Iranian offshoot were the Bogumils whose social and political affirmation culminated in the Balkan Peninsula, from the tenth to the fifteenth century. The neo-Manichaeism heresy penetrated during that period through southern Europe to Italy and France (Provence) where the Cathari ('the purified ones') were known as 'Albigenses'.

Original Manichaeism was considered as the most dangerous heresy in western Christianity since the time of the conversion of St. Augustine (fourth century) from Manichaeism to the Roman Catholic creed. The name of the sect was derived from the name of Mānī (third century), a Babylonian, whose religious teaching was based mainly on Zoroastrian Mazdaist tradition. This was true of several Gnostic sects, which at that time were widespread throughout eastern Christianity, though Gnostic schools were not limited only to the sphere of Christian religion.

The basic idea of Mānī was that his religion, expressed mainly in terms of Zoroastrianism as the predominating world conception in the cultural area of Mānī's own provenience and activity, contained the essence common to all great religions. During his journeys through Asia, to India and China, he studied eastern religions and finally identified his teaching, as a universal

synthesis, with Buddhism on one side and Christianity on the other. The lineage of prophets in world proportions according to Mānī was: Buddha—Zarathustra—Jesus—Mānī. The most often-quoted saying attributed to him is the following: 'Wisdom and deeds (i.e. theory and practice) have always from time to time been brought to mankind by the messengers of God. So in one age they have been brought by the messenger called Buddha to India, in another by Zaradust to Persia, in another by Jesus to the West. Hereupon this revelation has come down through me, Mānī, the messenger of God of Truth to Babylonia....'

Christian authors claim that Mānī had taken over his basic ideas from the teaching of Scythianus, who lived 'in the times of the Apostles' (Cf. *Acta Archelai*). Another Babylonian disciple of Scythianus, Teribinthus, before Mānī, has assumed the name of Buddha.

In Persian literature of the Sassanid period several books were written against the so called 'Zoroastrian Manichaeism'. In Mohammedan literature evidence on a deep influence of Manichaeian ideas can be found since the ninth century.

The followers of Mānī considered themselves Zoroastrians in the Middle East, Christians in the West, and Buddhist in the Asian East.

As far as the oldest Manichaeian literature has been discovered until now, we do not find any mention of Jainism. In general, Indian religions were practically not in the spotlight of Mānī's interest, though he had studied them for some time in Asia. There he selected Buddhism as the *ahimsā* religion which in his time was predominant in India and in other Asian countries he visited. Just for this reason it seems to me that it might be most interesting to compare the main tenets of his own synthesis of world religions with their possible explicit and implicit wider sources,

As astonishing as it may seem at the first glance, my impression is again that the closest parallel could be found in Jainism, primarily when we consider the aspects of the Manichaeian ethical rigorism which reaches far beyond the cosmologic aspect. This latter has obviously been taken over from the Zoroastrian source directly; but it happens to be identical in its main lines with the Jain cosmology, much more than with the Buddhist. Looking for a historical explanation of this fact, we should penetrate much deeper into the history of common trends of Indo-Iranian religions.

In this connexion it is well known that Buddhism started as another offshoot of the reform of the older Jainism performed by Mahāvīra within the limits of the orthodox tradition. As an expression of rebellion against a too heavy tradition, particularly concerning the penetration of *lokāyata* teachings—physics, astronomy, and general cosmology—(in the early Upaniṣadic literature, in *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* we can follow the same trend and the same kind of confrontation), Buddhism was more radical and therefore philosophically more original even in the life time of the Buddha himself. From this historical background it may appear better understandable why the main effort and the greatest achievement of the Buddha was in substituting the ontological basis of such notions as *dharma*, *karma*, and even *puṭgala* and *ātman* by purely epistemologic normative ideas of law. This basic philosophical achievement of the Buddha can be appreciated properly much better from the more adequate comparison with Jainism than from the comparison with the wider Upaniṣadic thought which, nevertheless, seems to me to be also clear enough, in this particular respect. Yet, these essential problems could be mentioned here only in the form of a digression. The basic tendency of both Mahāvīra's and Buddha's reforms was

to free the humanistic essence of the teaching which was their common heritage from the millenary outgrowth of a *lokāyatika* coating which covered the pure elements of the soul struggling eternally for liberation. As a symptom I wish to mention one issue only on which Buddhism differs in this respect from Jainism: the importance attributed to astrology which was not eliminated, or remained unnoticed by Mahāvira. Zarathustra who appeared in the same epoch of world history was another reformer of basic traditions, yet under different social circumstances.

At the end I wish to stress that, in the West, the last offshoot of Manichaeism, which happened to appear just in my country in the form of the Bogumil religion, was at the same time the strongest affirmation of the *ahimsā* religion on social and political level in world history. To show this in brief, it may be sufficient here to single out a few basic tenets of that religion concerning *ahimsā* in religious and social practice of the Bogumils. I must assume that the corresponding principles of the authentic Jain religion in India will appear evident to you.

St. Augustine stresses in his treatise '*De duabus animabus*' that with the Manichaeans 'man is represented as having two souls, one good and the other evil'. (Remember the Jain teaching on *saṃsāri-jīva* and *siddha jīva*.)

Referring to a wider cosmologic background of this theory, Muhammad ibn Ishāq (tenth century) in his *Fihrist* points out that 'the distinction which we are accustomed to make between natural and spiritual phenomena does not exist in Manichaeism, since it represents all the processes of nature as part of a spiritual contest'. (Let us remember the Jain theories on substance as *dravya*, on matter as *puṣṭhala* and *kārmaṇa-śarira*, on *nigodas* or atomic souls-groups which are *acetana*, the distinction of

*sthāvara* [immobile material] and *trasa* [sense] *jīvas* as the basic elements of the Jain *bhedābheda* system.)

In the *Fihrist* there follows the description of the typically Gnostic conception of 'the visible universe which, in fact, is a vast and complicated machine devised by God for the purpose of enabling the elements of light to effect their escape'. Here no further reference to Jain scriptures is needed.

It is interesting to quote, as the last and most important comparative element, the reference in the *Fihrist* concerning the Manichaean ethics, where the followers of this religion are classified in two groups: the Elect and the Hearers. 'The Elect abstain from both meat and wine; they are also forbidden to pluck fruit or vegetables, so that the food on which they subsist has to be supplied by Hearers.'

In an 'Antiheretic Discourse' against the Balkanian Bogumils, an orthodox Christian prelate, the Presbyter Cosma, singles out among their essential characteristics their teaching 'that God has not created the heaven and the earth nor any visible thing', but that they consider 'the Devil to be the creator and the architect of worldly things, and they say that in complying with his command men will marry and eat meat and drink wine. ... They consider themselves to be the inhabitants of heaven, while those who marry and live a worldly life are called servants of the Devil'.

This was the religion which penetrated in the tenth century from the East to Balkanian countries in the sphere of the Byzantine Empire. At that time the process of political disintegration had already started in the Eastern Empire. The heresy appeared first and became the strongest in the religious movement of the priest Bogumil, in Bulgaria, at the time when a local ruler, Simeon, achieved full independence from Byzantium; proclaimed himself Emperor, established a



national church independent from Constantinople, and was about to extend his power on the surrounding regions. His Empire was reconquered by Byzantium after Simeon's death. However, the presence of a strong religious movement of conscientious objectors, preaching vegetarianism and asceticism and refusing to take arms, had to be brutally stamped out immediately as it coincided with the arising of a new barbaric Empire. The same was the policy of Alexius Comnenus (twelfth century) who succeeded in crushing the Bulgarian danger, but had at the same time to face the same kind of danger from the side of the rebellious Serbian prince Nemanja, who finally achieved the independence of his national state which rapidly became prosperous and developed within a few centuries into another mighty Empire, recognized even by the Holy Roman Empire and the Pope in the West. The might of the Serbian Empire could be shattered and eventually crushed only by Turkish invasions, at the end of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century.

Under Simeon's pressure the Bogumils had escaped from Bulgaria to Serbia, but from there they were banished further to the West of the Balkan Peninsula, to Bosnia (central part of actual Yugoslavia). There they succeeded in settling down for a longer period and to acquire considerable influence also in state affairs. Bosnia developed as an independent state in late Middle Ages at the time of Serbian defeat under the progressing Turkish pressure. This last independent kingdom in the Balkans tried for some time to preserve its freedom through clever and more subtle political tactics whereby the non-violence principle of the Bogumil *ahimsā* religion could play a favourable role to some extent. Yet, it was the Pope who under the pretext to crush the heretics sent armies to Bosnia. Eventually, the country yielded to the Turks in 1463.

It is understandable that in such conditions Bogumils preferred to accept Islam rather than revert to Roman Catholicism. Several names of these converts to Islam and of their descendants are still well known in our history. Under those circumstances it is also understandable that the new Islamic culture in that country had established almost immediately closer contacts with the Persian spiritual and cultural movements in the Islamic world. Sūfī mysticism and Iranian metaphysics in Islamic version flourished in Yugoslav regions under Turkish domination since the sixteenth century. Thus several Yugoslav names became famous in the history of Arabic, Turkish, and Persian literatures of those times. Some more information on this specific subject is contained in my contribution to the centenary volume 'Vivekananda: The Cosmic Conscience' (1963), under the title: 'Oriental Influences and the Interest for India in Yugoslav Literature and Philosophy'. Among recent studies on Neo-Manichaeism I wish to point out the name of the book by Dmitri Obolensky, *The Bogumils, a study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism*, Cambridge, 1948.

#### CONCLUSION

In concluding this survey I feel I should take a final *anekānta-vāda* critical view of my own approach to the subject. My intention was to give an estimate of arguments speaking in favour of a historical hypothesis. Among questions that remain open and beyond the theme delimited by the title of this lecture, the most important seems to be: How to explain historical or doxographic coincidences for which we cannot trace direct evidence? This would refer mainly to the later analogies with Manichaeism. It appears obvious that the Bogumil Neo-Manichaeism in spite of its closest historical connexions with the Iranian Mazdaism cannot at all be reduced, as such a prominent *ahimsā* religion, either to

the classical Zoroastrianism or to an aspect of modern Parsism.

I wish to single out two facts, or at least two claims stressed by the representatives of the Jain thesis, claims which in my view deserve at least to be taken into very careful consideration:

1. In the history of religions Jainism is *the ahimsā religion par excellence* among all others and can always be safely taken as a comparative criterion to that effect.

2. It claims to be oldest living religion,

at least within the scope of the higher type of human civilization which is our common and direct heritage. This type of religion is usually termed the 'religion of salvation'.

From the viewpoint of comparative religion and philosophy of culture, it is therefore a legitimate request that the relation of all other, obviously later and less exclusively *ahimsā*, religions to the prototype whose oldest traces appear to be best preserved in Jainism should be investigated more deeply (by each of them).

## SRI AUROBINDO AND INDIAN AESTHETICS

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**N**EARLY fifty years from now talking about the uncritical critics of Indian art, or Indian values in art, Sri Aurobindo had written:

‘Everyone who has at all the Indian spirit and feeling, can at least give some account of the main, the central things which constitute for him the appeal of Indian painting, sculpture and architecture. This is all that I shall attempt for it will be in itself the best defence and justification of Indian culture on its side of aesthetic significance.’

As part of this modest attempt to ‘give some account of the main, the central things’ he wrote two essays, ‘The National Value of Art’ and ‘The Significance of Indian Art’. They are both brief but characteristic and contain the pith of his argument. They will interest and profit anyone who cares for the higher values of life. But here we shall not speak of these, of his work as expositor.

### SRI AUROBINDO’S APPROACH

Sri Aurobindo has done something even more important, watered the roots, made the archetypal awareness live again. Along with his other creative works, in his later poetry especially, he has re-affirmed the basic Indian or spiritual tradition in

aesthetics, and renewed that possibility once again. Nothing short of bringing back the new-old way of beholding, of a subjective interpretation of the self and the world, it is to this *creative* aspect of his works, a poetic, experiential re-statement of the ancient (or is it perennial?) experience, the Great Tradition, that I wish to draw your attention. I shall, therefore, pass over other attempts at interpreting Indian aesthetic attitude and achievement. These are, no doubt, valid and include the work of eminent men like Ananda Coomaraswamy, Abanindranath, and Rabindranath. And how can we forget such sympathetic outsiders as Fergusson, Havell, Zimmer, Codrington, Rowlands, and others? There are also the scholarly, sometimes comparative, studies of the texts and principles of aesthetics, of different ages and schools, by Kane, De, Hiriyanna, Dasgupta, Raghavan, Pandey, Chaudhury, Krishnamoorthy, and others. Much as we owe to these histories, translations, explications, they operate, as a rule, on the circumference rather than at the centre. What the critics write, or wrangle, about and about, this poetry of his *is*, the thing-in-itself.

Only an artist-thinker, with a similar outlook, intensity and poised serenity, the ‘calm strength’ of the old Masters which

he valued so much, could do that. This is where Sri Aurobindo, mystic and poet, *ṛṣi*, triumphs over others. He breathes life into dogmatics. As Claudel had said of Rimbaud he becomes almost an argument for a return to faith. In Sri Aurobindo's it is not merely a return but a prelude to going forward, an invitation to fresh embodiment. He makes it new. Sri Aurobindo's rootedness does not make a fetish of the forms of the past. That way he is not a conservative but a *sanātana*. What would else have remained bloodless categories, dry-as-dust exposition, or exercise in nostalgia, in his hands they become alive and reveal 'the rhythmic sense of hidden things'. This the modern world has all but lost. It is precisely here that Sri Aurobindo's significance stands out so clearly, as a giver of life. In these poems he does not so much theorize as actualize, 'realize'. He communicates a 'state of consciousness in its concrete actuality', and the state of consciousness is not confined to any one sect or tradition or aspect. It is large enough to contain all variations, the entire spectrum. Integral and inclusive, its value to the future, to the enlarging experience of the race is, or could be, immense.

#### THE ROLE OF BEAUTY IN INDIAN AESTHETICS

Aesthetics, the aesthetics of creative harmony, is of the essence of the Indian as of the Aurobindean world-view or life-world, *Lebenswelt*. Even his ideal of a spiritual life and society reveals aesthetic overtones. One is not surprised to find him saying towards the end of *The Life Divine*: 'The delight of the Spirit is ever new, the forms of beauty it takes innumerable, its godhead ever young and the taste of delight, *rasa*, of the Infinite eternal and inexhaustible. The gnostic manifestation of life would be more full and fruitful and its interest more vivid than the creative interest of the Ignorance, it would be a greater and

happier, constant miracle.' In this absolute, aesthetic, Aurobindean view:

Beauty is his footprint showing us where  
he has passed....

A communion of spiritual entities,  
A genius of creative immanence  
Makes all creation deeply intimate:  
A fourth dimension of aesthetic sense  
Where all is in ourselves, ourselves in all,  
To the cosmic wideness re-aligns our soul.

In this view, that is, in terms of this experience, beauty is a key to the supreme, a communion of 'moved identity': *Where all is in ourselves, ourselves in all*. It reveals the aesthetic roots of our Being, justifies the world as an aesthetic experience. It is the highest reward, the equation of *Brahma-svāda* and *Rasasvāda*. Behind the multiple, mutable forms that arise only to vanish, the sometimes beautiful objects there stands a changeless Essence, an Essence that can be nothing other than the Bliss of Self. Out of this has come all creation and towards it all things move, the Super-Nature behind the Nature we see. In the poet's own expressive words:

All Nature is taught in radiant ways to  
move,

All beings are in myself embraced.  
O fiery boundless heart of joy and love,  
How art thou beating in a mortal's heart!  
It is Thy rapture flaming through my  
nerves

And all my cells and atoms thrill with  
Thee;

My body Thy vessel is and only serves  
As a living wine-cup of Thy ecstasy.  
I am a centre of Thy golden light  
And I its vast and vague circumference,  
Thou art my soul great, luminous and  
white,

And Thine my mind and will and glowing  
sense.

Thy spirit's infinite breath I feel in mine;

My life is a throb of Thy infinity.

Ancient Indian wisdom, with its objective correlative, aesthetics, was based on nothing so much as the deathless doctrine or seed-idea of *Ānanda*, or the principle of Bliss or Delight as the matrix of manifestation. In the well-known words of the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*:

*Ānandādhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante;*

*Ānandena jātāni jīvanti;*

*Ānandaṁ prayantyabhisamvīśantī—*

From Delight all things are born, by Delight they exist and grow, to Delight they return. Again:

*Yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha;*

*Ānandaṁ Brahmaṇo vidvān—*

The delight of the Eternal from which words turn away without attaining and the mind also returns baffled, who knows the delight of the Eternal? The answer is, the poets and mystics do, as much as is possible. Without them we would have no reason to speak or suspect of these things, the aesthetics of the spirit. In *Bliss of Brahman* we hear:

I have become a foam-white sea of bliss,

I am a curling wave of God's delight,

A shameless flow of passionate light,

A whirlpool of the streams of Paradise.

I am a cup of His felicities,

A thunderbolt of His golden ecstasy's height,

A fire of joy upon creation's height,

I am His rapture's wonderful abyss.

I am drunken with the glory of the Lord,

I am vanquished by the beauty of the Unborn;

I have looked, alive, upon the Eternal's face.

My mind is cloven by His radiant sword.

My heart by His beatific touch is torn;

My life is a meteor-dust of His flaming grace.

And 'since infinite Beauty seeks for form',

the world is not wished away as an unreality or illusion. On the contrary, we learn the secret of earthly perfection:

To seize the Absolute in shapes that pass,  
To feel the Eternal's touch in time-made things,

That is the law of all perfection here.

#### ARTS AS THE LINK

In the inner view of things the arts become a link between the visible and the invisible, between the real and the apparent. Why should this be so? One reason for this is because they are related to a theory of participation and potentiality. That is, all earthly beauty reveals itself as beauty by participation—in His essence. In the *Kaṭha* and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads* we hear:

*Tameva bhāntamanubhāti sarvaṁ tasya*

*bhāsā sarvavidam vibhāti—*

All that shines here is but the shadow of His shining, all this universe is effulgent with His light. Or, in the simpler language of our poet: *The physical is the shadow of the psychic*. More explicitly, 'For the Indian mind form does not exist except as a creation of the spirit'. The thought is not exclusively Indian, it is echoed in Plato and Plotinus, in nearly all mystical literature. Sri Aurobindo's sonnet, 'The Divine Hearing', belongs to that living tradition, the language of heightened awareness, when

All sounds, all voices have become Thy voice:

Music and thunder, and the cry of birds,  
Life's bubble of her sorrows and joys,

Cadence of human speech and  
murmured sound.

The laughter of the sea's enormous mirth,  
The winged plane-purring through the  
conquered air,

The auto's trumpet-song of speed to earth,  
The machine's reluctant drone, the  
siren's blare

Blowing over the windy horn of space  
 A call of distance and of mystery  
 Memories of sun-bright lands and ocean-  
 ways,—  
 All now are wonder-tones and themes of  
 Thee.  
 A secret harmony steals through the blind  
 heart  
 And all grows beautiful because Thou art.  
 The companion poem, *Divine Sight*, con-  
 firms the same attitude and experience:  
 Each sight is now immortal with Thy  
 bliss:  
 My soul through the rapt eyes has come  
 to see,  
 A veil is rent and they no more can miss  
 The miracle of thy world-epiphany.  
 Into an ecstasy of vision caught  
 Each natural object is of Thee a part,  
 A rapture-symbol from Thy substance  
 wrought,  
 A poem shaped in beauty's living heart.  
 A master-worker of colour and design,  
 A mighty sweetness borne on grandiose  
 wings;  
 A burdened wonder of significant line  
 Reveals itself in even commonest things.  
 All forms are Thy dream-dialect of  
 delight,  
 O Absolute, O vivid Infinite.

#### INDIAN ICONOGRAPHY

From this 'ecstasy of vision' to Indian iconography, to those ageless forms of cosmic powers and consciousness, is but a step. According to the Indian philosophy of worship, with which is closely allied the origin of art, the *iṣṭa devatā* or chosen form of deity is but one's own ideal self, *svarūpa*. Through the appropriate ritual or contemplation, *dhyāna*, and worship, *pūjā*, the devotee is enjoined to be at-one or identified with it. Essentially, it is the recovery of a lost identity: *Thou art That*. The image he makes or worships is at once lamp and mirror. The embodiment is a

chance for the embodied, not to be pooh-poohed, as is sometimes done by the extreme, intolerant ascetic schools. That would be poor psychology indeed. The emphasis on contemplation, *dhyāna*, preceding creation is part of the traditional theory. There are numerous texts in support. But the poet's evidence, the artist's natural concentration of energy before a work of art can actualize is more telling. Listen to *The Stone Goddess*:

In a town of gods, housed in a little  
 shrine,  
 From sculptured limbs the Godhead  
 looked at me,—  
 A living presence, deathless and divine,  
 A form that harboured divinity.  
 The great World-Mother and her mighty  
 will  
 Inhabited the earth's abysmal sleep,  
 Voiceless, omnipotent, inscrutable,  
 Mute in the desert and the sky and deep.  
 Now veiled with mind she dwells and  
 speaks no word,  
 Voiceless, inscrutable, omniscient,  
 Hiding until our soul has seen, has heard  
 The secret of her strange embodiment.  
 One in the worshipper and the immobile  
 shape,  
 A beauty and mystery flesh or stone can  
 drape.

To understand this 'beauty and mystery' one must know something of the cosmic self or consciousness. In *The Indwelling Universal* we are told: *All eyes that look on me are my sole eyes. . . . The one heart that beats within all breasts is mine*. But even here there are distinctions to make, depths within depths. The cosmic self or consciousness would seem to imply, if not depend on, the doctrine of the two souls or selves in man: *There are two beings in my single self*. There is still another. For, in its turn, it is supported by a total, moveless Calm and, on the peaks, by the Transcendence itself: *My vast transcendence holds the*

*cosmic whirl*. In *Cosmic Consciousness* the poet tells us:

I have learned a close identity with all,  
Yet am by nothing bound that I become.

A 'deep spiritual calm upholds the mystery of this Passion-play' or *līlā*:

I housed within my breast the life of things,  
All hearts athrob in the world felt as mine;

I shared the joy that in creation sings  
And drank its sorrows like a poignant wine.

I have felt the anger in another's breast,  
All passions poured through my world-self their waves;

One love I shared in a million bosoms expressed.

I am the beast man slays, the bird he saves.

I spread life's burning wings of rapture and pain;

Black fire and gold fire strove towards one bliss;

I rose by them towards a supernal plane  
Of power and love and deathless ecstasies.

A deep spiritual calm no touch can sway  
Upholds the mystery of this Passion-play.

#### MUKTI: THE FINAL END OF LIFE

It is the 'secret touch' of the Ground Above that explains how *I have become what before Time I was*. And the Voice that now speaks is not that of the empirical ego but a new centre of personality, one-with-all and with the Ground. It is during such hours or moments of encounter with Being that *Watched by the inner Witness' moveless peace* are revealed:

The heart of a world in which all hearts are one,

A silence on the mountains of delight.

This heart of a world is close to being

world-free, to that sense of release or liberation, *mukti*, which the Indian mind has always believed to be the Final End of life. In the older view art has, not unnaturally, been held to be conducive to freedom or salvation, *Muktipradāyī*. That it means or leads to a release from the ego and its restricting categories is a matter of immediate and universal experience. The release does not come by any moral *diktat* or 'criticism of life' but by earned vision, by, to use Eliot's phrase, a raid on the absolute. On the borders of that Ineffable or *anirvacaniya*, freedom becomes the food of the free, the hero's meed:

My mind, my soul grew larger than all  
Space;

Time founders in that vastness glad and nude:

The body fades, an outline, a dim trace,  
A memory in the spirit's solitude.

This universe is a vanishing circumstance

In the glory of a white infinity,  
Beautiful and bare for the Immortal's dance,

House-room for my immense felicity.

In the thrilled happy giant void within

Though lost in light and passion  
drowned in bliss,

Changing into a stillness hyaline,

Obeys the edict of the Eternal's peace.

Life's now the Ineffable's dominion;

Nature is ended and the spirit alone.

But this living on heights does not come easily and is hardly to be sustained for long. To the majority the 'immense felicity' declares itself more often as an agony or a longing for the buried self—that Arnold knew so well—and which Sri Aurobindo has expressed thus:

A sacred yearning lingers in its trace,  
The worship of a Presence and a Power,  
Too perfect to be held by death-bound hearts,

The prescience of a marvellous birth to  
come.

Only a little the God-light can stay:  
Spiritual beauty illumining human sight  
Lines with its passion and mystery Matter's  
mask

And squanders eternity in a beat of Time.

Thus arises the hope to *replace by realized dreams the memory of her lost memory* (like) *Temples hewn as if by exiled gods...* To imitate their lost eternity. All man's offerings are at the altar of that temple that is for ever building. To a deeper view the body itself is that temple and for such as realize that the need for fixed rituals is over. This is another freedom or inner fullness offered by art at its highest. And those who realize this freedom and fullness do not, necessarily, dissolve or break away. Rather they unite the opposites, the life of action and the inner life come together, a seamless reality:

On meditating peaks

Where life and being are a sacrament  
Offered to the Reality beyond. ...

The body burns with Thy rapture's  
sacred fire,

Pure, passionate, holy, virgin of desire.

In that 'sacred fire' 'ever-burning Revelation's fire', all dross is destroyed. Every act and movement is lighted up and, as we have said earlier, the need for external worship or *bāhyapūjā* is no longer binding. An art of open and universal worship, sacramental attitude is among the promises of the growing psychic or aesthetic life. For *In my heart's chamber lives the un-worshipped God*. Now each finite thing one sees is but a facade or mask of the reality beyond. As the scales fall there comes to view 'the divinity of a symbol universe', 'those yet unimagined harmonies... The fate and privilege of unborn men'. Before the awakened eyes pass 'proud deities and

magnificent fates', 'Faces and hands come near from Paradise':

What shone thus far above is here in us;  
Bliss unattained our future's birthright is;  
Beauty of our dim soul is amorous;  
We are the heirs of infinite wideness.

This 'infinite wideness' or *citta vistāra* is the essential gift of the aesthetic factor. It is also the essence of all truly human culture. Not only does beauty, traced to its original home, give a non-temporal quality to our experience, but it also reconciles opposites. It alone can evaporate disagreeables, as Coleridge said of the poetic imagination. There is nothing, however dreadful or contrary, that art cannot change into its own and use as a medium for meaningful experience. A marriage of opposites is always a mark of maturity, the creative formula. It is a test of great art that it alone can 'reconcile the Eternal with the Abyss'. For reconciliation and not escape or palliation is the answer, at least not the Aurobindean answer, to the Riddle of the World.

#### CONCLUSION

To sum up: art and beauty, as Indian culture and Sri Aurobindo see these things, cure us of the chaos and insignificance of our lives. They are perhaps our only guarantee of meaning and satisfaction (*rasena triptah*). Angels of the upward way, they ease our ascent to awareness, or self-discovery, and ultimately bring us close to the bliss of pure Being, 'the one Being's sole immobile Bliss'. In a word, the waking bliss of self-existence. A purifying agent, of conscious evolution, art helps us to distinguish the laws of our being from biological and economic accidents and determinisms. Its real task is to point to an intenser form and 'clarity of consciousness', *ātmasaṃskṛti*. Thus understood, art is an aid towards the transvaluation of values, perhaps our true history:



A strange and grandiose symbol was his  
 birth  
 And immortality and spirit-room  
 And pure perfection and a shadowless bliss  
 Are this afflicted creature's mighty fate.

Thanks to the logic and language of our  
 growing destiny the material sky, field of  
 our troubled and mundane existence, is lit  
 up with some word, hue, glory or passion  
 from here or elsewhere. Then:

In an outbreak of the might of secret  
 Spirit,  
 In Life and Matter's answer of delight,  
 Some face of deathless beauty could be  
 caught

That gave immortality to a moment's joy,  
 Some word that could incarnate highest  
 Truth

Leaped out from some chance tension of  
 the soul,

Some hue of the Absolute could fall on life,  
 Some glory of knowledge and intuitive  
 Light,

Some passion of the rapturous heart of  
 Love.

Yet, it is remarkable, the great masters,  
 old and new, speak but little of rules and  
 techniques which seem to be all the cry  
 today. Thus, if Sri Aurobindo refers but  
 rarely to canons of art, or *śilpa śāstras*,  
 like *Manasara*, *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, *Viṣṇu-*  
*dharmottaram* and the like, it is not because  
 he is unaware of their historical or technical  
 importance but because he does not wish  
 to be bound by the letter of the law. He  
 does not legislate beauty's form or manner  
 of embodiment, he rather leaves the creative  
 mystery a mystery, a dim analogue of the  
 Creator's mind:

A mystery's process is the universe. . .  
 Into its form the Child is ever born  
 Who lives for ever in the vasts of God, . . .  
 Mirrored in the Inconscient's boundless  
 sleep,  
 Creation's search for self began to stir.

A spirit dreamed in the crude cosmic whirl,  
 Mind flowed unknowing in the sap of life  
 And Matter's breast suckled the divine

Idea.

A miracle of the Absolute was born,  
 Infinity put on a finite soul,  
 All ocean lived within a wandering drop,  
 A time-made body housed the illimitable,  
 To live this mystery out our souls came.

In the unfinished task, of making whole  
 the fragment-being that we are, art and  
 beauty are part of the mystery of inner  
 life, 'a self-luminous mystery' such as even  
 our outer life and world might become one  
 day:

A splendour of self-creation from the peaks,  
 A transfiguration in the mystic depths,  
 A happier cosmic working could begin  
 And fashion the world-shape in him anew.

All told, there have been few like Sri  
 Aurobindo who, both by example and  
 precept, has brought home to us the rationale  
 of what he himself calls universal aesthetics,  
 its principle, process and purpose, its poetry  
 no less than its philosophy. Here, indeed,  
 is the 'best defence and justification of  
 Indian culture on its side of aesthetic  
 significance', by 'establishing the aesthetic  
 principle right at the head of the ontological  
 series, the cosmic process' (Krishna Caitanya,  
*Sanskrit Poetics*). One only wishes it could  
 be embodied anew, on all levels of being  
 and society. That minor cavil apart, it is  
 of the essence of aesthetic experience to be  
 shared. Thanks to our poet, we too, as  
*sahydayas*, may look into the life of forms  
 and things, the creative moods of the  
 Infinite:

One who has made in sport the suns and  
 seas

Mirrors in our being His immense caprice.

But in the Aurobindean view man is not  
 only a mirror of the cosmos, but also 'a  
 call that grows, His soul the dim bed of

God's flaming rose'. The call is the call of the self within, the creative *daemon*, and the rose is the rose of God, 'great wisdom-bloom on the summits of being':

Rose of God, great wisdom-bloom on the  
summits of being,

Rose of Light, immaculate core of the  
ultimate seeing!

Live in the mind of our earthhood; O  
golden Mystery, flower,

Sun on the head of the Timeless, guest of  
the marvellous Hour.

Let us learn this Joyful Wisdom and help ourselves and 'beauty conquer the resisting world'. Perhaps this is what we are waiting for, the transformation of nature in 'a perfect harmony combining in itself the integral development of our many-sided

potentialities'. In our beginning is our end. In the words of Krishna Chaitanya, 'The terminal of evolution is the same state of poetic relishing that initiated it'. Beauty, angel of surplus (the phrase is Tagore's), makes possible a more than biological adjustment, adds a new dimension to our life. Without art man would be 'only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects on a speck of surface mud and water which has managed to form itself amid the appalling immensities of the physical universe'. It is the lasting value of Sri Aurobindo and of Indian aesthetics that it proposes a different and deeper reading of the human situation, saves us from the blight of disharmony, uglification, and the general insignificance that is the lot of man today.

## PHILOSOPHY, IN GRECO-ROMAN CULTURE

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MAN may be nature's unnatural, but his philosophy reflects his natural disposition. He cannot help trying to understand the world he lives in. Cosmology embodies man's attempt to understand his world as a whole. But in the light of new experiences he is obliged to modify his cosmology. It is no easy task to explain or understand the whole world in terms of a single principle. The earliest Greek thinkers, Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes, were engaged in this difficult task. They held in common, first that there must be some original entity from which all other things are derived, and second that this entity is material. They differed on the nature of the original matters. Thales thought it is water. Anaximander named it *apeiron* (infinite). And Anaximenes held that air is the origin of all things.

Aristotle thought that the main question which the Milesians tried to answer is: 'What is the world made of?' But it seems that they were concerned also with the question: 'How did the world and the objects in it come into being?' The Milesians were not the only persons to raise these questions. Their originality lies in trying to answer these questions in an unmystical way without postulating some anthropomorphic deities.

For Heraclitus fire was the material cause of things. And he is mainly concerned with the creation and destruction of the things within the cosmos. According to him,

nothing is, everything flows. But all changes, mental and material, social and natural, are governed by what he calls *logos* (or law). The doctrine of change was known even before Heraclitus. The new thing that he introduced in philosophy is this: the aim of knowledge is wisdom and moderation—the mean between the extremes. He is wise who 'breathes in the *logos*' and has grasped the laws of strife and tension, or, in modern term, unity of the opposites.

### PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING IN GREECE

Philosophical thinking developed at an early date in the Greek colonies of southern Italy. Pythagoras of Samos settled in the Greek colony of Croton in southern Italy. Besides wisdom, Pythagoras counted personal salvation as an object of philosophy. The Pythagoreans formed a religious brotherhood. Their religious interest was something new in the secular tradition of Ionian cosmology. They developed a new cosmology in which 'numbers' and certain numerical ideas were given a central position. In Pythagorean thought, gods, numbers and humans are musically harmonized. Pythagoras believed in the transmigration of souls and divine character of the human soul. The divinity of human soul was said to consist in its ability to copy the order of the *Kosmos*. The chief elements of order are to be found in (1) numbers and (2) the ten principles of opposites: Limit and unlimited, odd and even, one and plurality,

good and bad, etc. These contraries are said to be the *principles* of things and numbers as element of things. Of the Pythagorean cosmology two ideas are noteworthy: (a) the earth is not the centre of the universe; and (b) the motion of the celestial bodies produces a sort of musical harmony. Similar ideas about the intimate relation between musical sounds and cosmic order were prevalent in Babylon, India, and China.

The philosophy of the Eleatic School, closely associated with the names of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Zeno, emphasized two ideas: (1) change is unreal; and (2) Reality is one. Xenophanes (a) rejected Homeric anthropomorphism and polytheism; and (b) expressed doubt about the very possibility of knowledge. He poked fun at the Ethiopian gods who looked like the Ethiopians and the Thracian ones who resemble the Thracians. He believed in one god who is not like any mortal being and can regulate everything by his thought. Knowledge of mortal beings, he thought, is confined to appearances only. Parmenides rules out the possibility of knowledge of the 'things' which do not exist. And then he defines existence in terms of permanence or imperishability. True knowledge is then knowledge of only what is permanently existent. This suggests, by implication, a definition of knowledge itself. It is not easy to interpret the aphoristic arguments of Parmenides. Zeno, a disciple of Parmenides, developed the ideas of the latter in some well-known paradoxes—*reductio* arguments. He tried to show the impossibility of motion and the impossibility of plurality. Zeno called his arguments 'attacks'—the targets of his 'attacks' were Pythagoras and Heraclitus.

#### EMPEDOCLES AND ANAXAGORAS

Empedocles (495-435 B.C.) tried to harmonize the ideas of Heraclitus and Par-

menides of change and permanence. He agreed with Heraclitus that there is no permanent being and also endorsed the parmenidean view that there is no absolute becoming. He thought that there are some eternal basic elements, viz. fire, air, water, and earth, whose combination and dissolution (i.e. creation and destruction) take place *sub specie temporis*. Above the realm of matter Empedocles thought that there is a spiritual realm. Empedocles shared the Orphic-Pythagorean doctrine of transmigration. Anaxagoras (500-428 B.C.) also developed a compromise system, but in his thought reason is more pronounced than mysticism. He accepted the Empedoclean idea that change is material and permanence spiritual, and was thrown into old Empedoclean dualism. But Anaxagoras was not impressed by half material and half mythical explanation of motion in terms of Love and Hate and developed his idea of *Nous*, a rational all-powerful being. *Nous* is a spiritual principle and he seems to suggest that it exists in every atomic particle, which cannot be, therefore, purely material.

#### LEUCIPPUS AND DEMOCRITUS

Leucippus, who is often regarded as the founder of European atomism, identified 'being' with atoms and 'non-being' with void. *Atomos*, in Greek, means 'indivisible'. The atoms of Leucippus were indivisible but not uniform and invisibly minute. These were indestructible. Destruction or creation of an object meant for Leucippus only the coming together or going apart of its constituent atoms in void. Democritus (460-371 B.C.) shared most of the basic ideas of Leucippus which bear clear imprint of Parmenides. According to him, atom ('being') and void ('non-being') are metaphysical principles of equal importance. Atoms were believed to be completely homogeneous in substance and different only in respect of their shape and size. All qualities of objects

depend upon the shape, size, position, and arrangement of their constituent atoms. Democritus vaguely anticipated Locke when he asserted that there are certain qualities as weight, density, and hardness which belong to objects themselves, and there are other sense-qualities which are partly influenced by the affection of the percipient. It is really interesting to note that Greek atomists, like their Indian counterparts, unaided by instruments and sometimes even observation, tried ingeniously to solve many scientific problems at the speculative level. This suggests, among other things, that the main task of the scientific philosopher is not to observe and report but to make intelligent guess-works about the objects both sensible and non-sensible to relate and explain them, and then to test or criticize these guess-works by observation and experiment and the confirmed conclusions drawn therefrom.

### THE SOPHISTS

The Sophists, who flourished after the Atomists, shared some of the broad ethical ideals of the latter. They thought philosophy is an *ars vitae*—an art of living, free from supernatural prejudices. Protagoras' (483-414 B.C.) dictum 'man is the measure of all things, of the things that are, that they are, of the things that are not, that they are not' symbolizes the anthropocentric philosophical attitude of the Sophists one may read in it an anticipation what is known now as philosophical anthropology. One may safely interpret Lycophron's view that law is a covenant in terms of contractualism. An admirer of language, philosophy may go the length of holding that Sophists were and are (a) for the supreme importance of language in philosophy and (b) for the persuasive, i.e. non-probative, role of arguments in philosophical discourse. In the absence of authoritative writings of the Sophists it is not easy to ascertain what they actually meant by the dicta often attributed to them,

However, it seems that they developed a rather radical form of relativism together with a sort of moral pragmatism. Perhaps the most lasting contribution of the Sophists to the history of philosophy is their insistence on the centrality of the concept of man in philosophy.

### SOCRATES AND PLATO

The profound human orientation of the ideas of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle was in no small measure due to the Sophists' influence on them. The historical Socrates was perhaps himself a Sophist. The philosopher Socrates was largely a creation of his pupil, Plato. Some notable historians of Greek philosophy take Socrates' death as symbolic of the end of the era of free thinking and bold speculation, and hold that subsequent philosophers were engaged in although admirable but not very intriguing task of building up systems exploiting the influential ideas of the pre-Socratics. The slogan 'Back to the Presocratics' is now very much in the air. The controversy between Kirk and Raven, on the one hand, and Popper, on the other, is very stimulating and instructive indeed. And I must not conceal my solidarity with the views of Sir Karl Popper.

Engaged in fighting relativism and scepticism of the Sophists' theory of knowledge, Socrates was in search of satisfactory (i.e. 'real' as distinguished from 'nominal') theory of definition. In fact Socrates' main concern was not so much a *theory* of definition as 'real' definitions of abstract terms like 'virtue' and 'justice'. The theory of 'real' definition presupposes human ability to grasp infallibly the 'real essence' of the definiens. Those who like Sophists reject this presupposition are somewhat sceptical about the possibility of 'real definition'.

One might say that Plato took upon himself the difficult task of defending the epistemological and ontological implications of

a comprehensive theory of definition. First, it was to be established that there *are* real essences (or Ideas or Forms) of the definiens, and, secondly, that those essences can be infallibly known. Plato held that there are immutable and eternal essences which are exemplified in sensible objects, and which enable us to *re-identify* and *re-cognize* the latter. He further held that all cognitions are in fact *re-cognition*, and this implies that traces of all original (i.e. essential) cognition exist or subsist always in the immortal human soul, which is at bottom divine. Immortality of the rational soul and immutability of the essences are, according to F. M. Cornford, the twin pillars of platonism. Plato draws distinction between knowledge and opinion. Knowledge is clear, self-evident, and permanent, and mirrors the true nature of reality. Opinion mirrors reality obscurely and temporally. Corresponding to epistemological dualism between knowledge and opinion, Plato admits an ontological dualism between the realm of universal and eternal essences and that of particular and temporal objects of sense. In fact, Plato was re-visiting the old Parmenidean problem of Non-Being and trying to solve it by according it a secondary status, the status of appearance, in his system. Like all dualists, Plato had to encounter the problem of *tertium quid* between the Eternal and the Temporal, between the Universal and the Particulars. The different solutions of the problem that he offered in different works suggest that he himself was not perhaps quite sure of the correctness of any of his views. But it seems from his main ideas that he took the sensible objects as shadowy or imperfect copies of the forms which are intelligible. His uncompromising rationalism is evident also in his anthropology, ethics, and politics. Being essentially rational, man, he held, should try to realize his essential reality (i.e. divinity) both in his personal and social life. By rational politics, he meant

the rule of aristocracy, of the guardians who are supposed to represent the most enlightened and educated section of the society. It might sound paradoxical to some people that over-rationalization of a society entails concentration of decision taking power among a few 'wise' persons and depriving the rest from political power and freedom. Plato's *Republic* was at best frozen reason.

#### ARISTOTLE

Aristotle tried to remove the miseffects of almost uncritical rationalism of Plato. He firmly believed that man can never be completely rational and that his irrationality should be duly recognized in his ethics and politics. The highest ideal of man, *Eudaimonia*, requires fulfilment of all aspects of his nature. Aristotle, however, clearly asserts that reason must be our main guide in the pursuit of virtue. The main political virtue, justice, consists in correct apportionment of rewards and punishment. Aristotle's philosophy is a philosophy of moderation of golden mean, or unity of opposites. In epistemology he stands for the mean between sense and reason. He holds that sense-experiences as such are not deceptive. Errors are said to be due to false combination of sense-experiences. Plato's realism has been considerably watered down in Aristotle's system, which not quite unjustifiably is often characterized as idealist. Aristotelean idealism was of course objective. The fundamental laws of thought, he held, express the basic character of reality. He criticized Plato's ideas that reality is essential and changeless and that particulars are unreal. According to him, particulars are also real, the universals being their generic characters. Universals were believed to be embodied in sensible and perishable particulars. What Plato calls Idea or Essence, Aristotle calls Form. In his bid to avoid Platonic dualism, Aristotle said that there is no form without matter, and no matter without form, God is the only pure Form,

the only immaterial source of activity. Investing God with activity and characterizing Him as the Form of all forms, Aristotle made a very imaginative attempt to dynamize the static platonic world. Aristotle's elaborate idealist system has influenced almost all subsequent form of idealism in the West. Aristotle is particularly remembered for his well-developed system of logic, which has enjoyed unquestionable supremacy for more than two thousand years. His syllogistic is still regarded as one of the finest system of formal logic for its rigour, elegance, and application.

With the death of Aristotle in the year 322 B.C., there came to a close the most fruitful period in the history of Western thought. The wonder that was Greece has been preserved in its history marked by interplay of ideas and action, freedom and organization. Different ideas and ideals were freely sponsored and argued, ideas of divine purpose and purposeless natural drift, ideas of fate and human pride. The Greeks searched for a life of beauty, joy, and truth. They tried to discover the laws underlying all events. They realized that the key to understand the world without lies within. 'Know thyself' was the maxim for the Greek in a knowable world. You cannot hope to know the world truly, said Socrates, unless you know your true self. For many a Greek, knowledge was the supreme virtue. They abhorred the life which is lived without examination.

#### CONCLUSION

With the downfall of Athens and gradual decay of other city states and emergence of a unitary power in Greece under the arms of Macedonia started the downfall of the wonderful career of Greek philosophy. The Romans took advantage of the political bankruptcy of the post-Macedonian period of the Hellenistic age and forced Greece by combined means of diplomacy, legions, and navy to become a protectorate of Rome

(146 B.C.). The life of philosophical contemplation was mistakenly thought to be at least partly responsible for the political eclipse of Greece. Knowledge and its pursuits were no longer ends in themselves. Philosophy now tended to become an art of successful living. New philosophers of the period of Roman ascendancy started forgetting the days when the pre-Socratic cosmologists looked at stars and seas and thought of the possible unity of all things and the rational role of man in an ordered universe. Pursuit of truth and values gave way to practical success. Epicureans engaged themselves in developing a philosophy of man exposed to uncertainties of fast changing life. They held that knowledge is value only to the extent it saves man from painful experience and the discomfort of unsure alliances. Gone were the days when Socrates boldly proclaimed that knowledge is virtue. But any discerning student of Greek philosophy will see clearly how much the Epicureans drew upon Democritus. Post-Aristotelians drew heavily upon the pre-Socratics, not to speak of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. In spite of considerable difference between the attitudes of the Platonists and the Epicureans, it must be borne in mind that the latter's emphasis on freedom from fear and superstitions bears the stamp of the former's maxim: the unexamined life is not worth living. The Roman poet, Lucretius, faithfully represented the Epicurean cosmology and ethics. It is true that human freedom is defined ultimately by atomic motion but, unlike Democritus the Epicureans believed that, the paths of atomic motion are devious and this leaves room for human enterprise. Another notable feature of Epicureanism was its attempt to explain the cosmic order without recourse to providence. The sensationalist epistemology strengthened the Epicurean positivism. And it is undeniable that some people embraced this philosophy to justify their escapism and sensualism. But the vulgarization of a creed

should not be taken as its paradigm. The academic opponent must be met at his best and certainly not at his worst.

Stoicism arose as a protest against Epicureanism. It rejected the attitude of retreat from worldly commitment. The stoics believed in the possibility of firm knowledge on the basis of sensations. The founding fathers of the Stoic school, Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus, are still remembered for their contribution to logical theory, a subject which was not seriously taken by the Epicureans. The stoics believed that logic helps us to live a moral life. The laws of nature are to be taken as our guide to moral pursuits. They held that fire, or divine reason, underlies all material things, which move mechanically. There are some 'objects' like *meaning* which, they admitted, cannot be assimilated under the laws of material things. In the first two centuries of the Christian era the stoic school flourished most. Seneca, Marcus Aurelius and Posidonius are some of the well-known stoic thinkers.

However strange it may sound, it is a fact that some mild form of scepticism was advocated by some later members of the platonic Academy. A much less mild form of scepticism was advocated by Carneades (213-129 B.C.), the founder of the later New Academy, who doubted the very possibility of knowledge. The other well-known form of scepticism is associated with the names

of Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus, particularly the latter. The sceptic found no sufficient *theoretical* reason to hold some beliefs and opinions and reject others. But in social *practice*, he found the guide to live his life. Together with the Stoics and Epicureans, the sceptics sought an *ars vitae* for attaining quietude, tranquility, and a euphoric state of mind.

Platonic theme re-appeared in the philosophy of Plotinus who believed in a transcendental world of intelligible forms and in the unity of those forms. And Plotinus further held that the perishable objects of sense exemplify those transcendental forms. The soul seeks redemption from the world of sense by approaching the transcendental unity of the forms in One.

Here we propose to bring our brief—too brief, I fear, story of Greek philosophy to an end. In spite of its brevity, I am sure the story is remarkable for its vitality and variety, which is an unmistakable proof of the free and critical mind of the Greek people. Through historical ups and downs Greek thought had no doubt been influenced, but it never lost its search for truth, justice, and beauty. It is true that the spirit of the whole career of Greek philosophy cannot be expressed in a single phrase or sentence, but perhaps it will not be very unfair to hold that Greek philosophy in general stood for a beautiful mind in a sound body attuned to the knowledge of the whole cosmos.



## BOOK REVIEW

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALL-INDIA COLLOQUIUM ON ETHICAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES AS THE BASIS OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION.** Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7. 739 pp. Rs. 15.00.

This record of the proceedings of the All-India Colloquium to which was assigned the task of devising a scheme through which national integration could be effected by using ethical and spiritual values as the base has been published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, on behalf of the Publication Committee of the Colloquium. The Colloquium was held from December 30, 1966 to January 2, 1967 at the Bhavan under the joint auspices of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, the Sanskrit Vishva Parishat, the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, and the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, all of them renowned bodies which need no introduction.

The Colloquium was inspired by the assumption that ethical and spiritual values only can provide a sure basis for a creative social order and the integrity of India.

The invitation was extended to leading persons in all sections of life and in consequence the participants represent a cross-section of the elite of our people. The subjects for discussion represented a broad spectrum and included among others the following: Ethics, Religion, Education, Science and Technology, Agriculture, Industry, Literature, Fine Arts, Women, Law, and Sanskrit. In fact it included all possible subjects that help to build up a nation.

The inclusion of such a variety of subjects would appear somewhat puzzling. The point, therefore, calls for a little clarification. It appears that the original intention of the organizers was to deal with all aspects of the national life in an integrated manner. They felt that true national integration can be achieved only by basing it on ethical and

spiritual values although economic and political values should receive their due share of attention. By national integration they meant nation building.

With this clarification it will not be difficult to appreciate that the approach is not only distinctive but sound. One needs a solid foundation to build a good superstructure. It is moral and spiritual values which alone can provide such foundation. Mere material well-being unlinked with spiritual values cannot sustain a culture. History provides many examples to show that with the erosion of moral and spiritual values nations decay. With this ambitious objective in view, the organizers spared no pains to make a success of the Colloquium as the report will bear out. Elaborate arrangements were made to bring together leading thinkers of the country so that the subjects under discussion received the best possible attention from the most competent persons to speak with authority on the different subjects. In the process a vast storehouse of wisdom has been collected together to bear upon the principal subject of discussion.

As regards its quality as a publication it is an excellent record of the proceedings competently edited. It gives a full and comprehensive account of the sessions and meetings and the proceedings of the different sections. It also supplies all supplementary information relevant to the activities of the Colloquium. The report on the proceedings of sections refers to the papers read, gives an account of their contents and also of the discussion that followed. It is a mine of information on all the various subjects of discussion and contains many fruitful ideas which can be availed of by people interested in the well-being of our land and the shaping of its future.

HIRANMAY BANERJEE

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### New Year Greetings

To all our readers and well-wishers, we extend our hearty greetings for the New Year and best wishes for their all-round prosperity and welfare. We pray for lasting peace all over the world. *Sarve janāḥ sukhino bhavantu*—May all be happy.

With the publication of this issue, the *Bulletin* enters into its nineteenth year. A New Year comes with a promise—a promise of rededication for the coming year. With a mood of quiet dedication, the Institute enters into the New Year, keeping in mind the steady progress it has registered in the year just ended in all its branches, namely, the General Library and Reading Room; the Children's Library; the Junior Library; the School of Languages; the School of Sanskrit Studies; the School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies with a general course and four special courses; the Students' Day Home; the International Scholars House; the International Guest House; the weekly scripture classes and public lectures; Children's Story Hour Sessions; Children's dramas, film shows, and music programmes, arranged on different occasions; and the Universal Temple with its Chapel and Meditation Hall.

Through the abiding interest it has created in a large cross-section of the intelligentsia of Calcutta and of the numerous visitors, Indian and foreign, it can be said that the Institute has established itself as a centre for dissemination of higher thought, and an active forum for the meeting of the East and the West.

In spite of tremendous advancement in the sphere of science and technology, our world has yet to be freed from racial, cultural, and national conflicts, which, obviously, arise from superficial differences and limited views of life. These differences can

be greatly resolved through inter-cultural understanding and emphasis on the fundamental spiritual unity of humanity.

The cultivation of such spiritual awareness by man and its channelling into the service of fellow-men are the guiding principles of the work of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement. The Institute, in all its departments, is trying to give expression to these ideals; in this it seeks the help and cooperation of all its readers and well-wishers.

### Bi-Centenary Celebration of Tyagaraja

The Institute, in collaboration with the Indian Philosophical Congress, celebrated the birth Bi-Centenary of the famous poet, Tyagaraja, in the Vivekananda Hall on Monday, 15 May 1967 at 6.30 p.m. After the invocation by Srimati Manju Gupta, Sri Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A., Principal, Barasat Government College, and Secretary, Bi-Centenary Celebration Committee, gave the inaugural address. Sri P. S. V. Iyer then spoke on 'The Life and Philosophy of Tyagaraja'. It was followed by a programme of Tyagaraja's songs presented by Kumari K. Vijayalaxmi. She was accompanied on the Violin by Master Anatha Krishnan and on the Mridangam by Sri Padmanabhan

### Birthday Celebration of Rabindranath Tagore

The birthday anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was celebrated at the Institute at a solemn function held in the Vivekananda Hall on Wednesday, 17 May 1967, at 6.30 p.m. A well-decorated portrait of the poet was placed on the dais. A symposium on 'Rabindranath as the Legend and Symbol of a Composite Indian Mind in the March of Time' was arranged for the occasion. The participants included Srimati Chitrita Devi, Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A.,

B.L., Principal Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, prasad Sen, Sri Amiya Goswami, Srimati M.A., and Professor Tripurari Chakravarti, Aruna Sen, Srimati Bani Das, Srimati Gopa Chatterjee, Srimati Binati Chatterjee, and M.A. Sri Rathin De. They were accompanied on

The function came to a close with a programme of Tagore's songs by 'Sura instruments by Bibhuti Sinha and Sri Jyoti Madhuri'. The participants were Sri Rama- Kumar Ghosh.

## JANUARY CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

### SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE ISA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th January*

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govindagopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*5th, 12th, and 19th January*

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE: THE BHAGAVAD-GITA:

Swami Ranganathananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

*13th and 20th January*

## CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

MAGIC

By

PAN

With

PRYA (The Magic Queen)

*Tuesday, 9 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## CHILDREN'S BALLET

Universal Brotherhood

(Commentary in Bengali)

By

Nrityer-Tale-Tale

*Tuesday, 16 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## FILM SHOW

Devotional Film (in Bengali)

*Tuesday, 30 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR JANUARY 1968

*Swami Vivekananda Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 6 January, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 27 January, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

*Programme:*

Music, Recitation, Story-telling, and Film Show

## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

- January 3      **Social Ideals in American Literature**  
*Speaker:* Herbert R. Brown, M.A., Ph.D.  
*Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences*  
*President:* Himansunath Ganguli, M.A., Ph.D.
- January 10      **Sarmad : A Forgotten Fakir of the Mogul Empire**  
*Speaker:* Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.  
*President:* R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.
- January 17      **Poetry and Liberation**  
*Speaker:* Sisirkumar Ghose, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* Mahimohan Bose, M.A. (Oxon)
- January 24      **Girlish Ghosh : His Mind and Art**  
*Speaker:* Amulyadhan Mukherji, M.A., P.R.S.  
*President:* Srikumar Banerjee, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.
- January 31      **The Concept of Man in Modern Thought**  
*Speaker:* Debabrata Sinha, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* Saroj Kumar Das, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

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Public Celebration of

Swami Vivekananda's Birthday

*Programme:*

Invocation

Talk on: The Life and Message of Swami Vivekananda

By

Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

Devotional Songs

By

• Satinath Mukherjee and Utpala Sen

*Saturday, 27 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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No. 2

## THE MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTMAS

SWAMI SASTRANANDA

*Swami Sastrananda is an Assistant Secretary of this Institute of Culture. He was till recently the Assistant Minister at the Hollywood Vedanta Society of Southern California, U.S.A. Following is the text of a lecture the Swami gave at the Vivekananda Hall in December last, when the Institute celebrated the Christmas.*

**F**OR Christians all over the world, the Christmas is undoubtedly the great occasion of joy, festivity, and prayer. For the non-Christians, too, it has its own social impact. For the members of the Ramakrishna Order, however,—and the admirers of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda ideal—Christmas has a special significance.

Because of its liberal, nay, universal outlook of Vedānta, Hinduism has no difficulty in recognizing Christianity also as a valid path to God, and in accepting Christ as a special Divine manifestation. The good Hindu honours Christ as one of the Divine incarnations in the line of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Buddha, and benefits by his teachings. Many, in fact, have adored Christ not only in words, but also in thought and action;

and among such Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda stand out as supreme examples.

### CHRIST AND RAMAKRISHNA

After realizing the truth of divine unity by experiencing the *nirvikalpa samādhi* of Advaita Vedānta, and exploring the various traditional spiritual paths of Hinduism, Sri Ramakrishna also experimented with the paths to God in Islam, and then in Christianity. The result was a confirmation of the truth that the same Divine is their ground and goal. Of particular interest to us this evening, however, are his experiences and visions regarding Christ and the Christian religion.

At the end of the year 1874, there grew in Ramakrishna a great desire to learn the truth of the Christian religion. He started listening to readings from the *Bible* and became fascinated by the life and teachings of Jesus. One day, while sitting in the parlour of Jadu Mallick's house, his eyes discovered a picture of the Madonna and the Child. His eyes became fixed on it, and he was overcome with an intense divine emotion. The figures of the Mother and the Child in the picture became living. Rays of light began to emanate from them and entered into his heart and soul, effecting a revolutionary change within. He entered, as it were, a new realm of ecstasy. Christian thought and Christian love appeared for three successive days to be the sole content of his mind. Christ possessed him.

On the fourth day, while strolling by the *Pañcavaṭī* (cluster of five holy trees) in the afternoon, he had a remarkable vision. A strange personage with large eyes and beautiful countenance was coming towards him. And as he came very near, a voice rang out from the depths of Ramakrishna's heart:

'Behold the Christ who poured out his heart's blood for the redemption of the world and suffered endless anguish for the love of man. It is he, the Master Yogī, in eternal union with God. It is Jesus, the embodiment of love.'

The son of the Heavenly Father embraced the son of the Divine Mother; and Christ became merged in Ramakrishna. After this experience Ramakrishna was fully convinced that the path of Christianity also leads to God, and Christ is one of the great Divine Incarnations.

#### CHRIST AND THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

After Sri Ramakrishna's passing away, his immediate disciples under the inspiring

leadership of Narendra, (later Swami Vivekananda) banded themselves into an intimate monastic group preparing for the life of renunciation. Once, on the invitation of Baburam's (later Swami Premananda) mother they all made a trip to Antpur, his native village. During this period the spark of renunciation and spirituality in them blazed up into a tremendous conflagration and all these found external expression one night as they sat beside a huge open-air fire, *dhuni*:

'It was late in the evening when the monks gathered together before the fire of huge logs. Overhead was the canopy of the Indian sky, and all around ineffable peace. The meditation lasted a long time. When a break was made, Naren began to tell the story of the Lord Jesus, beginning with the wondrous mystery of his birth through his death on to the resurrection. Through the eloquence of Narendra, the boys were admitted into that apostolic world wherein Paul had preached the gospel of the Arisen Christ and spread Christianity far and wide. Naren made his plea to them to become Christs themselves, to aid in the redemption of the world; to realise God and to deny themselves as the Lord Jesus had done. Standing there before the *Dhuni*, with the flames lighting up their countenances and with the crackling of the wood the sole disturbance of their thought, they took the vows of *Sannyāsa* before God and one another. The very air seemed to vibrate with their ecstatic fervour. Strangely, the monks discovered afterwards that it was Christmas Eve!' (*The Life of Swami Vivekananda* by His Eastern and Western Disciples, pp. 159-60)

So we see that the founding of the Ramakrishna Order had its own intimate and sentimental association with Christ. Among these first disciples, Sri Ramakrishna hinted that two of them Sashi (Swami Ramakrishnananda) and Sarat (Swami Sarada-

nanda) were the followers of Christ, in a former incarnation.

Marvellous is the love and regard which Swami Vivekananda had for Christ. This we find in his lectures and discourses, specially in 'Christ the Messenger'. During his travels in India as a wondering monk, the Swami almost invariably carried with him a copy of 'The Imitation of Christ'. Most touching, however, are the incidents of his life related to Christ.

Once, for example, when one of his Christian admirers brought to him a picture of the Sistine Madonna for blessing, Swamiji declined to do so and instead touched the feet of the Divine Child to his forehead. On another occasion, he exclaimed: 'Had I lived in Palestine in the days of Jesus of Nazareth, I would have washed his feet, not with the tears of my eyes but with the blood of my heart.'

Thus, it is seen that when we speak of Jesus Christ it is not just a mere liberal talk or intellectual lip service. In some of our centres, Christ shares the altar with Ramakrishna and Buddha, and Christmas is an important holy event celebrated even in many Indian centres. So the celebration we are now conducting this evening here, in this Institute, is part of our tradition.

#### THE SPIRIT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is truly a great occasion in many parts of the world, and specially in Europe and America. It is an occasion of merriment and festivities, when churches and homes are charmingly illuminated and gifts and greetings exchanged. Billions of greeting cards travel across the world seeking to convey messages of a merry and joyous Christmas, in a variety of ways. Among them, we come across one particular inscription: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' This is not just a popular slogan. It is actually a classic text from the *Bible* (Luke

II. 14). In fact it may be considered as the very essence of the message or the spirit of Christmas.

'Peace on Earth!': This is the eternal hope of all good people, the constant theme of religious preachers and the topic of unending discussion among politicians. None can deny that the phrase is having a great impact on all of us, be it spiritually, intellectually, or physically. We talk so much about peace, discuss and argue about it, and even fight and wage wars for its sake! Yet peace eludes. It seems as though there is all along more of fighting and wars than of peace. The cynic who would define peace as 'the interval between two wars' does not seem to be very wrong.

#### THE PARADOX OF PEACE-SEEKING

Why this paradox? The hope or wish, no doubt, is very good, but mere wishes will not suffice without practical action to implement it. Even where it is sought to be implemented, the goal sought may be right but the results achieved seem to come out contrary to expectations. One can only conclude that the means, the various courses of action undertaken, are obviously not of the right type. In the *Chândogya Upaniṣad* (I. 1.10), we find:

*Yadeva vidyayā karoti śraddhayā upanīśadā tadeva vīryavattaraṁ bhavati—*

"That which is done with proper reflection and understanding, faith and dedication becomes truly effective.' In the light of this enlightening Upaniṣadic statement, we can surely infer that in our pursuit of peace, we have obviously lacked sufficient understanding and thought, faith and dedication.

We hear too much talk of global or international peace. But most of us forget that for international peace to be possible, there must first be national peace which, in turn, demands peace in the various parts of the



country, in the various communities. This presupposes peaceful families and homes and finally peaceful persons or individuals. Sufficient attention and effort are not devoted towards building up of peaceful individuals; yet we are hoping somehow to achieve international peace. Here lies the root of the paradox. We pay little attention to units but expect a strong and durable structure to come forth. It is like trying to build a huge ice-box with red hot bricks! Such has been our approach towards building up of *durable* peace. Fortunately, at least some thinking people realize this truth and give expression to it. Thus, we find in the preamble to the UNESCO Constitution the wise observation: 'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.'

So, until such defences are suitably constructed in the minds of men, all our efforts to achieve peace on the international plane and in the political and diplomatic world, will only be short-lived. The result would only be a temporary patching-up which may give in at the slightest pretext. The inescapable truth is that durable peace becomes possible only through peaceful individuals, through men of peace. It is the making of such men of peace that is the task and goal of true religion. This is what we find also in the *Bible* as a cardinal teaching of Christ—'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.' (Matthew V. 8.)

#### LASTING PEACE: THE THEME OF RELIGIONS

Lasting peace is the theme of all religions, and each religion in its own way offers the wisdom for its attainment. Hinduism has made a marvellous contribution in this direction. Supreme peace, *parā śānti* and the means to attaining it form a major topic of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Vedānta philosophy provides both the *know-how* and *do-*

*how* of peace. Its basic principle in this regard is: 'Find the cause of the objective in the subjective!' That is, when things go wrong in the external world, do not blame others or the world. Look within yourself and find out the causes there. On that basis suitable solutions can also be worked out. The switches for operating peace are to be found inside of ourselves. 'The space of true religion awaiting exploration is not 'outer space' but the 'inner space'. So the stress is on the internal rather than the international, the inner rather than the outer. By all means go ahead with your search for peace, carry on your struggles and conduct necessary negotiations for peace—but within. The true *Geneva* for peace negotiations is inside our own hearts. That is the ideal place—the Geneva on the lake of the mind.

This 'lake of the mind' holds the key to peace and happiness. A calm and placid, steady and stable mind is the real key to peace. Without that all manipulations in the external world would be of no avail. When the mind is restless and disturbed, no peace is possible, not even good sleep. For one whose mind is distracted by one's own follies and guilt, no sleep would be possible even on the most silent nights. 'A good conscience is the best pillow' is a very meaningful statement; it is the best 'tranquilizer' too. What most of us need is more of a 'spiritual tranquilizers' rather than pharmaceutical sleeping pills.

#### THE ANATOMY OF PEACE

Using the same medical terminology, we may try to understand something of the anatomy of peace or rather of its absence. The enemy of peace, its very opposite, is war; and the essence of war is destruction, which stems from anger. So, *anger* is the real enemy of peace. Civilized people are naturally ashamed of its crude, violent outer manifestations. Many, however, are not so

much aware of its subtler, silent, and inner aspects. In our world today, anxious efforts are made to contain the 'hot war' and rightly so. But, far more attention is needed to control the inner 'cold war', waged through silent anger. This silent anger or resentment manifests in various and unexpected ways. Resentment is suppressed anger and is no less harmful than the expressed variety. The issue is very similar to that of the modern nuclear weapons—their testing and use in war. The whole world dreads a nuclear blast and the deadly 'fall-out'. But, instead of totally eschewing these lethal nuclear warheads, ingenious man has his own perverse solutions to the problem, namely, prevention of fall-out through underground testing, and development of *clean* bombs! Resentment belongs to the underground-operation or clean-bomb variety, with no external fall-out but withal no less poisonous and destructive. Only, anger is more harmful than material bombs and radiation. While the latter destroys the body or the physical basis of man, the former harms the soul itself and destroys the spiritual basis of man. So, in a practical sense, anger or resentment is the greatest enemy and destroyer of peace. If man is to survive, a suitable remedy must be urgently sought and applied.

#### FORGIVENESS—THE REMEDY

Anger and resentment are just like fire and will burn the person, irrespective of who started it. Whether the cause is just or unjust, the result is same, namely burning, suffering, and 'hell on earth'. And what is the right remedy for countering such a fire? It is precisely the waters of *kṣamā*, forgiveness and patience. Genuine forgiveness is the sure path to peace, to health, joy, and even good sleep. Without the spirit of forgiveness, resentment bursts out into the flame of external anger consuming all things in its range. The violent

action, which usually is the product of anger, automatically begets a reaction. The initial strike invites retaliation, and this vicious circle gathers strength and rolls on till a mutually satisfactory destruction is achieved.

It is sincere forgiveness that can effectively break the vicious circle, the vicious chain. He who forgives comes out truly victorious. Forgiveness has a habit of neutralizing, of sterilizing, and even 'liquidating' the enemy—not by conventional means of physical destruction, but by eliminating the 'enemy' through transforming him into a friend.

It strengthens and uplifts him that forgives, and further gives a chance for the other person to pause and recognize his own error, and reform. Shakespeare's description of mercy fully applies to forgiveness as well. 'It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes'. (*Merchant of Venice*, IV. 1.) 'Truly it is a double blessing.

Jesus Christ is fully aware of the destructive potency of anger and therefore treats it as no less dangerous and condemnable than killing. 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgement.' 'But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement.' (Matthew. V. 21-22)

#### FORGIVE—IN YOUR OWN INTEREST

Even if justice, law, and right are on our side, even if it is we who are the aggrieved party, yet it would be better for us to forgive wholeheartedly in our own interest. And this is exactly what we would find Jesus saying a little later on. So, let us not resentfully keep quiet, while, at the same time, wishing and entertaining the thought of vicarious retaliation, through punitive authority, earthly or heavenly. While apparently playing the non-violent

role, let us not entertain the wish to hurt the character or the soul of the person concerned. We must be filled with true 'charity' which is prepared to forgive wholeheartedly.

In training ourselves for the path of forgiveness, the truth of the proverb 'To err is human, to forgive divine' would be of inestimable value. Forgiveness, then, gives us a practical chance to manifest our divinity; and, according to Swami Vivekananda, what else is religion but the manifestation of the divinity in man? If, however, we refuse thus to utilize such an opportunity and rise to the divine plane, then we naturally get stuck on the human plane, unforgiving. Only human we shall continue to be; and as ordinary humans we too shall err, and err grievously sometimes. For the wrongs committed by us, nemesis would automatically follow. In the face of retribution, seeking to avoid its effects, if we *then* seek forgiveness, how do we deserve to be forgiven by fellow men? Even from God, how can we expect forgiveness, having done what we did? This is precisely the truth which Jesus gives expression to, in his admonition:

'For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.' (Matthew, VI. 14-15) Let us not forget that we are all fragile, and that we all live in glass-houses. So, let us be wise enough at least not to cast stone at others and invite retaliation which will be perhaps more disastrous to ourselves. Let us, therefore, forgive and become divine, and peace will be ours.

It is this forgiveness that is the essence of *ahimsā*—non-violence. It is this which constitutes one of the basic teachings of the Buddha and Gandhi. It is again this which constitutes the crowning glory of Christ's teaching which found glorious expression

through his life. After crucifixion, without the least resentment towards the persecutors, he only prays to the Heavenly Father 'Forgive them; for they know not what they do!'

#### IN HUMILITY, SEEK FORGIVENESS

And, when it is we who have wronged, when we are the culprits, we should promptly seek forgiveness in all sincerity; otherwise, we shall surely have no peace. Our *karma* begets its consequences and comes back towards us even as a boomerang; we cannot escape it. The question would be only *how* we shall face it,—as strong and proud heroes, not being in the least perturbed, or as weak and humble souls, expecting mercy. Unfortunately most of us are weak but not humble. We are full of foolish pride; we would resort to deceptions and justifications to ward off the impending consequences and even seek special immunity at the hands of man and God: 'We have been such pious people, we have practised so much of devotions that the Lord shall surely close His eyes to our faults and condone our errors as mentioned in the *Gītā*; "Even the worst of evil-doers who are my devotees are to be considered as holy men. . . . There is no fear for him who takes refuge in me".'

Let us not fool ourselves relying on obviously incorrect and unjustified interpretation of holy texts. God and Truth can never be tricked. Even the mighty ascetic Durvāsa, after venting his rage on the great devotee Ambarīṣa, was forced to seek forgiveness from Ambarīṣa himself; the Lord refused to forgive and shelter Durvāsa who came to Him, bypassing the victim. In our pride and prestige, we cannot ignore the victim we have hurt, and try to go to God direct. We won't have peace till we have sincerely made up with the persons wronged, be they our seniors, equals, or even juniors. We have to seek forgiveness

from God in that person, and then God in us will forgive us; He shall let us go in peace. 'This is the gist of another of Christ's marvellous teachings: 'Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and then rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come back and offer thy gift'. (Matthew V. 23-24)

Forgiveness and humility are mighty steps to peace. The soul which has been scorched by resentment is healed, renewed, and refreshed by the cooling waters of forgiveness.

#### PERFECTION IN FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness can proceed out of weakness or strength; it can be passive and static or active and dynamic. Real forgiveness is dynamic and based on strength. Jesus conveys this truth to us in his own inimitable language: 'And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.' (Matthew, V. 41) When we are endowed with the spiritual strength of forgiveness, we shall not only not mind undergoing troubles at the request of fellow men, but would feel happy to do even more. It is this spirit of giving and forgiving, generosity and goodness that make our life living, lively, and worth-while. The teaching, 'Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away,' (*ibid.*, V. 42) is a very good guide in the art of joyous living. Let us, by all means, be generous in service, if we cannot be in money; if not in material things, at least in bestowing affection and kind words.

Perfection in forgiveness is attained when we rise to the great heights indicated in his next teaching, '... Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you' (*ibid.*, V. 44). This is the teaching

not only of Christ but of the other great incarnations too; and this is exactly what Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, and Christ exemplified in their own life and death.

This is the way of heavenly perfection. We have to follow this that we may be worthy children of the Heavenly Father—'That ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust'. (*ibid.*, V. 45) 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect'. (*ibid.*, V. 48) Divine perfection is our life's goal and forgiveness based on love the means—this is the real message of Christmas.

#### GOODWILL TOWARDS MEN

Of course, we cannot suddenly be such great heroes of forgiveness as Christ, Buddha, or Kṛṣṇa, but at least we can belong to the humbler ranks. We may not be able to be charitable, forgiving, and generous to cruel and wicked brutes who wantonly seek to hurt and destroy us; but we must be forgiving and generous *at least* towards our 'not-wicked' and 'not-brutal' fellow-beings, most of all towards those who are our 'neighbours' in our day-to-day life—be they old parents or immature children, pushing husbands or demanding wives, exacting employers or unruly employees. Forgiveness and generosity, kindness and goodness—all this can be summed up in one word 'goodwill'. Without such a goodwill towards men, or at least a sincere attempt to cultivate it, there can be neither peace on earth, nor the vision of God in the highest. The religious and the pious amongst us should remember that the thought and presence of God in our hearts should lead to good-will towards men; and secular people should recognize that peace on earth is impossible without goodwill towards men. So this goodwill towards men

reinforced by corresponding prayer and practice is the one tangible, practical, and immediately available means for realizing peace and God. That is the essence of the message of Christmas.

*Sarvastaratu durgāṇi sarva  
bhadraṇi paśyatu;*

*Sarvassadbuddhimāṇotū sarvas-  
sarvatra nandatu—*

‘May all overcome obstacles, may all perceive what is good and auspicious. May all be inspired by high and lofty motives, and may all rejoice everywhere.’

All the teachers of humanity are unselfish. Suppose Jesus of Nazareth was teaching, and a man came and told him, ‘What you teach is beautiful. I believe that it is the way to perfection, and I am ready to follow it; but I do not care to worship you as the only begotten Son of God’. What would be the answer of Jesus of Nazareth? ‘Very well, brother, follow the ideal and advance in your own way. I do not care whether you give me the credit for the teaching or not. I am not a shopkeeper. I do not trade in religion. I only teach truth, and truth is nobody’s property. Nobody can patent truth. Truth is God Himself. Go forward.’ But what the disciples say nowadays is: ‘No matter whether you practise the teachings or not, do you give credit to the Man? If you credit the Master, you will be saved; if not, there is no salvation for you.’ And thus the whole teaching of the Master is degenerated, and all the struggle and fight is for the personality of the Man. They do not know that in imposing that difference, they are, in a manner, bringing shame to the very Man they want to honour—the very Man that would have shrunk with shame from such an idea. What did he care if there was one man in the world that remembered him or not? He had to deliver his message, and he gave it. And if he had twenty thousand lives, he would give them all up for the poorest man in the world. If he had to be tortured millions of times for a million despised Samaritans, and if for each one of them the sacrifice of his own life would be the only condition of salvation, he would have given his life. And all this without wishing to have his name known even to a single person. Quiet, unknown, silent, would he work, just as the Lord works.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati Memorial Edition, Volume IV, pp. 150-51)

## WESTERN PSYCHIATRY AND THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF ANCIENT INDIANS

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**H**EALTH is something more than freedom from diseases', this pithy saying or maxim applies both to physical and mental health. A person who may be said to be perfectly healthy in body and mind is scarcely to be found. Anyone who can adjust oneself to one's environment is regarded to be healthy in mind, but as Freud declares, 'the healthy man is virtually a neurotic'. As civilization advances, cases of abnormalities increase. In the present age of scientific advancement, we have been able to cope with many diseases but we have achieved little success in the treatment of mental disorders. There was a time when the doctors of Europe and other western countries were of opinion that the so-called mental diseases are due to disorders in the nervous system or some other organic defect but investigations into the causes of mental disorders have proved beyond doubt that there are many diseases of purely mental origin. Doctors also admit that some diseases such as high blood-pressure, gastric ulcer, rheumatism, heart-troubles, etc. which were once believed to be due to organic disorders, may be of purely mental origin. So a doctor who wants to cure his patients even of their physical ailments must be a psychiatrist.

### THE WESTERN AND INDIAN OUTLOOK

In the present age, we find various schools of Abnormal Psychology and each school follows its own particular method in the treatment of mental disorder. Modern psychologists admit that there are cases of psychosis or insanity as well as those of neurosis such as hysteria and other milder forms of mental diseases. From a large number of observations, psychologists have been able to discover different classes of psychosis and neurosis. In the present age, we come across three outstanding figures who have thrown a flood of light on the origin of mental diseases. But we should also remember that the study of Abnormal Psychology was not altogether unknown in ancient India. Of the eight branches of Indian Medical Science one is *Bhūtavidyā* which deals with various cases of insanity. The great sage Caraka classifies all diseases into physical and mental, the physical being due to the disorder of *vāyu*, *pitta*, and *kapha* and the mental being due to the preponderance of *rajas* and *tamas* over *sattva*. These are technical terms and require a word of explanation. The terms *vāyu*, *pitta*, and *kapha* should not be translated as the wind, the bile, and the phlegm respectively. The term *vāyu* should rather mean functions of the central and sympathetic nervous system, the terms, *pitta* and

*kapha*, signify the functions of catabolic and anabolic hormones respectively. Assimilation of food, colouring of blood and various secretions are also the functions of *pitta*; *kapha* signifies the function of cooling, and the production of the various preservative fluids. We enjoy perfect physical health when these are in a state of equilibrium. Our mental ailments again are due to lust, anger, avarice, jealousy, constant worrying, inordinate ambition, fear, etc. In other words, these are due to the preponderance of *rajas* and *tamas*. Caraka also emphasizes the fact that wilful violation of duty or commission of sins may lead to various kinds of mental disorders. He also shows us the way as to how we can remain healthy in body and mind.

Indian philosophers and seers have prescribed various courses of spiritual discipline which help the religious aspirants to remain healthy in body and mind. Unfortunately, most of the western psychiatrists take no notice of the contributions of Indian sages and seers to the field of General and Abnormal Psychology. Hans Jacobs, an eminent western psychiatrist, is an exception to this. He has made a thorough study of the different systems of Indian philosophy and the religious scriptures of the Indians. He says:

'The goal of Indian philosophy is not insensibility but utter consciousness, supra-rational, not irrational, for it includes reason but transcends it. Its aim is ... the assimilation of the foundations of our Being, without which everything remains gloomy and empty.'

Hans Jacobs has made a special study of the yoga system and the different Tantras, because these are of special interest to a psycho-analyst. He believes with the Indian sages that real and enduring happiness can be attained only through the knowledge of the self and that the sex-appetite ceases when 'an individual finds

everything he wants within himself'. Jacobs' wonderful books, *Western Psychotherapy and Hindu Sadhana*, is a real contribution to the field of psychology. The following lines which occur on the flap introduce the author:

'Dr. Jacobs who is a qualified psycho-analyst and former pupil of Jung, has written a most valuable book which throws a new light on the relationship between traditional Hindu Yoga and modern psychiatric practice in the West.

'His comparison of the methods of Freud and Jung with the Hindu doctrine of *sādhana*, popularly known as yoga, is based on an intensive study of Western psychotherapy and of Hindu metaphysics, the latter carried out theoretically and under spiritual guides during prolonged stays in India.

'The vital contributions to the subject made by Freud and Jung, and the merits and defects of their approach are examined in the light of these experiences of the author in India and of his work with patients, mostly in Australia. After comparing contemporary Western psychology with classical Hindu teaching, the author extends the field of comparison to that of Indian and Western philosophy in general.'

#### FREUD AND JUNG: TWO OUTSTANDING FIGURES IN MODERN PSYCHOTHERAPY

As is well-known, the two outstanding figures in the field of modern psychotherapy are Freud and Jung. Freud's new method of treating various forms of mental aberrations is known as Psychoanalysis. This new method is based on his Psychology of the Unconscious. He first of all attempted to cure the mental patients through hypnosis; then, at the suggestion of a female patient, he used the method known as psycho-catharsis or abreaction in which the patient talks out his or her trouble. Ultimately he discovered a new method of

treating mental disorders. (This method has the advantages over the other two methods). This new method is also known as the Free Association Method. From an investigation into the cause of mental disorders in his patients, Freud formulated the theory that all mental troubles are due to the repression of *libido* or sex-urge. But this passage from some to all is at best the result of Induction per simple Enumeration. Freud's theory that libido or sex-urge is the spring of all human actions cannot be accepted. But his distinction between the three levels of mental activity, viz. the *conscious*, *pre-conscious*, and *unconscious*, his interpretation of dreams, his investigation into slips, errors, and forgetfulness in our daily life have thrown a flood of light on the structure of human mind.

Though Freud accepts the principle of the *Super-ego* which is akin to conscience, he is no believer in religion or any other super-sensuous reality. Freudian materialism is known as psychological materialism which should be distinguished from the materialism of Karl Marx. Freud, however, believes in the process of sublimation of the libido through art, literature, scientific researches, etc. The Indian sages also have discovered various processes of sublimation through different kinds of spiritual discipline; but to Freud, Indian Culture was a sealed book.

#### THE INDIAN AND WESTERN APPROACHES

To the Hindu mind self-realization or the attainment of liberation is the goal of our life. In order to reach the goal, we must control our instincts, emotions, and passions which stand in the way of spiritual progress. But we should not annihilate them, because every thing in the world is for use. We may, however, control them by reason, but as man is more irrational than rational, reason seldom comes to our rescue. Herein lies the importance of moral

and spiritual discipline or *sādhana*. The more we follow some course of spiritual discipline, the more we are transformed in body and mind and the more do we approach towards perfection. It would have been a boon to western psychiatrists, according to Hans Jacobs, had they been thoroughly conversant with the Indian processes of *sādhana*.

Hans Jacobs, though formerly a disciple of Jung, differs from him in many respects.

Jung himself was once a disciple of Freud, but he also could not ultimately agree with Freud on many important points. Freud has discovered how great the influence of the unconscious upon our conscious behaviour is, but he has over-emphasized the influence of the libido (which he identifies with sex-energy) on our conscious activities, as well as on our slips, errors, and dreams. Jung, however, identifies libido with instinctive energy. 'From a broader standpoint' says Jung, '*libido* can be understood as vital energy or as Bergson's *elan vital*'. Jung also uses the term 'Unconscious' in a broader sense. To him the term 'Unconscious' does not refer only to the individual mind, it also includes the 'collective or racial Unconscious'. He speaks of 'the primordial images, the inherited potentialities of human imagination'. 'These' he says, 'have always been potentially latent in the structure of the brain'. He also differs from Freud in his interpretation of dreams. To Freud, dreams are the *via regia* to the unconscious, they are the fulfilment of unconscious wishes which refer to the remote past. Jung says that dreams often refer to our present problems. Another contribution of Jung is that he classifies human beings broadly into two types, the extrovert and the introvert.

Jung also felt a keen interest in the Yoga system of philosophy and contributed an article on 'Psycho-analysis and the Yoga' in the *Prabuddha Bharata*, Sri Ramakrishna



Centenary Volume. But his study of Indian philosophy is superficial; his outlook on life being western, he could not dive deep into the Yoga system, and the Advaita Vedānta also had no appeal for him.

Alfred Adler, the founder of Individual Psychology and Carl Jung, the founder of Analytical Psychology also differ from each other. According to Adler, failure to adjust oneself to society generates in man a feeling of inferiority. Adler says: 'All forms of neurosis and developmental failure are expressions of inferiority and disappointment. According to him, love of power and love of domination over others lie at the root of all our activities. Jung, on the other hand, holds that a conflict between the two poles of life is the basis of a tension, on one pole lying the world of instincts and on the other the principle of religion.'

#### THE VIEWS OF HANS JACOBS

Regarding Freud, Jacobs remarks that he (Freud) fails to find out the noble aspect of human nature; to him man is a creature guided by instincts and emotions. Jacobs draws a parallel between Karl Marx and Freud.... 'While for Marx all culture is nothing but a superstructure on economy, for Freud it is built on sexuality.'

Jacobs also criticizes Jung's view of the self. According to Jung, the self is the sum-total of conscious and unconscious existence. He does not believe in universal consciousness, or in other words, he does not believe in the Indian theory of Ātman. But to Hans Jacobs this theory embodies the highest truth. The sages of India have realized their oneness with the Universal Spirit. Jacobs says:

'In so far as man is spirit he is one with God, for this oneness is the characteristic of spirit; while as mind and body he is a particular manifestation of his *śakti* or dynamic aspect.'

Again he says:

'There can be no greater inspiration for strength and power than the idea of the Indian Vedānta that the soul is essentially divine.' Actually the more we can think of our divine heritage, the more divine we become. The Vedānta says: One who always thinks that he is in bondage ever remains in bondage, one who always thinks that he is liberated actually becomes liberated. The seers and sages of India fully realized the influence of thought-forces on a man's life. Truths, ultimate and absolute, were revealed to the sages. Hans Jacobs makes a distinction between the modern scientific discoveries and the truth-vision of the sages of ancient India. He says:

'Being derived from immediate insight into timeless (*Sanātana*) universals, these teachings had never substantially to be altered or perfected. Herein lies a fundamental difference from modern scientific discoveries which, being directed to the study of determinate aspects of individual entities by means of reasoning, are subject to evolution and to progress in the course of time.' Hans Jacobs believes in the Indian methods of realising truths directly and immediately. But unless we go through a strict course of spiritual discipline, we cannot have intuitive knowledge of truth. Speaking on spiritual exercises or *sādhana* Hans Jacobs says:

'The first requirement is an intense longing to seek after one's real nature.' We are, first of all, to know ourselves and by knowing ourselves we can know everything. But we should also remember that self-control leads to self-knowledge. For those who are aspirants after spiritual life, a perfectly moral life is needed; a life of self-discipline but not of self-torture. Thirdly, we must have self-reverence and should always remember our divine heritage, because, no backward-looking attitude is helpful. Jacobs says, 'Evil is declared to be ignorance. All that could be called up

against anybody is, therefore, not sin but error. Error brings about sorrow and is ultimately the result of weakness. Consequently, the remedy is seen in strength and strength is conveyed by basing oneself not on the individual but on the universal'.

Naturally our mind wanders from object to object. But by constant practice we can concentrate our mind on a single object. This is *Yoga* or the beginning of *Yoga*. Concentration is not repression according to Jacobs. He says that the process of concentration resembles the analytical method of free association. The Yogins, by virtue of deep concentration, transcend the barriers of time and space; they can thus rouse their latent possibilities and achieve miracles; but their possession of occult powers often becomes a hindrance to their spiritual progress. Tāntrik *Sādhakas* have also recognized the value of auto-suggestion in building up our body and mind; the aim of our lives, according to them, is to transform us from men to god-men by some peculiar process of auto-suggestion and by various other processes. (*Bhūta-śuddhi*, *Āsana-śuddhi*, *Prāṇāyāma*, etc.). Hans Jacobs agrees with the Indian thinkers in affirming that real and enduring happiness is to be attained by true knowledge and that virtue without knowledge avails little. The Indian thinkers also believed that pure food leads to purity and clarity of mind. As we have already said, they also emphasize the fact that our sex-appetite will cease as soon as we find everything we want within ourselves.

Hans Jacobs believes that the recital of *mantras* under the guidance of a spiritual preceptor is of great help to the seekers after truth. He says:

'If well selected, the *mantra* is of such a nature that by the vibrations it produces it counteracts psychological drawbacks of the *sādhaka*, providing those elements which, in his subtle body, are lacking, counteracting those which are in excess.'

As it makes the mind more and more concentrated, it will over-ride weaknesses in the unconscious of the *sādhaka*, if his body, mental and physical, is brought to vibrate in it by persevering practice (*japa*). *Japa* brings success in life and leaves no room for worry'. Jacobs refers to such authoritative books on the *yoga* and the *Tantra* as *Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā*, *Gheraṇḍa Samhitā*, *Śiva Samhitā*, *Viśvasāra Tantra*, etc. He says:

'We want healers of souls rather than of bodies. The multiplicity of hospitals and of medical men is no sign of civilisation. The less we and others pamper our body, the better for us and the world.'

Again he says:

'A pure heart is the most essential requisite for mental and physical health' even as Tennyson's Sir Galahad declares—'My strength is as the strength of ten because my heart is pure'.

Again Jacobs says:

'The endless multitude of thoughts is the greatest impediment to concentrated thinking.'

But he believes in 'a synthesis of the timeless wisdom of Asia and the Western bent for practical accomplishments'.

He also believes that the knowledge of astrology is of great help to a psychiatrist as it throws a flood of light on the unconscious mind of the patient. But a knowledge of the influence of planets on the destiny of individuals need not make us fatalists or determinists. He remarks that the planets simply create some predispositions within us; and hence, astrology does not deny that we are free, self-conscious, self-determining, spiritual beings. 'There are always spiritual resources at a man's command which are not subject to planetary pressure', he adds.

His remarks on astrology are quite in keeping with the Indian outlook. In India, Astrology, both pure and applied, has been regarded as one of the six branches of the

Vedas and there have been references to this branch of study in the Indian science of Medicine. The knowledge of Astrology is indispensable to those who want to specialize in *Bhūta-vidyā* or Abnormal Psychology.

Hans Jacobs points out that the Unconscious, according to Indian thinkers, is 'the domain of the *saṁskāras*, that is, unassimilated residues of earlier years as well as of many former lives'. Thus we see that the Indian conception of the Unconscious is wider than Freudian conception.

He also points out some of the misconceptions of Jung about the yoga and the Vedānta systems. According to Jung, God is one of the contents of the human psyche. He says, 'To be like unto God is a characteristic of fools and mad men'. But Christ himself says: 'Be ye perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.' Again, Jung identifies the Yogic or Universal Mind with the Unconscious Mind. He argues that if there is no ego, nobody would be conscious of anything. To his mind, *saṁādhi* is a meaningless dream-state. According to Jung, the Easterners, being generally introverted, aim at such a dream-state. Hans Jacobs has rightly pointed out the misconceptions of Jung about two of the most important systems of Indian Philosophy.

We have reasons to believe that western psycho-therapists will achieve greater success in their treatment of neurotic and psychotic patients if they undergo a course of spiritual discipline. The yoga philosophy, the different Tāntrik texts and the standard works on Indian Science of Medicine throw a flood of light on the unconscious recesses of human mind. The Indians have their own methods of sublimating the libido through various processes of *sādhana*. The Tāntriks call it the awakening of the serpent-power (*Kuṇḍalini-jāgarana*). Through a rigorous course of spiritual discipline a man

is born again. The Bible also says—'Unless you are born again, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God'. The Indian sages say that lack of self-knowledge and self-control is often at the root of mental aberrations and the best preventive of mental diseases is to undergo a rigorous course of spiritual discipline. As we have seen, the sage Caraka holds the view that in the ultimate analysis mental diseases are due to the preponderance of *rajas* and *tamas* in our character and one may conquer them by knowledge derived from the scriptures, as well as by self-knowledge, patience, constantly remembering the nature of one's self and deep concentration. In the milder forms of mental disorders, the patient can surely minister to himself.

#### CARAKA'S APPROACH

In the *Nidānasthāna* of *Caraka-Saṁhitā* the sage Caraka deals with different types of insanity, the symptoms of every type, and various methods of cure including the application of medicine and the Indian method of shock-therapy. In the cases of mental diseases, the physician, according to Caraka, should also be careful in selecting wholesome diet for the patient. As has already been said, the sage, Caraka, holds that wilful omission of duties or commission of sin is often the cause of insanity. No student of Abnormal Psychology can deny that the sage has made important contributions to the Psychology of Insanity. Caraka also says that insanity may be, in some cases, due to supernatural agencies. The modern psychologists may not agree with the sage on this point, but we should remember that in analyzing the causes of insanity the great *ṛṣi* is influenced by the *Atharva-Veda*.

#### CONCLUSION

In recent days cases of psycho-neurotic disorders are on the increase both in western

and eastern countries. According to many thinkers, cases of insanity are often due to economic inequalities and the remedy lies in the decent standard of life for each individual. This may be partially true but this is not the whole truth, because 'man does not live by bread alone'. Communism also has its merits, but according to Bertrand Russell, its main defect lies in the fact that it 'attempts to mould a population forcibly in accordance with a pre-conceived pattern'. Unless we recognize the moral and spiritual values of life and undergo a systematic course of spiritual discipline under the guidance of a *guru*, we cannot hope to build up an ideal society where every individual should be healthy in body and mind. It is most unfortunate that we Indians do not feel proud of our glorious heritage, nay more, most of us are totally ignorant of it. We should always remember that we are the inheritors of the kingdom of God, so the aim of our life is to attain perfection or to realize that we

are perfect. The great Swami Vivekananda says : 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.' Religion also, according to him, is 'the manifestation of the divinity already in man'. But to realize that we are perfect, we are to comprehend the nature of our self through a rigorous course of spiritual discipline. We cannot be perfectly healthy in body and mind by ignoring the moral and spiritual values of life. The three cardinal virtues of self-reverence, self-knowledge, and self-control gradually lead life to perfection. The poet Tennyson echoes the sentiment of the Indian sages when he says :

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,  
 These three alone lead life to sovereign  
 power,  
 Yet not for power—power of herself would  
 come uncalled for,  
 But to live by law, acting by law, we live  
 by without fear,  
 And because right is right, to follow right  
 Is wisdom in the scorn of consequence.

## GRECO-ROMAN CULTURE : SOCIO-POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

AMALES TRIPATHI, M.A., PH.D.

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**P**EOPLES of the Mediterranean basin, the Greeks and the Romans were next door neighbours, and geography imposed on them a fundamentally like manner of living.

### SOCIETY AND STATE

The Greco-Roman society was urban and in both areas the system of production was based on slavery. It would be wrong, however, to think that every Greek was a slave-driver. If he owned a slave, he was doing pretty well. On the whole, private ownership and individual enterprise remained the general rule, though Greek temples and the Roman Emperors had vast estates. For the greater part of the Greek and Roman history, small holders predominated, which meant a sturdy individualism of the citizen body and a pronounced democratic tendency. Variations occurred, however, sometimes with introduction of money or expansion of trade or development of Empire. Differences in wealth and extent of land-ownership created tension between the haves and the have-nots which were exploited duly by politicians. Tyranny in Greece and dictatorship in Rome were the political results of economic and social disharmony.

Greece remained politically fragmented

throughout history due to the physical character of the country and the self-sufficiency of household economy. Athens attempted to develop a maritime, and Sparta and Thebes, each a land empire at the end but with dire results. The Greeks were psychologically averse to large political units. Rome was forced by circumstances to extend her orbit of influence, first over the Latin community, then over the Italian peninsula and ultimately over a large part of the western world and the ancient Near East. Roman law preserved Roman peace and Roman roads carried Oriental luxuries and Roman legions between Britain on the one hand and the kingdom of Parthia on the other.

The Homeric state—Polis—was a small city with a dependent rural area but a few kings like Agamemnon might have ruled more than one city. Even later, only two cities in Sicily and one in Greece proper, Athens, housed more than 20,000 citizens. The king was the top executive, the Commander-in-Chief and the high priest (Basileus), and he was assisted by an aristocratic council—Gerontes, and a folk assembly—Agora. While the Gerontes consisted of heads of powerful kindreds, the Agora consisted of free men who formed the army, who expressed no more than assent or

dissent after debate. By the eighth century, monarchy was giving way to aristocracy. Magistrates were chosen for a term from among the nobles. At Sparta hereditary kings survived to the end of the third century B.C. though the Gerousia or the Council of Elders outvoted them in peace time and the Ephors took away most of their functions.

Internal factions among the nobles, emergence of a rich merchant class through expansion of trade and colonics, and introduction of a new technique of war based on a middle class army of the Hoplites, led to the decline of aristocracy. Greed of the ruling class roused intense bitterness among the poor farmers. A demand for cancellation of debts and abolition of slavery for debt, written code and a more democratic government arose. The have-nots allied with the merchant-colonists and found a champion in a 'tyrant', i.e. an autocrat without the hereditary title to rule, who recognized no constitutional limit to his power. Tyranny sprouted all over Greece, the most famous being that of Cypselids of Corinth and the Peisistratids of Athens. Solon tried to stem the advent of tyranny in Athens by timely reforms. Athens had been governed by annual archons elected from among the nobles by the assembly of all citizens who had a certain property qualifications. These archons, after their year of office, became members of the ancient Council of Areopagus. The archons were really the old monarchy put into commission and the council of Areopagus was like the Roman Senate, a close and powerful corporation. Solon broke the monopoly of these Eupatridae over the Council of Areopagus. He disregarded birth and divided citizens into four classes according to income. Though the higher posts were confined to the two higher classes, the poorest had the right to attend the Ecclesia and sit in the appeal court for a review of the

magistrates' decisions. An executive committee of 400—Boule—was created to prepare its business. He freed the debtors from slavery and cancelled all debts. He encouraged foreign capitalists and craftsmen to settle in Athens and raised her to the rank of the greatest trading—manufacturing city in the ancient world. But struggle between factions of the upper class led to tyranny of the Peisistratid family. Peisistratus carefully preserved the outward forms of Solon's moderate democracy though infusing into them a new and vigorous drive for colonial expansion and cultural expression. When his family was overthrown in 510 B.C., Cleisthenes took the people into partnership. The polis used to be divided into tribes or groups of families for election of archons. This meant aristocratic control through patronage. This was eliminated when Cleisthenes disbanded the four Attic tribes based on kinship and redivided the people into ten new tribes, each composed of an equal number of demes or parishes which, however, were not contiguous. Some of the demes might be situated in the city itself, some inland and some on the coast. Each tribe was thus a cross-section of the whole population and it also became a regimental unit in the time of war. After excluding foreigners, women and slaves, the citizen body now numbered between 1,40,000 and 1,72,000.

#### PEOPLE, POLITICS, AND CONSTITUTION

The mass of Athenians consisted of peasants, independent craftsmen, and hired labourers and a principle of equality emerged in this *milieu*. Athens became an example of real democracy, where the assembly decided major questions of policy and most minute administrative details. But close scrutiny of matters like foreign policy was not possible in a large body and it later played into the hands of unscrupulous demagogues like Cleon or Alcibiades. The

Boule or the Council of Five Hundred was a sort of steering committee to prepare agenda for the Assembly. Chosen annually by lot from all the wards of Attica, in proportion to population, the council could never develop an anti-democratic spirit. Law courts conducted inquiry into acts of magistrates at the end of their term, tried generals and politicians and were the ultimate arbiters of the constitution. Here, as in Ecclesia, any citizen could take part. The magistrates were chosen annually by lot and no citizen could be elected more than twice for the same office. Only the Generals were not appointed by lot but they were elected by the Assembly on obvious tests of merit. The Athenian jurors, councillors, and Assembly members were paid like the magistrates and Pericles increased the pay of the jurors to enable even the poorest citizens to discharge their duties to the state. This policy of payment has been criticized by Plato and Aristotle and the selection by lot has drawn Aristotle's sarcasm.

In spite of all this, Thucydides calls Athens under Pericles 'nominally a democracy but really the rule of its leading man'. Pericles never ruled Athens by any constitutional powers but by persuading the Assembly. It was sheer moral authority. No one can surpass Pericles' description of Athenian democracy in his famous Funeral speech: '... in private disputes all are equal before the law, and in public life, men are honoured for conspicuous achievement in any field, and not for sectional reasons; nor is any poor man, who has it in him to do good service to the city, prevented by his obscurity. Ours is a free state, both in politics and in social life.... Among us, the same people manage both private and public business, and men who are immersed in other work form an adequate judgement on political questions.'

The Spartan constitution breathed alto-

gether a different spirit. The citizen body dwindled instead of increasing. They ruled over a large number of conquered peoples—helots—by terror. This called for a para-military rule. The only innovation was the Ephorate, a magistracy of five, chosen by the Popular Assembly who kept an eye on the hereditary kings. But the Spartan army abroad was always under a king who had absolute powers. There were a Senate (of 28) and an Assembly (of a few thousand full citizens). But the Assembly could not debate. It expressed its decisions by shouting, not voting. Class struggle had been eliminated but at the cost of normal democratic growth. The Peloponessian War which raged in Greece from 431 B.C. to 404 B.C. brought all healthy development to an end. Even Athens was swayed by demagogues and ultimately passed through an oligarchic revolution. Greece suffered under two deep-seated diseases of politics—strife between democracy and oligarchy and feud between city and city. This made her an easy prey to anarchy and alien invasion. The empire of Philip and Alexander drew the curtain on the most prolific political experiments seen in ancient times.

#### THE ROMAN HISTORY

Roman history is usually divided into three parts—the period of the Kings, the Republic, and the Empire. The first began in 753 B.C., with the foundation of Rome, and ended in the expulsion of the last king, Tarquinius Superbus in 510 B.C. Most of the accounts are legendary and have been rejected by Mommsen. The republic lasted from 509 B.C. to 27 B.C. and during this period Rome won her position in Italy and then in the Mediterranean, gained her political and administrative experience and learned from other civilizations. The last century witnessed political disorder, commercial and financial expansion and moral confusion. Great names appear—the Gracchi.

Sulla, Pompey, Caesar, Brutus, Antony, Cicero. The third period began with Augustus (27 B.C.) who introduced an empire under the pretence of a restored republic. The first two centuries of the Empire were the constructive years and both Gibbon and Mommsen acclaim them as great.

In the first hundred years of the city, the common people or plebeians, consisting mainly of peasantry, were occasionally called to an assembly, *Comitia Curiata*, because the citizens were grouped according to curiae or districts where they resided. They only gave assent or dissent to the decisions of the Senate to which none but the patricians, i.e. aristocracy of large land-owners, were admitted. Justice and army-command vested with the *rex* or king, who was elected by the Senate and the *comitia*. Once appointed, he could, however, wield an unlimited power—*imperium*. As in Greece, the aristocrats dispossessed the king and shared out the royal power, when the Etruscan monarch, Tarquinus, proved to be too despotic. The king's authority was transferred to a pair of annual magistrates, called *Consuls*, who were Patricians elected by the popular assembly. As they imposed upon the plebeians a harsh law of debt and a regular military conscription, the latter began to oppose. The conflict of the orders did not end in Tyranny as in Greece. The plebeians conducted the class war with bloodless weapons, i.e. by collective action and non-cooperation. They started a parallel Concilium plebeians, where they were organized according to tribes, not curiae, appointed their own officials, called Tribunes, who soon numbered ten. The Tribunes represented their cases before the Consuls and if, no justice was available, took recourse to political strike by mass-refusal of military service. In this way they extorted concession after concession from the Patricians, like the Code of the *Twelve Tables*, right of appeal from a Consul's decree, and retrial before a popular assembly.

The Tribunes were the watch-dogs over the Consuls and soon acquired a general power of veto on any public act under the pretence of defending plebeian interest.

After safeguarding fundamental rights (*Civis Romanus Sum*), the plebeians secured for their assembly the right of legislation. A second popular assembly, *Comitia Centuriata*, a quasi-military grouping by centuria or companies, was started. The latter got the right to elect Consul and other higher magistrates and to revise judicial sentences on appeal. Finally, they won the right to stand for election to the Consulship in 366 B.C. and eventually to all other magistracies. Their claim to seats in the Senate, which was in the keeping of Kings, Consuls, or Censors, was indirectly granted in 312 B.C. Any holder of the greater political offices could now get into the Senate *ex-officio*. In the third and second centuries B.C. the Senate consisted of 300 members.

#### THE ROMAN CONSTITUTION

By 300 B.C. all these piecemeal reforms had left the Roman Constitution in an untidy mess. There were two popular assemblies; too many executives. The Consuls were mostly limited to military duties, their civil jurisdiction was taken up by a Praetor, financial duties by four Quaestors, municipal responsibilities by four Aediles. Two Censors numbered the people and drew the list of the Senators. Their functions overlapped, their work was obstructed by the veto of any of the ten Tribunes. To prevent deadlock in a time of crisis, the Consuls could nominate an emergency official, *Dictator*, who assumed supreme authority. The recurrent need for this office and suspension of ordinary normal machinery of Government boded ill for the republic. The Senate, occasionally freshened by admission of Plebeians, a body of ex-Magistrates with experience, holding seats for life, became the reservoir of the best talent in the state.



Soon the magistrates and Tribunes were appealing to it for arbitration.

By now Rome had expanded beyond recognition. After the great Latin War of 340-38 B.C., the Romans dissolved the Latin League and entered into new compacts with individual Latin towns, by which they were definitely reduced to a dependent status. By defeating the Samnites and the Tarentines, they established ascendancy over the whole of South Italy and in the Central Apennines.

The conquest of northern Italy followed in 225-220 B.C. But military success brought a political challenge. At first Rome incorporated all conquered peoples into the fold of Roman citizenship. The outlying tribes were called *Socii* or partners. Though saddled with the burden of supplying military contingents, they were autonomous in domestic matters and paying no taxes to Rome. *Socii* was a sort of apprenticeship to real Roman citizenship. The Italian people gradually adopted Roman habits and Latin tongue and supplied the man-power which helped Rome to win a world-empire.

This arose out of the Punic Wars. Rome had conquered Sicily and Sardinia before she wrested Tunisia and Spain from Carthage. Soon after, southern France was absorbed. Caesar was to conquer it completely in the first century B.C. Rome could not keep aloof from Greek politics either. Macedonia was acquired in 148 B.C., Achaia in 146 B.C. From Greece to Asia was but one step. A province of Asia was erected in 133 B.C. Sulla's wars with Mithradates was followed by Pompey's victories and *Pax Romana* was established in the Near East.

How to govern a vast empire while keeping alive the republican spirit posed a grave problem. The provinces were administered by the Consuls and Praetors whose terms of office at Rome had just expired. They were called pro-Consuls and pro-Praetors. The collection of taxes was left to the native communities but sometimes entrusted to

private Roman capitalists, called Publicans. The latter extorted more than their share from the natives and often bought the acquiescence of the pro-Consuls. Local self-government was retained but defence became Rome's concern. The conquest had evil effects—inordinate increase in power of the Senate, concentration of the Mediterranean and Asiatic riches in Roman hands, a growing disparity between the rich and the poor, the possibility of ambitious generals like Pompey gathering power to challenge the Republic from a distant vantage point. Corruption within and invasion from without ate away, like canker, the moral virtues of the Roman Republic and it drifted through political crises into civil wars.

The first victim was the popular assembly. The Roman peasantry, now reduced and impoverished under the burden of prolonged military service in foreign lands, lost control over townsmen and freed men. Absentee capitalist landlords invested in huge cash-crop or mixed crop ranches—*latifundia*—growing cattle rather than crop by means of slaves. Free poor men drifted into cities for food and employment and became the battering ram of violent class-war. The assembly fell under the influence of a coterie of twenty-five leading families who managed them by patronage and bribery. The populace could be kept quiet by distribution of bread and amused by games and circuses. In return, the coterie got its own nominees elected to office and through office to the Senate. The republic closed its door to the sturdy, independent, and patriotic farmer class and grew inefficient and self-seeking. The Senate's power was challenged by the rise of a new class—the *Equites* or Knights—who made money by government contracts, army supply, and tax-farming. Tribune Gaius Gracchus tried to play off this class against the senatorial nobility in the second century B.C. He courted the populace by sale of cheap corn. His brother, Tiberius,

passed a land settlement bill, favouring the landless poor. By this he wanted to arrest rural depopulation and decline of agriculture. But both were violently removed from the scene by the oligarchic coterie.

Marius was more successful. He carried out, with the help of the bourgeois and popular elements of the Assembly, a measure of army reforms which ultimately broke the Senate. The professional soldiery were ready for any profitable adventure and proved to be a dangerous instrument in the hands of ambitious men. A new type of party leaders arrived who lacked the Gracchi idealism and cynically led the rural urban poor to erect their own government. Italy was trampled under the rival armies of Marius and Sulla. Sulla won and merely used his power to buttress the authority of the Senate. Two more generals reenacted the same drama for power—Pompey on behalf of the Senate and Julius Caesar apparently on behalf of the new classes. The second civil war went in favour of Caesar who assumed a dictatorship. He extended Roman franchise beyond the bounds of Italy, proposed political and economic reorganization. His challenge to the senatorial authority and inclination for permanent autocracy brought him down. The triumvirate of Antony, Octavian, and Lepidus punished the clique of assassins but soon fell apart. Octavian, the victor, assumed the name of Augustus and his political settlement lasted for three centuries. Augustus sought to introduce a new and more effective regime under the pretence of a restoration of the Republic. The magistracy took charge of the administration of Rome, supervision of Italy, and ordinary justice. The Senate was consulted on matters of high policy and was invested with additional powers. It became a high court of criminal jurisdiction, trying exalted persons; it took over the legislative and electoral functions of the *Comitia*; it appointed the imperial successors of Augustus. The Magistracy and

the Senate were thrown open to a wider field of candidates. Picked men from the Italian municipalities were now admitted. The Princeps or Emperor had a general authority over the Magistrates besides certain reserved functions. He was governor of half the provinces and controlled the governors of the other half; he had a veto over the Magistrates of Rome and the chief command of the army (he was called the 'imperator' for this). Thus he became the sole director of Roman foreign policy and as paymaster of the army had a control of *fiscus* or finance. The Senate, however, could not recover its lost power or prestige; it waited on the Emperor's initiative. To discharge this heavy burden, Augustus fashioned a new executive out of the Senatorial and the Equestrian class. An imperial service began to encroach upon the Republican magistracy. Augustus acquired an extensive jurisdiction as well and his tribunal grew into a general court of appeal for the whole Roman dominion, for which he constructed a privy council of legal experts. So far as the provinces were concerned, whether imperial or senatorial, their local autonomy was encouraged and the provincial concilia discussed matters of general concern including criticism of bad governors. Following the lead which Caesar had given, the Emperors gradually extended the Roman franchise to non-Italian peoples and they admitted select individuals of provincial origin into the bureaucracy or the Senate.

There was peace and prosperity for about a hundred and fifty years and then the decline set in of which Gibbon has written his immortal classic. Military anarchy was worsened by the barbarian invasion and the republican magistracies were either dead or had faded into nominal titles. The sessions of the Senate were now a pure formality; traditions of self-government died out as the impoverished municipal aristocracy shirked responsibilities. The Empire became an

oriental despotism with the pomp and ceremony of the Persian Shah. The bureaucracy became a heavy incubus on land. Rome was ripe for a new change of masters and the healthy urban economy of the Mediterranean relapsed into feudalism.

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Greek civilization was not dead; it had yet several centuries of life before it; and when it died (We may arbitrarily date this at A.D. 325, when Constantine founded Constantinople, and Christian Byzantine civilization began to replace the 'pagan' Greek culture in the eastern Mediterranean.) it bequeathed itself in an incomparable legacy to the nations of Europe and the Near East. Every Greek colony poured the elixir of Greek art and thought into the cultural blood of the hinterland—into Spain and Gaul, Etruria and Rome, Egypt and Palestine, Syria and Asia Minor, and along the shores of the Black Sea. Alexandria was the port of reshipment for ideas as well as goods: from the Museum and the Library the works and views of Greek poets, mystics, philosophers, and scientists were scattered through scholars and students into every city of the Mediterranean concourse. Rome took the Greek heritage in its Hellenistic form: her playwrights adopted Menander and Philemon, her poets imitated the modes, measures, and themes of Alexandrian literature, her arts used Greek craftsmen and Greek forms, her law absorbed the statutes of the Greek cities, and her later imperial organization was modeled upon the Greco-Oriental monarchies: Hellenism, after the Roman conquest of Greece, conquered Rome even as the Orient was conquering Greece. Every extension of Roman power spread the ferment of Hellenic civilization. The Byzantine Empire wedded Greek to Asiatic culture, and passed on some part of the Greek inheritance to the Near East and the Slavic north. The Syrian Christians took up the torch and handed it to the Arabs, who carried it through Africa to Spain. Byzantine, Moslem, and Jewish scholars conveyed or translated the Greek masterpieces to Italy, arousing first the philosophy of the Schoolmen and then the fever of the Renaissance. Since that second birth of the European mind the spirit of Greece has seeped so thoroughly into modern culture that 'all civilized nations, in all that concerns the activity of the intellect, are colonies of Hellas' today.

WILL DURANT

('The Story of Civilization'—*The Life of Greece*—p. 667)

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### **Swami Vivekananda Centenary Endowment All-India Annual Elocution Competition (1967)**

The Institute has received an endowment of Rs. 10,000/- donated by Sri J. C. De, former Secretary and Treasurer, State Bank of India, Calcutta, and at present Treasurer, Managing Committee of this Institute, in memory of his wife, the late Srimati Hemnalini De, for the purpose of popularizing and propagating the man-making and nation-building literature of Swami Vivekananda among our students, through an annual all-India elocution competition, with a view to helping the restoration of India's cherished moral and spiritual values.

Accordingly, during 1967, the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Endowment All-India Annual Elocution Competition was held on Thursday, 28 December from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall and the Premananda Hall of the Institute. The subject for the Senior Group was 'Swami Vivekananda and India's New Social Order' and for the Junior Group 'Why Vivekananda Appeals to Me'. 28 students from West Bengal and other States participated in the Senior Group and 18 in the Junior Group. Participating student-competitors showed high proficiency in their speeches.

### *Prize Distribution Ceremony*

On Friday, 29 December 1967, at 6.30 p.m., the Prize Distribution Ceremony for the competition was held in the Vivekananda Hall of the Institute under the chairmanship of Swami Ranganathananda with some 600 persons present as the audience. Sri Sarbaribhushan Purkait, Assistant Director, Department of Cultural Activities and Publication, gave a brief re-

port of the competition. Sri Gautam Banerjee of the Ramakrishna Mission Residential College, Narendrapur, (First prize winner in the Senior Group), Sri Bhaskar Das of Jhargram K. K. Institution (First in the Junior Group), Srimati Sudeshna Chakravarti (Second prize winner in the Senior Group), Sri Anjan Chakravarti of Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Howrah, and Srimati Anita Nag of K. B. Narishiksha Mandir, Chandernagore (both Second Prize winners in the Junior Group), Sri Narendra Kumar Mathur of Saifa College, Bhopal and Sri Gautam Chatterjee of La Martiniere, Calcutta (both winners of Certificates of Merit) spoke in their respective subjects. Professor P. K. Guha, the seniormost judge in the competition complimented the students on their excellent performances. He stressed the need for the propagation of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, which would definitely prove to be the panacea of all ills prevailing among the students. Swami Ranganathananda in his presidential speech appealed to the students and the guardians present to send in more and more competitors so that the laudable object of the endowment would best be served. The First prize winners in both the groups were awarded gold medals along with books; the Second and Third prize winners received books as prizes; and two candidates in the Senior Group and five in the Junior Group received certificates of merit along with a book.

### **Buddha Jayanti**

The Institute observed the birth anniversary of Buddha at a solemn function held in the Vivekananda Hall on Wednesday, 31 May 1967, at 6.30 p.m. The programme commenced with an invocation by Kumari

Nina Gupta and Kumari Shyamali Gupta. It was followed by a talk on 'The Life and Message of Bhagavan Buddha' by Professor Hemanta Kumar Ganguli, M.A.

Dr. Srikumar Banerjee, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., presided over the function.

The programme concluded with a film show on 'Our Buddhist Heritage'.

### Special Lectures

On Saturday, 26 August 1967, at 6.30 p.m. Swami Nityabodhananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, Geneva, Switzerland, gave a special lecture on 'Vedānta Movement in Europe' at the Vivekananda Hall.

Swami Ranganathananda presided.

### Film Shows

The following films were shown to the public in the Vivekananda Hall on the dates noted below :

i 12 September 1967: 'Arghya' in Bengali (The theme of the film was based on four famous poems of Tagore, namely, *Pūjārīnī*, *Abhisār*, *Dui Bighā Jami*, *Purātan Vṛtya*).

ii. 19 September 1967 : 'Bhagini Nivedita' in Bengali.

iii. 12 December 1967: 'Mīrā' in Hindi.

'The Crisis in Indian Education' was the theme of a special lecture given by Mr. Samuel Mathai, M.A. (Oxon), Vice-Chancellor, University of Kerala, on Monday, 18 September 1967, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., presided.

Dr. Herbert Reitbock of Max Planck Institute of Biophysics, Germany, gave a special lecture on 'Laser and Its Application' on Thursday, 14 December 1967, at 6.30 p.m. The lecture was illustrated with slides.

Dr. Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.Tec., D.Sc., Ph.D., M.D., presided.

### Students' Day Home

The following table presents at a glance the work of the Students' Day Home for the months of October, November, and December 1967 :

|   | October | November | December |
|---|---------|----------|----------|
| Total number of students enrolled                       | 700     | 745      | 800      |
| Average daily attendance                                | 308     | 346      | 362      |
| Average number of students daily taking meals or tiffin | 209     | 228      | 233      |
| Total number of textbooks issued                        | 8,430   | 12,455   | 13,733   |

**Library and Reading Room**

The following table presents at a glance a review of the work of the different sections of the Institute's Library for the months of October, November, and December 1967 :

*Main Library*

|   | October | November | December |
|---|---------|----------|----------|
| Total number of books                   | 54,039  | 54,100   | 54,159   |
| Number of books added                   | 105     | 61       | 59       |
| Number of books purchased               | 105     | 27       | 58       |
| Number of books received as gift        | —       | —        | 1        |
| Number of books withdrawn               |         |          |          |
| Number of bound periodicals accessioned | —       | 34       | —        |
| Number of books issued for home study   | 2,124   | 2,526    | 3,000    |
| Number of books issued for reference    | 4,374   | 5,152    | 7,261    |

*Reading Room*

|   |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Number of periodicals in the reading room | 445 | 447 | 447 |
| Average daily attendance                  | 433 | 333 | 427 |

*Junior Library*

|                                       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total number of books                 | 1,467 | 1,468 | 1,476 |
| Number of books added                 | 8     | 1     | 8     |
| Number of books issued for home study | 149   | 170   | 241   |
| Average daily attendance              | 11    | 9     | 12    |

*Children's Library*

|                                       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total number of books                 | 4,196 | 4,198 | 4,208 |
| Number of books added                 | 7     | 2     | 10    |
| Number of books issued for home study | 364   | 369   | 580   |
| Average daily attendance              | 25    | 18    | 25    |

**Guests**

Among those who stayed at the Institute's International House between January and June 1967 were the following :

Dr. M. Di Giacomo, nutritionist, Dr. Barbara M. Purvis, nutritionist, Dr. G. Blumenfeld, horticulturist, and Dr. K. H. Bain, Fishery Expert—experts, F.A.O. of the U.N. on a study tour;

Dr. A. V. Gushev, Visiting Scientist, from Leningrad, U.S.S.R., Professor W. Groth, Vice-Chancellor, Bonn University, Professor K. H. Shafer, Vice-Chancellor, Hamburg University, and Professor W. Meckelein, Vice-Chancellor, Stuttgart University, on an invitation tour to the Indian universities ;

Professor Zakariya Yusuf, Professor of Music, from Baghdad on UNESCO Fellowship;

Mr. Robert Owen, sculptor from London ;

Dr. P. I. Boriskovsky, Archaeologist, from Leningrad (U.S.S.R.) and Dr. A. D. Litman, Indologist, from Moscow (U.S.S.R.), on a Scientific mission ;

Dr. L. J. Leblanc, Professor of Biology, from Canada, on an educational tour ;

Professor A. S. Galiullin, Professor of Mechanical Engineering, from Moscow, on an educational tour ;

Professor M. B. Wilkins, Professor of Biology, from U. K., on an educational tour ;

Dr. J. Vam Overbeek, Biologist, with his son, from U.S.A., to attend a Symposium of All-India Biologist Conference ;

Dr. Stanislav Hruska, Ph.D. (Engg.), from Czechoslovakia, to attend M. T. D. R. Conference ;

Professor E. V. Chelischev, UNESCO expert, from U.S.S.R., to attend M.T.D.R. Conference ;

Dr. Mescheriakov, Professor of Engineering, from U.S.S.R. ;

Dr. L. Rappaport, scientist, from University of California ;

Professor M. G. Veselov from Leningrad University (U.S.S.R.) ;

Mr. L. G. Tholen, Engineer, from Spain;

Professor Paul J. Flory, Professor of Chemistry, with his wife, from Stanford University, U.S.A., to deliver a lecture at the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science ;

Dr. Barthelemy, Founder of Dr. Albert Schweitzer Village in France, with his wife, on a study tour as guests of the Government of India ;

Professor Mikhail Chailakhyan, Professor of Plant Physiology, from Moscow, to attend a Symposium ;

Professor Peter P. Remec, Professor of International Relations, from U.S.A., to deliver lectures at the Jadavpur University;

Dr. Vojtech Strand, from Prague, on a tour as a guest of the Ministry of Education, Government of India ;

Dr. Charles P. Schleicher, Professor of Political Science, from U.S.A. ;

Dr. Harold A. Symmons, scientist, from Australia ;

A group of twenty-two members of A.F. A.O., from France, on a cultural tour ;

Dr. Kadler Vladimir, Professor of Economics and Vice-Chancellor of Economics University, Prague, a Visiting Professor to Calcutta University ;

Dr. T. Horvath, Director, Ference Hopp. Museum, from Budapest, Dr. Mirjan Gruden and Dr. V. D. Veselinovic---both from Yugoslavia, on a cultural exchange study tour ;

Miss Nancy Gray Thompson, a research student on Indian Art History, from U.S.A.;

Mr. E. C. L. Donck, teacher, from Hague ;

Professor L. S. Sterman, Professor of Engineering and Telecommunication, from Moscow, to deliver a lecture at the Calcutta University;

Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Burri from Zurich ;

Mrs. M. C. Niles, an educator, from U.S.A.;

Mr. Lionil Nye, Barrister-at-Law, from England, on a social work ;

Professor Flemming Axencorne, Professor and Doctor of Philosophy, from Denmark, on a visit to this Institute ;

Professor Harold E. Snyder, from U.S.A., with his wife ;

Mr. Goodman, Adult Educator, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. Houst-Ekkohard Walter, a student, from Germany ;

Professor Cestmir Vermouzek, Professor of Chemistry, Professor Milos Zlamal, Professor of Mathematics, Professor E. Brauner, Professor of Power Engineering, and Professor Vladislav Osina, Dr. Sc., Professor of Science, all from Czechoslovakia, to deliver lectures at the Jadavpur University;

Miss Nazli Nour, a writer, from U.K.;

A group of twelve-members Youth Delegation, from U.S.S.R., on a cultural tour ;

Professor Y. V. Novozhilov, scientist, from U.S.S.R., Dr. Vassili V. Vakhrouchev, scientist, from U.S.S.R., and Dr. T. Grivet, scientist, from Paris, on a UNESCO Mission ;

Mr. E. Pallani, a student, from Italy ;

Dr. George Lozanov, Head of Scientific Centre of Bulgaria, on an Indo-Bulgarian exchange programme ;

Mr. Yap Fui Kong, W.H.O. Fellow, from Malaysia, on an official visit;

Professor Georg Stefanoff, Professor of Civil Engineering, from Bulgaria, to deliver a lecture at the Jadavpur University ;

Dr. K. Wolski, Anthropologist, from Poland, on an invitation from the Ministry of Education, Government of India ;

Mr. Victor P. Yakumin, research worker, from Moscow, on an official work ;



Mr. Sverre Gylseth, Consul General of Norway in Calcutta ;

Mr. K. Roger Nielsen, an engineer, from Norway ;

Mr. Antonian Arkady, an artist, from Moscow, to organize an Exhibition of Handicrafts from Caucasia ;

Dr. Triguna Sen, Education Minister, Government of India, on an official visit ;

Mr. Palloni from Italy to do research work ;

Mr. Karl Kirchberg, from Germany, on a tour ;

Mrs. Nina Kazpova, from State Museum of Oriental Art, Moscow, to organize an Exhibition of Caucasus Art ;

Mr. J. P. Naik, Adviser, Ministry of Education, and Member, Education Commission, Government of India, on an official tour ;

Miss Janette Nelson, laboratory technician, from Australia, as a W.H.O. Grantee on Cholera Research ;

Dr. John Rosselli, Ph.D., an author from London ;

Mr. Axel Horn, designer, from U.S.A. ;

Dr. A. M. Gade, Professor of Medicine, from Denmark ;

Mr. Charles, K. Brown, teacher, Dr. Donald Wehn, professor, Miss Dina Goldman, professor, and Mr. Elmer Headlee, teacher, all from U.S.A., to attend Summer Institute ;

Mr. Robert Skelton, Museum Curator, Victoria and Albert Museum, London ;

Mrs. Joy Kennedy North, teacher, from London ;

Dr. Geronimo De La Cerna, from Manila ;

Dr. Donald J. Schlueter, Physicist, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. Jens Westly, Metallurgical Engineer, from Norway on an official tour ;

Mr. David McCarthy, an educator of U. S. Embassy, New Delhi ;

Dr. C. V. Kanan, Professor of Anatomy, Secunderabad ;

Miss Diana Mathot from Pondicherry ;

Dr. William R. Riley, Professor of Physics, from U.S.A. on a visit ;

Professor F. W. Lohr, Professor of Mechanical Tool Technology from West Germany to deliver a lecture at the Jadavpur University ;

Professor V. G. Podoinitchin, UNESCO Expert, with his wife ;

Professor Marvin H. Pope, from Yale University, U.S.A., on a lecture tour ;

Professor E. B. McNeil, Professor of Physics, Professor J. F. Baxter, Professor of Chemistry, and Professor N. Sherman, Professor of Physics, all from U.S.A., to deliver lectures at the Jadavpur University ;

Mr. M. H. Rogers, Librarian, from U.K., on a visit to libraries ;

Mr. Donald G. Groom, from London International Service, on study tour ;

A group of twenty-two members of Stephens College, to attend Asian Seminar ;

A group of twenty-nine members of Western Michigan University, to attend Asia Humanities Seminar ;

Dr. A. J. Frank, Professor of Chemistry, with his wife, from U.S.A. on a tour.

## FEBRUARY CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)**Children below 12 years are not allowed*

## SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE KENA UPANISAD:

**Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.***On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali**1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th February*

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

**Govindagopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.***On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali**2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd February*

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE: THE PERENNIAL WISDOM OF VEDANTA

Swami Sastrananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English**17th, and 24th February*

## CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

## FILM SHOW

Devotional Film (in Bengali)

*Saturday, 10 February 1968, at 6 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## PUPPET SHOW

By

PUTUL RANGAM

*Tuesday, 13 February 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## MASK DRAMA

1. Lal Nekre
2. Sonali Shing

By

C. N. T.

(Children's Novel Theatre)

*Tuesday, 27 February 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only . . . . . Re. 1.00

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR FEBRUARY 1968

*Children's Own Galpa Āsar*

Second Saturday, 10 February, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 24 February, at 4.45 p.m., for Senior (10-16 age-group)

*Programme:*

Music, Recitation, Story-telling, and Film Show

## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| February 7  | <b>On the Concept of Social Sciences</b><br><i>Speaker:</i> Martin Greiffenhagen, Ph.D.<br><i>Professor and Director, Institute of Political Science,</i><br><i>University of Stuttgart, Germany</i><br><i>President:</i> Gouranga Chattopadhyay, M.Sc., D.Phil., F.R.A.I. |
| February 14 | <b>Religion and Society</b><br><i>Speaker:</i> Sailaja Kumar Bhattacharya, M.A., D.Phil.<br><i>President:</i> J. C. Banerjee, M.A.   |
| February 21 | <b>An Aesthetic Approach to the Ramayana</b><br><i>Speaker:</i> Hemanta Kumar Ganguli, M.A.<br><i>Department of Sanskrit, Jadavpur University</i><br><i>President:</i> Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.   |
| February 28 | <b>Philosophy of the Nineteenth-Century Bengal</b><br><i>Speaker:</i> Bhabatosh Datta, M.A., D.Litt.<br><i>President:</i> Nirmal Chandra Basu Ray Chaudhury, M.A., Ph.D.   |

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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LANGUAGES OF INDIA

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**A**T THE turn of the second half of the current century, the world witnessed the emergence of one of its largest territories, i.e. India as an independent Republic. While for us of the Indian Nation it was a fulfilment of long cherished aspirations for freedom, to the rest of the world we were included among the new, independent, and developing nations. However, with its traditions of culture, religion, philosophy, and scholarship going down to the proverbial hoary antiquity, for India to be considered as one among the new nations does not appear to be appropriate.

We are able to recount, with perhaps no small gratification, great achievements of humanity in thought and endeavour on the Indian soil as are evidenced through ancient Indian literary records of Sanskrit and Tamil which go back to the historical period of more than two-and-a-half thousand years ago. We can make specific mention of such monumental and scholarly endeavours as the compilations of Sanskrit epics of the *Mahābhārata*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the *Purāṇas* which are repositories of a composite cultural image of this vast nation since they embody all that goes to give a unified

picture of the Indian nation as one, and the spirit of which permeates through the entire literary scholarship of all, except Urdu, the well-known languages of India.

In the context of modern times, however, as a developing country, India, after its independence, has come to face such problems of economy, and cultural upheaval, as are normal to similar situations. The country with an area of over 3 million square kilometers, being about as large as Europe without Russia and with a population of 440 million consisting of so many different types of people coming from different parts of the globe at different times will naturally have many languages. This plurality of language appears to have played no disturbing role during the course of early and medieval periods of Indian history through which the Pan-Indian character of Indian civilization sustained itself. Historians tell us that geography, more than any other consideration, inevitably determined the earlier divisions of India into some distinct regions with strongly marked traits of their own, while formations of States depended much more on the military fortunes of individual rulers and dynasties than perhaps on the spoken languages of the people. In the contemporary situation, however, when there is an attempt to associate our masses representing agriculture and industry with political power and control as much as possible, and when there is a rising awareness of the need of participation by all the individuals in the programmes of development and literacy or education in the country, the problems of mass contact through intelligible media of communication make us face the problems of linguistic *diversity*.

I should now perhaps try to describe the language situation of our country in terms of the brief details of languages first. The languages are usually detailed in terms of their placements in the classifications of

language families, branches, or groups as are decided on the basis of grammatical characteristics of specific languages. The languages of this vast sub-continent composed of people of diverse racial elements are classified into four distinct families, viz. the Austric, the Tibeto-Chinese, the Dravidian, and the Indo-European. The people speaking languages of these different families represented four broad language culture groups and have had the history of living together for at least more than 3000 years. These contacts have introduced the normal processes of inter-influencing of linguistic traits in the realm of phonology and grammatical structure among the member languages of different families.

#### THE AUSTRIC LANGUAGE FAMILY

I. The Austric language family speakers occupy a vast area spreading from Central India through Assam, Burma, Malaya, and Indonesian Islands right up to the eastern and southern extremities of the Pacific including Hawaii Islands and New Zealand. This family is further sub-divided into the sub-families of (1) Austronesian and Austro-Asiatic. In India, the Austro-Asiatic sub-family is represented by the speakers belonging to the (a) Munda Branch who inhabit the central and eastern Indian regions and those belonging to the (b) Mon Khmer Branch including the Khasi group of languages of Assam and Nicobarese of the Nicobar Islands. Munda Branch includes the speakers of well-known languages of the people inhabiting mostly the out-of-the-way areas in the hills and jungles of Bihar, Chota Nagpur, Orissa, and Central India. The names of numerically more dominant speech community groups in this Munda Branch are Santal, Mundari, Ho, Bhumij, Korku, Kharia, and Savara. A scrutiny of 1961 language Census has shown that the Santali language is represented by more than three million speakers while there are

other 6 languages which are represented by more than a lakh of speakers of each—Mundari being represented by more than 7 lakh and Ho by more than 6 lakh speakers. Khasi language of the Mon Khmer Branch of this family is represented by 3.6 lakh speakers, while Nicobarese has the strength of nearly 14 thousand. The entire Austro-Asiatic family of languages in India is represented by a population of little more than 6 million people. Although on the basis of strength of population, the Austric language speakers represent only a fraction—about 1.5% of the total of Indian population, the languages are of great interest to scholars of linguistics and culture. Although actual field data on these languages has been lacking, the question of linguistic relationships with the speeches of other families like Indo-Aryan and Dravidian have attracted considerable attention of the interested scholars. In the Indo-Aryan studies some of the non-Aryan loans have been linked to Munda sources. Traces of Munda language characteristics have been reported to exist in some of the Tibeto-Burman group of speeches spread all along in the sub-Himalayan region from Himachal Pradesh in the north-west to the district of Darjeeling in the north-east. Much, however, remains to be done yet on these languages. Before the nineteenth century we have no specimens available of Austric speeches. It is only through the Christian missionaries from Europe working among the Santals, the Mundari speakers and others that we received information on these languages from the nineteenth century onwards. Due to mingling of the 'Austric' speech population with the more powerful and numerically stronger speakers of Indo-Aryan and Dravidian—a process of bilingualism has been at work and in many cases broad sections of Austric populations have either become bilingual or have almost totally switched over to the surrounding

Aryan or Dravidian language. Languages like Santali, Mundari, Khasi, and others have been reported to possess rich folk literature and some of which have been published also. The Austric speakers, particularly those of Central India and Chota Nagpur regions, are reported to be living under extremely poor economic conditions, subsisting mainly on forest product and agricultural or tea plantation labour. Literacy has been, as expected, almost at the minimum level (c. 5 to 8%) and, as such, even though there have been some efforts, as in case of Santali and Khasi, to cultivate the speeches, it appears difficult to hold out hopes of saving many of these languages from further switchover to the stronger and more prevalent prestige languages of their surroundings.

#### THE TIBETO-CHINESE FAMILY OF LANGUAGES

II. Speakers of Tibeto-Chinese family of languages of Mongoloid origin have been considered to have penetrated the Indian frontiers much earlier than the Indo-Aryan speakers. The area of the spread of Tibeto-Chinese speeches in India is much too vast. It stretches right from Baltistan in the west to the north-eastern frontiers of the country and further reaching up to the southernmost portions of Assam. Most of the region being mountainous and even full of thick forests, the density of population is small. Information on this speech community of the Indian frontiers is, however, very meagre. G. A. Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* is so far the only source through which some idea of linguistic classifications of this family of speeches can be meaningfully had. Grierson had called the speeches of this family as 'formless, ever moving ant-horde of dialects'. This remark in the context of the age-old isolation of small speech communities in the fastnesses of mountainous regions, making one speech unintel-

ligible to the other, appears to be borne out well through Grierson's comparative studies—mainly done through collaboration of Sten Konow of Oslo. During the Census of India in 1961, when efforts were made to register the responses from each speaker of the area in respect of his mother-tongue, the same condition of 'ant-horde' of speeches was again brought on record. As many as 226 names of mother-tongues were enumerated which, on scrutiny, partly on the basis of Grierson's classification and partly on the basis of local information collected by the Census Organizations, were tentatively considered to consist of no less than 98 languages. The population represented by the entire family of speakers was, however, only about 3.2 million which, on Indian population count, accounts for only 0.73%. However, seven languages of the family were recorded to possess strength of more than one lakh of speakers, while another 25 were recorded to have more than 10,000 speakers each. The languages with most numerous speakers are Meitei-Manipuri, Bado, Garo, Tripuri, Lushai, Miri, and Abor.

The main two sub-families of the Tibeto-Chinese Family are: (1) Siamese-Chinese and (2) Tibeto-Burman. The Siamese-Chinese family, however, is now represented only by one language to be included in the Indian scene and that is Khamti (only 300 speakers) which is distinct from Tibeto-Burman and belongs to the Tai Group of languages.

(2) The Tibeto-Burman sub-family of languages is to be further divided into 2 branches (a) Tibeto-Himalayan Branch and (b) Assam-Burmese Branch. (a) In the Tibeto-Himalayan Branch are included the (i) Himalayan Group of speeches which are spoken along the tracts to the south of the Himalayas from Himachal Pradesh in the west to the western borders of Bhutan in the east. These are further

split into Pronominalized and non-Pronominalized Groups of speeches. The Pronominalized Group of speeches has given evidence of Austric traits remaining in some of their member speeches. All these speeches are, however, represented by very small number of speakers within the Indian borders. Another group of the Tibeto-Himalayan Branch is the (ii) Bhotia or Tibetan Group. Tibetan, of course, refers more pointedly to the territory outside India; so a more acceptable nomenclature within Indian borders should be Bhotia which is represented by a number of important numerically strong speeches within Indian borders, namely, Ladakhi (more than 52,000), Lahuli, Bhutani, Sikkim Bhotia, Balti, and a number of other small communities combined under the common language name of Bhotia.

(b) Assam-Burmese Branch of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family consists of at least three numerically strong and significant language groups. They are (i) The Bodo Group (ii) The Naga Group and (iii) The Kuki-Chin Group.

(i) Bodo Group includes languages of the Bodo, Mech, Garo, Tripuri, Dimasa, Koch, and Rabha. Mikir spoken by more than a lakh of speakers is, on grounds of strong Bodo affinities, also considered nearer to the Bodo Group.

(ii) The Naga Group of languages is famous for mutual unintelligibility. Certain cultural traits of the Naga communities coupled with tribal rivalries and feuds were perhaps responsible for the isolation and consequently non-intelligibility of speeches of small groups of speakers. Some of the well-known names of the Naga languages are Angami, Sema, Ao Lotha, Mao, Konyak, etc. Lately, however, since larger tracts of Nagaland were brought under direct administration, more information on Naga languages has been reported; but pending actual investigations and studies,

these reports can be considered only tentative.

(iii) The Kuki-Chin Group also consists of a number of known speeches among which is Meithei or Manipuri, spoken by more than 6 lakh people and is the State language of Manipur. Manipuri had its own alphabet, also of Indian origin, which is estimated to have come in use by the fifteenth century when a section of Manipuris had become Hinduized. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Manipuri rulers and upper classes came under the influence of the Caitanya School of Vaiṣṇavism and by now they have become devout Vaiṣṇavas and have adopted Bengali script. Lushai-Mizo is another language of this group represented by more than 2 lakh of speakers. Among almost a host of Kuki languages the more numerically dominant ones are Thado Group of dialects, Paite, Hmar, and Halam each of which are represented by speakers of strength of more than 10,000.

(iv) A significant group of languages of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family occupies the north eastern frontiers of the country and may be named as 'North East Frontier Group', consisting of a number of known languages like Miri, Abor, Dafla, Aka, Mishmi, and Nokte. Abor group of dialects is represented by more than a lakh of people.

It will be seen that in spite of the complex ramification of languages and minor speeches all along the wide spread of these Tibeto-Chinese speeches, firstly, the numerical strength represented by the family is small and secondly, most of them with the exception of Meithei have yet remained almost unknown with regard to any literature, written or oral. Many of them have undoubtedly been effected by surrounding Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese, Bengali, Nepali, Hindi or Punjabi, but this perhaps cannot be said about quite a number of them. A number of speech communities,

of late, have given evidence of an inverted pride in exclusiveness and anxiety to appear different.

#### THE DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGE FAMILY

III. Of the four major Language Families in India, the Dravidian Family is represented by the second largest total of speakers, i.e. more than 107 million which is 24.47 per cent of the total population of India. This Family embraces four major regional language areas of South India, i.e. of the Telugu (about 38 million), Tamil (about 31 million), Kannada (17 million), and Malayalam (17 million). These four languages account for 95.58 per cent of the total number of Dravidian speakers in the country. Since the great linguistic survey of Grierson did not cover the Presidency of Madras and the States of Hyderabad and Mysore, we find only short accounts of the principal Dravidian languages of the Family. Following Grierson's work, however, the Dravidian linguistic field received considerable attention from scholars, both western and Indian, and a good amount of information has been available in recent years. Later researches in the Dravidian linguistic field have brought about a reassessment of Grierson's classifications and the current consensus of linguistic scholarship though not unanimous in detail, is in favour of adopting a different design of classification of languages under the Dravidian Family. As for instance, Grierson divided the Dravidian Family into three main groups: (1) Andhra Group represented by Telugu; (2) Dravida Group represented by Tamil and others; and, (3) The Intermediate Group represented by languages like Kurukh, Malto, Kui, Gondi, and Kolami. To these two further small groups were added, i.e. North-Western language referring to Brahui spoken in Baluchistan and semi-Dravidian Hybrids including a couple of speeches. Grierson's consideration



of his intermediate group of languages representing a stage grammatically somewhere midway between the Andhra and the Dravida Group has not found support with modern scholarship. Although a precise alternative classificatory scheme has not yet been offered, the languages of the Family have been broadly arranged geographically and the relative position of particular language or dialect is discussed with reference to its situation in the three broad Group areas. These are (1) South Dravidian including Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Kodagu, Tulu, Toda, Kota, and Badaga. To this is to be added Telugu also. (2) Central Dravidian including some of the lesser known and uncultivated speeches like Kui, Khond, Kolami, Konda, Gondi, Naiki, Parji, Koya, and some others. Telugu area, being geographically contiguous to both South and Central Dravidian, has been considered occupying a middle position between the two groups and so is included in both, i.e. South Dravidian and Central Dravidian areas. The third is North Dravidian Group area including Kurukh or Oraon, Malto and also Brahui which lie outside India.

Structurally the Dravidian languages belong to what is called agglutinative type of speeches which is different from the inflexional type to which belong the Indo-Aryan, or the prefix-suffix-infix adding type which characterizes the Austric; or the monosyllabic isolating type which includes the Tibeto-Chinese speeches. The agglutinative type also includes the Ural Altaic languages comprising of the Uralic speeches of Magyar, Finnish, Estonian, Lapp, and Vogul, Mordvin and Ostyak of Russia and Altaic speeches including Turkish, Mongol, Manchu, and Yakut. A genetic connexion between Dravidian and Ural Altaic has been sought to be established by a section of scholars but on the whole this theory has not been found acceptable so

far. Discoveries of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa civilization have thrown a flood of light on the pre-Aryan situation and these ancient city civilizations have been believed to be the work of Dravidian speakers. Discovery of a number of inscribed seals from these sites, however, holds out immense possibilities of the further revelations about this civilization but this unfortunately has to wait till such time as an accurate decipherment of these seals is available to the world. So far they seem to have defied all efforts of a reliable decipherment.

Of the four great Dravidian Languages, Tamil appears to have preserved its Dravidian character best. Although not fully in the realm of sound system, a good deal of its roots, forms, and words has retained the pure Dravidian character. The other three major languages, i.e. Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam have had heavy infiltrations from Sanskrit in the realm of lexicon. Tamil has a very old literature and the beginnings of it go back to about 2000 years from now. Emergence of Malayalam as an old offshoot of Tamil goes back to perhaps the ninth century, though it is from the fifteenth century that Malayalam literature took its independent life of development. Kannada as a cultivated language is almost as old as Tamil, while although early Telugu inscriptions go back to sixth to seventh century A.D., the literary career of Telugu appears to have got the start around the eleventh century.

This very sketchy and cursory survey of Dravidian speeches will perhaps still require at least a mention of some speeches which, though uncultivated, are yet quite interesting—some for reasons of being numerically strong, as also others being linguistically significant. In the South Dravidian Language Group are classified the speeches of Tulu (about a million speakers), Kodagu (about a lakh of speakers), and Toda and

Kota speeches of the Nilgiri Hills though numerically insignificant (having less than a thousand speakers in each case) are yet of considerable interest to linguists and culture scientists. Speakers of all these dialects are mostly bilinguals of Tamil or Kannada. The speakers of Tulu and Kodagu are concentrated in the State of Mysore and have close affiliations with Kannada. There are a number of speeches classified under Central Dravidian Group, which have, of late, been object of close study by scholars. Gondi, among them, represents more than 1.5 million speakers. The area of spread of Gondi, however, extends to the States of Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra in addition to Telugu speaking region wherefrom most of them have been reported to switch over to the regional languages of the Indo-Aryan forgetting their own. In any case, Gondi perhaps needs more detailed reports to be prepared on it. Other numerically strong languages are Kui, Parji, Koya, and Khond all of which have more than a lakh of speakers. In the North Dravidian Group there are two names, Kurukh or Oraon (over a million speakers) concentrating mainly in Bihar and West Bengal and Malto (about 90,000 speakers) found in Bihar.

#### THE INDO-EUROPEAN FAMILY OF LANGUAGES

IV. We may now turn to the Indo-European Family of languages which, of all the Language Families with their affiliated languages current in the large geographical regions of the world, embraces by far the largest number of human beings on earth. In India this great family is represented by its sub-family of languages, the 'Indo-Aryan' covering the widest area of the country and spoken by the largest proportion of the Indian population. According to 1961 Census, the languages classified under the Indo-Aryan and considered as

Indian languages within the geographical bounds of post-1947 India have registered a strength of approximately 322 million speakers which is about 73.3% of the entire Indian population. Out of the 15 major languages as specified in Schedule VIII of the Indian Constitution, eleven, including Sanskrit, come within the orbit of the Indo-Aryan Sub-Family.

The Indo-Aryan Sub-Family is further divided into 3 branches viz. (1) Iranian Branch; (2) Dardic Branch; and (3) Aryan Branch. (1) Iranian Branch is represented by languages like Persian, Pashto, and Balochi considered of foreign origin. (2) Dardic Branch is represented by Kafir, Dard, and Khowar groups of languages. Speakers of Kafir and Khowar Group do not come within the Indian boundaries, while the Dard Group is represented by Dardi, Kohistani, Shina, and Kashmiri. Kashmiri is scheduled in the Constitution of India. Though Dardic in origin, Kashmiri came under the influence of Sanskrit and Prakrit. It has the strength of 2 million speakers.

Linguistic position of the Dardic Group of speeches has been under study and scrutiny and most of the scholars like to include this group of speeches within the Aryan Branch.

(3) The third one, represented by the largest number of languages, is the Aryan Branch of the Indo-Aryan Sub-Family. The details of the classification of the Aryan Branch, which were originally in a way postulated by A. F. R. Hoernle and later elaborated by G. A. Grierson and established in the Linguistic Survey of India, have continued to be broadly adopted in the linguistic field with appropriate modification as have been considered necessary in the light of later researches and studies. The coverage of the languages of the Indo-Aryan Branch being much too wide, it will perhaps be convenient to restrict the brief

description of the main languages and dialects of the Branch, through enumeration of broad groups of languages classified in their proper circles with reference to common characteristics and socio-linguistic tendencies, often not found in the other groups. These are (i) North-Western Group including Lahnda or Western Panjabi Dialects and Sindhi; (ii) Southern Group including Marathi and Konkani; (iii) Eastern Group including Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, and Bihari language speeches of Maithili, Magahi, and Bhojpuri; and, (iv) Central Group including the broad Hindi language areas of Awadhi and Chattisgarhi, Hindi area of Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh including its literary forms of Urdu (known as vernacular Hindustani) and Khari Boli Hindi, Bangru, Braj Bhakha, Kanauji, and Bundeli, Panjabi including Dogri, Gujarati, Rajasthani speeches like Marwari, Jaipuri, Mewati, and Bhili Khandeshi dialects, and (v) *Pahari Group* including Eastern Pahari or Nepali in Nepal and India, Central Pahari including Garhwali and Kumauni dialects and Western Pahari including Chameali, Mandeali, Kului, Mahasu, and Sirmauri, etc.

(i) The *North Western Group* in the original scheme of Grierson's classification was delimited to the areas of West Panjab along the Indus Valley down to the province of Sind of pre-partition India. Still quite a number of Lahnda group of speakers were recorded within the geographical limits of the country during 1961 Census.

This Group of speeches accounted for about 9 thousand speakers including Multani, a significant variety of Lahnda which means 'sun setting', i.e. 'the west'. Sindhi, which has lately been specified in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, as one of the now 15 major regional languages was earlier described as the language of Sindh, now in Pakistan. During

1961 Census, major concentration of Sindhi speakers were reported from Gujarat (5 lakh), Maharashtra (3.5 lakh), Rajasthan (2.5 lakh), and Madhya Pradesh (2 lakh). Total strength of Sindhi speakers in India including Kachhi, which was hitherto considered as a dialect of Sindhi and about which, of late, there has been a rethinking, is 1.3 million. Sindhi language has preserved some of the archaic features of its Prakrit base in phonetics and morphology with certain implosive sounds as its peculiarity. Pre-partition Sindhi writings were carried out mostly in Perso-Arabic script. The dispersal of Sindhi population as displaced communities in almost all parts of India has perhaps been the cause of lack of literary activity in this language. The speakers are now trying to adopt Nagari script.

(ii) The *Southern Group* of the Indo-Aryan Branch is almost wholly represented by Marathi with its varieties. It is a language with very well developed literature coming down from the twelfth century. Marathi is one of the major languages specified in the Constitution and has a strength of over 33 million speakers. It employs Nagari script, the same as in Hindi. Konkani, a language of Goa and of a large number of speakers in Maharashtra, Mysore, and Kerala all along the western coastal region, has been considered a significant dialect variety of Marathi, though there exist differences of opinion with regard to this consideration and of late Konkani is being sought to be established as a separate language.

Though Grierson included Konkani within Marathi in his classifications, yet during his discussion on the topic on grounds of postulated historical split of Marathi and Konkani from their pre-stage Prakrit and subsequent independent development of each was inclined to consider these two as sister dialects. Subsequent studies seem to

support this view. As far as mutual intelligibility between Marathi and Konkani is concerned, it is reported to be on the high positive side among the people inhabiting Marathi language region. But the same has not received corroboration in respect of the Konkani population inhabiting Malayalam language area and the Kannada language area. In any case, an extensive study of the entire Konkani region is likely to bring out interesting findings both with respect to its position *vis-à-vis* Marathi as also the delimitation of Konkani variety areas showing significant cleavages. The total strength of Konkani speakers is about 1.4 million of which Goa shares about 5.5 lakh, Mysore 5 lakh, Maharashtra 2 lakh, and Kerala about 78 thousand.

(iii) For describing the *Eastern Group* of the Indo-Aryan Branch, we have to first give consideration to the compact group of three major languages all of which are cultivated and have tradition of considerable literature and scholarly activity. They are Bengali, spoken by 34 million (43 million in East Pakistan), Oriya—16 million, and Assamese—7 million. All of them are specified in the Constitution and are official State languages. All of them had their pre-stage of development in the Eastern Prakrit of the Aryan, i.e. Magadhi. Bengali and Assamese employ the same script with the exception of two special characters in Assamese while early Bengali and Assamese literature showed a close convergence. Assam, however, having had a separate independent existence, its speech community came to have the privilege of the language entirely separate from Bengali. Assamese, however, due to some of its special phonetic features makes it most of the time sound unintelligible to a Bengali speaker, although the grammatical features of both languages are very much similar. Bengali, in its standard form, is one of the most

cultivated speeches of India and has had traditions of scholarly activity of international stature. It is reported to have significant regional dialect varieties, though perhaps an intensive type of reporting work on them is yet a desideratum. A standard literary variety is used for prose all over the regional language area, but many works in colloquial of Calcutta and surrounding area are also extant. Calcutta colloquial made its entry into literature about a hundred years ago. Later, Rabindranath Tagore took it up and thus it received great impetus. Now though both the styles of Bengali are used side by side, the Calcutta colloquial is gaining ground more and more.

Oriya language has preserved more of archaic features among all the Eastern Group of languages, and has its own literature. Bengali and Oriya are largely mutually intelligible. According to Grierson, there were no significant dialect variations in Oriya but this has not found acceptance with subsequent scholarship although perhaps we have yet to see an authoritative work on this topic.

Bihari language speeches include three main dialects, namely, Maithili (about 5 million), Magahi (about 3 million) and Bhojpuri with about 8 million speakers. 'Bihari' is the name given to almost a non-existing language with a number of grammatical features shared by all the main three dialects falling within the region. It may be interesting to note that this name is no more palatable to the speakers of any of the above-named dialects. For reasons of grammatical similarities as also historical development, these dialects have got to be included in the Eastern Group, although it has been found that as one travels west from Bengal, the speeches show lesser and lesser distance with the languages of Eastern Hindi areas of Awadhi dialect. As such, Maithili dialect compares most favourably with the Eastern Group lan-

guages. Maithili has had traditions of literary activity from the fourteenth century and Poet Vidyāpati (A.D. 1400) is their proud possession. Maithili's literary life has been preserved till the present day while the language is being sought to be declared a language of the Constitution. The official State language of the entire Bihari area is, however, Hindi the standard Khari Boli form of which is used all through the State of Bihar. Bhojpuri speaking community is also numerically quite strong though not much evidence of literary activity excepting for folk songs, verses, and drama cycle, most of which are passed on orally, is available. Bhojpuri speakers, though very proud of their language and cultural traditions, have been looking more to the west of Bihar for their affiliations.

(iv) We now face the biggest group of languages of the Aryan Branch, i.e. the *Central Group* which encompasses the broad Hindi Regional Language Areas of eastern and western Hindi including dialects of Awadhi, Chattisgarhi of East Uttar Pradesh, dialects spoken in and around Delhi and in districts of Delhi, western Uttar Pradesh, termed by Grierson as vernacular Hindustani, Braj Bhakha, Bangru, Kanauji, and Bundeli, and is represented by a total of more than 205 million speakers. This broad central circle includes four major languages as specified in the Constitution of India. They are Punjabi, Gujarati, Hindi, and Urdu. Besides, there are linguistically significant as well as numerically strong dialect groups like Rajasthani Group of dialects, and Bhili and Khandeshi Groups of speeches, which are also within its broad orbit.

(a) Punjabi which is more appropriately to be affiliated in the North Western Group, for reasons of being strongly influenced by the languages of Central Group of speeches has been included in the Central Group and is represented by about 11 million

speakers. Majhi dialect of Amritsar has come to be recognized as the standard Punjabi variety while the position of Dogri and Kangri varieties considered by Grierson as dialects of Punjabi is now not acceptable to scholars. Dogri has a strength of about 9 lakh speakers and lately its speakers have sought an independent status for it. Punjabi is now the official State language of the reorganized State of Punjab. The official script is Gurmukhi.

(b) Gujarati is the language spoken in, an official language of the State of Gujarat with a strength of 20 million speakers and having had a cultivation of literature of a high order. A cursive form of Devanagiri script is used. Although Grierson noticed no dialects in Gujarati beyond speech differences between educated and uneducated individuals, modern scholars are inclined to define three dialect areas of Gujarat mainly on geographical basis. They are northern, central, and southern. Gujarati has developed some characteristics peculiarly its own. Further in some characteristics like preservation of three genders, Gujarati compares with Marathi as against Rajasthani and Hindi, Punjabi, etc. which have only two.

(c) Rajasthani was the name adopted by Grierson for a group of dialects spoken, roughly within the geographical area of the former Province of Rajputana. Dialect speakers of Marwari, Mewari, Malvi, Dhundhari, Nimadi, Harauti, and Banjari, etc.—all like to declare themselves as Rajasthani speakers. Rajasthani language area goes yet rather undefined and badly needs perhaps a thorough survey. The Western Rajasthani including Marwari has been found to have affiliations with North-Western Group of languages, specially Sindhi. All the same, Marwari and Gujarati appear to share large number of features of the pre-stage of both languages. On the other hand, Eastern Rajasthani, partly

due to early influence of Sauraseni Prakrit and partly due to proximity to western Hindi region came to have considerably close relationship with forms of Western Hindi. In any case, a language mapping survey of Western and Eastern Rajasthani speeches bringing out dialect cleavages of the border areas between these two sets of speeches would perhaps be very desirable. Rajasthani dialects are represented by about 15 million people. A section of Rajasthani semi-nomads, the Banjari speakers appear to have a very wide spread over the country and are known by the names of Lamani, Lambadi, etc. in South and Central India. Similarly, the speeches of another section of nomads called Gujars are also traced to Rajasthani source. The State language of Rajasthan is Hindi. There is, however, a revival of interest in re-establishing Marwari literature under Rajasthani name (early Marwari literature was called 'Dingal').

(d) *Bhili* and (e) *Khandeshi* dialect groups have been assigned independent language status by Grierson. Subsequent to Grierson, no attempts have been made to survey these groups. Bhili speech community is considered to be originally of Austric origin which switched over to Indo-Aryan completely. Grierson considered Bhili a sort of bridge between Gujarati and Rajasthani, while Khandeshi speech has been found to have points of affiliations with Marathi. In 1961 Census, Bhili was returned by more than 2.5 million and Khandeshi by about half a million speakers. For all practical purposes, however, all these speakers employ the regional languages of the states, viz. Hindi, Gujarati, or Marathi.

(f) The next language areas to be mentioned in Central Group of the Indo-Aryan Branch is the *Hindi regional language area*. By this *regional language area* is meant the part of North India where Hindi serves as the official medium of local Government

and Administration. We should, of course, for the present discussion exclude areas of Bihar, Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh which are named in connexion with Bihari, Rajasthani, and Pahari languages. On the basis of historical construct, the Eastern Hindi speeches Awadhi, Chattisgarhi, and Bagheli have developed from the Ardhamagadhi Prakrit as against Western Hindi dialect of Braj Bhakha, etc. which owe their development to Sauraseni. Awadhi has had good traditions of literary activity. Braj Bhakha also developed considerable literature. Before the advent of the British in Muslim time, while there is no evidence of any particular attainment of prestige by any of these languages in the then social climate, the languages, however, flourished to a certain extent perhaps under a balanced patronage of the rulers supporting the co-existence of different religious cults or literary traditions. Old Vedic was used for traditional Brāhmanical rituals, Sanskrit was for scholarly discussions and studies, while Persian was the language of the administration and law courts, and the trading communities were developing their own special medium of communication possibly the one developed around Delhi bazars with basic structure of the vernacular of that area, possibly 'Dahalwi' or 'Hindawi',...Hindustani received currency in the south region of Dakani. Thus Braj Bhakha became the literary vehicle for the poets of Kṛṣṇa Cult, Awadhi became the language of Ram Bhakti, while Maithili became famous for Vidyapati's Vaiṣṇava poetry. But the position as it stands now is that most of the literary activity of this type has lost its former social importance and lives in only folk traditions. Although the literary dialects like Awadhi and Braj Bhakha still attract literary attention, the socio-cultural processess of the present have tended to push them to the background in favour of the regional standard language

which had its base in a local dialect of west of Uttar Pradesh and around Delhi; and that has now come to serve as a native speech of a part of the literate section of urbanized society, and has attained the status of regional language through its intelligibility all through the region, as also through its cultivation even by speakers of widely divergent dialect areas. For limitations of space, it is not proposed to go into the discussion relating to the evolution of their standard Hindi language and the socio-linguistic proverbs involved in bringing up to the present status. It may be, however, useful to spell out different *strata*, through which this wide Hindi Language Area may be conveniently looked at.

The linguistic strata can be observed in the Hindi language area. To the first we may give the name (a) *the local stratum*. At this stratum are speech varieties of local dialects spoken at the local or village level. These form a chain of mutually intelligible local dialects extending through the entire length of the regional language area. They are understood in a limited area and vary geographically.

The second is (b) *the sub-regional stratum*. At this level are the sub-regional dialects which are as it were superimposed above the chain of local stratum and are understood over somewhat wider areas and are adopted as a second speech style for inter-group or inter-village communication. Within the present Hindi regional language areas according to Grierson's classifications, the sub-regional stratum groupings shall be Western Hindi, Eastern Hindi, Rajasthani, Bihari, and even Pahari, although Rajasthani, Bihari, and Pahari are linguistically closer to neighbouring regional languages. In the sub-regional stratum, the language distance increases with geographical distance to the extent of mutual unintelligibility between the extremes of the region.

The third may be named (c) *the regional stratum* which is to be referred to by the term Hindi and of which at the literary level is another variety called Urdu (differing in suffix and lexical structure). Another conversational style without purisms of Persian and Sanskrit borrowings is often termed as Hindustani. The varieties of this stratum are in turn superposed above the local and sub-regional dialects. As already indicated they are the native speech of only a minority of urban residents; for most people they serve as a second or third speech style.

The development of modern regional language did not really begin until the second quarter of the nineteenth century. After the consolidation of the British rule, when literary Urdu replaced Persian as the official language, this Urdu came to be taught in schools and greatly gained in prestige. Because of its association with Islam, Hindus did not consider it acceptable as the sole literary language and a prose style in Devanagiri script substituting Persian loans by Sanskrit borrowings started being cultivated. This Hindi for sometime became a symbol of rising forces of Hindu reforms represented by centres of Banaras and Allahabad, movements of Arya Samaj in Punjab and national uprisings in Bengal. Thus, with the turn of nineteenth century, the New Hindi Regional Standard replaced the sub-regional dialect literatures throughout the present regional Hindi language area. With the increasing tempo of urbanization and improvements of communication the Regional Standard made greater inroads among the local dialects. The native speakers of the Standard although still represent a minority with a much larger number of individuals, the Standard continues to function as a second or third speech style. According to 1961 Census statistics, Hindi was returned by a total of 133.5 million speakers. These figures exclude

Bihari, Rajasthani, Urdu, and Pahari speakers which would otherwise add up another total of 61 million.

#### THE PAHARI GROUP

V. The 'Pahari Group' of the Aryan Branch is the convenient name adopted in Grierson's Linguistic Survey for the Indo-Aryan speeches spread along the Himalayan region from Bhadrawah in the west to Nepal in the east. On these settlements Grierson's observations are that the region has been populated through 4 waves of speech community immigrants to the areas, first being of the Austric origin, second of the Tibeto-Burman stock, third an offshoot of the Dardic speaking the Khasha, and fourth from the Indo-Aryan plains of Rajputana. The region is divided in three areas of dialect groups (a) Western Pahari dialects (b) Central Pahari dialects of Kumaoni and Garhwali, and (c) Eastern Pahari or Nepali dialects. Nepali has had the official support of Nepal Government. According to 1961 Census, the Pahari Group is represented by about 4.5 million speakers within Indian boundaries. Very little significant work of linguistic survey has been done in these regions and the area needs a good deal of linguistic check-up through precise surveys. The language of instruction in all these areas is Hindi.

In the foregoing remarks I have made attempts to outline broadly the Indian linguistic scene. The description should, however, be incomplete without the mention of English which, though considered foreign to India, has been so intimately associated all through the process of our modern cultural evolution. As a language of our pan-Indian administration, education and scientific pursuits, and international communication, the place of English in our cultural matrix cannot be underestimated. Native speakers of English language in the country number 2.2 lakhs, while census

calculation have shown that a total of more than 11 million individuals are conversant with this speech.

#### CONCLUSION

This much about the *diversity* of languages on the Indian Linguistic Map. To magnify this aspect of the situation, however, is not my object. Perhaps we may not overlook the other side of it too, i.e. *unity*. For instance, calculation shows that the 15 main languages of our Constitution account for 87.2 per cent of the entire Indian population, while the remaining less than 13 per cent covers all the rest of languages. This, by no means, is to belittle the situation of more than 55 million of our population. The point meant to be made here is that the diversity is perhaps confined to only a small section. All the same in the socio-linguistic situations of a developing country like ours, we cannot perhaps close our eyes to some of our problems which are directly related to language in some way. Such linguistic problems include those of widespread illiteracy (our literacy is yet less than 25 per cent), lack of standardized language or languages, the need for pedagogic tools in language teaching, and the lack of modern technical vocabularies in languages which must be suddenly employed for communicating technical or scientific knowledge. We perhaps possess fully quantified specifications of our different languages, but may be we need to know a lot more about the *when* and in *what* circumstances languages are used and what are the *attitudes* of the people in using languages in multilingual situations. Exact socio-linguistic processess behind the situations of multilingualism are perhaps yet to be worked out, as may enable us to appreciate the points of view of other language speakers better and pave the way to still greater mutual understanding. There could be no denying the fact that the



better the information on various social usages of languages is, the more efficiently the desired results are likely to be achieved.

It may, however, be recognized that proper understanding of language situations is not always done on the basis of rational analysis, since several extra-linguistic factors like emotional, regional, religious identifications or regional rivalries or preservation of elite-interests come in. But the

fact remains that the availability of reliable information on the language situation of the country can be influential in making policy decisions and is of tremendous value in planning and carrying out the implementation of the policies.

Who will supply such information? India has had the greatest of traditions of linguistic scholarship, and it is to this source that we may confidently look up again for the help needed.

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In the beginning was the word, for with it man became man. Without those strange noises called common nouns, thought was limited to individual objects or experiences sensorily—for the most part visually—remembered or conceived; presumably it could not think of classes as distinct from individual things, nor of qualities as distinct from objects, nor of objects as distinct from their qualities. Without words as class names one might think of this man, or that man, or that man; one could not think of Man, for the eye sees not Man but only men, not classes but particular things. The beginning of humanity came when some freak or crank, half animal and half man, squatted in a cave or in a tree, cracking his brain to invent the first common noun, the first sound-sign that would signify a *group* of like objects: *house* that would mean all houses, *man* that would mean all men, *light* that would mean every light that ever shone on land or sea. From that moment the mental development of the race opened upon a new and endless road. For words are to thought what tools are to work; the product depends largely on the growth of the tools.

WILL DURANT

*The Story of Civilization (Our Oriental Heritage)*, Eighth Printing p. 72

## INDIAN PHILOSOPHY AND MARTIN HEIDEGGER

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*A speaker and a writer, Dr. H. K. De Chaudhuri is the author of many books, and among his books Amṛter Sandhān in Bengali, and Tattvajijñāsa—a treatise on Epistemology in Sanskrit, deserve special mention. The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. De Chaudhuri at the Institute in June 1966.*

THE subject of the present discourse is primarily the meaning of Indian philosophy in general, and the issue (question) whether the main schools of philosophy form a comprehensive, meaningful whole or they are just a body of heterogeneous types which are characterized as Indian simply because of their common origin in India. The answer to this question is that these diverse types of philosophy have certain common presuppositions and common aim and object; but they do not follow any common course in view of their divergent outlooks, and these different types of thought have evolved around certain fundamental problems which are characteristic of Indian thought in general. This is the line of our exposition of the subject. Incidentally there is some discussion of certain essential features of the Fundamental Ontology of Martin Heidegger, the eminent German philosopher of the modern age, with a view to exhibiting certain affinities and common trends of thought, in spite of fundamental differences in perspectives. In my interpretation of the meaning of Indian philosophy, I have followed the traditional method of exposition; but I have supplemented it by resorting to the phenomenological method of interpretation as emphasized by Heidegger. Phenomenology seeks to penetrate into the essence of things, 'Zu den Sachen Selbst', as originally conceived by Husserl; but Heidegger treats it

primarily as a method of investigation. According to him, phenomenology is the way of access to the theme of ontology and reveals the 'how' of exhibition and the way of treatment of the 'what' which is to be treated in this science (*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 34-35). In tackling the fundamental problems, our systematizers of thought have sought to determine 'what is it?' (*kim idam*) and 'why is it?' (*katham idam*) and to interrelate them. I have followed this method in the light of Heideggerian method of exposition and find it very helpful in clarification of meaning and structure of Indian thought.

Plato held that astonishment or wonder as pathos (emotion) is the *archae* (beginning) of philosophy (*thēaitetos*). But Indian philosophy had its origin in the visionary experience of mystic seers, *ṛṣis* as they are called; and the term *darśana* signifies vision of the Supreme Being, vision of reality that eludes grasp and revelation of mystery that surrounds Being. This sense prevails in the *Rg-Veda* and *Atharva-Veda*, and a few instances are cited here: 'The sages behold the supreme stride of Viṣṇu (the pervading deity), as the wide extended eye sees in the sky' (*Rg-Veda*, I.22.20 and *Atharva-Veda*, VII.27.7); 'We behold the light in the higher region beyond darkness and attained to that light beholding Sūrya, the sun among the shining deities' (*Rg-Veda*, I.50.10); 'Vena (the shining one) beholds the Supreme in-

side the cavern (of the heart) where the universe becomes of one form. He is the one who knows the immortal (*amṛtasya vidvān*)' (*Atharva-Veda*, II.1.1); 'I have seen him. (*Varuṇa*) who may be seen by all. I have seen his car on earth. He hath enjoyed my hymn of praise' (*Rg-Veda*, I.25.18). The Upaniṣads speak of the mystical vision of Brahman-Ātman, the vision of unity underlying the manifold: 'Of him who beholds this—all this of Ātman' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII.26.1); 'Ātman is to be seen, heard, intuited, and contemplated upon' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II.4.15); 'He who beholds diversity attains death after death' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II.1.10-11). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* gives expression in majestic verse to the sublime visionary experience which Arjuna had of God. (XI.15-19): 'O God, I behold in Thy body the *devas* (shining deities) and various kinds of beings. ...

'I behold Thee, Thy unending form on all sides. ...

'I behold Thee who hast no beginning, middle, or end, who art of infinite power and infinite arms, who hast the sun and moon as eyes, who hath the blazing fire as face, and who makes the universe aglow with the lustre of his fiery energy.'

We need not multiply similar instances from the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

The attempt to penetrate beyond the veil of darkness and to solve the riddle of Being marks the birth of philosophy in India. Profound philosophical speculation is noticeable in the riddle hymn of the *Rg-Veda* (I.164) and several other hymns in the tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Rg-Veda* (e.g. X. 81, 82, 90, 121, 129, etc.). There is the marked development of thought in the speculative hymns of the *Atharva-Veda*. The sublime hymn called the *Nāsadiya-Sūkta* (*Rg-Veda*, X.129) raises the problem of Being in language clothed in mystical and poetic imagery. 'There was neither Being (*sat*) nor non-Being (*asat*) then. There was neither death

nor immortality.' The primordial state (*prāgavasthā*) in which 'all this' (*sarvam idam*) was latent (*pralayāvasthā*) cannot be characterized either as Being or non-Being. 'There prevailed darkness hidden by darkness; and indistinguishable ocean was "all this". The meaning of darkness is that what prevailed was the veil of Being enveloping everything; the gradual revelation of Being is creation. 'This creation, whence it came into being, whether He sustains it or not, He who is the overseer in the highest firmament—He verily knows it or, perchance, He knows it not.' The *Rg-Veda* preaches again that 'in the beginning there was the golden germ (*Hiranyagarbha*), the sole Lord of what was. He sustained the earth and this heaven. To what god shall we do homage with oblation?' (X.121.1). In the *Atharva-Veda* the first and supreme Principle is variously conceived. It is the shining one (*virāj*), the universal support (*skambha*), the Lord of creatures (*prajāpati*), the ordainer (*dhatar*), the sustainer of all being (*kāla*), that which is the highest (*paramēsthin*), and finally Brahman. 'Being is one, which is variously conceived by the sages' (*Rg-Veda*, I.164.46). 'The inspired and the wise regard the One in diverse ways' (*Rg-Veda*, X.11.45). The principal Upaniṣads show how the quest for Brahman was pursued and how speculative thought emerged and evolved along different lines. The Upaniṣads furnish esoteric or mystic explanations of the secret doctrines of the Vedas concealed in the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads came to be known as the *Vedānta-vijñāna*, the science of Vedānta representing the end or culmination of the Vedic thought and the emergence of a new type of thought, viz. *Brahma-vidyā* and *Ātma-vidyā*. Here we cannot deal with the evolution of philosophy and the rise of the systems within this short compass.

#### THE UPANISADS

The fundamental thought of the Upani-

śads is centred around the two main concepts, viz. Brahman conceived as the cosmic principle, the first and supreme Being, and Ātman viewed as the psychical principle; and all the other problems are tackled as corollary therefrom. In other words, the single problem is: 'What being known, all this becomes known' (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I.1.3). 'What is that by which the unheard of is heard, the unthinkable is conceived, and the unknown is known?' (*Chāndogya*, VI.1.3, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.4.5. and IV.5.6). The main currents of thought may be summed up as follows: (1) Monism proclaiming the sole reality of Brahman and the identity of Brahman and Ātman, as inculcated in the great texts (*mahāvākya*); *tattvam asi*, (That thou art), (*Chāndogya* VI.9-VI.16) *aham brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman), (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, I.4.10); *ayam ātmā brahma*—'This self is Brahman (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.5.19); (2) Pantheism or the doctrine implying *sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ brahma* (Verily all this is Brahman), (*Chāndogya*, III.14.1); and (3) Theism, Brahman being viewed as the Lord controlling the universe (Īśa, Īśāna, Īśvara); the Upaniṣads build up the corresponding world-views accordingly. This *Brahmavidyā* constitutes the main theme of the Upaniṣads; it is the *parāvidyā*, supreme knowledge as distinguished from all kinds of *aparāvidyā*, subsidiary knowledge even including the vedic lore (*Muṇḍaka* I.1.3.5); (*Chāndogya* VII, 'Nārada-Sanat-Kumāra' episode). But the nature of Brahman is indefinable. The only way in which Brahman can be described is as the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* puts it, *satyaṁ jñānam anantam* (*Taittiriya Upaniṣad*, II.1; See also *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka* VIII.1). The expression means Brahman, the Real, Self-revealing and Limitless. The meaning and import of this proposition becomes intelligible in terms of Śaṅkara's interpretation. The three concepts, *satya*, *jñāna*, and *ananta* are not mutually related; they are substantives,

and each one an indirect characterization of Brahman. Brahman (alone) is the real. When the nature or essence of an entity by which it is determined is never susceptible of any modification (*vikāra*), it is the real (*sat*) and what relates to the real is *satyam*. Secondly, Brahman as *jñānam* does not imply that Brahman is the subject of all knowledge (*jñānakartā*) because that would imply the threefold distinction, viz. the subject, the object, and the process of knowing. Brahman cannot be both the subject and the object of knowledge. The process of knowing reveals some object; and applying the analogy it may be held that the essence of Brahman is self-revelation, just as *Savitṛ*, the sun, reveals itself. Finally, *anantam* really means Brahman as indefinable. An entity is defined in terms of some other things beyond itself. The ultimate is not susceptible of definition because there is nothing in terms of which it can be explained. A definition implies limitation; but the ultimate is limitless. This concept is explained in the *Chāndogya* (VI.24.1) in the following manner: 'When one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the infinite (*bhūmā*). But when one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else, that is the small (the finite). Verily, the infinite is the same as the immortal; the finite is the same as the mortal 'Venerable Sir, on what is the infinite established?' 'In its own greatness or not even in greatness.'

But what does 'All This', this world of Existence imply? Whatever exists, the realm of being constitutes the world (*Taittiriya Upaniṣad*, II.6). The whole world, whatever exists, springs from, and has its being in Life (*Kaṭha*, II.3.2). The world comprises whatever is formed and formless (*Praśna* 1.5); it is the supporter of all (*Muṇḍaka*, II.1.3). All this, the world within the world, is enveloped by God (*Īśa*, I). The question is: How does

all this come into being? Generally speaking, all types of theories concerning the origin of the world are represented in the Upaniṣads. First, there is the conception of emanation of which there are various forms; secondly, the doctrine of unreal or illusory appearance, and finally, the doctrine of creation. Whether the Upaniṣads clearly enunciate the doctrine of Māyā is a debatable point. But the doctrine of Brahman-Ātman implies the unreality of the manifold, i.e. duality, as it were (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.4.14, IV.5.15). What appears to be is not the real but the veil of reality. 'The face of the real is covered with a golden disc. Unveil it, O Puṣan for the view of reality (*satya*) which is *dharma* (Law unto itself)' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, V.15.1; *Īśā*, 15). The same idea is expressed elsewhere in almost similar terms. 'This unreality (*anṛtam*) is enclosed on both sides by reality (*satyam*); it becomes reality, as it were' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, V.5.1). (Here the meaning of the concept *Satyam* is expounded in the sense of un-veiling, dis-covering—an idea emphasized by Heidegger. We shall refer to this later). The monistic trend of thought in the Upaniṣads assumes an idealistic-cum-pantheistic colouring which is another striking feature; and then there is also the realistic strain of thought noticeable, here and there. As a matter of fact the Upaniṣadic thought is not homogeneous. These tendencies foreshadow the rise of the various types of philosophy.

We have explained in a nutshell the Upaniṣadic concept of *vidyā*. Now, according to subsequent thought, this *vidyā* consists in determination of essence (*tattvam*). Philosophy which originally implied *Vision of Being*, Brahman-Ātman is now held to be the science of essences (*tattvajñānam*); and a philosopher is one who has an insight into the essence of entities, i.e. *tattvadarśin*. Let us explain this point of view. (This is very important from the modern point

of view as well. Heidegger emphasizes this point in explaining the meaning of philosophy). This concept comes into foreground during the age of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* when the system had not yet arisen. There is no existence (*bhāva*) of non-Being (*asat*), and there is no non-existence (*abhāva*) of Being (*sat*). The conclusion about those two has been perceived by the seers of essences (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, II.16). The idea succinctly expressed here admits of different interpretations. Śaṅkara's interpretation appears to be most sound. He interprets it as follows. That is real in regard to which (our) consciousness (*buddhi*) does not encounter any contradiction. 'Tat' is a pronoun, *sarvanāma* that stands for all and Brahman is 'All This'. Thus *tattvam* signifies that which relates to Brahman and those who are capable of realizing the essence (*yāthātmya*) of Brahman are philosophers (*tattvadarśin*). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* states explicitly who may be regarded as knower of *tattva* (*tattvavit*). They are the wise who have an insight into the essence of Being (IV.34, VI.21). When the *Bhagavad-Gītā* refers to knowledge, it stipulates knowledge as relating to essence (*tattva*, *yathātmya*) of any entity (IV.9, VII.3, IX.24, X.7, XI.54, XVII.55); and again, knowledge of essence implies knowledge of the whole (III.28-29). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* defines knowledge as such (XIII.11): 'Constancy in the knowledge of self, insight into the end of the knowledge of the Real—this is declared as knowledge and what is different from it is non-knowledge (*ajñānam*). But in case of Brahman such knowledge is not possible. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, 'I shall describe that which is to be known and by knowing which immortality is attained. It is the supreme Brahman which is beginning-less and which is neither Being (*sat*) nor non-Being (*asat*)' (XIII.12). The same idea is expressed in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (II.3.12): 'How can

Brahman be realized except by saying that Brahman exists.' Thus *tattva* means *svarūpa*, own nature, *svabhāva*, own Being, of any kind of being including concepts. The *Māṇḍūkya Kārika* (II.38) says: 'By realizing the essential nature of self and psychical entities (*ādhyātmika*) and external entities (*bāhya*) and having been attuned with the essence (*tattvibhūta*) and delighting in that, one does not deviate from the inner essence, i.e. one has an insight into the inner essence.'

The various systems which gradually evolved emphasize this point in defining their subject-matter. We have already explained that the Vedānta means *Brahmātmata*, the system that is solely concerned with the essential knowledge relating to Brahman-Ātman. The Sāṅkhya (lit. knowledge) signifies the system that is concerned with the essential knowledge relating to Puruṣa, Self and Prakṛti, the source of Cosmos, *Physis*, *Natura* as summed up in twenty-five *tattvas*. Yoga, the cognate system of the Sāṅkhya, is primarily concerned with *Samādhi-tattva*. Mīmāṃsā which is not a full-fledged system of thought aims at interpretation of Vedic *dharma* (duty), i.e. *Dharmata*. The Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems specifically mention what kind of *tattvajñānam* they aim at; they define explicitly their special fields of study. In the case of Nyāya, it is knowledge of *tattva* relating to mode of cognition (lit. instrument of knowledge) *pramāṇa* and of cognizable objects, *prameya*; and in the case of Vaiśeṣika, it is knowledge of *tattva* relating to the six categories of Being, viz. substance (*dravya*), quality (*guṇa*), action (*karma*), generality (*sāmānya*), and particularity (*viśeṣa*) (*Nyāya-Sūtra*, 1.1.1; and *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra*, 1.1.4 respectively). Subsequently the category of negation (*abhāva*) was added to the list of six categories. Vātsyāyana, the commentator of Gautama's *Nyāya Sūtra*, defines in a realistic sense the nature of *tattva* with which the Nyāya is

concerned (introductory commentary on I.1.1.). Finally, the Buddhist philosophy aims primarily at the knowledge of the way leading out of this vale of sorrow and darkness, i.e. *nirvāṇatattva*.

#### THE NATURE OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

We would now discuss very briefly the nature of the different types of the Indian philosophy and in what sense they may be said to build up a common whole. First, all the systems have certain common presuppositions. They are all concerned with the problem of Being, *sat* and non-Being, *asat* and the problem of Existence (*sattā*, *astitā*, *bhāva*). They all seek to investigate the ways of knowing; and by this means they endeavour to solve the riddle of existence and aim at the exposition of freedom (*mokṣa*), necessary conditions of freedom and the paths leading to freedom. But as they are differently oriented, their approaches are necessarily different. They seek to build up their world-views (*Weltanschauung*) and life-views (*Lebensanschauung*) from their basic points of view and thus they came to be designated as different types of philosophy in the sense of *darśana* or view of reality. This term *darśana* gained currency presumably in the third and fourth century A.D. Here we attempt to sketch in bare outline the essences of the systems.

The Vedānta represents the culmination of the Upaniṣadic thought. In view of the fact that all the orthodox systems of the Indian philosophy look upon the Śruti as the undisputed authority, it would be relevant to point out in few words how the Vedānta stands *vis-a-vis* other Indian system. The Vedānta is closely related to the Sāṅkhya-Yoga in many respects except plurality of Puruṣas and the nature of Prakṛti. Later Vedānta, however, describes *māyā* as the composite of three *guṇas* and compromises to a certain extent

with the Sāṅkhya. In expounding the nature of the phenomenal world, the Vedānta speaks of unreal modification (*vivarta*) a kind of apparent transformation mis-called illusory transformation, while the Sāṅkhya adheres to the doctrine of real transformation (*pariṇāma*). The Vedānta is directly antagonistic to the realistic outlook of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and is also opposed to the Mīmāṃsā so far as it accepts the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika categories, but it agrees with it regarding the self-validity (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya*) of knowledge. The Advaita Vedānta closely resembles the Mādhyanika in its interpretation of the nature of the phenomenal world; but it is utterly wrong to characterize Śaṅkara's philosophy or *Māyāvāda* as a brand comprising the elements of *Vijñānavāda* and *Sūnyavāda*. As against the Mādhyanika doctrine, that the world is wholly devoid of any essence (*niḥsvabhāva*), the Advaita Vedānta holds that the phenomenal world although a product of *māyā* is a meaningful coherent whole from the relative point of view.

In this connexion we would delineate a basic sketch of the Advaita world-view mainly as formulated by Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*. The Advaita Vedānta does not altogether deny the existence of the world as an illusion or mirage as commonly held. It merely asserts that the world which is *māyā* and a product of *māyā* lacks reality of its own (*pāramārthikī sattā*); but it is a cosmic whole which has empirical reality (*vyavahārikī sattā*). Śaṅkara's problem is how to reconcile this status of the world with the Upaniṣadic doctrines of denial of multiplicity, *neha nānāsti kiṃcana* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV.4.19) and of pantheism, *sarvaṃ khalvidam brahma* (*Chāndogya*, III.14.1). This he does on the basis of his *Māyā* doctrine as enunciated in the Upaniṣad. He elaborates the concept of *māyā*, works out the implications of *avidyā* and *ajñāna*, nescience,

and the doctrine of unreal modification, *vivarta*. The world has its being in Brahman when associated with *māyā* out of mere sport; but although originator and controller (*antaryāmin*), Brahman remains unaffected by *māyā*. The world subsists in Brahman in the sense that the being of an unreal snake may be said to subsist in the rope as long as ignorance prevails and the illusion is not dispelled. Similarly, *samsāra*, the cycle of existence in which the individual (*jīva*) is entangled endures until the world-illusion is dispelled and the *jīva* is released from bondage. *Māyā* is conceived as power (*śakti*) of God, qualified Brahma (Saguṇa Brahma) which is indistinguishable from him, i.e. God conjures up the world-show by *māyā* out of mere sport. *Māyā* has a double role to play; it is a veil on Being and obscures and conceals the nature of reality; and, at the same time, it projects out of itself the phenomenal world of appearance. Śaṅkara seeks to establish the doctrine on the basis of the concept of *adhyāsa*, the imposition of self on not-self and *vice versa* which is an inherent tendency with us. *Māyā* is an unreal attribute (*upādhi*) of Īśvara, and *avidyā* is the attribute of *jīva*. The problem of relation between Brahman and *jīva* is viewed as one of identity-indifference comparable to that of fire and spark. The *jīva* is characterized by limiting adjuncts such as mind and body and is different from Brahman; but it merges in the supreme self on release, like rivers losing their identity in the ocean. (*Brahmasūtra*, I.4.21-22). In this connexion we can only refer to the another type of the Vedānta, viz. qualified monism (*viśiṣṭādvaita*) of Rāmānuja which is an attempt to synthesize monism with theism.

The evolution of the Sāṅkhya-Yoga system forms a unique chapter in the history of Indian thought. Sāṅkhya and Yoga represent admixture of ancient thought drawn both from non-Vedic and Vedic,

mostly Upaniṣadic sources. Early Sāṅkhya, as codified at a later age in the *Mahā-bhārata* (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Śāntiparvan*, *Anu-gītā*, etc.) and *Purāṇas* (*Viṣṇupurāṇa*, *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, etc.) had a theistic character. However, a brief discussion on these points would carry us far afield. The Sāṅkhya offers a unique conception of Cosmos, Physis, *Natura* and shows specifically that a world-view cannot be built up in terms of realism-idealism or naturalism-panpsychism, etc. Prakṛti in its primordial state is the unity of these kinds of intertwined strands of subtle entities in their infinite varieties which are known as *guṇas* in a state of equilibrium or equipoise (*sāmyāvasthā*). The transcendental influences of Puruṣas who are infinite in number initiate the process of evolution of Prakṛti. The *guṇas* which remain intertwined for ever are of three kinds: (1) *Sattva* or essence, essential which is characterized by the tendency to manifestation; (2) *Rajas*, a form of energy which is characterized by the tendency towards any kind of activity; and (3) *Tamas*, inertia which is characterized by the tendency to counteract manifestation or activity. Here tendency is used in the implication of the state of being (*bhāva*). All kinds of phenomena are conglomerate products of the *guṇas* which constantly act and interact on one another, supporting and overpowering one another; and the nature of entities is determined by the degree of predominance of any type of *guṇas* in any form. The first evolute in the transformation of Prakṛti is *mahat* (lit. the great), the germ of cosmos, psychophysical world; the second is *ahamkāra*, ego and then the two series come into being, one comprising *antahkaraṇa*, the internal organ, and senses (*indriya*), viz. five sense-organs and five motor organs and the other comprising five *tanmātras*, essences of five kinds of gross elements and then the gross elements (*bhūta*). Thus the two phases of evolution,

the psychical (*buddhisarga*) and the physical (*bhautikasarga*) are set in motion. The history of cosmic evolution which is the interplay of these twenty-four principles (*tattvas*) with Prakṛti at the head is for the enjoyment of Puruṣas. Thus the system stands on the superstructure of twenty-five principles which constitute the chain of causal relations. Puruṣas are infinite, eternal, and omnipresent; they are not agents (*kartā*) but passive enjoyers (*bhoktā*). The evolution of Prakṛti is an unceasing process owing to the presence of Puruṣas who get entangled in the *samsāra* due to ignorance, *avidyā*, as conceived by the system. Unlike the Sāṅkhya, the Yoga posits Īśvara, a special kind of Puruṣa unconnected by afflictions, *karma*, and their function or latent deposits. In Him the germ of the Omniscient is at its utmost excellence (*Yogasūtra*, 1.24-25).

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika presents an altogether different kind of world-view, the striking characteristic of which is the pluralistic outlook in accordance with a thorough-going realism. The Nāya stresses the logico-epistemological standpoint while the Vaiśeṣika emphasizes the ontological standpoint. According to the Vaiśeṣika, the term 'category' (*padārtha*) includes *dravya* (substance), *guṇa* (quality), *karma* (action), *samavāya* (inherence) *sāmānya* (universal) and *viśeṣa* (particularity) to which *abhāva* (negation) has been added later. The Nyāya, however, uses the term in a loose sense meaning sixteen topics classified under the two, viz. instrument of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) which embraces the entire sphere of logic and epistemology and objects of knowledge (*prameya*).

#### BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

We would now add a few words about the Buddhist philosophy and confine our observations as to how it sought to tackle the problem of Existence. The fundamental



doctrines may be summarized as follows: (1) the doctrine of impermanence of the world of phenomena, the realm of existence; (2) the doctrine of essencelessness; and (3) the doctrine of twelvefold chain of causal relations. In this connexion the question that crops up is how the various schools of Buddhism may be said to constitute a single unified type of philosophy. In spite of their differences in external outlook and thought, they possess certain fundamental features directly traceable to the teachings of Gautama Buddha, the enlightened one, and make up a distinctive whole and at the same time an essential, integral part of the Indian philosophy in general. The fundamental problem is how the wheel of existence (*bhavacakra*) or the wheel of life (*saṃsāracakra*) comes into being and how freedom from this dark vale of existence is possible. The first sermon of Gautama Buddha after the attainment of *sambodhi* (enlightenment), viz. discourse on setting in motion the wheel of the doctrine or *Dharma cakkaṭṭhapattana-sutta*, formulating the four noble truths (*ariyasacca*) and the eightfold path (*aṭṭhāṅgika māgga*) and the causal doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) form the pivotal thought of Buddhism.

The different schools of Buddhism arose over the interpretation of the initial doctrine of *Paṭicca-samuppāda* (Sanskrit *Pratitya-samutpāda*) and the nature of *dhamma* (Sanskrit *dharma*), the entities which build up the realm of existence. The usual labels of the various types of the Buddhist thought such as the *Vaibhāṣika* as the realistic school, *Sautrāntika* as the conceptualistic type, and *Vijñānavāda* and *Śūnyavāda* as the idealistic and nihilistic systems, are entirely misleading. The original *Sarvāstivāda* school out of which the *Vaibhāṣika* and the *Sautrāntika* developed cannot be described as the realistic type of thought. The term *Sarvāstivāda* does not imply the

real existence of *dharma*s in time (*kāla*) as they lack duration and *kāla* is merely a congeries of fleeting moments (*kṣaṇa*). This school prepares the ground for the rise of the *Vijñānavāda* which regards all phenomena as of the nature of *vijñāna* (roughly ideas) and asserts the reality of *ālayavijñāna* (the receptacle consciousness). *Vijñānavāda* postulates degrees of reality viz. imaginary (*parikalpita*), relatively real (*paratantra*), and real (*pariṇiṣpanna*) (see *Lankāvatāra-Sūtra*). Finally, the *Mādhyamika* represents the culmination of Buddhist thought and the original doctrine of *Pratityasamutpāda* receives a new orientation of meaning. The radical philosophy of Nāgārjuna (c. 150 A.D.) and his followers, viz. the *Śūnyavāda* works out with all the rigour of the powerful dialectic the ontological implications of the Buddhist thought. It is misconceived as nihilism; it is, in fact, a form of radical relativism which seeks to demonstrate that phenomena have no essence or intrinsic nature of their own (*niḥsvabhāva*); and *nirvāṇa*, the ultimate Reality implies cessation of phenomenal flow (*prapañcōpaśama*), i.e. the opposite of *saṃsāra*. But the reality of *nirvāṇa* is indefinable; it is neither Being (*sat*) nor non-Being (*asat*). The *Mādhyamika* distinguishes between two orders of being, viz. (1) *Samvṛti satya*, the concealed reality, i.e. apparent reality of phenomena; and (2) essential reality (*paramārtha satya*) which is beyond the ken of human knowledge. Here it would be relevant to observe that the *Mādhyamika* and the early Vedānta developed side by side and influenced each other; and both have striking affinities. But it is not possible to dilate on this line within the present compass.

We now proceed to discuss certain essential points of the Fundamental Ontology of Martin Heidegger as embodied mainly in his epoch-making work, *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time) and also certain other treatises. It will be noticed that in our

sketch we have not discussed the problem of freedom which is a major issue of the Indian philosophy covering a very wide field. We have also omitted altogether the Jaina system of thought and certain other currents of thought which prevailed at the time of the rise of the great systems, as they are but piecemeal solutions of the main problem of Existence which characterizes Indian philosophy in general. However, the Jaina doctrine, *anekāntavāda*, deserves special mention in this connexion. It conceives of Being as the composite of many facets none of which is a true description. This doctrine may be described as relative pluralism from an empirical point of view, as a sort of protest against the absolutism of the Upaniṣads.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF HEIDEGGER

Till now we have sought to delineate the fundamental character of Indian philosophy in general and to present a picture as to how the different systems originated and how they attempted to grapple with the main problems which confronted the Indian philosophy and how they alienated from one another in view of their different approaches. At this stage we would draw attention to certain salient features of the philosophy of Heidegger *vis-à-vis* those of the Indian philosophy where any reference would be relevant. The philosophy of Heidegger opens up a new chapter in the history of European thought; and his penetrating exposition of Fundamental Ontology in the light of human existence or *Da-sein* as he terms it, is a unique one. Here it would not be quite relevant nor possible within this compass to institute any critical estimate of it from our point of view; but a brief review would prove interesting. In certain cases parallels are quite striking although the approaches are entirely different.

In his monumental work, *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time), Heidegger demonstrates

that phenomenology seeks to disclose something which proximally and for the most part does not show itself at all and which remains concealed *vis-à-vis* that which proximally and for the most part shows itself and belongs to it so essentially as to constitute its meaning and ground (*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 34-38). This outstanding phenomenon is Being (*Sein*), and thus phenomenology paves the way to ontology. The primary task of phenomenology is the exposition of the meaning of Being (*Sinn von Sein*) in general, i.e. the nature and structure of Being as such and that of whatever is or exists in Being, in other words, the Being of being (*Sein des Seiendes*). Heidegger seeks to show that ontology is possibly only as phenomenology. In this connexion, it would be relevant to state briefly Heidegger's attitude towards philosophy to general and metaphysics in particular. Philosophy raises the question of what something is: What is it? It is this form of question which was developed in Greek philosophy; and what-ness, *quiddity* has been determined differently in different periods of philosophy. That depends on the interpretation of what the 'what' signifies. Philosophy as the speculative knowledge of the first principles and causes (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*) and the like are only particular interpretations. Metaphysics is the questioning beyond of the things that are, in order to regain them as such and in the whole for the purpose of comprehension. Metaphysics raises two fundamental problems, viz. the problem of Being and the problem of Nothing-ness. The basic question of metaphysics as formulated by Heidegger is: Why is there being in general rather than nothing? (*Warum ist überhaupt Seiendes und nicht vielmehr Nichts?*). This question depends on and presupposes another question, How is it what Being? (*Wie steht es in das Sein?*). Heidegger seeks to clarify metaphysics as exposition of the

problem of Existence as such and Existence in the whole, i.e. Being. The totality of the whole is the unity of existence which unity unites by virtue of being the productive ground. This is what he calls the Onto-theo-logical nature of metaphysics. Another important characteristic of metaphysics is that every metaphysical question embraces and permeates the entire realm of metaphysical problems. Metaphysical questioning has to be formulated as a whole and has reference to the existential situation. Secondly, every metaphysical questioning can be formulated only in such a way that the questioner as such is involved in the question.

Before we proceed with Heidegger's analytic of Being and Existence (*Sein und Dasein*), we would point out that certain fundamental ideas similar to these lines of thinking already prevailed in Indian thought, as indicated in our discourse on the meaning of the Indian philosophy. Here we would merely reiterate the following. The fundamental trend of Indian thought is that *sat* (Being) lies hidden behind phenomena, its nature is incomprehensible, and it, however, reveals itself in many guises. The philosophical interrogation is of the form of what it is, *kim idam*, what is the essence of any entity (*tattvam*) which warrants philosophical investigation. Similarly, Indian philosophy undertakes investigation of what phenomenon is and what appearance means; and the diverse senses in which these terms are used arise from diverse approaches which characterize the Indian philosophy as a whole. Here we can refer to our discussion of the themes, and show how they anticipate Heideggerian conception of the same in many ways. Heidegger discusses the concept of phenomenon (*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 28-31) and shows that it has different meanings. Primarily, the term signifies that which shows itself, the manifest (*das Offenbare*). Again, it may imply

that which looks like something, that which is *semblant*, 'semblance' (*das Scheinbare, der Schien*). Phenomenon is also loosely used in the sense of appearance (*Erscheinung*). Appearance as the appearance of something does not mean showing itself but announcement of something which does not show itself. Again, appearance may mean emanation or emergence of something the essence of which is concealed in that appearance. In our treatment of the Vedānta, we have shown that the essence of Being or Being of being according to Heidegger's terminology consists in revelation or manifestation (*prakāśamānatā*) and appearance (*avabhāsa*) has this double significance. According to the *Mādhyamika* system of Buddhist philosophy, phenomena and appearances possess neither reality nor unreality; they have merely empirical validity.

Further, the main systems of philosophy in India seek to embrace the entire domain of metaphysical thought. The Vedānta is not confined exclusively to the investigation of the nature of Brahman and Ātman; but it deals with the entire range of problems which, from its point of view, may arise. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is not merely an inquiry into categories of thought (*padārtha*) or an exposition of the problems of logic and epistemology; but it aims at building up of a comprehensive system of thought in general. Similarly, the Sāṅkhya-Yoga system offers a unique explanation of the Cosmos, *Physis* or *Natura* (*Prakṛti*) and of the role of self (*Puruṣa*) in it; and the Buddhist philosophy especially the Mahāyāna system primarily a critique of Being and non-Being, embraces the entire realm of thought. These systems are characterized by their particular outlooks; and they seek to offer a complete world-view (*Weltanschauung*) based on their outlooks.

In discussing the nature of Being, Heidegger shows that the essence of truth lies in

uncovering (*Ent-bergung*) of what is, and that it implies unveiling, i.e. revelation of being as such. He analyzes the Greek concept of *ALETHEIA* and shows that it is essentially a concept of Overtness, 'letting-be' of what is. The realization of truth is the discovery, uncovering, unveiling, revelation of what lies hidden and obscure. Heidegger's views may perhaps be best summarized as follows: Truth is primarily not seated in a concept or proposition and its relation to a fact or thing. It is invariably bound up and is actually identical with the concept of Being. It is not primarily a matter of judgement or intellectual understanding but one essentially connected with Being and of he greatest consequence for human existence, *Dasein*. He shows that the concept of 'Existence' really implies 'Existence' as an 'exposition' into an uncovering, as well as of 'being', being as such, being-in-the whole essence and Being. Heidegger discards the correspondence theory of truth as untenable. This theory implies a relation between an ideal entity and something that is supposed to be 'Real'. But what is the ontological meaning of the relation which must submit between the Real and the ideal content and what does such subsisting mean ontologically? The Being-true (*Wahr-sein*) should be understood as Being-uncovering (*Entdeckend-sein*). Truth has by no means the structure of an agreement between knowing and the object in the sense of any adjustment of one entity (the subject) to another (the object). Truth is defined as uncoveredness and Being-uncovering (*Entdecktheit und Entdeckend-sein*) (*ibid.*, pp. 214 ff).

In our analysis of the Upaniṣadic concept of *satyam* (truth), we have shown that it is a characteristic of *sat* (Being) and is one with it; and the concept is not one of judgement of correspondence between thought and reality. We have discussed how the various views regarding the nature of truth arose; but primarily truth lies in

the manifestation of nature or essence (*svabhāva*) (lit. own being) and falsehood consists in concealment (*apahnavā*). The essence of truth implies the state of freedom (*muktasvabhāva*) or pure being (*kevala*) as the Vedānta and Sāṅkhya respectively express the idea. Another implication is that knowledge, *per se* is valid; and the self-validity (*Svataḥ-prāmāṇya*) of knowledge implies the certitude of truth. Despite minor differences, the Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, and Sāṅkhya systems agree on this point. Heidegger appears to have emphasized both these points.

Heidegger discusses the problem of Being and the problem of Nothingness (*Nichtigkeit*) which are inseparably and intimately bound up; in other words, the concept of nothingness is linked up with what essentially is. From the existential—ontological point of view, it is urged that we encounter nothingness which is revealed by care (*Sorge*) in our every day *Dasein*; and only when we have faced the problem of nothingness, we can rise to the problem of Being. In our discourse on the nature of *sat* and *asat*, Being and non-Being, we have discussed the view that pure Being, i.e. Being in its primordial state arises from non-Being; and we have also referred to the Mādhyamika doctrine that non-Being variously described as the *śūnyam* or *nirvāṇa* is the ultimate reality devoid of any characteristic or attribute. The term *śūnyam* does not mean the void nor does *nirvāṇa* imply extinction of Being. To use Heideggerian expression, we may perhaps characterize this as the possibility of the possibility of Being (*Sein*) and of the impossibility of being *Seiendes* for ever.

According to Heidegger, Being (*Sein*) is indefinable; it is the most universal, self-evident concept and can not be analyzed in terms of entities or anything that is *Seiendes*. 'Being lies in the fact that some-

thing is and in its Being as it is, in Reality, in presence-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*), in substance, in validity, in *Dasein*, in there-is' (*ibid.*, p. 26). Being is the *transcendens* pure and simple (*ibid.*, p. 38). Heidegger's main concern is what he terms *Dasein* (lit. being-there), i.e. existence; and he endeavours to give an analysis of the 'existentialia' and the existentialistic structure of human *Dasein*. In this context, it is not possible to sketch even in barest outlines the fundamental features of Heidegger's Existenz-philosophic or Phenomenological Ontology as he calls it. We would confine ourselves to a summary discussion of certain aspects of *Dasein*. Human *Dasein* is characterized as 'Being-in-the-world' (*In-der-Welt-sein*); this is its fundamental constitution and innermost essence. The essence of *Dasein* lies in its existence, and 'Being-in-the-world' in general is the basic state of *Dasein*. The characteristics of *Dasein* which are not its properties but possible ways for it to be are the following: (1) *Dasein* signifies *existentia* being prior to *essentia*; (2) *Dasein* in each case is characterized as mine, i.e. it is individualized, and (3) *Dasein* has an undifferentiated character of averageness, 'average-everyday-ness' (*Durchschnittlichkeit*), i.e. it has no specific or definite way of existing, and it may exist in various guises. The fundamental modes of *Dasein* which have the specifically disclosing function are: (1) '*Befindlichkeit*' which signifies man's being attuned, a state-of-mind to the facticity of *Dasein* in which man finds himself projected; (2) '*Verstehen*' understanding an existential characteristic which unveils man's potentialities of being; and (3) *Rede* (lit. talk) signifying articulation of 'being-in-the-world'. Corresponding to these the characteristics of the 'in-Being' (*In-sein*) of every day *Dasein* are prattle (*Gerede*), curiosity (*Neugier*) and ambiguity (*Zweideutigkeit*). How these modes and characteristics are interrelated cannot be discuss-

ed within the problematic of the present investigation. It is, however, necessary to state how *Dasein* is disclosed. The phenomenon of Fear (*Furcht*) belongs to the very structure of attunement (*Befindlichkeit*); and it is fear that always reveals *Dasein* as being there. Care (*Sorge*) constitutes the structure of *Dasein*, man's being-there. Finally, dread (*Angst*) which is distinct from fear relates to the world of *Dasein* as such, in the face of which man encounters dread or anxiety. But fear always comes from entities within the world and dread which is indefinite discloses the world in the character of nothingness. These are not to be understood as psychological entities but as existential structure of the modes of *Dasein*. 'The existential ontological condition for the fact, that being-in-the-world is characterized by "truth" and "untruth" lies in the structure of *Dasein's* Being which is characterized as thrown projection (*geworfenen Entwurf*). This is a constituent of the structure of care (*Sorge*)' (*ibid.*, p. 223). There is always the temptation towards falling away (*Verfallen-sein*) from *Dasein* and this alienation or estrangement leads to misconception and error, i.e. untruth. In other words, truth as conceived is relative to *Dasein's* Being (*ibid.*, p. 227).

The primordial ontological basis for *Dasein's* existentiality is temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*). This temporality is interpreted as the ontological meaning of care (*Sorge*). The primary existential characteristic of time is the future; the past is intelligible only as characteristic of having been (*Gewesenheit*) which arises from futurity and the present is in the process of having been. This phenomenon which has the unity of a future and of the past as having been and which makes the present in the process of having been is designated as temporality (*ibid.*, p. 326). The culmination of *Dasein* is death. Death is the potentiality of Being which *Dasein* has to take over in every case.

The full existential conception of death may perhaps be summarized as follows: Death is the end of *Dasein*; it is *Daseins'* ownmost possibility, non-relational, certain and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped (*ibid.*, pp. 250-251). Man is in the midst of being-towards-death and care (*Sorge*) is the existentialia of being-towards-death (*Sein-zum-Tode*).

In his analytic of *Dasein* as Being-in-the-world (*in-der-welt-sein*) Heidegger elucidates the meaning of the worldhood of the world (*Weltlichkeit der Welt*). Heidegger shows that the term 'world' is used in a variety of senses: (1) As an ontic concept it signifies the totality of these entities which can be present-at-hand; (2) As an ontological term it signifies the Being of these entities which can and may relate to any region embracing a multiplicity of entities, e.g. the world of Mathematics; (3) It signifies another ontical-existential sense wherein practical *Dasein* as such may live, the world of everyday existence, environment, *Umwelt*, etc.; and, (4) Finally, the 'world' designates the ontological-existential concept of worldhood in general, any structure-wholes of special worlds. In the existential-ontological philosophy of Heidegger it implies the world of being, i.e. the world of entities.

Heidegger discusses the problem of Reality and rejects both realism and idealism. He points out that the question of the reality of the external world is raised without any previous clarification of the phenomenon of the world. According to Heidegger, *Dasein*, if correctly understood, defies such proof. 'The scandal of philosophy is not that this proof has yet to be given but that such proofs are expected and attempted again and again'. (*ibid.*, p. 205). The existential-ontological view concedes the realistic thesis that the external world is real and present-at-hand (*vorhanden*); but it differs from every kind of realism which

asserts that the reality of the world not only needs to be proved but also is susceptible of proof. Likewise, Heidegger says that if idealism emphasizes that Being and Reality are only in consciousness, it expresses the fact that Being (*Sein*) cannot be explained in terms of entities (*Seiendes*). But as long as it remains unclarified as to what this knowledge of Being means ontologically, how it is feasible or that it belongs to the structure of Being of *Dasein*, the interpretation of Reality which it builds up is an empty one (*ibid.* pp. 207-208).

Heidegger's analysis of human *Dasein* is something very novel and unique in the history of thought. But it is open to criticism whether it takes cognizance of all basic phenomena of human existence and whether it embraces the entire range of thought. Apparently there are problems which lie outside the perspective of Heideggerian system or which are not clearly and totally tackled therein as our probe into the meaning of the Indian philosophy would show. Here we would point out certain striking affinities of thought, notwithstanding the most obvious differences between the Indian philosophy in general and Heidegger's existential ontology. In this connexion we may refer to our analysis of *sat* and *asat*, Being and non-Being respectively *vis-à-vis* Heidegger's exposition of the same. Heidegger shows that 'being' has different meanings and similarly the fact that an entity exists or it has different significations; anything that exists in any sense has a being of its own. Likewise, there are different implications of Being (*sat*) and being (*bhāva*) which are characteristic of the various schools of Indian philosophy; these need not be repeated here. Heidegger holds that Being *Sein* which is the most universal and self-evident concept is indefinable, and his main concern is analysis of *Dasein*. But Indian philosophy goes deep into the problem of *sat*, i.e. the problem of ultimate reality.

Heidegger speaks of the existential projection and *Dasein's* Being and of *Dasein*; but how this comes into being is not perfectly clear. In Indian philosophy it is *avidyā* or *ajñāna* (*Nescience*) which brings about the world of existence; but the nature of *avidyā* as well as the nature of the world of existence are variously conceived by the various schools of Indian thought. It is the *Vedānta* philosophy that works out fully the implications; and the doctrine of *Māyā* offers an explanation. *Māyā* projects the world and at the same time it functions as the veil that envelops the world. *Māyā* is misconceived as illusion; it is the potentiality of Being that cannot be described as real or unreal. Incidentally we may refer to an existentiale of *Dasein*, viz. Fear (*Furchat*) which is viewed as disclosing the world as being there. We find a somewhat similar conception in the Upaniṣadic thought. 'The

whole world, whatever there is arises from and vibrates in Life (*prāṇa*). It is the great fear, the upraised thunderbolt; they who know that become immortal. Through fear of Him, Fire (*agni*) burns, through fear the Sun (*sūrya*) emits heat, through fear Indra (the Lord of Devas, the shining deities), Wind (*vāyu*), and Death (*mṛtyu*), the fifth, speed along' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II.3.2-3, et. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II.8). The world is conceived as 'All This' (*sarvam idam*), the totality of being and again from another point of view there is the world within the world (*Īśā Upaniṣad*, I). As against Heidegger's analysis of the concept of death (*Tod*), we may refer to the Upaniṣadic conception that death (*mṛtyu*) is not the end of being; it is the primordial form of Being that envelops everything 'All This' and to which 'All This' returns (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I.1-2).

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### MARCH CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*  
*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

#### SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE KENA UPANISAD:  
Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*  
*7th, 21st, and 28th March*

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:  
Govindagopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*  
*8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th March*

#### CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

#### FILM SHOWS

*Saturday, 9 March 1968, at 6 p.m.*  
*Saturday, 16 March 1968, at 6 p.m.*  
*Saturday, 23 March 1968, at 6 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only . . . . . Re. 1.00 for each day

#### BENGALI DRAMA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By

Burdwan Samskriti Parishad

*Monday, 4 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission free

#### SANSKRIT DRAMA

SRI TULASIDASA

By

Pracya-Vani

*Tuesday, 12 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only . . . . . 50 Paise

#### CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR MARCH 1968

*Sri Ramakrishna Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 2 March, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 30 March, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

#### *Programme:*

Music, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Show



## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

- March 6 **Religion and Society**  
*Speaker:* Sailaja Kumar Bhattacharya, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* J. C. Banerjee, M.A.
- March 13 **Self-reliance in Indian Economy**  
*Speaker:* Shanti Kumar Ghose, M.A., Ph.D.  
*President:* Satyendranath Sen, M.A., Ph.D.
- March 27 **The Concept of Man in Modern Thought—Philosophical Anthropology**  
*Speaker:* Debabrata Sinha, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* Priti Bhushan Chatterji, M.A., D.Phil.

## SPECIAL LECTURE

*Tuesday, 5 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

- Subject:* **The Capitals in the History of India**  
*Speaker:* Friedrich Wilhelm, Ph.D.  
*President:* Benoy Chandra Sen, M.A., Ph.D.

## PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S BIRTHDAY

*Programme:*

Invocation

By

Pandit Srijib Nyayatirtha

Talk on: The Life and the Message of Sri Ramakrishna (in Bengali)

By

Swami Gambhirananda

General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission

Devotional Songs

By

Pankaj Mullick

*Saturday, 2 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

## PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF SRI CAITANYA'S BIRTHDAY

*Programme:*

Invocation

Talk on: The Life and the Message of Sri Caitanya (in Bengali)

By

Narayan Chandra Goswami, M.A.

Devotional Songs (Kirtan)

By

Chabi Bandyopadhyaya

*Wednesday, 20 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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## THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

E. A. BURTT, A.B., S.T.M., PH.D., L.H.D.

*Dr. E. A. Burtt, a renowned philosopher, is Sage Professor of Philosophy (Emeritus) at Cornell University, U.S.A. Dr. Burtt taught philosophy in several universities of the U.S.A., travelled four times in the Far East, and has served as President of the American Theological Society and American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division). Of the books written by him, mention may be made of the following: (1) Types of Religious Philosophy, (2) Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science, (3) Man Seeks the Divine, (4) In Search of Philosophic Understanding. Very recently, he visited Calcutta as an invitee of the Calcutta University to deliver a series of Lectures entitled Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghose Lectureship (1957). The following is the text of a special lecture Dr. Burtt delivered at the Institute on 29 January 1968.*

**T**HIS is an ambitious topic. I hope that it will be provocative but that it can be kept from appearing presumptuous. So I shall say at once that I have no crystal ball through which I can see the unfolding future. What I mean to emphasize by choosing this topic is that religion is a profoundly transforming and creative force in all phases of human life and that, as such,

it not only has a great past and a significant present, but also the assurance, as long as man exists, of a promising future—a future that will be equally important, perhaps more important, than its past. Let us this evening survey it as best we can in this long-range and future-facing perspective, trusting that whatever illumination thus comes will be instructive. No claim will be

made for the form which that illumination takes in my case; my hope is only that it will prove suggestive to you.

There are two special reasons for attempting to win and develop such a perspective today.

#### SCOPE AND CHARACTER OF RELIGION IN MODERN TIMES

One is that in our time religion faces an unprecedented opportunity, arising in part from the significant differences between the great civilized religions, and in part from the rapidly increasing interaction between them that is now evident. To traditionally-minded religious people this situation is a perilous threat, but to those who are ready to grow toward fuller truth it opens a magnificent prospect. The source of these differences lies in the variations between the *national* or regional cultures in which these great religions had their origin and in the distinctive *personal experience* of each pioneering founder, which was communicated to his followers and became characteristic of the faith which looks back to him as its source. In the past the great religions were sufficiently isolated from one another so that each could develop its genius without any forceful distracting impact from its rivals, at least till its formative period was over. Such interaction as took place during that period (except in the case of Confucianism and Taoism) was on the periphery of each faith, not at its centre. Now all faiths are entering a period of intensive intercommunication in which that impact cannot be escaped. Religious men who are unable to realize its constructive promise, will gradually fade into the backwash of modern life, while those who are able to realize it will be the leaders of the spiritual reconstruction that is sure to take place.

What will be the consequences of this

momentous historical change? A major question naturally raised by it is the question: Will there in time emerge from this process just one civilized religion accepted everywhere, which will have thus overcome all its rivals so that it can reign alone? A simple consideration, in the perspective now guiding us, is sufficient to justify a 'No' to this question. Surely new religions will be born from time to time, in the future as they have been in the past, each of which will have features that diverge from the distinctive features of others. There is no reason to suppose that all possible forms of spiritual realization have already been exemplified. But what we may hopefully believe under the prodding of this question is that the living faiths of the future will exhibit a unity of spirit that for the most part has been sadly lacking in the past—a unity that will be shown in readiness to subordinate their special doctrines to the achievement of mutual understanding and harmonious collaboration with other faiths.

#### THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The other reason for viewing religion in this all-embracing and anticipatory perspective is that when one does so, an intriguing pattern in its unfolding through time is revealed—a pattern with breath-taking implications for our day. Religion seems to evolve, during man's quest for civilization at least, in a cycle which takes about six hundred years for its completion. This historically repeated pattern is not perfect, of course—events significant for religion occur which do not fit into such a cycle—but the pattern stands out sufficiently to be very suggestive. It cannot be ignored by one who seeks to understand religion.

We shall begin by describing the cycle in general terms. There comes from time to time a surge of spiritual realization, taking

a new form as compared with the achievements of the past. That realization always involves a novel outlook on life and the world, and it may also involve the creation of novel systems of theological or philosophical interpretation. Any such surge is followed by a period of consolidation that requires several centuries, in the course of which the new insight is elaborated in ritual, doctrine, and artistic expressions, transforming the whole culture of its adherents in the direction of its ideals. That period gradually loses its initial exuberance and gives way to a period of comparative stagnation, which lasts until conditions are ripe for another creative surge. The pattern is then repeated. The fact that the entire cycle tends to take about six hundred years is confirmed when we look quickly in the light of this suggestion at the history of civilized religions.

#### THE DIFFERENT SURGES

The first surge, that can clearly be identified as such, came around 1200 B.C. Its occurrence is evident in India and among the Hebrews: perhaps fuller historical knowledge will reveal it elsewhere too. In these two areas—limiting ourselves to them—the religion generally practised was in many respects like the primitive religion of peoples around them, but it exhibited a distinctive and promising feature. Under Moses the Hebrews entered into a 'covenant' relation with their divinity Yahweh which was capable of continued moral and spiritual deepening as their prophets interpreted it over the succeeding centuries. In the case of the early Vedas of India, the celebration of divine powers in Nature was touched by a spirit of searching, beyond and beneath these powers, in quest of a more ultimate reality.

The next surge came in the astonishing sixth century B.C., when civilized religion

everywhere burst into flower, its pioneers leaving far behind the typical primitive orientation. This was the century of Zoroaster and the later Hebrew prophets in the West, with their conviction that in the long run right makes might, however this maxim might seem to be flouted by short-run events. In India it was the century of the Buddha, Mahāvira, and the wise sages of the Upaniṣads; in China it was the century of Confucius and Lao Tze. New religious movements were initiated by the example and teaching of each of these spiritual pioneers, which are still living forces in our own day. A lengthy subsequent period was needed for the philosophical and poetic elaboration of the insight won through them.

The third surge came around the beginning of the Christian era, and satisfied a spiritual hunger that had not hitherto been satisfied. It brought an epochal realization, which was gained independently by Christianity in the West and Buddhism in the East. In essence it was a realization that the true nature of the divine is missed when God is conceived as a metaphysical First Cause or as a regal and authoritative law-giver (and law-enforcer) to man but is disclosed in a compassionate love which reaches out to all men and is ever drawing them into unity with itself and with each other. The Christian form of this realization first appears clearly in the Gospel of John, especially in the portrayal of Jesus at the Last Supper with his disciples. As portrayed there, he unforgettably exemplified this love and thus revealed himself as not merely the promised Messiah but as a human incarnation of God. The Buddhist form first appears in the new spiritual insight of the Mahāyāna saints and is interpreted in the Mahāyāna philosophies that arose contemporaneously with the Gospel of John. According to this insight, the

*arhat* ideal of spiritual perfection, won through determined self-discipline, is superseded by the Bodhisattva ideal, which holds that spiritual maturity is revealed, not in the pursuit of one's own salvation but in the overflowing love through which one prefers to share the woes of his weaker fellows, postponing his own entrance into *nirvāṇa* till all are ready to enter together.

The fourth surge came during the seventh and eighth century A.D. In the Christian West this was a period of relative somnolence, but everywhere else in the civilized world new insights dawned and spiritual energy was renewed in unexpected ways. This was the period in which Buddhism rapidly spread in China, taking novel forms congenial to the genius of Chinese spirituality. It was the period of resurgent Hinduism in India, learning all that its saints and sages could learn from Buddhism and culminating, so far as its systematic interpretation is concerned, with the philosophy of Śāṅkara. But the most momentous expression of this surge in the world at large was the birth of Islam and its rapid expansion. Over a wide geographical arc extending from Spain and north-west Africa in the Occident, toward China and the islands off south-east Asia in the Orient, this young faith brought new religious vitality and flowered in a new culture with its distinctive art, literature, philosophy, and social institutions.

Next came the surge of the thirteenth century, together with the centuries that preceded and followed it. In Japan this surge took its usual form as an awakening to new spiritual life; several novel sects of Buddhism arose which have retained their vigour to our day. Elsewhere, however, it most prominently took the form of novel systematic interpretations of spiritual energies already at work. In China at this time the Neo-Confucianism of Chu Hsi

appeared, with its forerunners in the twelfth century and its elaboration in the centuries that followed. This new philosophy had absorbed much in Buddhism and Taoism, and it articulated an appealing synthesis of the varied spiritual forces which had affected Chinese culture. In the West this was the period of Aquinas' re-interpretation of Christian theology on an Aristotelian foundation, which gave it a form more harmonious with the Western world's persistent concern to reconcile religious aspiration with the quest for systematic knowledge of the natural world. Slightly earlier came the profound synthesis of Islamic thought in Al-Ghazzali.

Now I have taken the time to describe each of these swings of the pendulum because, if I am right, they bring out vividly the second special reason for attempting to view religion in this world-wide and long-run perspective. A very momentous question can hardly be escaped. Six hundred years have passed since the peak of the last creative surge. Are we on the verge of another swing upward in man's spiritual life, comparable to the upward swings of the past? Nay, is it already under way? We know that, to conservative minds at least, a new form of religious experience and insight may not seem at first to be religious because it will differ in some respects from what they are accustomed to call 'religion'. It must be adapted to novel conditions. Let us pursue this exciting question.

#### THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIME

For one thing, the challenge in our time that any such surge must meet is unprecedented and thorough-going. There is the intensive interaction of peoples all over the world and inter-communication between religions on a scale never before exemplified. There is the vast new universe of modern

science with which any new spiritual insight must be fully reconciled; religion in the past has developed in an ancient picture of the universe that modern minds have irrevocably left behind. There is a new moral orientation whose emergence is largely due to the influence of religion at its best, but which has not yet been fully accepted by religious men or clarified by religious thinkers. One of the insistent questions raised in this orientation is the question: How far can men now expect to control his own future, and in what respects must he recognize his dependence on an Ultimate Reality which cannot be controlled? May we not expect that under the challenge of these needs spiritual geniuses will arise who will envision and open up for their fellows an adequate way of meeting them? Perhaps we may even expect that when this new surge has reached its peak it will appear more significant than any previous surge, except possibly that of the sixth century B.C.

For another thing, when we look around us, with these possibilities in mind, it is not hard to detect, during the last century, movements which may well be part of the expected surge, or at least important forerunners of it. We observe that Communism, despite its avowed atheism, has a definitely religious aspect. It gives its followers a millennial goal—the coming ‘classless’ society—for which to live and to die, and the Marxian theology through which it interprets human history has many features which show that in its religious character it is a Jewish-Christian heresy; had it originated in the Eastern world, it would have taken a radically different form. On the other hand, a movement that is obviously religious, even in the traditional sense of the word, is the movement in India in which Ramakrishna and Gandhi have been the outstanding recent leaders. The most striking aspect of this movement

is the way in which it brings together the mystic spirituality of the East and the active prophetic spirituality of the West. Gandhi clearly united these in his own person, giving equal prominence to each. Ramakrishna and his close follower, Vivekananda, exemplified both, but the ideal of the mystic saint was most prominent in Ramakrishna, while the ideal of the prophetic reformer was most prominent in Vivekananda.

#### EVENTUAL ARTICULATION OF RELIGION

What may we expect to take form as this surge of our day advances toward its peak?

A special note of humility is called for when such a question is asked. The one kind of event that is incapable of being predicted is the novel achievement of a genius in any field, and this is especially true of a spiritual genius. The illuminating, invigorating, and guiding insights that are going to emerge in this swing of the pendulum cannot be forecast before they become visible; they will appear in their own way and at their own pace. Still more impossible would it be to prophesy the distinctive form that the next upward swing will take, for it will meet needs and aspirations that can only become definite in the aftermath of the swing now under way.

But there is something that we can do even at this early stage, and it should be clarifying to attempt it. We can try to perceive and articulate some of the needs which the surge of our time will surely try to satisfy, and we can note the significant fact that the articulations that have thus far appeared express groping visions of men of literature more than insights of acknowledged religious leaders. A very important preparatory role is being filled by the poets, novelists, and dramatists who are couching their visions in non-theological

language and are providing a new set of instructive parables, capable of harmonizing what they envision with the novel universe in which modern man will live. Can we helpfully describe some of these needs?

First, man has entered the Nuclear Age. One obvious need is a faith adequate to sustain the generation of young people who must find their vocation and bring up their children in an era haunted by the peril of sudden and wholesale destruction. Religion has always taken the death of the individual with full seriousness; now it must find the secret of a serene and inspiring faith in the face of the possible death, in agony, of the entire human race. A second need is an increasingly sympathetic and intimate dialogue between adherents of various existing religions, opening up the riches of each in an atmosphere of mutual sharing. An exciting sign of spiritual progress today is the decision of the Roman Catholic Church to enter this dialogue, thus tacitly abandoning its age-old claim to be the sole mediator of salvation to man. The new pioneers who are contemporaries will, we hope, engage in such a dialogue with each other. It is vital that this need be so met that a pervasive unity of spirit is realized without losing the distinctive insight that each religion can bring. A third need is a universal frame-work for religious thinking, in which the varied spiritual insights can be expressed without any distortion. In the past each religion has thought in terms of its own basic concepts which are not fully translatable into the language of another religion. As long as this remains the case, full mutual understanding is impossible. This need cannot be satisfied quickly, but the time required can be greatly shortened, when it is clearly and widely recognized.

A fourth need is an honest facing by religious men of the radical nature of the evils that bring suffering to human life and

of the unrealistic character of belief in a protecting Providence and the millennial Utopianism that has comforted millions of souls in the past. The era in which 'pie in the sky' can be hoped for, is over. Such an honest facing means, among other things, an awareness that new evils arise with every step in the conquest of old ones, and that the goal of progress can no longer be conceived as a heaven free from suffering but simply as the greater humanity of the future—a humanity with increased power to know and create, and hence better able to conquer whatever evils arise and to realize whatever goods become possible. A fifth need naturally arises from the fourth; it is the need of clearer visions of man's fulfilment in the setting of the good and evil forces now at work and of the new universe that will provide the environment of whatever he can achieve. Magnificent and inspiring visions have been glimpsed in the past, but in many respects they are now outdated and can no longer, without modification, fill their rôle.

A sixth need is vividly emphasized by the new technology of war, with its unlimited and appalling capacity to destroy at a distance. Callousness swells and becomes widespread when men can project lethal missiles without seeing the people on whom they are pouring anguish and destruction. Each great religion in its early days expressed a tender concern for every individual—an unfailing respect for his life, his freedom to grow, his right to a share in whatever well-being is possible. Surely the surge of our day must recover this tender concern under the conditions that from now on will obtain, and foster its growth in alertness and compassionate understanding.

A seventh need, involved in the six already described, is the need of full openness to further truth and deeper realization in a radically dynamic universe.

The idea that spiritual truth has all been achieved in the past is a sad obstruction to progress—still more the idea that salvation depends on uncritical loyalty to the creed of one's own religious tradition. Piety towards tradition must henceforth be subordinated to the welcoming of continued growth. One of the greatest contributions of the typical Indian attitude toward religion is the strong conviction of its leaders that spiritual depth and breadth do not conflict but intrinsically go together—that is, that religious experience in any person becomes fuller and richer as it expands in sensitivity and responsiveness to what is most precious in the experience of others. Surely this conviction will become shared on a wide scale as the surge of our

time moves toward its peak.

When this upward swing has advanced somewhat further, we may expect that philosophers all over the world will be collaborating in their search for a comprehensive world-view which will give adequate interpretation to the novel insight and richer experience that have taken form. And by that time evidence should begin to appear that all phases of life—moral, artistic, political, economic, educational—are gradually being permeated by the new spirit realized through the awakening that we have tried to describe.

How can you and I, with our special gifts and talents, play our part most effectively in this surge as it gathers momentum in the epoch now unfolding?



## GIRISCHANDRA : HIS MIND AND ART

AMULYADHAN MUKHERJI, M.A., P.R.S.

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**E**XACTLY a hundred years ago a young man, then in his early twenties, made his debut on the Calcutta stage in the role of Nimchand in Dinabandhu Mitra's *Sadhabār Ekādaśī*. He was a clerk in the Accounts Department of a mercantile firm in Calcutta but had already acquired reputation of a sort as a composer of songs for the theatre. He was friend, philosopher, and guide to a group of young people in the Bagbazar area of North Calcutta, who had been seized with enthusiasm for dramatic performances after the English pattern, the latest craze amongst the fashionable set in the city of Calcutta. But as their resources were limited, the group, known as the Bagbazar Amateur Theatre Party, chose to stage *Sadhabār Ekādaśī*, a drama for which no elaborate scenery or costly costumes were necessary. The difficulty was about finding an actor for the role of Nimchand, that complex character of a scholar and sot who was at the same time a wit and an acute critic of manners. The choice at last fell on the young accounts clerk who, on the very first night of his appearance on the stage, was

immediately acclaimed as the greatest actor on the Calcutta stage of the day. He was Girischandra Ghose, destined to be the greatest player-playwright of Bengal and one of the leaders of national revival in Bengal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Since that first night of stage success Girischandra never looked back. It was laurels, laurels all the way, and soon he came to be looked upon as the Master by the whole community of actors and actresses; for he was great not only as an actor himself but also as a director, an organizer, a manager, and particularly as a teacher of play-acting. He could discover talent even in the most unexpected quarters and shape it into brilliance. He was pressed to turn a professional, but for a pretty long time he was hesitant. Not that he had any inhibitions about choosing the career of an actor. He had by this time discovered himself. Not only was all the world a stage to him, but the stage was to him all the world—the field of his fame and glory, where he was called upon by a higher will to exercise his skill and where alone he could find his happiness

or not at all. His hesitancy was only due to his sense of mission as an actor, and he had scruples about turning a mercenary. Initially he had objections even to charging gate-money from visitors to the theatre. Ultimately when he was prevailed upon to turn a professional, it was not for any love of lucre, for his pay and prospects as an accounts clerk had been far better than as a whole-time actor. It was only a compelling urge and a sense of mission that swept him to the stage and motivated him throughout his career as actor and dramatist.

#### GIRISCHANDRA: THE PLAYWRIGHT

Initially Girischandra had no ambition to turn a playwright, but the role was practically thrust upon him. There was a dearth of plays, whether good, bad or indifferent, and although a number of well-known literary works were dramatized they were not very successful as stage plays. Girischandra who knew all the secrets of stage-effect and understood his audience as few have done, was by sheer necessity of circumstances persuaded to try his hand at play-writing. He started warily, trying his hand first with curtain-raisers and gradually feeling his way towards full-length plays. So modest he was about his abilities as a playwright that originally he published his first venture under a pseudonym. But he knew what he was about. Play-writing was not for him an academic exercise as it has been with many scholar dramatists. Though his formal education had not proceeded beyond the secondary school standard, he had later studied with avidity and deep understanding a good deal of Indian and European literature. But he was not handicapped by any scholastic theories of dramaturgy. A genuine dramatist, he chose his themes and rendered them into dramatic form in a manner best calculated to move the heart and soul of

his audience, employing a dramatic technique that was all his own. He never wrote any closet dramas.

During his long career as a playwright Girischandra wrote about eighty plays. A few of them were stage versions of well-known literary works like *Kapālkundalā*, *Mṛiṇālīnī*, *Viṣaḥkṣa*, *Meḡhnādbadha*, and *Palāśīr Yuddha*. But the rest were original dramatic creations, though many of them were based upon history, mythology, and legends about saints. His strength lay not so much in his invention of plots as in his conception of characters and in the moral and spiritual significance he discovered in the ancient legends and tales, in 'old, unhappy, far-off things' as well as in stories of 'some natural sorrow, loss, or pain'. Whether he derived his plots from history or legend or contemporary social life, they were always 'philosophy teaching through examples'. Though he tried his hand at almost every type of drama then in vogue—tragedy and comedy, satire and farce, pantomime and extravaganza—his success was pronounced in plays based on mysteries, miracles, mythology, and lives of saints. These he found most suited to the expression of his soul and best calculated to 'ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears' of the audience and stir them to the depth of their being. Every one of his plays is a Morality, taking the word 'Morality' in its broader sense.

Girischandra was no believer in the dilettante doctrine of 'Art for art's sake'. Like Shāw he wrote always with a purpose and the purpose in view was simultaneously to entertain and edify his audience. It is sometimes wrongly supposed that Girischandra was only seeking box-office returns and to that end was pandering to the low taste of his audience. He did, of course, write a number of dramatic trifles to meet passing demands of the stage, but in his more serious works he, like Gold-

smith's Village Preacher, tried each art to allure his audience to brighter worlds. *Sursum Corda* was the motto of his dramatic career. But it is not to be supposed therefore that his plays are merely vehicles of overt preaching. They are vitalized with a human quality that immediately strikes a sympathetic chord in our hearts. The intellectual contents are so transfused that they are felt in the blood and felt along the heart. In fact his plays are dramatic renderings of his own intensely felt realizations of the truth behind the many-splendoured thing called life. The various dramatic devices in his plays are not mere concessions to the demands of an audience seeking cheap entertainment. Taken over mostly from the tradition of popular drama, they were utilized by Girischandra with an artistic motive to humanize his plays and add a new dimension to the plot.

#### A WRONG APPROACH TO GIRISCHANDRA'S DRAMAS

In this connexion we might consider certain disparaging views regarding Girischandra's dramas—views current amongst the sopellicated set today. They fail to appreciate or understand Girischandra's plays principally because their approach is wrong. They pin their faith on certain principles of dramaturgy based upon their study of European drama; they weigh Girischandra's dramas in the balance of these principles and find them wanting. This is actually putting the cart before the horse. It is doubtful whether there are any rules of literary composition which can be applied universally. Certainly, there are none so far as drama is concerned. For drama is after all a very practical art, not meant for exclusive enjoyment or solitary study. It is a social art meant to interest and kindle the emotions of a particular audience at a given place and time. Three elements are involved in the ultimate total

effect produced; firstly, the mind and art of the dramatist; secondly, the personality and the histrionic skill of the players; and finally, the mental and moral disposition of the audience. It is evident therefore that any rules of dramatic composition can only have a limited application.

In assessing the plays of Girischandra we have to bear in mind that he and his audience belonged to the age of neo-Hindu revival in the history of modern Bengal. Rules which might hold good for the Athenian theatre in the age of Pericles or those for the London theatre in the age of Elizabeth could not be applicable to judging the dramas of Girischandra. He knew his mind, he knew his audience, and he knew his players; he wrote his dramas accordingly, as all great and successful dramatists have done. An Aristotle or a Bradley could not set down the rules for a correct judgement of Girischandra's dramas.

#### BENGALI DRAMATIC TRADITION AND GIRISCHANDRA

Some critics have suggested that no great dramas have been or could have been written in Bengal as the people of Bengal never had any great dramatic tradition. If the term 'drama' be not taken in a narrow sense but broadly understood to mean 'any kind of mimetic performance in which a group of persons impersonate certain characters before a group of their fellows for a ritualistic or religious purpose or simply for entertainment', then Bengal had as good and powerful a dramatic tradition as any other land.

This dramatic tradition must have had its beginnings in times remote, but it was probably the great saint Caitanya Deva who made the drama a powerful influence to propagate religious ideals amongst the common people. Drama of this type came to be known as *Yātrā* performance later on,

and it is to this tradition that the dramas of Girischandra belong. This might appear to be a paradoxical statement, seeing that Girischandra wrote for a stage modelled after the contemporary European theatre. Actually, however, Girischandra was serving old wine in new bottles; though the form of a Giris drama is English, the spirit is Bengali. Girischandra is not an empiricist like Shakespeare; he is not a realist like Ibsen. He is, like Aeschylus, the dramatist of ideas and ideals.

It is to be pointed out in this connexion that Girischandra is not necessarily an inferior dramatist because he continues the old *Yātrā* tradition. Every form of art has its distinctive features, and has potentialities and limitations peculiar to it. A genius knows how to exploit the possibilities of a particular type of art and create a thing of beauty. The tradition of old Greek comedy is continued in Aristophanes's *The Frogs*; of Elizabethan revenge and horror tragedy in *Hamlet*; of *Yātrā* plays in *Bilva-mangal*. All these three are amongst the greatest creations in drama.

#### DIFFICULTIES IN APPRECIATING GIRISCHANDRA

Besides obsession of western critical theories, there are other reasons why a modernist cannot appreciate Girischandra and his dramas. Girischandra is supposed to be 'low' and vulgar because few of his characters belong to the genteel society. His characters are either gods or men, and when they are men they are mostly men in the raw, vigorous, and sincere, and speak the idiom proper to their station in life; they are not society figures, speaking an artificially polished diction and leading an artificial existence. In fact, Girischandra's dramas are mostly concerned with cosmic truths in their relationship to basic humanity, not with the psychological complexes and romantic sensibilities

peculiar to civilized life in the present day world. The modernist in the literary world has not merely lost touch with basic humanity but also with tradition, and hence he is less capable of understanding the dramas of Girischandra. A new mentality, sometimes referred to as cultured, has developed amongst the intelligentsia in our country under the impact of English education. It has led to subsidence of the spiritual motive in man. There is no hunger of the soul, no motive to salvation but only the motive to secular satisfaction. The modernist, even when he does not frankly confess to be an atheist, is entirely lacking in faith—faith in the Divine reality that permeates the Universe and lives within the human breast. To him as to Omar, 'one thing is certain that Life flies and ... the Rest is lies'. The result is that the modernist is incapable of realizing the truth of the ancient myths, the profound significance they have for the human soul voyaging through strange seas of experience towards a 'far-off divine event'. We cannot understand Girischandra and his dramas until we rise to the level his mind moved on.

#### HISTORY OF THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF GIRISCHANDRA'S MIND

The history of the growth and development of Girischandra's mind offers an interesting study. Like many great men in their younger days, Girischandra was wayward and turbulent as a boy. His parents were sometimes too indulgent and sometimes too indifferent towards him, and he never had the advantage of proper guidance and companionship at home. His vigorous nature found expression in occasional pranks and frivolities in the company of urchins in the neighbourhood. He studied in various Calcutta schools and amongst his intimate classmates there were several who later won distinction in various fields

of life. Girischandra was acknowledged to be a boy of remarkable intelligence but he was by nature indisposed to abide by the discipline of education in schools in those days. The result was that he could not pass the final examination at the end of his school career. He lost his father when he was barely in his teens, and further prosecution of studies was for him out of the question. At a very early age he had to shift for himself and earn a precarious living to maintain himself and his family. He married twice, and twice he became a widower. Many of his children predeceased him, and he had reason to feel bitter over the attitude of some of his relatives and friends. His bitterness was further accentuated by his own sense of guilt and shame. He fell among evil companions in the salad days of life and became addicted to the twin vices of intemperance and incontinence. So deeply seated were these habits that he could never get rid of them altogether, and later on when he had come under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna, the great saint did not insist on his total abjuration of these habits. They were a part of his virile nature and his redemption could be won only by following his natural bent. Usually he was courteous and sociable, and had a keen sensibility and tender humanity. Generosity and a spirit of service marked him from his early years.

Girischandra had a sharp understanding, a curious intellect and his mind was always alert, logical, and quick in expression. Suffering did not dull his parts, they only awakened his mind to a larger view of the realities of life. The more he saw of life, the stronger was the impact of questions regarding the moral order of the universe that came crowding upon him. As a young man he had scoffed at religion, had been something of an atheist and hedonist on principle. But hard truths were

borne in upon him and he clearly perceived what the wages of sin and the consequences of evil were. The world was for him only a 'place of wrath and tears', and beyond it there loomed only 'the Horror of the shade'. Does God really exist? Does He come to the aid of a sinful man? To him these were not questions of academic interest; they were of vital importance.

In this dark night of the soul a few gleams of light he began to perceive gradually. His experiences in life taught him that there must be a supervening moral will in the universe, but how could one know it or comprehend it? A few miracles he had known in his own life, and more things, he had felt, were wrought by prayers than the world dreamt of. He began to peer into and vaguely perceive the cosmic truths underlying the religious myths. Yet his problem remained.

It was at this juncture that the greatest event in his life occurred. He met Sri Ramakrishna. He had already heard of the Saint of Dakshineswar and of the impression he had created even on men like Keshabchandra Sen. But Girischandra was too honest intellectually to be led away by mere reputation. He happened to meet Sri Ramakrishna first almost casually when the latter came down on visits to some of his disciples in Calcutta, and the first impressions of Girischandra were not very favourable. But since the evening that Sri Ramakrishna came over to the Star Theatre to see a performance of *Caitanya Lilā*, Girischandra was more and more drawn towards Sri Ramakrishna Deva. First, he recognized in the Saint a character of remarkable human virtues and overflowing grace and affection. Later he discovered in him the 'Master'—the heaven-appointed minister of his redemption, and finally, the God-Man. It was not credulity that led Girischandra to accept Sri Ramakrishna as the Master, for Girischandra was critical

by nature and sometimes at the outset he used to criticize Sri Ramakrishna violently. But gradually he was converted and the conversion was complete. It was a complete surrender to the Master from whom he had the assurance that all the evil in him—(crookedness he called it)—would be removed by divine grace. Henceforward he lived and wrote, he believed, under his Master's eye. He became the Evangelist as Playwright.

#### GIRISCHANDRA AND HINDU MYTHOLOGY

Some have supposed that in most of his plays Girischandra only paraphrased certain mythological and religious tales and legends and packed them with a number of current ideas and sentiments with an eye to box-office returns. But this is an altogether erroneous idea. All his greater dramas are expressions of a vision that his soul had caught under a higher inspiration, every single detail fitting into a patterned symbol of a sublime realization. The old themes only provided a skeleton which he invested with flesh and blood and into which he infused the warmth of his own being. Every scene presents a dramatic moment in a process of progressive realization of a cosmic truth and every character has its place in the pattern he rolls out in the drama. A large portion of the contents of his dramas was based on his own acute observation of life and the rest were creations of a powerful imagination that could give even abstract notions and metaphysical concepts not merely a name, but also form and character. In doing this he was undoubtedly helped by his intimate knowledge of Hindu mythology, and if he adopted some of the conceptions from that source it was because his mind worked the same way.

#### THE NEO-HINDU REVIVAL

Girischandra's dramas exercised a powerful influence in the national revival in

Bengal that set in about the eighties of the last century. The modern age in the cultural history of Bengal begins about 1858, the year when the first graduates passed out from the University of Calcutta. The immediate trend was to discard the old and adopt new standards provided by Europe. Creative genius in Bengal retained its individuality, of course, and sought a synthesis between the West and the East, but the emphasis was initially on the ideas taken over from Europe and planned efforts to naturalize them in the soil of Bengal. Free thinking, agnosticism and deism in religion; the works of Madhusudan, Bankimchandra (in the earlier phase) in literature; insistence on rational, secular, and humanitarian values in social life; the demand for political rights and liberty—all these were symptoms of an intellectual revolution that ensued with the spread of English education. Even the great Pundit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar was actually on the side of the new revolutionaries.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, however, the current began to flow into new channels. It was a sort of neo-romantic movement, a reaction against the rationalism of the previous age. The immediate trend towards westernization was checked. A new synthesis began, and traditional ideals, re-interpreted and re-oriented, once more became powerful as directive forces and provided guide-lines for action and expansion in every sphere of life. Though it is sometimes referred to as the neo-Hindu revival, actually its influence extended beyond the frontiers of Hindu society. It was a resurgence of what may be called Indianism in every field of activity. Even Brahmoism under the leadership of Keshabchandra Sen turned to many things previously regarded as characteristically Hindu. In literature Bankimchandra in the later phase of his literary career wrote his novels and essays in furtherance

of these neo-Hindu ideals and his famous song *Bande Mataram* provided the nationalists with a motto and an ideal. Chandranath Basu, Navinchandra Sen, and many others were propagating the same ideals in literature. Hindu Mela, The Indian Association, The Indian National Congress were other institutions that came into being in furtherance of these national ideals. There were preachers like Sasadhar Tarkacudamani who tried to vindicate Hindu religion and Hindu social institutions and commanded the attention of large audiences. The atmosphere was charged with a new influence emanating from Dakshineswar. It transformed the sceptic Narendranath Datta into Vivekananda, the puissant apostle of neo-Hinduism. It converted Girischandra, the sinner into Girischandra, the Evangelist whose dramatic works became the vehicle of the new idealism on the stage and powerfully moved the heart and soul of contemporary Bengal.

#### GISRICHANDRA AND BENGALI DRAMA

Before Girischandra started writing his plays, there was a National Theatre in Bengal but no national drama. The stage had caught the imagination of the public, but in spite of the elaboration of stage fittings and devices and the undoubted talent of many of the actors, no particular play could create any real and enduring impression. As the managers, actors, and the audience clearly recognized, this was principally due to lack of 'good' plays—plays which could touch the depths of the soul of a Bengali audience. There was a welter of types. There were imitations or adaptations of European drama, mainly Shakespeare's and Moliere's; there were sentimental plays as well as comedies of manners, farces, and satires mainly critical of contemporary follies and foibles. Materials were gathered sometimes from Sanskrit drama, and dramatic versions were made

of famous contemporary novels and epics. And yet Bengali drama could not strike a line of its own.

It was Girischandra who gave life to Bengali drama, directed it into proper channels, and showed how it could come home to men's business and bosoms. The themes he selected—whether religious, social, historical or patriotic—had always an appeal to the heart of Bengal, and his treatment of the themes had also just the touch to stir the dormant soul of the audience. He is not only the father of the Bengali stage but also the creator of the Bengali drama.

#### HIS DRAMATIC METHODS

Girischandra's dramas would ordinarily be classified as romantic, but as a dramatist Girischandra had his own methods. These methods have given rise to certain conventions which are now well recognized as characteristic of Bengali drama. In adopting these methods Girischandra was, to some extent, influenced by Shakespearean drama and the Sanskrit drama but mostly by the tradition in indigenous Bengali drama. Some of these were the mingling of the serious and the comic; introduction of clownage following close upon the heels of lofty sentiments; employment of characters of jesters and clowns, knaves and fools, rustics and beggars, the crazy and the eccentric; and an extensive use of songs and lyrics. All these devices he employs with a deft dramatic touch, not only to lend colour and variety to the action, bring it closer to life and to provide dramatic relief but also to add new dimension to the play, to enrich it with far-reaching suggestions and subtle nuances. The songs and lyrics are there not simply to satisfy a popular taste; they strike chords deep in our hearts and awaken our minds to a perception that 'more is meant than meets the ear'. The apparent clownage offers a running com-

mentary on the action, the true significance of which is patent to the 'ideal spectator'; the knaves and rogues are often gifted with a sincerity that ultimately transforms their raw humanity; the bedlamite and the beggar stand on the periphery of worldly life and have glimpses of the mystery that surrounds it.

### HIS VISION

The vision of life presented in the dramas of Girischandra has been considered to be defective, and he has been accused of an aversion to taking a straight look at the broad facts of life. But Girischandra did not attach any great importance to the shadow-show of life and often spoke of the disgust he felt with so-called realism. As a dramatist, he felt, it was his business to communicate to his audience the glimpses of truth that could only be caught by looking at life from certain angles. He was not a man equipped only with a 'blind understanding'; under the guidance of his Master he developed a superior faculty and had an insight into the inherent divinity of man and the ways of God to men. He was drawn to the old myths as in them he found his own realizations best symbolized. As in the case of Dante, the orthodoxy of his religious views was grounded upon a sincere conviction won through battling with evils of life. His own experience of life had taught him the littleness of man and the futility of man's quest for worldly happiness. There is little room for heroic achievement in life, for the Higher Will predominates. There is only one attitude proper to man, viz. that of surrender to this Will. The reward is not in terms of plenty, prosperity or length of days. It is in a grace abounding and vision beatific, descending on the soul.

Of this Higher Will Girischandra had his own conception based on his own spiritual history. It was Power as well as Love

and possessed a personality. It was ever on the track of erring man, guiding him through the mazes of the purgatorio called life towards his divine destiny. Its one distinctive quality that man was qualified to perceive was Charity in the highest and broadest sense—wide-embracing love, particularly for the sorrowing and the distressed. 'Blessed are they that mourn'; a contrite heart is the surest passport to His mercy and grace. This Higher Will has a mysterious many-sided personality which cannot be summed up in any convenient term of philosophy. Destiny, Providence, the Moral Absolute are terms too narrow to describe it adequately. Francis Thompson speaks of the Hound of Heaven chasing man down the labyrinthine ways of the mind. Girischandra's own realization of the intimate relationship between the human soul and the divine was akin to this conception but with a difference. How he actually felt about it is symbolized in certain myths concerning Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In many of the important mythological plays of Girischandra occurs the character of Śrī Kṛṣṇa—the man and god, the statesman and the lover, the ruthless enemy of the evil-minded and the proud, but the loving friend of the poor, the meek and the pure in heart. That was Girischandra's conception of Godhead—a conception based on his own experiences and realizations.

### THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO GIRISCHANDRA

If we re-read the famous mythological and religious plays of Girischandra—plays like *Janā*, *Pāṇḍava Gaurava*, *Bilvamangal*—in this light, their profound human significance will be more evident to us. Girischandra did not merely take over striking tales and legends and give them a dramatic shape; his great dramas are chapters of his spiritual autobiography. There was a time when, like the Ancient Mariner, he had been 'all alone on a wide, wide sea'. And



then 'a saint took pity on his soul in agony'. Heaven's mercy descended on him like a gentle shower and he became the Evangelist as Playwright. The gospel according to Girischandra was the gospel of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Incarnation of God, of whom it might be justly said—

Thou seemest human and divine,  
The highest holiest manhood Thou,  
Our wills are ours, we know not how,  
Our wills are ours to make them Thine.

There are many legends about Śrī Kṛṣṇa but Girischandra put into his dramas only those which agreed with his own conception of Divinity. There are in his plays many episodes concerning Śrī Kṛṣṇa which were his own invention, and which show how his mind was working.

#### RELIGIOUS DRAMAS: PANDAVA GAURAVA

His conception of a Divinity working in the world of man is probably best brought out in *Pāṇḍava Gaurava*. Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays the role of a crafty politician, sometimes even to the chagrin of his devoted friends who believe him to be the very incarnation of godhead but very often fail to understand his ways to men, far less to justify them. The drama offers the grand spectacle of a cosmos brought to the verge of a cataclysm, the harmony of the Primary Powers in the Universe being disturbed by a discord which begins casually and almost involves a War of the Worlds. The possible catastrophe is averted only at the last moment when the harmony is restored and confrontation of the Powers ended by the resurgence of the balancing factor, Universal Nature (*Mahāmāyā*), moved by a device of the Universal Mind (Śrī Kṛṣṇa). The threatened War of the Worlds is paralleled in the moral plane by a conflict between friends and kinsmen; between loyalties and duties; between honour and interest; between faith and

doubt. In the physical plane it is between appearances and realities. A full scale of characters, human and divine, is involved, from the grass-cutter at one end to the great god Mahādeva at the other, all acting as the unconscious agents of a power and a will over and above them; every one of them suffers from a purblind vision of the Truth known alone to the Universal Mind, incarnate in and acting through the princely diplomat Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All this cosmic upheaval is ultimately due to Divine mercy operating to redeem a repentant sinner (Ūrbaśī) who had thoughtlessly brought down a curse upon herself. Like Dante, Girischandra realized that it is love that moves the world, and loving kindness to the lowly and the fallen is the principal attribute of the Divine.

#### JANĀ

*Janā* illustrates another aspect of the inscrutable Will operating in the world of human motives and passions. The supreme Will represented by Śrī Kṛṣṇa acts not only to sustain and rear but also at times to dissolve and destroy. Not only does it what is evil; sometimes it rides roughshod over the tenderest human affections and most glorious human passions. Human values it seems to disregard altogether and operates only to shock us out of our fond illusions. Girischandra's *Janā* is the expression of an idealism quite different from what we have in Madhusudan's famous poem on Janā. Madhusudan was a romantic rebel, and in his poem poetic sympathy is entirely with Janā, an impressive figure remarkable for dynamic energy and heroic womanhood, whom he invests with tragic dignity. In Girischandra's play, Janā is the same heroic queen but the keynote is not provided by her passionate womanhood or rebellious defiance. In some ways the most significant character is the Court Jester who has a better insight into the truth of god, man,

and human life, and, though he has to struggle through doubts, is rewarded with the vision beatific even on this side of life. Properly speaking, the play is not a tragedy; the dramatic action culminates not in the catastrophe that overwhelms Janā but in the illumination that dawns at the end of the play. The action progresses through complexities of passion and judgement until its conclusion in 'calm of mind, all passion spent'.

#### BILVAMANGAL

In *Bilvamangal*, Girischandra reaches the height of his dramatic art. Based on a legend in Vaiṣṇava literature, the drama depicts the progress of the rake, Bilvamangal, from sin to saintliness, a theme close to the soul of Girischandra. Paradoxically the very passion—the passion of love—which made him a moral wreck and an abandoned bankrupt in life, led through its sheer strength and sincerity to his ultimate redemption. Only a dramatist with Girischandra's knowledge of human psychology and his insight into the moral and spiritual depths of human nature and his consummate dramatic art could have treated the theme so successfully as he does in *Bilvamangal*. Passionate love, whatever may be its actual form or expression, is always a guarantee of spiritual redemption provided it is sincere and 'deep as life'. So it is not only the rake Bilvamangal who is redeemed but also the prostitute Chintamani, though at first the quality of her love remains obscured under professional habits of speech and thought. It is sincerity that counts ultimately. The well-known maxim, 'This above all; to thine own self be true' sums up the secret of moral redemption.

The art of Girischandra is best brought out in his invention of a subplot and a few side characters in *Bilvamangal*. The subplot concerns two characters, a hypocritical ascetic and another prostitute. In

spite of their professions of religiosity and love, both are meanly selfish creatures seeking mundane comforts and carnal enjoyments, and are prepared to commit furtively any number of sins and crimes to satisfy their appetites. The same course of events that lead Bilvamangal and Chintamani to salvation sweep these two to damnation and death. The theme of the main plot is thus brought into relief by the contrast presented in the subplot.

Perhaps the best evidence of Girischandra's dramatic genius is found in his creation of two characters, the Beggar and the Mad Girl. The Beggar, an absconding thief, is a knave but no fool. He is 'of the earth, earthy', but has a sharp intelligence, keen enough not merely to see through all pretensions but also to understand his own faults and errors. A hard-headed realist and critic of life, he is no cynic. Though perfectly unsentimental, he can appreciate genuine nobility of soul wherever it may be found. He contributes little to the action but stands as a chorus; his shrewd and witty remarks lend a human touch to this drama of moral conflict and provide the best commentary on the progress of the action. His curious mind takes in all experience with an easy span, and it is in the history of his moral progress and ultimate salvation that we can trace the path of advance from common human levels to higher things. He is haunted by a vague fear of a police warrant which is, by a steady process of mental evolution, sublimated into a 'fear of the Lord' which is 'the beginning of wisdom'. Otherwise 'fearless and unperplexed', he passes across the stage with a knowing smile upon his lips—a spectator of life and a pilgrim of eternity—till he reaches the Holy Land.

The Mad Girl in *Bilvamangal* is another brilliant creation. Like Browning's Pippa, she flits across the stage singing her devotional songs and exerting a sublimating

influence upon the other characters in the tense, critical moments of their career. She has escaped out of the ills of a worldly life into the bliss of madness. But it is a madness that has made the higher truths simple and easy to her. In her the highest status in spiritual discipline appears to have been realized. Standing almost outside life, and having a bare physical connexion with it, she casts a 'dim, religious light' upon the action. Her songs do more than provide a dramatic relief or lend variety and charm. They touch this story of a Rake with a supra-mundane significance and make us feel that 'Heaven is here'. One of the greatest achievements in dramatic literature, *Bilvamangal*, like Goethe's *Faust*, depicts how 'men may rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things'.

#### HISTORICAL PLAYS: SIRAJ-UD-DAULA

A few historical and social plays should also be counted among Girischandra's major achievements. His success here was not so pronounced as he was on less sure grounds. Girischandra's genius was best fitted for the high themes of man's struggle for salvation, character, and action being only media to bring out the eternal verities in terms of tradition, faith, and the experience of life. Human nature and human life he knew as intimately as any but his dramatic instinct was never satisfied with presenting a cross-section of actual human life. The so-called reality was never for him the whole truth, and so even in his historical and social plays he introduces devices that sometimes strain our belief. Perhaps the best of his historical plays is *Siraj-ud-daula*, in which he dramatizes the fateful events culminating in the death of Siraj and establishment of British rule in Bengal. Girischandra does not merely present history; he gives his own interpretation of the moral forces responsible for the

decline and fall of the free state of Bengal. It is history turned into Morality, and the tragedy of Siraj is the tragedy of Bengal, brought about by the meanness, selfishness, insincerity, and chicanery rampant amongst members of the ruling class in Bengal at that time.

The protagonist Siraj with his virtues and shortcomings invites comparison with Marlowe's Edward II and Shakespeare's Richard II. A beautiful but ineffectual character, he suffers as much on account of his softness and good intentions as for his misdeeds in the past which he cannot wipe out. Beleagured by treacherous grandees in a rotten State, he has to carry on continuously a struggle against Destiny and its agents, the English, and against Nemesis and its agent, the vengeful Lady Johara. There are just a few good men about him but they are too few. Weak-minded and vacillating, uncertain in temper and inconsistent in his plans, Siraj, like the typical protagonist of tragedy, succumbs to what is false within and about him.

But though well-planned as a historical drama, Girischandra's *Siraj-ud-daula* suffers from a confusion between the real and the ideal. A historical play may be a Morality but it may not be a Mystery or a Miracle. The position of the critic-philosopher, Karim Chacha, a typical invention of Girischandra's, corresponding to the Jester in mythological plays, is extremely anomalous; that of the ubiquitous Lady Johara even more so. That she should influence the action so much is very improbable and her figure is altogether unconvincing. The way Girischandra's methods as a playwright garble realities of actual life indicates one of his limitations as a dramatist.

#### SOCIAL DRAMAS

The social dramas of Girischandra have the same defects as his historical plays, though a few of them must be pronounced

to be really good, if not great. Girischandra had a thorough knowledge of contemporary middleclass Calcutta society, and with his undoubted dramatic talents might have given us excellent realistic portrayals of social conditions and its problems. He does so certainly but his art suffers from an overplus of the reformist zeal. The fault is not that he writes with a purpose, but that he oversteps probabilities and distorts the image of life. The good are just goody-goody; the villains are monsters; there are always a few typical creations of Girischandra's art, the disreputable characters who are basically well-meaning and are reformed under the powerful influence of noble deeds and noble thoughts; there is also another type of characters—favourites of the dramatist and often his mouthpieces—crack-brained creatures, true to the highest ideals of life and led by the kindly light of a vision divine, who flit across the stage, often singing devotional lyrics. They do not harmonize into the picture of social life. The plots are often full of sensational incidents, charged with sinister passions, and clumsily end in unlikely solutions of problems or in moralizing over the exposure of villains and sufferings of the good. In fact in his social plays Girischandra creates myths out of contemporary social life. They have the same motifs as his mythological plays.

Yet, in spite of these defects, some of Girischandra's social plays like *Prafulla* and *Balidān* have an enduring appeal. In these he depicts the sad history of 'poor humanity's afflicted will' carrying on a desperate but vain struggle against forces and circumstances that prove too strong for it. Through one fatal leak in his character the sea of troubles makes its way into the happy life of Jogesh (in *Prafulla*) till he sinks under the weight of his misfortunes and anguish. Paralyzed by the growing infirmity of his character, Jogesh stands helpless, and can

only look on and lament 'his own mischance'. In *Balidān*, Karunamay finds himself, like Laokoon, in the grip of serpentine coils that wind round him—coils of social duties and conventions—and is inevitably led to his doom. In both their cases suffering is mainly emotional and is caused by a sense of moral frustration. They are betrayed not so much by any *hamartia*—by vice or imprudence—as by their goodness, scrupulous honesty, and gentlemanly ideas. No arbitrary Fate, no moral law but a malignant power in the shape of the very conditions of polite life and social ideals brings about their destruction. They are not heroes but gentlemen; they do not fight, they suffer. Whether one calls it tragical or not, one can hear 'the still, sad music of humanity' vibrating through their history.

#### FEATURES OF GIRISCHANDRA'S DRAMAS: HIS CONTRIBUTION TO BENGALI LITERATURE

On the technical side Girischandra's dramas have their special characteristics. They have many features in common with the romantic drama of Shakespeare, though Girischandra's approach to life is basically different from Shakespeare's. They are remarkable for their diversity and richness of effects, variety of characters and incidents, harmony of tones. The dialogue is laced with sharp wit, humour, and a flashing intellectuality. The action does not necessarily imply a conflict between two almost equally urgent principles; it is often an exposition of the working out of a certain Will, moral or divine. He holds the mirror up not to Nature in the Shakespearean sense but to the larger Truth gleaming beyond the casement of reality. Each of his characters has individuality, vividness, and dimension proper to the scheme of the drama, though it is not always character in the round. Songs and lyrics are essential constituents of his dramas, and more often than not they are

integrated into the dramatic scheme. His more serious plays are very often poetic dramas, not merely because the dialogue is mostly in verse but also because they give an emotional and imaginative rendering of a poetically conceived theme. There is usually alternation between verse and prose in his dramas, verse being reserved for the more exalted and more emotional utterances of people of rank and culture, and prose for small talk and dialogue closer to everyday life. The plots are complicated after the usual romantic pattern, and the events often demand a 'willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith'. For Girischandra, however, it was not simply a poetic faith; it was a vital faith.

Apart from his contributions to Bengali drama, there are other considerations that ensure for Girischandra an important position in the history of Bengali literature. He is one of the greatest composers of songs and genuine lyrics with a devotional content. He was the innovator of a new style in versification—the so-called Girish metre, a kind of free verse; it is flexible blank verse in which the various standard measures are freely associated in periods of varying length answering to the intensity of the emotion at the moment. It has been widely accepted as the medium of Bengali verse-drama. He must be also credited with a unique talent for exploiting the resources of colloquial Bengali for dramatic purposes. Probably there never has been amongst Bengali authors a greater master of the idiom of conversational Bengali.

#### GIRISCHANDRA AND NATIONAL DRAMA

We hear a good deal in these days about

the necessity of a national theatre—a theatre which will be no mere centre of amusement but a source of active inspiration to the people. Unless there be a national drama, there cannot be a national theatre. A drama of this type should be true to the kindred points of heaven and home, must be rooted deep in the traditions of the race and the tastes and instincts of the people. In Bengal it was Girischandra alone who had discovered the secret of a national drama, and it was because of him that the new drama could make such a headway into the remotest corners of Bengal, direct the emotions and shape the ideals of the people. A mere effort at imitation of foreign writers, however famous, will never succeed in creating a national drama. An exotic is bound to languish when transplanted from its proper soil.

#### CONCLUSION

There are academic critics who find fault with Girischandra's dramas because they do not conform to the rules of Drama formulated by European critics. They should remember that there are many mansions in the house of drama, and Girischandra created a unique dramatic type, 'compounded of many simples', the product of a synthetizing genius of the theatre. No one can question that the greater dramas of Girischandra are literature of power. It is futile to compare them with the works of this or that dramatist with a different social and cultural background. They are not ponderable in the same scales of comparison with European drama and

We do *them* wrong, being so majestic.

To offer *them* the show of violence—the violence of our misconceived criticism.

## TRADITION AND FORMS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

RAMESH CHANDRA BANERJEE

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INDIAN music having been originated in the Vedic period became more and more enriched and refined through process of evolution. It was the north-western part of India which became the main centre of Classical or Hindustani music. It is not simply the product of a single age but an assimilation of contributions by great artists and composers. In Hindustani music, we find a fusion of several cultures. Interchange of ideas and cultural link with far-east countries, especially Persia, gave a new impetus to Indian melodies, and, as a result, many new *Rāgas* evolved.

So the Classical music imbibes in itself a great tradition. Tradition represents the sum of all that we have inherited from our forefathers—language, custom, religion, belief, science, and art. So, the Classical music as a traditional form of art has been handed down from generation to generation and from age to age. According to history, the growth of an art depends upon the social, religious, political, and economic conditions of the country. It is said that a life of ease, luxury, and healthy atmosphere leads to the growth of an art. But it cannot be denied that sometimes in hardships and struggle best forms of art emanate.

In India, all great arts are handmaids of religion to a considerable extent; of course there are other elements which lead to the

growth of the arts, i.e. broad conception of life, imagination, and appreciation of the beauties of Nature. In art, we find a closer link between life and Nature. Nature is the sole inspiration of an artist. An artist interprets the beauties of Nature in various forms—music, colour, movements, etc. There is beauty in each and every art form. As for instance, in music we find the tonal beauty, the structural beauty, and beauty in expression. The sum total of all these makes a musical piece perfect.

I have said that music and other arts are handmaids of religion. According to our authentic Sanskrit treatises, the *Prabandha Gītis* sung in temples in ancient times developed into *Dhruvād* song in later period. In this connexion it may be said that music had been the best means of spiritual attainment. Here, in India, universal brotherhood, peace, and amity were preached through devotional songs called *Bhajan* composed by great saintly poets like Tulasidāsa, Suradāsa, Mīrā Bāi, Kabīr, and others. Sri Caitanya Deva, the divine incarnate, preached the doctrine of love—the union of the human soul with the Divine through *Saṁkīrtana* which had a direct appeal to the people who, irrespective of caste and creed, embraced the doctrine of love and universal brotherhood. So, music in India is depicted as something divine and which transcends all,

As regards the origin of melodies or *Rāgas*, some sources are attributed to the Folk music. It is said that skeleton or the structure of some classical *Rāgas* are derived from Folk or regional tune. The tune and technique of Folk songs are very simple and spontaneous. These are composed and sung by the village people communicating incidents of every-day life, festivals, and characters of local interests. Moreover, we find in Folk music, mostly common themes and some uniformity in tune throughout the world and thereby it has a mass appeal. In Classical music there is ample proof where some melodies have been adopted from the Folk or regional tunes, but reshuffled and ornamented by composers and musicians.

#### THE FORMS OF HINDUSTANI MUSIC

Now I like to discuss about the forms of Hindustani music. Before coming to details, I would interpret this in a general way. In music as general, we find two forms—one absolute and the other descriptive. Absolute music is called the highest form of music. It is concerned only with melody. *Ālāp* in classical music, which is best expressive of a melody through improvisation, without following any particular rhythm and not associated with literature may be called absolute music. On the other hand, descriptive music gives expression to things or action, feeling, or mood with literary association. This type of music reflects a particular circumstance or emotion and it is generally effective in opera, drama, and dance-drama. But vocal music other than *Ālāp* may be called descriptive music in which we find a perfect mingling of melody, rhythm, and literature. Vocal music, when associated with literature, is called the best form of music. In ancient India, the *Sāma-Mantras* were used to be recited with the help of musical notes, and, in the Epic age, we find ample instances of the formation of *Rāgas* from the notes and it is said that

the *Rāmāyana* used to be sung with the help of *Lyre* and *Laya*, i.e. in accompaniment of *Viṇā* and 'Drum', and some writers are of opinion that the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* are compilations from roaming bards (*Cārāṇas*). Hence, through *Ālāp* the absolute music secures the highest place in the realm of music, yet music with literary association has been effective and popular since time immemorial.

Now I come to the details about the different forms of our traditional music. The four forms such as *Dhrupad*, *Kheyāl*, *Tappā*, and *Thumrī* have made the Hindustani music so varied, so complex, and at the same time, beautiful and deep in sentiment. In course of evolution of music we find *Dhrupad*—systematic in structure and at the same time melodic and sublime. It is vast within its frame-work. Though *Dhrupad* is derived from *Prabandha-Gītī*, yet in it we find a vivid picture of *Rāga* and *Tāla* along with emotional aspect which plays an important part in *Dhrupad* and herein lies the basic formula of Indian music. The literature associated with it is mainly devotional and descriptive with a broad conception of life and nature. The ancient *Prabandha-Gītī* consisted of many parts describing and adoring the Gods and set to tune and rhythm with application of *Alaṅkaras*. But the *Rāga* element was not so appealing and improved and the rhythm lacking in variation.

*Dhrupad* is said to be the oldest and finest form of Classical music and it contains the root out of which all other types or forms have evolved in later periods. It was in the fourteenth century that Nayak Baiju, a saintly person and a famous singer and composer, gave a concrete shape to *Dhrupad* consisting of four methodical parts along with improvised system of *Rāga* and *Tāla* and application of special techniques. Thus *Dhrupad* was first systematized by

Nayak Baiju and his contribution is a high-water mark in Indian classical music. His compositions are mainly devotional and descriptive dealing with story elements from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Another contemporary musician, composer, and scholar was Nayak Gopal, a versatile genius both in Hindustani and Karnatic music. He introduced many South Indian *Rāgas* in Hindustani music such as *Śaṅkarabharaṇ*, *Deogiri*, etc. His *Dhrupad* compositions are remarkable for vibration of words, rhythmic interpretation, and vivid description of Nature and God Śiva. The primary factor of his songs is 'rhythm' hence it is called *chanda*. Regarding the sentiment of his songs, it is considered to be of a high aesthetic value. Nayak Gopal's songs may be compared to the *Dhrupad* compositions of another great devotional poet, composer, and musician of the fifteenth century, Swami Haridāsa. The theme of his songs is permeated with Vaiṣṇava philosophy, himself being a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In his compositions he used both 'Brajā Bhāṣā' and 'Sanskrit'. Swami Haridāsa is at his best while describing *Rāsa-Līlā* and *Abhisāra*. In his *Dhrupad* there are distinctive new elements of technique and melody which influenced Tānsen, the greatest creative genius in Indian music ever born and whose music is a source of eternal inspiration to all the composers and musicians of later ages. *Dhrupad* is based on purity of *Rāgas* and deeper conception. It is regarded as the foundation of all musical training whether vocal or instrumental. In *Dhrupad* there is restraint in ecstasy and rigidity in flexibility. *Dhrupad* rose to the zenith of its glory in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when peace and prosperity prevailed in India. The age of Tānsen is called the golden age of classical music. Many new *Rāgas* owe their existence to Tānsen. He laid emphasis on the emotional aspect of *Rāgas* and gave new colour to

*Rāgas* such as—*Kanāḍa*, *Toḍī*, *Mallār*, *Sāraṅg*, etc. and a few thousands of his *Dhrupad* compositions have made his name immortal throughout the world. A wizard of melody and words, Tānsen is regarded as the best composer and one of the leading poets of the mediæval period. An analytical study of his songs gives ample proof of his poetic genius, though the poet Tānsen has been shadowed by the musician and composer Tānsen. He remodelled the *Dhrupad* and *Ālāp* styles of song and introduced *Mid*, *Gamak*, *Āś*, and *Vistār* as a result, ornamentation predominated giving vast scope for artistic representations. Impact of Tānsen's music opened a newer outlook to the musicians of all ages to come and his cosmopolitan views paved the way for future evolution of *Kheyāl* and other types of Hindustani music. Since the age of Tānsen, Hindustani music gradually took its course to Romanticism. Thus we see that Classicism with its rich mood, grandeur, and purity of style taking its turn to imagination and ecstasy. In this connexion, it may be said that Tānsen's music, though classic in form was romantic in spirit. Art is an integral part of our life and society and as life and orders of society change, conception of art also changes. From the latter part of the seventeenth century, we find an experiment going on for introduction of a new system of music, most imaginative and ecstatic. This is *Kheyāl* song—and Sadāraṅg's name is written in golden letters in the history of Hindustani music for giving it an honourable status. *Kheyāl* is a Persian word meaning something whimsical: as in this type of song there is an unlimited scope of rendering a *Rāga* as the artist feels or imagines. So, in *Kheyāl*, intuition and improvisation play an important part. When Sadāraṅg flourished, the Mughal empire was on the verge of decay, yet the Emperor Mahammad Shah patronized



this form of Classical music. So in most of his *Kheyāl* songs we find Sadāraṅ eulogizing the Emperor. The descendants and disciples of Sadāraṅ are famous for composition of *Kheyāl* songs, which are considered as a great landmark in the evolution of Indian music. *Dhrupad* is supreme for its strange inwardness, whereas in *Kheyāl* the imagination is fully exposed. It is something intoxicating.

The latter part of the eighteenth century witnessed the evolution of another romantic type of music called *Tappā*. It claims its origin from a particular type of folk-tune of the Arabian desert. This type of intonation was adopted by Shorī and Gulamnabī and their love songs addressed to each other formed the basis of *Tappā* songs which are composed with a very few words, but at the same time very appealing and ecstatic. *Tappā* songs are composed in light *Rāgas* and its *Alaṅkāras* are distinctly separate from those of *Kheyāl*.

We find the growth of another type of music called *Thumrī* in the earlier part of the nineteenth century which is also limited to light *Rāgas* and *Tālas*, but very expressive, while *Tappā* is composed of colloquial Panjabi language, sometimes Urdu and Hindi mixed. *Thumrī* is mainly composed in *Braja-Bhāṣā* describing the *Līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In one sense *Thumrī* may be called an offshoot of *Tappā* with *Alaṅkāras* more concised but variation in *Rāgas* is the distinctive feature of this type of songs. Sanad and Kadar were famous composers and exponents of *Thumrī* song and Wazed Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Oudh, was a great patron of *Thumrī* and himself a great composer.

These four types of Hindustani Music—*Dhrupad Kheyāl*, *Tappā*, and *Thumrī* give a concrete form of the tradition of Indian Classical music. The Hindustani music though abide by some principles and grammar, yet it is flexible and this is

the reason why it retained its lusture and appeal even now. It is so fresh and enchanting that people listen to it hours and hours together but it never becomes monotonous. So Classical music which imbibes in itself the great heritage of Indian culture is called the finest of all arts.

### CONCLUSION

The gradual evolution of Indian music proves that the art of music is dynamic. It is not stagnant or stereotyped. Art is progressive. The world changes; art also changes. Art must not lag behind the general progress of the world. New forms of art appear on the threshold of the old. These new trends though revolutionary, yet in spirit are evolutionary. The main characteristics of art are simplicity, purity, and sensibility. The emotion is subjective and it is communicated to the listener. Thus the feeling is equally shared by the artist as well as by the listener. Art has a definite purpose in social life. Its object is humanitarian. It is not merely an object of entertainment. Art brings unity in diversity and it serves as a connecting link between different countries and different nations of the world. All melodies are subject to improvisation, especially Indian *Rāgas* which are not simply the product of permutation and combination of notes, but the expression of different human sentiments such as devotion, love, joy, despair, and pathos. If we go deep into a morning *Rāga* from psychological standpoint, we have a vivid picture before our mind's eye—the early dawn when the first rays of the sun brightens the sky. What sentiment does it bring? It is awakening from slumber and a spirit of adoration. So each *Rāga* contains in itself an emotion or feeling.

I conclude with a few words about the culture of Hindustani music in Bengal. Bengal's contribution to the revival and popularization of Classical music constitutes

a glorious chapter in our cultural history. The reference of *Rāgas* and *Tālas* in *Caryā-Gīti*, *Jaydeva Padāvalī* and other lyric songs of Bengal shows ample proof that Classical music highly influenced the poets and composers of this part of India.

Then we come to the age of Rabindranath who liberated life and culture, so also our music from the clutches of conservatism and made it popular in true national spirit through universal appeal. He, in his early

years, adopted the style of great pioneers of music of the medieval period, but later on took his own style—the melody just expressive of the deep meaning of his lyric poems—wherein lies his creativity. He made the contradictory forces of Classicism and Romanticism into a supreme unity. In his composition, besides his own creation, we find a synthesis of all trends of classical, as well as the indigenous music of Bengal.

We love music, but if it is asked as to why do we love music, we cannot give a satisfactory answer to it. If we say that we love music for our own satisfaction, the answer will not be correct. But it should be remembered that music is an art, which contains within it a universal appeal and an inner urge for expansion. Music conveys the idea of broadening our mind and intellect. It enlightens our soul for realizing the real import and value of art and life. So the culture of music does not require any suspension or limitation. It does not mean that we should be contented with practice of mere skeletons of *rāgas* and *rāgiṇīs*, which are framed out of the combination and permutation of tones, but we shall have to dive deep into the very core of the *rāgas* and *rāgiṇīs*, and shall realize their true emotional aspect and spirit. We shall have to infuse life in them and make them dynamic and fit to be divinised and visualised in our intuitive vision.

SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

(*A Historical Study of Indian Music*, First Edition p. 426)

## BOOK REVIEW

EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION (A SYMPOSIUM). Edited by T. S. Avinashilingam. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore Dt. 1967. 165 pp. Rs. 9.00 or \$ 2.

The book under review consists of nineteen papers on the subject of education for national integration from the pen of eminent writers like Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Swami Ranganathananda, Dr. K. G. Saiyidain, Dr. P. S. Lokanathan, Professor M. S. Thacker, and others, all of whom are distinguished in their own fields. The book is published in commemoration of the thirty-five years' service of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore District. Recommendations of the Seminar held in December 1965 to commemorate the services of the Vidyalaya are given in the concluding chapter. These have been grouped under six heads, viz. educational, psychological, economic, political, social, religious, and cultural factors which contribute to national integration.

Some of the papers contained in the book are enlightening and offer fruitful suggestions as to how national integration can be best achieved. Others offer predominantly theoretical discussions. The first paper entitled 'Education for National Integration' by the editor himself is illuminating and instructive in many ways. The author has rightly analyzed the distinction between 'secular' and 'religious', and has effectively discussed the role of national and social service in any scheme of education. He has extensively quoted articles of the *Constitution of India* in support of his findings. Dr. K. G. Saiyidain, in his paper on 'Concept of National Integration', points out that a sense of national integration springs from two sources: a realization of the fact that the people have, in spite of their many differences, a strong community

of interests covering a broad front and a feeling of pride in one's own country. And he goes on to urge that 'unless we can assure for all classes and communities a just social order and an equality of opportunity, national integration cannot be achieved'. Swami Ranganathananda in his paper on 'Spiritual Values and National Integration' shows, admirably, in what respects the spiritual growth of man differs from his merely physical growth and gives a comprehensive idea as to wherein lies the uniqueness of man. The special merit of his paper is that he supports his findings by the observations of such eminent scientists as Russell, Millikan, Julian Huxley, and others. The expression 'ethics of positivism' (P. 23) may appear to be somewhat misleading to the uninitiated reader. Swami Lokeshwarananda, in his paper on 'Religion in National Integration', says that care should be taken, while imparting religious education to the youth, to stress those ideas in religious literature which urge that due reverence should be shown to followers of other religions. Inter-religious group meetings and participation in religious practices should also be encouraged, according to the writer, so as to remove exclusiveness as far as possible. Sri K. Santhanam, in his paper on 'Political factors in National Integration', makes a strong plea that care should be taken, by all lovers of national integration, to see that political parties of an all-India character do not exploit religious, communal, and other separatist feelings of the people at the time of general elections held throughout the country. Legal provisions to penalize the exploitation of communal and religious prejudices should be effectively enforced. Dr. P. S. Lokanathan in his paper on 'Economic Factors in National Integration' expresses the hope that with

the rise of *per capita* income in the country, national integration will be placed on a firm footing, for then people will be resourceful enough to be mobile and will see for themselves common features everywhere in India. This, in the opinion of the reviewer, seems to be a case of oversimplification. For, one is tempted to ask: Will a rich Indian, who has money enough to travel widely throughout the length and breadth of India, be necessarily integration-minded? He might as well be a mere tourist and nothing better than that. Both Sri K. Arunachalam (paper on 'Curriculum for National Integration') and Dr. K. Kulan-  
daivel (paper on 'Training of Teachers for National Integration') put forward valuable suggestions which deserve to be implemented by all lovers of education for

national integration. Sri K. Arunachalam rightly recommends: 'The school children should study the local community by making frequent visits and understanding social service activities. This programme will develop a love sentiment in the children to the community to which they belong' (p. 104).

The book is strongly recommended to all who want to grasp the fundamental ideas of national integration and the steps which are necessary to implement them. A few typographical errors, such as Betrand Russel for Bertrand Russell, psychocological for psychological, and a few others may be corrected in the next edition.

The book could have been priced moderately.

AMIYA KUMAR MAZUMDAR

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Bal Mandir Kanchan Manimela, Kanchrapara

*Saturday, 6 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR APRIL 1968

*Sri Caitanya Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 6 April, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

*Gautam Buddha Galpa Āsar*

Last Saturday, 27 April, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

**Programme:**

Music, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Show

## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

**April 3 Vedantic Interpretation of the Ramacaritamanasa**

*Speaker:* Hridaynarayanji Yogi

*President, Manas Sadhana Mandal, Lucknow*

*President:* Swami Chidatmananda

**April 10 The Concept of God in Indian Philosophy**

*Speaker:* Gopika Mohan Bhattacharya, M.A., D.Phil.

*President:* Krishna Gopal Goswami, M.A., Ph.D.

**April 17 Tradition and Modernity**

*Speaker:* Sisirkumar Ghose, M.A., D.Phil.

*President:* Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

**April 24 The Philosophic and the Scientific Basis of Tantric Thought**

*Speaker:* Debranjana Mukherji, M.A., Ph.D.

*President:* Chintaharan Chakravarti, M.A.

## SPECIAL LECTURES

*On Tuesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

**April 9 International Understanding**

*Speaker:* Rev. E. Stanley Jones

*President:* Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L.

**April 23 Modern Sanskrit Songs (Illustrated)**

*Speaker:* Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D.Phil.

*President:* Saroj Kumar Das, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

Illustration

By

Purnendu Roy

Chabi Bandyopadhyay

## INSTITUTE NEWS

## SYMPOSIA

on

Sister Nivedita

in collaboration with

Akhila Bharatiya Nivedita Vratī Sangha

## Participants

Teachers and Students of Calcutta Schools and Colleges

*Monday, 29 and Tuesday, 30 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

## PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MAHAVIRA'S BIRTHDAY

*Programme:*

Invocation

Jaina Temple Music

Talk on : The Impact of Jainism on the Life of Indian People

By

Asutosh Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D.

President

Bijoy Singh Nahar

Devotional Songs

*Saturday, 13 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

## PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF SISTER NIVEDITA'S BIRTH CENTENARY

In collaboration with

Sri Sarada Sangha (Calcutta)

*Programme:*

Invocation

Prakriti Paramam

Talk on : The Ideals and Activities of Sister Nivedita

By

Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D.Phil.  
and others

President

Swami Bhuteshananda

*Monday, 22 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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LAND AND PEOPLE OF INDIA

MINENDRA NATH BASU, M.Sc., P.R.S., D.Phil., F.R.A.I.

*A keen student of Anthropology and author of several books, Dr. Minendra Nath Basu is Head of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Calcutta. He was President, Indian Anthropological Society, Calcutta, during 1963-65. At present he is the President of the Indian Anthropological Association, Delhi. Among his books, Material Existence of Man, Sociology—an Applied Limb of Cultural Anthropology, Museology and Its Place in Anthropology, and Anthropology in the Service of Education deserve special mention. The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. Basu at the Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies on 11 January 1968.*

**T**HE land, inhabited by man for ages together, is India. India is a big country what may be called a sub-continent. She is naturally protected—on the north are the Himalayas; on the west, the east, and the south there are the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Indian Ocean respectively. She occupies an area of about thirteen lakhs square miles and has a population of over four hundred million. She also spreads over a fifteenth

of the world's circumference and she measures two thousand miles from the north to the south. A land frontier of over eight thousand miles separates India from the Asian mainland, while a coastline of about three thousand miles encircles her in the south.

## THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

India is divided into three broad zones:

1. The great mountain wall.



2. The great plain of Hindusthan formed by the valleys of the two major rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra.
3. The great plateau of Peninsular India, south of the northern plains.

The great Himalayan arc, with the Everest as the world's highest peak extends over an area of about fifteen hundred miles from the west to the east between the Indus and the Brahmaputra. Just at the foot of the Himalayas the Indus flows in the north. The Brahmaputra rises in the western Tibetan plateau of the Himalayas and makes fertile the paddy fields of Assam. But the most fertile region of India is the Indo-Gangetic plain and the greatest concentration of her population is in this region. The west coast and central part of India is relatively less fertile and a portion of Rajasthan is more or less arid.

The Deccan plateau lies between the Western and Eastern Ghats. The mountain ranges of the Satpura and the Vindhyas separate this region from the northern plains. In the north-west the Aravallis and in the north-east the Garo and the Khasi hills are the main regions of the mineral deposits of India. The Mahānadi, the Godāvarī, the Kṛṣṇā are the main rivers of this region. They are not fed by the melting Himalayan snows like the rivers of the north. They are fed by the monsoon rains, so in the summer months they often become almost dry.

India has a great diversity of climate. The seasonal variation dominates all the phases of the lives of India. The hot weather is from March to mid-June, the monsoon from mid-June to September, and winter from October to February.

India has large deposits of a variety of important minerals for industrial development. She has enormous resources of iron, coal, manganese, bauxite, mica, titanium, thorium, limestone. She has also copper,

tin, lead, zinc, nickel, cobalt, sulphur, and petroleum.

Forests are an important source of India's wealth. Cattle is also an essential factor in her agricultural economy and fisheries contribute a substantial national income to India. Above all, the most important and vital aspect is agriculture. Two-thirds of the population if not more, depend on agriculture. Rice occupies the first position in agriculture. It is the staple food of the eastern and the south Indian people. Next comes wheat, a staple food of the most of the north Indian people. Then millet, bajra, jowar, maize, barley, pulses, sugar, oilseeds, groundnuts, tea, tobacco, cotton, and jute are all her agricultural products.

#### POPULATION

India's population next to that of China, is made up of many racial strains. India is not a land of homogeneous people but heterogeneity prevails from the very early times. That man lived in India from the earliest times, is a probable fact. The natural environment in India has changed along with her peoples but her topography has not changed to the same extent. Many a people came and many went away in different times and many more will perhaps come and pass away in future, leaving India a land of intermixture of culture and races. In this context the writer would like to recall the memory of Shakespeare's 'The world is a stage'. India here plays the part of a stage and the ethnic elements are her stage players.

Man was first born in southern central Asia. With the increase in population, men migrated to Europe, east Asia, and Africa for food. Evidence of their migration may be best found in the fact that Europe is racially dependent on Asia, and some racial elements are common to Africans and the Asiatics.

That man might have been born at

other places simultaneously with man of southern central Asia has not yet been definitely ascertained. But we have sufficient evidence of the fact that man lived in India in the Palaeolithic period, although no skeletal remains are found. Nor even any skeleton has been discovered at Mesolithic sites, but the presence of the stone implements is a definite evidence of the presence of man in the stone age. But, on account of the absence of any skeleton, it is difficult to ascertain when and how men came. We are only to assume that when the later immigrants came, India was already an inhabited place. The original inhabitants might have been completely absorbed by the newcomers or might have become extinct. The earliest racial elements discovered from the skeletal remains are at the Chalcolithic sites of the Indus valley area. There the racial elements are:

1. The Proto-Australoid.
2. The Mediterranean.
3. The Mongolian.
4. The Alpine.

Thus we find from the prehistoric times that the Indian population has been an intermixture of different races. We have yet no evidence that some particular race without any intermixture lived at any time in India and the intermixture was the effect of subsequent migrations or invasions. Whether this intermixture had taken place before their entry into India or shortly after their entry is also difficult to ascertain. Archaeological researches have not yet been completed in India and we cannot predict what the future workers may add to our knowledge. These intermixed people were gradually conquered, absorbed, or driven away to remoter parts by subsequent immigrants and invaders.

The classification of mankind on a philological basis was initiated in Calcutta by Sir William Jones, the founder of the

then Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, now known as the Asiatic Society of Bengal, which, from the first, encouraged every kind of oriental study. The classification of the Indian people from anthropometric point of view was first attempted by Sir Herbert Risley in the Census of India, 1901. Anthropometric measurements on the Indian people was not first applied by Risley but before him Baron Mezokovesd Von Ujfalvy, a Hungarian anthropologist took anthropometric measurements in the Kashmir regions between 1879 and 1884. After him came Stein, Dainelli, and Guha. They carried out an extensive survey work in these regions including the Hindukush and the Indus valley one after another. Before Risley's survey the somatic traits of the Indian people were available in Dalton's *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal* in 1872. In or about the time of Risley, Wadell (1901) took somatometric measurements on a number of Assam tribes and a similar task was done by Thurston in the Madras Presidency in 1909. So it can be said that Risley's attempt to introduce a method of classification of the Indian people can be regarded as a landmark in the study of the peoples of India.

The Indian people consist of several racial strains. A race is a group of people having certain characteristics common to them by reason of ancestry. The characters are—the form of hair, head, nose, shape of face and eye, skin, colour, and stature.

#### THE DIFFERENT ETHNIC TYPES

Risley distinguished seven different ethnic types in the population of India. They are as follows:

- (1) *The Turko-Iranian type*: The people have broad head, fine to medium nose, fair complexion, dark or grey and plentiful facial hair. This strain is typified by the Balochis, Brahuis, and the Afghans.

- (2) *The Indo-Aryan type*: This type has long head, fine to medium nose, fair complexion, dark eyes with plentiful facial hair. These characters are found among the Panjabis, Rajputs, Jats, and the Khatris of the Kashmir Valley.
- (3) *Scytho-Dravidian type*: Fair complexion with scanty facial hair, medium to broad head with medium nose. The Mārāṭhā Brahmins and the Coorgs of western India are typical examples of this type. They are distributed from Gujarat to Coorg.
- (4) *Aryo-Dravidian or Hindustani type*: The head varying from long to broad, nose broad to medium, light brown to dark complexion are the features of this type. They are found in the United Provinces, in parts of Rajputana and in Bihar.
- (5) *The Mongolo-Dravidian or Bengali type*: The complexion is dark with plentiful facial hair. Head is broad with a tendency to medium, nose varies from fine to broad. This type is found in Bengal and Orissa.
- (6) *The Mongoloid type of the Himalayas, Nepal, Assam, and Burma*: The head is broad, skin colour dark with a yellowish tinge, and the hair on the face is scanty. Stature is short or below medium. Nose is from fine to broad. The face is characteristically flat. Eye-slits are often oblique.
- (7) *The Dravidian type*: Extending from Ceylon to the Ganges covering all the portions of south-eastern India. This type is found in Madras, Hyderabad, most of the central parts of India, and Chotanagpur. The pure type of this

variety lives on the Malabar coast and in Chotanagpur. They are probably the original inhabitants of India, and now modified by the infiltration of the Aryan, Scythian, and the Mongoloid elements. Head is long, stature short or below medium, skin colour dark. Hair is plentiful with an occasional tendency to curl. Eyes are dark. Nose is very broad but not so as to make the face a flat one.

The first group, i.e. Turko-Iranian is now called by Haddon as Irano-Mediterranean. Leaving out of the account the first three groups and the Mongolian, one should examine the Mongolo-Dravidian, the Scytho-Dravidian, and the Dravidian in the light of recent researches.

In accounting for the broad-headed element in the Bombay Presidency, Risley lays too much stress on the Scythian elements in its population. But the Scythian invaders remained for too short a time to exert any influence on such a vast multitude of people in the Bombay Presidency. So Risley's theory does not hold good. But the real cause will not be ascertained until one examines the group, Mongolo-Dravidian. Bengal is, according to Risley, peopled by broad-headed people and in accounting for the broad-headed factor, Risley takes the Mongolian influence as the cause. But an examination in the outskirts of Bengal shows that the racial elements in these parts are not homogeneous. The broad-headed, broad-nosed elements are predominant in the south-eastern part bordering on Burma, while the long-headed, broad-nosed elements are strong in the Brahmaputra valley. Again, the broad-headed, long-nosed is predominant in the Sikkim region with the gradual decrease towards the north and the east.

In accounting for the racial anatomy, not only one will take the nasal index (nose form), but also the orbito-nasal index of

Topinard. So Risley was right in taking this index, but it should be noted that he did not use it except in a solitary case. So Risley's conclusion is not justified on the basis of his own data.

Moreover, R. P. Chanda has pointed out that the typical characters of the Mongolian, for example, straight hair, yellow complexion, oblique eye, epicanthic fold, absence of bodily hair are not present among the Bengalis. So Risley's conclusion seems to be too hasty. Again Bhandarkar has shown in his paper on 'Foreign Element in Hindu Population' that a similarity can be found in surnames used by the Nagar Brahmins of Gujarat and the Bengalis, as for example Dutta, Burman, Mitra, etc. By analyzing the data given by Risley, of these two peoples one can see that 73% of the Nagar Brahmins are broad-headed and 70% of the Bengalis are also broad-headed. So one cannot understand why Risley takes the Scythian element as the cause of the broad-headed factor in the Bombay Presidency and the Mongolian for Bengal. Hence one will have to trace some non-Mongoloid broad-headed people near about India. In fact, the Pamirs, and Chinese Turkistan, as gathered from the data of Ujfalvy and Aurel Stein are peopled by a broad-headed people who are known as Homo-Alpinus.

Again Aurel Stein has discovered in the Lobnor region certain skeletal remains distinctly broad, and from the present-day population it should be noted that this region is inhabited by broad-headed element, for example, Galcha, Tajik, etc. So these people (Homo-Alpinus) might be responsible for the broad-headed factor in Bengal as well as in the Bombay Presidency. When the Alpines came they found the upper Gangetic plain occupied by the Aryans, so some of them came to Bengal and others remained in the Bombay Presidency.

In regard to the Dravidian question, it can be said that among the Dravidians one

finds three factors: long-headed broad nose, long-headed medium nose, and long-headed fine nose. Long-headed broad nose is now-a-days known as pre-Dravidian. Chanda has compared it with the Niṣāda mentioned in the Purāṇas. There the Niṣāda is described as 'black like crow, very low-statured, short-armed having high cheek bones, low-topped nose, red eyes, and copper coloured hair'. Long-headed medium to fine noses are the true Dravidians.

Risley does not mention anything about the Negrito element in the population of India. But the occurrence of Negrito element in some of the pre-Dravidian tribes cannot be denied. Iyer observes woolly hair among the Kadirs of the Cochin hills. Lapique found near south Indian virgin forests some with distinct Negro faces. The hair is generally curly and in some clearly woolly. Giuffrida-Ruggeri also thinks that among some of the south Indian jungle tribes remnants of the Negritos, who are supposed to have been there before the pre-Dravidians, are still to be found. Hutton has shown that there is a Negrito substratum in the population of the eastern frontiers of India.

After Risley various anthropologists have tried to classify the Indian people but none could give a precise and scientific classification till the Census of 1931, when B. S. Guha revised the earlier accounts and made a classification of the Indian people from anthropometric survey.

The following are the ethnic compositions of the present-day Indian population according to Guha:

1. The Negrito
2. The Proto-Australoid
3. The Mongoloid
  - (a) Palae-Mongoloid:
    - (i) Long-headed type
    - (ii) Broad-headed type
  - (b) Tibeto-Mongoloid

4. The Mediterranean
  - (a) Palaeo-Mediterranean
  - (b) Mediterranean
  - (c) Oriental type
5. The Western Brachycephals or the Alpo-Dinaric
  - (a) Alpinoid
  - (b) Dinaric
  - (c) Armenoid
6. The Nordic

#### THE NEGRITO

There have been continued disputes regarding the existence of Negroid strain in the population of India. As a matter of fact one finds true Negrito people in the Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal and also in the Semangs of the Malay Peninsula. On the mainland of India Lapique claims the existence of a Negrito strain among some of the forest tribes of southern India. It has specially been said that woolly hair which is anthropologically indicative of Negro blood, is to be found among the Kadirs of southern India; but Thurston denies the above statement. On the contrary, Guiffrida-Ruggeri thinks that among many of the south Indian jungle tribes some remnants of the Negritos who are supposed to have been there before the pre-Dravidians, are still to be found. Haddon, speaking about the Kadirs, seems to commit nothing. He says, 'A Negroid population has been suspected in the Deccan as for example among the Kadir but it has not been definitely established'. He also says, 'The Kadirs have thick lips and there is a possibility that they may be partly of Negrito stock'. The Negrito problem has been given much attention by Hutton. He says from his personal observation that there is Negrito substratum in the population of eastern frontier of India. He has found out distinctly frizzly hair among some of the Angami Nagas of Manipur and the Cachar

Hills. The Negroid strain has also been found by Guha among the Kadirs and some other hill tribes. Sarkar has also found a broad-headed youngman with woolly hair among the aborigines of the Rajmahal Hills, Bihar. Hutton, however, generalizing the facts at hand writes, 'The earliest inhabitants of Indian peninsula were probably Negroid in type and all the Negrito rapidly disappearing though he is, still survives in the Andaman Islands. His kinship, too less isolated and therefore more hybridized tribes in the Malay Peninsula and in the Indian Archipelago, is well established, but he has left few traces on the mainland of India and Burma. In the Kadirs and Uralis of the forests of the extreme south of India, occasional individuals with frizzly hair and low stature and Negro-like features are very suggestive of the survival of the Negro race'. Guiffrida-Ruggeri maintains the pre-existence of Negritos between India and Persian gulf and their survivals in Susiana up to historic times. Arthur Keith commenting on Joyce's paper published in the 'Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute' supposes a black belt stretching from Africa to the far east, which being subsequently breached through by the Caucasian invaders give rise to the Hamitic people. Guiffrida-Ruggeri also suggests that the broad-headedness of southern Arabia is due to an ancient Negroid substratum and that this is substantiated by the low stature of the southern Arabs and their occasional curly hair.

From what has been said above it is not unreasonable to endorse the viewpoints of Hutton. In the Bay of Bengal, in the Malay Peninsula, in part of the Fiji Islands, in New Guinea, in southern India and southern Arabia the presence of Negritos or a suspected Negroid substratum induces one to suppose that at some remote prehistoric times a Negroid population occupied a very large part of the Asiatic mainland and spe-

cially the southern portion of it. Subsequently on arrival of the pre-Dravidians and the Dravidians, who proved themselves stronger, this primitive population might have been dispersed, extinct, or absorbed.

Of the immigrants some are of opinion that the Negritos were the earliest. But whether there was any Negrito invasion or some scattered people came into India is very difficult to ascertain. On the Indian mainland practically speaking no Negrito element is found except some of a suspicious nature in north central India, in the extreme north-east, and in the extreme southern part of India. The presence of the Negritos in the islands of the Bay of Bengal does not definitely prove that they had once been scattered over the whole of the Indian mainland. The islands are closer to the Malay Peninsula than to the Indian shores and their presence there may be the cause of the slight suspicious elements found in the north-east of India. It has not been ascertained by which way the Negritos came, if they did at all come to the mainland of India. If it were not impossible for them to have crossed the sea to India, it was equally possible to have their vessels drifted to the distant islands of the Indian Ocean instead of bringing them to India.

The recent researches in physical anthropology try to explain the sporadic character in a man. The presence of the Negrito element in the Indian population is a sporadic one and this sporadicity of element has been explained genetically. The geneticists interpret this sporadic character in other organism due to some idio-variations meaning some changes within the chromosomes. So according to them, due to this idio-variation new characters sometimes develop.

#### THE PROTO-AUSTRALOID

Most probably the second immigrants were the Proto-Australoid or the pre-Dra-

vidians. But when and by which way they came are still unknown. Whether they were the original inhabitants of India cannot be definitely said but we cannot brush aside the suspicion. This type is the predominant element at present in almost all the tribal population in India, specially the southern, central, and partly northern. Some are of opinion that the Niṣādas described in the Sanskrit literature belong to this type. Their great affinities in skin colour, head form, hair, face, etc. with the Vedda of Ceylon and the Australians indicate that the three belong to the same type. But whether this people migrated out of India or are immigrants into India cannot yet be definitely known. For their affinity with the Australians the term Proto-Australoid is given. The physical features of this type are as follows: Dark brown to nearly black skin, longhead, broad and flat nose but depressed at the root, wavy hair and short stature. The representatives of this group are the Santals, the Oraons, the Mundas, etc. of Chotanagpur area, the Chenchus and the Kurumbas etc. of south India and the Bhils of central and western India.

#### THE MONGOLOID

The Mongoloid people came into India most probably through the north-eastern gate. The difficult land routes in the north and north-eastern India have always stood in the way of large scale invasions or migrations. But slow infiltration could not have been checked and the three types of the Mongoloid people are still found in the north-eastern parts. This type differs from the other group by the following special characters:

- (1) Flat face with prominent cheek bones.
- (2) Peculiar eye with half opening and a loose fold on the inner canthus known as epicanthic fold, a special

feature of the Mongolian people, so this is also called the Mongolian fold.

- (3) Hair growth scanty on body and face.

(a) The Palae-Mongoloid is distinguished by the form of the head, long to medium with bulging occiput, nose medium, eye-slits oblique but epicanthic fold not always found, face short and flat, dark to light brown skin. The character of hair is straight. This variety (i) is known as the Long-headed type. They are predominant in the tribes, such as the Nagas, etc. living in the Sub-Himalayan regions, Assam, and Burma frontier. The Sema Naga is the true representative of this type.

(ii) Another one of this group, the Broad-headed type, is found in the hill tribes of Chittagong, such as the Chakmas and the Mughis, etc. The Lepchas of Kalimpong are also included in this group. Their head is broad, nose medium, darker skin, obliquity of the eye-slits, eye-folds are more marked. The face is short and flat. The character of hair is straight but tending towards short waves (wavy).

- (b) The Tibeto-Mongoloid—They are broad-headed people with light skin, tall stature, flat and broad nose, very marked face with long and flattish character. The absence of hair on body and face are more marked. They are found in

Sikkim and Bhutan amongst the Tibetans, etc.

The Proto-Australoid and the Mongoloid constitute the main tribal population in India. The tribal population in India is only a small fraction of the whole population, from approximately 2.5 to 3 million out of over 400 million. The general population contains mainly the Mediterranean, the Alpo-Dinaric, and the Nordic races.

Of the Mediterranean races three distinct types are found:

- (a) The Palae-Mediterranean type—Dark skin, long head with high vault and projecting occiput, narrow face but disharmonic in character, broad nose, medium stature, hair growth scanty on body and face, are the distinguishable characters of this people. This type appears to be predominant in the Telugu and the Tamil Brahmins of south India.
- (b) The Mediterranean type—Dark to olive brown skin, head and face long, narrow nose, medium to tall stature are the characteristic features of this people. This type is represented by the Mārāṭhā lady of Indore, Brahmins of Allahabad and Nambudri Brahmins of Cochin, etc. Occasionally among the Bengali Brahmins this type also occurs.
- (c) The Oriental race of Fischer or the Semitic type—This type resembles the Mediterraneans except in nose formation, which is long and convex and the type is distributed in the Kho of the North Western Frontier Province, the Bania of Rajputana, the Chatri of the Panjab, etc.

These Mediterranean people are possibly responsible for the Indus valley civilization.

The Alpo-Dinaric type or the Western Brachycephals of Guha came from the west. The type is divided into three sub-types:

- (a) The Alpinoid—Skin lighter than the Mediterraneans, head broad with round occiput, round face with prominent narrow nose, stature medium sometimes short, hair growth abundance on body and face, are the criteria of the group. The people of this group are the Kathi of Kathiawar, the Bania of Gujarat, and the Kayasthas of Bengal, etc. This sub-type possibly moved from southern Baluchistan through Sind, Kathiawar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, into Kannada, Tamilnad, and Ceylon and along the Ganges to Bengal. The intermediate Malabar and Andhra remained unaffected.

The latest researches on ethnology say that the major racial strains of Bengal and Bombay belong to this group. The anthropologists are of opinion that this group is known as *Homo-Alpinus* of Lapouge.

- (b) The Dinaric—Skin slightly darker, head not so broad but very short with flattened vertical occiput and vault very high, forehead seems to be rather receding slightly, face comparatively long, nose long and often convex, stature tall—are the features of this sub-type. The presence of this sub-type is very marked in Bengal, Orissa, and Coorg, often mixed with the Mediterraneans. The Coorgs are the pure type of this variety. The Kanarese Brahmins of Mysore and the Bengali Brahmins also belong to this group.
- (c) The Armenoid—Twany white skin, short to medium stature, broad head, narrow and aquiline nose with a depressed tip and broad wings. The Parsees of Bombay are the true

representative of this group. The occurrence of this type among the Bengali Vaidyas and the Kāyasthas is not a rare one.

The variation in the complexion of the Alpo-Dinaric type retaining the other characteristic features suggests their dominance in the northern Indian people.

The Nordic race came from the north probably through Central Asia. They bear the following physical features: Florid or reddish white skin (i.e. fair skin), head long often medium with arched forehead and occiput protruding, prominent narrow nose with tall stature. Their racial dominance is not so great today but the type is scattered all over the country specially in the north-west among the Red Kaffirs, the Khalash of Rambur, and the Pathans of Bijaur in the North Western Frontier Province. In north India this type is noticed but marked by admixture with the Mediterraneans. The sprinkling of this element has reached the western side of India as well as far east in Bengal.

#### THEIR MIGRATIONS

It has been stated that man was first born in some parts of South Central Asia, north of the Himalayas—somewhere near about the Pamir plateau. But why did man travel out of his birth place? It cannot be a mere question of chance, or something like aimless wandering merely to satisfy the eyes or to enjoy climatic sweetness. In that case there would be regular expansion of the first little home without any break with the new home. Man came out of the first home, travelled long distances and settled down in places giving up all connexions with the land of origin and gradually grew quite different cultures in new surroundings. Even he himself was changed from the effect of the new climate and conditions giving rise to different races.



What repelled him and what attracted him are points of consideration. Shortage of food, increase in population and consequently further shortage of food have been suggested to be one of the most important causes of the early human migrations. It is difficult to think that man was attracted to any particular place by its plenty as that will presuppose the early man's knowledge of the plenty of that distant land before he could begin his migration. The second point might be a possibility in later times, but not certainly during the earliest migrations. Another cause has been suggested to be quarrel or difference of opinion leading to factions in the earliest home, and one faction getting the better of another and driving it out of the home. Out of fear and self protection the defeated faction might take refuge in some distant inaccessible place, or wandering about aimlessly in helpless condition might at last settle down in a distant land of plenty. But these are only surmises and we cannot yet ascertain the definite cause of the earliest migration. The only reasonable ground was possibly food shortage with increase in population, probably associated with epidemic disasters. The steppe lands of Central Asia is certainly suggestive of occasional, if not constant, food shortage. And that successive hordes left the land from time to time is also indicative of the same factor.

The next point is the question of route. The easiest routes must be the first to be tried when no knowledge of geography could be expected. The north, north-west and west routes lying through vast plains most probably were the first to be attempted. The southern routes towards India, almost inaccessible mountain tracks through ice-capped peaks and bleak valleys constantly broken by steep crags and dangerous glaciers, most probably defied their first attempts. But, in course of time, some

bands might have been forced to take the southern route. The cause might have been quarrel and defeat at the hands of those barring the other routes. But once the route was discovered the plenty of the plains of India became an attraction and began to draw in successive hordes who began to gather knowledge from those who might lag behind or occasionally return. The route through Persia and Baluchistan might not have been so very difficult at least in some seasons of the year, though the waterless desert expanses proved insurmountable barriers. But some think that this route brought but earliest immigrants. On the Indian side of these barriers, Sind, the Panjab, and the west and the north of the Rajputana, the land and climate were not so arid as they are today. The sites of the ancient Indus civilization are sufficient evidence that the places were quite congenial to human life and progress. We have also evidence of more rivers, such as the lost Hakra, once flowing through the Indian desert of today. We may easily discard the sea route to India when we consider the fact that art of navigation was unknown to the earliest man and was discovered only during the Neolithic period. Thus we may conclude that the north-western mountain passes were the routes taken by the earliest immigrants into India. These passes in later times have been found to be so often used by the historical invaders of India.

Apart from the question of the north-western passes and the sea route, there are a few more routes through the north-eastern corner of India. But the routes are far more difficult and the lower valleys are full of impenetrable tropical forests extending over vast expanses. The impenetrable character of the region will be fully proved by the fact that the gorge through which the Tibetan river Sangpo crosses the Himalayas, is not yet properly

speaking explored. In the last World War, military activities of armies, all powerful with scientific war weapons, were considerably hampered by the difficulties of the region. The Mongoloid people, who came through these routes, or used the routes a little west through Sikkim and Nepal and where they are still found in largest numbers, came later and probably when some knowledge had been gathered. Probably there were no proper invasions or large scale migrations. There were probably slow infiltrations and this is more confirmed by the fact that their number is still insignificant and they have not been able to create any marked influence on the people either physically or culturally. If the routes were in considerable use in prehistoric times, they would have been considerably cleared and rendered less difficult for regular communication sufficient for use in historical times. But we find that communication with China has always been carried on through Sinkiang, Turkistan, and the north-western passes. The Chinese pilgrims, Hiuen-Tsang, Fa-Hien, and others came to India through the north-western gates and did not even think of attempting the shorter route through the north-eastern gates.

Some anthropologists have called the earliest migrations as 'Spreading movements', and later migrations, 'Invasions'. Invasions no doubt came later on with the growth of fighting capacity, command and control over larger groups of men, rise of ambition and greed. No doubt gradual growth of geographical knowledge of routes and the conditions of distant lands greatly helped them in their achievements. Today we can understand what spirit led the people to invade other lands, as we have innumerable evidences of such things even in this civilized world of today. But large scale migrations appear to be things of the past, and except the colonizing

spirit of the Europeans in the last few centuries, we cannot give anything like racial migrations from one land to another. Even then it is difficult to understand if the spirit and method of the early migrations were like those of the colonizers of America and Australia. In modern times, greed, internecine quarrels, food shortage, all fostered by a strong spirit of adventure of a rising generation, drove the people to distant lands. We do not know how many of these forces combined to drive away man from his first home. We have an example of the early migrations having taken place in historical times, and this will prove the nature and method of these things of prehistoric days. The Kalmuks, a Mongoloid people lived on the bank of the Volga. Some three hundred years ago, one fine morning their homes were all found deserted. A large number of people, a million or so, had made arrangements to leave their homes without the knowledge of any one else. Their neighbours could in no way suspect anything about their departure. With such large numbers of women, children, old and invalid persons, and carrying all their household things, large quantities of food and their domestic animals, they commenced their dangerous wandering through the waterless steppe lands and deserts of south-eastern Russia and Central Asia. Harassed both by Russian soldiers, sent to bring them back, and Tartar robbers and barbarous tribes of the steppes, they slowly proceeded eastward suffering in the most indescribable way all along the route. One of the most pathetic descriptions of the story has been given in De Quincey's 'Return of the Kalmuks', vividly giving an idea of the migrations of prehistoric days. Shortage of water and food, diseases and deaths, attacks of the robber bands, and oppressions of the soldiers considerably diminished their number, and finally only a small fraction

of the large band that had left their homes on the banks of the Volga, reached Chinese territory and was well received by the Imperial Government of China. The example is not certainly a complete understanding of the conditions of the migrations of earliest peoples having no experience and no knowledge of their destination. Yet it is worth study and gives an idea of some of the later migrations. Moreover, immigrants were not usually well received in the new lands. They had sometimes to fight, sometimes they were purchased for their fighting capacity and given homes to live in, as we find in the case of some of the Mughal incursions during the Pathan Period.

#### THE PRESENT POPULATION OF INDIA

A brief idea of the various races that have come to India has already been given. We cannot determine exact chronology of the migrations, but an approximate idea of the succession of the migrations has been made. Apart from this aspect we may try a study of the general population of India and find out what races have become intermingled. In this connexion the question of the origin of the races may be taken into consideration. As far as our present knowledge goes, we have accepted the theory that man was born at one place only—south central Asia. From there man travelled to different regions of the earth. Life in the different climates, environments, and taking of different kinds of food brought about certain physical changes giving rise to different races. For example, it is said that the early man was long-headed. Broad-headed man gradually evolved in the region extending from western Asia to Dinaric and Alpine region of Europe. Skin colour grew darker in the tropical regions and lighter in the cold northern regions. In all these changes time

factor was no doubt the most important thing. For we know that no appreciable change in physical characters can take place within a few generations in a new home. The characters are all hereditary, and changes will only occur very slowly, it may be said, after countless generations. In a land where immigrants poured in from a number of races and subsequently intermixing has taken place, we shall find in the intermixed races all the characters of the different races that come. Biologically speaking, all the characters will not certainly appear in every man, but a study of the whole population may reveal all the characters. No doubt some strong point of a particular race may become dominant, while the distinguishing characters of another race may appear dying out. Still it is not impossible to determine from which particular races this race has come out.

Skin colour also changes in changed climates, but there also time factor is undeniable. However it is said that some of the races, i.e. the Mediterranean and next to them the Alpo-Dinaric, change skin colour more rapidly than the others. Consequently diversity of skin colour in the people of a large country like India is suggestive of the dominance of either of these two races. Of the other characters, stature is most variable, while head form is the least variable of all the characters. Therefore in distinguishing different races study of head form is more dependable than that of any other character.

Apart from the question of the changes in the outward physical characters, it is not yet properly known that changes in the development of the brain may be influenced by changes in climate and environments. Brain development cannot be regarded as influenced only by time. For in that case there would be no backward peoples in the whole world,

because all are the descendants of the same people that were born in and migrated out of south central Asia. So time factor must be left out from the consideration of this point. Here we can only surmise that climate, environment, food, opportunities, etc. were mainly responsible for the changes in brain development. Time factor is only to be taken from this point of view that only a very long time is necessary for brain development even when all the other factors are quite favourable. So we shall also take brain, or in other words, intellectual capacity, to be as much hereditary as the other characters. Thus we may conclude that whatever intermixing might have taken place, the descendant will possess sufficient intellectual capacity if the ancestral peoples possessed developed brain. But the precise measurement of intellectual capacity is yet not a possibility. So no idea of distinction of race intermixture can be properly gathered from this. But a general idea of a people can, to a certain extent, be made from its intellectual activities. Even in that case, we are to make a very long survey, because intellectual activities are not necessarily constant things and there are questions of sudden set-backs, long dormant conditions, etc. due to various circumstances, economic and social disturbances, and accidents of nature sometimes even changing climates and environmental aspects. Moreover, intellectual capacity should not be confused with intellectual productions. Intellectual productions are the effect of certain circumstantial or environmental urges on the intellectual capacity of the people. On the whole, it may be taken that a people possessing intellectual capacity will not lie absolutely dormant for a very long time. So a survey of a sufficiently long period will prove its existence in the people.

The other point, apart from physical questions, is mental tendencies. This point

is too vague and will rapidly change under changed environments and circumstances. Human activities which are outcome of mental tendencies, of the same people have always been found to differ in different regions. A martial race from a hilly and unfertile region may settle down as an extremely peaceful agricultural people when it comes to a region full of fertile plain lands. Consequently peaceful or warlike character cannot be the criteria of race distinction. But there are certain peculiar activities of mental tendencies which do not usually die out with environmental or circumstantial changes. The aesthetic sense, love for fine arts, etc. may be cited for example. Some races have been found to possess keener aptitude in these than the others.

To study intellectual capacity and mental tendencies human brains have been anatomically studied. Cranial capacity has been found to be greater in some races with more numerous convolutions. But little difference has been found in the nature and extent of sense perceptions. No definite conclusions can yet be arrived at from these researches. Only increase in convolutions is taken as evidence of greater intellectual capacity. But this is mostly individual and exact race distinction from it is not yet a possibility.

From what has been stated above, it will be found that the present population of India is an intermixture of almost all the races of the modern world with some variations due to climatic and environmental influences. What was the earliest race that lived in India is indeterminable, and possibly they are extinct. The Negroid element, which according to some, came earliest, is also nearly extinct. The Proto-Australoids, the next covers, are found in distant parts, almost in excluded areas, considerably abandoned by the general population, in the hilly regions and jungles of southern,

western, and central India. They also form a small part of the population. The Mongoloid groups were not also generally intermixed with the whole population, though scattered and stray cases may be found in the north eastern regions. They still live in the hilly regions and jungles just below the Himalayas and the Assam-Burma frontiers. Probably their advent was considerably checked by the peoples who came through the north-western gates. Most probably some of the Mediterranean groups were the first to come through the north-western gates. It may also be assumed that for a long time there was alternation of the advent of the longheaded Mediterraneans and the broad-headed Alpine groups. The Mediterraneans gradually settled in the Indus valley, the present desert tracts and travelled along the Ganges valley. Some also travelled south even up to the south-western hills. These settlements and movements were no doubt results of fresh incursions, fights, defeats, and conquests. But the alternations of the Mediterraneans, the Alpo-Dinarics and sprinkling of the Nordics, gradually brought about sufficient intermixing to confuse all traces of definite movements and settlements of the different race groups. We are now left only to assume from the dominance in the racial elements of a particular area that such and such race groups came there in the largest numbers. But that assumption may not be exact, as we know from Mendellism that simple intermixing may lead to the dominance of any one race. Thus we may only assume that such and such races came here, but in what number and whether they were the conquerors or conquered cannot be exactly known. But on the whole, it may, to a certain extent, be safely assumed that the Mediterranean groups and the Alpine groups with a sprinkling of the Nordics settled and intermixed in the vast northern Indian plain

along the Indus and the Gangetic valleys extending from the north-western hills to the confluence of the rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. In the Ganges valley we find in the upper portion a dominance of the Mediterraneans, while in lower valley, i.e. in Bengal, the Alpo-Dinaric is decidedly dominant. While the Mediterranean and the Alpo-Dinaric groups with some Proto-Australoids settled down, intermixed and became dominant in the area south of the Vindhya, commonly called the Deccan. The Nordic or the Proto-Nordic is scarcely found in the Deccan excepting a very few in the Central India region.

There is another point to be considered in connexion with race dominance as it is now found in India. Indiscriminate intermixing was not certainly the general rule. It cannot be denied that sexual selection is instinctive in all the animal world. Indiscriminate promiscuity might not have been absolutely unknown, or it might have been considerably a secret thing or at least openly deniable. The offsprings, it may be assumed, in such cases were usually looked down upon and were considerably excluded from the social advantages. It cannot also be denied that in sexual selection there is a tendency for finding girls from cultured circles. Personal beauty also plays a great part in such selection. This might have at least been one of the causes of the dominance of the Mediterranean and the Alpo-Dinaric elements in the peoples of India, and here may lie the causes of the exclusion of certain peoples in India. The gradual extinction of some is also understandable from this point of view.

#### THE CULTURAL ASPECTS

This, in short, is an idea of the general survey of the distribution of races in India. A survey of the cultural aspects may now

be considered which may lead to the understanding of certain racial affinities. But culture, in short, is the production of intellectual capacity and mental tendencies, the former is considerably indeterminable, and the latter rapidly variable under environmental changes. But certain cultures are found to exist in different areas. They might have been acquired through contact. But where contiguity of the peoples exists, it is not possible for them to have carried the cultures from the lands they migrated from and to have preserved it even under the altered conditions. Language has never been considered as a criterion of race distinction. Biologically speaking, it is an acquired character and is not inherited. Consequently it may be said that it will undergo little change with environmental and circumstantial changes. Practically man will accept a different language when forced by a conqueror, or for the sake of convenience to speak with a larger number of alien people, or when superiority of expression is found in another language. However, it cannot be denied that the language of the people of superior culture will usually be accepted in course of time. So when we find that the peoples of the whole of northern India with very few exceptions, and of a large part of the Deccan speak the Aryan language, which is the basic language of almost all the countries of Europe and of western Asia, we cannot but assume racial and cultural affinity between all these peoples. In southern India, the predominance of the Dravidian language points to the closer relationship of those peoples with the ancient Dravidians, who were probably forced to go down to the south with the advent of the later races. In some places we find purer Sanskrit language than in others. Although Bengal (undivided) is at a great distance from the first settlements of the Vedic races, and although we find more

than fifty per cent of the Bengalis to be Muslims, the language of Bengal is more purely Sanskrit than that of any other part of India. Gujarat is the only other part which nearly approaches Bengal in this respect. Though Bengal and Gujarat appear diametrically opposite each other on the map of India and are separated by long distances of hills and jungles without any communicative connexions between them, we may reasonably assume that similar races travelled eastward into Bengal and southward into Gujarat.

### THE ROLE OF RELIGION

Religion has always covered a large part in the life of a people. Advancement of civilization and spirit of nationalism have considerably lowered the position of religion today, specially among the most advanced peoples. Naked religion of one Godhead devoid of ceremonies is considered now as true religion from the nationalists' point of view. Ceremonies and rites are considered to be expressions of rather unadvanced and practically uncivilized minds, still in a state of infancy. But leaving aside the question of the justification of religion and faith, for which human life is made subservient to the fears, hopes, and aspirations of an imaginary, beyond death, existence, we may here consider what is actually found in the world. Religions no doubt grew out of fears and hopes and of a feeling of helplessness before the all powerful natural phenomena, and it might be regarded as the first manifestation of humanity's intellectual activity. Religion might have been polytheistic or monotheistic in the beginning but that is not our consideration at present. But it cannot be denied that the growth of ceremonies and rites is always an expression of further intellectual activity, consequently of the growth of civilization. We have always found that reformers or

preachers of new creeds rise and in their eagerness for austere purity divorce all ceremonies and festivals from religious performances. But after their death the very creeds preached by them gradually become adorned with ceremonials and rituals. This was the case with Buddhism, to a certain extent with Mohammedanism, and with the Roman Catholic Christianity in Europe. We cannot discard religious ceremonies as too uncivilized aspects.

Religion being practically the earliest intellectual achievement of man, all his subsequent achievements, his arts, culture, and even his administrative systems, were based on religion, or on the faith in beyond death existence. This may be regarded as the general question everywhere, though differences occur due to the growth of the cults in different places. Consequently from the similarity of ceremonies and mythological stories we have sometimes tried to find out affinities between different peoples. This is usually too vague and the similarities explained are generally too far-fetched. But where a particular cult has been found to be kept almost intact in its basic principle in spite of differences in time and place, we cannot but assume racial contact or even, when other evidences are available, racial intermixture. Such is the case with the Śiva of the Phallic cult of the present-day Hindus and of the people who founded the Indus valley civilization. The Kālī cult and the snake worship are also said to have been handed down from the Dravidians. These are no doubt considerably strong evidences of intermixture. The glory of the Indian culture in its diverse manifestations is no doubt undeniable. With religion as the basic principle, it branched out in various directions in its unique beauty and grandeur specially in artistic literature, philosophy, speculative science, and social administration. How much of it was influenced by

the environmental aspects or by the intellectual capacity of the immigrants cannot be properly ascertained. But when we consider the warlike nature retained in the invaders, who settled in the desert climates and hilly regions of north-west India, we may conclude that the influence of the original spirit of the invaders was playing a considerable part even when accepting the culture cults of the conquered people such as in the selection of the worship of Śiva and Śakti. While driven to the distant moist plains of Bengal with immense plenty, enervating climate, and considerably equable temperature, the same people took to more charming and peaceful cults of Buddhism and Vaiṣṇavism, sometimes intermixed with mysterious cults of Tāntrikism or so, from an intellectual aberration caused by misunderstood philosophical doctrines given to vanishing cruel practices of a shy but fanatic people. In a similar way, we may account for the prevalence of some Dravidian cults in southern India. The culture of Bengal in the midst of its plenty and enervating climate has in some of its aspects surpassed that of any other part of India. The religions that grew in Bengal, Buddhism and Vaiṣṇavism, in their philosophical basis and logical consistency and in their doctrine of the purity of life, yet remain wonders of the whole world. The culture phases that grew out of these religions mark the effect of both environmental and intellectual influences. They have given to Bengal the sweetest of poetic beauty of the whole world. The Bengali language today is one of the most cultured of all the languages of the world and its glory undoubtedly begins with the Vaiṣṇava songs. The religion of Bengal has a very charming and sweet and affectionate touch absorbing and ennobling the tender feelings of the heart. It is unique in its character. God has been worshipped in the other parts of the world

as a powerful monarch, as a father of the family, or a mother. The benevolent power has been the aspect everywhere. The Vaiṣṇavas made him the husband. As to the Hindu wife, the husband is the highest object of all her love, affection, and veneration, as she has to depend on him in every respect in every way through life and death, and even in her widowhood, she has to depend on and worship the sad memory. God is taken to be the husband whom we should worship with all our love, affection, respect, and depend on Him for our all, however imaginary, He may be.

In Bengal this has further advanced into child worship. To the mother the object of all her care and affection and tenderest feelings is the child, and with all these feelings the Bengali Vaiṣṇava will worship his God. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is no longer the warrior of the *Mahābhārata*, nor the lover of the *gopīs*, but a child in its mother's arms sweet, charming, singing, and dancing, and spreading on all-round atmosphere of the tenderest cheering attraction for all in its playfulness and childlike pranks. There is nothing but the sweet ameliorating incense smoking in the burning desires of the heart, cooling and soothing it to its fullest extent, drawing tear of sweet affectionate devotion. The influence has been so strong that it has even changed the Śakti cult into its own cult. Even in the Durgā Pūjā, the greatest religious festival of Bengal, we find that the goddess has been made into a married daughter coming with her children for a three days' stay at her paternal residence to visit them. There is nothing but all-round rejoicing her three days' stay and the parents received her with whatever they can get to please her no doubt to their own satisfaction. When she leaves, the all-round gloom of the tenderest affection's separation darkens the happy land and draws the sweetest tears of devotion. This tenderness has charmed and

absorbed all the phases of Bengali life and culture. In Bengal has grown a sweet family life. Its language has been embellished with it and all the intellectual and cultural outlook of the people has been fully charmed and influenced by it. If culture be regarded as the ways of life and relationship between man and man, apart from all economic, administrative questions and questions of foreign relations, Bengali would stand pre-eminent in the whole world.

In the case of Bengal, we may mark the activities of the mainly Alpo-Dinaric people in the special surroundings. Considerably similar things have grown in the Gujarat area, where, however, the presence of the Alpo-Dinaric is undeniable though the Mediterranean is dominant. Moreover, the climates are not exactly alike and the region is hilly though the climatic conditions are more equable than that of the north-west.

The condition of southern India is a little different. The climate is hotter and the land is a vast plateau full of hills and jungles, sea sides plain, and moist lands. Here we find dominance of the Mediterraneans with Proto-Australoids and a few Alpinoids, but practically no Nordics. Probably they were driven from the north with the advent of fresh invaders and intermixed with those who had already been living there. Some traces of the Indus valley culture are still discernible, while later cultures appear considerably stronger in them, and are practised to a certain extent in a bigoted way. This may be regarded as an evidence of these cultures bring their latest acquisitions. It may also be argued that the land having lesser contact with the Muslim invaders the people preserved their religion and cultures in a more secluded way with transformations due to time and environmental circumstances. Moreover, with the exception of the Bombay coast, the languages are not Sanskritic, and



a large number of dialects prevail. Some think this to be due to the peoples having come to this region before the advent of the Vedic invaders. Though Sanskrit languages are not the mother tongues in these parts, there came some of the great Sanskrit scholars, poets, and some religious preachers, specially Vaiṣṇava preachers from these peoples, even during the Muslim period. They have shown sufficient capacity for intellectual activities.

#### CONCLUSION

Cultural superiority of India in the past cannot be denied, and in spite of long gaps and dormant conditions for various cases,

which cannot all be exactly ascertained, the intellectual capacity and the prospect of progress of the people are also undeniable. If a long dormant condition be taken as the death of capacity, then what should be spoken of the people of Europe in the middle ages commonly called the Dark Age? India which even today could produce a Ramakrishna, a Vivekananda, a Gandhi, a Rabindranath, a Jagadish Chandra, a Prafulla Chandra, a Nehru, and a Raman, cannot be called a land of dead culture. Circumstances and want of opportunities might have brought about temporary setbacks, but intellectual capacity cannot suffer permanent death unless and until the race itself has been completely extinct.

## POETRY AND LIBERATION

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**O**UT of the fire  
the iron question,  
Learn his source.

To think poorly of poetry is now the prevailing mood. Perhaps modern poetry is to blame. One of its protagonists, Eliot, once told a Harvard audience that it was a 'mug's game' and elsewhere: 'Poetry is a superior amusement'. The gesture is nothing new. It is almost a recurring note, of opinion, self-pity, and a certain kind of sophistication, if not self-deception. But this is not the whole truth or the whole situation. Another and a vastly different view exists, and has always existed. There have been men and cultures that looked upon poetry for what it is as 'a highly charged power of aesthetic expression of the soul of man'. In the long run, poetry appears to be a kind of dialogue with circumstances or destiny ultimately, but another name for the liberating experience or illumination of the human condition which we all wait and seek. *Sā vidyā yā vimuktaye*, the knowledge that liberates. *Vedāhametaṁ*, I have known. It is of this poetry, of knowledge, power, prayer, and vision that we shall briefly speak.

### THE NATURE OF POETRY

Ascetics, recluses, intellectuals, and rationalists are apt to denigrate poetry as an

inferior, if not dangerous function. The orthodox generally look upon it as a hindrance to the path of *yoga* or self-discipline. The conflict between *śāstra*, canon, and *kāvya*, poetry, is long standing. On some pretext or other the orthodox cry has continued through the sad centuries. An industrialist era like ours is least likely to accept poetry as a form of higher consciousness or organization. Philosophers, not only the so-called scientific philosophers of today, have their quota of scepticism. Plato's uneasy disapproval of art, 'in terror of its spontaneity and creativeness', is well-known. What he did not suspect was that he might be the first victim of his own formula. Variations of Plato's theme form part of the history of ideas. 'As civilization advances, poetry declines'—the self-assured paradox has its echo elsewhere. But the paradox did not go unchallenged. It brought forth, as we know, Shelley's spirited *Defence of Poetry*. But long before, in the early Indian view, for instance, we come across an even more resolute and firmly grounded rationale of the poetic activity. Most of the values of Vedic culture, in so far as we can piece them together, were products of poetic insight, of the highest order. One might almost say, as Sri Aurobindo once suggested, that ancient India was created by the Vedas and the

Upaniṣads and that the visions of inspired seers made a people. The *Kavi*, *Ṛṣi* or *Secr*—it was possible to interchange the phrase—was the *acknowledged* legislator of the people and its ethos. The poet was a model or a paradigm, in the sense in which Mannheim has re-defined paradigmatic as 'a peculiarly vivid kind of awareness and responsiveness to reality beyond ourselves'. That, in the context of ancient culture, with its eyes fixed on the Final End, poetry should come to be looked upon as an agent of awareness or liberation, *muktipradayī*, is not surprising.

#### WHAT LIBERATION MEANS

But what do we mean by liberation? Simply, it means two things: the discovery of one's essential self as apart from the contingent and the empirical; secondly, among the attributes of this essential self are existence, consciousness, and delight. The identification of poetry with liberation is based, one might say, on allied states of being, 'unknown modes of the being' as Wordsworth called these. The equation is experiential and, in its own way, based on a discrimination between the apparent and the real. Poetry is a voice, 'a *mantra* of the Real'. Or so the wise among the Indians have held. Withdrawn in their secret fields of thought and experience, the primary and pioneer poets found the source of Being in non-Being, a discovery which any one who has gone along that razor's edge may, or must, verify. And so we hear a modern poet of India speak of:

A colloquy of the original Gods .  
Meeting upon the borders of the  
Unknown,  
Her soul's debate with embodied  
Nothingness  
Must be wrestled out on a dangerous  
dim background.

Her being must confront its formless  
Cause.

In an early existential document, the *Nāsādiya Sūkta*, the Vedic poet announces his dread encounter with the primordial Night or Nihil: 'There was no air, then, neither the worlds, nor the sky beyond. ... Of neither night nor day was any semblance ... Non-Being then existed not, nor Being. Death was not, nor Immortality.' A daring escape from the fallacy or tyranny of man-made or mind-made systems, gradually this Nothingness, non-Being acquired a positive status and, as Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, in his *Sanskrit Poetics*, has pointed out, 'here again it is primarily poetic cues that helped to clarify the concept, the symbolic concept of Aditi, the great Mother of Gods, the created and the cause of creation. Eric Neumann in his *The Great Mother* speaks of the 'archetypal feminine who is and contains all things'. Goethe's evocation of the World of the Mothers, in *Faust* is familiar. In *The White Goddess*, Robert Graves has tried to settle the provenance of genuine poetry in terms of a Creatrix, 'the Eternal's artist Bride', as an Indian poet calls it.

The esoteric slant or admission of First Principles, or the inner laws of creation, does not deny the world process. The Creatrix does not fashion Illusions only. The becoming of Being is a realized, spiritual act or fact, of ritual sacrifice: *Our life is a holocaust of the Supreme*. In the beginning was the Deed, and the Deed was a sacrament, *yajña*, aided by the essential word, *mantra*. Creation is manifestation or self-manifestation, and not an alienation from reality. It is a power inherent in the Self or Original Person, Adam Kadmon. 'The Poetic Genius', as Blake said, 'is the true Man.' In this inner view God becomes the First Poet, *ādī kavi*, and the poetic activity (*kāvīvyā-pāra*) turns into a re-enactment of the crea-

tive fiat, 'a dim analogue', as Coleridge put it in describing the Primary Imagination.

The ultimate reality has now and then been described in apparently negative terms. That is because the reality is trans-logical, beyond discursive thought, because from there 'Words return unattaining, with the mind'. Obviously we are here dealing with operations of a borderland consciousness, with what happens on 'rims of consciousness', between the waking one the slumber self, with which our normal contacts are few and far between. Song is Existence, says Rilke. But—

On meditating peaks

Where life and being are a sacrament

Offered to the Reality beyond—

the singing, as he knew, calls for 'another breath', breath being the symbol of the One source of all pluralities, the Many. Transience—

But is there any comfort to be found?

Man is in love and loves what vanishes,

What more is there to say?—

the fact that all things vanish does not necessarily negate reality, because, 'pacing through vastness to a vaster goal', transience itself may be a process and a programme, fulfilling, as the poets have often hinted, some 'far-off divine event'. 'The Miracle of Birth'—evolving from the worm into the god—is telic and at the other end of the popular cult of the Absurd. It is at once play and purposive. It is, as the mystics tell us, 'the Immortal's gradual birth mid mire and stone'. What higher theme or motive does one require?

#### THE LANGUAGE OF POETRY

And—since poetry uses the language of paradox—this 'far-off' event is also near, as if far-off yet within the soul. *Taddüre, tadantike*. There is, it would seem, a still centre in our being—what Shelley described

as a being within being—which is a summary or delegate of the Absolute:

One who has made in sport the suns  
and seas

Mirrors in our being his immense  
caprice.

It is also part of the same caprice that the mirror becomes lamp. The feeling of the unreality of time and space to the soul, and that 'all things are already complete in us', are repeatedly vouched in mystical experience, when the lamp is lit. In Yājñavalkya's analogy, the great drum, symbol of creative activity, is vibrating not only in the sky and earth, it can be heard in the human psyche also, if and when it is ready or awake. And then to the tomtom of the inner drums (which may yet be part of 'unheard music', the voice of silence), on the waves of an ultimate intuition, 'revealed by silence to the silent spirit', is born, or re-born, the extraordinary equation, the bliss of identity, 'that oneness which can most powerfully illumine our human utterance'. And the three basic equations or identities, *mahāvākyas* or great words, are: *Thou art That, I am Brahman, All this is Brahman*. In a charismatic moment Wordsworth had seen the problem of One and Many as if it

Were all like workings of one mind,  
the features

Of the same face, blossoms upon one  
tree ;

Characters of the great Apocalypse,

The type and symbols of Eternity,

Of first and last, and midst, and without  
end.

This, the establishment of being with the help of the essential word, as Heidegger has re-emphasized with the help of the poetry of Hölderlin, is poetry's most outstanding gift or characteristic, a step in the journey towards liberation, in the 'path to being', from the self to the Self. This alone matters. This alone is, *Asti* or *Istigkeit*, to use Meis-

ter Eckhart's medieval phrase. The world exists because it is a poem. Or, as Elizabeth Barrett Browning put it: 'God himself is the best poet and the Real is His song.'

#### POETRY AND THE ARTS

But the Being not only is, it is also supremely conscious. Poetry and the arts have always been held as forms of heightened awareness, though the contents of that awareness, naturally, are not always the same. Sanskrit aestheticians know it as *citta vistāra*. Sri Aurobindo speaks of it as 'wideness ineffable', Longinus, as the echo of a soul. In the Indian view this connects with the soul as witness or relisher of experience. In the language of the *Gītā*: 'Know the soul as the rider, the body as the chariot, the intellect as the charioteer, and the mind as the reins. The organs are the horses and the sense objects the roads for them. The soul with the body, organs and mind is designated by the sages as experiencer.' Needless to say this entire complex of attitudes rejects the mechanistic or behaviouristic interpretation of life and art. Such an escape from determinism to destiny, to use Spengler's fateful distinction, is not a negligible emancipation. For, in effect, it goes much further than Spengler, in that it does not confine or equate consciousness with only waking consciousness. The self has many stances, stations, or 'inner fields'. As relisher of the world experience it is awake, ever awake, *nityajāgrat*, on all the three states of beings: waking, sleeping, and dreaming, and perhaps even beyond. The discipline of the contemplative life helps in avoiding the otherwise easy conclusion that Nihil or Un-consciousness is the Ground, a huge Blank, which is how pessimistic philosophies, with their poor psychology, have presented That. Such inwardness, *kūṭastha*, cannot be the work of the intellect or the emotions, nor can it be expressed in the language of dis-

course. It is also not within the imagination's province, though the imagination may catch some reflection. To reach or receive the inward communication one must leap beyond both thought and imagination, to some direct power of vision or identity, real and renewable. This renewable reality has been affirmed, again and again, in the *Yajur-Veda*, *Svetāsvatara Upaniṣad*, etc. down to the work of the modern poets, like Rilke and Sri Aurobindo. This is the Great Tradition beyond all the little traditions, a liberation from the local and the topical. Thanks to the Great Memory—'No one I am who am all that is'—which this inmost poetry stirs, 'I have become what before Time I was'—surely not a small gain towards self-discovery. The doctrine of the timeless soul or self as the relisher of experience is basic to Indian aesthetics as well as metaphysics. If this leads to complications it is also a recognized solution of the riddle. The *Ātman*, or Self, says Abhinava, is a self-luminous mirror, pure and perfect self-awareness that is. Among its capacities are *vimarśa*, the power of synthesis, and *prakāśa*, self-luminosity. Have we not an echo of this in the medieval theory of 'intelligible form' and in St. Thomas Aquinas' description of the work of art as possessing *integritas*, *consonantia* and *claritas*? This creative potential, radiant harmony and fulfilment—'... What in itself it is, and would become' (*Prelude*, XIV, 79)—is a state of overlasting Delight or *Ānanda* 'the bliss that that God felt when He created His image', the third power of Being which Indian thought has never lost sight of. The free self is the delight self, that is how Sri Aurobindo sums up the ancient intuition.

The value of this concept or experience, of *Ānanda*, is not to be minimized or misunderstood. For instance, it is not pleasure and it implies no retreat from becoming (*saṁsāra*) or a static repose a charge often brought against the Indian mind in its higher

flights. The charge is, at best, partially true. The Upaniṣads are unequivocal in their acceptance of the reality of becoming, *sambhūti*. If the world is but an illusion, what legs have the arts to stand upon, except as, what Kant once called, part of the empire of Illusion? If Indian aesthetics and metaphysics are so close that is largely because both assert and accept the reality of the world process. The pure Being desired: Let me be Many, let me multiply. . . . In a sense the *raison d'être* of plurality is aesthetic. God does not need to create the world. It is created out of his sense of pure Delight, as a poem or song is created, as free activity. The internal necessity (Leon Vivante has described this as 'intrinsic indeterminacy') is not a determination but a self-expressive activity, in the end even an objectless ecstasy.

The establishment of the triadic Self—as Sat, Cit, Ānanda—was the work of India's ancient poets and their real service to the race, the crown of their experience: 'a crown of conscious immortality'. And it must be the poet's task for ever. But the liberating experience is not to be confused with popular ideas about poetry, of pleasure or the romantic survival of personality in some blissful after-world. Salvation is *here* and *now*, *ihaiṇva*, and its conditions have been fairly and repeatedly stated in the Upaniṣads: 'When the egocentric desires that are in the heart cease, then at once the mortal becomes immortal and obtains here (in this world) Brahman.' Here the risk of dichotomy or division between time and eternity is very real. In fact it runs through all history. In the words of Toynbee: 'Most human beings, in their ordinary experience of life, are confined to the time stream as strictly as fish are confined to water. Yet a few people have reported to the rest of us the experience of breaking out of time into an altogether different dimension of spiritual existence. In terms of time, the duration

of this experience may be almost infinitesimally brief; yet an experience which might have occupied no more than a fraction of a moment, can be eternal in its own dimension.' Indian thinkers would endorse Toynbee's description but they might also try to cure the wound between time and eternity. This they could do by looking steadily and whole upon all historical existence or extension as the Absolute's measured steps or becoming, as part of a programme or fulfilment, which is to be remedied rather than abandoned. The unified life is responsible and relational and not a vanishing trick into the Void. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, out of the *Sūnya* comes *Karuṇā*. In other words, the unconditioned experience of timelessness carries its own categorical imperative and the action of the liberated, *muktasya karma*, becomes not only possible but imperative 'The *Yogī* is he from whom the world shrinks not and who does not shrink from the world.' And so, on life's battlefield, *Yogībhavārjuna*, Arjuna, be thou a *Yogī*.

#### POETIC EXPERIENCE: INDIAN VIEW

The yogic detachment that the wise insist upon can, however, be achieved in aesthetic experience on its own lines since it also 'distances' the emotions involved. In the *Bhāgavata*, Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava: 'Like wind, you should be able to pass through, untouched.' Poetic experience, where it is true to itself, carries its own correction or liberation. One might even say that the experience of liberation must be a poetic achievement, its very peak, the summit self, unless we endorse the individual's 'right to sensibility' or what is its opposite, the refusal of the ascetic which only represents an arc of possible or total experience. A knowledge or experience that condemns the world as unreal cannot be the highest knowledge or experience about that world. The world, as Nietzsche once said in a blinding phrase, is justified as an aesthetic experience,

The justification may be carried out in words or in works, in life as in art. And when a person is able to achieve the poetic status, to contemplate or to recreate aesthetically all forms of life and experience, he is strangely fulfilled and adjusted to the law and harmony, and 'A secret harmony steals through the blind heart', 'an interior life that lives through all thing'. Then is he truly *rasena typtah*, poised because of his relish in all that is, because of seeing all things with equal eyes: *The world now throbs fulfilled in me at last*.

Such a state of acceptance and adjustment should not mean, as we have said before, an insulated universe or a bypassing of social duties or commitments. The Indian thinkers were too astute, too rooted in the soil and the soul, to ignore man's social need and nature. Else, the *Gītā* would not have spoken, repeatedly, of the action of the free, of non-attached activity. It does not rule out the poetry of action, but it is an action on a higher level because of the inner values involved.

#### THE WESTERN ARGUMENT

Since it is part of the argument, a word on inspiration may not be out of place. The phenomenon is not unknown among western artists and thinkers, among the Greeks for instance. Its medieval indications are to be found in the theological doctrine of grace and works. As Harbert Read has reminded us, and Read is not among the faithful, poetry is a state of grace, a descent or an invasion. The Indian theory of *Śruti* or revelation admits the role of inspired sages in whose names the verses stand. But they are in no way the maker or originator of the verses. They are at best channels. The source or originating centre is above or within. The final explanation remains unflinchingly monistic, because what has been thus revealed comes from the hidden depths of the self. Indians, one might say, have been depth

psychologists long before that science came into fashion. Maritain's commentary explains it thus: 'There is no Muse outside the soul; there is poetic experience and poetic intuition within the soul, coming to the poet from above conceptual reason.' The emphasis is on 'above' reason and not below, as seems to be the case with many of our moderns. And between the 'above' and 'below' oh, the difference!

The alignment of poetry with freedom is perhaps inevitable. This is so because of the structure of the self as well as the nature of the poetic or creative experience. Where the encounter with destiny is weak or wanting, that is because the self revealed in poetry is working at a low potential, in a word, superficial. This, no doubt, accounts for the major part of what passes for poetry, an *ersatz* or approximation. Among modern poets who have dealt with this aspect of awareness are Paul Valéry and T. S. Eliot. Valéry in *Le Cimetière Marin* seems to be more inclusive than Eliot who, in *The Four Quartets*, tends towards, in his own words, a 'desiccation of the senses and an inoperancy of the world of spirit', a repetition of the refusal of the ascetic. The Indian attitude seems more mature and self-assured. Here history has a purpose (may not be an ill-too-human purpose) and the individual, unbothered by personal survival, takes up the challenge of reality with open eyes. It is not a Grecian Urn existence or an ivory tower to which the artist retires or advises others to seek refuge. Utilizing the ground of being, his divine nature, the individual can even outface crisis, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune with good grace. In the words of one of the archetypes of literature of extreme situations, the *Gītā*: 'Whenever there is a decline in righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, I incarnate myself. I come into being, *sambhavāmi*, from age to age.' Incarnation is not an illusion. Then history has no meaning. To the extent that

life is a continued crisis and a universal incarnation, poetry is part of that larger promise or actualization, a call to heroic action (such as Matthew Arnold sought for but never found). Such heroic affirmation is of course not easy to sustain. For both men and cultures, the creative tension can easily snap or slacken. For a fact even poets do not live at concert pitch. In certain ages or areas the Indian tradition too shows evidence of ambiguity and deviation. 'This comes out in the controversy centring round *sānta rasa*, the emotion of tranquillity as we may call it.

Indicative of the controversy are the interpretations of the *Mahābhārata*. Popularly regarded as a sermon in serenity, the cessation of all activity and sensibility in a finale of holy indifference, this view upholds the *Mahābhārata* as an epic of quietism. 'This is a grotesque misreading of Vyāsa's strong, affirmative spirit which was neither world-weary nor pacifistic. Vyāsa believed in heroic virtues quite apart from the mortality that dogged the earth-born and was bound, eventually, to cut short the hero's life no less than that of the villain. Poetry knows, indeed knows little else than, that 'mortality overweighs'. But it refuses to accept the rule of that iron law. In undertaking activity the problem of personal survival or success is irrelevant. In the field of dramaturgy, too, Bharata did not understand by *Nirveda*, a withdrawal from all action or emotion. On the other hand, he understood by it a poised or serene activity, all the more powerful for being so. 'Act in the world with thy being beyond it', wrote Sri Aurobindo in one of his later poems. Indian poetics has not hesitated to associate *sānta rasa* or tranquillity with *vīra* or the heroic mood. This comes out in its classification of heroes which includes the *Dhīraprasānta*, the brave and the serene. The combination is difficult but not impossible. Vyāsa's image of the ideal person is the *Sthitaprajña* or the man

of poised intellect, but actively engaged (*éngagé?*) in the hurlyburly of life rather than a recluse in some empyrean 'above the battle'. Our crisis today is partly because we have lost that earlier balance, of 'contemplative action', because our intellect and imagination, deprived of their moorings, are insufficiently related to levels of the self. Without the reconciling poetic spirit we shall continue to be superficial and baffled, waifs rather than masters of destiny.

#### THE FUNCTIONS OF POETRY

Briefly, then, poetry, if and when it is true to itself, liberates on many levels and in many ways. It opens a sky as it were. First, it releases us from the bondage of ego—this man, so-and-so, 'I, the doer'—of petty interests and attachments, culturally this catharsis, integration and discovery 'as the ancients would have had it consciously act, as a purifier and builder of the soul' is indispensable, for we are still largely the animal man or, as the Tantra says plainly, *paśu*. 'Through sacrifice and enlargement of the field of perception, art frees us from living by bread alone, that is in terms of physical needs and sensations. Properly understood, poetry is or can be an education in living in depth, a 'link with the inner being', or a growth towards selfhood. Also by providing an equality, detachment or aesthetic 'distancing', it helps to release us from the causal nexus or chain. As the Witness Self, we are no longer wholly creatures of circumstance but possess a certain freedom of control and rejection. 'This does not mean, as now and then it has been made to mean, a world apart, as result of 'an ascetic quarrel with the mother earth'. Such a quarrel can only lead to depleted vitality. On the contrary, an inclusive vision of poetry, that mark of maturity, makes possible an energetic dealing with one's environment, against all odds, internal as well as external. As the mystic poet



critic Sri Aurobindo sees it, a 'mediation between the truth of the spirit and the truth of life will be one of the chief functions' of poetry of the future and 'A spirit which is all life because it is greater than all life, is rather the truth in which we shall most powerfully live'. But the greatest value of poetry resides, no doubt, in its ability to establish or reveal being and the delight nature of the free self as maker and enjoyer. As Jinarajadasa in his *Art as Will and Idea* puts it: 'The main point I desire to emphasize is that art is a high training of the soul necessary to Liberation.' Or as Sri Aurobindo, in *The Future Poetry*, has it: 'The aesthetic mind, whether it takes form in the word of the poet or in the word of the illumined thinker, the prophet or the seer, can be one of the main gateways' towards an enhancement of perception and personality, a step towards the future, the possibility of an intuitive mind, art and poetry. A 'rainbow-bridge marrying earth and sky', we may call it a god's labour. Orpheus is at home in both this and the other world, master of life and death. Most of us are neither. But only their 'sweated selves'.

To be or not to be—and what to be—is a question that poetry alone can answer. As Schiller said, poetry alone can give back to man his sense of lost dignity. In the words of a modern poet:

Follow poet, follow right  
To the bottom of the night,  
With your unconstraining voice  
Still persuade us to rejoice.

In the deserts of the heart  
Let the healing fountain start,  
In the prison of his days  
Teach the free man how to praise.

Confronting the ruthless forces of the Unseen, 'the long Night's hour', the disasters of death, desire and incapacity, it is our one ransom of the Night. As Tagore would say, *Bandire diye gechho muktir svāda*, to the prisoner you have brought the taste of freedom. Redeeming from decay the visitations of the divinity in man, poetry may not save us quite—since the lives of the poets are rarely a poem—but it at least makes us worth saving. The birth of the poet is our only true biography. When, as Wordsworth says—

Through love, through hope, and faith's  
transcendent dower  
We feel that we are greater than we  
know

he speaks for everyman and for poetry. And since, at heart, all men are poets,

Dust we are, the immortal spirit grows  
Like harmony in music; there is a dark  
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles  
Discordant elements, that makes them  
cling together  
In one society.

It is in such a hope for poetry as ontology, as a renewal of insight, that the hope of the race in this crisis lies. This is the Revolution of the Word, of which the apocalyptic poets speak, the godhead of unrealized things, the epiphany for which the world's soul cries out:

I have drunk deep God's own liberty...  
I am the wordless being vast and free.

Only the poet's tongue could utter the song of the free:

*Weave from my life His poem of days.*

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### **Holy Mother's Birthday**

The birthday of the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi was observed at the Institute on Tuesday, 26 December 1967, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. A beautifully decorated portrait was placed on the dais on the occasion.

The programme commenced with an invocation by Swami Sastrananda, till recently Assistant Secretary of the Institute, which was followed by a programme of devotional songs by the members of Nitya-Tale-Tale. Then Professor Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A., gave a talk on 'The Life and Message of the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi'.

The day's function came to a close with

a programme of devotional songs by Sri Pintoo Bhattacharyya.

### **Symposium on Sister Nivedita**

On Saturday, 30 December 1967, at 6.30 p.m. a symposium on Sister Nivedita was held in the Vivekananda Hall of the Institute. Madame Sophia Wadia presided.

The programme commenced with an invocation by Srimati Supriti Ghosh. Swami Ranganathananda, Sri Ashok Kumar Sarkar, Sri Pranab Ranjan Ghosh, Sri Girdhar Lal Mehta, and Pravrajika Atmaprana spoke on the dedicated life and ideals of Sister Nivedita.

The symposium concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Pravrajika Sraddhaprana.

## MAY CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

### SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*2nd, 9th, 23rd, and 31st May*

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govindagopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st May*

## A SERIES OF DISCOURSES IN ENGLISH ON THE UPANISADS

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English**4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th May*

## CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

SITAR RECITAL

By

Nikhil Banerjee

*Monday, 6 May 1968, at 7 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only . . . . . Re. 1.00

## FILM SHOWS

*Tuesday, 14 May 1968, at 6 p.m.**Tuesday, 21 May 1968, at 6 p.m.**Tuesday, 28 May 1968, at 6 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only . . . . . Re. 1.00 for each day

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR MAY 1968

*Rabindra Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 4 May, at 4.45 p.m. for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 25 May, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

**Programme:**

Music, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Show

## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*May 1 **Shakespeare Day***Programme:*

A talk on: Shakespeare's Play-world

By P. K. Guha, M.A.

Introducing *Macbeth*

By Sushil Kumar Mukherjee, M.A.

Film Show: *Macbeth*

May 8 **Rabindra Jayanti**

*Programme:*

Songs

Recitations

A talk on: Social Thinking of Rabindranath (in Bengali)  
By Maitreyi Devi

Film Show: Rabindranath

May 15 **The Concept of Man in Modern Thought : The Existentialist View**

*Speaker:* Dehabrata Sinha, M.A., D.Phil.

*President:* Priti Bhushan Chatterji, M.A., D.Phil.

May 22 **Art and Culture of Early Central Asia**

*Speaker:* Bratindra Nath Mukherjee, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A.

*President:* Benoy Chandra Sen, M.A., Ph.D.

May 29 **Sankara Jayanti**

*Programme:*

Siva Mahinna Stotram

Songs

A talk on: Sankaracarya's Message for the Modern Man

By Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D.Phil.

Portrayal of a few select scenes from the Sanskrit drama  
Sankara Sankaram

By

Prachya Vani

**SPECIAL LECTURES**

**Buddha Jayanti**

*Programme:*

Songs

By

Purva Sinha

A talk on: The Life and Message of the Buddha

By the Hon. Mr. Chief Justice D. N. Sinha

Film Show: Our Buddhist Heritage

*Thursday, 16 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

**Rabindra Manas**

(A series of 8 lectures organized with a view to providing an opportunity to the youth and students, as well as interested individuals, to better understand and appreciate the different aspects of Rabindranath's life and literature and also his contribution to mankind awareness.)

*Programme:*

*Tuesday, 7 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* Tagore's Humanism

*Speaker:* Aniya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

*Monday, 13 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* Rabindranath and Vivekananda

*Speaker:* S. M. Banerjee, M.A., B.L.

*Monday, 20 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* Educational Ideas of Rabindranath

*Speaker:* J. N. Mullick

*Monday, 27 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* The Upanisads and Rabindranath

*Speaker:* Hiranmay Banerjee

*Monday, 3 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* Rabindranath: The Universal Poet

*Speaker:* Promotho Nath Bisi

*Monday, 10 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* Rabindranath: His Novels and Short Stories

*Speaker:* Asutosh Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D.

*Monday, 17 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* Tagore Music: Its Trends and Development

*Speaker:* Saumyendra Nath Tagore

*Monday, 24 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* Rabindranath and His Dramas

*Speaker:* Sambhu Mitra

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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ON THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

MARTIN GREIFFENHAGEN, PH.D.

*Dr. Martin Greiffenhagen is Professor and Director of the Institute of Political Science at the University of Stuttgart. Formerly he was Professor of Political Science at the Teachers College, Lüneburg. The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. Greiffenhagen at the Institute on 7 February 1968.*

THE social sciences are fashionable today. What makes them fashionable has been subject to varying interpretations. Both the condemnation of the social sciences as 'popular sciences' and the attempt to establish them as basic disciplines reflect the confused situation confronting them and determining their self-concept. We shall try to make this situation at least intelligible. To begin with, we shall consider a thesis which assigns to the social sciences a particular epoch-making chapter in the history of man, for which they are in a special way characteristic, namely, the modern age. This is what Ralf Dahrendorf had in mind when he wrote (*Gesellschaft und Freiheit*, Munich, 1961, p. 13):

'What theology meant for the feudal

society of the Middle Ages, and philosophy for the period of transition to the modern age, sociology means for industrial society. All three disciplines were or are—aside from their specific areas of knowledge—instruments for the self-interpretation of historical epochs.'

## WHAT SOCIAL SCIENCE MEANS

We do not want to pursue here an exact differentiation of the plural in the term 'social sciences'; we shall consider the terms 'the social sciences', 'social science', and 'sociology' as co-equal, whereby sociology, as in the quotation from Dahrendorf, has the sense of *pars pro toto*. Social science is, according to Dahrendorf, especially oriented towards our period which we call 'modern', and the self-concept of

our age is to be formed essentially in the categories of social science. This contrasts with the orientation categories of earlier ages, which, for Dahrendorf, were theology and philosophy.

It is immediately clear what this periodical division means. As long as man's concept of himself is formed essentially in theological terms, he sees himself as dependent on the will of God, and this means in a negative sense—not as the creator of his own destiny. Society, too, is seen as an image and a mirror of divine order, and demanding therefore the obedience due to a divine command. Things are different when man interprets his existence in philosophical categories. Philosophy, in contrast to theology, is initiated by doubt in divine authority, by scepticism towards a tradition handed on and supported by this authority, and by criticism of the eternal validity of institutions. What is true then is what man himself answers to the question of what he is, and what his critical mind, in ridding itself of prejudices, recognizes as real. For this reason, the age in Western Christian history characterized by philosophy is full of designs and systems of man delivered from religion to autonomy.

For the modern age, according to Dahrendorf's thesis, man's view of himself is formed in the categories of social science. It seems, first of all, that the peculiar characteristic of the social science viewpoint is the reduction of the axioms of theology and philosophy to 'society'—to an entity which, whatever else it may mean, transcends the individual and his decisions, the person and his belief, his consciousness. The ultimate source of knowledge of the world is no longer divine will, not even the human mind, but social, economic, and in general, political forces, which in a technologically determined world force the individual will to conform to them, and

in this manner 'make history'. After having touched upon it, we shall for a time leave the question of whether the social sciences are suitable as medium of interpretation of our age. Instead, we shall try to come to an understanding of this new, modern complex of sciences. There is a famous characterization of the social sciences which helps to illustrate their place in systematic thought: their designation as 'the science of opposition'. This term has a double meaning: social science is a science of opposition, firstly, in the political and secondly, in the epistemological sense. The two meanings of opposition, as we shall see, are closely connected.

#### THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

The change from feudal society to the new industrial society forced a political reaction among a certain group of people especially affected by this change. Alfred Weber has termed this group the 'socially unattached intellectuals' (*sozial freischwebende Intellektuelle*). These intellectuals, who had lost their previously secure social position, formed the vanguard of a new society, and the mobility and dynamism which distinguished their critical mind characterize the whole of society today. Among them developed, above all, two extreme courses—the restorationists and the revolutionaries, or the conservatives and the socialists.

To the conservatives, the change towards the new society seemed altogether negative, a defection from the old way, a deplorably wrong path which had to be abandoned at all costs (and some used this expression quite seriously). Society meant for them the feudal and agrarian society. Revolution seemed to them a fever which had to be beaten down. The conservative criticism of the present age was completely formulated in the framework of the old society, which they regarded as eternal,

exemplary for all time, a permanent frame of reference. This form of criticism stretches from such a significant document as Schiller's letter on aesthetic education, to less well-founded theories today.

It was different with the revolutionary socialists of that radical period. Their frame of reference was not the past in the sense of a binding ancestry, but the future as freedom for a true humanity. For them, the right society was and is a society still to be realized, created, and actually constructed.

It is easy to see that there are close relations between these two political tendencies, the conservative and the socialist. In his ideal of an intact society, the socialist—and this is by no means the least true of Marx—also depends upon a harmonizing ideal of the so-called 'stable world'. The loss of a more or less self-evident order of social structures leads to a general longing for social integration. This ambiguity in the revolutionary attitude is particularly evident with Rousseau who can be claimed for both the conservative and the revolutionary viewpoints.

Every political orientation, however, necessitates an analysis of the social present; or in other words, any social policy already includes social science, because it intends this theoretical analysis. The distance the socially unattached intellectuals have from the society in which they live gives them the ability to perceive the process of social change. This involves an old principle of cognition, namely, I can only perceive something when I find myself in a certain distance from it. For the social sciences, this distance means a condition which Hans Freyer called the 'post-mortem situation' of sociology, i.e. social structures reveal themselves as past or passing.

The social scientist, therefore, is frequently suspected of 'destructive' thought. With good reason, his 'analysis' does after all

bring society to an awareness of its change, and wherever such a change is not seen or is denied, the social scientist comes into conflict with his society. This is the reason why social scientists have such difficulties in totalitarian states.

Social science, therefore, is itself a product of the change which it critically registers—'critically' in the political as well as the scientific sense. Since modern society does not have a self-evident order, but has become problematic, it calls for theoretical analysis and practical integration. Incidentally, in the term 'modern' there is already the element of incompleteness, liability to change necessary development. 'Modern' does not mean just 'New' but 'always new', geared to the future. When I say 'modern', I implicitly accept further change. In his analysis of modern society, therefore, the social scientist deals more with trends than with static facts. He seldom concludes: such and such is so or so. Instead, his analyses always take into account future development. Thus the social scientist is necessarily a social prognostician. This was even shown by Toqueville, one of the first important diagnosticians of the modern world, whose inquiry into what is and what happens always took the form of the question: Where are we going?

In the meantime, continuous social change has entered the popular consciousness. We all understand society as being subject to change, dynamic and progressive. This general social consciousness represents the clearest contrast to the old society. To carry on the 'old truth' was the old society's highest command. Consequently, the axiomatic identity of what is and what should be cannot be removed from its social theory, and the theological philosophy of natural law was the ideological core of its social self-interpretation. In view of the natural law doctrine, the question



arises once again of the function of modern social science as an attempt by modern society at self-interpretation. This question is of immediate relevance since the social doctrine of the Catholic Church continues to hold to the decisive sections of Thomas Aquinas' social teachings, which are classical for her. We can approach a first answer to our question by clarifying the relationship between theology and philosophy on the one hand, and social science on the other, in terms of a concept which has meanwhile become a slogan—I mean the problem of 'alienation'.

### THE CONCEPT OF ALIENATION

The concept of alienation characterizes a specifically modern difficulty which has contributed to the birth of the social sciences. 'Man in a bourgeois society is ... on the one hand a private individual, but on the other a citizen of the state, for bourgeois society exists in a problematic relationship to the state. Since Rousseau, the incongruity of the two has been a fundamental problem for all modern doctrines of government, and the totalitarian societies are an attempt to answer Rousseau's question: how can man, by nature a whole, be brought into harmony with the entirely different wholeness of the *société politique*.'

Rousseau did not succeed in solving the problem of whether one should educate man to become an *homme* or a *citoyen*. He saw very clearly that the antagonism between individual and society was not to be understood in its modern context without taking the Christian religion into consideration. The reason that this tension became a theme of social philosophy is that with its entry into the modern world, Christian religion lost its cultural meaning and influence; it was no longer the basic law for political and social life. Many of the first social critics around the turn of

the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, for example Novalis in Germany, saw the actual origin of the modern dilemma of individual and state in the Reformation. This is true in that the Reformation, at least in its results, led to a separation of religion and state, and, consequently, of religion and morals, religion and culture, religion and education. Religion became finally a private affair. The absolute state favoured this development insofar as it set religion free and relegated it to the new sphere of society which it had helped to create. The churches, therefore, belong to the first pluralistic groups in the modern state. But even where the absolute state tried to make the Christian religion a political religion in a new sense, on the principle of *cuius regio eius religio*, i.e. sought in it the ideological foundation for its two new principles of sovereignty and *raison d'être*, it unintentionally admitted that it was interested in religion not for religious but for political reasons. Thus Christian religion for the first time became ideology, i.e. a function of political homogeneity.

The Christian religion, as Rousseau had regretted, is ill-suited to a state religion. The deeply ingrained principle of individuation extends beyond the bounds of the state and urges the individual introspection and to antagonism towards the state, as soon as the latter attempts to create a religion *civile*. The French Revolution was the first radical, though paradoxical, attempt to make the principle of individuation a concern of the state. Through the state, freedom of the individual and equality of all citizens were to become one. Calling the individual into the service of the state, however, led to an overstraining of society's claim on the state; and since Christian religion ceased to provide the spiritual and moral canon for the West, ideologies took its place.

In the antagonism between the two principles of radical individual and total socialization, modern social science finds itself in a paradoxical position. On the one hand, it lends weight to the principle of society as against the individual. On the other hand, it does this in the interest—real or ostensible—of the individual, just the attempt to invent a new order of society will make freedom of the individual possible. This individualist assumption of the social sciences has survived up to the present, and reveal a most emphatic expression in Dahrendorf's little book on the 'homo sociologicus'. The danger of one-sidedness, however, appears clearly in this work, when Dahrendorf says (*Homo Sociologicus*, Cologne and Opladen, 1959, p. 38):

'The socialising process is constantly a process of depersonalisation, in which the absolute individuality and freedom of the individual is lost in the social rôle. Man as homo sociologicus has been delivered unprotected to the laws of society and the hypotheses of sociology ...'

A still more radically one-sided individualism can be heard in the following: 'As long as sociology understands its task as a moral problem, it must forego the rationalisation and analysis of social reality; as soon as it strives for scientific insight, the moral concern of the individual and his freedom recedes into the background. Not that sociology has distanced itself from its real task, but that it has developed as a science at all is what makes the paradox of the moral and alienated person so distressing.'

Whenever the social sciences are attacked today, the attack comes from the viewpoint of an ethically self-validation, radical individualism. There is a widespread 'feeling of unease, indeed of abhorrence ... of what is felt to be the disappointing and destructive aspect of sociologism'. This

abhorrence, unfortunately, is not lessened by the fact that each discipline originally committed to individualism, now discovers its 'sociological dimension'. With justification, Carl Brinkmann has compared social science in its shock effect with Freud's depth psychology. Just as embarrassing as Freud's reference to sexuality is the social scientist's reference to the social, particularly the economic drives which are attributed to the individual and to a large extent determine his behaviour. Brinkmann suggests that 'homo sexualis and homo oeconomicus' are strictly analogous figures from the crude naturalism of 'egotism' to the most sublime emotional and mental reactions of communalization. And nowhere is this analogy more significant than in the inclination to deny and disavow subjectively just those natural roots—hidden as they may objectively be. 'Repression', therefore, is not merely the known defence mechanism against the sexual, but more frequently and normally also the way in which society treats its crude, economic, 'materialistic' substructures. They become matters of shame, from the almost artistically perfect disguise in the rites and ceremonies of primitive societies to the 'conventions' of the developed capitalist society, where money is never mentioned in polite company, but where the mephistophelian saying applies, 'One may not say before chaste ears what chaste hearts cannot do without'.

We shall describe with a few illustrations the individualist stand against the social sciences. The following examples apply to all those inter-disciplinary disputes in which the social science group still faces a more or less united front of the classical disciplines. Especially in Germany, the humanities until recently stood in a close, almost inseparable, relation to individualism.

'The great cultural ideal of humanity, the ideal of the totality of personal development which dominated the age of Goethe'

was predominant at least until Dilthey. Dilthey, however, 'regarded sociology as an abstraction which derived the collective from the individual. He rejected the application of the universals of natural science to the interpretation of intellectual phenomena, and therefore refused to accept a sociology which wished to study the totality of social life. It is only consistent when he then concentrates upon the reality of the individual emotional experience. Scientific Lyricism of this kind is a genuine child of German classicism'.

These remarks on Dilthey are the words of an important present-day scholar in the field of the humanities, and they announce a change in the evaluation of the social sciences. It is, of course, easier to declare oneself against the humanist ideal of *Bildung* than it is to show how the humanistic, individualist aspect is to be conveyed with a sociologically oriented concept of man. They seem to be mutually exclusive and to force the alternative of 'adaptation or resistance'. This, the title of a book by the sociologist Helmut Schelsky, clearly indicates the close link between the humanities and the problems of education in our age. As long as education has an individualist orientation, and it is not yet decided whether in a free world it could in principle be otherwise, it falls into the same dilemma as a purely individualistic concept of education. The humanistic tradition reaches far back beyond the cultural turning-point of the social revolution, and thus beyond the emergence of social science itself.

#### LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

The problem is similar for legal science. The jurist assumes the rightfulness of the law; and law for him is not a sociological but an ethical entity. Therefore, every sociological relation in the legal field fills him with distrust. His 'premises are

intended to be permanent and absolutely valid, and they tend towards a metaphysical foundation and rationalization—or they would at least like to be traced back to premises which are so founded. Sociology's attitude does not support the claim of legal science to eternally valid norms. Its function consists in narrowing the circle of absolute premises'. The lawyer's concept of the law is by its very claims static; he is an enemy of all change and, as Max Weber showed in his sociology of law, by profession conservative. The question of natural law, therefore, can never become a dead issue among jurists, for the removal of natural law from the axiomatic framework of legal science would take with it the firmest metaphysical reference point of their system. Law would become convention and would thereby lose its character as law. The struggle between the legal and social sciences is particularly bitter where social change necessitates new terms of law (for example, that of 'social adequacy'). Civil law is by nature conservative, criminal law more amenable to social change, labour and social law for a jurist of the old school a rather doubtful discipline, since change in social conditions here threatens to become a legal principle.

In the field of government law, the contrast between state and society plays a decisive role to a conservative jurist. In Germany, this difference has been maintained by some experts in governmental law till today, and defended against political science. The political scientist, on the other hand, is inclined to speak of process of integration of state and society; he is no longer able to separate the two. The dispute between state law and political science in Germany today is one of the most interesting intellectual events. For one thing, it reveals a specifically German difficulty (one is reminded, for example, of the discussion on *Obrigkeit*, which is

completely incomprehensible in Anglo-Saxon countries, or on the clearly delineated fronts in the 1963 'Spiegel affair'—state-mindedness on the one side, democratic responsibility on the other). Secondly, however, there is a political problem of high order: How can the theoretical form of the state with its inevitable claim to the pursuit of the common good be combined in one theory with the social reality of mutually competing interest groups which exert considerable influence on the government? Needless to say, this problem deserves not only theoretical interest, but is a vital question of our political reality.

#### THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Finally, the dialogue between theology and social science furnishes the source for the differences between it and the other humanistic disciplines. Whoever is not acquainted with the theological background of our time can hardly deal with the question of the importance of social science today—and this is true of all civilizations and religions. Sociology of religion is nowadays a most important discipline, with great practical influence on political decisions.

Aside from the antagonism which characterizes theology's relationship with every science which does not depend on revelation, but seeks and finds its truths autonomously, there is a problem which quite remarkably binds theology and social science together, compelling them to enter into discussion. The problem is this: on the one hand, social science knows that no society can survive without a minimum of homogeneity in its view of the world. Such like-mindedness is ultimately based on irrational axioms, on a belief which cannot be made rationally evident. On the other hand, however, it is just social science, here as sociology of knowledge, that points

to the difficulties which Christianity has to deal with as a religion in the modern world, a religion which, aside from its being a 'faith', represents the cultural principle of a past society. The connexion between theology and social science is complicated even further by the origins of social science, which are, as we saw, closely connected with Christianity's loss of cultural significance. Since Christianity lost its power to unify Western society, there has been a rapid succession of attempts to replace vanishing religious power by ideological 'Movements'. In respect to these attempts, social science plays a decidedly equivocal role. If on the one hand it tries to restrict itself without prior assumptions to the analysis of social events and phenomena, it is always tempted on the other hand, consciously or not, to favour this or that ideology. Yet social integration is one of its basic assumption. The work of Karl Mannheim especially shows this dialectic. Whereas in his earlier writings he had spoken out for a radical, analytical, practical understanding of social science, he later advocated a deliberate ideological planning, when it came to defending hardpressed democracy. It is characteristic that for a while Mannheim did not believe he could renounce certain ethical elements of the Christian religion and tradition in the struggle for liberal democracy.

Such a pragmatic assessment of religion, however, must provoke criticism from Christianity itself. The Christian faith, by its very nature, is not interested in society, but in the individual and his relationship to God. Rousseau recognized this clearly, and held that the Christian religion, whose unifying and humanizing power he regarded highly, was very unsuitable, just for that reason, as a state religion. We have every reason today to take this seriously, or, to be quite frank, to stop pursuing church politics and gear ourselves towards a world

society, which can exist in spite of the East-West conflict, and is already conceived in the realization that this conflict cannot be settled by traditional means.

In summary, one can say that the distrust of social science is nourished by the distrust of the modern, industrial, mobile society in general. The classic sciences of man, therefore, today tend frequently towards conservatism, and criticism of modern civilization. As classical sciences they are not—like the social sciences—themselves products of the changing process of the last two hundred years, and consequently are not 'crisis sciences' and hence their self-interpretation refers to much earlier origins. On the other hand, it is not to be overlooked that each of these humanist disciplines has now discovered its 'sociological dimension'. Every science knows nowadays that it must account for certain social realities in its research, and must reinterpret its concept of man in view of the changes in society. Social science can count as a basic science of our day to the extent that it has brought about this new horizon.

But this is an ambitious claim, and deserves a little scepticism. The most important sociologists have always shared this scepticism—even Max Weber pointed out that the social sciences, to a considerable extent, live from the results of other sciences, that sociology at least is more a point of view than an independent discipline. Weber, the sociologist, was also a jurist, theologian, and historian, and made use of many different methods.

If a discipline is not defined by its subject-matter, but by its unique method, as is held for the classical sciences, it will be difficult to develop the social sciences, disciplines of such independent prestige as law, philosophy, and history. This does not alter the fact that social science is modern science in the same sense that

history, biology, and psychology were once modern sciences. All research referring to man must be seen to a great extent from a sociological point of view, and the social sciences seem to offer the last truth on man—if not the ultimate truth, then, after psychology, the latest and thus the most modern. An external indication of this topicality of social science is the fact that the guest speakers of today are no longer historians, as was still the case half a century ago, but social scientists. The titles of their speeches often close with the words '... and society'. Their subject run all the way to sports, whose sociology is explained at sports conventions. Earlier, a historian would have spoken on this occasion on 'Sport and the Ancients' or 'Sport and the Nation'. Congress of historians and philosophers in recent years show how strongly all sciences today have taken up sociological viewpoints. In both fields, a definite turn towards topical, if not to say practical, themes is evident. It is no longer possible to overlook the sociological viewpoint in the scientific and practical world, and one may safely presume it will become stronger as general development continues to confront us with problem of a social nature.

#### CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Social science contributes largely to a general orientation by defining the tasks for other sciences. Their effect reaches into natural science, physics, chemistry, and technology in the broad and narrow sense. The architect, the city planner, the traffic engineer, and the power supplier—all need the individual counsel of social science, but also a greater conception, drawn from social science, which transcends any single science and places its work at the service of society as a whole. Community life, in earlier times, never a problem in itself, has become so today. Population increase,

greater mobility, technical and medical progress have brought our attention to society itself, so that almost a complete reversal is taking place. Medicine, for example, must accept the fact that health long since ceased to be a natural gift but belongs to the social equipment of a civilized society.

Social science, moreover, is a basic science in the sense that it offers a connexion between other sciences, a convergence due to a common perspective. The enrichment of our colloquial speech as well as scientific terminology points to a trend going beyond mere fashion. One begins to realize that one can only serve man through service to the whole of society. Even the most private circumstances become hardly perceptible singly, but comprehensible only when generalized.

In the last remarks is an indication that the social sciences are possibly or even necessarily basic sciences in an axiomatic sense. Social change, as the social sciences interpret it in general and in particular, would then provide a norm for individual conduct. Riesman's 'outer-directed type' would not only be an analysis of what is or a prognosis of what is to come, but, at the same time, an axiomatic definition, a demand for what should be. The 'logic of facts' would compel the conscious and deliberate accommodation of norms to reality.

A social science which believes itself to be a basic science in this sense would not only have replaced theology and philosophy as society's medium of self-interpretation, but also as its source of values. It would be the attempt at self-interpretation of a totally depersonalized society committed not to norms but to scientifically derived 'patterns of conduct'. In conclusion, we shall see whether this idea if or not we regard it as desirable can claim to be correct.

The social sciences owe their existence,

as we saw, to the change to modern industrial society. They remain bound to this new 'age of revolutions'. In this respect, two assumptions of the social scientist are held to be indisputable: first, his concept of change as unceasing social transformation, secondly, the meaning of what he calls 'society'.

The first of these axioms, the change of social conditions, can cause a certain antagonism towards philosophy, which I will briefly clarify. We all speak in general sense of 'man' whether as members of past civilizations or present primitive societies. According to the axiomatic assumption of total change, however, this way of speaking is inaccurate, so it is not surprising that voices can be heard in social science today suggesting that we no longer speak of the human being as a creature remaining generally the same. Arnold Gehlen, for example, assumes that 'throughout the course of human history, there has been a change in the structures of consciousness themselves not merely the natural, continual change in the content of consciousness'. Gehlen's assumption is the result of his doctrine of civilization, according to which mankind went through history in separate phases, one phase not leading continuously to the next. The transformation of a technical industrial society in Europe, for example, can be likened in its profound impact to the transition from nomadism to settlement. If it is so that social science can no longer speak meaningfully of the human being, in contrast to philosophy where the concept of man (except in existentialism) is taken as universally valid, then the possibility arises of surrender of the concept of continuous human history and the loss of orientation in a constantly changing present. This question is of immediate concern, for example, for the problem of tradition. The idea of tradition in earlier times was of

something handed down to each generation as eternal and independent of time or place. Permanence was part of the concept, and guaranteed by the tradition itself, which embodied the demand to be passed on to posterity. Today, the question arises whether we can still understand tradition in this way or whether we must not arrive at a functional understanding, which would imply that only formal principles be handed down, whereas content would be fully alterable.

Just as recent as the assumption of radical change is the axiomatic entity, 'society' is the ultimate frame of reference for human conduct. The recourse to society dates from the beginning of the revolutionary age, and is the result of a fundamental decision between individuation and socialization in western civilization. What is 'modern' in the present form of this dilemma is that for the last two hundred years in Europe, we have been in the process of deciding for one or the other, while in the eighteenth century, the highest and most noble test for most scholars in literature, theology, and politics was their reconciliation. As long as the Christian religion itself was the basic law of state and society, neither radical individualism nor the attempt at total socialization could succeed. Not until the beginning of the modern age have there been such rigorous attempts to decide as those of Marx and Kierkegaard. Both stemmed in a dialectical way from the last great effort at reconciliation in the West, which Hegel undertook in a magnificent manner. They show that we have by no means gone beyond Hegel, but still need his 'Introduction to the Present'—as Kojève originally wished to call his book. The task is still to defend the freedom of the individual from the encroachment of society and yet, at the same time, to make both state and society possible. For the Greeks, the two

tasks coincided so that the question of how one should educate one's son to become a good man could be answered with the paradoxical advice: Educate him as the citizen of a state with good laws. The Christian age, however, stands under the commandment: Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's (Matthew.22.21), and it is characterized by the antagonism revealed in this saying.

A social science which is not capable of seeing the problem of the relationship between individual and society as a theological and philosophical problem, but which naively takes the standpoint of society forgets its origin and becomes in whatever form and ideology of total socialization. The dilemma of the 'trial of society against individual' cannot—and this we should have learnt from the past two hundred years—be decided in favour of one or the other.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we shall attempt to answer the question posed at the beginning—can science really provide the frame of reference for modern man's self-interpretation? To say it straightway, I think, it cannot. As soon as social science, renouncing a transcendental view of man, attempts to make society man's direct point of reference, and to measure what he ought to be on the basis of what he is in the opinion of social scientists, or what he promises to become in the future, it approaches underlying ideological references, which transcend society just as much as openly professed theological or philosophical systems. Society cannot be its own reference without leading to a helpless tautology. It is interesting and fruitful to follow up the different attempts made since the eighteenth century to set up society itself as its own principle of normation and formation.

These attempts have all failed or have been defeated with great sacrifice. Even present attempts of this sort show that the facts which speak for themselves are constantly replaced by norms. One need only think of the confusion in public opinion polling, where political normative concepts are continually mixed with the empirical concept of so-called representative results.

Every society, yesterday, today, and always, needs an image of itself which goes further than just the facts and tends towards a normative function. This is not at all affected by the fact that norms cannot survive without a factual basis, that is, without being useful. The question of the destiny of mankind is still unavoidable, and cannot be answered by simple recourse to the facts of society. This means that all sciences which have to do with the question of human destiny, i.e. with norms, can gain less from the social sciences than is generally supposed. Neither theology nor

even education—to name two important normative sciences—can simply expect social science to supply a fundamental answer to the question of what man is or what is good for him.

And yet social science is more than a fashionable science, and the reason is that our society is moved by forces which often considerably limit individual power of decision. Every normative science, therefore, would do well to examine its view of man in the light of the results of social science, and to ask itself in what its concept can be realized in our time. Social science, as an analytical, empirical discipline, cannot answer the question of what man ought to be. It can, however, help to realize the ideas which we consider ethically appropriate. Just as the form of a state depends on its citizen's image and ideals of man, so the concept of social science depends on the humanity of those who pursue it.



## PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY BENGAL

BHABATOSH DATTA, M.A., D.LITT.

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TO GIVE a philosophical account of the nineteenth century Bengal would indeed mean an exposition of the general intellectual position of Bengal in that period of history. I do not, however, propose to enter into the details of metaphysical niceties which characterize our traditional method of argumentation and philosophical speculation. As a matter of fact, right from the days of the Upaniṣads down to the days of the Navya-nyāya of Bengal, philosophical discussions produced different schools at different periods of Indian history. What is the exact nature of our existence, what is the relation between Jīva and Brahman, what is *mokṣa*, how it can be attained—these and similar other problems absorbed our thinkers so long. And so various philosophical positions such as Dvaitavāda, Advaitavāda, Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda—all based on the authority of the Vedānta grew up. In Bengal, the followers of Caitanya developed a still different school known as Acintyabhedābheda-vāda. This also was based on the ancient authority of the Purāṇa and the Vedānta. Thus, the Indian mind was all along engaged in the pursuit of the ultimate Reality and did not take much notice of the problems of this material world in which it lived. The school of Navya-nyāya was the culmination of such abstract thinking. The nature of problem in which the scholastic pundits were interested was

somewhat different. It was a type of scholastic thinking that robbed us of the senses of practical reality and got lost in verbal quibbles. Literature and philosophy—these are the two things in which the Indian mind excelled. But unfortunately, events of history, social and political conditions of the people around them, the mysteries of the physical nature—all these remained outside the purview of their intellectual quest. They sought Truth—something which is absolute and eternal, real and changeless.

### THE SOCIAL PRACTICES

Side by side there developed a complex system of social practices which apparently did not contain much philosophical significance. The Smṛtis or the codes gave us directives we were to follow. There were moreover *lokācāra* or the folk-practices. These practices were so strong that even the Brahmins, supposed to be the custodians of Sanātana Dharma, had to admit them. Which of the two, the Śruti and the Smṛti, argued the great Rammohun Roy, are we to follow? This was a very pertinent question at the beginning of the nineteenth century. What is remarkable is the fact that the philosophical investigation and the blind *lokācāra* went on side by side for ages. One was pursued by the intellectual class, indifferent towards the world around them, and absorbed in metaphysical specula-

tions. The other was practised by the millions of people, undisturbed by political and other changes. Morality consisted in observing these social practices only.

With the coming of the British, things began to change. Gradually the political stability set in; Bengal society gradually underwent changes; English education was spreading; new horizon was opened before us; a spirit of enquiry, a doubt as to the validity of the social and ritualistic practices made the young neophytes restive. A fresh and lively interest was aroused in the world around us. We were out to make a fresh assessment of the time-worn values which had governed our everyday life. Now, the actual development that took place in the fields of education, politics, social reforms, literature, etc. need not detain us here. What is more relevant in the present context, is the change in the concept of social values, quite a new methodology of logical argumentation and a thorough overhauling of the general philosophy of life. It was a new philosophy. Unlike the philosophical pursuits in the previous centuries, it was more concerned with the problem of putting the new ideas into practice. The abstruse metaphysical problem which had no bearing on our mundane life, in other words the abstract reasoning of the Navya-nyāya which made us merely impractical lost its meaning to the newly educated people.

'It is, indeed, still taught with reverence' wrote Bankimchandra in his *Study of Hindu Philosophy*, 'and learnt with awe, in the secluded *ṭols* of Nodiya and other seats of ancient learning, but the philosophy of the *ṭols* is the most barren and unprofitable study in which the human intellect can engage itself. Philosophy as taught by the Pundits is simply a storehouse of verbal quibbles, and high proficiency in it is considered synonymous with high proficiency in the art of profitless wrangling.'

Almost in similar veins, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar criticized the study of Hindu philosophy while sending a report on the Sanskrit College system of education.

#### THE NEW PHILOSOPHY

Thus, philosophy in the nineteenth century did not mean what it had meant before. In other words, philosophy did no longer mean abstract intellectual pursuit for its own sake. It took to itself the arduous task of explaining and interpreting the conduct of life, of ascertaining the exact relation between man and his universe, between individual and his society. This is a subject which our former teachers did not enquire into. 'The philosophical literature', said Aksay Kumar Datta, the first exponent of our new philosophy, 'hardly made this their subject of enquiry. The physiological nature of our body and the mind, their relation with the external world were never felt to be the suitable subject for investigation.' Aksay Kumar Datta wrote *Bāhyavastur Sahit Mānab-prakṛtir Samvandha Vicār* in 1852. Literally translated, the name means 'Treatise on the Relation between the Human Nature and the External World'. Before this treatise, there had been no systematic discussion on this subject. From Rammohun Roy to Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, attempts were all directed to the reformation and betterment of the society in which we lived, but nobody before Aksay Kumar Datta attempted to rationalize this endeavour in a reasoned and philosophical pattern. He was a master thinker before Bankimchandra Chatterjee appeared in the seventies as the famous editor of *Baṅgadarśan*. It will not be out of context to give a short description of the book here.

*Bāhyavastu* was first serialized in the *Tattva-bodhinī Patrikā* and then was published in two volumes in 1852. It was a remarkable book which cast a deep in-

fluence on the Bengali mind. Aksay Kumar himself was influenced by the ideas of George Coombe, a positivist thinker of England. Aksay Kumar's *Bāhyavastu*, though basically a summary of Coombe's *Constitution of Man*, contained conviction of his own. Some of the chapters of the book are as follows :

Introduction; natural law; analysis of human nature and its relation with the external object; elements constituting man; his physical nature; his psychological nature; on the origin of happiness; his behaviour in conformity with the natural law; pain and sorrow due to violation of natural law; result of violation of natural law.

In the first part of his book, Aksay Kumar defines religion in the light of natural sciences. Religion, according to him, is not esoteric; it is, on the other hand, the knowledge of the laws of nature. In the second part, he discusses the various implications of moral laws set forth by religion as defined by him in the first part. Some of the chapters of this part are as follows :

On the pain incurred as the result of non-observance of religious laws; social laws; penalty according to the laws of nature; simultaneous operation of various laws of nature; whether the law of nature is agreeable for every individual, etc.

Taking Aksay Kumar Datta as the representative thinker of his time, one can easily presume the subject of their interest. It is really wonderful, how Aksay Kumar tackled a difficult subject like this in a prose which was immature and comparatively inexpressive.

#### BANKIMCHANDRA AND HIS DHARMATATVA

At least thirty-two years after Aksay Kumar Datta had written his treatise, Bankimchandra Chatterjee published his philosophical work, *Dharmatattva* (1884). By that time the nineteenth century was

drawing to its end and the great resurgence which had begun since the establishment of the Hindoo College (1817) almost reached maturity. New values were formed, new ideas were put to action, and a definite line of future actions emerged out of the initial dislocation of old values. Bankimchandra indeed was more specific in indicating the solution of moral and social problems. And yet he hardly discussed any political and social issue of his day. Topical subjects did not much interest him. Those problems indeed were for the social and political workers or for the newspaper columnists to deal with. Bankimchandra had in his early days seen some of the great social movements such as widow-marriage and anti-polygamy movements. He also witnessed the very important religious reformation started by Devendra Nath Tagore and Keshub Chandra Sen. But Bankimchandra, instead of raising these questions at all in his book, analysed the moral nature of man and tried to define humanity from a modern perspective. His *Dharmatattva* had an alternative sub-title—*Anuśilan*, meaning 'culture', not the mental refinement as we generally understand the term, but the process of progressive harmonization of all the faculties that a man possesses. In this sense man initially is imperfect and his faculties are not harmoniously developed. That makes man rather unhappy in life. It should be his endeavour to cultivate his three broad faculties, namely, the faculty of action, the faculty of knowledge, and the faculty of aesthetic understanding. This is *anuśilan* or cultivation. A man who has thus acquired a wide culture only knows his right track to follow. The topical solutions of the topical problems do not really last. Written in the dialectical method and planned in Herbert Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy*, *Dharmatattva* gives us a detailed account of our moral behaviour. Thus, Bankim-

chandra created a new value of selfless work and devotion to our motherland. He made us conscious of our moral and natural obligation to our self and also to our neighbours. In this book, Bankimchandra explains the *dharma* or the new philosophy, so unlike the *dharma* of the Smṛtis and Sāṃhitās of the old days.

### THE CHANGE OF OUTLOOK

It appears from all these that the nineteenth century thinkers were merely engaged with the pragmatic solution of the crisis. Surely this was a great change of outlook, almost radical in nature. Even the great Vedāntist, Raja Rammohun Roy, appeared to be a very practical man. And what did the great Swami Vivekananda propound? This was the Practical Vedānta

-Vedānta put in practice. Nobody before Rammohun thought like this. Nobody felt the necessity of such a transformation. And so we find Rammohun, after he had revived the study of the Upaniṣads as far back as 1815, writing to the then Governor-General Lord Amherst his famous letter on English education. Some of his remarks are worth quoting :

'We were filled with sanguine hopes', writes Rammohun Roy reacting against the official proposal of spending a huge sum of money on the establishment of the Sanskrit College, 'that this sum would be laid out in employing European Gentlemen of talents and education to instruct the natives of India in Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, and other useful sciences which the Nations of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection that has raised them above the inhabitants of other parts of the world.'

'This seminary' he further adds '(similar in character to those which existed in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon), can only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and

metaphysical distinction of little or no practical use to the possessors or to the society. The pupils will then acquire what was known two thousand years ago, with the addition of vain empty subtleties since produced by speculative men. ...

'Neither can such improvement arise from such speculations as the following, which are the themes suggested by the Vedānta: In what manner is the soul absorbed into the deity? What relation does it bear to the divine essence? Nor will youths be fitted to be better members of society by the Vedāntic doctrines which teach them to believe that all visible things have no real existence; that as father, brother, etc. have no actual entity, they consequently deserve no real affection and therefore the sooner we escape from them and leave the world the better. Again no essential benefit can be derived by the students of Mīmāṃsā from knowing what it is that makes the killer of a goat sinless or pronouncing certain passages of the Vedas. ...'

I quote this rather long excerpt from this historic letter to show how the nineteenth century mind was undergoing change and how a reasonably philosophical conviction was trying to be evolved. Rammohun Roy cannot be imagined to have dispensed with the Vedāntic ideas, nor could he be imagined to have underestimated the value of the useful learning. Thus, it was an intellectual crisis in Rammohun which, of course, symbolized the crisis that was only too real to be overlooked.

And so Truth became twofold: truth of knowledge and the truth of practice. Apparently this is a contradiction. Truth, according to traditional Indian point of view, is one and absolute. All other truth is relative and ephemeral. The position now has changed and the relative truth raises equally strong challenge to the absolute

Truth. Nobody from Rammohun to Vivekananda could ignore this relative truth and hence a reasonable explanation had to be sought out. We are reminded of Bacon who said, 'It is therefore most wise to render unto faith the things that are faith's'. He took the religious truth for granted and had no quarrel with it; but he was more concerned with the truth of science. Bacon's desire was to separate religious truth from scientific truth and that was in the interests of science and not of religion. Bacon used to be frequently quoted in support of liberal education in our country. Yet Bacon's ideas were not meant exactly to play the same role as they had to do in Europe. Truth since Bacon's days was divided and the twin did not meet. The separation perhaps was complete in the nineteenth century when Charles Darwin appeared with his famous doctrine of evolution.

#### THE VIEWS OF DIFFERENT THOUGHT-LEADERS

The position in our country was rather different. An Indian mind cannot remain satisfied with the bifurcation of Truth. The laws of nature, God and human behaviour must have to be explained by the same principle. Different thought-leaders of Bengal in the nineteenth century had recourse to different theories but with the same object. Positivism of Comte and the utilitarianism of Mill were looked for: *Gītā* and Vedānta sometimes came to provide the solution.

We have already mentioned Aksay Kumar Datta who identified himself with a positivist, George Coombe, and had translated his book. Positivism basically was nothing but a compromise between the Christian ideal of piety and a scientific interpretation of social evolution. It was, as a matter of fact, a reaction against transcendental philosophy that preceded

Comte. Mill's utilitarianism, on the other hand, which had greatest good for the greatest number as its object, similarly was nothing but a logical outcome of the philosophy of Comte in another form. One explained the ethical principle in a scientific manner, while the other enunciated the law of nature and society. It was, therefore, quite natural that the newly awakened Bengali mind which was groping for some sort of ideological support would find in this philosophical system their comfortable resort. It is also interesting that the authorities who were in the helm of affairs were also helping utilitarian ideas to spread. The liberal opinions held by some of the Governor-Generals of India, particularly Lord Hastings and Lord William Bentinck, encouraged the growth of new ideas. James Mill, it is to be remembered, was appointed Assistant to the Examiner of India correspondence in 1819. In his official position Mill was exercising considerable influence on his superiors in policy making. The utilitarian influence continued to be exercised with the appointment of John Stuart Mill as a junior clerk in the Examiners' office under his father. It is known that the Education Despatch of 1854 was prepared by John Stuart Mill, one of the results of which was the founding of Calcutta University. A detailed account of the utilitarian influence in India will be found in Professor Erich Stocke's scholarly book *English Utilitarians and India* (1958).

Bankinchandra in introducing his famous magazine, *Baṅgadarśan*, made no secret of his desire to spread education through the medium of Bengali, as this was the only means of reaching the ordinary people. This was clearly in accordance with the utilitarian principle. His idea of making literature didactic and beautiful at the same time clearly shows his utilitarian leaning. At a certain point in his *Dharmatattva*,

Bankim elucidates his utilitarian ethics thus (*Dharmatattva*, Chapter 22):

'Supposing you can render one-fourth of a service to each of the hundred persons as against what you can do to one single person only, the calculation is expressed thus  $100 \div 4 = 25$ . Here it will be your duty to render service, however small, to those hundred persons at the expense of the service to one single individual. On the other hand, had the amount of service done to each of these hundred persons been one-thousandth instead of one-hundredth, then the total amount of happiness for them would have been  $1/10$  only. Your duty therefore will be to render service to one and not to those hundred.'

Taking Bankimchandra as the most important thought-leader in the second half of the nineteenth century, we can try to understand the general intellectual background of that age. Positivism, like utilitarianism, had penetrated deep into the Bengali mind. 'The teaching of Comte' said Sir Henry Cotton in his admirable book, *New India*, (1885) 'has already deeply penetrated a few of the most select minds in Bengal. That is quite enough for the present'. He also noted the 'decided advance which has been made especially in the Bengal Presidency in the direction of the teachings of August Comte'. The observation is indeed correct. There was a number of followers of Comte in Bengal who used to correspond with Congreve. Yogendranath Ghosh, the editor of Ram-mohun's English writings, Justice Dwarakanath Mitter, Krishnakamal Bhattacharya, a noted philosopher, W. C. Bonnerji, and others set up a Positivist Club at Nilmoni Coomar's house at Taltala.

Bankimchandra not only makes frequent mention of Comte, he also quotes from him in his novel *Devī Choudhurāṇī*. His interpretation of social and literary evolution followed the same line of interpreta-

tion exemplified by the positivist thinkers and historians. In eschewing all blind faith based on super-sensual revelation, Bankimchandra was a positivist in thought and outlook. A firm belief in mechanistic determinism, a heritage from the eighteenth century Europe, pervades his novels as though everything in life is reasoned, planned, and determined. The fall of a hero is the result of the operation of a law of nature. The unhappiness that befalls a man is only due to the ignorance of this law. This, with the positivistic tendency of basing all knowledge on scientific law of uniformity of nature, actually influenced the nineteenth century thinking process. This was, in fact, the theme of Ramendra-sundar Trivedi's well-known essay 'Niyamer Rājatva'—the Reign of Law.

In 1866, Keshub Chandra Sen, the famous religious leader, was very much alarmed at the spread of positivistic and utilitarian ideas which almost threatened the existence of God. 'The politics of the age is Benthamism', Keshub said impatiently, 'its ethics utilitarianism, its religion rationalism, its philosophy positivism.' If these things encouraged humanistic endeavours in our life and society, one may ask quite reasonably, what was the necessity of invoking godliness? Was not the great Vidyasagar an agnostic? Did not Aksay Kumar Datta try to ascertain the existence of God by the democratic voting method of raising of hands? But Devendra Nath Tagore, on the other hand, was a God-intoxicated man and so was Keshub Chandra. They were preachers of Brāhmoism and Brāhmism, though it was based on Vedāntic principles, was a product of modernism. The Brāhmo thinkers criticized Bankimchandra for being a positivist. But they were not free from positivistic ideas. Like Bankim, Rajnarain Bose, the noted Brāhmo leader, talked of 'the exercise of every human faculty under proper regula-

tion and a harmonious discharge of all our duties, duly subordinated for the sake of harmony itself'.

But the fact is, a large section of modernists were not happy with the absolute dependence on the utilitarian values. Positivism is a materialistic creed. It only led one to godlessness. The service to humanity does not necessarily mean that one has to be a non-believer. Belief in God, on the contrary, gives strength to the spirit of service. Rajnarain Bose, one of the associates of Devendra Nath Tagore and a theologian of Brāhmoism, accused Bankimchandra for being a follower of 'hateful doctrines of Comte'. Keshub Chandra Sen also said that service to man should be inspired by the belief in God. The godliness of Ramakrishna Paramahansa is too well-known to be mentioned in detail. It may be noted that the general belief held by the thought-leaders of the second half of the nineteenth century tended to be the belief in a Supreme Brahman. It is really interesting what Locke, Hume, and Bentham had taught the enlightened Hindoo College boys in the thirties was gradually losing ground.

At the same time it was clear to those who had received liberal education, that the ritualistic practices and idolatry had lost their former significance. Rammohun revived the study of the Upaniṣads which showed that meditation on Brahman and the service to humanity could go together. He was a follower of Ācārya Śaṅkara, the great monistic philosopher who had described the material world as *māyā* or illusory. Hence service to this material world is meaningless for one who seeks salvation. And so Alexander Duff criticized Vedāntic religion for being non-ethical. One has indeed no moral duty to render to this material world which is illusory in nature.

This was really a crisis. A clear phil-

osophical position which could explain away this dilemma had become necessary. And so Devendra Nath Tagore, the next important reformer after Rammohun, though he adhered to the Vedāntic ideals, turned to Dvaitavādi position. He admitted the dual existence of God and the world. Devendra Nath, of course, was primarily a devotee and from a devotee's standpoint he left the necessity of admitting the dual existence of the worshipper and the worshipped. When the reality of the existence of the material world is admitted, logically all the implications such as duty to one's society and the moral obligation of fighting the evil etc. also have to be admitted. The Brāhmo Samāj under his leadership ultimately became one of the most powerful organization for bringing about social reforms in Bengal. Keshub was a deeply religious man. He was an associate of Devendra Nath whom he respected like his father. But it seems, he was not much interested in the Vedānta philosophy; he was rather influenced by the Christian ideal of sin and repentance, but that also was Dvaitavāda in another form. Pandit Sivnath Sastri, the third leader of the Brāhmo movement, although he had difference with Keshub whose mystical utterance led Sivnath to sever relation with him, philosophically maintained the same stand of a Dvaitavādi.

'If you want life', said Sivnath Sastri, 'then cultivate love for God, the giver of good. Follow the path of devotion. The followers of Vedānta will come to argue at this point and will say how we can love the thing that is absolute and incomprehensible. Enough of such quibbles. The Śāstras tell you about the dual attributes of Brahman. He is the creator of this material world manifesting himself in this human world. This is his *Īśvara-bhāva*. But in his other aspect he is beyond this creation. This is his attribute, *Brahma-*

bhāva. Do not get yourself involved in this Brahma-bhāva'.

Sivnath Sastri's reforming zeal was therefore backed by a strong philosophical conviction. But the strongest and systematic argument to this effect was provided by Bankimchandra himself, to whose *Dharma-tattva* we have already made reference. He based his arguments on the great work of Indian philosophical writing the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The *Gītā* in its time faced the similar problem of synthesizing *karma*, *jñāna*, and *bhakti*. But did *karma* mean the same thing to the ancients as it meant to us in the nineteenth century, and did *jñāna* mean the same knowledge as it meant to us? *Karma* in those days meant ritualistic and religious performances, while *jñāna* was the knowledge of self, i.e. Paramātman. But in the nineteenth century, we have already noticed the all-round zeal for material upliftment. *Karma* at that time only could mean work related to man and his society. What Lord Kṛṣṇa asked Arjuna to do was his duty which as a *dehī* he must have to do, but do it disinterestedly. He must not have any selfish motive. All his works are works of God. To understand the divine nature of work one has to be a *jñānī* or the seeker of truth, i.e. Brahman.

The philosophy of the *Gītā* wonderfully suited the requirement of the moment. Only the *Gītā* was not a *mokṣa-śāstra* as it had been to the ancients. Similarly, *jñāna* really meant the knowledge of the scheme of things, the universal law operating through the whole existence. This could be had by the study of different sciences. In the *Dharmatattva*, Bankimchandra has given a detailed analysis of this new philosophy supported by the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

The intellectual crisis that the nineteenth century thinkers faced was supposed to be met by the Dvaitavādi standpoint. It seemed, the Advaitavāda could not really answer the necessities of the age. That was why

after Rammohun the philosophical position changed. It appears the stand taken by the later thinkers was what is called Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda or qualified monism. But was pure monism lost completely? Did it not have any meaning to the intellectuals? There were thinkers, however, who really believed that the spread of monism was desirable and that this would be a life-giving force to the Bengalee: We were depending too much on western thinking. This should be checked. Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya, the venerable writer of *Sāmājik Prabandha*, held this view. Bhudev believed in old values. He had his arguments which were not easy to refute.

#### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CONTRIBUTION

The greatest exponent of Advaitavāda, of course, was Swami Vivekananda. This perennial philosophy re-appeared in full glory through that great Sannyāsī. Swami Vivekananda interpreted Advaitavāda in a manner which excellently suited the need of his age. The Advaita philosophy, instead of rendering all our action meaningless, inspires one to selfless devotion to work. 'Advaita', said Swamiji in course of a lecture on the Vedānta in 1897, 'and Advaita alone explains morality. Every religion preaches that the essence of morality is to do good to others. And why? What is the reason that I should be moral? You cannot explain it except when you come to know the truth as given in the *Gītā*. ... He who sees everyone in himself, and himself in everyone, thus seeing the same God living in all, he, the sage, no more kills the Self by the Self. Know through Advaita that whomsoever you hurt, you hurt yourself; they are all you.'

Vivekananda, it must be noted, had passed through the scepticism born of extreme rationalism and positivism of his age. His biographers narrate how 'the abstruse philosophy of Herbert Spencer



interested him particularly and later on he used the Spencerian mode of reasoning in his argumentation on the more abstruse doctrines of the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta'. Thus, Vivekananda before he became a Sannyāsi had gained the power of thought, penetrating discrimination and spirit of search for a scientific basis which stood him in good stead in delivering his message in later years. It is significant, no doubt, that for the time being he found refuge and solace in the positivist philosophy of Comte which embraces a wide ethical outlook.

It seems, Vivekananda pursued a different track from that pursued by the others. While others thought that the remedy lay in positivism or dualism, he preached Advaita Philosophy with amazing confidence thus harping on the universal oneness of humanity. It is the singular contribution of

Vivekananda to restore the self-confidence in us. Man is the architect of his own life. He can do and undo things if only he believes in himself. It is a kind of individualism though largely different from that conceived by the European social philosophers, like John Stuart Mill. It is a spiritual individual. According to Swamiji, 'Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man'. A man become sharply individualistic to the proportion he realizes his own self. The social philosophers thought it otherwise. They put forward the theory of harmonious development of all our faculties. Swami Vivekananda's philosophy is the philosophy of spiritual individualism firmly grounded on the Advaitavāda. It struck a new note in the nineteenth century thinking. With the growth of individualism the century came to a close.



## BOOK REVIEW

**THE DIARY OF A MYSTIC.** By Edward Thornton. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. 177 pp. Price in U.K. 25 s. net.

Messrs. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., the well-known publishers of London, Ruskin House, Museum Street, have brought out rather a remarkable volume which claims to be the spiritual autobiography of a person who, we are told, is a rare combination—a successful businessman and a mystic. One can appreciate that while it is comparatively easy to lay down the requisites of a successful businessman in terms of £, s. and d., it is somewhat difficult to define the exact dimensions of a mystic or his religiosity. As a matter of fact, what exactly mysticism is, is anybody's guess and any phase of human conduct or behaviour pattern, rites and rituals, occult appearances bordering on magic, any suppressed longing, any psychiatric manifestation or psychologic aberration in a human being, even inherited family traits, peculiarities, complexes or sub-normal or abnormal conditions are likely to be dubbed as mystic experiences, i.e. attempts of the limited human mind to come into contact with the unchartered principles of life in a unitive process and comprehend their nature, import, and reality. A postulation of a God or their Messiahs or angels or devils is a natural corollary.

The book has been offered at the altar of the Lord Eternal, who, according to us, is both Time and Timelessness, who always was and who always will be—the Being and the Becoming in the cauldron of Time, Space, and Continuum. The Christian tradition has humanized it in the form of a Saviour who can intercede with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, though this Trinitarian approach has been attacked by the Unitarians. The book is dedicated to Carl

Gustav Jung, the world renowned psychologist, whose student at Vienna the author was for a number of years. The story is of an ordinary Yorkshire wool merchant developing into what must be called a super-sensitive personality who could respond to the voice of the Infinite all round and pick up the messages in the proper mental wave-lengths. There is, of course, a risk, if not a danger in trying to lay bare secrets of one's soul and particularly in their evaluation.

To us Indians, it is interesting to notice that he unconsciously imbibed our Indian concepts and traditions which he subconsciously developed against the background of his Christian inheritance and faith and thus realized a superconscious ideal that all paths lead to the same goal and that religion was an experience, a truth which he learnt from Vivekananda and was not mere an intellectual dissertation at a seminar or a symposium or a code of philosophy. It is doubly gratifying that it was Vivekananda's stray words which he had picked up at a book shop at the age of seven that formed the bed-rock of a spiritual rejuvenescence which the author later felt. He was a lover of theatres and produced plays also. Shakespeare, Bernard Shaw, Priestely, John Masefield, and others had drawn him as magnets. Apart from his participation in *Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, or Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* one of his first parts was that of an insane man in an one-act Grand Guignol play called *Nutcraker Suite* and his next part was the juvenile lead in a Hungarian play called *Under Europe's Heaven*. When he was given the role of the villain in Eugene O'Neill's *Day without End*, he found himself confronted with this dark being which began to manifest itself in him much more

clearly, and which seemed to become integrated into a whole line of sinister parts. This is what Jung calls 'the Shadow side of Man' in the anatomy of the Soul. Creative activity such as writing poetry, painting, or acting endows one with experience of living in the inner being. We must not however forget that the chronic difficulty of a modern man is that he cannot relax. We should not overlook that there is an important psycho-physiological relation between tension and the activity of thinking. This establishes the fact that here was a responsive artistic soul and like Shakespeare (Polonius to Laertes) he could say—

This above all; to thine own self be true  
And it must follow, as the night the day  
Thou can'st be false to any man.

Of course, it is difficult to bridge the gulf between precept and action and find what is one's own *svadharma* or nature. I quote author's own words, 'In the Western world where an extroverted attitude to reality is normal, the problem of the mystic who wants to convey his experience is made all the more difficult since the thread of his conscious awareness is derived from the subtler world which only introversion can pierce. Hence the nature of the continual battle which seems to have existed in all religious traditions, between the ritual and the letter of the sacred scriptures, as opposed to the essence of religion which is experienced in the depths of the human soul. On the other hand, the attitude to reality in the East is more often introverted. Neither is sufficient in itself, since one supplements the other, which is why our Lord taught us to pray. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Such an approach is immediately understood by the Vedāntin as the fulfilment of the Eternal *Dharma* of the individual soul in the sphere of ordinary life.'

The story of the evolution of the author's mental and spiritual life once again proves the old adage that a seed once shown may ripen into a fruit if the conditions are propitious. Nothing is lost in the scheme of the Universe. Nothing ends, all but began. Otherwise, how, when in 1934 he heard a lecture on Rāja-yoga in a class in a Unitarian Chapel at Stratford-on-Avon, he could at once recognize that here was the author of the volume which had made such a deep impression on him as a boy and he wrote at once to Swami Vivekananda care of his publisher in New York to ask for 'guidance' (p. 56) without knowing that he was dead and gone for the last thirty-two years (1902). The publisher wrote back saying that Miss Josephine McLeod, one of the first ladies who had been drawn to Vivekananda, was then actually at Stratford-on-Avon and he could refer to her. This was almost a miraculous coincidence and he lost no time in contacting her (Tantine as she was called) and learnt how the old Vedic saying—Truth is one; the sages call it by various names—has a meaning. It was she who recommended to him that since each human being has to have his or her natural approach to life, Karma-yoga was best for a man of action, Bhakti-yoga for one who is of a devotional type, while Jñāna-yoga was for the intellectual and the philosophical man; finally, Rāja-yoga was concerned with the psychological aspect of man and the various techniques of meditation and contemplation but its practice was dangerous without the guidance of competent teachers. She then recommended that he should read Romain Rolland's books as well as Radhakrishnan's. He had already studied Coomaraswamy and others about the Gospel of Buddhism. He admits that it was through Vivekananda that he found a satisfying account of the creation which was not a mere matter of faith but

accorded with one's reason (p. 58). His later acquaintance with Jung was another step in his mental growth and he found, according to him, an answer to Swami Vivekananda's query to the questioning of the western world, 'why don't these people live their own myths?'. One of Jung's most important tasks was to make his pupils and patients conscious of the reality of their own myths so that they could fulfil their own destinies in accordance with these inner realities.

Part two of the book is the practical catechism of the various meditation techniques which the author practised and also refers to his dreams and symbols referred to by Jung in his collected works, Vol. V, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1935, pp. 7-33. He also found great solace in the assurance which Sri Ramakrishna had given to his devotees. It was in essence Śrī Kṛṣṇa's assurance in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*—

Whatever wish men bring to me in  
worship

That wish I grant them.

Whatever path men travel

Is my path.

No matter where they walk

It leads to me.

and he refers also to the Upaniṣadic prayer of Vivekananda—

From the unreal lead me to the real

From darkness lead me to light

From death lead me to Immortality.

And how to do this was his business and he read a fragment of the Gnostic Gospels quoted in New Sayings of Jesus—Jesus says, 'when you strip yourselves without being ashamed, when you take off your clothes and lay them at your feet like little children and trample on them! then you shall become Children of Him who is loving, and you will have no fear'. This reminds us at once of our Mahāvīra Digamvara, the Jaina Tīrthaṅkara. While

his association with Jung facilitated his understanding the psycho-neurotic impulses and archetypal images, his association with Vivekananda, Ramakrishna, and early Christian mysticism brought him the spiritual solace for which the inner soul was hankering. It has to be remembered in this connexion that self-enquiry as envisaged by Indian saints and seers such as Ramana Maharshi differs fundamentally from psycho-analysis or any other kind of psychiatric treatment. One's aim is to be out of bounds of the ordinary normal human state, and in Arthur Osborne's book we find the query put between the Disciple and the Master.

Disciple—How can you know whether a particular person is competent to be a *Guru*?

Bhagavān—By the peace of mind you feel in his presence.

We need not discuss or dissect the images he used to see in his meditations, but to one I would make a passing reference. When he came to India and was the guest at the various Ramakrishna Mission centres and establishments, including the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture at Calcutta, he had a dream that the child Ramakrishna appeared at the door of his room and as he gazed upon the beauty of his countenance, 'he became transformed into the figure of our Lord'. There may be many explanations of this psychological transference, but the truth is that whether we are extroverts or introverts, whether we belong to a prophetic type or religion with one supreme transcendent personal God or whether we believe in one Eternal Being immanent in nature, which can be known or experienced by man, the twain shall meet. Truth is one.

That is the very great lesson which the author wants us to realize and the book is worth reading for that alone, if not for the story of the quest of an aspiring soul,

in search of Holy Grail, which is always a captivating one.

I cannot do better than conclude in Sri Aurobindo's words (*Yoga and Its Objects*):

'Purified from all that is *asubha* (evil) transfigured in soul by his touch, we have to act in the world as dynamos of that divine electricity and send it thrilling and radiating through mankind. ... Churches, orders, theologies, philosophies have failed to save mankind because they have busied themselves with intellectual creeds, dogmas, rites and institutions ... and have neglected the one thing needful, the power and purification of the Soul. We must go back to the one thing needful, take up again Christ's gospel of purity and perfection of

mankind, Mohammed's gospel of perfect submission and servitude to God, Caitanya's gospel of the perfect love and joy of God in man, Ramakrishna's gospel of the unity of all religions and the divinity of God in man .... So that there may be a resurrection of the soul in mankind.'

And in the words of Rabindranath :

'Where can I meet thee unless in this home made thine? Where can I join thee unless in this my work transformed into thy work ... for thou dwellest in me and I in thee.'

Yet he is the poet to say 'I am able to love my God because he gives me freedom to deny him'.

SUDHANSU MOHAN BANERJEE

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### DECLARATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

GIVEN below is the Declaration of the principles of international cultural co-operation, unanimously adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its fourteenth session, on 4 November 1966, the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Organization:

#### INTRODUCTION

The Declaration of the principles of international cultural co-operation was unanimously adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its fourteenth session, on 4 November 1966, the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Organization. The Declaration was proclaimed 'to the end that governments, authorities, organizations, associations and institutions responsible for cultural activities may constantly be guided by these principles'. Its purpose is to advance 'through the educational, scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of peace and welfare that are defined in the Charter of the United Nations'.

The full text of the Declaration is given in the following pages.

At the same session the General Conference adopted a resolution that 'recommends this Declaration to the attention of Member States and Associate Members and invite them to publish the text of it in their respective languages and to ensure that it is distributed, displayed, read and commented on'. The resolution also 'requests Member States to use their best efforts to implement the provisions of this Declaration, so that

it may serve the cause of peace and the well-being of mankind'.

#### DECLARATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

##### The General Conference

of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, met in Paris for its fourteenth session, this fourth day of November 1966, being the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Organization,

##### Recalling

that the Constitution of the Organization declares that 'since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed' and that the peace must be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind,

##### Recalling

that the Constitution also states that the wide diffusion of culture and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern,

##### Considering

that the Organization's Member States, believing in the pursuit of truth and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, have agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples,

##### Considering

that, despite the technical advances which

facilitate the development and dissemination of knowledge and ideas, ignorance of the way of life and customs of peoples still presents an obstacle to friendship among the nations, to peaceful co-operation and to the progress of mankind,

### **Taking account**

of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, and the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty, proclaimed successively by the General Assembly of the United Nations,

### **Convinced**

by the experience of the Organization's first twenty years that, if international cultural co-operation is to be strengthened, its principles require to be affirmed,

### **Proclaims**

this Declaration of the principles of international cultural co-operation, to the end that governments, authorities, organizations, associations and institutions responsible for cultural activities may constantly be guided by these principles; and for the purpose, as set out in the Constitution of the Organization, of advancing, through the educational, scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of peace and welfare that are defined in the Charter of the United Nations:

### **ARTICLE I**

1. Each culture has a dignity and value

which must be respected and preserved.

2. Every people has the right and the duty to develop its culture.
3. In their rich variety and diversity, and in the reciprocal influences they exert on one another, all cultures form part of the common heritage belonging to all mankind.

### **ARTICLE II**

Nations shall endeavour to develop the various branches of culture side by side and, as far as possible, simultaneously, so as to establish a harmonious balance between technical progress and the intellectual and moral advancement of mankind.

### **ARTICLE III**

International cultural co-operation shall cover all aspects of intellectual and creative activities relating to education, science and culture.

### **ARTICLE IV**

The aims of international cultural co-operation in its various forms, bilateral or multilateral, regional or universal, shall be:

1. To spread knowledge, to stimulate talent and to enrich cultures ;
2. To develop peaceful relations and friendship among the peoples and bring about a better understanding of each other's way of life ;
3. To contribute to the application of the principles set out in the United Nations Declarations that are recalled in the Preamble to this Declaration ;
4. To enable everyone to have access to knowledge, to enjoy the arts and literature of all peoples, to share in advances made in science in all parts of the world and in the resulting benefits, and to contribute to the enrichment of cultural life ;
5. To raise the level of the spiritual and

material life of man in all parts of the world.

#### ARTICLE V

Cultural co-operation is a right and a duty for all peoples and all nations, which should share with one another their knowledge and skills.

#### ARTICLE VI

International co-operation, while promoting the enrichment of all cultures through its beneficent action, shall respect the distinctive character of each.

#### ARTICLE VII

1. Broad dissemination of ideas and knowledge, based on the freest exchange and discussion, is essential to creative activity, the pursuit of truth and the development of the personality.
2. In cultural co-operation, stress shall be laid on ideas and values conducive to the creation of a climate of friendship and peace. Any mark of hostility in attitudes and in expression of opinion shall be avoided. Every effort shall be made, in presenting and disseminating information, to ensure its authenticity.

#### ARTICLE VIII

Cultural co-operation shall be carried on for the mutual benefit of all the nations

practising it. Exchanges to which it gives rise shall be arranged in a spirit of broad reciprocity.

#### ARTICLE IX

Cultural co-operation shall contribute to the establishment of stable, long-term relations between peoples, which should be subjected as little as possible to the strains which may arise in international life.

#### ARTICLE X

Cultural co-operation shall be specially concerned with the moral and intellectual education of young people in a spirit of friendship, international understanding and peace and shall foster awareness among States of the need to stimulate talent and promote the training of the rising generations in the most varied sectors.

#### ARTICLE XI

1. In their cultural relations, States shall bear in mind the principles of the United Nations. In seeking to achieve international co-operation, they shall respect the sovereign equality of States and shall refrain from intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State.
2. The principles of this Declaration shall be applied with due regard for human rights and fundamental freedoms.



INSTITUTE NEWS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

MANAGING COMMITTEE: APRIL 1968—MARCH 1969

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## JUNE CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*  
*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

### SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*  
*6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th June*

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govindagopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*  
*7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th June*

THE UPANISADS:

Swami Bhuteshananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*  
*1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th June*

### CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

### FILM SHOWS

*Tuesday, 4 June 1968, at 6 p.m.*

*Tuesday, 18 June 1968, at 6 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00 for each day

### CHILDREN'S BALLET

Hira-Manik-Sona

By

Chhaya-Hindol

*Tuesday, 11 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

### MUSICAL SOIREE

*Tuesday, 25 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR JUNE 1968

*Nazrul Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 1 June, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 29 June, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

*Programme:*

Songs, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Show

## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

June 5

**Anthroponymy: A Linguistic Phenomenon***Speaker:* M. K. Sen, M.A., D.Phil.*President:* Sisir Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D.

June 12

**Myths and Symbols: A Glimpse of India's Spiritual Life***Speaker:* H. K. De Chaudhuri, M.A., Dr. Phil.*President:* J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

June 26

**The Poetic Soul of Nivedita***Speaker:* Uma Ray, M.A., D.Phil.*President:* Hiranmay Banerjee*Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University*

## KALIDASA JAYANTI

*Programme:*

Recitation from

Meghadutam

By

Pandit Anath Saran Kavyatirtha

Talk on:

Kalidasa: The Immortal Poet

By

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

Giti Alekhya

Barsa-Abahan

(Based on Tagore's songs)

By

Rabi-Chakra

*Wednesday, 19 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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## THE CONCEPT OF FREEDOM

SWAMI ANANYANANDA

*Swami Ananyananda, one of the former Joint Editors of the Prabuddha Bharata, was Assistant Secretary of this Institute for sometime. He was also one of the Editors of the Vedanta for East and West, the journal published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London. At present, Swami Ananyananda is associated with the task of bringing out a new edition of The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. The following is the text of a discourse the Swami gave at the Institute on 4 May 1968.*

THE concept or notion of freedom immediately raises in our mind the question, *freedom* from what? The answer to this question, in one word, is from *bondage*. Every concept of freedom, therefore, implies a corresponding concept of bondage. It is from bondage that one wants to get freedom. No one is happy in bondage, whatever that may imply or offer. Bondage does not seem to be the nature of man. He struggles to get out of it. He wants to be free. Freedom seems to be beckoning him all the time. The call of freedom is heard by one and all, at some time or other, sooner or later. Blessed is

the man who hears it sooner than later. Once the call of freedom is heard, no sacrifice is considered too great to attain it—the most pleasurable things of the world are sacrificed at the altar of freedom. The most dear and near ones are disowned or abandoned for the sake of freedom. Until the voice of freedom comes, every one has to struggle in and through bondage.

### FREEDOM: WHAT IT IS

Freedom is the birthright of every being, every human being. Anything that stifles it, man tries to revolt against. No man likes his freedom to be curbed, curtailed, or sup-

pressed. Human life, as a matter of fact, all life, is an expression of this revolt against bondage. Man feels he is bound as he is. He wants to transcend the limitations that have been imposed upon him by several circumstances—circumstances of birth, of social status, of economic condition, physical health, intellectual powers, and so on. All human activity, in a sense, is an expression of this struggle to attain freedom. The ignorant man and the sage both are working to attain freedom, each in his own way, and each feeling the pinch of bondage in his particular field in his own way, though the ends achieved by them are poles apart. The urge to freedom is common to both, though the concept of freedom in the one is diametrically opposed to that of the other. One is seeking freedom *in* the pleasures of the senses, while the other is struggling just to get away from them, to attain freedom *from* the pleasures of the senses.

The ignorant man is satisfied if he can get freedom within a certain limit—if he can get rid of the bondage of hunger and thirst and other bodily needs. But the sage is not happy or satisfied with these things. He feels that there is a stronger bondage which has to be thrown off, the bondage of matter, the bondage of all kinds of limitation, of all sense of finitude and smallness that relates to his body, mind, and the senses. He seeks to go beyond nature and its laws, and struggles to attain a state which is beyond all laws.

We speak of several kinds of freedom—political freedom, social freedom, economic freedom, religious freedom, and so on. All these imply that a particular situation—political, social, economic, or religious—is not to the liking of the people under its sway, and they want to get out of that situation and improve matters. They work towards that end, facing all kinds of trials and tribulations that come in their way and making great sacrifices, and eventually

attain the type of freedom that they struggle for. The entire history of man's evolution, from his primitive level up to the present-day civilization, is nothing but an expression of his struggle to be free. Man has fought against natural calamities; he has fought against social tyranny by one group over another; he has fought against economic conditions and uncertainties; and he has fought against political subjection of one nation by another. In short, he has fought against every kind of power that sought to keep him in bondage, making him feel small, limited, and bound. The struggle has not ended, and goes on even today; and it will continue as long as man feels the grip of bondage in one form or another. The urge to freedom in the human heart will not die, until man attains the highest of all freedom—the freedom of the spirit.

#### THE FREEDOM OF THE SPIRIT

This freedom of the spirit is spoken of differently by different religions and philosophies. Although every religious school and every philosophical system accepts that man's ultimate goal is spiritual freedom, the concept of that freedom varies from religion to religion, or from philosophy to philosophy, even to the point of one school or system repudiating the position of another. For instance, we have in India the two positions held by the Advaitins and the Dvaitins, which seem to disagree on several fundamental philosophical points. It should, however, be added that all the philosophical systems in India maintain that every one is marching towards spiritual freedom, whatever may be the concept and the content of that freedom.

Spiritual freedom has been described variously—as liberation, emancipation, salvation, *nirvāṇa*, *mukti*, *kaivalya*, *mokṣa*, Self-knowledge, and so on and so forth. One thing that strikes as common to all these

concepts is this : man was originally perfect; due to some reasons, he is in a state of imperfection now; and he will have to get back to his original pure and perfect state. Every religion accepts this position and says that the attainment of that pure and perfect state is the goal. This life here, this imperfect state, which is a degeneration, constitutes what is known as bondage—*bandhana*. To get out of this bondage is freedom—*mukti*. The various terms used, such as liberation, emancipation, salvation, etc., indicate what really constitutes freedom—to go beyond this present state of bondage and imperfection. Religions only point out the way to those who seek that perfection, that freedom.

All religions have this one goal to be attained—to transcend the limitations imposed by nature, in other words, the limitations of this life in the world. All religions—from the most crude to the most developed, whether expressed through mythology or symbology, or through stories of gods and angels, of saints and seers, or through abstract philosophy—all religions have one object in view, namely, to go beyond the limitations imposed by our present mundane existence. Every religion conceives of a state of existence where none of these limitations, to which man is subjected, exist. Man's conception of gods, goddesses, and other divine beings springs from his innate and inherent urge to freedom. He conceives of them as free beings who are no longer bound by the limitations of nature, to which he himself is subject. Consequently, he looks up to them and seeks their help in getting out of this bondage. Gods are looked upon as the masters of the laws of nature, and hence their help is sought by man to go beyond nature.

#### LIFE ON EARTH IS A DEGRADATION

Every religion considers this life on

earth a degradation, an imperfect state of existence. The word used in Hinduism to designate this mundane existence is *samsāra*, which means recurrent round of birth and death. *Samsāra* is a degradation of the soul; it is not its natural state. It is a fall from its primitive pure state of perfection and freedom. Living through *samsāra*, gaining experiences both sweet and bitter, and getting knocks from the world in the course of daily life which open its eyes to the truth of its essential being, the soul of man ultimately regains and reasserts its freedom. Man's original state of being was pure; the present state is a degradation; and he must regain or discover his true state of perfection—this is, more or less, the teaching of every religion.

In the Bible, for instance, we get the idea that Adam was pure. He lost that purity later because of his evil deeds. This allegorical statement suggests that the nature of the primitive man was perfect, and that the impurities and weaknesses that we feel are but superimpositions on that nature. The history of Christian religion and the lives of Christian saints and mystics show that they all believed in the certainty of regaining that old state of purity and perfection.

#### THE BUDDHISTIC AND JAINA VIEWS

The Buddhists believe in the state of *nirvāṇa*, a state which is beyond this relative, empirical world. It is very much similar to the concept of Brahman in Vedānta; only it is negatively expressed, that is all. The entire system of the Buddhists is founded upon the idea of regaining that lost state of *nirvāṇa*. It is a wrong reading of Buddha's teachings to say that he denied the self or identified it with the body and the mind. The self, according to Buddha, is not man as he is, for that would be a degeneration of his true nature. Buddha had the concept of

an ideal self, to realize which there is an innate urge in man. The practical discipline to realize this self is the 'waning out' of the lower nature—of lust, anger, greed, etc.—in him. The result of this purging of man's lower nature is *nirvāṇa*, which is not annihilation of the self, but only assertion of the ideal self in its true nature.

Jainism believes that knowledge, of the nature of omniscience, is the essence of the soul. Life on earth is a limitation put on its essential nature. The eye, for example, is not looked upon as an aid to seeing, but as a limitation put on the absolute sight of the soul. The ultimate aim of life is conceived of as transcending all the limitations imposed by the senses, when the soul may regain its natural state of omniscience. In that state, the soul directly intuits all things, and has full and complete knowledge, which is known as *kevala-jñāna*. So, life on earth, this mundane existence, is a limitation imposed on the nature of the soul. When this limitation is cast off, the soul regains its original state of omniscience. This is freedom, according to Jainism.

It has already been stated that the concept of freedom differs from philosophy to philosophy. We may now review, in brief, the positions of the well-known systems of Indian philosophy, before we pass on to a more detailed discussion of Vedānta and its concept of freedom.

#### THE SĀṆKHYA-YOGA POSITION

The Sāṅkhya-Yoga position is very similar to that of Jainism, where *mukti* is not a becoming, but merely liberation from physical bonds. Spiritual freedom is attained by throwing off the limitations imposed on the Puruṣa by Prakṛti. The Puruṣa, which is pure spirit, gets into bondage when it is associated with Prakṛti and its evolutes. The Puruṣa by itself is of the nature of sentience, but inactive. Prakṛti is active,

while the Puruṣa is passive. Activity begins when the Puruṣa is in the proximity of, or comes to be associated with, Prakṛti. Nature evolves, as the Puruṣa gets associated with the various evolutes or *vīkṛtis* of Prakṛti—the twenty-four categories starting with the cosmic mind. Dissociation from Prakṛti, or aloofness, *kaivalya*, from Prakṛti as the Sāṅkhya calls it, constitutes the goal of life. By gradual stages, the Puruṣa gets free from the hold of matter or Prakṛti and returns to *kaivalya*, which is the Puruṣa's intrinsic character.

The philosophical positions of the Sāṅkhya and the Yoga are fundamentally the same. Hence they are clubbed and treated together. Whereas the Sāṅkhya elaborately discusses cosmology or the theory of creation in all its details, the Yoga is chiefly concerned with the practical discipline of attaining *kaivalya*, and gives its well-known method of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. The *yoga* discipline consists of the cultivation of detachment from the world of senses and the practice of concentration and meditation on the ultimate truth. The Puruṣa, which is free, gets into *saṃsāra* because of its association with Prakṛti and its transformations. Release or *mukti* is only a *viyoga* or separation of the Puruṣa from Prakṛti. When the Puruṣa is separated from Prakṛti, it gets back to its own nature, namely, *kaivalya*.

#### THE NYĀYA-VAIŚEŚIKA CONCEPT

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, generally treated together because of common philosophical theories, conceives freedom as a state beyond pain and pleasure. This conception fits in with the nature of the self as understood in these two systems, which is that the essence of the self is neither sorrow nor pleasure. This arises from their philosophical position that evil is as much a fact of life as good, and that a person cannot have the one without the other. Good and evil both operate together or cease together.

The self which is under the sway of good and evil is in *saṁsāra*—worldly existence. When it gets release, *apavarga* or escape as it is termed in these systems, the self goes beyond both pain and pleasure, which is the state of freedom according to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. When a person attains final release, his self is said to transcend not only pain and pleasure, but all its specific qualities with which it was associated during *saṁsāra*. As to the discipline advocated in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, it is in common with other systems, namely, a spirit of detachment, which helps the aspirant in overcoming selfish desires and impulses, and meditation on the ultimate truth regarding the self, which is beyond all sorrow or suffering and joy or pleasure. Though the spiritual discipline of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is the same as in other systems, the content of the state of liberation to be attained is different from others.

#### THE MIMAMSA VIEW

The Mīmāṃsā conception of *mokṣa* bears a striking resemblance to that of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. It holds *apavarga* or escape as the goal of life—to escape from all the ills of life. But there is one great difference. Some Mīmāṃsakas, however, hold that the state of freedom is not merely absence of all sorrow and suffering, which is rather negative in approach, but it is also one of positive bliss, something positive in content. In the earlier stages of its development, Mīmāṃsā appears to have had a different ideal as the ultimate goal of life, namely, attaining heaven or some such desirable end in a coming life. This was mainly because of its insistence on *dharma* and *karma*, which were performed for attaining something which was not possessed and enjoyed in this life.

In common with several theistic schools, Mīmāṃsā, too, conceived of heaven as the goal of life. But this, however, was gradually

superseded or replaced by the idea of *mokṣa*, which, to use the Mīmāṃsā language, is 'the restoration to the self of its intrinsic condition'. The discipline to achieve this end differs much from the common discipline of *jñāna* and *vairāgya* that is advocated in other systems. Here *karma* is emphasized, and the ideal of *sannyāsa* is rejected. The Mīmāṃsā insists on performing all obligatory deeds, giving up optional and prohibitory ones. This will, it is said, remove evil from the mind of man, thus cutting at the root of all future births. As a result of such a discipline, the self of man, at the end of this life, is 'restored to its intrinsic condition'. This is *mokṣa*, according to the Mīmāṃsā.

#### THE CONCEPTS OF THE THEISTIC VEDĀNTA SCHOOLS

Next, coming to Uttara Mīmāṃsā or Vedānta, the theistic schools of Vedānta conceive of *mokṣa* in different ways, depending upon the philosophical positions they uphold with regard to the *jīva* and the Paramātman and the relation between the two. In the state of release, the soul or *jīva* is not only freed from the cycle of births and deaths, this *saṁsāra*, but enjoys supreme bliss in the presence of God in a different sphere. There, again, the soul is said to attain different grades of existence. Some hold that the soul, in the state of *mokṣa*, attains the form of God, though it remains separate from Him and enjoys the bliss of His presence. This is known as *sārūpya*, attaining the same form. Others there are who hold that the soul gets only to the proximity of God, having been purged of all impurities and freed from the possibility of returning to this earth; and there it remains distinct from God, enjoying the bliss and grace of His presence. This is called *sāmīpya*—coming close to God. There are yet others who hold that the soul attains what is called *sālokyā*, going to



the same *loka* or world as that of God. Attaining that world in which God is, the soul remains there ever after, and will not be subject to births and deaths any more.

In all these conceptions, one feature is common. The soul, after its release, goes to God and remains distinct from Him, whether it attains proximity, the same *loka* or sphere, or even the same form as that of God. This, it should be noted, is fundamental to all the theistic schools of Vedānta. The *jīva* can never hope to become God and attain identity with Him. Either it remains totally distinct from Him, or, at the most, it is granted the position of being a part of the Paramātmān. Total identity of the *jīva* and the Paramātmān or Brahman, complete in every sense of the term, is accepted only in Advaita Vedānta.

#### MOKṢA ACCORDING TO VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA

Taking Viśiṣṭādvaita as the best representative of the theistic schools, we shall state, in brief, its position regarding *mokṣa*. Common with the rest of the Indian philosophical systems, Viśiṣṭādvaita conceives of *mokṣa* as freedom from mundane existence or *saṁsāra*. In addition to this, it also holds that the soul, after release, attains to a supra-mundane sphere, where it enjoys the highest bliss in the presence of God. There the soul assumes a *śuddha-sattva* body, pure and perfect, and remains enjoying divine bliss and being guided by the will of God. We get picturesque descriptions of that region in the books that deal with this subject. Śrīman Nārāyaṇa, the supreme God, is seated there on His white throne. He is served by His consort, Lakṣmī, who, it is said, intercedes on behalf of the devotee of the Lord. Without obtaining the grace of Lakṣmī first, no further progress is possible. She must be pleased with the *jīva* first, and then she intercedes on its behalf and pleads for the grace of God. When the soul is finally released, it is

welcomed to God's presence, and is accepted by God as His very own.

The means to release or *mokṣa*, according to Viśiṣṭādvaita, is through devotion and self-surrender. Though it upholds the performance of the Vedic rituals and duties as a means to *mokṣa*, its emphasis is more on devotion and self-surrender, as this latter course throws open the portals of spiritual life for one and all, irrespective of caste, community, rank, or sex. The notion of *prapatti*, self-surrender, or taking refuge in the Lord, takes the most important place in the spiritual philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita. The best course for the *jīva*, which is finite, limited, and burdened with affliction, is *śaraṇāgati*, complete self-surrender at the feet of God and seeking His grace and compassion. *Prapatti* is absolute self-surrender. It therefore indicates complete self-effacement and firm determination to follow the will of God. This is engendered by the belief that God, in His infinite compassion to the soul, will come to the rescue of the *jīva* and save it from *saṁsāra*. When the grace of God descends on the *jīva*, there is an end to all misery and affliction that are concomitant with its earthly existence. The *jīva* is then transported to the supra-mundane region of God Himself, where it remains permanently in the presence of God, in the company of other similarly released souls, and enjoys ineffable and unbroken bliss that issues forth from God. The ideal of *mokṣa*, according to Viśiṣṭādvaita, is the attainment of the world of Nārāyaṇa, and the means to it is through *bhakti* or devotion and *prapatti* or self-surrender, both arising from a trust in the mercy of God and His saving power.

#### THE ADVAITA STANDPOINT

It is in Advaita Vedānta, Vedānta *par excellence*, that we get the bolder affirmations regarding the divinity of man and his

innate purity, perfection, and freedom. Advaita holds before man the highest ideal that is ever presented before him. It says that man not only can become God; he is God even now. The self of man is ever pure and perfect, eternally free. Only he has forgotten it for the time being. A veil of ignorance has covered the truth, as it were, from his vision. The removal or the lifting of this veil of ignorance reveals to him what he essentially is—that he is already and eternally free. So, it is said in one of the Advaita treatises that ‘the removal of ignorance is verily *mokṣa* or freedom’—*avidyā nirvṛtīreva mokṣaḥ*.

*Mokṣa* or freedom is not a state to be newly attained. It is the very nature of the self. To become aware of this intrinsic nature of the self is *mokṣa*. That is the reason why *mokṣa*, in Advaita Vedānta, is termed self-realization or self-knowledge, *ātmajñāna*. A very common illustration given to bring out this point is that of ‘a prince brought up as a hunter from infancy’. When he grows up and comes to know that he is of royal blood, nothing new happens to him. He only discovers the truth about himself. He did not attain anything new. It was simply a question of self-discovery or self-knowledge. It was ignorance about the true state of things that made him feel that he was a hunter-boy. But the real knowledge regarding himself did not add anything new to him. He remained the same person, but his understanding about himself underwent a great change. The ignorance about his being really a prince vanished together with the wrong notion that he was a hunter-boy, which had been created by that ignorance.

We have also the very familiar example of the lion-cub growing amidst a flock of sheep, which Sri Ramakrishna was very fond of narrating in this connexion. As the cub grew along with the sheep, it also started eating grass and bleating like sheep.

Only when another lion caught hold of it and took it to a pond to show its reflection in the water, telling that it was not a lamb, but a lion like itself, was it convinced that it, too, was a lion! The lamb did not become the lion. The lion was a lion all through. Only a set of circumstances had given it the notion that it was a lamb. When the real knowledge came, the ignorance that was responsible to hide its real nature from it vanished. That is exactly what happens when the *jīva* attains *mukti*.

#### SANKARA'S VIEW OF MOKṢA

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya describes *mokṣa* negatively in the following manner. It is not something to be attained, nor to be created anew, nor to be purified, nor to be transformed. Describing the real nature of the self, Śrī Śaṅkara, in his introduction to the commentary on the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*, says: *Na hi evaṃ lakṣaṇam ātmanaḥ yāthātmyaṃ utpādyam vikāryam āpyam saṃskāryam vā*—‘the self in its real nature is not a thing to be created, transformed, achieved, or purified’. Let us explain these terms. In our daily life, when we wish to attain something which we do not possess, we try to find out ways and means of obtaining that and bend all our energies in that direction. As a result of this tremendous labour put forth from our side, we get what we work for. *Mukti* is not attained as a result of any work done by us. It is not offered to us as the fruit of our labour. No amount of work can bring us *mukti*—work of any kind, whether it is sacrificial, religious, or social. Works of this type may lead us to some other goal, like heaven etc. But *mukti* cannot be attained that way; it is innate to the soul; it is inherent in it.

*Mukti* is not created anew. You sow a seed, and it will sprout in time and gradually grow into a huge tree. Or, you take a lump of clay and shape it in the

form of a pot. You have a new pot. That means that the pot was created from the clay. What is present in the effect was not present in the cause—this is a position not acceptable to Advaita Vedānta. *Mukti* is not at all like that—that it is absent at a particular stage and becomes manifest at a later stage. *Mukti* cannot be made to manifest anew like that. *Mukti* or freedom is the essential nature of the soul—it is *nityamukta*, eternally free, and was never bound. This essential nature of the soul was never absent at any time, nor does it come and go at intervals.

Neither is *mukti* the result of *vikārya* or transformation, that is, something that can be transformed and obtained with the help of some other agent. Acid or some citrus or even a little curd is necessary to transform milk and obtain curds. Thus milk undergoes transformation with the addition of this curdling agent and becomes curds. Is *mukti* something like this which can be had by bringing about a transformation with the help of an agent? No, says Advaita. For transformation from one condition to another is possible only when what is sought to be achieved is not present in the previous state or condition. *Mukti* or freedom is already present in the soul. So, there can be no question of obtaining it by any external means or by means of transformation.

Finally, *mukti* is not the result of purification either. Purification implies a state of impurity from which a thing is purified—*saṁskārya*, as Śaṅkara has called it. The soul is pure and perfect by nature; it is *śuddha* and *apāpaviddha*, pure and unsmitten by sin, to use Śaṅkara's words again. Religious observances and performance of sacrifices etc. are meant to clear the way for the manifestation of the purity that is already in the soul. The soul cannot be purified by these ceremonies and sacrifices

or by ritualistic worship etc. Very often, they have a different goal to be attained, like heaven etc., as they are all *sakāma*, performed with definite objects in view. *Mukti* is not attainment of heaven. It is the unfoldment of its own innate and intrinsic purity and perfection. So, the idea that the soul in bondage is impure, and attains purity in *mukti*, is also denied.

Śaṅkarācārya is emphatic in asserting that the freedom of the soul is not the result of any of these changes or activities, which means that *mukti* involves no becoming. It is regaining something that had been lost; or, better, reasserting something that had been forgotten.

#### BONDAGE AND FREEDOM ARE BOTH IN THE MIND

There is a very significant Advaitic statement which proclaims that it is our mind alone that is the cause of our bondage as well as of freedom. In one of the minor Upaniṣads, known as the *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad* (2), occurs a *śloka* which says: *Mana eva manuṣyāṇāṁ kāraṇaṁ bandhamokṣayoḥ*—‘It is indeed the mind that is the cause of men's bondage and liberation’. This *śloka* adds further: *Bandhāya viṣyāsaktaṁ muktam nirviṣyaṁ smṛtam*—‘The mind that is attached to sense-objects leads to bondage, while dissociated from sense-objects, it tends to lead to liberation. So the wise think’.

This *śloka* is very significant in the present context—the concept of freedom. The purport of the *śloka* is that in our mind alone is the notion of bondage as well as of freedom. Reiterating the purport of this *śloka*, as it were, Swami Vivekananda says in his forceful words: ‘Why should you go to seek for what you never lost? You are pure already; you are free already. If you think you are free, free you are this moment; and if you think you are bound,

bound you will be. This is a very bold statement, ... but when you think over it and realize it in your life, then you will come to know that what I say is true.'

The notion of bondage is heavily weighing us down, obscuring our real nature, which is freedom. What is needed on our part is a reassertion of that freedom without any compromise, and its realization in our innermost depths. This realization is true knowledge, *vidyā*, which makes the soul aware of itself, its essential blissful nature, and its unfettered and perfect freedom.

#### AVIDYĀ, VIDYĀ, AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

*Avidyā*, ignorance that veils the real nature of the self, and makes it attached to the things of the world, is bondage, according to Advaita Vedānta. The way *avidyā* works is inscrutable. *Avidyā* not only covers truth from our vision, but also projects something else in its place—these two powers of *avidyā* are known as *āvaraṇa-śakti* and *vikṣepa-śakti*. The result of this twofold action of *avidyā* is that we not only forget our essential divine nature, but run after the ever-fleeting and apparent things of the world. We are detached, as it were, from God, and attached to the world. This is bondage. Freedom consists in reversing the process—to get detached from the world and get attached to God, which we are in truth. *Avidyā* or *māyā*, as is well known in Vedānta, is inexplicable. It is indescribable—*anīrvacanīya*. Its nature is enigmatically described as that which is different from being, *sat*, and non-being, *asat*. *Māyā* is and is not. One cannot refute its existence, for one can feel its presence and impact. However, when one wishes to prove the existence of *māyā*, or analyse it to know what it is, it is no longer there. *Avidyā* ceases to be when *vidyā* rises. Darkness can no longer remain once the light is lit. When knowledge dawns in the human heart, *māyā* ceases to be; and with

it ceases all bondage. The world stands transformed. The soul which was labouring under the shackles of matter gets liberated. The servant of *māyā*, *māyādhīna*, becomes its master and lord, *māyādhīśa*. That is freedom, knowledge, *vidyā*, according to Advaita Vedānta.

It is *avidyā*, absence of right knowledge, that keeps our worldly life going; in other words, *avidyā* causes bondage. The notion of 'me' and 'mine' is the product of *avidyā*, which conceals our true nature, and creates all sorts of identifications of the self with our body, mind, intellect, etc. The self, forgetting its innate purity, perfection, and freedom, gets identified with the body, the senses, the mind, and so on, and suffers or enjoys the miseries and joys of the world. The self, which is beyond any quality or description, beyond time or space, neither male nor female, begins to identify with the body and say: I am a man, I am a woman; I am young, I am old; I am fat, I am slim; I am strong, I am weak; I am fair, I am black; and so on and so forth. When the self gets identified with the senses and the mind, it says: I am bright, I am sharp, I am dull, I am blind, I am miserable, I am happy, and so on. All these, in fact, are the conditions of the body and mind, and they are superimposed—*adhyasta*—on the self. The result is that the self feels that it is passing through and experiencing all these conditions of the body and mind, whereas, in truth, the self remains untouched or unaffected by these conditions which are extraneous to the self. In Advaita Vedānta, this superimposition of the qualities and characteristics of the body, mind, intellect, etc. on the self is known as *adhyāsa*.

So long as *adhyāsa* lasts, the light of truth is hidden from the self. When the veil of *adhyāsa* is lifted, the spirit or the self shines in its own splendour, dispelling all false knowledge. This is freedom, *mukti*,

according to Advaita Vedānta. It is *avidyā* that causes *adhyāsa*, which, in turn, brings about mutual superimpositions of the self and the not-self. The Advaitic *mokṣa* consists in cutting at the root of *adhyāsa*, which clears away *avidyā* and reveals the truth of our being in all its glory. Empirical life is the consequence of *adhyāsa* which is created by *ajñāna* or *avidyā*. *Ajñāna* is, therefore, the obstacle that hides the truth from our vision, and this obstacle is cleared by *jñāna* or knowledge, *vidyā*. In Advaita Vedānta, all that is needed to attain *mokṣa* is the removal of this obstacle, this *avidyā*. Hence is the very well-known statement, *avidyā nivṛttireva mokṣaḥ*—‘the removal of ignorance is verily *mokṣa* or freedom’.

#### THE SCOPE OF SADHANA IN ADVAITA

The spiritual discipline that is prescribed in Advaita is solely to bring about this removal of ignorance. It is like a mirror that has been covered with dust for years. The capacity to reflect is innate to the mirror, but because of dust that has accumulated on it, it does not reflect. Once the dust is cleared, automatically the mirror begins to reflect. Nothing new was added to the mirror. All that was needed to make it manifest its innate character of reflecting was to remove the dust that had accumulated on its surface. Similarly, all the discipline that is enjoined in Advaita Vedānta is aimed at the removal of the layers of *avidyā* that have covered the truth from us. Once *avidyā* is destroyed, the self of man stands revealed in all its glory.

Another example given in the Advaitic texts is that fragrant substances, such as sandalwood, *agaru*, etc., which produce bad odour because of contact with water, and this bad odour covers up the essential fragrance of those substances, but on rubbing against stone the sandalwood etc. do regain their essential character, i.e. manifest their real essence, similarly the nature of the self,

coming in contact with the external world through the senses etc. appears to have been lost sight of. But on the dawn of right knowledge, *jñāna*, which is produced by spiritual practices, the self realizes or uncovers its own essential divine nature.

The Upaniṣads declare: *Tat tvam asi*—‘That thou art’; *Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi*—‘I am Brahman’. These are clear and unambiguous statements regarding the nature of the self or Ātman. *Ayam ātmā Brahma*—‘This Ātman is verily Brahman’. We are that Brahman always and for ever. But we forget our true nature by the intervention of *ajñāna* or *māyā*. By struggling against *māyā*, we have to know and realize the truth that we are Brahman. These great statements of the Upaniṣads—the *mahāvākyas*—point out one thing clearly, and that is that we are pure, perfect, and free even now. We are Brahman—‘That thou art’; they do not say, ‘that thou becomest’. *Mokṣa* is not a becoming in Advaita Vedānta. It is self-awareness—like the prince or the lion-cub in the story mentioned earlier. Nothing new is added; only the cloak of *avidyā*, which had given rise to a false superimposition, is discarded and destroyed. This destruction of *avidyā* constitutes the real *sādhana* in Advaita, and all discipline is directed towards this *avidyā nivṛtti*, removal of ignorance, which is *mokṣa*.

#### FREEDOM WHILE LIVING: JIVANMUKTI

*Mokṣa* is attained *here and now*, in this very life, while yet living in this body, which is known as *jivanmukti*. According to Advaita, *mukti* is not a *post-mortem* condition of excellence in which the self revels. Freedom is experienced in this very life. This conception of *mukti* is quite logical, because knowledge, *vidyā*, is the sole means of release from bondage; and once knowledge dawns, freedom should follow as a matter of course. This is the grand concep-

tion of *jīvanmukti*, free in this very body, according to Advaita Vedānta. Freedom is to be felt and enjoyed, if such expressions are permissible, *here* and *now*, in this very life—in this very world in which the pain of bondage was felt and suffered.

The world no longer deludes the *jīvanmukta*. He lives, moves, and has his being in God, in his own self. To all outward appearance, he moves, talks, behaves, and works like other ordinary persons. But his activity does not proceed from any selfish motive or impulse. Since there is no selfishness, no work can bind him down or taint him. He is a free soul, who works for the happiness of the many and for the welfare of the many—*bahujana sukhāya bahujana hitāya*. He works in the world like the spring season which adds colour and beauty to nature and brings fresh life to one and all—*vasantavat loka hitam carantaḥ*—itself seeking nothing in return. He is a blessing to humanity, and a pathfinder to other groping and struggling souls.

#### THE THREEFOLD DISCIPLINE OF ADVAITA

The Advaita Vedānta prescribes the path of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana* as the discipline that one has to undertake for the discovery of the self. Even before an aspirant is ready for *śravaṇa*, or hearing, he is expected to be fully endowed with all the indispensable ethical and moral qualities of body and mind that are included in what are known as *sādhana-catustaya* in Vedānta. These include qualities of discrimination, dispassion, self-control, self-withdrawal, faith, etc., all with the intense desire for *mokṣa* or spiritual freedom. When the aspirant is endowed and equipped with these qualities, he approaches a spiritual preceptor, who is himself a knower of Brahman, in an attitude of humility and service, and takes refuge at his feet to be taught the saving knowledge.

*Śravaṇa* is hearing or learning from the *guru* or the preceptor about the truth of the self, accompanied by study and discussion of the sacred Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads speak about the ultimate philosophic truth. In the words of Śaṅkara: *Sarvāsām upaniṣadām ātma yāthātmya-nirūpaṇenaiva upakṣayāt*—‘All the Upaniṣads exhaust themselves simply by determining the true nature of the self’. This he says in his introduction to the commentary on the *Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad*. Mere study of the Upaniṣads by itself is insufficient. That study becomes fruitful only when taught by a competent teacher, who has himself realized the truth. The truth has to be heard from the lips of a teacher or *guru*.

This is followed by *manana*, reflection. By repeatedly reflecting on the truth that has been heard on trust, the aspirant’s conviction deepens, and any lurking doubt that may be there in his mind vanishes altogether, gradually. *Manana* is chiefly aimed at intellectual conviction.

Then comes *nididhyāsana*, meditation. This is real contemplation or meditation upon the identity of the individual self and Brahman. Meditation must culminate in intuitive experience, immediate and direct, which is known as *aparokṣa-anubhūti*. When this realization takes place, one attains *jīvanmukti*. *Samsāra* ceases for that individual, and he is freed for ever.

Such a blessed soul attains sameness of vision, *samadarśitva*. He perceives divinity everywhere, having himself become divine in essence. Wherever his mind alights, there it gets absorbed in the highest experience. In the words of a small treatise on Advaita Vedānta, known as *Dṛg-dṛśya-viveka* (30): *Dehābhimāne galite vijñāte paramātmani, yatra yatra mano yāti tatra tatra samādhayaḥ*—‘With the disappearance of the attachment to the body, and with the realiza-

tion of the supreme Self, to whatever object the mind is directed, one experiences *samādhi*'.

From freedom, we have come; in freedom, we are living; and unto freedom, we shall return, say the scriptures. Freedom is our eternal home. There is our final rest. In between comes the play of *māyā*, which makes us forget our real nature, for the

time being. But the voice of freedom shall surely be heard, sooner or later, by everyone of us, for we are all rushing towards that one goal; whether we know it or not. To quote the words of Swami Vivekananda:

'Freedom is the one goal of nature, sentient or insentient; and consciously or unconsciously, everything is struggling towards that goal.'

The infinite human soul can never be satisfied but by the Infinite itself. ... Infinite desire can only be satisfied by infinite knowledge—nothing short of that. Worlds will come and go. What of that? The soul lives and forever expands. Worlds must come into the soul. Worlds must disappear in the soul like drops in the ocean. And this world to become the goal of the soul! If we have common sense, we cannot be satisfied, though this has been the theme of the poets in all the ages, always telling us to be satisfied. And nobody has been satisfied yet! Millions of prophets have told us, 'Be satisfied with your lot'; poets sing. We have told ourselves to be quiet and satisfied, yet we are not. It is the design of the Eternal that there is nothing in this world to satisfy my soul, nothing in the heavens above, and nothing beneath. Before the desire of my soul, the stars and the worlds, upper and lower, the whole universe, is but a hateful disease, nothing but that. That is the meaning. Everything is an evil unless that is the meaning. Every desire is evil unless that is the meaning, unless you understand its true importance, its goal. All nature is crying through all the atoms for one thing: its perfect freedom.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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## TRENDS IN MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIETY

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THE topic is the burning question of the day. Before I start my discussion, I must apologize to those who might have considered technology as a cross to the civilization. I contradict. Yet, I do admit that recent advances in technology opened the throttled valve of man's hungry boiler; man faces a gloomy picture before him, a horrified darkness through which no silver lining can be viewed. Yes, this is fact. But is it not man's own uncontrollable greed that caused science and technology to be a terror to his fellowmates? It will be escapism if we ignore this primary fact.

### SCIENCE VERSUS ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Engineering, in its bigger sense, technology as it may be so defined, is the mother-liquor out of which science originated in its primordial stage. Technology is experimental or applied in nature, that man learnt in his cave-life without theories, without mathematics, simply by practice. It was then the 'must' for a man to survive. So technology was the first to come out of sheer necessities of life, then followed science which was the result of man's untiring restlessness for knowledge, for knowing the truth of life and nature. It is true, during

the centuries of the past, it was science that moved triumphantly with a compassionate look for technology without giving the least help to the engineers. Those days were crucial days for the engineers until Newcomen and Watt gave blood to the engineering. Feeble pulse of engineering grew stronger and from then it continued its march with steady steps. While it is at present so quick that we amazingly notice it in Supersonic planes, MIGs, Venus-4, Cosmos-186 and 188. Of course, one must admit that during the nineteenth and the part of this twentieth century, science gave her discoveries and inventions to the technologists, that helped its marathon race. Here I have used the word 'engineering' very often. But it is obvious, I do not intend to restrict myself to its narrow definition. It covers all technology. Now-a-days it will be quite fruitless and inappropriate to attempt to assess the relative value of the contributions to modern world prosperity and human progress of the scientist and the technologist. From the very dawn of history, the engineer has laid his fellows under a heavy debt for his many contributions. It will be quite stimulating if I start off by saying quite categorically that with-



out the work of the engineer or the technologist, the world would still be in the Dark Ages. Without engineering no civilization can exist.

#### PHASES OF TECHNOLOGICAL GROWTH

The whole process of technological growth can be classified into four phases: the eotechnic, paleotechnic, neotechnic, and biotechnic. The 'eotechnic' was based on wind, water, and wood; the 'paleotechnic' on coal and iron; the 'neotechnic' on electricity, steel, and light alloys, and the 'biotechnic' on the application of science to life processes (insecticides, disinfectants, weed killers, chemotherapeutics, fertilizers and contraceptives) to control man's own evolutionary processes. These periods may be considered as emergent or recessive in particular parts of the world.

With these four phases we should now add a fifth one, the 'Spatio-technic', the emergent phase of our time. Today we live in an age when Moscow is less than twelve hours' journey from New Delhi and the earth itself is circled by an increasing number of man-made satellites which are engaged to predict the weather, investigate our solar system, and still further shrink the whole world to the insignificant dimension of an early twentieth-century or a nineteenth-century nation.

#### POSITION OF THE ENGINEERS IN THE SOCIETY

In discussing the trends in technology, a question which will obviously crop up, what is the position accorded to the engineers in the society? When Law and the Church or Temple held high status in early days, the engineers were classed no better than a menial and even for centuries after medicine had achieved respect from the society, the engineers remained completely outside the professional classes. After the Industrial Revolution, the wheel turned and the engineers came to limelight and

thenceforth they were ranked in the first row. In our country, the rapid change in their position started mostly after independence.

Along with the position of the engineers, comes the story of technological development. This is not limited to any one country, rather it comes from all inhabited parts of the globe. Moreover, the centre of thought and action, the apparent nucleus of the ferment, changes over the years in turn, India, China, Arabia, Egypt, Greece, Japan, Spain, England, Russia, Germany together with the other countries of Western Europe and the United States. The story has been repeated time and again; the country at one period in the forefront falls out of the race, hands over the torch and in its due course sees a competitor enjoying the prosperity which goes to the pioneer.

#### ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIETY

One of my objectives is to show how human progress has resulted from the efforts of the technologist. I am afraid, I will meet a certain type of criticism here. Some must say that man cannot live by bread alone and hence engineering itself does not civilize the nation. There are so many instances of the outstanding contributions of the engineer to the amenities of life, for instance, a modern concert hall, beautiful building, perfect acoustics and healthy ventilating system, but, after all, and I admit this, it is through the wonderful strains of Allauddin Khan or Vilayet or Ravishankar music that the human spirit is lifted to great heights. Certainly there is more in life than technology but, at the same time, unhesitatingly I will say that without engineering there can be no civilization.

Every sensible man will surely admit the essential place of technology in the progress of modern world. It is now widely recog-

nized. In any country, when political changes are brought about, it is natural that this takes place sometimes painfully and by force; they very often crystallize into a more stable state, rather their stand lies on the firm rock of stability, through the encouragement of technological development. The politicians or statesmen depend more on the progress of technology to maintain the period of safety of the state. Not only that, but also for increasing the economy of the country, to provide the citizens with honest labour, technology is 'the necessity' of the persons who are at the steering wheel of the country. We have witnessed this in America, Russia, China, and in our country too.

A question may easily crop up in the inquisitive mind, how technology has contributed to the human progress? Broadly speaking, we can draw three distinct lines, i.e. in three different ways an engineer served the society. Firstly, he has provided public services like roads, bridges, canals, aqueducts, irrigation from early times and more recently telecommunication, power supply, and artificial satellites.

Secondly, the engineers invented tools like chisel in all its forms from the primitive flint axe to the modern lathe machine, milling machine, the plough with its family and so many up-to-date and useful agricultural implements, the pump in a thousand forms, the wind-mill and the coater-wheel, the steam-engine and the electric generator.

Thirdly, the well-recognized fields as metallurgy, textiles, pottery, paper-making, and chemistry with all their many subdivisions are some of the achievements of the engineers.

These are undoubtedly powerful claims for engineering and technology as a civilizing influence. It is, therefore, interesting to note that the earliest evidence of man's departure from beast in nature is to be found in the archaeological evidence of fire

and stone implements. We can easily differentiate man from the rest of the animal creation. One eighteenth-century French playwright composed a very good definition of man. According to him, 'man differs from the beasts only in drinking when he is not thirsty and in making love all the year round'. We can demand with confidence that the civil engineer's definition is a more powerful basis, it is man's prerogative, just to distinguish him from the beasts, to control the forces of nature for his own use. The beast lacks man's capacity for employing logical thought in the use of tools to achieve his ends.

Archaeological investigation will definitely lead us to the conclusion that the primitive movement in the 'tools' stream took place about 3000 B.C. Indian archaeologists demand that in India this thing started far before 3000 B.C. Flints were mounted on rib-bones to make weapons for hunting and sickles were made for cutting grass and cereals. Not only these things, but also a variety of stone axes and edges for constructional purposes were used. Our ancestors made digging sticks for cultivation of the ground, which consisted of pointed sticks with heavy perforated stone fixed near the point. Then gradually came pestle and mortar. The set was used for grinding grain.

Probably the first public service of the engineer was in the design and construction of earth works for defence against enemies and wild beasts. One must appreciate that even at an early date, these pre-historic civil engineers played an important role to save man from the immediate danger. They were also engaged in carrying out such works where a large manpower was utilized, thus creating a source to give bread to hundreds.

Along with this contribution to defence, the neolithic engineers by laying out irrigation schemes for agriculture, met the de-

mands of the growing tendency to form communities. In the great centres of civilization like Mohenjo-daro and Harappā, the Indus, the Nile and the Euphrates, the rivers had to be brought under control by the building of dikes and construction of canals. The improvement to crops due to the controlled and seasonal flooding helped for the stabilization of a community and hence the engineering work was almost necessary for the community. Due to varied activity of the engineers, specially the civil engineers, large volumes of soil were shifted and incidentally various geodetic problems involved gave a great impetus to the study of mathematics and astronomy. So the engineers passively helped the growth of scientific research. The significance of the movement is that the engineering works helped the formation of a class, rather we can say this caused the crystallization of individuals, as engineering works cannot be performed by individuals. Thus a co-operative system grew up. The application of the hydraulics through a large organized system, even in those days, were definitely something new, moreover the system when came into existence constituted a social discipline of controlled nature. An individual could not provide the whole service alone but once the system began to work he could not contract out. So individual freedom to roam and fend for oneself and one's family was replaced by an organized society based on engineering structure. Unless a man co-operated, there was no provision of water for him.

Excepting that technology is used for harmful purposes during warfare, most of its works have been of a beneficent nature. Its remarkable list of achievements in war constitutes a record of human pain and misery; still there is a point to be discussed whether the value arising out of subsequent application of war-time inventions may not atone to some extent. So we can find two

aspects of engineering. One has done no harm, rather it can be said that it has contributed much to human progress.

Around the middle of the last century, Industrial Revolution gained momentum, but the rapid strides in industrialization did not begin to be really evident to man till the beginning of this century. During the early years of this century, enormous changes took place in heating, lighting, and communication system. Telephone, telegraph, radio, and television, land, sea, and air transport made a man feel happier than before. When man was overwhelmed with the achievements of technology, industrialization began to exert its influence on the living conditions of the people to such an extent (specially in the West) that it was now-a-days a quite difficult task to think how a man even at the dawn of this century could lead his life.

We must acknowledge that home has become quite comfortable due to the introduction of gas, electricity, frigerators, etc. We must, however, not forget other engineering feats which have revolutionized our homes during the last five or six generations beyond anything which even a king could afford for himself in the past. The rise of chemistry and bacteriology promoted the supply of good potable water. Public cesspools and 'privy bucket' system are on the verge of abolition even in our country after inquiries into public water-supply had revealed the potential dangers of the primitive systems. In towns and cities in India, water purification, the central supply system threatened the existence of private wells and public fountains. Gas and electricity permitted the installation of water-heating system in private houses. Air-conditioning, steam-circulating coils to heat room, application of refrigeration now revolutionized our life and society too.

While discussing the modern amenities of life, one can easily ponder that science by

joining on to technics, raised the ceiling of technical achievement and also widened its potential cruising area. One who can view the past thoroughly, will feel that engineering as an art went back to antiquity and as a result of military enterprise the engineer began to develop as a separate entity. From the fourteenth century onward, the engineers' duty was also to design fortifications, canals, and weapons of assault. In this connexion, I like to quote from Auguste Comte who clearly pointed out the relation between scientific body and the engineers. Comte said (*Fourth Essay*, 1825):

'It is easy to recognize in the scientific body as it now exists a certain number of *engineers* distinct from men of science properly so-called. This important class arose of necessity when Theory and Practice, which set out from such distant points, had approached sufficiently to give each other the hand. It is this that makes its distinctive characters still so undefined. As to characteristic doctrines fitted to constitute the special existence of the class of engineers, their true nature cannot be easily indicated because their rudiments only exist. ... The establishment of the class of engineers in its proper characteristics is the more important because this class will, without doubt, constitute the direct and necessary instrument of coalition between men of science and industrialists by which alone the new social order can commence.'

#### ELECTRICITY REVOLUTIONIZED THE SOCIETY

It was carefully noticed that the improvement in the status of the engineers helped them to produce remarkable improvement in the field of technology. Electricity effected so many revolutionary changes. It not only influenced the concentration of industries, but also exerted its influence on the organization of the factory as well.

Availability of water-power for the pro-

duction of energy, finally changed the potential distribution of modern industry throughout the planet and reduced the peculiar industrial dominance held under the coal-and-iron regime. In comparison to coal and steam, electricity is much easier to transmit without heavy losses of energy and higher costs. There will be high charge for the transportation of coal from one place to another, similarly steam also can be used only for local distribution. Wires carrying high tension alternating currents can easily cut across mountains which no road vehicle can pass over; and once an electric power utility is established the rate of deterioration is slow. In addition to this, electricity has got other advantages too. It can be converted into various forms, as for example, the motor to do mechanical work, the electric lamp to light, the electric radiator for heating purpose, X-ray and Ultra-violet light for penetration and exploration purpose, and the selenium cell to effect automatic control.

The use of water-turbine brought an advantage of utilizing electricity with high efficiency in all sizes of engines and power-ratings became plain if there was shortage of sufficiently heavy head of water to operate a large alternator, excellent work can nevertheless be done for a small industrial unit, like a farm, by harnessing a small brook or stream. And with the help of a small auxiliary gasoline engine continuous operation can be assured even depending on the seasonal fluctuations in the flow of water.

The water-turbine has a great advantage. It is rather automatic in nature. Once installed, extra expenditure is almost unnecessary, the costs of production are very low as no fireman or attendant is absolutely necessary. It is obvious that all power need will not be absorbed by the local area. In that case, surplus power may be transmitted over long distances by means of a system

known as system of interlinked stations.

#### ADVANCEMENT IN METALLURGY

During the last two or three decades, a revolution in metallurgical research has taken place. As a result of systematic experiments in this branch of engineering, a total change is observed, specially in the industries. Rare metals are now occupying a special place in industry and their careful use tends to promote habits of thrift even in the exploitation of commoner minerals. Now-a-days stainless steel is being produced and is securing a prominent place. The increasing demand of this type of steel will decrease the erosion of steel and better the metal worth as scrapheap will then be seldom seen.

One must admit the influence exerted by the electricity on metallurgy. Electricity brought into wide industrial use its own specific materials, in particular, the new alloys, the rare-earths and the lighter metals. Not only that, but also a series of synthetic compounds are being created. The synthetic compounds that supplement paper, glass, and wood are celluloid, vulcanite, bakelite, and synthetic resins. These have got special property of unbreakability, electrical resistance, and imperviousness to acids or elasticity.

Copper and aluminium are the two metals having a high degree of conductivity. Electricity places a heavy premium on them. Considering the merits of the two metals, it can be very easily assumed that copper is almost twice as good a conductor as aluminium but when the weight is considered, aluminium is much superior to the former one. In comparison to these two, iron, nickel, etc. are practically useless when resistance is needed.

*Aluminium—the metal of the day:* Most probably the neo-technic metal is aluminium. Present-day technology counts aluminium much and that is why we observe

the victorious march of this metal. In this part of the twentieth century, aluminium is the most useful substance, after copper and iron. Not only that, aluminium is the third most abundant element on the crust of the earth, the first two being oxygen and silicon.

From type-writer frames to air-planes, from cooking vessels to furniture, everything can now be made of aluminium and its stronger alloys. With the introduction of aluminium we observe a new standard of lightness. New aluminium cars for railroads can attain a very high speed with a smaller output of power. Aluminium is used for making aeroplanes and it is expected that within a decade or two it will replace the construction materials too. Once, bigness and heaviness were recognized as a happy distinction, but now-a-days these appeared as handicaps. Lightness and compactness are the emergent qualities of Neo-technic Era.

#### INFLUENCE ON CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

One of the greatest of the neo-technic advances is associated with the chemical utilization of coal. Coal-tar which was once an unfortunate refuse of coke-woven, is now an important source of wealth to the chemical industrialists. According to the specialist's report, from each ton of coal the following substances are obtained. The by-product oven produces approximately 1,500 pounds of coke, 1,11,360 cu. ft. of gas, 12 gallons of tar, 25 pounds of ammonium sulphate, and 4 gallons of light oils. By breaking down the coal-tar, i.e. by the destructive distillation of coal-tar and by other adjunctive processes, the chemical engineer has produced a host of medicines, dyes, resins, and perfumes too.

#### RENAISSANCE IN COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUE

Communication does not only mean

sending of a news from a man to the other. It is more than this. Communication between human beings developed with the immediate physiological expressions of personal contact, from the howlings and cooings and head-turnings of the infant to the more abstract gestures and signs and sounds out of which language, in its fullness, develops.

The invention of telegraph was a bridge over the gap between communication and time. Successively wireless telegraph, wireless telephone, and finally television have revolutionized the communication system. Mumford says (*Technics and Civilization*, 1962, pp. 239-40): 'As a result, communication is now on the point of returning, with the aid of mechanical devices, to that instantaneous reaction of person to person with which it began; but the possibilities of this immediate meeting, instead of being limited by space and time, will be limited only by the amount of energy available and the mechanical perfection and accessibility of the apparatus. When the radio telephone is supplemented by television communication will differ from direct intercourse only to the extent that immediate physical contact will be impossible: the hand of sympathy will not actually grasp the recipient's hand, nor the raised fist fall upon the provoking head.'

So we can easily imagine the outcome. Certainly there will be a wide range of intercourse, that means more numerous contacts and automatically more demand on attention and time.

One of the outstanding marks of the neo-technic phase is the instantaneous personal communication over long distances. We can appreciate this as a mechanical symbol of world-wide co-operation of thought and feeling and this should emerge if our whole civilization does not sink into ruin. These new avenues of communication have distinct features and advantages. One

may think with depression that the mechanical apparatus will duplicate and further organic operations. This suspicion may be true to some extent at the onset, but in the long run they promise not to displace human being but to re-focus him and enlarge his capacities. But there is a proviso attached to this promise. The culture of the personality will parallel in refinement the mechanical development of the machine.

Radio-communication has perhaps the greatest effort in the field of politics. Through radio, the restoration of direct contact between the leader and the group is possible. A single orator can now teach not only a city, but also the whole country, nay he can put his comments before the whole civilization.

#### STAT EFFECT OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY ON MAN

The engineer has a powerful 'tool' in his hand. That is 'energy'. It is one of the greatest contributions to the civilization; one kilowatt hour of electricity has got the capacity to replace ten hours of human energy. With the discovery of this thing, fear is dispelled—fear of slavery, hunger, cold, illness, and ignorance. This strengthened human senses, lengthened the span of human life. The countries consuming the most kilowatt hours of electricity are regarded as the countries of higher standard. Technology gave human being a hope for the future. Due to improved mechanization, duty hour in a factory has come down to 40 hours from 70 in U.S.S.R., U.S.A., and U.K., in India it is 47 hours. The new trend in technology brought an improvement in the society, not only the aesthetic part is considered, but also the utilitarian aspect as well, because we know that by the satisfactory harmony between the two, civilization moves towards maturity and prosperity.

Just before I mentioned that span of life became wider. According to statisticians, one-seventh of all the people who have ever been alive are alive today. The expectation of life, due to prominent technological development, has gone up from thirty years to the shady side of seventy. Longevity and working capacity of a man have increased to such an extent that a country gets the essential benefit from the total population.

#### IN SEARCH OF POWER

Increased population needs more and more power. Palmer C. Putman supplied an interesting report to us. He has calculated that from the death of Christ to the beginning of the American Civil War, the total energy consumption of the world was from 6 to 9 Q ( $Q=10^{18}$  B.T.U.), i.e. .45 Q per century. The figure has now increased to 20 Q per century and by the end of this century it may rise up to 100 Q per century.

In addition to coal, oil, and uranium or thorium, engineers tapped solar energy to meet the need of power. Derivation of power from the river-tide or sea-tide is possible. Engineers are now trying to collect energy from the depth of the earth. Today, at Larderello in Italy, steam piped from subterranean volcanoes gives energy convertible to electric power, whilst the Russian Academy of Science has sent a research team to work on earth heat in Kamchatka. Another source of power is also known to the engineers. Utilizing temperature differences in the sea, power can be derived. At Abidjan on the French Ivory Coast there is a project, the aim of which is to use the difference between surface and sea-depth temperature as a power source.

#### CALCULUS OF LIFE IN TECHNOLOGICAL ERA

One of the by-products of the magnificent mechanical devices and mechanical

standards is the nullification of skill. As for example, the safety razor has set aside the demand of a barber in our daily life. The camera is now serving the purpose of an engraver or painter. We will admit that too much mechanization by lessening the need for domestic service, 'has increased the amount of personal autonomy and personal participations in the household. In short, mechanization creates new occasions for human effort, and on the whole the effects are more educative than were the semi-automatic services of slaves and menials in the older civilizations'.

Still we must say that during the translation of technical improvements into social processes, however, the machine has undergone perversion. Instead of being utilized as an instrument of life, it has become an absolute. At the beginning, the machine was rather an attempt to substitute quantity for value in the calculus of life. Between the conception of the machine and its utilization, a necessary psychological and social progress was skipped—the stage of evaluation. Thus, a steam turbine is able to contribute thousands of H.P., and a speed boat may achieve speed easily; but these facts, though satisfy the engineer, do not necessarily integrate them in society.

The process of social evaluation was largely absent among the people who developed the machine in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hence the machine raced like an engine without a governor, tending to 'overheat its own bearings and lower its efficiency without any contemporary gain. But, at present, the situation is changed and people is now feeling the utility of machine. Technology brought hope for life, it is true. Without them science would probably degenerate into a series of casuistic exercises. Their strategic position between the endless frontiers of new knowledge on the one hand, and the equipment proved by success

on the other, enable them to act as the most effective revolutionists of our time.

There is also a refreshing aesthetic in artefacts which Goethe (himself no mean scientist) described as 'frozen music'. Such an aesthetic is no less true of the ring formula for benzene than of a bridge. Both are ingenious and both are exciting.

In spite of these, some thinkers hesitate to widen their heart to greet the technological developments. Arnold J. Toynbee had said (*Civilization on Trial*):

'The social effects of individual human sinfulness have not been abolished by the recent advance in our technological "know-how", but they have not been left unaffected by it either. Not having been abolished, they have been enormously keyed up, like the rest of human life, in respect of their physical potency. Class has now become capable of irrevocably disintegrating society and war of annihilating the entire human race. Evils which hitherto have been merely disgraceful and grievous have now become intolerable and lethal, and therefore, we in this westernized world in our generation are confronted with a choice of alternatives which the ruling elements in other societies in the past have always been able to shirk—with dire consequences, invariably for themselves, but not at the extreme price of bringing to an end the history of mankind of this planet.'

There is some truth in it, but most of the statement is mere an emotional outburst and the fear is more or less hypothetical.

### CONCLUSION

We have seen that the recent progress in technology has demonstrated beyond all doubt the triumph of materialism. Certainly it has revealed the tremendous potentiality of the human intellect that helped man to cross the barrier of time and space.

But I must admit, though technology is serving as a tower of strength to materialism

yielding enough good, yet there is evil with it. A few people being equipped with power of the machine usually consider themselves as controllers of the millions. The capitalists, the ruling minorities in some form of government enjoy this benefit.

Automation is the ultimate goal of mechanization and unless there is proper control, the result is surely technological unemployment. It happened in many countries and this may happen in India too. The result is a chronic social and economic insecurity. To save life, people driven by hunger and depression must surrender their liberty. It is undoubtedly a blow to the basic human right.

Production of immense power and mammoth wealth made by technological advancement, have created in man an uncontrollable and ugly lust for them. The result is war, attitude of controlling other nations by force, causing suffering and misery to the million innocents. Still I shall emphasize on the fact, it is not technology that brought before us this gloomy picture; it is man's narrow outlook to the life that caused technology to be an evil in place of good. But it is certain that technology, though brought immense good to the humanity, could not bring peace to them. Comfort and peace—the two words though identical to hear have got strikingly different meaning. To quote *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (VI. 20):

*Yadā carnavat akāśam veṣṭaiṣyanti  
mānavāḥ;*

*Tadā devam avijñāya duḥkosalānto  
bhaviṣyati—*

'Man may try through his technical advances to roll up the sky itself as if it were a piece of leather, but with all that, he will never succeed in achieving peace and the end of his sorrows without realizing the luminous Divine within Him.'



I like to quote a passage from the writings of eminent Indian scientist-philosopher, Professor Priyadarajan Rây. He says ('Science, Society and Human Freedom', *Science and Culture*, Vol. 27, p. 551):

'It is time that science should now turn its attention to the study of mind and recognize that thoughts and feelings form as legitimate parts of reality as matter and motion, and that the study of moral, aesthetic and religious functions of man are as important as that of mathematics, physics, chemistry or physiology. Matter and spirit are not two different isolated entities, but one integral whole. For, it must now be admitted by all sensible persons

that the values of life contribute in no small measure to human happiness and social tranquility.'

An equilibrium is necessary in all respects—equilibrium in the environment, i.e. equilibrium in population and finally equilibrium in mental state. This state of balance and equilibrium—regional, industrial, agricultural, communal, and psychic—will work a further change within the domain of machine itself—a change in tempo. This is the 'must' of the present day, otherwise the beast in man, unless controlled, will be totally reflected on his own society, and will create another Hiroshima and Nagasaki, immersing this society and civilization into total extinction.

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### **Celebration of Swami Vivekananda's Birthday**

The Institute observed the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda on Saturday, 27 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. The portrait of Swamiji on the background of the dais was beautifully decorated on the occasion.

The programme commenced with a Vedic Invocation by Pandit Srijib Nyayatirtha, M.A. It was followed by a talk in Bengali on 'The Life and Message of Swami Vivekananda' by Sri Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A., Principal, Barasat Government College.

The day's function came to a close with a programme of devotional songs presented by Sri Satinath Mukherjee and Srimati Utpala Sen.

### **School of Languages**

The 1968-69 session of the Institute's School of Languages commences on 1 July 1968. The School has arrangements for teaching the following Indian and foreign languages :

*Indian Languages:* Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, and Urdu.

*Foreign Languages:* Arabic, Chinese, English (Spoken), French, German, Japanese, Persian, Russian, and Spanish.

Instruction in the School of Languages is imparted by the direct method. In special cases, however, English may be used as medium.

The duration of the complete course is two years. Ordinarily, each course comprises two academic sessions: the first session is devoted to the certificate course, and the second session to the diploma course. There are also a degree course in Russian and a rapid course in German language (certificate course) extending

over six months. From this year the duration of each class in the French language certificate course will be two hours per day.

The School has one academic session a year, opening on 1 July and closing on 30 June.

Each group of students has two one-hour lessons a week (except in French language certificate course and German language rapid course). Classes are held in the evening between 6.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.

*Fees:* The fees for the courses are as follows :

*Indian Languages:* There is an admission fee of Rs. 5. The tuition fee per month for the certificate course is Rs. 2, and for the diploma course Rs. 5.

*Foreign Languages:* There is an admission fee of Rs. 10. The tuition fee per month for the certificate course is Rs. 10, and for the diploma course Rs. 15. Tuition fee for French language certificate course, rapid German course (certificate) and the third-year degree course in Russian language is Rs. 15, and admission fee is Rs. 10.

Tuition fees should be paid in advance, and not later than the 15th of each month. Fees are payable throughout the year, including vacation periods.

Further details are available at the Institute's Counter.

### **School of Sanskrit Studies**

The 1968-69 session of the Institute's School of Sanskrit Studies commences in July 1968. The School offers two courses of studies—General and Advanced.

The General Class of the School provides a two-year course which covers the following subjects: Vedic literature, Buddhism and Jainism, the Purāṇas and Itihāsas, the

Smṛtis and the Arthaśāstra, Sāṅkhya and Yoga, Vedānta, and Sanskrit literature.

The Advanced Class of the School provides specialized and intensive studies in the following subjects: Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Tantra, Buddhism and Jainism.

**Fees:** The fee for the General Course is Rs. 10 for each term of three months.

The fee for the Advanced Course is Rs. 5 per month.

There is also an admission fee of Rs. 5 for the Advanced Course.

Classes are held between 6.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. Further details may be had from the Institute's Counter.

#### Special Lectures and Discourses

'The Perennial Wisdom of Vedānta' was the theme of a special discourse given by Swami Sastrananda, the then Assistant Secretary of the Institute, on Saturday, 16 December 1967, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

Swami Vijayananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America, gave a special discourse on 'Four Stages of Vedāntic Experience' on Saturday, 6 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

Swami Akunthananda, Secretary of the Institute, introduced the speaker.

On Tuesday, 11 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. John B. Broadbent, M.A., Ph.D., Senior Tutor of King's College and University Lecturer in English, Cambridge University, U.K., gave a special lecture on 'W. B. Yeats among School Children'.

Dr. Sisir Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D., presided.

The Institute, taking the opportunity of Dr. E. A. Burtt's visit to Calcutta as an invitee of the Calcutta University to deliver

a series of lectures entitled Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghose Lectureship (1957), organized a special lecture on Monday, 29 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. E. A. Burtt, A.B., S.T.M., Ph.D., L.H.D., Sage Professor of Philosophy (Emeritus) at Cornell University, U.S.A., spoke on 'The Future of Religion' on the occasion.

Sri Hiranmay Banerjee, Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, presided.

Dr. Burtt's special lecture on 'The Future of Religion' was later on published in the April 1968 issue of the *Bulletin*.

'World Peace and Human Rights' was the theme of a special lecture given by Dr. Richard N. Gardner, A.B., Ph.D., Professor of Law and Government, Columbia University, U.S.A., on Tuesday, 30 January 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

Sri Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., M.L.C., presided.

Srimati Nilima Sen presented a programme of Tagore's devotional songs on the occasion.

In commemoration of the Birth Centenary of Madame Marie Sklodowska Curie, the Institute, in collaboration with University Women's Association, organized a series of six lectures on Radio-activity on Tuesdays, in the afternoon, beginning from 13 February 1968.

On 13 February at 6 p.m. Dr. Shyamadas Chatterjee gave the inaugural address on 'Madame Curie—in Search of Radium'. Professor Priyadarshan Rây, M.A., F.N.I., presided.

The second lecture of the series entitled 'Fundamentals of Radio-activity' was given by Dr. Santimay Chatterjee on Tuesday, 20 February 1968 at 4.30 p.m.

Professor Sobhana Mukherjee delivered the third lecture of the series on 'Funda-

mentals of Radio-activity' on next Tuesday. Comparative Religion in the Shivananda Hall.

On 'Nuclear and Radiation Chemistry' spoke Professor Amiya Kumar Chakravarti.

Dr. Anjali Mookerjee gave the fifth lecture on 'Some Aspects of Radiation Biology'.

The concluding lecture of the series was given by Dr. Samarendra Nath Ghoshal on 'Radiation and the Cosmic World' on Tuesday, 19 March 1968, at 4.30 p.m.

The series of these six lectures created interest among the audience present and the student community in particular.

#### **Extension Lectures : Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghose Lectureship (1957)**

The Institute, in collaboration with the University of Calcutta, held a series of four lectures entitled Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghose Lectureship (1957). Dr. E. A. Burtt, A.B., S.T.M., Ph.D., L.H.D., Sage Professor of Philosophy (Emeritus) at Cornell University, U.S.A., gave these lectures on 'Towards and Beyond the Community of Man'.

The four lectures by Dr. Burtt, which were held in the evenings of Friday, 12 January, Monday, 15 January, Thursday, 18 January, and Thursday, 25 January 1968, were presided over by Dr. S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D., Swami Ranganathananda, The Hon. Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji, and Dr. B. B. Malik, respectively.

#### **Extension Lectures : Rai Bahadur G. C. Ghosh Lectures (1967)**

The Institute, in collaboration with the University of Calcutta, arranged for a series of five lectures entitled Rai Bahadur G. C. Ghosh Lectures (1967) on some aspects of

Sri Sudhanshu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B., I.A. & A.S. (Retired), Rai Bahadur G. C. Ghosh Lecturer for 1967, gave a series of five lectures on 'The Spiritual Quest of a Century: Rammohun to Aurobindo'. The inaugural lecture was delivered on Monday, 19 February 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, M.A., D.Litt., presided.

The subjects for the remaining four lectures were 'Rammohun, Brāhmo Samāj, and the Impact of Christian Thought', 'Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement', 'Rabindranath and His Predecessors', and 'Evolution of Aurobindo's Thought'. The lectures were held on Monday, 18, Tuesday, 26 March, and Mondays, 1 and 8 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m.

The presidents for these four lectures were Rev. Dr. H. L. De Mel, Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D., Sri Hiranmay Banerjee, and Dr. B. B. Malik, M.A., LL.D., Barrister-at-Law, respectively.

#### **Extension Lectures : T. P. Khaitan Lectures (1967)**

The Institute, in collaboration with the University of Calcutta, also arranged for another series of three lectures by Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B., in Bengali on 'Siva Concept in the Eyes of Rabindranath, Vivekananda, and Aurobindo' on Tuesday, 27 February, Mondays 4 and 11 March 1968. Sri B. B. Ghose, Sri Ramaprasad Mookerjee, and Professor Asutosh Bhattacharyya, respectively presided.

**Students' Day Home**

The following table presents at a glance the work of the Students' Day Home for the months of January, February, and March 1968 :

|   | January | February | March  |
|---|---------|----------|--------|
| Total number of students enrolled                       | 720     | 720      | 780    |
| Average daily attendance                                | 395     | 378      | 422    |
| Average number of students daily taking meals or tiffin | 236     | 286      | 284    |
| Total number of text-books issued                       | 12,154  | 12,757   | 16,615 |

**Library and Reading Room**

The following table presents at a glance a review of the work of the different sections of the Institute's Library for the months of January, February, and March 1968 :

*Main Library*

|   | January | February | March  |
|---|---------|----------|--------|
| Total number of books                   | 54,476  | 54,665   | 55,019 |
| Number of books added                   | 317     | 189      | 354    |
| Number of books purchased               | 315     | 189      | 338    |
| Number of books received as gift        | 2       | —        | —      |
| Number of books withdrawn               | —       | —        | —      |
| Number of bound periodicals accessioned | —       | —        | 16     |

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|                                       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number of books issued for home study | 2,956 | 2,877 | 3,059 |
| Number of books issued for reference  | 8,182 | 7,720 | 8,810 |

***Reading Room***

|   |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Number of periodicals in the reading room | 448 | 448 | 449 |
| Average daily attendance                  | 464 | 460 | 494 |

***Junior Library***

|                                       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total number of books                 | 1,497 | 1,534 | 1,542 |
| Number of books added                 | 21    | 37    | 8     |
| Number of books issued for home study | 274   | 217   | 219   |
| Average daily attendance              | 12    | 10    | 10    |

***Children's Library***

|                                       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total number of books                 | 4,213 | 4,243 | 4,252 |
| Number of books added                 | 5     | 30    | 9     |
| Number of books issued for home study | 577   | 549   | 555   |
| Average daily attendance              | 28    | 24    | 24    |

## JULY CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

## SCRIPTURE CLASSES

## THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th July*

## SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM :

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th July*

## THE ISA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

*6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th July*

## CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

## FILM SHOWS

Tuesday, 2 July 1968, at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, 16 July 1968, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00 for each day

## CHILDREN'S BALLET

Swapan Budo's

Nil Pakhi

*(Bengali version of Maeterlinck's Blue Bird)*

By

Sabpeyechir Asar

*Tuesday, 9 July 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## MUSICAL SOIREE

Barashan

*(Based on Tagore's songs)*

By

Vichitrita

*Tuesday, 23 July 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR JULY 1968

*Bankim Galpa Asar*

First Saturday, 6 July, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 27 July, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

*Programme:*

Music, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Show



## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

- July 3      **Myths and Symbols : A Glimpse of India's Spiritual Life**  
*Speaker :* H. K. De Chaudhuri, M.A., Dr. Phil.  
*President:* D. C. Sircar, M.A., Ph.D.
- July 10     **Religious Sects of India**  
*Speaker:* Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* Asutosh Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D.
- July 17     **An Approach to Eugene O'Neill**  
*Speaker:* Himansunath Ganguli, M.A., Ph.D.  
*President:* Sisir Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D.
- July 24     **Young Bengal : A Study in Students' Revolt in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century**  
*Speaker:* Benoy Ghosh, M.A.  
*President:* R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.
- July 31     **The Concept of Man in Modern Thought : The Indian View**  
*Speaker:* Debabrata Sinha, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

## SPECIAL LECTURE

*Monday, 15 July 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in English*

**Two Decades of D.V.C.**

*Speaker:* Amiya Kumar Ganguly

*President:* Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

*Film Show:*

Time for Change

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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## EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

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THE term 'international law', first proposed by Jeremy Bentham, superseded the once familiar English term 'law of nations', and has become the accepted designation for the science today. International Law, meaning a law between or among states, is 'a product of modern Christian civilization' and is 'about four hundred years old' (Oppenheim [Lauterpacht], *International Law*, Vol. I, Seventh Edition, 1948, p. 68). But its roots stretch far back into antiquity. The story of its evolution is a long and tortuous one. Originating as fragments in remote antiq-

uity, it has progressed through a steady, continuous but not unbroken process towards maturity and has reached the present twentieth century stage of limited perfection and adequacy. Today, it has expanded along two lines—in 'width' and in 'depth'. To a modern mind, a study of its evolution is of absorbing and exciting interest. It shows the steady triumph of reason over passion—it shows man's inherent love for law even in the midst of lawlessness—it also shows Nature's plan of action of progress through creation and crossing of hurdles,

### ITS ORIGIN

International Law, in its origin, could not be global or world-wide in character, as it is today. This was so because the world then was not a single unit. Hence International Law, in its embryonic form, arose as a kind of local or regional law operating in the prevalent international system of the area in that age. There are three broad divisions of modern International Law—the laws of peace, the laws of war, and the laws of neutrality. The laws of neutrality are of later origin but the laws of peace and the laws of war are as old as humanity itself. Emerging originally as scattered fragments and local precedents or practices or principles, the corpus of International Law has assumed today an imposing and impressive form.

Montesquieu assumed that there was 'something in mankind like an innate idea of international law'. This assumption is surely unwarranted. Still it is true that traces of International Law can be seen 'since the dawn of documentary history, that is, from the fourth millenium B.C.' (A. Nussbaum, *A Concise History of the Law of Nations* [1950], p. 7). In about the year '3100 B.C.' there was a treaty between 'Eannatum, the victorious ruler of the Mesopotamian city-state of Lagash, and the men of Umma, another Mesopotamian city-state' (A. Nussbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 8). The accuracy of the date mentioned by Nussbaum may be questioned. We find the name of the ruler Eannatum mentioned in the section on 'The Early Dynastic Period—c. 2800–c. 2360 B.C.'. Hence this ruler Eannatum must have lived after c. 2800 B.C. and there could have been no treaty with him in about the year c. 3100 B.C. (See *The Light from the Past—the Archaeological Background of the Hebrew-Christian Religion* by Jack Finegan [1947], pp. 31–37). This treaty, preserved in an inscription on a stone monument in Sumerian language, had a

guarantee in oath in the name of gods, and contained an arbitration clause. Thereafter, in documentary history, we hear of treaties in the second millenium when the Israelites emerged.

### CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ISRAELITES

In preserved and recorded history of man the traces of International Law can be seen among the Israelites. They 'come before us as a people thirteen centuries or more before the birth of Christ with a polity fresh from the hands of its framer, the Law-Giver Moses, the leader of a migration from Egypt' (T. A. Walker, *A History of Law of Nations*, Vol. I, [1898], p. 31). The Israelites considered themselves 'a chosen race of brother tribes' and we can see in them 'the first faint outline of an inner International circle'. There were also peoples outside this circle. Among these peoples outside this circle, a distinction was drawn between the 'Seven Nations, the original occupiers of the Promised Land and other foreign communities' (See Deuteronomy, Chapter 7, para 1. [Deuteronomy is the Fifth Book of the Old Testament]). These seven nations were the sworn enemies of the Jews. In relation to these seven nations, the Jewish Law, as announced by Moses, was very severe and permitted utter destruction with no room for mercy (Deuteronomy, Chapter 7, paras 1, 2, 3, and 5). But towards the peoples other than these seven nations, the Jewish laws were liberal to some extent. There were the laws of peace and the laws of war. The foreign sojourner was admitted and protected. Extensive commerce with these foreign people was carried on. They showed remarkable 'care for the faith of treaties' (Joshua, Chapter 9, paras 15 to 19 [Joshua is the Sixth Book of the Old Testament]). Their history was fairly free from that treachery in international dealings which was a common feature in the public

proceedings of other Asiatic peoples' (*op. cit.*, T. A. Walker, p. 34). They recognized the sanctity of ambassadors and heralds (Samuel II, Chapter 10—David started war against Ammon on account of the ill treatment of the heralds sent by him. [Samuel II is the Tenth Book of the Old Testament]). They also acknowledged the claims of the foreign refugees (Samuel I, Chapter 27—David was given shelter by Achish, king of Gath. [Samuel I is the Ninth Book of the Old Testament]). These were the laws of peace. The war practices were, however, very severe. Quarter was to be refused. There was to be the killing of all women and children (Samuel I, Chapter 15, para 3). There was to be the slaughter of prisoners. They even mutilated the bodies of their defeated foes like 'cutting off the thumbs and great toes' (Judges, Chapter 1, para 6 [Judges is the Seventh Book of the Old Testament]). Yet compared with the contemporary practice of other peoples of antiquity, the Jewish war practice was not worse. In fact in some respects their practices were milder. Mosaic Law provided for the proclamation of peace before appeal to arms (Deuteronomy, Chapter 20, para 10). It again banned the destruction of trees of a besieged city for 'thou mayest eat of them' (Deuteronomy, Chapter 20, para 19). In this respect 'the Mosaic Code anticipated in curious fashion modern limitations upon the exercise of belligerent force' and 'it would not be too much to say that herein we see the beginning of a definite Law of War' (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 36). Many modern laws of war and occupation have a basis in self-interest or mutual utility. Moreover, for the development of the International Law of the future, the Messianic ideals and hopes of the Jews had a great contribution. Isaiah's prophecy was that after the advent of the Messiah 'they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning

hooks: nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more' (Isaiah, Chapter 2, para 4 [Isaiah is the Twenty-third Book of the Old Testament]). It is interesting to note that I. L. Claude wrote and published a book entitled 'Swords into Plowshare' in 1958, in which he discussed the different conditions and avenues to stable and permanent peace). The Jews gave this ideal to the Christian world (Oppenheim [Lauterpacht], *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 69-70). It is an ideal with us even today. The contribution of the Jews to the evolution of International Law is then of no mean value.

#### THE GREEK PERIOD

After the Israelites, we come to the Greek period. The Greek world, we know, was a world of city states and their International Law was accordingly inter-city or inter-municipal law. They drew a line between the Hellene and the Barbarian just as the Jews drew a line between the Jew and the Gentile. The Greek world thus formed a kind of international circles. There seemed to be something like a system of sovereign states tied together into a community which observed certain rules in their relation with one another both in time of peace and war (Oppenheim [Lauterpacht], *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 70). The Greek world developed a feeling of unity through common language, common Gods, common oracles, common games, and local contiguity. They developed the Amphictyonic Council in which we can read the idea of international arbitration. They had also their laws of peace. 'Greek care for the stranger appeared at its best in treaties for the mutual administration of justice to the sojourning foreigner, and international conventions for the establishment of mixed tribunals or even for the grant of Isopolity' (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 40). They developed 'the noble institution of

Xenia'—an extension of the 'sanctity of the guest-tie' concept from the private to the public field—which was 'a prototype of the consulates of modern times'. On two aspects the Greek practice was, however, primitive. One was the drastic custom of Athenian Androlepsia—a kind of private reprisal. The other was the Greek sanction to piracy.

The Greek war practice even in purely Hellenic contests was 'terribly severe', according to Walker. Of course, heralds were inviolable and truces were observed. But 'frightful vengeance', 'pitiless ravage and destruction', 'slaughter of Hellenic prisoners in cold blood', 'enslavement of women and children after capitulation', poisoning the water supply of a besieged city, 'massacre of every soul in a defenceless and peaceful country town'—these, according to Walker, (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42), were the usual Greek practices during war. But 'in his relations with peoples outside the Hellenic pale the Greek recognised the obligation of certain rules, though these were ill-defined'. The slaughter of envoys was 'an admitted breach of custom'. The Greeks recognized something like 'the laws of all mankind', 'laws universal' which the Greeks felt called upon to apply towards members of another political aggregate and these became International Law. Possibly on the basis of this aspect of Greek war laws and practices, Oppenheim gives us a different picture. He says it was a rule with them never to commence a war without a declaration. He continues (Oppenheim [Lauterpacht], *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 40, p. 71):

'Heralds were inviolable. Warriors who died on the battlefield were entitled to burial. If a city was captured, the lives of all those who took refuge in a temple had to be spared. Prisoners of war could be exchanged or ransomed; their lot, at the utmost, was slavery. Even certain

persons in the armies of the belligerents were considered inviolable, as for instance, the priests, who carried the holy fire and the seers.'

In the Greek period we also find the picture of an ideal king depicted by Xenophon. He 'depicts his ideal king as making an agreement with his foe that the labourers on the land should be let alone on either side, and the operations of war should be confined to those bearing arms'. We can see herein the germ of the famous modern doctrine of immunity of non-combatants from belligerent attack.

To Walker, International Law of the Greeks was an 'improving law'. Oppenheim, however, reads in the Greek system a significant and inspiring contribution. The Greek system showed that the 'common interests and aims' could bind the states together. Modern International Law also seeks to lay emphasis on the community of interests among the states which alone can strengthen the base of the system.

#### THE ROMAN LEGACY

The contribution of the Roman period to the growth of International Law, though different from that of the Greek period, was highly significant. This contribution can be seen in the first part of Roman history, when Rome was one of several Italian city states. In the later period, when Rome became an empire, there was little scope for the further development of International Law as 'in a world state International Law must find its vanishing point'. The natural law philosophy was developed by the Stoics in the third century B.C. Cicero of Rome was a champion of Natural Law and their Natural Law had a bearing on the growth of International Law.

In the first period of her history, Rome was one of several Italian petty states. It was at the time a 'trading emporium' which invited crowds of admiring and profit-

seeking foreigners, with whom Rome inevitably came into contact. And in relations with them Rome developed through 'guest-tic' technique canons of hospitality and eventually the rules of *Jus Gentium*. Rome developed *Jus Civile*, *Jus Gentium*, and *Jus Fetiale*. The latter two had definite contributions to the growth of International Law. There were two deductions from *Jus Gentium*—private international law and public international law. Private international law meant a regular system of equity to individual foreigners. And from *Jus Gentium* as public international law were deduced many rules like inviolability of ambassadors and heralds. This *Jus Gentium* was not only law international, its roots were laws universal, observed by men as law-abiding human beings and linked up with *Jus Naturale* which was Law of Nature 'immutable and unchangeable', law of 'exact justice self-evident to the individual exercising the right reason'. 'In *Jus Gentium* in its more public sense the Roman approached most nearly to our modern International Law' (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 46). The Romans also developed a system of *Jus Fetiale*—laws regarding declaration of war, making of peace and framing of treaties. These rules were placed under the jurisdiction of a special body of officials, known as the 'College of Fetials'. There was to be a formal demand for redress before declaration of war. Treaties required ratification and were treated as sacred documents.

In Roman law war was a legal institution. Four different just reasons of war were recognized, viz. (1) violation of the Roman dominions; (2) violation of ambassadors; (3) violation of treaties; (4) support given during war to an opponent by a hitherto friendly state. There were legal rules concerning termination of war. But for war itself no rules existed, and Roman war practice was largely cruel. It permitted devasta-

tion, slaughter, and enslaving of captives, special severity in the case of towns taken by storm and in the case of rebels and deserters. In some aspects milder practices were also noted. The Roman practice showed respect for the letter of the law, condemned treachery or breach of faith, permitted truces for the burial of the dead and for conducting negotiation. Hence 'we recognize the Roman as civilizer in his severity' (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 49).

Relations of the Romans with a foreign state depended upon whether there was a treaty of friendship between Rome and that state. In the absence of any such treaty, the foreigners and foreign goods in Rome and the Romans and the Roman goods in the foreign land enjoyed no protection. The Romans abroad could be enslaved. But if they returned to Rome they became again free men. The Roman world has given to modern International Law the concept and laws of *postliminium*. Three kinds of treaties were in existence—Treaties of Friendship, of Hospitality, and of Alliance. Often these treaties contained provisions for arbitration in case of controversies.

There were rules for the end of war. War could be terminated by a treaty of peace, or by surrender, or by conquest.

Rome is noted for its contribution to law and legal concepts. Rome developed legal rules and concepts covering different aspects of International Law. This Roman approach was a definite contribution to the future growth of International Law along concrete legal lines.

#### ANCIENT INDIAN TRADITIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

International Law, it is claimed, has been born in the cradle of European Christian civilization. This is the stand of the twentieth-century European writers. This may be true of modern International Law. But International Law, in the wider sense and

in its origin, comes from the pre-Christian era and from the Jews and the Greeks. But the western writers in studying the evolution of International Law have generally ignored the existence of the ancient Asian legal systems including the Indian. This might have been due either to lack of contact of the West with the East or to differences of language or to absence of scientific research. Several western writers (Oppenheim [Lauterpacht], *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 68 [f. n. 1] where he refers to the book *International Law in Ancient India* by Viswanatha [1925] and says that the book 'reveals some interesting anticipations of rules and institutions commonly regarded as exclusively European'. Fenwick notes this in his book *International Law*, First Edition [1924], p. 7, and also in the Third Revised Edition [1948], p. 5. A. Nussbaum also refers to International Law of ancient India in his book *A Concise History of the Law of Nations* [Second Printing 1950], p. 10. Gould also refers to this aspect in his book *An Introduction to International Law* [1956], p. 31) have made a reference to the existence of a Law of Nations in ancient India but the whole thing appears to have been handled by them rather casually. But recent researches and studies by the Indian authors have revealed that India also had very rich traditions of International Law in the past-traditions which, in many respects, appear strikingly modern. The attitude of the West in claiming a monopoly of ancient storehouse of knowledge in International Law has prompted research studies. In addition to the few books (S. V. Viswanatha, *International Law in Ancient India* [1925]; P. N. Bandyopadhyay, *International Law and Custom in Ancient India* [1920]; H. Chatterjee, *International Law and Inter-State Relations in Ancient India* [1958]) regarding the ancient Indian traditions of International Law published in the twenties, in the last decade, specially since

1952, in the Indian Year Book of International Affairs many articles have been published by Indian authors and research workers showing the rich heritage of India in the matter. The authors in these articles have been very vocal and emphatic in their claims about Indian heritage. This has provoked a reaction in some. Dr. J. D. M. Derret of the University of London has read in some of them an attempt at 'distortion', a bias and a 'somewhat disingenuous interpretation of the texts'. He says: 'Whereas Mahamahopadhyay Dr. P. V. Kane and Professor K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar are full and accurate and write without bias or distortion, a desire that the account of Indian political and military ideals should be acceptable to the West, and to an educated Indian public which is imbued to some extent with standards imported from the West, has resulted in a distortion of the facts and a somewhat disingenuous interpretation of the texts on the part of other publicists' (J. D. M. Derret, 'Maintenance of Peace in the Hindu World: Practice and Theory' in *Indian Year Book of International Affairs*, 1958, pp. 361-62). He also says that Viswanatha's *International Law in Ancient India* 'errs in attempting to fit Indian theories to western conventional doctrines' and accuses Mr. N. N. Law of being 'guilty of distortion of both theory and fact'.

Ancient Indian traditions of International Law which appear refreshingly modern may irritate some western writers who move about with 'the absurd idea of European superiority in all fields'. We, however, cannot help it. The proper approach should be not one of quarrel about intellectual or cultural superiority, but of scientific and objective research, study, interpretation, and assessment. Many of our treasures were wrapped up in the mists of ignorance—these are gradually being unfolded. We should first of all discover the ancient theories and practices in India in the matter of International

Law, and then read them correctly without any bias. Thereafter at the second stage of our study there should be an analysis of these ancient rules of International Law in India to see if they contain any elements of fundamental or universal value. If they do and if these fundamental values happen to coincide with those behind modern International Law we cannot be accused of bias or distortion or fitting Indian theories to modern International Law.

A study of the ancient Indian texts reveals that in India also at that time there was something like an Indian circle of states and interstate relations and International Law. The *Vedas*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Manu Samhitā*, the *Dharma Śāstras*, the *Agni Purāṇa*, the *Sukranītisāra*, the *Kamandaka Nīti*, the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, etc.—all these contain different aspects of International Law. Special mention may be made of the *Śāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*. We can read in its *śloka*s the principle of renunciation of war (*Ayudhenaiva vijayaṃ vardhayet vasudhādhīpaḥ; Jaghanyamāhurvijayaṃ yuddhena ca narādhipaḥ*)—(*Śāntiparvan*, Chapter 91. *śl.* 1) in general, ban on unjust war (*Nādharmena mahīm jetuṃ lipsyet jagatīpatiḥ*) (*ibid.*, Chapter 93. *śl.* 1) in particular, prohibition of the use of poisoned arrows (*Iṣurlipto na karni syāt asatyam etadāyudham*) (*ibid.*, Chapter 92. *śl.* 11), and treacherous killing, the germ of the Geneva convention (*Cikitsyaḥ syāt svaviṣaye prāpyo nā svagrhe bhavet; Nirvāṇaśca saḥ moktavya eṣa dharmah sanātanaḥ*) (*ibid.*, Chapter 92. *śl.* 18, 19), and the doctrine of immunity of non-combatants from attack. (*Vṛddhabālau na hantavyau na ca strī naiva prsthataḥ; Tṛṇapūrṇamukhaścaiva tavāsmīti ca yo vadet*) (*ibid.*, Chapter 95. *śl.* 75).

Experts in International Law knowing both English and Sanskrit find many provisions in the ancient Indian texts which are largely akin to the principles of ancient

International Law found among the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans and also to the norms of modern International Law. I have gone through many of these Indian texts and am proud to feel and see that the rules found in them were in many respects more progressive and humane than those found in the Old Testament or among the Greeks and the Romans. I feel that research studies by experts regarding Indian ancient traditions are not adequate. More organized, systematic, and coordinated research in the field should be taken up and the Indian ancient traditions of International Law should be scientifically assessed in the context of modern International Law. I also feel that the story about the evolution of International Law should be re-written to give adequate weight to the Indian ancient system, along with that to the Jewish, Greek, and Roman contributions.

#### THE MIDDLE AGES

In a study of the evolution of International Law after the Roman period we come to the Middle Ages and thereafter to the Renaissance and Reformation periods. This is a long period covering about seventeen centuries. This period had many contributions to the growth of International Law.

The Roman Empire was broken with Barbarian conquest and therewith began the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages for the purpose of our study may broadly be divided into three periods—the early period of Barbarian invasion and break-up of the Roman empire; the middle Middle Ages after the eighth century when the 'Church-state' concept with papal domination emerged; and the third period with the anti-papal claims when the 'Estates-state' concept with Feudalism prevailed.

The early part of the Middle Ages, called the Dark Ages, began with the Barbarian invasion of Roman Empire. At that time



International Law had hardly any scope for development. 'In the Dark Ages, between A.D. 476 and 800, International Law reached its nadir in the West' (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 64). But Christianity saved civilization in the West: it brought the whole Barbarian West within the range of revived and extended International Law and preached the idea of world unity in the spiritual field with its corollary of unity in the temporal field. Thereafter Christianity faced another enemy, the Saracens since A.D. 750. The Saracen war practices (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-79) were mild and showed the state of their advanced civilization. These were enjoined by Mohammed and reflected the model of Mosaic law. The Saracen war practices imposed a ban on the attack on women, children, and the infirm old men. We can read herein the Doctrine of Immunity of non-combatants from attack in some sense. They also prohibited the destruction of the products of the earth, the ravaging of the fields, and the burning of buildings and dwellings. There was again provision for fair treatment to the prisoners and those who surrender. There was ban on perfidy or falsehood and safe conducts were granted and observed.

The two other periods of the Middle Ages contain stories of Papal supremacy, the anti-Papal claims and controversies and many other almost bewildering allied issues. The period of Renaissance in the sixteenth century with Machiavelli as its grand child saw the revival of classical Greek learning and the attempt at divorce of politics from Religion. The period of the Reformation with emphasis on the spirit of the Christian religion once again witnessed the mingling of politics with religion and led to many wars. The Thirty Years' War of the Reformation ended in 1648, when the Treaty of Westphalia was concluded and the European states system was born. Modern International Law really begins with the estab-

lishment of the European states system and hence it is about four centuries old.

The Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Reformation periods had many contributions towards the evolution of International Law which can be seen in the following points. The developments (Oppenheim [Lauterpacht], *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 75-79) and the incidents of the period having a bearing on the issue were—(1) the emphasis by the civilians on the principles of Roman law (*Jus Civile*, *Jus Gentium*, and *Jus Naturale*) and by the canonists on the moral and ecclesiastical principles; (2) the collection of the maritime usages of great importance, e.g. the *Consolato del Mare* in the mid-fourteenth century; (3) emergence of the Leagues of Trading Towns like the Hanseatic League for the protection of trades and trading citizens providing for arbitration on controversies in some cases; (4) the system of receiving and sending permanent legations, specially in medieval Italy; (5) emergence of standing armies in the fifteenth century; (6) Renaissance with a revival of classical Greek philosophical principles; (7) Reformation with emphasis on the spirit of Christian religion and on territorial sovereignty; (8) care for the foreigner and foreign merchants; (9) Feudalism leading to the emergence of territorial sovereignty and territorial state (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 82); (10) problem of title by discovery; (11) sense of chivalry mitigating harshness in war practices (T. A. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 88 [specially among the Saracens]); (12) beginning of the contraband concept and contraband law through Christian prohibition in sending goods to the Saracens; (13) frequent treaties guaranteed by oath or pledging of places or forts; (14) emergence of the schemes of eternal peace like that of Pierre Dubois (1305); (15) the world Church concept leading to the idea of world unity. These were the major and main contributions of the period.

### GROTIUS'S CONTRIBUTION

In addition, the literature on the Law of Nations also began to grow. Grotius is declared to be the father of International Law; but his work is the product of long centuries of evolution. Beginning from St. Augustine (A.D. 354-430) there is a rich galaxy of writers and thinkers who have contributed to the growth of the Law of Nations. They are, to name only a few, Isidore of Seville (A.D. 600), Gratian (A.D. 1265), Thomas Aquinas, William of Ockham, Pierre Dubois, Marsiglio of Padua, Dante, Thomas More, and many others. But, in the matter of doctrinal development in the field, special mention of the sixteenth century writers should be made as they may be regarded as the fore-runners of Grotius. They are—Francisco Vitoria (1480-1546), a champion of Natural Law, and just war concept based on the same, and of *Jus Gentium*; Francis Suarez (1548-1617), an advocate of *Jus Gentium* and Natural Law, just war concept, and the idea of 'Society of States' based on need of mutual aid and association and interdependence of states; Pierino Belli (1502-1575), who wrote on military matters and war; Balthasar Ayala (1548-1584), who also wrote on the law and duties of war and military discipline; Alberico Gentili (1552-1608), whose main contribution is the doctrine of *rebus sic stantibus* as the tacit condition of treaties.

The seventeenth century saw significant developments. In this century, the Netherlands emerged as a strong power and the books of Grotius were published and known. There was an increase in diplomatic activities and there was the evolution of permanent embassies. Many commercial treaties were concluded: the Dutch doctrine 'Free ship, free goods; enemy ship, enemy goods' emerged. Neutral regulations regarding contraband were formulated including Right of Angary.

In the matter of doctrinal development in the field, the seventeenth century saw the publication of the works of Grotius (1583-1645). He is the father of modern International Law; with him begins the science of modern International Law. His views led to the establishment of a school known as the Grotians. Grotius's views on Natural Law, *Jus Gentium*, tolerance, just war doctrine, laws of warfare, freedom of the seas, extritoriality of embassy areas, faith of treaties, neutrality, etc. carry permanent value and are to be read by the teachers and the students of the subject even today. Grotius spoke of sociability of man and society of states. Modern writers and jurists draw inspiration from the Grotian theme.

### OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS DURING SEVENTEENTH TO NINETEENTH CENTURIES

In the seventeenth century two other writers also emerged. Samuel Pufendorf (1632-1677) was a Naturalist laying emphasis on the fact that International Law is nothing but Natural Law. He eventually became the founder of the school of Naturalists in the science of International Law. The other was Richard Zouche (1590-1660) who was the founder and exponent of Positivism which lays emphasis on voluntary International Law based on consent. Hence he is sometimes called the 'second Father of the Law of Nations'. He had a follower in Samuel Ratchel (1629-1691), a German positivist.

The eighteenth century saw the emergence of some important writers some of whom were Grotians and others Positivists. The Grotians were Christian Wolff (1676-1756), and Emmerich de Vattel (1714-1767). The Positivists were Cornelis Bynkershoek (1673-1743), John Jacob Boser (1701-1785), and George Friedrich Von Martens (1756-1821).

During the two centuries, seventeenth

and eighteenth, we then note the emergence of three schools—the Grotians, the Positivists, and the Naturalists. Moreover, on account of the all-pervading influence of Grotius during these two centuries, generally the views of Grotius held the field and Positivism could not flourish.

The story, however, becomes different in the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century inaugurates a new era in the history of International Law. There was an enormous growth in written law. Between the Congress of Vienna and 1924 there were 16,000 treaties according to one estimate, and 10,000 treaties according to another. It was the era of Positivism. Numerous conventions and treaties were entered into creating laws on different aspects. Positivism meaning the consent basis of International Law also received encouragement from the writers like Austin, Mancini, Lorimar, Savigny, Haffter, Martens, Bluntschli, and others.

#### THE MODERN TREND

The twentieth century, however, witnesses a turn in the trend. There is dissatisfaction with Positivism specially since World War I. Three developments (S. K. Mukherjee, *A New Outlook for International Law* [specially the last two chapters]) may be noted in the twentieth century which change the nature and character of International Law. These are: (1) abandonment of positivism to a large extent; (2) emergence of a sociology of International Law; (3) the recognition of individuals and international organizations as subjects of International Law. The impact of these three developments is epoch-making. The first enables International Law to be functional and teleological as can be seen from the provision of the U. N. Charter. The second strengthens the basis of International Law as it is to be based on interdependence or

mutuality of interests and thus lays the foundation of the world community. The third makes International Law much wider as it is to cover not only the states, but also the individuals and the international organizations.

The science of International Law today is inspired with Grotianism. It has developed a teleology which is 'justice' and 'human ends'. In other words, the more important thing in modern International Law is the value content of the law than the positive consent behind the law. The twentieth-century approach is that International Law is to earn validity not through consent but through value. Further, it lays adequate emphasis on the imperatives of interdependence which tend to outweigh the mandates of independence. The mandates of independence generate and stimulate the forces that divide: the imperatives of interdependence vitalize the forces that unite. Modern International Law draws inspiration from the faith that the forces that unite will overrule the forces that divide. In other words, subjective integration based on a community sentiment will undo the tendency towards disintegration. The unity in the non-political level will soften the edge of the 'political' and will ultimately neutralize the disunity in the political level. This is not an easy task. There are hurdles and handicaps: Yet the trend is there and it should be further strengthened. Lastly, modern International Law has discarded the monopoly subject status of the states and has brought in new subjects in the field, viz. the individuals and international organizations. In the light of these developments, modern International Law, I believe, should be re-defined, and the new definition is that it is a law for the just and equitable regulation of inter-unit relations within the world community.

## THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN MODERN THOUGHT—I GENERAL BACKGROUND

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THE exact scope of the present theme has to be properly defined at the beginning, for it may seem to be rather too comprehensive for a brief discourse. The very concept of *man* is a comprehensive, although a familiar, one; it commands a wide range of connotation. So, in my discourse, I only propose to bring into focus the main lines of development along which the philosophical orientation of the concept of man has taken shape within the purview of modern thought. But as to the wide scope which may well be suggested by the expression 'modern thought', I am to deal here with the background of the recent and contemporary philosophy of man. And for this I shall be taking into consideration only the more significant landmarks and phases in the philosophical investigations of men as they find place in the history of European thought—right from the seventeenth century. However, no exhaustive historical account as such—nor a strictly chronological one—of modern thought as it bears on the problem of man is to be attempted in the present context.

### WHAT MAN IS: THE EARLIER VIEWS

'The proper study of mankind is man'—that is what the eighteenth-century English poet, Alexander Pope, declared. This emphasis on man, on man's knowledge of himself can, however, be traced much earlier in the history of European thought. It was Protagoras of ancient Greece, who already in the fifth century B.C. formulated that well-known maxim: man is the measure of all things—of the existent that they are, and of the non-existent that they are not. Subsequently as we come to Socrates and the post-Socratic Greek thought, the problem of man seems to have an acknowledged place in the mind of the philosopher.

In Socrates, unlike in the pre-Socratic tradition at large, we no longer have an independent theory of nature or an independent logical theory of being as such. One question remains as fundamental: what is man? Socrates always maintains and defends the ideal of an objective absolute universal truth. But the universe he knows and to which all his enquiries do refer is pre-eminently the universe of man. In that sense his philosophy—if, of course, one could strictly speak of a

systematic philosophy in his case—might rather be regarded as an ‘anthropological’ one. It was ‘anthropological’ in the sense of having man as the centre of reference.

This question of man, along with the urge to self-knowledge of man, was present right at the early stage of human culture—in all countries. Thus, we find, for instance, the dictum of *ātmānam viddhi* in the Upaniṣadic tradition in India, and the well-known Delphic motto of ‘know thyself’ in the ancient Hellenic tradition. Self-knowledge is indeed regarded as the first prerequisite of self-realization. In every philosophical question, man himself is placed—whether implicitly or explicitly. Philosophic reflection first arises when the obvious belief in a world-order is disturbed—an order to which man had earlier known himself to belong. Then he seeks afresh to ascertain in reflection the nature and structure of this order, so that he might gain once again the certainty of his being in the knowledge of that reality outside him.

In such an attempt, however, man could yet remain without entering as the explicit theme of philosophic enquiry. It is exactly at this point that modern philosophic thought—taking the meaning of ‘modern’, of course, in a wider perspective in the history of European thought at large—presents a remarkable departure. Here at last—at least in the major stream, one might say, of modern western thought—man comes to be more directly the theme of philosophical investigation, and not merely a broad frame of reference nor a mere corollary to a general theory of reality. The question of the essence and reality of man was posed in right earnest as the central theme of philosophic discourse. Moreover, as one shall see subsequently, the question of man was sought to be understood more and more in the light of the contemporary situation of man,

viewed individually as well as collectively.

Reflections on man—although in a theological framework—were certainly exhibited as early as in the medieval thought of Europe, in the system of Thomas Aquinas in particular. Aquinas looked upon man as placed in the middle point between the lower hierarchy of earthly existence and the higher order of supramundane or heavenly existence. The typical awareness, however, of the need of the modern age for a conscious deliberate theory of man as man was perhaps for the first time demonstrated by the eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher, David Hume.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF HUME

The original task of Hume’s philosophy was to offer a unified theory of man, and he attempted to formulate such a view in his *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Proceeding more as a ‘metaphysician of human nature’ (and not one of Reality), Hume posed for himself two broad questions pertaining to a theory of man. Firstly, what type of a being is man? Is he a rational or a non-rational being, or is he a combination of both? Secondly, what are the principles of human nature which guide man in his theoretic and extra-theoretic life?

Hume’s philosophical ambition was indeed to be ‘the Newton of human nature’, as he himself expressed it in his *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding*—i.e. ‘to build a science of human nature itself on as strong foundations of laws as Newton had built the physical science (David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding*, Section I). How far did that ambition of Hume meet with fulfilment, and how far was it subsequently taken up and carried on by his successors? The answer, I am afraid, would not be very much in the affirmative. But two important points were definitely

gained by Hume. In the first instance, he showed the possibility of launching on a systematic study of the human nature in its different aspects of the 'understanding' (i.e. the intellectual faculty), the 'passions' (i.e. the emotive faculty) and 'morals' (i.e. the conative faculty). And the whole investigation was undertaken through what Hume preferred to call 'the experimental method', i.e. the method of empirical observation and analysis. Indeed, the science of man was meant by Hume to be the most fundamental discipline on which every other discipline, whether in natural science or outside, should ultimately rest. And that for the simple reason that every body of knowledge is *man's* knowledge, and, as such, dependent on man's faculty of knowing and understanding.

The second point followed as an outcome of Hume's enquiries in his demonstrating the predominance of the non-rational faculty over the rational in human nature. 'Reason is and ought to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them'—such was, in brief, the verdict of Hume on the relative position of the rational and the non-rational faculties of the mind. So Hume emphasized the basic role of the natural non-rational element in the mind—what he prefers to call 'nature'. In this respect Hume seems to fall more in line with the Romantic movement of Rousseau. Rousseau, the philosopher of feeling, glorified the 'natural man' as replacing the conventional man.

Yet, with all his emphasis on the non-rational or the natural element in the human mind, Hume was still fundamentally a believer in reason and science. Indeed Hume's opposition to reason was never radical to that extent—as for instance, with Rousseau—so as to go against the generally accepted European conception of man as 'animal rationale' or rational animal.

Hume's scepticism—as with Protagoras too, in a less developed way—was simply the counterpart of a resolute humanism. By the denial of the objective certainty of the external world, the sceptic-humanist meant to throw all the thoughts of man back upon his own being.

The necessary bearing of *reason* on the essence of man has generally been emphasized in the central—and one may say, the dominant—tradition of western thought. Here we are once more led back to that classical landmark of European thought, viz. Socrates. The latter never mentioned a direct definition of man. He rather admitted that the nature of man could not be discovered in the same way as we could detect the nature of physical things. But the point that he emphasized was that man alone was the creature who was constantly in search of himself, who was to be assessed by his critical attitude, towards human life itself. As Ernst Cassirer, the distinguished philosopher of culture in modern times, puts it, man is defined by Socrates as 'that being who, when asked a rational question, can give a rational answer' (Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*).

#### DESCARTES

The acceptance of this tradition of the concept of 'animal rationale' marked, no doubt, the development of modern European philosophy, right from Descartes (seventeenth century) himself. Only the conception was more systematically and consciously worked out. Along with this there further combined the Socratic strain of conceiving man as beyond physical categories. If man were to be defined, he could be so only in terms of his consciousness. Thus, in Descartes' discovery of the foundation of '*ego cogito*' we find the basic direction of modern thought in a way determined. The thinking subject or 'I' is said to have a unique self-certitude of its own.

The autonomy of man, again, occupied a significant place in Descartes' thought. It followed from his assertion of consciousness, of rational thinking for that, as the essential quality of the self. The subject that is 'I' becomes the fundamental principle which exercises its function essentially through reason. All reality was sought to be comprehended in terms of the certitude of reason or rational cognition. Through the inner light of reason as the continental Rationalists preferred to call it—man's supremacy over nature was promised. At the same time all forms of human society and social organizations were sought to be understood, on ultimate analysis, in conformity with the thinking subject itself.

#### HEGEL

Following this line of the continental Rationalists (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), holding rational cognition as the key to our comprehension of reality as a whole, we come at last to the philosophy of Hegel (late eighteenth century). In the Hegelian orientation in the form of Absolute Idealism, the fundamental definition of man as the thinking subject remains. The principle of subjectivity, which was treated practically as equivalent to reason, proved still to be dominant in the philosophical orientation of man throughout the modern age—right from Descartes down to Hegel, through Kant.

At this stage, however, we may pause briefly to take note of another great movement in the eighteenth-century Europe—one that had its roots nevertheless in early Greek thought—viz. Enlightenment. Its one guiding principle was the autonomy of reason, but reason was looked upon as an acquisition of man, and not merely as the theoretic faculty, as with the Rationalists. Through reflective reason the known world of concrete objective reality could

be widened, and the mind of man, society, state, and nature itself could all be analysed. The point of departure for the whole movement was man—as for instance, pre-eminently voiced in those words of Pope, one of the chief literary protagonists of the English Enlightenment. The nature of man presented for these men of Enlightenment a qualitatively new dimension.

#### KANT

Kant, representing in his 'transcendental philosophy' the high-water mark of Enlightenment, gave clear expression to the spirit of Enlightenment in his advocacy of the rational autonomy of the human *person*. We may well recall Kant's characteristic statement in his answer to the question, 'What is Enlightenment?' Kant declares: 'Enlightenment is the departure of man from his minor state, the latter having been brought about through his own fault. This minor state is the incapacity to serve one's own understanding without the guidance from another. Self-committed is this minor state when it has for its cause not the lack of understanding as such, but the lack of resolution and courage to serve oneself without the guidance of others. So have courage to serve your own understanding—and that is the motto of Enlightenment!'

As Kant himself pointed out, philosophy in the universal sense was to address itself to these questions: (1) What can I know? (2) What should I do? (3) What could I hope? (4) What is man? (Immanuel Kant, *Logic* [Introduction]). Metaphysics was to answer the first question, morals the second, religion the third, and anthropology the fourth one. But he did not simply piece together the fourth question to the first three. On the contrary, he contended that one could count all the three questions under the title of 'anthropology' for they all refer back to

the question of what man is. Kant, of course, spoke of anthropology only in general; but the anthropology which was to take the place of the foundation of philosophy was to be a 'philosophical' one. Even though the latter was never quite developed in Kantian philosophy itself, the central stress in the Kantian ethics on the autonomy of human person was only too pronounced. His maxim was to look upon every man as an end in itself, and never as a means. Indeed, the ideal order of human community as Kant conceived it was to be a 'realm of ends'.

The Kantian note of the autonomy of a rational person seemed, however, to be submerged in the Hegelian orientation of rationalism towards a full-fledged pan-intellectualistic metaphysical system. For Hegel, the chief principle is the spirit (*Geist*), which is the Absolute, but which is also the true and universal essence of man. The external peculiarities of man are to be understood only in the light of the 'inner universality', which is the Spirit. Hegel stressed that man was man exclusively through the Spirit. And his concept of Spirit was not meant *anthropologically*, but *theologically*—as the Christian Logos, and as such necessarily as 'above man'. In Hegel's philosophical theology, the universal definition of man was that man was the Spirit understood in the Christian way, and not the bare man who was conditioned in the mundane way. It was this concept of man, totally abstract and unrelated to the concrete human reality, which led many of Hegel's successors to question and modify his absolutist metaphysics, particularly in view of the question of man.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF SUBJECTIVITY

At this stage one turning point in the development of modern thought has to be taken into consideration. It was the direction towards overcoming what might

generally be characterized as the 'philosophy of subjectivity'—one that dominated at large the modern age (since Descartes) till the collapse of German Idealism in the nineteenth century. The Cartesian conception of the self-conscious subject and its rational certitude was carried too far on the wings of Hegelian Absolutism. It landed into a totally abstract concept of man absorbed in a pan-intellectualistic system. In attempting to overcome the philosophy of subjectivity, which took shape in the philosophy of the Absolute and of timeless Reason, the nineteenth century thinking turned to anthropology. In other words, there was a turn from the Absolute Spirit of Hegelian philosophy to the concrete finite reality of the sensuous human being, who had a situation in the social and historical reality.

The first formidable assertion of this revolt against the conception of 'abstract man' was put forward in the nineteenth century by the German philosopher, Ludwig Feuerbach. For Feuerbach, in direct antithesis to the Hegelian notion, the bodily man was the highest essence of man. His whole attempt was to transform the Absolutist philosophy of Spirit into a *human* philosophy of man. In his philosophy of man, which stood in direct opposition to philosophical theology, the task was to make man the object of philosophy and philosophy the object of man. The new philosophy that Feuerbach proposed was not to begin with God or the Absolute, but with the finite mortal man. Man is man so far as he is embodied and lives in the world.

This trend of thought—materialistic or naturalistic as it was—was further organized and strengthened at the hands of Karl Marx. The Marxian orientation of man was unmistakably directed towards the *concrete* man. In his attempt 'to make man *man*', Marx took into consideration the social



relationships in which man produced through work the commodities required to satisfy him. But man is at the same time a self-alienated producer of goods; and 'the true man' has to be gained back—a task in which Marx identified himself with the 'real humanism' of Feuerbach. Marx held that the 'human' emancipation of man related not to man as the ego and the alter-ego, but to the *world of man*; for man himself was his human world. The fundamental anthropological content was thus never lost sight of by Marx in his critique of the middle-class society and economy while offering the critique of the middle-class (*bourgeoisie*) man.

The preoccupation with the anthropological question, so far as Feuerbach and Marx were concerned, turned upon the question of the *concrete* man. It was a swing to the other pole of the Hegelian conception of man. But in the Marxian orientation, through a commitment to the doctrine of historical and economic determinism, a philosophically comprehensive view of man, seemed to be missing. Although the concrete historical setting of man in the process of economic production was rightly taken into consideration, a view of man entirely in terms of his class character was not found philosophically satisfying and adequate by most of the philosophers succeeding Marx.

#### THE IMPACT OF THE SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW

At this stage we have to take into account another stream of the late nineteenth century thought which substantially contributed towards the making of 'philosophical anthropology' as somewhat of a new discipline (or part of a discipline). I mean the impact of the scientific point of view, particularly the biological sciences, along with the social sciences. On the one hand, the special sciences which dealt with man from one point of view or another—

partial though the respective treatments as such were—also contributed their perspectives gradually towards a total view of man. Thus, the biological and physiological, medical, psychological, ethnological, sociological, and historical perspectives were gained. Added to all these, there was the general impact of August Comte's Positivism (or Humanism) in the nineteenth century—his emphasis on the positive sciences along with the glorification of the 'grand being' of humanity.

Now the perspective from special science which came to be uppermost towards the orientation of a fuller view of man was the biological one, i.e. one relating to the phenomenon of *life*. The question regarding the world of man was posed as a biological problem of man's relationship with his environment. This led to the consideration of the conditions under which the human species could maintain itself in the environmental situation of his. Consequently emerged the grand concept of Life, which became the keyword to indicate the *concretion* of the human essence. Here we find indeed another stream towards the concretion of human essence—one that took a different course than the Marxian trend.

#### CONCEPTIONS OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY PHILOSOPHERS

The principle of Life assumed with a formidable section of nineteenth century philosophers a double meaning towards a reorientation of the philosophy of man. On the one hand, there was the *biological* sense, on the other, there was the *historico-social* meaning of life. It was Friedrich Nietzsche, who was responsible for bringing this concept of life into the philosophical arena—one which quite profoundly touched the post-Hegelian world of thinking in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Nietzsche's concept of life sought to comprehend both the historical as well as the

biological meaning. As for the historico-social meaning of life, Wilhelm Dilthey of Germany was the outstanding exponent of that stream. (Nietzsche, Dilthey, and, later on, Bergson are counted as the three independent exponents, in three different lines, of what is broadly termed as the philosophy of the life-principle [*Lebensphilosophie*]).

To a keen awareness of the decadence of the Greco-Roman and Christian heritage in the contemporary European 'ethos', Nietzsche reacted only too radically. The Christian world, according to him, displaced man of his right dimension; through such delusive notions as 'humanity', 'manhood', 'sympathy', 'compassion', it had only led to the 'diminution of the whole type of man', as Nietzsche put it. As a protest against this displacement of humanity, he offered his radical critique of modern man. What he urged was a conquest of man, which amounted to the outgrowing of the whole of the Christian humanity.

Further, for Nietzsche, man could be overcome only in the 'Superman', who steps in while 'God is dead', as Nietzsche typically declared. In this process of conquest, man would lose his traditionally accepted status of a being placed between the divine being and the animal. Happiness, reason, virtue, rectitude, sympathy—all these traditional notions should no more be binding in the context of a new orientation of man as Nietzsche visualized it. Consequently the motto he laid down was: transvaluation of all values. Referring to this, Nietzsche urged—'that is my formula for an act of the highest self-consciousness of mankind' (F. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*).

This almost semi-romantic assertion of the 'human, all too human' never, however, developed with Nietzsche into a systematic philosophy—nor was it meant to be so. In the thought of Dilthey, on the other hand, we definitely come across

a more systematically and scientifically developed interpretation of man towards the turn of the present century. There is, however, one point common to both the interpretations of life—in Nietzsche as well as in Dilthey. Human life—whether understood more in the biological or more in the historico-social sense—was sought to be explained by both the thinkers in *immanent* terms (i.e. not as the transcendent principles in relation to the known phenomena of life). That meant, as Dilthey urged, that life was to be interpreted purely out of its own laws, behind which nothing further could be traced; or as Nietzsche urged, the laws of life were not grounded metaphysically in any 'world behind' (*Hinterwelt*).

To Wilhelm Dilthey—in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the present—goes to a large extent the credit of driving towards a philosophical anthropology, i.e. a total view of man, emerging as a result of the partial viewpoints gained from different special sciences. With the significant developments in the historico-sociological knowledge, the philosophical questions on the social character of human being and on the relative being and meaning of the individual and society took on a new shape. As Dilthey contended, the 'human-social-historical world' in general was the urgent theme of a philosophical theory of reality.

The central principle of Dilthey was that of a 'purely immanent' explanation of the human-historical life. Life was to be understood out of itself—all metaphysical explanations being shut out, i.e. no reference to transcendent principles should be there. Nor was life to be understood in a merely biological sense. Rather what was meant was 'life knowing itself'—as a principle which could be approached immediately 'from within' in the reflection of its structures as demonstrated in the 'categories of life'. What Dilthey attempted to bring

out may negatively be put as the destruction of metaphysics—particularly of the theological world-view—and positively, as the reduction of metaphysics to anthropology. In this way human nature was also sought to be naturalized.

In Dilthey's orientation the tradition of the philosophy of history necessarily entered into anthropology. Human being was demonstrated in the unity and totality of his living experience. The key to such demonstration was, of course, man's situation in the world process and the meaning of his being, taking its shape in the personal as well as in the historical understanding of life. With the introduction of this new 'anthropological' problem, there came in a clear departure from the older metaphysical theory of self—a theory which had been directed to the concept of self as the spiritual substance, conceived on a transcendental plane.

#### THE MODERN CONCEPT

As a result of these various developments in the nineteenth century, the ground was ready by the turn of the present century for a further theory of man. All the major motives contributing towards the shaping of this new discipline, that gradually came to be known as 'philosophical anthropology', were present. The nature of man was demonstrated within the framework of our experience of reality primarily as a natural being. But though rooted in the bio-physical life process, man yet grows out of the order of living beings in general. At the same time man's existence was discovered to be one necessarily in a world which is relatively *open*. Further it was recognized that there was need for man to act, to produce and to maintain his life in and through the productive work. Finally, there was the recognition of the *historical* character of work in society, in and through which

human race would not only maintain, but also perpetuate itself. In fine, it was recognized that man was a being who *discovered* himself.

Towards the recognition of man as a natural being the overall impact of Darwin's Evolutionism was, of course, very great. Subsequently the so called philosophy of the life-principle (*Lebens-philosophie*) particularly with Dilthey—joined its force in the naturalization of man. As for the social emphasis, i.e. the emphasis on the concrete human society in which man lives, the impact of the Marxian orientation as well as of Dilthey's was there to be reckoned with. The concept of man was in need of being oriented through the objective interests of man's world of experience through such interests as proceed out of the historical tendencies of social development.

All these factors brought into relief the task of fixing, on the basis of biological, sociological, and historical findings, the special and unique structure of man's nature—his essential distinction from animals and his specific position in the universe around him. This was the task at large towards meeting which several first rank thinkers of the twentieth century (particularly of the European Continent) subsequently addressed themselves by putting forward their respective views and theories of man.

#### CONCLUSION

At this concluding stage of the present discourse, it may be worth-while to sum up the features and conditions guiding the philosophy of man which was to emerge from the various movements of thought in the nineteenth century. Two points can be put forward: (1) On the one hand, man was to be viewed not as the being which was over or beyond nature, not as pure spirit or '*res cogitans*' (as Descartes would

put it), or as the pure subject of consciousness—in a word, not as the isolated autonomous (at least relatively) mind or subject. (2) On the other hand, a notion of man merely as a natural being (i.e. a being entirely involved in or subject to the conditions of nature) also proved to be inadequate.

As a result the question that emerged was that of the paradoxical way of being

pertaining to man. Man is *in* nature; and, at the same time, he stands over against nature, so far as he cognizes and acts on nature, and also surpasses it in his essential characteristics. This was indeed the direction towards which the new discipline of philosophical anthropology sought to work out its programme towards constructing an integrated view of man and his place in the world, or rather in the Universe itself.

We are not individuals yet. We are struggling towards individuality, and that is the Infinite, that is the real nature of man. He alone lives whose life is in the whole universe, and the more we concentrate our lives on limited things, the faster we go towards death. Those moments alone we live when our lives are in the universe, in others; and living this little life is death, simply death, and that is why the fear of death comes. The fear of death can only be conquered when man realises that so long as there is one life in this universe, he is living. When he can say, 'I am in everything, in everybody, I am in all lives, I am the universe,' then alone comes the state of fearlessness. ... It is only the Spirit that is the individual, because it is infinite. No infinity can be divided; infinity cannot be broken into pieces. It is the same one, undivided unit for ever, and this is the individual man, the Real Man. The apparent man is merely a struggle to express, to manifest, this individuality which is beyond; and evolution is not in the Spirit. These changes which are going on—the wicked becoming good, the animal becoming man, take them in whatever way you like—are not in the Spirit. They are evolution of nature and manifestation of Spirit.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Volume II,  
Mayavati Memorial Edition, pp. 80-81)

INSTITUTE NEWS  
SCHOOL OF HUMANISTIC AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
EIGHTH ACADEMIC YEAR: AUGUST 1968--APRIL 1969  
PROSPECTUS  
AND  
SYLLABUSES OF COURSES

The Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies enters on its eighth academic year with the current session (August 1968—April 1969).

Beginning with a single general course of studies in 1961-62 on the subject of the life, thought, and culture of the peoples of India, and of the rest of the world, the School has registered a steady progress year by year. During 1964-67, three special courses were added, namely, studies in Shakespeare, a course in Music Appreciation, and a course of studies in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. Last year a condensed course on 'Know India' and another course on 'Five Great Writers of the World' were introduced.

During the current session, the whole scheme has been reorganized and the syllabus would include the following topics :

I. GENERAL COURSE

1. Great Religions of the World
2. Political Ideas and Institutions
3. The Poetical Heritage of Man
4. Indian Culture

II. SPECIAL COURSE

1. Indian Culture Appreciation through Studies in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*
2. Music Appreciation through Studies in the Musical Heritage of India and the West

The School has certain unique features which it derives from the ideals and objectives of the Institute itself. The

Institute was established in 1938 as a permanent memorial to Sri Ramakrishna with aims and objects designed to uphold great ideals of unity, harmony, and fellowship in India and among the various peoples, cultures, and religions of the world—ideals of which Sri Ramakrishna himself was the embodiment. Thus it was that, in addition to other diverse activities of the Institute, this School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies was established. The School is unique in that the education which it imparts to its students is designed to give them a comprehensive human outlook—education that deepens and broadens one's vision and sympathy by the assimilation of the best traditions of one's own culture along with that of humanity as a whole. The world stands in very great need of this educational approach in order to achieve global unity. This was emphasized again and again by Swami Vivekananda. The School seeks to provide, through its diverse courses of studies, an approach by which the students will gain a global viewpoint through a sympathetic understanding of the world's cultural heritage.

*Method of Study*

All the courses in the School will be conducted in English. The subject-matter in the various courses will be presented with a view to stimulating thinking among the students. The students are encouraged to ask questions ; ten minutes are devoted to discussion after each lecture. The aim is to make the students not just passive listeners,

but active participants in the educational process.

### *Working Hours*

The School functions as an evening college on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays (other than listed Institute holidays) between 6.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.

### *Admission and Fees*

Admission is open to all persons above the age of sixteen; a fair knowledge of English is essential.

An admission fee of Rs. 2 is charged for each course. Tuition fees for each of the six groups are as follows and have to be paid at the time of admission :

#### *General Course*

1. Great Religions of the World—Rs. 8.00
2. Political Ideas and Institutions --Rs. 8.00
3. Poetical Heritage of Man—Rs. 8.00
4. Indian Culture--Rs. 8.00

If any one takes all the groups in the General Course, he is to pay a tuition fee of Rs. 25.00 and an admission fee of Rs. 2.00 only.

#### *Special Course*

1. Indian Culture Appreciation through studies in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*—Rs. 8.00
2. Music Appreciation through Studies in the Musical Heritage of India and the West—Rs. 8.00

Any one taking both the courses will receive the benefit of a concessional tuition fee of Rs. 40.00 with a single admission fee of Rs. 2.00.

### *Certificates*

Certificates of attendance will be awarded to students at the end of the academic year.

### *Details of the Courses*

#### **I. GENERAL COURSE**

##### **First Term**

##### **1. Great Religions of the World**

##### *Aim of the Course*

This course of lectures is designed to provide a general but an analytical study of the different religions of the world. It will comprise 25 lectures which will seek to inculcate in the students a spirit of tolerance for all religions of the world through a proper understanding of their spirit, as ignorance of it lies at the root of much of the ill-feeling between followers of different religions.

##### *Duration*

The first term will extend from Friday, 2 August 1968 to Friday, 13 September 1968.

##### **Second Term**

##### **2. Political Ideas and Institutions**

##### *Aim of the Course*

The aim of the course is to give the students a general knowledge about political ideas and institutions springing from the remotest past and developing into the present generation.

##### *Duration*

The second term will extend from Friday, 25 October 1968 to Friday, 6 December 1968.

##### **Third Term**

##### **3. Poetical Heritage of Man**

##### *Aim of the Course*

With a view to providing an insight into the poetical heritage and the humanistic traditions of mankind, as revealed through some of the world's greatest epics and lyrics of different literature, this course has

been introduced this year with 15 lectures dealing with Greek and Sanskrit epics, and lyrics in Sanskrit, English, French, German, Bengali, and Chinese literature.

#### *Duration*

This course will commence on Monday, 9 December 1968 and end on Friday, 3 January 1969.

### **Fourth Term**

#### **4. Indian Culture**

#### *Aim of the Course*

The aim of the course is to provide knowledge of Indian Culture as expressed through her philosophical and religious teachings as also through her literature.

#### *Duration*

This course will commence on Monday, 6 January 1969 and end on Friday, 31 January 1969.

### **II. SPECIAL COURSE**

#### **1. Indian Culture Appreciation through Studies in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata***

#### *Aim of the Course*

The aim of this course of study is to bring invaluable treasures hidden in these two Indian epics within easy reach of the lovers of India's cultural heritage.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* are unique documents in the literary history of the world. Specially in the field of religion, mysticism, and philosophy, as well as social and political thought, they have depicted phases ranging from mundane to the divine, from the empirical to the transcendental levels of life. In them we get a glimpse of the vigorous development of

the Hindu mind from the Vedic to the epic ages. In them we get rich specimens of the songs to Nature reminiscent of those of the earlier Vedic bards. In them we also get illuminating discussions and profound teachings on the philosophy of human nature and destiny. They reveal nature, man, and the gods in their closest intimacy. Above all, they convey to us the message of *Dharma*, the central theme of Indian culture in its different aspects, individual and social, and presents before us a galaxy of men and women who incorporated this value in themselves and whose example had the most powerful impact on subsequent social evolution not only in India but also in South-East Asia.

#### *Duration*

This course will commence on Friday, 7 February 1969 and end on Friday, 4 April 1969.

#### **2. Music Appreciation through Studies in the Musical Heritage of India and the West**

#### *Aim of the Course*

With a view to providing an insight into the traditions of Indian and Western music, this course offers a study of the two schools of Indian music, namely, Hindusthani and Karnatic, together with the School of Western music, leading to the promotion and exchange of knowledge and mutual appreciation of each other's cultural legacy.

#### *Duration*

This course, comprising 6 lectures each on Hindusthani, Karnatic, and Western music systems will commence on Thursday, 8 August 1968 and end on Thursday, 7 November 1968.

For further particulars please contact the Institute's Reception Counter, or write to the Assistant Director.

## SYLLABUSES OF COURSES

## I. GENERAL COURSE

## SCHEDULE FOR THE FIRST TERM

*Friday, 2 August to Friday, 13 September 1968*

## 1. GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

*Friday, 2 August 1968*

(1) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS:

MAN'S NEED FOR RELIGION:

The Hon. Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji

SELF-INTRODUCTION BY PARTICIPANTS

(2) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 5 August 1968*

(3) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

COMPARATIVE RELIGION:

Principal A. K. Mazumdar

THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN VEDANTA:

Swami Mukhyananda

(4) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 9 August 1968*

(5) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA:

Professor Sukumar Sen Gupta

THE TEACHINGS OF THE GITA:

Swami Sivanananda

(6) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 12 August 1968*

(7) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

REVELATIONS OF THE JEWISH PROPHETS:

LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF CHRIST:

Rev. R. Antoine

(8) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 16 August 1968*

(9) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH:

Rev. John Pothen

THE CHRISTIAN SERVICE:

Rev. John Pothen

(10) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 19 August 1968*

(11) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

MOHAMMED AND ISLAM:

Dr. Sukumar Ray

MUSLIM SAINTS AND MYSTICS:

Dr. Hiralal Chopra

(12) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 23 August 1968*

(13) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

CHRISTIAN SAINTS AND MYSTICS:

Rev. R. Antoine

SAINTS OF MEDIEVAL INDIA:

Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

(14) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.



*Monday, 26 August 1968*

(15) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(16) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 30 August 1968*

(17) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(18) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 2 September 1968*

(19) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(20) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 6 September 1968*

(21) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(22) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 9 September 1968*

(23) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(24) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 13 September 1968*

(25) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(26) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

LAOTSE AND CONFUCIUS:

Professor Tripurari Chakravarti

SHINTOISM:

Professor Tripurari Chakravarti

'RELIGION OF MAN'—RABINDRANATH:

Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

'LIFE DIVINE' OF SRI AUROBINDO

Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

THE STOICS:

Dr. Debiprasad Chatterjee

THE HUMANISTS:

Dr. Debiprasad Chatterjee

THE IDEA OF GOD:

Principal J. C. Banerjee

THE IDEA OF SOUL:

Principal J. C. Banerjee

THE IDEA OF SIN:

Principal A. K. Mazumdar

THE IDEA OF WORSHIP:

Principal A. K. Mazumdar

RELIGION AND SOCIETY:

Sri Hiranmay Banerjee

ORGANIZED RELIGION:

Principal A. K. Mazumdar

#### SCHEDULE FOR THE SECOND TERM

*Friday, 25 October to Friday, 6 December 1968*

#### 2. POLITICAL IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS

*Friday, 25 October 1968*

(1) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(2) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

POLITICAL IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS IN  
ANCIENT INDIA I:

Dr. R. C. Majumdar

POLITICAL IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS IN  
ANCIENT INDIA II:

Dr. R. C. Majumdar

*Monday, 28 October 1968*

(3) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(4) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 1 November 1968*

(5) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(6) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 4 November 1968*

(7) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(8) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 8 November 1968*

(9) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(10) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 11 November 1968*

(11) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(12) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 15 November 1968*

(13) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(14) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 18 November 1968*

(15) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(16) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 22 November 1968*

(17) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(18) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Monday, 25 November 1968*

(19) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(20) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

PLATO:

Professor Parimal Kar

ARISTOTLE:

Professor Parimal Kar

SOCIAL IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS IN  
MEDIEVAL EUROPE:

DEMOCRACY I:

Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya

DEMOCRACY II:

Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya

DEMOCRACY III:

Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM I:

Professor Gautami Chattopadhyay

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM II:

Professor Gautami Chattopadhyay

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM III:

Professor Gautami Chattopadhyay

EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW I:

EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW II:

WORLD GOVERNMENT I:

Miss Basanti Mitra

WORLD GOVERNMENT II:

Miss Basanti Mitra

WORLD GOVERNMENT III:

Miss Basanti Mitra

IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON SOCIETY I:

Dr. Shyamadas Chatterjee

IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON SOCIETY II:

Dr. Shyamadas Chatterjee

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF WORLD  
COMMUNITY I:

Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF WORLD  
COMMUNITY II:

Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

*Friday, 29 November 1968*

(21) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(22) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

IDEAL OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD:

NON-VIOLENCE IN HUMAN RELATIONS:

*Monday, 2 December 1968*

(23) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(24) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

VIEWS ON THE MEANING OF HISTORY I:

VIEWS ON THE MEANING OF HISTORY II:

*Friday, 6 December 1968*

(25) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(26) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

FUTURE OF MANKIND:

SEMINAR:

### SCHEDULE FOR THE THIRD TERM

*Monday, 9 December 1968 to Friday, 3 January 1969*

#### 3. POETICAL HERITAGE OF MAN

*Monday, 9 December 1968*

(1) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(2) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

THE GREEK EPICS I:

THE GREEK EPICS II:

*Friday, 13 December 1968*

(3) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(4) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

THE SANSKRIT EPICS I:

Professor Hemanta Kumar Ganguly

THE SANSKRIT EPICS II:

Professor Hemanta Kumar Ganguly

*Monday, 16 December 1968*

(5) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(6) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

EPICS OF OTHER LITERATURES:

SANSKRIT LYRICS:

Dr. Ramaranjan Mukhopadhyay

*Friday, 20 December 1968*

(7) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(8) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

ENGLISH LYRICS I:

Professor P. K. Guha

ENGLISH LYRICS II:

Professor P. K. Guha

*Monday, 23 December 1968*

(9) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(10) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

ENGLISH LYRICS III:

Professor P. K. Guha

FRENCH AND GERMAN LYRICS:

*Friday, 27 December 1968*

(11) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(12) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

BENGALI LYRICS I:

BENGALI LYRICS II:

*Monday, 30 December 1968*

(13) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

CHINESE-JAPANESE LYRICS:

(14) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

WHAT IS POETRY I:

Professor P. K. Guha

*Friday, 3 January 1969*

(15) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

WHAT IS POETRY II:

Professor P. K. Guha

(16) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

SEMINAR:

#### SCHEDULE FOR THE FOURTH TERM

*Monday, 6 January to Friday, 31 January 1969*

#### 4. INDIAN CULTURE

*Monday, 6 January 1969*

(1) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

ADVAITA VEDANTA:

(2) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

VISISTADVAITA VEDANTA:

*Friday, 10 January 1969*

(3) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

VEDANTA FOR EAST AND WEST:

Swami Mukhyananda

(4) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

THE PATHS OF YOGA IN THE GITA—JNANA:

Swami Ananyananda

*Monday, 13 January 1969*

(5) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

THE PATHS OF YOGA IN THE GITA—KARMA:

(6) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

THE PATHS OF YOGA IN THE GITA—BHAKTI:

*Friday, 17 January 1969*

(7) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

THE BHAKTI CULT IN INDIA—VAISNAVAS:

Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

(8) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

PHILOSOPHICO-MYSTIC CULT—SAIVISM:

NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN:

Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

*Monday, 20 January 1969*

(9) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

ESOTERIC CULT—SAKTA, PASUPATA, AND  
TANTRIKA:

Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

(10) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

SYNTHESIS IN INDIAN CULTURE:

Swami Mukhyananda

*Friday, 24 January 1969*

(11) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

SANSKRIT LITERATURE:

(12) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

BENGOALI LITERATURE:

*Monday, 27 January 1969*

(13) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(14) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 31 January 1969*

(15) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(16) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

HINDI LITERATURE:

Sri Krishnacharia

TAMIL LITERATURE:

Professor V. Krishnaswami

MARATHI-GUJARATI LITERATURE:

SEMINAR:

## II. SPECIAL COURSE

### 1. INDIAN CULTURE APPRECIATION THROUGH STUDIES IN THE RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

*Speaker:* Professor Tripurari Chakravarti

*Friday, 7 February to Friday, 4 April 1969*

*Friday, 7 February 1969*

(1) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(2) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 14 February 1969*

(3) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(4) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 21 February 1969*

(5) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(6) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 28 February 1969*

(7) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(8) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 7 March 1969*

(9) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(10) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

THE RĀMĀYAṆA AS THE ĀDI-KAVYA OF INDIA

GREAT CHARACTERS OF THE RĀMĀYAṆA:

(1) RAMA

GREAT CHARACTERS OF THE RĀMĀYAṆA:

RAMA

GREAT CHARACTERS OF THE RĀMĀYAṆA:

RAMA

GREAT CHARACTERS OF THE RĀMĀYAṆA:

(2) SITA

GREAT CHARACTERS OF THE RĀMĀYAṆA:

(3) HANUMAN

THE MAHABHARATA AS THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA  
OF DHARMA AND CULTURE

DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE

MAHABHARATA: (1) GANDHARI

DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE

MAHABHARATA: (2) VIDURA

DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE

MAHABHARATA: (3) KUNTI

*Friday, 14 March 1969*

(11) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(12) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 21 March 1969*

(13) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(14) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 28 March 1969*

(15) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(16) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Friday, 4 April 1969*

(17) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(18) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: (4) YUDHISTHIRA  
DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: (5) DRAUPADI

DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: (6) BHISMA  
DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: BHISMA

DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: (7) ARJUNA  
DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: ARJUNA

DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: (8) KRSNA  
DHARMA IN PRACTICE IN THE  
MAHABHARATA: KRSNA

## 2. MUSIC APPRECIATION THROUGH STUDIES IN THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF INDIA AND THE WEST

(WITH PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION)

*Thursday, 8 August to Thursday, 7 November 1968*

*Indian Music*

*Thursday, 8 August 1968*

(1) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(2) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Thursday, 22 August 1968*

(3) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(4) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Thursday, 29 August 1968*

(5) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(6) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Thursday, 5 September 1968*

(7) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(8) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

NOTES, SCALES, RHYTHM, AND TALAS:  
HINDUSTHANI:  
Mrs. Aparna Chakravarti  
RAGAS: HINDUSTHANI:  
Mrs. Aparna Chakravarti

RAGAS: KARNATIC:  
Sri T. Srinivasan  
TALAS: KARNATIC:  
Sri T. Srinivasan

FORMS: HINDUSTHANI:  
Mrs. Aparna Chakravarti  
FORMS: HINDUSTHANI:  
Mrs. Aparna Chakravarti

FORMS: KARNATIC:  
Sri T. Srinivasan  
FORMS: KARNATIC:  
Sri T. Srinivasan

*Thursday, 12 September 1968*

(9) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(10) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Thursday, 19 September 1968*

(11) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(12) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: HINDUSTHANI:

Mrs. Aparna Chakravarti

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: KARNATIC:

Sri T. Srinivasan

NORTH AND SOUTH INDIAN MUSIC: A

COMPARATIVE STUDY:

Mrs. Aparna Chakravarti

A CONCERT OF INDIAN MUSIC:

### *Western Music*

*Thursday, 24 October 1968*

(13) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(14) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Thursday, 31 October 1968*

(15) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(16) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

*Thursday, 7 November 1968*

(17) 6.30 to 7.20 p.m.

(18) 7.30 to 8.20 p.m.

MELODY AND RHYTHM:

Dr. (Mrs.) Bani Chatterjee

COUNTERPOINT:

Dr. (Mrs.) Bani Chatterjee

HARMONY:

Dr. (Mrs.) Bani Chatterjee

FORMS:

Dr. (Mrs.) Bani Chatterjee

HISTORY:

Dr. (Mrs.) Bani Chatterjee

CONCERT:

Dr. (Mrs.) Bani Chatterjee

## AUGUST CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

### SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE AITAREYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*1st, 8th, 22nd, and 29th August*

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th August*

THE KATHA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

*3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st August*

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

CHILDREN'S BALLET

Flowerland

And

Bharat Natyami Group Ballet

By

Nrityer-Tale-Tale

*Tuesday, 6 August 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only

Re. 1.00

MUSICAL SOIREE

Nazrul Giti

By

Agni Bina

*Tuesday, 20 August 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only

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Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S DRAMA

Abanindranath's

Kshirer Putul

By

Jonaki

*Tuesday, 27 August 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only

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Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR AUGUST 1968

*Sri Aurobindo Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 3 August, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 31 August, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)



**Programme:**

Songs, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Shows

**LECTURES***On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

- August 7      **Towards a Spiritual Society**  
*Speaker:* Sisirkumar Ghose, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* The Hon. Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji
- August 14    **Sri Aurobindo on the Theory and Function of Poetry**  
*Speaker:* Mahimohan Bose, M.A. (Oxon)  
*President:* Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.
- August 21    **Communication and Politics**  
*Speaker:* Nirmal Chandra Basu Roy Chaudhury, M.A., Ph.D.  
*President:* Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L.
- August 28    **Saints of India**  
*Speaker:* Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:* Sitanath Goswami, M.A., D.Phil.

**SPECIAL LECTURES***Monday, 5 August 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali***Siva Katha : The Concept of Siva in the Tantras***Speaker:* Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.**A THREE-DAY****INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM****ON****Chromosome—its Structure and Function***Participants*

The University of Calcutta

The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture

The University Grants Commission

The Nucleus

Sunday, 11 August 1968, 10 a.m.—5.30 p.m.

Monday, 12 August 1968, 9 a.m.—5.00 p.m.

Tuesday, 13 August 1968, 9 a.m.—5.00 p.m.

Admission by invitation card only

**PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF JANMASTAMI****Programme:**

Invocation :

A Talk in Bengali on : Bhakter Bhagavan

By

Narayan Chandra Goswami, M.A.

Lila Kirtan

*Monday, 19 August 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

VOL. XIX

SEPTEMBER 1968

No. 9

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY-WORLD

P. K. GUHA, M.A.

*The Institute observed the birth anniversary of Shakespeare on 1 May 1968. Professor P. K. Guha, Emeritus Professor, Jadavpur University, where he was also Dean of the Faculty of Arts, gave this lecture on the occasion. Professor Guha is the author of Tragic Relief (Oxford University Press), and is well known for his Shakespearian studies.*

**B**ERNARD SHAW, comparing Shakespeare with Ibsen, with a view to making out the superiority of Ibsen over Shakespeare, said that while Ibsen put ourselves in situations 'that are ours', Shakespeare had put ourselves in situations 'that are not ours'. Shaw concedes that the characters painted by Shakespeare are 'ourselves', that is, they are truthful representations of men and women as they are in real life. But while acknowledging the faithfulness to life of the characters painted by Shakespeare, Shaw condemns as unreal the situations in which the characters are placed by him. If the charge is tenable, Shakespearian drama cannot claim to be an imitation of life, which is the essential element of the drama. If the characters

in a play function in an unreal environment, the mere realism of the characters cannot make the play a mirror of life. As Aristotle says: 'With drama, knowing it unreal, we need to believe it real before we can enjoy its strangeness.'

But the impression of all discerning readers of Shakespeare has ever been that Shakespeare's drama is not merely realistic in respect of its characters, but its situations also are fundamentally a full and faithful picture of life, in spite of the romantic character of the incidents making up the plot. The lay notion, however, has always been that Shakespeare is great only on account of his characters and in spite of his plots which are thought to be a tissue of absurdities and a medley of

incoherencies—a mass of unassimilated and unorganized borrowed matter.

But does Shakespeare portray, in his plays, characters only? Does he not depict also, in most of his plays, in the plot, a map of life, with its hills and dales, its light and shade, its wide range and endless variety of men and things?

The situations in Shakespeare's plays, far from breaking away from reality, represent reality in an ampler and more authentic way than the conventional dramatic situations do. The dramatic situation, of the usual mould, is something specific and narrow and it is rigidly confined within the range of the dramatic business of the play. The situation does not impress us as anything belonging to the larger world to which we belong. A great achievement of Shakespeare's dramatic art is his incorporation, into every play, of diverse elements, introduced for the purpose of creating in the play a spacious world emblematic of real life with the variegated constituents of every situation in it.

#### THE REALISM OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY-WORLD

Shakespeare's play-world is, in every sense, our world in miniature. It is a true imitation of the world of reality in which we live in association with all types of our fellow-men and where there are joys and sorrows, good and evil, side by side. The central dramatic situation is placed in a large and varied setting that impresses us as a sphere of real life. It is not enclosed in a narrow cell devised in strict relevance to the purpose of the play. Shakespeare's play-world throws its doors open to all and sundry, and there is quite a crowd of people, jostling and bustling, that create an atmosphere of real life. Shakespeare adopts in the pattern of his play-world that interweaving of diverse elements, which makes the texture of real

life, and which is set forth thus in *All's Well That Ends Well*: 'The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together.'

There is no escapism nor exclusiveness in Shakespeare's picture of life. He does not fight shy of evil, for he does not deny to evil the right to exist side by side with the good. This spirit of tolerance enables Shakespeare to present, his plays, a juxtaposition of good and evil without which, he seems to feel, he would not be presenting a complete and faithful picture of life. In his *Twelfth Night*, he places Malvolio, the puritan, and Sir Toby, the reveller, side by side, and he puts no reply in the mouth of Malvolio to Sir Toby's angry question: 'Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?'

Moulton aptly describes a Shakespearian comedy as a harmony of stories, a harmony of notes, and a harmony of tones. Several stories are blended together in the plot of a comedy of Shakespeare, and they strike diverse notes and have different emotional appeals. The sad is freely mixed with the gay, the serious with the light. The people in every play are a motley crowd that seems to be a section, cut out, at random, from the population of our own world. The diverse elements serve, by their very diversity, the dramatic purpose that Shakespeare imposes on himself, in every play, of reflecting the spaciousness and variety of real life,—a purpose which is of no concern to the ordinary dramatist. These diverse elements are incorporated by Shakespeare with great skill into a composite plot that is a facsimile of real life. The pitch of the different notes struck by the different constituents of the play is so regulated as to make the resultant note the note of joy that a comedy demands.

This harmonization of diverse elements we find in Shakespeare's tragedies also.

Here, too, Shakespeare interweaves multi-coloured threads to imitate the mingled yarn of the web of life.

A Shakespearian play is not the dramatization of a specific situation, conceived by the dramatic artist, in isolation from the general current of life, but a picture of a dramatic situation, presented within a belt of real life and partaking of the variety and complexity of real life. The crucial situation of a drama, its central theme, by its very nature, is something special and particular and is not an exact counterpart of any actual situation of real life, for otherwise it would not be dramatic. 'To present a narrow dramatic situation' in such a way as to correlate and amalgamate it with the vast expanse of real life is a phenomenal achievement of Shakespeare's dramatic genius. It is, by no means, less astonishing than his miraculous creation of characters that have all the vitality of men and women of real life.

#### ANALYSIS OF SHAKESPEARIAN PLAYS

If we analyse the situations of Shakespeare's plays—comedies as well as tragedies—we are amazed by Shakespeare's boldness in mixing up incongruities in the composition of the play.

#### THE COMEDIES AS YOU LIKE IT

In *As You Like It*, the two sad stories of fraternal strife are finely mixed with the charming story of a great romantic love with three other love episodes, side by side. The gloom of the tragic part of the story is dispelled by the introduction of various sources of joy and mirth and, especially, by the exhibition of the great power of man to accept an adverse situation in life with serenity and patience, to realize in the heart that 'Sweet are the uses of adversity'. The story of the romantic love

of Rosalind and Orlando, by itself, would have made a fine comic drama, but it would not have made the great comedy of life that *As You Like It* is on account of the extensive and thickly peopled environment, typical of real life, within which the love story, the central theme of the play, is enclosed.

#### 'TWELFTH NIGHT

In *Twelfth Night*, the story of Viola's deep and unexpressed love for the Duke, her attendance on him in the disguise of a boy, and her ultimate union with him, would have been an adequate material for a comic play. But Shakespeare enlarges the landscape by joining with this story of true love the sentimental love of the Duke for Olivia, and Olivia's fanciful love for Viola in disguise. A tragic note is struck by the story of the separated brother and sister—Sebastian and Viola. All these disparate elements are blended together harmoniously, and the *Twelfth Night* spirit of unrestrained mirth is kept ringing in our ears in the hilarious songs of Feste, the Clown, closing with:

When that I was and a little tiny boy,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
A foolish thing was but a toy,  
For the rain it raineth every day.

(V. i. 401-404)

In the same play, which finds room for this arrant nonsense in verse, we meet with the most touching expression of suppressed love in the noblest poetry:

She never told her love,  
But let concealment, like a worm in the  
bud,  
Feed on her damask cheek; she pin'd in  
thought,  
And with a green and yellow melancholy,  
She sat like Patience on a monument,  
Smiling at grief. (II. iv. 112 et. seq.)

Sense and nonsense lie side by side in real

life, and they are together in Shakespeare's transcript of life in his drama.

#### MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

In *Much Ado About Nothing*, the Italian tale borrowed for the story of Hero and Claudio, containing the episode of innocent Hero's denunciation in church where she comes to be wedded, was no stuff for a comedy, and Shakespeare intended to write a comedy. But nothing daunted, Shakespeare took up the painful story for inclusion in his comedy and joined it on to his invented story of the oblique love-making of Benedick and Beatrice and the farcical episode of Dogberry and Verges. Stopford Brooke says: 'What is sad in the play is from Italy, what is gay is from Shakespeare.' The sad and the gay are skilfully blended together into an organic whole, the sad note is drowned by the note of joy and the result is not merely a fine comic drama but also a true comedy of life with the painful and the pleasurable woven together. Shakespeare might have discarded altogether the borrowed Italian story of pain and made a fine comic play merely with Benedick and Beatrice, with their pretended hostility, half-concealing their deep attachment to each other. But Shakespeare was as much concerned with presenting in this play, as in all his plays, a full sample of real life, as with constructing a comic drama. He, therefore, welcomed the sad story that came to his hand when he proceeded to write the comedy. It was no stuff for comedy for another dramatist, but it was for Shakespeare. All is grist that comes to his mill. He felt that the fusion of the two stories, sad and gay, would make the play a truer imitation of life.

#### THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

In *The Merchant of Venice*, there is a most courageous mixture of hell and heaven. Jessica, the daughter of Shylock,

said to their servant, Launcelot Gobbo, 'Our house is hell'. Shakespeare creates a heaven to subdue the hell. The murderous Shylock is counterbalanced by the great friend Antonio, Shylock's intended victim, ready to sacrifice his life cheerfully for the sake of his friend. The heavenly atmosphere is deepened by an exquisite conjugal love, a heroic adventure of a newly wedded wife to save a crisis in her husband's life, and is made colourful by a romance of youthful love exhibited in all its charm in a moonlit night regaled by music. The gloom of the naughty world created by Shylock is dispelled by the heavenly light of friendship and love, and that is symbolized by Portia's observation on the light, that Portia and Nerissa saw coming out of Portia's hall, as they were returning home in the dark night after Portia had saved Antonio's life:

How far that little candle throws his  
beams!  
So shines a good deed in a naughty  
world. (V. i. 90-91)

None but Shakespeare could find room in the same play for these diverse elements:

The fiendish cry of Shylock:  
If I can catch him once by the hip  
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear  
him. (I. iii. 47-48)

The heavenly note of mercy struck by Portia:

The quality of mercy is not strained;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from  
heaven  
Upon the place beneath: it is twice  
blessed;  
It blesseth him that gives and him that  
takes.

The mystical sense of the charm of unheard music in Lorenzo's enraptured words:

There's not the smallest orb which thou  
behold'st

But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

### THE TRAGEDIES

In the tragedies, Shakespeare does not present a sample of the normal real world, as he does in his comedies, but the picture of a temporary suspension of the workings of basic human nature and a consequent dislocation, for the time being, of the normal order of things. But the abnormal situation presented in the tragedy is placed against the background of the natural world of men. At the end there is heard a knocking of the real world at the gate of the tragic world, bringing about a disillusionment and an awakening from the tragic frenzy of the agents and victims of the tragedy, their redemption, chastening, and recantation, and a resumption of the current of normal life that had been arrested for a little while by a deviation from typical human conduct and the usual ways of the world. Here, too, the scene of the drama is enlarged and is not kept confined to the particular situation which is the theme of the play.

### JULIUS CAESAR

The domestic life of Brutus is associated with his fateful political act which is the main theme of the tragedy, *Julius Caesar*. Brutus, the husband of the great wife Portia, makes as deep an impression on us as Brutus, the idealistic patriot, which is his specific role in the tragedy. Shakespeare encompasses Brutus' political action with his domestic life, thereby making upon us the impression that the play is not the dramatization of a chapter of Roman history

but a drama of our own world, with its customary repercussion of public activity on the joys and sorrows of personal life. The demand of Portia to know her husband's secret, and the unhinging of the cool and philosophic Brutus by the shock of the death of his 'noble wife', are superfluities, so far as the main action is concerned; but it is these that bring the historical play into the core of our own world.

### MACBETH

The pathos of *Macbeth* centres round his domestic tragedy—Lady Macbeth's partnership in her husband's crime, based on a fatal misunderstanding of her own nature as well as that of her husband, culminating in her haunted somnambulism and self-inflicted death. *Macbeth* would not have been the great tragedy of life that it is, and it would have been merely a crime drama with just a political interest, if it were not intimately bound up with Macbeth's personal life. It is the extension of Macbeth's political action to his domestic life that gives the play its large human appeal. It is to this that we owe these spontaneous outbursts of the heart that have made *Macbeth* a great classic:

Had he not resembled

My father as he slept I had done't.

(II. ii. 14-15)

\* \* \* \* \*

All the perfumes of Arabia will not  
sweeten this little hand.

(V. i. 55-56)

\* \* \* \* \*

She should have died hereafter;  
There would have been a time for  
such a word.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, . . .

Out, out, brief candle!

(V. v. 17 et. seq.)

These elements of the drama do not

advance the action but are the extra lines that give the play the contour of life. They touch us to the quick and make us admit the unhappy delinquents into our hearts as fellow-sufferers in our world of errors and sorrows. The play-world is completely incorporated into the world of reality.

### HAMLET

*Hamlet* would not have been the great tragedy of life, that it is, if Hamlet had not been given the dual role of a lover and the would-be avenger of his father's murder. It is the enlargement of the tragedy of revenge by another tragedy added on to it, the wrecking of Hamlet's love-life, that brings home to us the human aspect of the tragedy. If the Ophelia episode were not joined with the affair of Hamlet's revenge on his father's murder, the play would have fallen in line with the traditional revenge tragedy. It is these outbursts of Hamlet's heart that make the play a great human tragedy and they are furnished not by the drama proper but by an accretion that carries the play alive into our hearts:

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*

Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst  
Thou be a breeder of sinners?

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*

I lov'd Ophelia: forty thousand brothers  
Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
Make up my sum.

### OTHELLO

In *Othello*, too, the tragic canvas embraces a dual tragedy—the wrecking of love and the wrecking of a great military career. The story of Othello's love for Desdemona is enlarged by the story of Othello, the great military commander. It is this enlargement that gives the drama its human

dimensions, and saves it from degenerating into a problem play dramatizing the attenuated theme of *mesalliance*. The most touching utterance of Othello is his exclamation: 'Othello's occupation is gone.'

But this does not refer to the wrecking of his love but to the loss of his mental tranquillity that will kill his major passion in life—the thrills of war:

O! now for ever

Farewell the tranquil mind; farewell  
content:

Farewell the plumed troop and the big  
ware

That make ambition virtue!

O farewell!

Farewell the neighing steed, and the  
shrill trump,

The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing  
fife,

The royal banner, and all quality,

Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious  
war!

Farewell! Othello's occupation is gone.

(III. iii. 348 et. seq.)

This is the tragic waste of the play that touches our heart most deeply. Even the poignant love-tragedy subsides into the subordinate role of an instrument of the battering of a mighty tower of military valour. The human appeal of this fall is irresistible and universal.

### KING LEAR

In *King Lear*, Shakespeare extends the bounds of the tragedy by joining the Gloucester story to the Lear story. It produces the impression that filial ingratitude and treachery are rampant all over the world, and the tragic fear that a similar misfortune may befall any one of us is generated. Without the Gloucester story, *King Lear* would have been merely a tragedy of dotage, with only a dramatic interest, and would not have the large

human significance that it has by its composite plot.

The repetition of the story of filial ingratitude in a second story haunts us with the feeling that 'we are witnessing something universal—a conflict not so much of particular persons as of the powers of good and evil in the world', as Bradley puts it. 'This pervasion of the whole play by a spirit of filial treachery and cruelty gives 'the feeling of vastness, the feeling not of a scene or particular place, but of a world; or to speak more accurately, of a particular place which is also a world', to quote Bradley again.

#### CORIOLANUS

In *Coriolanus*, the main source of the human appeal is Coriolanus's domestic side added on to his aristocratic pride which meets with its merited doom and would not have, in itself, touched our hearts. But the play comes to us as a human tragedy on account of the involvement in his tragedy of his great mother and his gentle wife: 'My gracious silence', as he lovingly calls her.

#### ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

*Antony and Cleopatra* would have been a cloying drama of sensual passion, if it were not enclosed in the larger story of the Roman Triumvirate. In this connection, Boas aptly points out that in each of Shakespeare's three dramas, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, dealing with sexual love, the emotional interest is interwoven with elements of a political nature. Shakespeare does not isolate the amorous passion from the wider, more material, issues of surrounding life. He thus avoids, says Boas, the disastrous pitfall of treating love as an exclusive factor in existence—which might produce an unwholesome sentiment. We might add *Othello* to Boas's list of three.

I would now refer to some observations, relevant to this context, of De Quincey in his classical essay, 'Knocking at the gate' on the Porter Scene in *Macbeth*:

'All action in any direction is best expounded, measured and made apprehensible by reaction. . . . The retiring of the human heart and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stepped in; and the murderers are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. . . . The murderers and the murder must be insulated—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess. . . . When the deed is done . . . the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds; the knocking at the gate is heard, and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again, and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them' (*De Quincey's Works*, Edited by Masson, Vol. X, p. 396).

#### SHAKESPEARE PLAY LINKED WITH LIFE

Shakespeare's play-world presents the seat of the play's dramatic action and also exhibits, within the play's framework, the reaction of the dramatic action on the currents of normal life. The simultaneous presentation of action and reaction is a unique feature of the Shakespearian plot; it provides Shakespeare's dramas with a broad basis in the realities of life, which is beyond the range of the play-world of the conventional mould. The play-world of the ordinary dramatist is a 'broken arc', that of Shakespeare 'the perfect round'. The story dramatized in a Shakespearian play has an epic beginning: it starts from the middle and there are hints and suggestions



in the play which, worked up by our imagination, can visualize a long course of events preceding the incidents in the play. The close of a play of Shakespeare also opens up a vista of coming events necessary to round up the story of the drama in the imagination of the reader or spectator. The way in which a play of Shakespeare starts and ends, imparts to his play-world the impression of a chunk hewed down from the quarry of life. The picture that he thus presents has a foreground, a background, and a sequel in the grand portrait that is life.

It is thus that *Julius Caesar* starts:

Hence! home, you idle creatures, get you home:

Is this a holiday?

So chastize the Tribunes the making of a holiday by the workmen to honour Caesar. This abrupt beginning places the play against the historical background of the unfriendly attitude of the upper classes towards Caesar and the idolatrous worship of him by the common people.

The play ends with an intimation that Octavius takes over, gathers together the broken threads, and undertakes to do the needful to restore the normal order of life in Rome:

So, call the field to rest: and let's away,  
To part the glories of this happy day.

In *Macbeth*, when Macbeth will 'proceed no further in this business', Lady Macbeth tries to taunt Macbeth out of his hesitancy by recalling a talk between them before the play started. Macbeth says,

I dare do all that becomes a man.  
Playing upon his word 'man', Lady Macbeth twits him by saying:

What beast was it then  
That made you break this enterprise  
to me?

Nor time nor place  
Did then adhere, and yet you would  
make both:  
They have made themselves, and that  
their fitness now  
Does unmake you.

At the end of the play the audience is relieved to find that the continuity of life in Scotland will survive the havoc that is presented in the play. Malcolm takes over and says—

This and what needful else  
That calls upon us, by the grace of grace,  
We will perform in measure, time and  
place.

In *Hamlet*, the dying Hamlet gasps out:

But I do prophesy the election lights  
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice.

So Shakespeare does not leave the state of Denmark in chaos and confusion resulting from the wholesale massacre with which the play ends. He does not leave the throne of Denmark empty.

In *King Lear*, the following significant statements in the first scene reveal Lear's deep affection for Cordelia—deeper far than that for his other daughters—and Cordelia's bitter scorn of the character of her sisters:

Lear about Cordelia:

I lov'd her most and thought to set my  
rest  
On her kind nursery.

Cordelia to her sisters when leaving after Lear had disowned her:

I know you what you are; ...

Use well our father:  
To your professed bosoms I commit him;  
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,  
I would prefer him to a better place.

All that happens in the play is thus linked up with the previous history of the

family, and the events in the drama come as a natural sequel to it.

At the end of the play Shakespeare intimates to us that the charge of affairs is taken over by the good Albany and the noble Edgar. He thus relieves our minds, harried by the tremendous shock of the dying of Lear with the dead Cordelia in his arms. How soothing are the last words of the play uttered by Albany, Lear's good son-in-law, who is more than a son to him.

'The weight of this sad time we must  
obey;

'The oldest hath borne most: we that are  
young

Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

This conclusion of the play brings us back to the normal world of loving relationship between father and child, after 'the awful parenthesis' of the filial ingratitude and treachery that we had witnessed in the play.

## CONCLUSION

Shakespeare's play-world is thus, in impression, an extensive world with a long vista both antecedent to the play and subsequent to it. And in drama 'impression is the fact'. A Shakespearian drama is an interlude of the drama of life that is enacting itself before us. It is, as it were, a portion of life that catches the eye of the dramatist and is put within an artistic framework by him. In a way, it is a play within a play. It is 'a parenthesis, a tragedy being an 'awful parenthesis', to adopt De Quincey's illuminating phrase in the passage on 'Knocking at the gate' quoted above. It is a 'delightful parenthesis' in the case of a comedy, being a refreshing oasis in the midst of the drab and dreary desert of life. A Shakespearian play is a part and parcel of life. It depicts not an art-made world, detached from life, but, in miniature, the very world in which we live, move, and have our being.

## MACBETH—A STUDY

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**O**F THE four great tragedies of Shakespeare, *Macbeth* is the briefest and quickest. Its action proceeds at a terrific speed and the entire attention is focussed on the two central characters, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. At no time it is allowed to be diverted to anything else. There is in this drama no sub-plot, no parallel action. Even the tragic relief provided in the Porter Scene (Act II. Sc. 3) is very brief—and then the scene is a relief only on the surface. It is a scene of grim dramatic irony. Important characters in this play are few. None deserves serious notice except Banquo, and Banquo is painted mainly as a foil to Macbeth. He is disposed of when the play is only half way through; and his ghost, when it appears in the Banquet Scene (Act III. Sc. 4) is important not for itself but for the reaction it has on Macbeth. Banquo's only significant contribution to the play is his warning to Macbeth against placing too much credence on the words of the witches :

That, trusted home  
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,  
Besides the Thane of Cawdor. But 't's  
strange  
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,  
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's  
In deepest consequence.

After Duncan's murder Banquo had made a solemn promise :

In the great hand of God I stand, and  
thence  
Against the undivulg'd pretence I fight  
Of treasonous malice.

But he did not keep his promise. When in Act III. Sc. 1, he soliloquizes :

If there come truth from them,—  
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches  
shine,—  
Why, by the verities on thee made good,  
May they not be my oracles as well,  
And set me up in hope?

It is clear that Banquo has forgotten his own words of caution to his friend and is now himself a victim of temptation. Before he falls further he is killed. Duncan, whose murder releases forces that overwhelm Macbeth, appears in three brief scenes, goes out of our sight even in the First Act, and is assassinated in the second scene of the Second Act. And Duncan is killed off the stage, not because Shakespeare wanted to observe the classical convention of not showing a violent action on the stage, but because his drama is concerned not with the murder of Duncan but with what followed the murder, the psychological reaction of the murder on the murderer and his accomplice.

## THE NATURE OF THE PLAY

*Macbeth* is not a political play. It is a human tragedy of universal interest and appeal. It is a tragedy of temptation and fall; a tragedy of ambition for power and its disastrous consequences when the ambition is fulfilled in a wrong way. It is a tragedy of lack of self-control, a weak will that allows itself to be influenced and dominated by 'instruments of darkness' that surround us and, given the least opportunity, drag us to lower depths. There is a Macbeth in every one of us. Ambition lurks in every bosom, may not be of the same nature as Macbeth's, or in as strong a measure as in the hero of Shakespeare's play, but ambition still—ambition for wealth, for power, for fame, and so on—which, if not kept within reasonable bounds, fanned by undesirable forces and helped by circumstances, may lead us to the same fate as Macbeth's—'vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself and falls on the other'. The lesson of the play is clear and *Macbeth*, who had a gift of aloofness to analyse and review his own actions, whether contemplated or accomplished, was clear-sighted enough to know it:

But in these cases

We still have judgement here; that we  
but teach

Bloody instructions, which being taught  
return

'To plauge the inventor; this even-handed  
justice

Commends the ingredients of our poison'd  
chalice

'To our own lips.

## ITS HUMAN APPEAL

It is because of this that we still read *Macbeth*. We read it for its intense human appeal, over and above its gripping dramatic qualities which make it an instant success both on the stage and on the

screen. Otherwise, who bothers about the historical or pseudo-historical *Macbeth* about whom there is a brief entry in the Concise Dictionary of National Biography which is as follows: 'Macbeth, died 1057, king of Scotland; commander of Duncan, king of Scotland, whom he slew and whose kingdom he took, 1040; defeated by Siward, Earl of Northumbria, 1054; defeated and slain by Malcolm III, 1057.'

## THE DATE OF COMPOSITION

The date of the composition of *Macbeth*, as of Shakespeare's other plays, is a matter of conjecture. The generally accepted date is 1606 when James I was on the throne. The play was published seven years after Shakespeare's death. The text of *Macbeth*, according to scholars, is very unsatisfactory. Some scenes are supposed to be spurious, including the well-known Porter Scene. The Hecate Scene (Act IV. Sc. 1), is supposed to be an interpolation by Middleton. The Witch scenes in *Macbeth*, important as they are from the dramatic point of view, are supposed to have been written by Shakespeare to please King James I who was interested in witchcraft and wrote a book called *Demonology*. There are passages in the play which are believed to be indirect compliments to the reigning king—for example, the references to the 'two-fold balls and triple sceptre' (Act IV. Sc. 1) and the 'healing benediction', a miraculous power of the King of England to cure what was known as the 'king's evil' (Act IV. Sc. 3, 144-51). Shakespeare was not only a great dramatist, but also a practical man of the world.

To the ordinary reader neither the date of *Macbeth*, nor the text of the play or its source and deviations, not even the veiled references to the king or the topical allusions, is important. To him 'the play

is the thing'. And *Macbeth* is a stagy play above all, because of its story and characters, and because of the strong element of action in it and the scope it affords for what is called in theatrical parlance character-acting.

#### THE PARADOX OF MACBETH

The paradox of *Macbeth* is that its story is as simple as its main characters are complex. The story of *Macbeth* is straightforward, but the central characters are a puzzle. They appear to be what they really are not. The way the story will go can be anticipated, but not the shape that the characters will take. The First Act is the story of temptation of the ambitious hero at the words of the witches and then at the instigation of his wife. The temptation leads to the first crime, the murder of Duncan, which is the story of the Second Act. Crime, to consolidate its gain, leads to another crime. The Third Act is the story of the second crime—the murder of Banquo. The Fourth Act shows the reaction and the gathering of counter-forces. The Fifth and the last Act is the catastrophe. The play runs at a breakneck speed. The climax, namely, the murder of Duncan, occurs as early as in the second scene of the Second Act. And immediately the tragedy begins. The crown of Scotland is assured, but the crown of life, 'the eternal jewel', the human soul, is simultaneously thrown away, 'given to the common enemy of man'. This, and not his death, is the tragedy of *Macbeth*. Death is rather a welcome relief after the harrowing experiences in the inner world.

#### THE CHARACTER OF MACBETH

'Character is destiny' is a *cliche* of Shakespearian criticism. It would perhaps be more appropriate to say that not character, but 'deed is destiny', that it is

action that determines destiny and not character. It may be said that action itself is character or reveals it. It is not always so. It is not so in *Macbeth's* case. It is not so in *Lady Macbeth's* case either. *Macbeth's* action, the action which releases the flood of his suffering, is not a true index of his character. *Macbeth's* murder of Duncan is an uncharacteristic action. *Macbeth*, 'the valour's minion', 'Bellona's bridegroom', was not cut out to be a secret murderer. Hence it is that the first suggestion of the murder, its 'horrid image' did unfix his hair and made his seated heart knock at his ribs 'against the use of nature'. Hence it is that he could not sit long in the presence of the king at the dining table where Duncan was his guest. It is significant that when Duncan came to his castle as guest *Macbeth* was not at the gate to welcome the king. And when *Macbeth* saw the gracious old king who had, of late, honoured him, present there 'in double trust'—*Macbeth* being his 'kinsman and subject' and now also 'his host', he left the banquet hall for a struggle with his uneasy conscience. The passage depicting this battle with conscience is well-known (Act I. Sc. 7, 1-7):

If it were done when 'tis done, then  
'twere well

It were done quickly; if the assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and  
catch

With his surcease success; that but this  
blow

Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of  
time,

We'd jump the life to come.

But if taken literally, the passage is liable to be misunderstood. It may appear that *Macbeth* is hesitating because he is afraid that when it (i.e. the murder) is done, it is really not done (i.e. done away with),

that murder does leave behind a chain of consequences. 'Blood will have blood'—this Macbeth knows and hence he hesitates. A more careful reading of the passage and a consideration of the whole trend of the play will however show that what was troubling Macbeth was his conscience. He was caught in the midst of an acute moral conflict and ultimately decided not to proceed 'further in this business'. Left to himself, Macbeth would have stuck to his decision. But there was 'the dearest partner' of his life to chastise him 'with the valour of her tongue'. This she did with a remarkable striking power before which the hero of a hundred battles lay prostrate. Ere long, a bewildered and exhausted Macbeth declared, in spite of himself, 'I am settled, and bend up each corporal agent to this terrible feat'.

This is not to suggest that Macbeth is an example of a good boy spoilt by a bad wife. What is meant is that, in spite of his ambition for the crown and the hailing of the witches as 'king hereafter', Macbeth would not have gone for the secret murder of the sleeping Duncan. 'If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me without my stir,'—said he at the end of the third scene of the First Act. This would have been his stand. But that was not to be. Lady Macbeth fell upon him with a concentrated will power and unyielding determination which swept him off his feet. With 'the great task-master's eye' (or, shall we say task-mistress?) upon him, Macbeth, 'the wither'd murderer' 'with a stealthy pace' moved 'like a ghost' 'towards his design', namely, Duncan, the King of Scotland. The fearless killer of men on the battlefield proceeds to kill an old man in his bed, trembling at every step. The dagger in the air, 'a false creation, proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain' showed him the way, and the bell rung by his wife invited him to

Duncan's room. The deed was done.

'I have done the deed', said the dazed Macbeth with a sense of relief, as if he had somehow completed a task he was compelled to undertake, a task which was repugnant to his nature. The moment he had done the deed he heard an uncomfortable noise which appalled him. 'Did'st thou not hear a noise?' he asked his wife. But she had heard only the 'owl scream and the crickets cry'. The noise that Macbeth heard was the voice of his conscience. His outraged conscience immediately presented to him a dried-up throat that could not say 'Amen!', and that too, at a time when he felt he had 'most need of blessing'. Imagine, a murderer who, just after he had done the deed, feels that he needs God's blessing! Punishment followed—the fear of eternal sleeplessness. His conscience whispered to him: 'Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor shall sleep no more: Macbeth shall sleep no more.' That the action of Macbeth is his uncharacteristic action is clear the next moment when he refused to go to Duncan's chamber again to place the knife which he had brought with him by mistake. This mistake itself is a proof that Macbeth was a novice in crime, that what he did he did against his nature. 'I'm afraid to think what I have done; look on't again I dare not.' Hence his eternal shame that he had bathed his hands in blood and his fear that the blood would never be wiped away. Looking at his blood-stained hands he cried:

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this  
blood

Clean from my hand? No; this my  
hand will rather

The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red.

His wife's comforting words 'A little water clears us of this deed', appeared to him a

cruel mockery. And now that the deed was done he wished for the impossible. 'Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!' This is a genuine wish. But alas! it is too late. How acutely conscious was Macbeth of the enormity of his crime is once more clear from his words in Act II. Sc. 3, 72-77, words meant to deceive, but when uttered acquire a different meaning and a different complexion:

Had I died an hour before this chance,  
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this  
instant,  
There's nothing serious in mortality;  
All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;  
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere  
lees  
Is left this vault to brag of.

This is an expression of Macbeth's genuine feeling. Certainly, if he had died an hour earlier he would have lived a blessed time because he would then not have become a traitor and a murderer of his king, his benefactor and his guest. And now that he was so 'all is but toys' the best part of his life was gone.

It may be asked if this was his real feeling why did he not make a clean confession and throw away his ill-got prize? The fact is, Macbeth could not simply do this. Macbeth was ambitious. His ambition for power and instinct of self-assertion would not allow him to do this. The result was a disaster. The fruits of crime can be preserved only by crime, and one crime leads to another. This is the history of all crimes. It was not different in Macbeth's case. And so Macbeth launched on a career of crime—the murder of Banquo, the attempt, though unsuccessful, to kill Fleance, the storming of Macduff's castle and the massacre of the innocents there and so on. But it is remarkable that though Macbeth jumped from one crime to another, his soul was always

disturbed by shapes and visions of terror, and he heard within himself a voice that repeatedly told him that for a mess of pottage he had sold himself to the devil. Even in the Fifth Act, when death was not far away, and Macbeth had a feeling that he had 'supped full with horrors' and 'direness, familiar to his slaughterous thoughts' could not once start him, the truth is otherwise. The very fact that Macbeth felt that he did not feel, shows that he had still some feeling left in him. The hardened criminal was not hardened enough. His pathetic lamentation in Act V. Sc. 3, shows his real character:

I have lived long enough: my way of life  
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
And that which should accompany old  
age,  
As honour, love, obedience, troops of  
friends,  
I must not look to have; but, in their  
stead,  
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour,  
breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny,  
and dare not.

A Richard III would not speak in this strain; nor would a Iago. Macbeth is not a born child of darkness. Circumstances drove him to a situation, undoubtedly because of his inner weakness, when one day he discovered to his dismay:

I am in blood  
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no  
more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

Macbeth's murder of Duncan and all that followed as a logical corollary, proceeds from the surface of his self and not from his depth. There are indeed two Macbeths—one that does and the other that laments the deed and wishes it were not done. The ghost of Banquo so upsets him because

psychologically it is Macbeth's half-murdered conscience. It is of this second Macbeth that we hear in the whole of the Fourth Act. It is significant that in the Fourth Act and also in the Fifth, Shakespeare has practically dropped the name Macbeth. The hero of the play has been referred to as 'tyrant', 'villain', etc. It is to this other self of Macbeth's character that attention is drawn. It is this other Macbeth that made Scotland a graveyard where each new morn new widows howled, new orphans cried, new sorrows struck heaven in the face, and so on. The real Macbeth returns once more as the play nears the end, in the two speeches already quoted—'I have lived long enough' etc. (Act V. Sc. 3, 22-27) and 'I have forgot the taste of fears' etc. (Act V. Sc. 5, 9-14) and again in an unexpected place, when in the last scene he is face to face with Macduff.

Of all men else I have avoided thee;  
But get thee back; my soul is too much  
charged  
With blood of thine already.

Note that he speaks not of his hand being marked with the blood of Macduff's family, but his soul! And, what a human touch! This is the regeneration of a lost Macbeth. The tragedy of Macbeth is that he did not know himself. Again and again he misunderstood the pangs of his outraged conscience as the fear of revenge, the possibility of Banquo turning upon him and so on. And when he saw visions he thought:

My strange and self-abuse  
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use.

He was entirely wrong. Had Macbeth known himself he would not have gone the way he did. The same may be said of Lady Macbeth also.

#### THE TRAGEDY OF LADY MACBETH

The tragedy of Lady Macbeth is that

she did not only not know herself, she did not know her husband either. Had she done so she would not have incited him to overcome his initial hesitation and nervousness. When in her soliloquy in Act. I. Sc. 5, 21-26 she said:

... what thou wouldst highly,  
That thou wouldst holily; wouldst not  
play false,  
And yet wouldst wrongly win; thou'dst  
have, great Glamis  
That which cries, 'Thus thou must do,  
if thou have it';  
And that which rather thou dost fear  
to do  
Than wishest should be undone.

This suggests that Macbeth's shrinking from crime was not so much for moral as for prudential reasons, it is clear that she did not know her husband and what follows is all for this misreading of his character as well as from her ignorance of her own character. Lady Macbeth knew that Macbeth was ambitious. 'Thou wouldst be great', said she. 'Art not without ambition, but without the illness should attend it.' So far she was right. Only she did not know why he wanted to avoid the 'illness' which should attend ambition. She too was ambitious. So she prepared herself for what she considered the supreme task of her life, namely, winning for her husband the crown of Scotland. For this she invoked 'the spirits that tend on mortal thoughts', exhorting them:

... unsex me here,  
And fill me, from the crown to the toe,  
top full  
Of direst cruelty; make thick my blood,  
Stop up the access and passage to  
remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace  
between  
The effect and it!



This passage is of vital importance in understanding the character of Lady Macbeth. It shows how she was arming herself with weapons too heavy and unnatural for her to carry to the end. She was, for a particular purpose, assuming a character not normally hers. She did not know that this could not simply be done.

When Lady Macbeth first met her husband on his arrival from the battlefield, she uttered no word of love or endearment. Her words were: 'Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor. Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!'—words that hit Macbeth's weak point, his ambition. And note her grim prophesy. When Macbeth informed her: 'Duncan comes here tonight', she asked—'And when goes hence?' As Macbeth told her 'Tomorrow', adding, 'as he purposeth', Lady Macbeth told him outright: 'O, never shall sun that tomorrow see!' Each understood what was in other's mind. 'He that's coming must be provided for: and you shall put this night's great business into my dispatch.' Thus Lady Macbeth undertook to do something which it was not for her to do. Not knowing herself she plunged into a venture that proved her undoing. Her determined confrontation of her husband earned for her many uncomplimentary sobriquets, including that of the 'fourth witch', a lady 'detested' and so on. Even her husband was shocked and blurted out: 'Bring forth male children only; for thy undaunted mettle should compose nothing but males.'

There is no doubt that Lady Macbeth did show her 'undaunted mettle', but only up to a point. She gave a glimpse of her real self quite early in the play, in Act II. Sc. 2, when she made an excuse why she could not do the deed herself. 'Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done't.' And yet she had strengthened herself with wine and claimed 'That which

hath made them drunk hath made me bold'. Still she could not be bold enough to hold the knife herself as she had thought of doing when she said in her soliloquy in Act I. Sc. 5:

Come, thick night,  
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of  
hell,  
That my keen knife see not the wound  
it makes—

Lady Macbeth is a woman, a daughter. In her also, as in her husband, the voice of conscience was not dead. It was heard at critical moments. The only difference is that for her the medium was memory, for her husband it was imagination.

This conscience she however kept in rigorous check. She never allowed it to disturb her so long as she was herself. But sometimes it betrayed her, though only after the deed was done. Lady Macbeth stood by her husband before and after the murder of Duncan trying to help him in all possible ways. As Macbeth's wild ravings started with 'This is a sorry sight', after a look on his blood-stained hands Lady Macbeth discovered what she had done. From now on till her complete breakdown at the end of the Banquet Scene (Act III. Sc. 4) her one thought was how to help her husband. Both in the Murder Scene and in the Banquet Scene she rose to great heights. To the dazed and bewildered Macbeth she gave a warning: 'These deeds must not be thought after these ways; so, it will make us mad.' She tried to soothe her excited nerves by affectionate address and advice: 'Why, worthy Thane, you do unbend your noble strength, to think so brainsickly of things.' She pointed out the simple thing to do. 'Go get some water, and wash this filthy witness from your hand.' When she found that Macbeth had brought the daggers from Duncan's chamber contrary to previous

arrangement, she asked him to go and place them there after smearing the 'sleepy grooms with blood'. When Macbeth refused, she, in a spirit of bravado, offered to do it herself. 'Give me the daggers . . . I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal'. Not knowing her real self here she did something which she ought never to have done. In her over-anxiety to tie up all loose ends, she overstepped her limit. She entered the blood-chamber and soiled her own hands in blood—and the blood stuck to her, so that she who in the Murder Scene tried to comfort her husband saying: 'A little water clears us of this deed: How easy is it, then!' cried out in despair in the Sleep-walking Scene (Act V. Sc. 1): 'What, will these hands never be clean?' To the end of the Murder Scene Lady Macbeth struggled hard to make things look normal. Finding her husband disconsolate she made an affectionate complaint: 'Your constancy hath left you unattended.' 'Get on your nightgown', said she. And her final appeal to her husband in this scene is an instance of grim dramatic irony: 'Be not lost so poorly in your thoughts.'—an advice which she needed to follow more than her husband, because while Macbeth, to drown the voice of his ever-protesting conscience and also to ensure his position, plunged more and more into violent action, Lady Macbeth, left to herself, sank inwardly.

That Lady Macbeth was not as strong as she appeared or wanted to be, that she could not wholly unsex herself, becomes evident quite early in the play; not only in her excuse in Act II. Sc. 2, that she could not murder Duncan because the old man resembled her father; but also when she forgot to play her prepared part in making 'griefs and clamour roar' upon Duncan's death, and made a sorry mistake in acting, as Duncan's murder was announced by Macduff. 'What, in our

house?' reacted Lady Macbeth. Forth came Banquo's rebuff: 'Too cruel anywhere.' This silenced her. From now on she did not speak a single word till she fainted and was carried away. She fainted on hearing Macbeth's vivid description of the old king lying in a pool of blood:

Here lay Duncan  
His silver skin lac'd with his golden  
blood;  
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach  
in nature  
For ruin's wasteful entrance; there, the  
murderers,  
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their  
daggers  
Unmannerly breech'd with gore:

This brought to her memory what she herself had seen, and she could not bear it. She fainted. The fainting is an indication that the reaction had started. Lady Macbeth had denied nature and nature was now out to take revenge. Gradually she faded out of the play. Lady Macbeth had no part in Macbeth's subsequent murderous career. It did not take much time for her to realize that: 'Naught's had, all's spent when our desire is got without content.' She too felt as her husband had done: 'tis safer to be that which we destroy, than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.'—lines which echo Macbeth's:

Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;  
Treason has done his worst: nor steel,  
nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further.

Realizing what she had done, discovering to her surprise, sorrow and dismay that her husband was not that hard stuff she had thought him to be, Lady Macbeth was anxious to get as near him as possible to

comfort him and cheer up his spirit, keeping her own pain and suffering to herself. It is remarkable that this lady helped her husband as long as she could, but never sought his help. She cautioned her husband against keeping alone, making 'sorriest fancies' his companions. She suggested a way out of the vicious circle of thought. 'Things without all remedy should be without regard; what's done is done.'—she said. Lady Macbeth's heroic effort to come to the help of her husband reaches its magnificent climax in the Banquet Scene where she brought all her resourcefulness to bear on the situation to make it look normal. Sometimes she drew her husband's attention to the fact that he was not playing the part of a good host; sometimes she invented a quick lie to explain the curious conduct of Macbeth when he was upset by the appearance of Banquo's ghost and asked the guests to leave him alone; sometimes she rebuked him in a whisper for his baseless fear; sometimes she tried to put him to shame for his unusual behaviour, and so on. Finding all these useless she spoke to him in a normal manner. All attempts failing, she abruptly dissolved the party. At the end of the scene she was utterly exhausted. She had put a tremendous strain upon herself. Her own suffering was no less intense than that of her husband. But she kept her husband's need in the forefront. 'You lack the season of all natures, sleep.' 'These are her last words to her husband, words, once more full of a pathetic irony, because she it was who needed this sleep more than her husband. And she had no sleep.

When we meet her for the next and last time we find her walking in her sleep. She too had murdered sleep and cursed thoughts, dreadful memories and the fear of after-death visited her in turn, showing the total collapse of the once seemingly demoniac woman and the emergence of a

frail, lonely, female in whom consciousness of guilt has acted as a deadly devouring poison, the whole story of whose inner devastation is suggested in three monosyllabic cries—'Oh, oh, oh!' after she had realized: 'Here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.' Pat comes the comment of the doctor: 'What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.' The Lady Macbeth of the Sleep-walking Scene may appear to be a contradiction of the Lady Macbeth of the earlier scenes, the Lady Macbeth who once said:

I have given suck, and know  
How tender 'tis to love the babe that  
    milks me;  
I would, while it was smiling in my  
    face,  
Have pluck'd my nipple from his  
    boneless gums,  
And dash'd the brains out, had I so  
    sworn as you  
Have done to this.

And yet it is not so. Shakespeare has given enough hints in the play to indicate that the one woman is the other. Lady Macbeth's character is all of a piece. She is not really the 'fiend-like queen', as Malcolm describes her. She is a woman, nay a woman who, in her own way, is an ideal wife too. Consider how even in her sleep-walking her main thought was her husband's safety. 'What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?' ... 'No more of that, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.' ... 'Wash your hands, put on your nightgown, look not so pale; I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out of his grave.' All these incoherent utterances, appropriately put in broken prose by the master-dramatist, show where her heart was. Her pathetic unfulfilled desire to come near her husband is ex-

pressed in her last words spoken in delirium—'Come, come, come, come, give me your hand.' Standing on the borderland between life and death, the wife stretches forward her helpless hand to her husband who, she imagines, is there but who is really far away from her. She calls him: 'to bed, to bed, to bed.' With this Lady Macbeth goes to bed, alone and unfriended, broken and pale, a pathetic victim of an unnatural role she tried to play. She goes to bed, never to rise again; and when the news of her death is given to her husband: 'The queen, my lord, is dead'—he does not even enquire how or when. He at once passes on to a philosophic mood—

She should have died hereafter;  
'There would have been a time for such  
a word.  
'Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to  
day,  
'To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
'The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief  
candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor  
player  
'That struts and frets his hour upon the  
stage,  
And then is heard no more; it is a tale  
'Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

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## THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN MODERN THOUGHT—II

### PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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THE situation that on the whole dominated European thought by the turn of the nineteenth century, emerged, as we have seen in the earlier paper, as a result of the major movements of that century. Towards the shaping of the modern philosophy of man in the twentieth century this situation provided, indeed, the clue and the background. In this regard what had to be taken into consideration was the peculiar paradox involved in the philosophical orientation of man (as mentioned in the earlier essay). Man is *in* nature, and at the same time, stands over against nature, so far as he cognizes and acts on nature, and also surpasses it in his essential characteristics.

#### NEW PHILOSOPHICAL DISCIPLINE

With the advent of the present century, the emancipation from metaphysics and the naturalization of man had already largely been achieved—thanks to the impact of Nietzsche and Dilthey. However, with both of them—though in different ways—the central principle of explanation was that of *life*. Even in Dilthey's preoccupation with the 'human-social-historical world', the

specific question of man, his position within the totality of experience, was not fully brought into focus. There was a growing awareness of a need for a fuller theory of man, and it gradually took shape in the present century, as the new discipline of 'philosophical anthropology' made its way in the arena of modern philosophical thinking.

This discipline of philosophical anthropology was not strictly a scientific one, as the term 'anthropology' might otherwise suggest. It was meant to be through and through a philosophical discipline—with all that the latter might imply. Only here it was philosophy addressing itself to the anthropological problem, i.e. the problem of man. That provided the point of departure and the centre of reference in the theory envisaged in this branch of philosophical investigations. In other words, it is with the theory of man, with man's situation in the world and the meaning of his being, that philosophical anthropology was to concern itself.

In a broad sense, the philosophy of man spreads over the whole history of the development of western thought. But before

the advent of the modern philosophy of man, it was hardly taken notice of as a distinct area of philosophical investigation. As Ernst Cassirer, the distinguished philosopher of culture in contemporary thought, rightly remarks in his *An Essay on Man*, 'the history of the philosophy of man is still a desideratum'. Such a history is yet to be systematized—although thinking on man could be traced right from Socrates, down the centuries of European thought. The reason for this vital omission lies in the fact that never before was the fundamental question of man's nature and status posed in such a concrete socio-historical perspective. The new philosophy of man in its turn aimed at representing the fundamental structure of man's being in its concrete totality. This new discipline took a decisive shape at the hands of the German philosopher, Max Scheler (1874-1928).

Philosophical anthropology, in a sense, shares its area of investigations with philosophy at large. But the typical position which this discipline takes, as between theory and experience, is relatively a recent phenomenon in philosophical thinking. In attempting to philosophically interpret the conclusions of certain relevant sciences, viz. the so-called human and social sciences, philosophical anthropology made its way. The science of man had already, by the first decade of the present century, developed from biological anthropology to psychology and sociology. That brought into focus the need for theoretical interpretation of the results of empirical investigations in respective fields.

Thus philosophical anthropology was not to be regarded as a scientific branching off from philosophy proper. It indicated, on the contrary, a reaction of philosophy itself to these human sciences. In so reacting this new philosophical discipline stands rather parallel to at least two other

developments in recent philosophical thinking, viz. the philosophy of nature (particularly, in the form of a theory of life) and the philosophy of history (particularly, in the form of a theory of society).

So philosophical anthropology did not take upon itself the task of 'first philosophy' as in the Aristotelian tradition—i.e. of the fundamental science which was to provide the basis for all special sciences. Its claim was not to condition the origination of the special sciences, but rather to let the special sciences speak for themselves. In other words, it did not claim to represent a 'fundamental ontology' as a theory of Being, under which any problem concerning man and the world could theoretically be placed.

Anthropology, so far as it is philosophical, has to take into consideration the limitations and preconditions of the concrete world which anthropology as a positive science is subject to. Like any anthropologist, a philosophical anthropologist too cannot claim the position, so to say, of the angel—taking an 'angelic view' of things and beings. It is, on the contrary, primarily a reflection from the mundane point of view, and on the mundane phenomena—only the phenomena have also to be human in the fuller sense of the term.

#### CHANGED DEFINITION OF MAN

All this points to the fact that the modern anthropological philosophy set to work within a changed framework other than that of the preceding thought. The frame of a metaphysics of the Absolute, of Idea that transcends the time-process—one that dominated nineteenth-century metaphysical philosophy, was to be left behind. So also would be the case with the earlier metaphysical theory of soul-substance. In its place the conception of man as temporal finite existence came into play. But idealistic monism was not the only imme-

diate point of departure for the new philosophy of man. It also departed from the naturalistic thinking of the nineteenth century which viewed man primarily as a natural being, rooted in the biophysical process. The new anthropological thinking, unlike the naturalistic anthropology of the preceding century (Positivism, Feuerbach and Marx, evolutionism, etc.), was not prepared to define man barely as a natural being, i.e. being of nature.

This brings us to an important development in the twentieth-century philosophical anthropology—viz. its fundamental direction towards the conception of man as the unity of body and mind. The old dualism between body and mind or soul is left behind—a dualism which went as far back as Platonic philosophy, and was represented more expressly in the philosophy of Descartes. The prevalent theories on this background of dualism of the psychophysical relation—viz. Interactionism, on the one hand, and Parallelism, on the other—proved to be inadequate to cope with the task of offering a further explanation of the human mind, in view of the discoveries of new facts in the fields of psychology and physiology. Hitherto unrecognized forces, influencing the mental life, brought about an extraordinarily deepened insight into the fact of reciprocal dependence of and link between the different sides and levels of the total human life.

As a result, the attempt to comprehend the physiological as the cause of the psychical, or the psychical as the cause of the physiological, was left out. The tendency, on the other hand, was rather to understand man in all his functions and modifications, primarily in the light of the psycho-physical totality of life that he embodied. Towards this tendency, the modern developments in the medical science, joined by psycho-analysis, particularly in

regard to psychogenetic diseases, played a considerable role.

Added to this the older characterization of man in terms of freedom and personality had a further bearing on the renewed acceptance of man as the central theme of enquiry. In this regard there was a sharp departure from the nineteenth-century naturalistic and deterministic viewpoint. The naturalistic way of thinking in the nineteenth century, reinforced by the prevalent sociological, biological, psychological, and historical findings, sought to demonstrate man as the point of intersection of the laws and conditions of nature. But in that attempt the creative activity of the individual man, his responsibility and freedom, the inner spontaneity and uniqueness of his personal being, were apt to be missed.

So far as the psychological, sociological, and historical observations in the so-called human sciences were concerned, they all proceeded out of certain deterministic presuppositions. Such was, for example, the very presupposition of the absolute supremacy of natural laws; or as put in Marxism, the dialectical movement of science was inexorable. The present-day philosophical thinking, on the other hand, sets a new meaning for human freedom and decision. A place of importance is given to the individual task of self-realization in the contemporary situation of living. That would further make room for the openness of future possibilities and the spontaneous acts of engagement on the part of the human subject. (Of course, these features of human reality are conspicuously present in modern existentialistic thinking).

#### CONCEPT OF PERSON

In close connection with this aspect of freedom one finds in present-day philosophical thinking attempts towards a fuller

comprehension of the concept of *person*. Since the assertion of the autonomy of human person in Kant's moral philosophy, man was sought to be placed as person as against things. (That was indeed the keynote of Enlightenment). In the modern orientation of the concept of person, however, the tie between the two conflicting trends of transcendental philosophy, on the one hand, and of empirical philosophy and psychology, on the other, played its role. The former sought to posit human consciousness in general, and in so doing was apt to overlook the *moral* idea of personality, i.e. a person as a self-conscious free moral agent. Empirical psychology, on the other hand, concerned itself with the mental life of man, worked to resolve the principle of personality by way of breaking up mind into psychic elements and individual states.

In view of these two preceding trends in opposition, there followed fresh drives towards the theme of *personality*. One conspicuous change in viewpoint was ushered in by what is known as the phenomenological way of thinking, particularly associated with the philosophy of Edmund Husserl. In phenomenological philosophy, unlike in the traditional spiritual philosophy, consciousness was conceived not in terms of a soul-substance, but essentially in terms of *act*. It is the act of 'intentionality', as they put it, i.e. the act of referentiality or being directed to certain objects, which constitutes the essential nature of consciousness. Accordingly, for Husserl man also is conceived as a being of a special kind which, like any other being, has to be treated in the light of the functionality of consciousness. Each knows himself as-a definite man, as a member of a particular community, belonging to a particular time. This comprehension of oneself as the centre of the acts of consciousness makes man what he is. To this extent the phenomenological theory of

*act* seems to be more in opposition to the tradition of empirical philosophy and psychology.

But Husserl goes further to assert that the said activities of consciousness are not to be understood as those of an isolated subject. For the subject essentially relates itself to others in consciousness. What he is and what he understands to be *this* man, with *this* name, with *this* personal destiny, holds good as much for the world of his fellow beings. The individual has certainly not chosen freely the role which he is to play, it is rather prompted to him by what is already the case in the world surrounding him. But it is also to be accepted that the subject takes his position in relation to his surrounding world. This very fact points to the achievement of man's consciousness, of his self-comprehension in the situation of the world. Thus the subject in the form of 'I', which is at the same time the man—in other words, as Husserl points out, the 'I-man'—unfolds himself in reflection not as an isolated 'I' but as a person in fellowship with others.

#### SCHELER'S ANTHROPOLOGY

The central direction in Husserl's thought, however, was not towards the making of an anthropological philosophy proper, but rather in the analysis of consciousness or subjectivity as functioning in terms of objectivity. It was Max Scheler, who actually sought to work out a full-fledged philosophy of person within the total framework of a philosophical anthropology proper. On the basis of the phenomenology of *act*, Scheler pointed out afresh, in the context of his ethics, that the being of a person is constituted by the mental centre of acts. And this centre was placed in opposition to the psychical states, which are, after all, knowable objectively (through introspection and otherwise), and also as distinguished from the 'I' of inner percep-



tion. This self-active being, that is the person, is apt to be identified with the merely *mental*, but it is to be understood as the essential being.

So for Scheler, unlike with Husserl, the being of man was no more to be considered in the light of 'being as the object for consciousness'—which was only a methodological proposition for Husserl. With Scheler, the question of the being of person stands right from the beginning at the centre of his enquiry. It is person, to whom, as the performer, the acts of different types belong, and who enables the unity of all acts to subsist in *one* consciousness. It is no object, no substantial unity, and cannot even be regarded as a mode of objectivity, constituted through the referential function of consciousness.

Thus, going beyond the limits of a strictly phenomenological analysis, for Scheler the being of person is not equivalent to its being object for a referring consciousness. On the contrary, he comes over to the problem of human existence proper (which subsequently provided the clue to the existentialist formulation). But he did not even remain on the level of human existence, but proceeds to the further question: how is the essence of man to be understood in its metaphysical significance? The concept of person is thus elucidated through its relation to the concept of Spirit (*Geist*). *Spirit*, according to Scheler, is that which has for its essence *act*, intentionality and the fulfilment of meaning. So, person is the only form in which spirit exists.

Now the principle of the unity of all acts, which makes *person* a person, is to be comprehended neither in terms of will nor intellect alone. For it is more than merely a sum of these traits. Scheler, however, points out that spirit, which is the core of personhood, lies in the first instance in the capacity for the comprehension of the pure 'what', so to say, or the *essence*, of things,

i.e. what makes a thing *what* it is. This higher capacity to grasp the essence of things—a capacity that indicates the finer level of thinking-consciousness—distinguishes man essentially from the animal. Even the faculty of (practical) intelligence is not by itself enough to differentiate *qualitatively* the one from the other, except in respect of degrees. That at best marks man as the *homo faber* (i.e. the tool-making man), one who employs *knowing* as instrument and finds the culmination of this process in the construction of natural science and its application in the form of technique. As against this, man as a spiritual being is one who is capable of saying 'no'—the 'ascetic of life', as Scheler expresses it, following the path of renunciation (*nivṛtti*). He alone among all beings is capable of posing such questions: Why at all is there a world? Why and how am I here at all?

Following this line of thinking, Scheler comes to construct a unified metaphysics of man on the basis of the different empirical systems of knowledge. This is how philosophical anthropology would emerge as the fundamental science of the essential structure of man. This should be a science which, at the same time, would deal with man's relation to nature, both organic and inorganic, as well as to the basis of psychical and spiritual origin in the world. Further, it should be a study of the forces and powers that move man and which he sets in motion, of the basic directions and laws of his biological, psychical, cultural-historical, and social development and of their essential possibilities as well as actualities.

#### MAN IN THE UNIVERSE

As the title of one of his major works puts it (Max Scheler, *The Place of Man in the Universe*), Scheler's aim was to interpret 'the place of man in the universe'. Man is taken as the *microcosm*; for in him

the metaphysical drama of the interaction between spirit and impulse plays its role. The process of sublimation of impulses finds its completion in the human spirit—and that, in a sense, is the very cosmic process itself, and not a mere individual phenomenon. The process of becoming man in the sublimation of drives ultimately leads man to be the 'ascetic of life' in the pure detachment of understanding (somewhat in the manner of a *sāksin*, one might say, to compare with the Vedāntic tradition). And it is this process, again, which is interpreted by Scheler to be at the same time the process of becoming God. Man, as the meeting point of spirit and impulse, would thus prove to be the unique place for the self-realization of God. In pursuance of this line of thinking, Scheler urges that the task of mankind should be to realize the agreement between the spirit and the impulse, proceeding in the direction of viewing the pure essences of things. In the realization of this ideal, Scheler seeks to unite what he calls the oriental spiritual technique of world-denial with the occidental technique of world-mastery or the mastery over nature.

It would, however, be wrong to think that on the basis of this conflict between spirit and impulse, Scheler offered to construct a *concrete* theory (science) of man. The whole direction of his thought was rather towards a *meta-anthropology*, in the sense of a metaphysics having its ground in the theory of man which acknowledges to itself all the knowledge of man empirically available. For Scheler recognizes that 'man is the direction towards which the universe itself moves'. Hence man is to be treated as having a *cosmic* significance of his own, and not as *acosmic*. The modern trend after Hegel (more as a reaction) towards making anthropology into a basic philosophical science thus met with a metaphysical vindication at the

hands of Max Scheler. In the framework of such meta-anthropology a more genuine evaluation of the vital stratum of the mental and spiritual life of man is shown to be possible.

#### ANTHROPO-BIOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT

At this stage a brief mention may relevantly be made at least to one contemporary thinker in this area of problems, viz. Arnold Gehlen of Germany. In his major work entitled *Man: His Nature and His Place in the World*, Gehlen seeks to bring the biological point of view to a fulfilment. Neither is man to be understood from beyond the world, nor should he be treated biologically as an animal on the same level with the sub-human species. Posing the anthropo-biological question, Gehlen finds the point of departure of man from the animal in the appearance of the former as 'a being who lacks in something'. Unlike animals, man has no relationship of strict adaptability to the environmental conditions of life. On the contrary, what distinguishes man is the lack of (biological) adaptability, and to that extent, his openness in relation to the world. Man is concerned as free, or capable of taking decisions, although involved in the world.

Viewed in this light, all human functions—sensation, perception, behavioural movement, language, etc.—are found, on ultimate analysis, to be the peculiar activities through which man remodels the vital deficiencies of his being. It is in this context that the role of *technique* in human society has also to be viewed, that is, as arising from the lack of fuller organic efficiency and fitness. All these typical forms of human endeavour pertain to a being who is biologically deficient, but yet conscious of himself.

Now such an anthropo-biological point of view, as Gehlen typically represents among

present-day anthropological thinkers, needs some reservation for its acceptance. For, if accepted as the final standard, it can hardly meet such a question: why should we at all hold to *life* (pre-eminently in the biological sense) as a higher value? But such a question need not as such be regarded as redundant. On the other hand, to admit such a question would mean going against the very life presupposition of Gehlen's point of view.

In search of a more satisfactory formulation of the anthropological problem, and on a more comprehensive level, we now come upon a distinctive approach to the philosophical question of man as presented by that outstanding recent philosopher of culture, Ernst Cassirer (1874-1945). Neither in line with Scheler's meta-anthropology, nor sharing the anthropo-biological interpretation of Gehlen, Cassirer attempts to hit the problem of man more directly at its core. Thus, Cassirer remarks in his *An Essay on Man*—'The history of anthropological philosophy is fraught with the deepest human passions and emotions. It is not concerned with a single theoretical problem, however general its scope; here the whole destiny of man is at stake and clamouring for an ultimate decision.'

#### CASSIRER'S REVISED DEFINITION

Now, towards the philosophical explanation of the nature of man, Cassirer finds one clue—that is the *symbol*. Qualitatively distinct from other animal organisms, human organism functions in the symbolic system. As compared with other animals, man lives not merely in a broader reality, but in a new dimension of reality, so to say. In the circle in which man as an organism functions, the natural order is reversed. He no longer lives in a merely physical universe; he lives in what Cassirer would call 'a symbolic universe'. And language, myth, art, and religion are but

the constituents of this universe. Constituted as he is, man can no longer confront reality in an immediate fashion. Physical activity seems to recede in proportion as man's symbolic activity advances. Instead of dealing with the things as such, man is, in a sense, conversing with himself. The medium of a symbol—be it in linguistic forms, artistic images, mythical symbols, or religious rites—intervenes between man and the things he perceives or knows.

Accordingly, Cassirer proposes a revision of the classical definition of man as *animal rationale*. Of course, rationality is to be admitted as an inherent feature of all human activities. Yet reason would prove to be a very inadequate term with which the forms of man's cultural life could be comprehended in all their richness and unity. But all these forms—whether mythology or simply language—are, after all, symbolic forms. Hence instead of defining man an *animal rationale*, an enlarged and truer definition would be *animal symbolicum*, i.e. the symbolical animal.

To consider the nature and function of symbols more closely, a symbol is a part of the human world of meaning, not of the physical world of being. Symbols have only a functional value. The principle of symbolism or symbol-making, with its universality, validity, and general applicability, is the magic word—as Cassirer puts it, 'the Open Sesame giving access to the specifically human world, to the world of human culture'. Without symbolism, the life of man would be like that of the prisoners of the cave of Plato's simile. Man's life in that case would be confined within the limits of his biological needs and his practical interests. It could find no access to the 'ideal world' which is opened to him from different directions through such divergent disciplines like religion, art, philosophy, and science.

## TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

By this rich understanding of man as *animal symbolicum*, Cassirer undoubtedly contributed in a fundamental way towards the modern philosophy of culture. But this contribution was nevertheless affected by his relative neglect of the tool-making man, *homo faber*. Indeed his over-emphasis on the symbolic character of human activity is apt to miss in the long run the closer relation between man and technique. Modern anthropological thinking has made it more or less clear—thanks to the impact of Scheler and, later on, of Gehlen and others—that the human being is essentially oriented to action. And the necessity for technique is derived from the deficiency in specialized organs and instincts from which man necessarily suffers.

In line with Gehlen's thinking, on the other hand, i.e. from an anthropological point of view, the question of the meaning of his existence could not properly be met. Here one may rather appreciate why Scheler, though acknowledging the *homo faber* idea, was not ready to stop with that, but went in for a deeper characterization of man. And that was to be met with

in man's capacity for abstraction and idealization. This essential aspect of human being, transcending the merely practical and nature-bound character of man, seems to have been put forward more directly—without any metaphysical postulations—by Cassirer. Certainly, in pointing to the symbolic dimension of the human universe of thought and practice, Cassirer has very rightly drawn our attention to the most significant feature of man's creative life. Only that symbolic activity would not perhaps do full justice to the concrete human existence itself. Whether it is the reflection of essences, as Scheler meant it, or whether it is symbolic construction, as Cassirer explained it, the process of idealization by itself cannot provide the proper clue to the essence of human reality, its concrete existence. Perhaps a more satisfactory solution lies in the direction of the *human subject*, posited in unobjective and yet concrete terms. Yet humanism or humanist philosophy stands vindicated through the attempts of modern philosophical anthropology. For in this discipline man's universe is, after all, sought to be explained with reference to the essential character of man himself.

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## INSTITUTE NEWS

### SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

#### SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE AITAREYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*5th, 12th, and 19th September*

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM :

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*6th, 13th, and 20th September*

THE KATHA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

*7th and 21st September*

#### CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

#### MUSICAL SOIREE

Niskranti

and

Tagore's Bansiwala

By

Rabindra Manas

*Tuesday, 3 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only      ..      .. Re. 1.00

FILM SHOW

Devotional Film (in Bengali)

*Tuesday, 10 September 1968, at 6 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S BALLET

Swapan Budo's

Nil Pakhi

(Bengali version of Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird*)

By

Sab-Peyechir Asar

*Tuesday, 17 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 1968

*Vrati Galpa Asar*

Saturday, 7 September, at 4.45 p.m. for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Saturday, 21 September, at 4.45 p.m. for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

*Programme:*

Songs, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Show

LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

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|--------------|---|
| September 4  | <p><b>Saints of India (Lec. No. II)</b><br/> <i>Speaker:</i> Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta M.A., D.Phil.<br/> <i>President:</i> Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.</p>   |
| September 11 | <p><b>A Symposium on An Approach to Fourth Five Year Plan</b><br/> <i>President:</i> Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L.<br/> <i>Subject:</i> <b>Industry</b><br/> <i>Participant:</i> Bhabatosh Dutta, M.A., Ph.D.<br/> <i>Subject:</i> <b>Agriculture</b><br/> <i>Participant:</i> Rakhal Dutta, M.A.<br/> <i>Subject:</i> <b>Social Welfare</b><br/> <i>Participant:</i> Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L.</p> |
| September 18 | <p><b>The Concept of Goddess Durga in Indian Thought</b><br/> <i>Speaker:</i> Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D.Phil.<br/> <i>President:</i> J. C. Banerjee, M.A.</p>   |

## INSTITUTE NEWS

## SPECIAL LECTURES

*Monday, 9 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

SIVA KATHA

A Talk in Bengali on :

**Devimahatmya and Siva**

By

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.

## A SYMPOSIUM

ON

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

**In Commemoration of the Platinum Jubilee Celebration of his Participation in the  
Chicago Parliament of Religions (1893)**

## FIRST SESSION

*Saturday, 14 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Programme*

Invocation : By Swami Ananyananda

*Participants*

Swami Gambhirananda

S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D.

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

## SECOND SESSION

**Youth Day**

*Monday, 16 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*President:* Swami Lokeswarananda

*Programme*

Invocation : Jay Vivekananda : By Dhiren Bose and Kalyani Kazi

Recitation from Swami Vivekananda

Talk on : Swami Vivekananda in the Parliament of Religions (1893):

Its Impact on the Modern Mind

By

Haripada Bharati, M.A.

Film Show on : The Life of Swami Vivekananda

## PUJA HOLIDAYS

From Monday, 23 September to Tuesday, 22 October 1968 all lectures and discourses, including the cultural and children's programmes will remain suspended. The different departments of the Institute will, however, function as usual except during the Puja holidays from Saturday, 28 September to Monday, 7 October 1968.

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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## MAN'S NEED FOR RELIGION

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE P. B. MUKHARJI

*The Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji is the President of the Managing Committee of this Institute. A distinguished jurist and a Judge of the Calcutta High Court with a wide recognition both in India and abroad, Justice Mukharji is a profound scholar of religion, philosophy, and literature, and has addressed gatherings at the Institute on several occasions. The following is the text of his inaugural address delivered on 2 August 1968, at the Eighth Academic Session of the Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies.*

**M**AN'S need for religion has its foundation on two basic conceptions. What is man? What is religion? These interrogations have ceased to be theoretical. They are the two practical and burning problems of the modern age.

If man is only a beast or only a clever machine like the computer, then he has no need for religion. If man is a captive prisoner or a blind victim of chance, then also he needs no religion. Equally again, if religion is only unintelligent ceremony to be mechanically performed at artificially chosen days and hours, or a system of graded superstitions with a carefully

planned appeal to fear, and a device to exploit the insecurity of change and death, then also man does not need religion. A religion which has become an individual or organized excuse is not a religion. A little reflection will show that this view of man and religion is not only inadequate, but is also basically unsound and circumscribed.

A total and more comprehensive perspective and appreciation of the nature of man and the nature of religion and their common destiny can make their inter-relation clear. Both man and religion have mutual need for each other. One cannot do without the other. The whole subject



of religion is man. The whole of man is the concern of religion. Those who say man has failed religion do not know either man or religion. Those who say religion has failed man are also ignorant of both. Man means religion. Religion means man.

#### MAN IN THE MODERN AGE

A close scrutiny of the position of man in the modern age will be an appropriate enquiry on this subject. Modern man suffers from three great deprivations. He is characterized by three divisions. He is divided from himself. He is divided from his fellow men. He is divided from his Creator, and necessarily from the universe and nature. These three divisions have cost man to lose context in the scheme of existence. He has not only succeeded in disintegrating the atom and acquiring atomic power, he has also disintegrated himself and acquired the technique of individual and mass suicide.

Man's division with himself means disunity within himself. He has no overall purpose. He has become an unregulated complex. He is a menagerie and a zoo where his senses and passions are fighting his essential nature. More rightly perhaps he is a museum of dead and uncorrelated bits of information which he mistakes for knowledge. He changes his philosophy as easily as he changes his clothes. On Monday he is a materialist. On Tuesday he is a tourist. On Wednesday he is perhaps either a liberal, or a conservative, or a socialist or a communist. On Thursday he lives on a thriller. On Friday he is a Freudian. On Saturday he is an existentialist. On Sunday he either goes to the church or the temple mechanically or prides in keeping himself away. Each day he has a new idol. Politics, power, and pelf are his daily consumption. Each hour he has a new mood. His authority is public opinion and the public press. He

is no longer an individual. He is a 'dividual' according to the new word coined by Koestler. He is a mass product. He has no fixed ideal, no great passion, and has only a sneering indifference to the rest of the universe. He is in a state of continual self-reference where the frame of reference is perpetually changing. Long before the youthful Beatles, Hippies, and Beach Boys started parading the streets of the world and riding the latest hobby horse of transcendental meditation on the rocks of transcendental confusion, he had already become one of them without realizing it.

#### HIS SELF-HATRED AND CYNICISM

This personal self-hatred has led naturally and inevitably to hatred for neighbours. That is division from his fellow men. Associated with this inner conflict he exhibits the present tendency of being hypercritical. It is the genesis of his modern commentator-mentality which regards every respect for tradition as reactionary and which makes him judge yesterday by today and today by tomorrow. There is no greater tragedy for a man who once had memory than to lose it. Equally there is no greater tragedy for a civilization than to lose its tradition. Tradition provides the rhythm of the cosmos and the atom and is the very texture of life and order. It is the great discipline without a disciplinarian. Lose that basic tradition and you are extinct. This basic tradition is not the prison-house of inertia, nor the dead lumber and humdrum load, but is the spark of dynamism which enables flexibility to function without disintegration and decomposition.

Alienation from one's self and from his fellow men are at the root of the result of his alienation from God. God is very far away from the modern man and his present scheme of life. Man's modern life has no room for Him. The organized

atheism of the present hour is only a magnified projection of modern man's self-hatred. No man hates his Creator without first hating himself. He rationalizes his cynicism and inner discord. He views the world as a kind of chaos and evolves his pathetic philosophy of licentious living which goes by the fashion of living dangerously. Bravado is the current modern philosophy. Modern man therefore becomes poorer as he gets wealthier and more monotonous with increasing opportunities for variety. He is both a bore and a bankrupt. Such a divided personality therefore cannot be happy. He is not happy in spite of all his science, his power, wealth, and affluence.

The great interrogation is: What is it that the modern man lacks? What is it that he seeks? Standing at the juncture of nature and spirit and simultaneously involved in both freedom and slavery, man has become a hybrid. He is a traveller who has lost both his way and his destination. His intense interest in luxury is the proof of his inner poverty. His search for materialism is his inverted search for religion. He misinterprets his need. The greatest deception of today is the myth that leisure and affluence are the two basic conditions of happiness. Contemporary economic disorder is the symptom of spiritual disorder. It is the result of the neglect of religion. The two recent World Wars that men have fought in this twentieth century are not the real wars. The great world war is the one that goes on between baser instinct and higher ideal, between matter and spirit, between the *id* and the super-ego. The atom bombs and hydrogen bombs are very paltry weapons to fight such a war. The outer man and his external resources are very small and meagre compared to the inner man and his interior resources. Religion helps to plumb these inner resources of endless and limitless

power, knowledge, bliss, and enduring wisdom.

Do not mistake this for speculative mysticism. Dr. William Browne, Reader in Mental Philosophy at the Oxford University and a great psycho-therapist at the King's College Hospital, once said, 'I have become more convinced than ever that religion is the most important thing in life and that it is essential to mental health.' Dr. C. G. Jung in his celebrated work *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* expressed his view in these terms: 'During the past thirty years, people from all the civilized countries of the earth have consulted me. I have treated many hundreds of patients. Among all my patients in the second half of life, i.e. over thirtyfive, there has not been a single one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age had given to their followers and none of them had been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook.' Is this not what the scriptures are saying? No doubt they said so forcefully and inimitably, but it is not fashionable to read scriptures today, far less to listen to them and shape one's life accordingly. This is what the great authorities of modern psychology are saying.

#### WHAT RELIGION IS

Having tried to have a look at man in his modern context, it is essential now to have a look at religion in the same modern context. Religion today is a devalued word. Either it means nothing or it means anything to anyone. The current idea is that it is a kind of jargon which perhaps once had a meaning but it is now irrecoverably lost, or it is a kind of intellectual fraud and moral subterfuge, or a citadel of irrationality, blind faith, blind passion, and

still more blind prejudices, or it is a kind of superstition which acts as a hindrance to reform and progress, or it is a clever innovation of priests, magicians, and ritualists to keep the best part of mankind in a subtle bondage from which our modern civilization of science and technology is supposed to be trying so hard to rescue the beguiled humanity. This current view of religion is a necessary consequence of the plight of modern man. This is the direct result of the three main privations he is suffering from. It is said that one gives the dog a bad name before killing it. It is just possible that this attitude represents giving religion a bad name before making an attempt of extinguishing it from the modern life.

But then this is not religion. Religion has manifested itself in baffling variety of forms which contain not only much that is crude, unintelligible, and irrational, but also much that is noble, idealistic, inspiring, and enduring. If it has produced wars and frauds, it has also produced saints, good men, exemplars of life; and it has evoked highest ideals and the noblest aspirations, of sacrifice, renunciation, restraint, and unflinching dedication and steady resistance to persecution by pelf, pride, and power. The inextinguishable essence of religion is this protestantism. The apparent chaos or confusion of rites, rituals, beliefs, practices, superstitions, and sects do not represent the whole or even the major story of religion, and certainly not the real mission and destiny of religion in the world.

Attempts to discover a normative definition of religion have not succeeded so far. Hegel declared religion to mean 'the knowledge possessed by the finite mind of its nature as absolute mind'. The accent of this definition is that religion is knowledge. That is a view of religion comparable to Śaṅkara's view. E. B. Tylor's famous 'minimum' definition of religion is 'the

belief in spiritual beings'. Max Müller describes religion as 'perception and apprehension of the infinite'. This definition recalls the Hindu view that religion is the realization of Brahman, the unconditioned infinite without any limitations. Schleiermacher defines religion by saying 'The essence of religion consists in a feeling of absolute dependence on God'. In this definition, religion is pure feeling dissociated from thought, morality, and action; it is similar to the Hindu view of *bhakti*, the path of sacrifice and surrender of the lower nature at the altar of the higher divine nature. Mathew Arnold's definition is 'Religion is morality touched with emotion'. Kant defined religion as 'the recognition of all our duties as divine commandments'. Here all work is worship. All duty is divine. Reinach's definition is 'a sum of scruples which impede the free exercise of our faculty'. That is a negative definition of religion raising the question, what is a faculty? Another well-known definition is by Hoffding who says in his *Philosophy of Religion*, 'the conservation of value is the characteristic axiom of religion'. In this view, religion is the highest value. It is at once the greatest common measure and the lowest common multiple. Everything goes into it. Again it goes into everything else.

Further multiplication of illustrations is not necessary. As religion is life itself, eternally coursing through time and space, no words and no definition can fully describe it. The illustrative examples and the definitions of religion show how inadequate and imperfect all these definitions are. Yet each one of them contains some element of truth.

Religion is both personal and impersonal. Religion is both conservation and destruction. Religion is both belief and disbelief. But religion has the universal element of faith, either with reason or without reason. Faith alone creates facts. There can be no

fact of life without a faith behind it. Religion is the most elemental fact of the universe. You breathe and live by religion. It is the religion of rhythm. You sleep and dream by religion. It is the religion of rest and withdrawal. You work and talk by religion. It is the religion of expression and communication. The waters of rivers and oceans beat their currents and waves against their banks and shores by the religion of movement and self-restraint. The mountains rise against the sky by the religion of aspiration. The trees, the fruits, and flowers rise by the religion of self-assertion and charity. The sun, the moon, the stars, and the firmament itself rise and set by the religion of phenomena. Both the saint and the sinner are the products of the religion of individual nature.

Religion is a discipline which includes and controls all indisdisciplines. No erring prodigal is beyond religion. Religion admits no preferences. It suffers all prejudices. No Church can contain it. No dogma can enfold it. No prophet can monopolize it. No particular book or scripture can obtain the copyright of this religion. No exponent can exhaust its commentary. No cartographer can make its complete blue print. Religion is revelation. Religion is experience. Although it is often shrouded in mystery, yet religion is the most direct, the most real, and the most palpably practical influence operating in its own way at every level of consciousness. Religion demands nothing less than the ultimate unification of life under its own supreme control. Its primary aim is all-inclusive and co-extensive with the whole of life, visible and invisible, natural or artificial. It treats death as a chapter of life itself. That is why *dharma* as a concept in India is the essence of religion and etymologically means the upholding principle. Whatever upholds life or its value is religion. It includes and covers all morality, art, science, and philosophy

but transcends them all. It is humanism and much more. It includes the animal and vegetable kingdoms. It is universally valid and individually adjustable.

The world is filled with the din of the debate between religion and science. Understood in its true perspective and essence, religion is not in conflict with science. Religion does not admit of any contradiction. It contains science within its folds. It is the sum total of all science and more. In that sense religion is the harmony of the universe. It admits no conflict between matter and spirit. It combines science of objects with the science of the subject. Religion makes science whole. It alone can give life and meaning to physical sciences. True religion enfolds and transmutes materialism. In so far as physical science makes men dependent on things, objects, and machines other than himself, they are inadequate. Self-reliance and not dependence is the test of religion. But it is a different self than that of the objective sciences within which they seem to be imprisoned. The apparent conflict between science and religion in the modern age is due to this ignorance.

#### CONCLUSION

The present terrestrial life of man upon this earth is caught in the web of a great evolutionary riddle. The riddle is that at the supreme hour, when the self-mastery of man is within his grasp, he finds himself caught in the grips of his greatest slavery. It is at this crucial frontier that man needs the religion of Spirit. The naked fabric of religion is spirituality which provides both its warp and woof. Matter is concealed life. Life is concealed mind. Mind is concealed Spirit. Religion means the unveiling of this triple concealment. It is self-realization of the Spirit. To awaken all that is seemingly dormant is religion. Religion is the dynamics of life and the

statics of awareness. Therefore religion is practical and not theoretical. Religion is action which includes contemplation and meditation which alone can generate action. Religion is not departmental or compartmental. It is central and indispensable and its footprints are on every function of life and death. The infinite can be reached by infinite roads. All roads lead to the infinite. The road to hell is also a road to the heaven—may be a slippery and meandering one ; or else it will be a poor heaven indeed.

That is religion. Therefore religion is the Truth. Hence it is not relative but absolute.

It is in that sense that religion is the breath of life. It is in that sense that man needs religion, for without it he will not be a man any more. Truly speaking man does not need religion. Man is religion. They are one. The need is to make the already unconscious union conscious ; for, as Swami Vivekananda pointed out, 'Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man'.

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This universe of ours, the universe of the senses, the rational, the intellectual, is bounded on both sides by the illimitable, the unknowable, the ever unknown. Herein is the search, herein are the enquiries, here are the facts ; from this comes the light which is known to the world as religion. Essentially, however, religion belongs to the supersensuous and not to the sense plane. It is beyond all reasoning and is not on the plane of intellect. It is a vision, an inspiration, a plunge into the unknown and unknowable, making the unknowable more than known, for it can never be 'known'. This search has been in the human mind, as I believe, from the very beginning of humanity. There cannot have been human reasoning and intellect in any period of the world's history without this struggle, this search beyond. ... I shall try to bring before you the Hindu theory that religions do not come from without, but from within. It is my belief that religious thought is in man's very constitution, so much so that it is impossible for him to give up religion until he can give up his mind and body, until he can give up thought and life. As long as a man thinks, this struggle must go on, and so long man must have some form of religion.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. III,  
Mayavati Memorial Edition, p. 1)

## TRADITION AND MODERNITY

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‘WE ARE all modernity-snobs now’, said Aldous Huxley. Some of our intellectuals are almost out to prove it. It is, no doubt, the sensitive who feel the crisis. As the highest point of contemporary consciousness, they claim to be doctors of a sick society, when, in fact, they are perhaps the disease, or part of the disease. But nothing like a slogan, to focus the combat and the combatants.

In recent history, at different times different labels have been bandied about: Ancient *versus* Modern, Old *versus* Young, Progressive *versus* Conservative, White *versus* Black/Yellow, Pink *versus* Red, East *versus* West, etc. Now it is the turn of Tradition *versus* Modernity. The conflict, in its extreme form, is as needless as never-ending.

In its present form it certainly is an ache, one that bedevils our existence at every turn. Everyone is worried and perhaps has his (or her) own pet solution. But, is it possible to isolate and reduce the problem to manageable proportions?

### WHAT MODERNITY IS

The problem, as it exists, is no doubt western in origin. ‘Modern’ is western. Both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are modern, though not presumably in the same way. That means some countries and cultures

may be more modern than others. But how to distinguish? Is the Atom bomb more modern than the Crossbow? Henry Miller than Khajuraho? Sartre than Nagarjuna? the Beatles (as they claim) than Jesus Christ? But if we stop to ask ourselves in what precisely this mysterious quality of modernity, a value-laden word, consists, it is not easy to get a satisfactory answer. The nearest would be, one thinks: Reason and Science, applied science more than theoretic. In a word, Industrialism. Here is the great Divide, what theologians would love to call the second Fall of Man.

It was Talleyrand’s regret that those who had lived before 1789 could alone have tasted life in all its sweetness. In Burke’s rhetoric, we seem to hear the funeral oration of the *ancien régime* as it appeared to his superior sensibility. This, of course, was a gloss, too weak to hold back history.

### FIVE IGNOBLE TRUTHS

More than the philosophers—Voltaire, Rousseau, Tom Paine, and others—it was the scientists, priests of the new order, who set the pace. What happened has been admirably summarized by Joseph Wood Krutch. The basic tenets of our modern civilization (in chronological order), as he sees them, are: (i) the most important

task to which the human mind may devote itself is the control of nature through technology (Bacon); (ii) man may be completely understood if he is considered to be an animal, making predictable reactions to that desire for pleasure and power to which all his other desires may, by analysis, be reduced (Hobbes); (iii) all animals (man excepted) are pure machines (Descartes); (iv) man, Descartes notwithstanding, is also an animal, and therefore also a machine (Darwin); (v) the human condition is not determined by philosophy, religion, or moral ideas because all of these are actually only by-products of social and technological developments which take place independent of man's will and uninfluenced by the 'ideologies' which they generate (Marx).

To these Five Ignoble Truths one could reasonably add two more: that man's psyche is only partly conscious, that he is really a creature of unconscious drives, to repress which is dangerous, and that the tabus of civilization are undesirable (Freud); and that God being dead, as proof of ultimate freedom, everything becomes permissible, if not absurd (Existentialist).

Into such an emancipated or emasculated universe we have been 'thrown into' and have to make the most of it. Hierarchies and ultimate purposes do not exist. In any case, the logic of science knows nothing of these. And so they do not exist. Only *ad hoc* purposes have a right to be. Openly or by implication the prevailing view favours reductionism, explaining the higher (or what used to be considered as higher) in terms of the lower. Strictly speaking, modernity and the modern age are based on categorical confusions or errors of methodology and methodological miscegenation. In *Religion in the Modern World*, Lord Northbourne has pointed out that 'Modern science, together with the philosophy and industry that are organically one

with it, is the expression *par excellence* in our civilization of the profane point of view'. Ideas, alas, have consequences. The process, how an arbitrarily selective view has come to dominate our image of reality, has been ably set forth by Burt in his *Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science*. In George Orwell's phrase, once we admit  $2+2=4$ , all else follows. As Burt saw it: 'It has after all been worth the metaphysical barbarism of a few centuries to possess modern science. ...'

'But, if they may be proved clearly false, it is important to do away with these guilty mathematical pretensions. It may be that heavy and discouraging incubus on the high endeavours of the reflective modern man will be thrown off just by the recognition' of the fact, that the so-called scientific picture of man and the world is not a total or correct picture but a convenient construction, convenient for certain specific purposes.

Without sighing over the passing of medieval civilization, it ought to be possible, today, to see where our disproportionate development of end and means has led us —towards collapse and extinction. Western man, as some of their own percipient thinkers will tell us, has made an evil choice or a series of false choices.

#### A NEW DEFINITION

It is thus possible to say, with some modicum of accuracy, that aggressive modernity, when it turns back, contemptuously, or through ignorance, upon history and the total human situation, spells psychological immaturity. It is a curious, dangerous dogmatism that calls itself progress. Progress towards the precipice, was Irving Babbitt's angry but not too incorrect diagnosis. In *A Psychiatrist Discovers India*, Dr. Medard Boss has explained the phenomenon in sober and simple language: 'Western psychology has borrow-

ed its methodology and thought-models from the natural sciences ; but it overlooks the fact that the conceptual universe of these natural sciences was by no means designed for the investigation of human life. Western psychology tells us absolutely nothing about the subjectivity of the subject, the personality of the person and consciousness ... in a manner that would actually enable us to understand the connexion between these, the environment and our real selves. ... Our psychology (also) never tells us what human freedom is. Nor does it explain why we are here on earth at all. Nor does it make clear how our life here is to be justified. ... Western psychologist can simply not keep up with the problems of the increasing number of patients who do not come to him because of clearly defined neurotic symptoms, but who are suffering "only" from the diffuse meaninglessness, vacuity, and ennui of their lives, or who are reduced to despair by the question : "Why is there being rather than nothingness"?"

Here, then, is another definition of the modern : as a self-exile from the reality of being, waif of history or suicide, *ātmahanojanāh*. This reveals, may be unknown to him, the real nature of his search and suffering.

#### INDIA'S INWARD JUDGEMENT

The blast of history has not spared the East. Why should it? It is a fascinating story, waiting to be told, says Dr. Naravane in his *Modern Indian Thought*. The story, fearful no less than fascinating, a mixed series of clarities and confusions, could be a thing of importance at least to India if not the world. Unless we choose to be paralysed by the present chaos, we must recognize that, in course of the search for identity, the working of a happier solution has been glimpsed and spelled, with

variations. But it has not been generalized in the life of the people.

India reveals, apparently, in anachronisms, the more absurd the merrier. But no cloud without a silver lining. The inability or refusal to make a *volte face* to please the Time-Spirit, to repudiate the entire past and racial experience in one swift gesture or sleight of hand, may admit of more inward judgement. As one who has seen deeply into the subject was led to observe : 'But India lives centrally in the Spirit, her processes are apt to be deliberate, uncertain, and long because she has to take things into that depth and from its profoundest inwardness to modify or remould the more outward parts of her life. But here too lies the assurance that, once the inner direction has found its way and its implications have come to the surface, the result will be no more modification of western modernism, but some great, new and original thing of the first importance for the future of human civilization.' In other words, we return to the old wisdom : To thine own self be true and thou canst not be false to any man. Everything depends on the wisdom of our choice and with what self or ideal we choose to identify ourselves.

#### REVALUATION OF HER PAST

It can hardly be denied that the period preceding the British Raj was one of uncreative stupor and stagnation, an evening or night of decline. More than the decline of an effete Mughal empire, it was the collapse of an old, proud, and closed civilization. Relics of vestigial forms remained to mock and sustain the fallen. The British broke the cake of custom or petrification and deserve our thanks for services rendered, however unintended.

The encounter between civilizations has produced interesting and inevitable results of which the end is not yet.

The early generation of Indian intellec-



tuals, Macaulay's 'brown Englishmen', were fired with the ambition of a root-and-branch policy—India 'changed wholesale and radically' out of recognition. Mostly mimics—their faint or shrill echoes may be heard even now; their hope of an Anglicized India has left its fossils both at the top and the bottom, among the upper echelons of a 'counterfeit class' as well as the self-styled proletariats and their uncritical espousal of revolutionary ideologies from abroad. Not all of these men were fools or knaves. This is how they saw or see things, a little purblind may be but honest. They have left a legacy which it will be idle to ignore.

Among the values of this first reaction, three, for the sake of simplification, stand out. First, it brought about, in however limited and imitative a manner, the spirit of rational inquiry. Secondly, it introduced the modern temper in our dealings with the past, and the 'violent break in our customary view of things' was as necessary as it was salutary. Finally, it forced us to look at our past and revalue it dispassionately. Its early mistakes are less important than the prospects it has led up to.

The attempt at revaluation has provided, on the whole, better insights into the motive and meaning of Indian culture. While admitting, openly or 'in practice, the need for fresh forms and adaptations it did not reject the past outright. From the Anglicizing slant it led, by degrees, towards greater rootedness, a syncretical re-statement. Even the orthodox did not remain untouched by the new wave and new needs.

### NEW GOALS

Whatever may be one's private reaction to the existing chaos, or preference, the facts remain, calling upon or compelling us to revise our goals and attitudes, to

re-think the question of ends and means, of problems at once remote and immediate. In any case, no mere return or *status quo* will save our turn. That way lies madness. In the words of Ananda Coomaraswamy, who is often looked upon as a rank reactionary, 'When a living Indian culture arises out of the wreck of the past and the struggle of the present,' he wrote, 'a new tradition will be born, and new vision will find expression in the language of form and colour no less than in that of word and rhythm. ... But this can only be through growth and development, not by sudden rejection of the past. ... We stand in relation to both the past and the future; in the past we made the present, the future we are moulding now, and our duty to the future is that we should enrich, not destroy, the inheritance that is not India's alone'. By law as by general will such horrible customs as *sati* and untouchability have been done away with, though the embers of the controversy are kept alive in strange and sometimes unexpected quarters. No less remarkable has been the so-called emancipation of women—forty per cent of Delhi University students are girls, some, I am told, entirely enlightened—and the break-up of the joint-family system (a pity, as those who have separated realize too late). These, and other factors, are forcing a set of new goals and personality orientations which seem to make Sohrab-Rustami or a conflict of generations almost inevitable, as part of the game.

### SCIENCE AND INDUSTRIALISM

One has to look a little more closely at the situation. The single factor, if there is any single factor, responsible for the problems is—as we have said before—Industrialism. The reason why Indians are somewhat sceptical about a scientific utopia must be its early association with alien ownership and exploitation, the

systematic economic ruin of the country by the British interests. But British or Indian, capitalist or communist, the character of industrialism does not change very much. In either form its challenge to traditional mores is obvious and multiple, and has created internal frictions previously unknown. Its impact or influence has now reached the villages, the bedrock of the old order. Rural economy, based on caste and the joint family system, is challenged at every turn by an industrialist civilization which operates without sanctions or inhibitions. Though the cities and villages are still fairly apart, the mobility of men as of population is quickly bringing them together and providing a symbiosis unlike anything that has happened in history before. Such institutions and mass media as railways, restaurants, hotels, hostels, hospitals, the cinema, and the radio are not without their effect. In the village itself the decay of hereditary crafts has sapped one of the chief supports of the old order, the caste system. Also thanks to the Panchayats, local self-administration, the community radio, the newspaper, the vocal opposition parties, the spiralling prices (material determinism at its most material), the country yokel as well as our unquestioning, long-suffering womenfolk, the unacknowledged heroines and legislators of the Indian ethos, are no longer content to accept *karma* or *kismet* as valid explanations for their lot. The problem of modernity and tradition, now so much being talked about, is not a problem confined to the bogus *élite* in the cities, it goes much deeper.

Industrialism does not sit still. It harbours contradictions and challenges galore. One of its bitterest red fruits has been the revolutionary ideology of communism. The intellectuals apart, today it is not necessary to be well-grounded in dialectical materialism in order to be a communist. It is perhaps a mood more than a methodology.

No system, party, or programme, repudiates, with such ease and consistency, almost every item of Indian, at any rate Hindu, habits and customs, its presuppositions and superstructures as the communists. A paradox of the movement lies in the fact that many or most of its present leaders (de-classed?) come from the higher classes or castes. Be that as it may few groups have been such intrepid, sometimes outrageous, critics of Indian attitudes and institutions. While it will be idle to deny their passion for social justice, they seem to pose a problem and a greater danger to Hinduism, the majority faith, than Buddhism, Islam, or Christianity. Were they to succeed, Indian history will have to be re-written.

Strangely, the Indian tradition is not exactly anti-scientific but anti-materialistic. It is true, as many have observed, that among the world religions, Hinduism has been least affected by the advance of science. The leaders of modern Indian thought, from Rammohun Roy to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, have been apostles of reason but not at the cost of the religious life, insight, or experience. The Indian mind is strongly impressed with the limitations of (physical) science. Unless our (not politically oriented) *sādhus*, *yogis*, and mystics are 'liquidated' this will be always so.

#### WAY OUT

What is the way out of this prolonged impasse through which India and the world have been passing? Getting out of the blind alley will, one can see, require a radical revision of goals. This means that there is no part of our modern world and our inheritance from the past that we must not be ready to scrap, if the need to scrap is the price for freedom and fullness, our true need.

## NOVUM ORGANUM

Only a brief hint of the new thought, a possible cure for the immature and near-pathological pattern of our present-day ideas, our profane philosophies, can be attempted here. The need for fresh thinking is the first of these. In the minatory words of Aldous Huxley, we are living now, not in the delicious intoxication induced by the early successes of science, but in a rather grisly morning after, when it has become apparent that what triumphant science has done hitherto is to improve the means for achieving unimproved or actually deteriorated ends. We have blessings to count as well as shortcomings to complain of.

Part of this new thought, of apprehensive sobriety, might look negative, and most of it rather rigorous in nature. That cannot be helped. Some fond fallacies, 'ghosts' will have to be laid aside. In terms of traditional analysis, the modern age, at once proud and afraid, is best described as possessed. What is called for is nothing short of exorcism. Among the changes likely to be brought about or come about a few may be mentioned. Today these are almost in the nature of platitudes, that is, truths recognized rather than acted upon.

It is a good sign that cybernetics, which is a study of communication and control in men and machines, has shed much of its self-assurance in course of the last decade. In other words, the long reign of Mechanomorphism, of natural science in the saddle, must end.

With it will go the myth of the atomized contractual individual egos, swayed by fear and competition, and the later, decadent myth of the *isolato* which has played such havoc in modern society and imagination. The polarity of selfishness and sharing is not the last word in human affairs:

'Saving from the error of divided self  
The deep spiritual cry in all that is.'

As Bergson pointed out, 'There have arisen privileged souls who have felt themselves related to all souls, and who, instead of remaining within the limits of their group and keeping to the (restricted) solidarity which has been established by nature (and society) have addressed themselves to humanity in general in an *élan* of love'. In this respect the modern obsession with alienation, loneliness, and dread, and general meaninglessness of the Existentialist schools is part of the predicament. After a lifetime of reflection and observation Nathaniel Hawthorne, a student of erring souls and an erring society, had come to the foregone conclusion that the one unpardonable sin was—egotism. How well it agrees with the Indian insight about *ahamkāra* as the root of all our troubles because of a false identification with a lower or instrumental potentiality of being!

This enlargement of interest and awareness will, it may be hoped, open a new and happier symbiosis between the individual and society. In today's false and forced socialization, of mass culture and the police state (miscalled the Welfare State), the individual is often sacrificed at the altar of an abstraction. But to get back on the right road we may have to work out our own, a personalized, ethics or philosophy, I-We-Thou-and-All relationship. This does not mean, as is sometimes imagined, giving up science and technology and returning, in a huff, to the Middle Ages. Nothing so easy as that.

Inter-personal relationships demand a new dimension of reality, a Reverence for Life. It has been well re-stated in the neo-Vaiṣṇava Jewish thought of Martin Buber: 'Love is responsibility of an I for a Thou. In this lies the likeness of all who love, from the smallest to the greatest and from the blessedly protected man to him who in his life was nailed to the cross in the world, and who ventures to bring

himself to the dreadful point—to love all men.' Why men only? The wide of heart will include all existence, find himself in all-that-exists, a cosmic re-alignment. The ideal law, as Sri Aurobindo once pointed out, would be for the individual not only to perfect (not distort) his personality by free development from within, but also to respect, to aid and be aided by the same free development in others. A society of slaves, such as ours, perhaps demands compulsions. But a free society or a society wishing to be free may well do without these. In the prevailing western view, it is true, the myth (the reality no less) of struggle and competition is deeply entrenched. The principle upon which the divisive socially conditioned mood operates is *I-versus-you*. This must go.

But the change, from *I-versus-you* to *I-We-Thou-and-All* will not, and cannot, be brought about by machinery. It has to come from within or not at all. In other words, the besetting sin of salvation, or revolution, from the outside has to give place to salvation, or revolution, from within. As Schweitzer put it, we must reject the modern man's belief in the redemption of the world of Things. This may slow down the process, but it is the only sure one. This model of an inner revolution calls for maturity and patience and will be specially on guard against Reductionism, and the easy habit of relying on 'nothing-but' explanations and remedies, and explaining the higher in terms of the lower or confusing ends and means. In the long run we may have to revise our theory of causation.

This can be done or made possible by admitting levels or grades of reality. The laws of physical science cannot be applied, indiscriminately, to the biological sciences or to specifically human values and problems. The science or phenomenon of Man calls for another perspective, other

laws. This, on the whole a commonsense view of the matter, is slowly gaining ground. After all, 'The contrast between man's amazing ability to manipulate his material environment and his pitiful incompetence in managing his own affairs—now as commonplace as it is tragic' is known to everybody.

'Philosophically everything is now very different. For modern physics has established the existence of two or three force-field potentialities, universals that are actual, non-material (but real) continua well understood and in constant use in science, and ever-present in nature and human affairs.

'It is now necessary to realize that because something is non-material it does not follow that it is unreal. In fact, the reverse is true.'

#### INNER-OUTER BALANCE

These factors, outlined above, should not mean any neglect of the outward forms or normal interests of life, or a moratorium on science. On the contrary, the new and needed synthesis will work for and achieve a brighter balance between the inner and outer, the instrumental and terminal, past and present, science and spirituality, than any we have known so far. It will be, thus, a philosophy of world-affirmation and not world-negation. What is needed is not abstinence from work but purification of motive. Not *karma* or activism, work for the sake of work, but Karma-yoga. The difference is basic but unavoidable. And the work, such as it is, will include all life, not only parts of it. As Dag Hammarskjöld underlines it, 'In our era, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action'. It will be work inspired by a spiritual religion of humanity, not as a dogma but as a growing, unifying, experience of the Spirit in Man.

## SPIRITUAL RELIGION

According to the wisest wisdom, all life is *yoga*. Integral experience is the need of the hour. Not the limitation of the earlier days and xenophobic civilizations, but a wider, inclusive awareness. Its direct and immediate correlate will be world unity and world humanism, perhaps a worldwide renaissance. In the words of a modern thinker: 'A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future. By this is not meant what is ordinarily called a universal religion, a system, a thing of creed and intellectual belief and dogma and outward rite. Mankind has tried unity by that means before; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. The inner Spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realization that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we all are one; that humanity is its highest present vehicle; that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. ... No doubt if this is an idea like all the rest, it will go the way of all ideas. But if it is at all a truth of our being, then it must be the truth to which all is moving, and in it must be found the means of a fundamental, an inner, a complete, a real human unity which would be the secure base of a unification of human life.'

## RECONCILIATION OF VALUES

For this to come about we shall need, instead of a divided, regional, bellicose, and

perpetually frustrating history, a wiser and wider loyalty to the cosmos and the community. Perhaps through the pangs of the present is preparing, if nothing more, some psychological transformation that will guide our phenomenal triumphs over outward nature towards a fuller and inner life instead of making it difficult, unnecessary or destroying it.

One cannot be sure how the game—Tradition *versus* Modernity—will turn. But it is well to remember the analysis and expectations of a sympathetic but keen observer whose insights we have used before. 'Again and again in India I felt', writes Dr. Medard Boss in *A Psychiatrist Discovers India*, 'a sense of profound, inward rootedness and repose directing the entire lives of countless millions of people—what if it were precisely India that is destined to stem the universal onslaught of soulless technology—thanks to the long continuing, ancient rootedness in this spiritual tradition?' The admission of these thoughts is itself a release from the ritual of wrangling. It gives us an aim to live and fight for and rise above the easy pessimism and conflict that one sees all round. If, as the *Dhammapada* says, we are the result of all that we have thought (as well as of all that we have never thought), it is not easy to fix the limits of the change and challenge ahead. If all the problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony, the Harmony, such as we seek, harmony 'in the midst of tension and uncertainty is the intrinsic reward of love' and understanding. For this will be needed a revolutionary concept of tradition—the Great Tradition beyond all little traditions, the pure distilled heritage of the past (*purāṇa—purā api nava eva iti*—though ancient, the Truth is ever new, in the words of Śaṅkara) that is never wholly lost. *Sanātana iva nitya nūtanah*—the perennial alone is progressive, it alone can 'make it

new'. That is, to be concerned with tradition, it is not necessary to be dominated by the past. As was well put by Sri Aurobindo: 'The traditions of the past are very great in their own place, in the past, but I do not see why we should merely repeat them and not go further. ... The great past ought to be followed by a greater future.' Or, in the words of W. H. Auden, 'the duty of the present is neither to copy nor to deny the past but to resurrect it'. It is not a faith for the feeble. Those who have no concern for their ancestors will have, by the simple application of the same rule, none for their

descendants either. What Winston Churchill once said in a fateful hour of England's history is true of all history: 'Of this I am quite sure that if we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost the future.' To be true to *both* tradition and modernity is the task before us. In the nature of things this is an act of faith rather than a formula. And there I would like to leave it, as an open question, rather than pass off a pet or a private hope as *the* answer to the agonies of choice which is another name for life today.

The present adjustment will be the harmonizing, the mingling of these two ideals. To the Oriental, the world of spirit is as real as to the Occidental is the world of senses. In the spiritual, the Oriental finds everything he wants or hopes for; in it he finds all that makes life real to him. To the Occidental he is a dreamer; to the Oriental, the Occidental is a dreamer, playing with ephemeral toys, and he laughs to think that grown-up men and women should make so much of a handful of matter which they will have to leave sooner or later. Each calls the other a dreamer. But the oriental ideal is as necessary for the progress of the human race as is the occidental, and I think it is more necessary. Machines never made mankind happy and never will make. He who is trying to make us believe this will claim that happiness is in the machine; but it is always in the mind. That man alone who is the lord of his mind can become happy, and none else. And what, after all, is this power of machinery? Why should a man who can send a current of electricity through a wire be called a very great man and a very intelligent man? Does not nature do a million times more than that every moment? Why not then fall down and worship nature? What avails it if you have power over the whole of the world, if you have mastered every atom of the universe? That will not make you happy unless you have the power of happiness in yourself, until you have conquered yourself.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. IV,  
Mayavati Memorial Edition, p. 155)

## THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN MODERN THOUGHT—III THE EXISTENTIALIST VIEWPOINT

DEBABRATA SINHA, M.A., D.PHIL.

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**I**N THE philosophical orientation of man in the present-day thinking, the existentialist movement at large undoubtedly plays a very significant role. Already, as we have noted in the last article, there had been felt a need for recognizing the concrete human existence towards the making of a philosophical anthropology worth the name. In attempting to interpret the nature of human reality and man's position in the cosmic order, the question of human existence as existence thus presented itself as an urgent one. In the modern movement of thought, which has in broad come to be known as existentialism, this issue of human existence has taken its shape in all its urgency and acuteness.

### QUESTION OF HUMAN NATURE AND EXISTENCE

The unique content of the said question had not fully been grasped so far as the general trend of anthropological thinking had been concerned. However, the question was posed in right earnest by one set of thinkers in Europe, beginning with Søren Kierkegaard in the late nineteenth century. The question thus posed was: What is unique about man? Whether man is to be treated absolutely apart from other things and beings? And if so, why? Even

so treated, could he not be viewed *intellectually*, in the light of the general trend of rational analysis? Existentialism as a philosophical standpoint—if not as a rigidly systematized school—made room for a direct confrontation with such questions.

### KIERKEGAARD

With the radical opposition to the nineteenth-century intellectualism, particularly in the form of Hegelian Absolutism, this new attitude towards the question of human nature and existence took entirely a new turn. In the second half of the last century, this revolt against an intellectualist system found its acute and unambiguous expression in the thoughts of a solitary Danish thinker, Søren Kierkegaard, who can truly be regarded as the precursor of modern existentialism. Kierkegaard urged that nothing short of concrete reality could satisfy what he called the 'metaphysical demand' of human nature.

Now Kierkegaard laid his hand at once upon the simple truth, generally overlooked in traditional philosophy, that existence is primordial and irreducible. Here is exactly the existentialist emphasis that existence, unlike a category of thought, is unamenable to rational analysis and proof. And this concrete existence is not something which can be reduced in terms of an intellectual-

istic system. It rather forms the very core of human reality in its inner subjective attitude. Thus the key to human reality, according to Kierkegaard, is to be met with in the inwardness of his subjective existence. He sounded the cardinal note of the existentialistic mode of thinking by declaring, 'Subjectivity is truth, subjectivity is reality'. Thus what Kierkegaard, as well as the existentialists of our time, mean by 'existence' proves to be, on ultimate analysis, an attitude of the individual towards himself—an inner attitude brought into focus through certain typical personal situations.

So Kierkegaard's stress on the concrete non-rational existence broadly determines the twentieth-century trend of existentialistic thinking. The concrete principle of existence, the central concern in existentialist philosophy, is not to be taken as an attribute or character belonging to things. It is, on the contrary, the very reality of all possible attributes. It is in this sense substantive, as appropriately expressed by that German expression, *Existenz*. Such underivative existence, however, should not be regarded as something objective, which could be set apart from the experiencing subject itself. Indeed the only form of existence acknowledged in existentialism as genuine is subjective existence.

Subjective existence, again, as meant by existentialists, takes on the shape of *human* existence. For man alone, according to the existentialist explanation, *exists* in the authentic sense. That is how existentialism necessarily involves a philosophical theory of man or philosophical anthropology. As the existentialist would put it in a simple way, the question is: Who is, after all, philosophizing? Is it not *man* who is theorizing and offering different possible views of reality? But the intellectually constructed systems could give him only the

*possible* truths and not the actuality, which lies in concrete existence alone.

#### HEIDEGGER AND SARTRE

In my discourse on the existentialistic philosophy of man, I propose to confine here my attention more particularly to the two major thinkers in the present-day existentialist camp, viz. Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre. In considering the existentialistic orientation of the concept of man, i.e. of human existence, in the philosophy of Heidegger, we at once come upon his sharp departure from the traditional subjectivistic philosophies. Heidegger found both the types of subjectivism unsatisfactory—whether the metaphysical type (i.e. Cartesianism, etc.) or the epistemological-transcendental type (i.e. Kantianism and Husserlian phenomenology). His dissatisfaction with the phenomenological conception of pure consciousness, reinforced by his strong ontological interest, led to his attempt to substitute human being for the subject of pure consciousness. He sought to replace 'transcendental subjectivity' (of Kant and Husserl) by the concrete being of human existence.

#### THE CONCEPT OF DASEIN

The key to Heidegger's approach to human existence lies in the concept of *Dasein*, i.e. authentic existence, or rather human *Dasein*. Improving upon the older Scholastic distinction between 'essence' and 'existence', Heidegger put forward the radical opposition between the two concepts of 'being so and so' (*Sosein*) and 'being there' (*Dasein*), simply *there*. The latter expresses that something *is*, while the former, i.e. the essence, expresses *what* that something is, that it is so and must be so, and cannot be otherwise. The traditional essence-existence distinction, focussed on the distinction between possibility and actuality,



is for Heidegger not adequate to bring out the fuller significance of human existence. In the specific sense of his peculiar ontological orientation, man alone *exists*. No other thing—a stone or a tree—can be said to exist in the genuine sense of existing. For Heidegger, the essence of *Dasein* lies in its existence, where existence is taken as the wider concept.

In stressing on the unique import of *Dasein*, as distinguished from any other concept, Heidegger puts forward two points. Firstly, *Dasein* is ontologically marked by its difference from everything else; its character is not that of a thing among things. It is to be differentiated from things of objective experience which may be characterized either as presented before us or as something to be used as a tool (what Heidegger calls 'utensils'). Our normal objects of experience are either there present before us or are there not simply as present, but as serving certain practical interests. Human existence, properly speaking, can come under neither of these categories.

Secondly, *Dasein* does not mean a self-enclosed being. To exist, for the existentialist, is not merely to be, but also to be here or there. In other words, it is being in a *situation*—in a very special relationship with the world and fellow-beings. Though the reality of my existence is uniquely my own, it is so not as divorced from the social and cultural situation in which I find myself involved. As Heidegger typically puts it, *Dasein* is 'being-in-the-world'; the world is that into which *Dasein* transcends so as to be what it actually is. Pursuing this line of thinking, he comes upon the peculiar notion of 'thrownness'—*Dasein* being 'thrown' into a situation which indicates existence. There is a decided acceptance of the facthood in which man is thrown.

#### TYPICAL MODES OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

This basic feature of human *Dasein*, participating in the world, serves to explain the typical modes of human existence, for which certain so-called 'critical' situations (i.e. situations of 'crisis') in human experience serve as indices. They arise out of the essential finitude of man which only indicates the facthood of his existence. This finitude becomes explicit before the phenomenon of *death*, which has a particular significance for the existentialist, as meaning the annihilation of all possibilities. Heidegger goes so far as to define *Existenz* as 'being-towards-death'. In this context the concept of 'care' (*Sorge*) assumes a particular importance in Heidegger's thinking as a fundamental existential category through which the basic structure of human existence is comprehended—that is, the being of human existence. 'Care' becomes explicit in another existential mode, viz. 'dread' (*Angst*). The latter indicates dread about oneself in the face of the possibility of non-being.

Such typical existential modes of experience as 'care', 'dread', etc. reveal ourselves out in the world, but as forlorn, without support. Such critical situations, however, are necessary for bringing home to us our own authentic existence. We find no reason why we should be plunged in the world. Here arises one of the fundamental assertions of the philosophy of existence, that we are there without any ground for our existence. Hence we prove to be existence without essence. This fundamental strain of existentialism finds its explicit formulation in Sartre's statement: existence precedes essence.

The said existential modes, however, need not be interpreted as merely psychological, nor as pessimistic—as in any respect pertaining to a 'philosophy of death' as it has sometimes been alleged. What is in view, on the other hand, is

their existential-ontological significance. The conception of human existence as essentially contingent brings out the supreme importance of the specifically existentialistic states of 'anguish', 'dread', 'care', etc. in Heidegger's thought, and the state of 'anxiety', relating to 'choice' and 'responsibility' in the philosophy of Sartre. This indeed explains the existentialists' preoccupation with the typical psychological nuances connected with these 'critical' phases of human experience. With all the pseudo-psychological attitude of the existentialist, the ontological interest in human existence would not still be missing—particularly in Heidegger and Sartre.

#### EXISTENTIALIST VIEW OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The existentialistic conception of consciousness in this connection deserves our particular attention. To start with, the modern existentialist departs completely from a spiritualistic conception of self. For him there is hardly a self dissociated from the world. On the contrary, the reality of the world is affected through what he typically describes as 'participation' or 'engagement' of the subjective being. Looked at from this point of view, again, the world that exists *for me* is to that extent the work of my consciousness and owes its being to my existence. My existence, on the other hand, is similarly to be regarded necessarily as 'worldly'. So against the Kantian formulation of 'I' as a subject, Heidegger brings out the charge of isolatedness from the world. And indeed the Cartesian conception of incorporeal spirit finds no place in existentialist thinking.

In the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, in particular, we come across a more fully developed existentialist theory of consciousness. On the one hand, Sartre denies outright any substantive status to consciousness. At the same time he emphatically insists on the irreducible existentiality of

consciousness. Sartre would not posit any transcendental subject behind consciousness; he rejects the possibility of a so-called 'transcendental I or ego'. Consciousness, according to him, has nothing substantial about it; it is a pure 'appearance' in the sense that it only exists in so far as it becomes apparent. Immanence and concrete reality are thus combined in his theory of consciousness.

In line with a phenomenological study of consciousness, Sartre recognizes consciousness essentially as presence to oneself and presence to the world. 'This table, that wall etc. exist in themselves; but man alone in this world exists *for himself*'. Thus what in Sartrean terminology is called *pour-soi* (for-itself) comes to be synonymous with consciousness, and for such consciousness alone is there a world. In the light of his analysis, Sartre further shows a peculiar negativism involved in the very nature of consciousness. It turns on the unique character of consciousness as a 'presence-to-itself'—and the inherent dialectical paradox operating on the two poles of *en-soi* and *pour-soi*.

In so functioning consciousness exhibits a peculiar capacity of reducing to nothing, of 'nullifying'. On the one hand, I am no longer what I am, in myself (*en-soi*); for in the very observation of that 'in myself' I would have 'reduced it to nothing'. But neither am I the observer projected outside the *en-soi*. The very idea of an *en-soi* which should be a *pour-soi* presents a contradiction; for the *pour-soi* implies a distance from oneself, a split of the *en-soi*. The ideal combination of *pour-soi-en-soi* state—i.e. being-in-itself reconciled with being for itself—should ever remain unattainable.

Consequent upon this negative movement inherent in the nature of human consciousness, man proves to be a being who is bound in a pursuit leading to no fruitful

results. This indeed gives rise to the basic malady of human existence. This essentially negative situation of human reality is summed up by Sartre thus: 'Human reality is in its nature sick, because it arises into being as perpetually haunted by a totality that it is powerless to be. ... Thus it is by nature unhappy consciousness, without any possible escape from the state of unhappiness.'

#### PARADOX OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

Thus the peculiar paradox of the human situation is that man is ever what he not yet is and is not that what he already is. So he can never be fixed as an essence; his existence has rather to be characterized as 'being-out-of-itself', so that in whatever way his essence is sought to be determined, it is ever bound to remain beyond his existence. This would explain why Sartre prescribes an activist approach towards the definition of man. Man, he urges, must *create* for himself his own essence. Man makes out his existence, so to say, in and through his act—the act of 'choice'.

The resulting position implied by Sartre's existentialism has been characterized by himself as 'humanism'. Unlike the humanism in western thought, classical or modern, the centre of reference in existentialist thought is not anywhere outside the unique individual existence of man. As Sartre puts the point sharply, man is the centre of his own 'transcendence', in relation to which alone he can grasp objects.

In this humanism of Sartre, the role of choice and responsibility is indeed very significant. For our very existence turns out to be what we freely choose to be, and is not grounded on any ideal essence. We chose our own essence just as we chose our own ends, and in that we are endowed with absolute freedom. The very fact of free choice involves the inner feeling of 'responsibility' with respect to our own choice of

what we are. Now the individual, in choosing his own end, is forced to decide upon the meaning of existence both within himself and everywhere outside himself. This gives rise to the typical phenomenon of 'anxiety'.

As a result of Sartre's thinking, the picture of man that emerges is of one who is, as Sartre remarks, 'condemned to be free'. As Sartre further goes on to remark: 'Condemned, because he did not create himself; yet he is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does.' Thus in the face of a negative situation the struggle of man for self-assertion in freedom is visualized. In view of this groundless activity, man has even been described by Sartre as 'a useless passion'.

#### THE HUMAN DRAMA

This rather nihilistic trend of existentialist thinking, which has had Sartre for its high priest, finds an allied but differently directed form in Albert Camus, the modern writer. Camus also in his own way—in a more literary than philosophical manner—upheld the sense of groundlessness as the central crisis of modern man. Quite close to Sartre's position, Camus stressed on the inescapable *absurdity* of human existence. Man's existence in this world is gratuitous, absurd. As Camus points out, man is 'open to the benign indifference of the universe'. In focussing on the tragic consciousness of the absurdity of human life, Camus recalls the typical Greek myth of the eternally condemned Sisyphus (cf. 'The Myth of Sisyphus').

In Camus' conception of man there is the recognition of a twofold awareness. On the one hand, there is the awareness of cosmic indifference, and on the other, intuitive certitude regarding man's creative essence. Thus, Camus declares: 'There is

nothing nobler than the human mind at grips with a reality that transcends it.' Indeed the arrowhead in Camus' thinking is always directed out of the negativity and absurdity of the human situation to a positive glorification of the nature of man. Yet none perhaps other than Camus is more keenly aware of the acute spiritual dilemma and crisis in the life of contemporary man. For he seems inevitably to be confronted with the undesirable alternatives of suicide on the one hand and destructive revolt (which is apt to take the shape of murder) on the other. What Camus would prescribe out of this impasse is creative revolt, which alone could combine freedom with knowledge. Consequently his vision of man is that of the eternal rebel. Through such revolt alone can the humanity of the individual be promoted in an otherwise non-human world.

From this brief discussion of Camus' view it may seem that it hardly offers any positive exposition of the essence of human nature. Indeed one would miss in Camus any systematic conception of man—not to speak of a philosophical anthropology—and would rather find an expression of the drama of human existence. This drama of human existence—one that is not wholly intellectually amenable—is, after all, the one running theme through all phases of existentialist thinking and literature. In another modern philosopher of existence, Karl Jaspers, for instance, we similarly come across a reference to what he calls the situation of 'shipwreck', in and through which authentic *Existenz* can grasp itself consequent upon man's endeavour to experience the transcendence of Being. Of course, there is the positive note of hope and faith in Jaspers' conception.

#### LIMITS OF BARE HUMANISM

Now at this stage one significant question seems to emerge—a question pertaining to

the predominant drive the modern existentialism towards the recognition of the human as the self-sufficient principle of all explanation. Thus doubt may be posed if there is any need for going beyond the limits of human existence. The anthropological standpoint may not be a self-sufficing standpoint. On the contrary, the necessarily self-transcending character of human existence has to be kept in view. Rather an acute awareness of the facthood and finitude of human existence can be taken as a possible point of departure for a comprehensive philosophical explanation. So a thoroughly man-centred existentialism of a Sartre, for instance, may not suffice for and satisfy the philosophic consciousness in search of the essence of man.

In the light of this question posed above, we could perhaps better appreciate the formulation of the problem of human existence in the later philosophy of Heidegger. What the latter did was to pose the question of human existence entirely in the light of that higher metaphysical principle of *Sein* or Being. From the point of view of the transcendent Being, Heidegger seeks to reorientate the notion of humanism. The humanity of man is thus defined not entirely in terms of *Dasein*, whose essence lies in existence, but further from the point of view of the proximity of Being. Man is thus regarded as being which contains the 'openness' of Being. As Heidegger typically puts it—almost in a Vaiṣṇavīc vein of *Sāyujya* or *Sālokya*—man, among all beings, is uniquely privileged to be in the proximity of Being. He even urges, in a metaphorical tone, that man is in the service of Being. In that sense it could be maintained that in Heidegger's interpretation of humanism the ontological standpoint and the element of human realism stand combined.

#### CONCLUDING ESTIMATE

We may conclude the present discourse

by pointing out the positive stresses and stronger features in the existentialist orientation at large, as well as its negative aspects. To look to the points of merit, first we come upon the impressive element of human realism inevitably present in it. Modern existentialists—of varying shades as they are—make no secret of the truism of the human reality, the reality of human existence and situation. The concrete historical-social reality of man's position in the world has indeed rightly been taken into account.

Not only is the historico-social perspective emphasized, but the uniqueness and inwardness of human existence has been upheld in the existentialist viewpoint. The existentialist vindication of the primordial value and reality of human existence is, no doubt, a pointer in the face of scientific generalization and mechanical abstractionism of the present-day scientific and technological trend of thinking. While mechanical standardization is in vogue, existentialism has come forward in the recognition of the unique value and integrity of the human person. It has offered a new definition of human freedom in the light of the inner attitude of human will, which refuses to be reduced to any outer norms or authorities.

With all its positive stresses, the shortcomings and negative moments of the existentialist viewpoint can also hardly be overlooked. Firstly, in its overemphasis on the non-rational—or rather the irrational—existentialism seems rather to have neglected the rational approach and the path of analysis. But a philosophical approach, focussing wholly on the irrational centre of man—one that is admittedly unamenable

to rational analysis—is apt to miss the rational content in the notion of man.

Further, existentialistic thinking at large tends to entertain a definite bias for the sheer contingency and insecurity of the human situation. This sense of extreme contingency and absurdity essentially involved within the human situation itself may well be viewed indirectly as a contribution of the general socio-political situation prevailing in Europe after the last War. But this current mood of insecurity, anxiety, and uncertainty—in a word, of morbidity, need not be extended and generalized to the level of a philosophical theory. What is required is not a philosophical justification of these moods, but rather an enlightened transformation of them.

Whatever may be the deficiencies in the existentialist view of man, with all its morbidity of outlook and negativism, the basic truism of human existence and the reality of human situation have been firmly grasped by the modern existentialist. Rightly enough there is the stress on the irreducible uniqueness of the fact that man in a primordial manner *exists*. And that alone could impart meaningfulness to everything which constitutes the world of man. To attempt to resolve this human world in the impersonal terms of abstract scientific language could only amount to some sort of escapism—an escape from the primordial realism of human existence. For this basic truth is apt to be missed in the name of scientific and objective attitude. The need for emphasizing this truth has never perhaps been so keenly felt as in the present era. The right note of caution against the tendency of over-intellectual dehumanization has been sounded in existentialistic thinking on man.

## AN OUTLINE REPORT OF WORK FOR THE YEAR 1967-68

**E**STABLISHED in 1938 in commemoration of the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, the Institute is now housed in its own commodious building at Gol Park, Calcutta 29 (Telephones : 46-4612, 46-4613, 46-5678, 46-5679 ; Telegraphic address : INSTITUTE, Calcutta 29). The Institute seeks to embody the vision of the universal Divinity and human solidarity based on it as exemplified in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) and Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) and communicated by them to the modern world. In the light of this vision the Institute has placed before itself a *threefold* field of work:

- (a) A proper interpretation and appraisal of Indian Culture in all its aspects ;
- (b) The promotion of the knowledge of and mutual understanding between India and other countries ; and
- (c) The promotion of the study of the Cultural Heritage of mankind-as-a-whole as background to the individual cultures of the world with a view to providing channels for mutual appreciation and cultivation of awareness of the solidarity of mankind.

The work of the Institute is significant not only to India, but also to all the countries of the world in their search for mutual understanding, co-operation, and peaceful co-existence.

From small beginnings, the Institute has grown into a recognized centre of learning and is a national and international forum for the meeting of minds. It has attracted the attention of the public and of many leading scholars in India and abroad and evoked their great interest in its activities.

The three aims of the Institute, which spring directly from the clearly expressed teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, are sought to be realized through a comprehensive scheme of spirit-

ual, educational, and cultural activities. During the year under review the work of the Institute continued to register progress and expansion and the Institute had 1,692 members.

A brief account of the activities of the Institute during 1967-68 is given below :

### **Library and Reading Room**

(a) *A General Library and Reading Room* with a total number of 55,019 volumes of which 2,049 were added during the year; total number of books issued was 1,19,579 (35,417 for home study and 84,162 for reference) with an average daily attendance of 402 ; and 449 journals (Indian and Foreign) in the Reading Room.

(b) *A Junior Library* with 296 members; total number of books was 1,542, 106 being added during the year; the number of books issued to members was 3,000, with an average daily attendance of 12.

(c) *A Children's Library* with 1,167 members; total number of books was 4,252 of which 75 were added during the year, total number of books issued was 7,082, with an average daily attendance of 27.

(d) *A Universal Temple Library* stocked with the scriptures and spiritual books of all the principal religions of the world. It is for the use of those who resort to the Institute's Universal Temple on the fourth floor with its Universal Meditation Hall and Universal Chapel.

### **The School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies**

The School offered the following courses of studies :

(1) *A General Course* with 93 lectures dealing with the Life, Thought, and Culture of the Peoples of India and of the Rest of the World with 23 students on the roll ;

(2) *Special Courses*, three with 18 lectures each and one with 12 lectures: (a) A course of lectures on *Know India* with

12 students on the roll; (b) A Course of lectures on *Five Great Writers of the World* with 24 students on the roll; (c) A course of lectures on *Indian Culture Appreciation through Studies in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata* with 17 students on the roll; (d) A course of lectures on *Music Appreciation through Studies in the Musical Heritage of India and the West* with 23 students on the roll.

### The School of Sanskrit Studies

The School offered the following courses of studies:

(1) *A General Course* dealing with Vedic Literature, The *Bhagavad-Gītā*, Buddhism and Jainism, Itihāsas and Purāṇas, Smṛti and Artha-Śāstra, Six Orthodox Systems of Indian Philosophy and Literature; it had 2 students on the roll;

(2) *An Advanced Course* aiming at a closer study of the Vedic Religion, the Upaniṣads, the Orthodox and Heretical Systems of Indian Philosophy, the Tantras, the Āgamas, and the Niti and Dharma Śāstras; it had 11 students on the roll.

### The School of Languages

The School offered Certificate and Diploma courses in the following 6 Indian and 9 Foreign languages: (a) *Indian Languages*: Assamese, 5 students; Bengali, 51 students; Hindi, 195 students; Sanskrit, 37 students; Tamil, 14 students; Urdu, 15 students. (b) *Foreign Languages*: Arabic, 5 students; Chinese, 11 students; French, 175 students; German, 271 students; Japanese, 15 students; Persian, 9 students; Russian, 68 students; Spanish, 17 students; and Spoken English, 375 students.

### Students' Day Home

The Day Home for College students offered the following facilities from 6 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. to the 800 student members

on the roll of the Home: (a) *A Text-Book Library and Reading Room* with 7,801 books of which 661 were added during the year; total number of books issued was 11,366 with an average daily attendance of 312 students; (b) *A Canteen* providing subsidized meals (thirteen Paise per meal) to the students; 211 students on an average took daily meals at the canteen; (c) *Bath and W.C. arrangements.*

### International House

(a) *The International Scholars House* accommodated 145 residents and guests of whom 4 were research scholars; (b) *The International Guest House* provided accommodation to a total of 552 guests including the members of 6 cultural delegations from America, Russia, and France.

### Publications

(a) *The Cultural Heritage of India*: Four Volumes of the revised and enlarged Second Edition had been published earlier; of the remaining three volumes of the series in preparation, Volume V (The Arts) and Volume VI (Science and Literature) are expected to be ready for the press at an early date.

(b) *The Institute Booklets Series*: Of the 30 booklets, handy and well-brought out and cheaply priced (50 Paise), 5 were published during the year. These booklets had a wide demand in India and abroad.

(c) *The Bulletin*: This monthly journal of the Institute completed its eighteenth year of publication in December 1967. It carries news of the Institute's activities to all parts of the world. Its contents mainly consist of lectures and discourses given at the Institute by eminent Indian and foreign scholars, Book Reviews, and news of matters of international and cultural significance.

**Cultural Activities**

*Scripture Classes:* (a) 27 weekly discourses on Our Spiritual Heritage: The *Bhagavad-Gītā* (in English); (b) 42 weekly discourses on The Upaniṣads (In Bengali); (c) 25 weekly discourses on The *Rāmācaritamānasa*; (d) 18 weekly discourses on The *Srimad-Bhāgavatam* (in Bengali); 4 weekly discourses on The Vedānta (in English); and 4 weekly discourses on Śiva-Kathā (in Bengali) with an average attendance of about 1,000 people.

*Lilā Kīrtan:* 2

*Anniversary Celebrations:* 9

*Centenary Celebrations:* 4

*Public Lectures:* 41 weekly Wednesday lectures by Indian and foreign scholars.

*Special Lectures:* 17

*Symposia:* 3

*Seminar:* 4

*Extension Lectures:* 18 lectures specially organized for Indian and foreign students.

*Orientation Course:* 6 lectures on Town and Regional Planning.

*Colloquium:* On Ethical and Spiritual Values—for College and University Students.

*Swami Vivekananda Centenary Students' All-India Elocution Competition* (for High

School and College students) and its Prize Distribution Ceremony.

*Inauguration Meetings of the Schools of the Institute:* 2

*Children's Story Hour Sessions:* 22

*Children's Ballet:* 2

*Dramas:* 3

*Educational and Cultural Film Shows:* 17

*Musical Soirée:* 12

*International Orchestra:* 4

*Puppet Shows:* 2

*Magic Show:* 1

*Music Festival:* 1

*Gītī Ālekhya:* 1

*Receptions:* 2

**Universal Temple**

(a) *Universal Meditation Hall*, and (b) *Universal Chapel* were kept open to spiritual seekers between 9 and 12 in the morning and 4.30 and 8 in the evening; and many seekers utilized this facility.

**Staff House**

The construction of the five-storeyed staff quarters with 13 *family flats*, and a *staff hostel* with 29 double-seated furnished rooms which was completed last year continued to be of service to the members of the staff during the year under review.



## INSTITUTE NEWS

### **Sri Ramakrishna Birthday Celebration**

The Institute observed the one hundred thirty-second birth anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna on Saturday, 2 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m. at a solemn function held in the Vivekananda Hall. With a beautifully decorated portrait of Sri Ramakrishna on the dais, the function commenced with a Vedic invocation by Swami Sastrananda, then one of the Assistant Secretaries of the Institute, followed by a recitation in Sanskrit from 'Sri Ramakrishna Stotram' by Pandit Srijib Nyayatirtha.

Revered Swami Gambhiranandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, then gave a talk in Bengali on 'The Life and Message of Sri Ramakrishna'.

The day's function came to a close with a programme of devotional songs presented by Sri Pankaj Mullick.

### **Sri Chaitanya Birthday**

Sri Chaitanya's birthday was celebrated at the Institute on Wednesday, 20 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. The programme included an invocation and devotional songs by Srimati Sikha Ghose, and a talk in Bengali on 'The Life and Message of Sri Chaitanya' by Sri Narayan Chandra Goswami, M.A.

### **Maxim Gorky's Birth Centenary Celebration**

Maxim Gorky's Birth Centenary was celebrated at the Institute on Saturday, 30 March 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

The function commenced with Russian

rendering of Tagore's song 'Klanti Amai Kshama Karo Phabhu' presented by Sri Debabrata Biswas, which was followed by readings from, and a few words on, Gorky, in Russian, by Sri Pradip Kumar Ghose and Sri Tarlok Singh respectively.

Sri Gopal Haldar, M.A., M.L.C., gave a talk in English on 'Humanism of Maxim Gorky'. The programme concluded with a film show entitled 'Lenin 1917'.

Sri Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., M.L.C., presided.

### **Birthday Celebration of Bhagavan Mahavira**

On Saturday, 13 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Bhagavan Mahavira's birthday was observed at the Institute in the Vivekananda Hall. The day's proceedings commenced with 'Jaina Temple Music' for invocation, which was followed by a talk in English on 'The Impact of Jainism on the Life of the Indian People' by Dr. Asutosh Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D.

Sri Bijay Singh Nahar presided.

With a programme of devotional songs by Srimati Kamala Bader and others the function came to a close.

### **Celebration of Sister Nivedita's Birth Centenary**

The Institute, in collaboration with Sri Sarada Sangha (Calcutta), held a programme in connection with Sister Nivedita's Birth Centenary on Monday, 22 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

Revered Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj, Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, presided.

The function commenced with the in-

vocatory song 'Prakritim Paramam'. Dr. Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D.Phil., welcomed the participants.

Srimati Bandita Bhattacharya, M.A., then spoke on 'Educational Ideals of Sister Nivedita', and Pravrajika Atmaprana on 'Sister Nivedita'.

#### Extension Lectures

The Institute, in collaboration with the University Women's Association of Calcutta, arranged for a series of five extension lectures on 'Indian Government and Politics' on each Friday at 6.30 p.m., commencing from 5 April 1968, in the Shivananda Hall.

The inaugural lecture of the series on 'The Indian Political Tradition' was given by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji on 5 April 1968 at 6.30 p.m.

Dr. Pratul Chandra Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., presided.

Professor Amlan Datta, M.A., gave the second lecture on 'Politics and Culture in Indian Society' on 12 April at 6.30 p.m.

Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., M.L.C., presided.

On 19 April at 6.30 p.m., Dr. Bhabatosh Dutta, M.A., Ph.D., spoke on 'Economic Consequences of Centre-State Relations'.

Dr. Satyendra Nath Sen, M.A., Ph.D., presided.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Durgadas Bose gave the fourth lecture of the series on

'Emergency Powers under the Constitution' on 26 April at 6.30 p.m.

Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., M.L.C., presided.

The concluding lecture was given by Sri Subrata Ray Chowdhury, M.A., Bar-at-Law, on 'Constitutional Symbolism in India: President and Governor' on 10 May at 6.30 p.m.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice A. N. Ray presided.

#### Film Shows

The following films were shown to the public in the Vivekananda Hall on the dates noted below :

- i. 10 February 1968: 'Devi-tirtha Kamrup-Kamakhyā' in Bengali.
- ii. 9 March 1968 : 'Lakshmi Narayana' in Bengali.
- iii. 16 March 1968 : 'Aparajita' in Bengali.
- iv. 23 March 1968 : 'Chuti' in Bengali.
- v. 20 April 1968 : 'Biplavi Kshudirām' in Bengali.
- vi. 21 May 1968 : 'Arghya' in Bengali.
- vii. 28 May 1968 : 'Kabuliwala' in Bengali.
- viii. 4 June 1968 : 'Michael Madhusudan' in Bengali.
- ix. 18 June 1968 : 'Mira' in Hindi.
- x. 25 June 1968 : 'Udayer Pathe' in Bengali.

**Students' Day Home**

The following table presents at a glance the work of the Students' Day Home for the months of April, May, and June 1968 :

|  | April  | May   | June  |
|--|--------|-------|-------|
| Total number of students enrolled                          | 780    | 746   | 746   |
| Average daily attendance                                   | 469    | 315   | 217   |
| Average number of students daily taking<br>meals or tiffin | 268    | 184   | 156   |
| Total number of text-books issued                          | 10,992 | 9,070 | 6,895 |

**Library and Reading Room**

The following table presents at a glance a review of the work of the different sections of the Institute's Library for the months of April, May, and June 1968 :

*Main Library*

|                                       | April  | May    | June   |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total number of books                 | 55,406 | 55,558 | 56,134 |
| Number of books added                 | 387    | 152    | 576    |
| Number of books purchased             | 30     | 139    | 140    |
| Number of books received as gift      | 357    | —      | 419    |
| Number of books withdrawn             | —      | —      | —      |
| Number of periodicals accessioned     | —      | 13     | 17     |
| Number of books issued for home study | 3,163  | 3,255  | 3,294  |
| Number of books used for reference    | 9,566  | 8,860  | 8,140  |

*Reading Room*

|   |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Number of periodicals in the reading room | 449 | 410 | 360 |
| Average daily attendance                  | 489 | 465 | 457 |

*Junior Library*

|                                       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total number of books                 | 1,544 | 1,548 | 1,563 |
| Number of books added                 | 2     | 4     | 15    |
| Number of books issued for home study | 230   | 276   | 302   |
| Average daily attendance              | 10    | 15    | 16    |

*Children's Library*

|                                       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total number of books                 | 4,252 | 4,261 | 4,299 |
| Number of books added                 | —     | 9     | 38    |
| Number of books issued for home study | 603   | 604   | 881   |
| Average daily attendance              | 24    | 24    | 36    |

**Special Lectures**

'International Understanding' was the theme of a special lecture given by Rev. E. Stanley Jones on Tuesday, 9 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m.

Sri Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., M.L.C., presided.

Dr. Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D.Phil., Principal, Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta gave a special illustrated lecture on

'Modern Sanskrit Songs' on Tuesday, 23 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. Sri Purnendu Roy and Srimati Chhabi Bandyopadhyay presented songs illustrating the lecture. They were accompanied on musical instruments by Sri Kalidas Chakravarti.

Sri Saroj Kumar Das, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., presided,

## OCTOBER CALENDAR

*(This function is open to the public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

UNITED NATIONS DAY CELEBRATION

*Thursday, 24 October 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Subject:* **Human Rights Year and the UN Charter**

*Speaker:* Robert A. Collinge

*Information Officer, USIS, Calcutta*

*President:* Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L.

The lecture will be preceded by an Exhibition of United Nations Publications and followed by a film show on the United Nations activities.

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# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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## THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN VEDĀNTA

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

*Swami Mukhyananda is Assistant Secretary of this Institute of Culture and also Joint Director, Department of Cultural Activities and Publications. Formerly, he was Head of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Chandigarh. The Swami was Sub-Editor of the Prabuddha Bharata, a well-known monthly journal, published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas, and also its City-Editor at Calcutta for some time. He was In-charge of the publication of the monumental Seven-Volume Project of The Cultural Heritage of India, undertaken by this Institute, of which four volumes have been so far published. During 1959-60, the Swami was Assistant Minister at Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre in London, and in 1965-66, he was a member of the Advisory Committee, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur Math. He has contributed several articles in English and Hindi in newspapers and magazines. The lecture reproduced below was given by the Swami at the Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies on 5 August 1968.*

**T**HE idea of God is central to religion, and from the most ancient times man all over the world has conceived of a powerful being or beings, supernatural or quasi-supernatural, controlling the affairs in the world. These con- ceptions have varied from time to time, and from clime to clime, but the basic idea of a powerful controller has remained, whether crudely conceived or in a refined manner. It was man's inherent curiosity to understand himself and his surroundings in

which he was cast, together with his need for succour—physical and psychological—in a strangely hostile-benevolent environment, which gave rise to a conception of God, and it is these, again, which have stimulated the enquiry into the nature of God and His relationship to the universe and its beings. The conceptions of God have evolved over the ages *pari passu* with the growth in the knowledge of man about himself and the surrounding Nature and influenced by developments in his social and political organization.

#### INTRODUCTORY

In the beginning, the conceptions of God were of the character of just response to stimuli from external environment, i.e. instinctive. Because they were instinctive, the primitives at times had profound intuitive glimpses of Truth, which they could not fully understand, nor rationally formulate, nor separate these from other crude tribal conceptions on the intellectual level. But they gave very direct and forceful expressions to these glimpses. A conscious enquiry into God as the Cause of the universe sets in at a much later stage, and that only in some parts of the world, and in some civilizations. For the rest, the conceptions of God rested on the stimuli-response basis, sometimes reinforced by sublime mystic insights or prophetic utterances. As such they could not have any universal rational appeal or philosophic and scientific value; they had only religious value to the followers of different cults and faiths affording them psychological and emotional satisfaction. Even where a rational enquiry was instituted, in most cases, such enquiries could not get free from the hold of religious theology, often got involved in religious terminology and symbolism, and gradually relapsed into dogmatic and credal sectarian views, because the racial, tribal, or national passions and

prejudices prevented the growth of a rational universal vision.

#### THREE STAGES IN THE CONCEPTION OF GOD

In the early stage, we find that man and his world are the central theme of the picture, and God who creates these intervenes physically in the affairs of men. He has all the qualities of goodness and failings of men, only on a large scale, but is powerful. The anthropomorphic conceptions of men, their desires and passions cling to him. He has a form, he has an abode, he has human qualities and is moved by hatred and jealousy, he has likes and dislikes, he favours some and pours his wrath on others. He is opposed by Satan. He has his sons, daughters, angels, chosen people, and so on.

It is only at a later stage that man tries to shed his anthropomorphism and gradually rises to a purer conception of God as the source, sustenance, and refuge of the whole universe and all its beings, human or non-human. God is Divine. In Him all things, animate and inanimate, live, move, and have their being, and He loves all His creation equally.

At the third stage, man shifts from anthropo-centred conceptions to Truth-centred philosophic enquiry. God sheds even His 'He'-ness, and remains as the Truth and Ground of the phenomenal universe, the Infinite Impersonal Reality in all Its Glory, inspiring the functioning of the finite universe, and claiming its homage as its Source; It is the Home to which all will return in the end for Rest, and the final Rest is achieved when the identity of the being with the Reality is realized and all outward movement stops. There is no duality in the Infinite and hence no movement, no want, no fear or sorrow: *Tatra ko mohah kah śokah ekatvam-anupāśyataḥ* —'what delusion, what sorrow can be there to him who realizes the oneness of all

Existence' (*Īśā Upaniṣad*, 7). It is all 'Peace that passeth understanding', It is *Parā Śānti* (Supreme Peace), It is *Mokṣa* (Freedom from all limiting adjuncts), It is *Nirvāṇa* (Cessation of all phenomena).

Thus there are three types of conception of God—the natural, the super-natural, and the transcendent or philosophical, with numerous shades and grades in every type.

We find all these three types of conception of God reflected in the Vedic literature. As classified by Yāska in his *Nirukta*, they are: the anthropomorphic or natural (*ādhibhautika*), the divine or super-natural (*ādhidāivika*), and the transcendent or philosophical (*ādhyātmika*), culminating in the highest conception of the Absolute Infinite (Nirguṇa-Brahman) in the Upaniṣads, which, being the last portion of the Vedas, are called the Vedānta.

#### UNIQUENESS OF VEDIC CONCEPTIONS

When compared with the conceptions of God in other parts of the world, we find that the conceptions in the Vedic literature, the earliest extant living literature in the world, display this unique feature that a sort of enquiry or conscious quest is associated with them from the very beginning. They are not mere groping apprehensions or instinctive beliefs. The conceptions put forth are often questioned and analysed deliberately. Progressively new solutions are offered to overcome logical difficulties and to satisfy psychological and emotional needs. Another line of enquiry runs parallel to these conceptions to meet the philosophical requirements of Truth. These two conceptions, which we may term religious and philosophical, the concrete manifestation and the abstract principle, of God (*Deva*) and Absolute Reality (*Sat*), run parallel, meet, intermingle, and coalesce, so much so it is difficult to treat of them in isolation.

All through Vedic literature—as is

reflected in all Indian thought—the approach to problems is synthetic and comprehensive. It is inclusive and not exclusive, and does not wish to leave any loose ends. The conception of God leads to the conception of the Absolute Reality, and again God is derived from and treated as the phenomenal manifestation of the Absolute Reality. They are two aspects of one and same Reality, Brahman (the Infinite): *Dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe; mūrtam caiva-amūrtam ca*—Dual are the manifestations of Brahman, the formed one and the formless one (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II.3.1). They are the *saguna* (phenomenal or with attributes) and the *nirguṇa* (noumenal or absolute) aspects of the One Brahman. *Saguna-Brahman* is God, the Creator and Lord of the Universe (*Īśvara*), possessed of all divine qualities; and *Nirguṇa-Brahman* is the pure Ground of the Universe, which gives substance to the universe and makes its creation (manifestation) possible. To put it more accurately, the One Brahman appears to us in its phenomenal aspect as God, universe, and the living beings, while all the time remaining as their essence and substratum. Brahman thought of with Its inherent creative Divine Power (*devātma-śakti*—*Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, I.2), *Māyā*, is *Īśvara*. In other words, when the creative Divine Power *Māyā* is kinetic (*Prakṛti*), Brahman is seen as *Īśvara*. It is this Divine Power which manifests as the universe on the substratum of Brahman (*ibid.*, IV. 10). And this phenomenal appearance of the universe, according to the Vedic thought, is evolutionary in character (*Muṇḍaka Up.*, I.1.8, II.1.2-3; *Taittirīya Up.*, II.1.) with God presiding (*adhyakṣa*) over it and evolving it (cf. *Gītā*, IX.10) through cosmic laws and order in terms of Truth (*ṛta* and *satya*—*Rg-Veda*, X.190.1). *Satya* (derived from *Sat*, i.e. Existence, Truth, or Reality) is never haphazard; It is always perfect and orderly



(*satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ*); hence law, order, and reason are inherent in the universe and these are also the means through which we can discover Reality (*Muṇḍaka Up.*, III.1.5-6).

#### NATURE AND DEFINITION OF GOD

In Vedānta, therefore, God should not be taken merely as an extra-cosmic Creator of the universe, creating the universe by an act of will out of nothing. Neither God is merely a 'He'. He is both personal and impersonal. 'He' is only a convenient description to show that God is conscious entity (*caitanya*) and not an inert existence (*jada*). As such God can be equally described as 'She' or 'It', and can be thought of in all relationships of Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Master, Lord, Friend, etc. to establish emotional communion with the Divine to suit one's nature. God in Vedānta is, from different standpoints, extra-cosmic, intra-cosmic, and supra-cosmic—(*sa-prapañca*); as the pure non-dual Absolute Reality, in relation to which no relativity or any touch of duality can be posited—*prapañcōpaśamaṁ śāntaṁ śivam-advaitam* (*Māṇḍūkya Up.*, 7), 'He' is also transcendent and acosmic—(*niṣprapañca*).

God is Reality in relation to the universe—from which the universe emerges, in which it rests, and finally into which it merges back, leaving no trace behind, like a wave in the sea. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (III.1) defines Brahman in precisely this manner: *Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante, ena jātāni jīvanti, yat prajānti-abhisamviśanti*. The universe is not something apart from God, either in substance or in existence (*brahmaiva-idaṁ viśvamidaṁ varīṣṭham*—*Muṇḍaka Up.*, II.2.11). God is to be meditated upon as the '*tajjalān*', says the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*—*tajjalān iti śānta upāśīta* (III.14.1), the same idea put in an aphoristic formula, using the first syllables of the words: *Tasmin jāyate, liyate, aniti*

(That in which the universe is born, in which it merges, in which it vibrates, i.e. lives). The *Vedānta Sūtras* begin the enquiry into the nature of God or Brahman (*athāto brahma-jijñāsā*) with this very definition: *janmādi asya yataḥ*—'That from which is the origin etc. of this manifested universe'.

#### EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE VEDAS

After this brief introduction, we shall now try to trace the evolution of the conception of God in Vedānta from the early Vedic times. By this we do not mean any chronological development of the conception, but only logical and psychological, since the various conceptions overlap from the earliest period from time to time. Just as in modern times, too, various conceptions of God exist side by side, then also they existed side by side. In historic times too, among Vedāntic systems, the subtle philosophy of Advaita came first to prominence, next Viśiṣṭādvaita, and then Dvaita. It is also said that Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa collected and rearranged (*Saṁhitā*) the Vedic hymns in ancient times and classified them into the present four Vedas. So we can only seek to trace a logical, and not a chronological, evolutionary process in the Vedic literature.

#### VISVAKARMAN

The logically first conception of God in the Vedic literature is that of Viśvakarman—the architect or builder of the Universe: 'Who is our Father, our Creator, Maker; Who every place doth know and every creature. By Whom alone to gods their names were given, To Him all other creatures go, to ask Him' (*Rg-Veda*, X.82.3). He builds the universe, just as the carpenter builds the house (from wood, as in early times). But, then, the questions arise; where was the material for the building?

Whence are the living beings? Does he evolve these out of Himself? etc.

'At the time of creation what was His basis? How and whence did He start creation, the great Viśvakarman, the Seer of all? How could He extend the sky above and the earth below? His eyes are everywhere, His face is everywhere, and He is of all hands and of all feet. He, that one God, moves His hands and wings (imagination) and creates the sky and earth. What was that forest and what was that tree (i.e. material) out of which have been manufactured the earth and the sky? O wise ones, enquire into these in your mind and realize on what basis He created the universe' (*Rg-Veda*, X.81.2-4).

#### HIRANYAGARBHA

The enquiry was made and we come across the next conception of God as the Hiranyagarbha, He who has the shining germ of the universe (*hiranya*, golden, shining or brilliant—i.e. *mahat* or Cosmic Intelligence which is the germ of the universe) within Himself, in His womb (*garbha*) as it were, emerging out of Himself, just like the hen has the egg within itself created out of its own body. This Cosmic Egg (*aṇḍa*), comes out of Hiranyagarbha, evolves and manifests as the universe with all the beings (Hiranyagarbha is also called *Brahmā* and the universe is his Egg, '*Brahmāṇḍa*'). So Hiranyagarbha is also the Prajāpati, the Lord of creatures:

'In the beginning rose Hiranyagarbha born as the only Lord of all existence. This earth he settled firm, and heaven established. He is the giver of life and strength whom all gods and beings worship and obey; whose light and shade are life and death; ... who by His own glory is the One Lord of all that breathes and is their ruler. ... What (other) God shall we adore with oblations?' (*Rg-Veda*, X.121.1-3).

Since the egg, when it develops resembles its parent, Hiranyagarbha also must have a similarity to the universe. As such He is the Virāt, in his cosmic form. He is the *Brahmā*—the Vast. (From different functional points of view Hiranyagarbha is named differently such as Virāt, *Brahmā*, Mahat, Mahān-Ātman, Sūtrātman, etc.) Just as the hen is both outside the egg, containing the egg within itself, and again is potentially in the egg, activating it to manifest itself through the growth of the egg, Hiranyagarbha also is both within and without the universe and encompasses it as well. He is extra-cosmic and also intra-cosmic in both senses, i.e. He is within the cosmos and the cosmos is within Him in a subtle form.

#### PURUṢA

But like the hen and its egg—which develops into the chicken—do the two exist separately? Then, where do they both exist? Or is Hiranyagarbha immanent only and is exhausted in the universe? And such other questions begin to press upon the mind. The answer, already latent in the conception of the Hiranyagarbha, is made explicit in the conception of the Puruṣa (Divine Person). When the conception of the Puruṣa arose, sometimes Hiranyagarbha was considered as the Cosmic Egg itself proceeding from the Puruṣa (*Hiranyagarbham janayāmāsa pūrvam—Śvet. Up.*, III.4), and evolving the universe from within as its inner soul or Sūtrātman. (cf. *Gītā*, XIV.3). The *Puruṣa-Sūkta* (*Rg-Veda*, X.90) says: All this universe and its beings are only a part, a quarter of the Puruṣa; three-quarters of the Puruṣa transcends all manifestation (*pādo-asya viśvā bhūtāni tripād-asya amṛtaṁ divi*). All this universe is Puruṣa only, whatever was in the past and whatever will appear in the future (*puruṣa evedam sarvaṁ yad bhūtaṁ yat ca bhā-*

*vyam*). The manifested universe is a reflection of His glory (*etāvān-asya mahimā*). He excels His glory (*ato jyāyāṁśca pūruṣaḥ*). The Virāt is born from the Puruṣa (*tasmāt virāḍ-ajāyata*), but the Puruṣa transcends the Virāt (*virājo adhi pūruṣaḥ*). Like waves in the sea, the universe arises from the Puruṣa. The waves are only a small part on the surface and the vast sea beneath is waveless, and is the support and substance of the waves. The wave-form is only a condition or state of the sea itself, and not a separate thing in itself apart from the sea.

In these three conceptions of Viśvakarman, Hiraṇyagarbha, and the Puruṣa, we have the conceptions of God as extra-cosmic, intra-cosmic, and supra-cosmic. Viśvakarman is extra-cosmic, standing outside the universe and building it as it were; Hiraṇyagarbha is intra-cosmic, the universe is part and parcel of Him, and though manifesting outside of Him, it comes out of His own being and is like unto Him in being and nature. It is not something entirely separate from Him. Nor is He separate from it; He activizes it from within as the Cosmic Energy (*Prāṇa*) or Cosmic Ego (*Mahān-Ātman*). The Puruṣa is supra-cosmic. The universe is only a part of His glory and is not an entity different from Him; it is like the sun and its rays.

#### ADITI AND VĀK

Along with these conceptions of God in masculine terminology, we also find in the Vedas, God is conceived in feminine terms. The conception of Aditi, the Mother of gods, as the all-pervasive Infinite is significant. Says Max Müller: 'Aditi, an ancient God or goddess, is in reality the earliest name invented to express the Infinite; not the infinite as the result of a long process of abstract reasoning, but the visible Infinite, visible by the naked eye, the endless expanse, beyond the earth, beyond the

clouds, beyond the sky' (*Rg-Veda*, Eng. Trs., I.p.230). The root meaning of Aditi is boundless, unbroken, indivisible, or infinite. The *Rg-Veda* describes Aditi in these terms: 'Aditi is the celestial sphere; Aditi is the intermediary space; Aditi is the mother, the father, the son; Aditi is all gods, the five classes of beings, the created, and is again the cause of creation' (*Rg-Veda*, I.89.10).

Similarly, Goddess Vāk (*Word* or *Logos* personified) is conceived as the all-pervading Power which empowers and animates all gods and beings. She is the *Saguṇa* aspect of Brahman (*Īśvara*). In the *Rg-Veda* Vāk says: 'I move about in the form of Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, and all gods ... I am the Queen of the whole universe, the bestower of all wealth. I am the knower of the Truth, the first among the worshipful. The gods have placed me in various regions, as diverse are my abodes, and I exist in various living beings. All beings eat, breathe, see and hear only through me ... I teach gods and men the highest Truth (cf. *Kena Up.*, IV.1). I make them great ... I have entered the heaven and earth and all beings and exist in numerous ways ... Having created all the worlds and beings, I move freely like the wind. I thus exist in my glory above the skies and on the earth' (*Rg-Veda*, X.125).

In the conception of Vāk, and also that of Nārāyaṇa (the Lord residing in all beings—*ātmā nārāyaṇaḥ paraḥ*), which is similar to that of Puruṣa, there is an echo of God as the indwelling Self of all beings which view was later developed in the Upaniṣads.

Side by side with these monotheistic conceptions, we find two other streams of thought all of which later culminated in a confluence, in a grand synthesis. This synthesis is reflected even in the *Rg-Veda* in the famous dictum; *Ēkaṁ Sat, viprā*

*bahudhā vadanti*—the One Existence sages describe variously (*Rg-Veda*, I.164.46).

#### CONCEPT OF GOD AND GODS AS THE RULERS OF THE UNIVERSE

While thus the middle stream of Vedic thought seeks for the Personal God who is the Creator of the universe on a logical basis, giving impersonal functional names to God in relation to the universe, a side stream running parallel to it seeks psychological satisfaction in conceiving various personal gods, phenomenal aspects of divine power, who will satisfy the emotions of men, who interfere in the affairs of men, who look after their welfare, who control the forces of nature, etc. These are Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni, Vāyu, etc. Even in this conception, their personality is vague. Often they are the embodiments of the forces of Nature, or their controllers, or presiding deities. The natural objects like fire, wind, sky, earth, etc. are their bodies and they are their inner soul. They are the guardians of the universe (*loka-pālas*), performing different functions. These gods may be likened to Government functionaries in the governance of the universe. The Government, which is itself impersonal, and in which all power vests, operates through the personal functionaries like the king, ministers, etc. The power is delegated to them. They represent the Government and act in its name in a personal manner controlling different departments.

The monotheistic God stands for the king, who is the sovereign as well as the highest functionary. God is the supreme Ruler of the universe; and He delegates His powers to other gods. In His personal aspect God rules from 'outside' as it were; but in His impersonal aspect He controls things from within (*antaryāmin*) pervading everything as the great cosmic law (*ṛtaṁ bṛhat*). The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (II.5.2) says:

*Nṛṣad varasad ṛtasad vyomasad abjā gojā ṛtajā adrijā ṛtaṁ bṛhat*—'He is in man, in the gods, in the space, in the sky; He is born in water, born on earth, born in space, and in heavens. He is the Great Cosmic Law.' His great Cosmic Power (*Prāṇa*) vibrating, the whole universe, along with every thing in it, is projected forth (*yadidaṁ kiñca jagat sarvaṁ prāṇa ejati niḥsṛtam*—*Kaṭha Up.*, II.6.2). He is the inner law of being of things, of all that exist, and none can transgress it. He is the Great Fear (*mahad-bhayam*), as it were, which everything obeys implicitly. He is like a raised thunderbolt (*vajram-udyatam*) for fear of whom all the forces in Nature, all the other gods, perform their respective functions: 'For fear of Him the fire burns, the sun shines, the rain pours, the wind blows, and death stalks everywhere' (*Kaṭha Up.*, II.6.3).

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III.8.9) says that by the Immutable Law (*prāśāsana*) of this Abiding Reality the sun, the moon, and the earth (and all other things in the universe) are held in their proper places and perform their functions duly. He is the unseen immortal Ruler abiding within all these things as their Self (*yaḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni-antaro yamayati eṣa te ātmā antaryāmi amṛtaḥ*—*ibid.*, III.7.15).

#### GOD AND GODS AS THE SELF

Thus by a gradual penetration of the exterior gross manifestations, God is conceived as the very Self of all beings, which makes things what they are. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* declares, 'he who worships God or gods as apart from the Self, he does not know the truth' (I.4.10).

Interacting with the other streams of thought, the gods are seen as aspects or manifestations of the same One God. They are raised to the status of the supreme God, by turns, when hymns are sung to

them. The origin and nature of these gods is explained by Yāska:

*Māhābhāgyād-devatāyā eka ātmā  
bahudhā stūyate;  
Ekasya ātmano anye devāḥ pratyāṅgāni  
bhavanti;  
Itaretara janmāno bhavanti;  
Itaretara prakṛtayah;  
Karmajanmānaḥ, ātmajanmānaḥ ...  
Ātmā sarvaṁ devasya—*

'It is because of the great glory (infinite or infinite facets) of the Divine, that they apply many names to Him, the One Self, one after another. The other gods (*devas*) come to be sub-members of the One Self. They are mutually born from one another; they are of one another's nature; they originate in function (*karma*)—i.e. their attributes are according to the function conceived for them. They are born of the Self—the whole essence of a god is the Self only.' (*Nirukta*, VII.4). The same God appears in different contexts differently or is viewed differently as Indra, Mitra, Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa, etc. (*Rg-Veda*, I.164.46). The One Essence (*Tad Ekam*) runs through all these gods—*mahaddevānām asuratvam-ekam* (*Rg-Veda*, III.55).

#### THE PHILOSOPHIC QUEST FOR GOD AS REALITY OR TRUTH

On the other side of the middle stream, runs parallel to it the rational philosophic questioning about the Impersonal Reality or Truth (*Sat*), the source of all—God, gods, and the universe—, and Its nature.

In the very early stages of the *Rg-Veda* (X.129) itself, the *ṛṣi* questions, in the *Nāsadiya Sūkta*, about the nature of the Reality before creation (*Song of Creation*, J. Muir's translation in *Original Sanskrit Texts*, V. p. 356):

Then there was neither Aught nor Nought,  
No air or sky beyond.

What covered all? Where rested all?

In watery gulf Profound? (1)

Nor death was there, nor deathlessness,  
nor change of night and day.

That One breathed calmly,\* self-sustained  
nought else beyond It lay. (2)

\* (i.e. It was neither nothingness, nor  
insentient material entity).

Who can predicate anything about the pre-creation nature of Reality? It remains indescribable in Its own nature:

Who knows, who ever told, from whence  
this vast creation rose?

No gods had then been born—who then  
can ever the truth disclose? (6)

Whence sprang this world and whether  
framed by hand divine or no—

Its Lord in heaven alone can tell,  
if even He can show.\* (7)

\* (i.e. Even the Lord is post-creation).

All our views are post-creation, even of God, for who saw the First One being born? *Ko dadarśa prathamam jāyamānam?* (*Rg-Veda*, I.164.4).

But yet, from the phenomenal point of view some relationship has to be conceived between the Reality and manifestation without which the mind feels lost and restless as Reality impinges on us all the time, the mind itself being an emanation from it. Hence the poser:

The kindling ray that shot across

The dark and drear abyss—

Was it beneath? Or high aloft?

What bard can answer this?

The answer is supplied:

Gloom hid in gloom existed first—

One sea, eluding view;

That One, a Void in Chaos wrapt  
by inward fervour grew. (3)

Within it first arose desire  
the primal germ of mind;

Which Nothing with Existence links  
as sages searching find. (4)

One kindling ray from *That One* gives rise to mighty creative cosmic forces :

There fecundating powers were found,  
and mighty forces strove—  
A self-supporting mass beneath,  
and energy above. (5)

#### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ONE AND THE MANY

What is the relationship between the One and the many? Where is it that both these aspects, the phenomenal and the noumenal converge? What is their relationship to the investigator? Is not the Experiencer, the central core in all these problems? Even Reality, God—whether personal or impersonal—and all gods, and Nature itself, stand in relationship of objects to the Experiencer ; all conceptions are his formulations. Without the Experiencer, even the talk of their existence becomes meaningless; all problems become meaningless ; for even to affirm, negate, or doubt, or characterize, the Experiencer must be there. Then what is the nature of the Experiencer? Is it that the secret of Reality, of God, and of Nature, somehow lies hidden intimately in the Experiencer himself as his inmost Essence? What is the nature of the Self of man?

#### UNITY OF REALITY AND THE SELF

Such and various other related questions begin to assail the mind of the Vedic investigator and we find these various problems deliberately discussed, analysed, and solutions sought in the later Vedic literature—the Upaniṣads—which are called the Vedānta or the last portions of the corpus of Vedic literature. The thought-processes of the Vedas as knowledge (from *vid*, to know) also reach their culmination (*anta*) in the Upaniṣads. From this point of view also the Upaniṣads are called the Vedānta.

In the Upaniṣads the search is for the

Unity of All Existence or Reality (Brahman) and its realization in the Self (Ātman), the locus of all experience. Without the unity with the Self, the experiencing subject, Brahman remains merely an object—an incomplete objective infinite ; and the Self, without Brahman, is reduced to a point of mere individual subjective consciousness. It is soon realized that the subject and the object are the two poles of one and the same Reality. The external search for Brahman, the Infinite, the Absolute, which mind and speech fail to comprehend, culminates in Its discovery as the omnipresent Self of all Existence, hidden in all things and beings, inspiring their functioning and that of the universe. Brahman is realized intimately in experience as one's inmost Self and ceases to be merely an object of logical thought-process, a remote inference. Says the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (VI.11):

*Eko devaḥ sarvabhūteṣu gūḍhaḥ,  
Sarvavyāpī sarvabhūtāntarātmā;  
Karmādhyakṣaḥ sarvabhūtādhivāsaḥ,  
Sākṣī cetā kevalo nirguṇaśca—*

'The One Supreme Divine Being, the attributeless Absolute, abides hidden in all beings as their inmost Self and the witness of all their activities. He is all-pervasive and, dwelling within all, energizes the whole universe and inspires and guides its functioning.'

The sage Śaṇḍilya who realized the Self declares :

'This is my Self within the heart, smaller than a rice grain, or a barley corn, or a mustard seed, or a grain of millet, or the kernel of a grain of millet ; this is my Self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the mid-region, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds. This is Brahman' (*Chāndogya Up.*, III.14.3).

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I.2.20) says: *Aṇor-aṇīyān mahato mahīyān ātmā-asya jantor-nihito guhāyām* (This Self hidden in the

heart of all beings is smaller than the smallest particle and greater than the greatest entity).

The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (IV.14) also echoes:

*Sūkṣmātisūkṣmaṁ kalilasya madhye  
viśvasya sraṣṭāram-aneka rūpaṁ;  
Viśvasya-ekam pariveṣṭitāram ...*

‘The Creator, subtler than the subtlest, abiding in the minutest germ, manifests this whole variegated universe and also enfolds it within Himself.’

#### THE GREAT EQUATION

The Great Equation Ātman=Brahman and *vice versa*, is discovered and declared in the *mahāvākyas* (Great Utterances) in the Upaniṣads. The *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (2) declares ‘This Self is Brahman’ (*ayamātmā brahma*). One can experience that one’s Self is Brahman (*aham brahmāsmi*—‘I am Brahman’), says the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* (I.4.10), like the sages Śaṇḍilya, Vāmadeva, and others. But this ‘I’ is not the ego in me as the individual, but the Essence that is in you and all other beings and things. ‘That thou art’ (*tat-tvam-asi*) explains the *Chāndogya Up.* (VI.8.7). The *Īśā Upaniṣad* (6), as also the *Gītā* (VI.29), point out that it is not solipsistic or mere subjective visualization of all beings and the universe in oneself (*sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmani-eva-anuśīyati*), but, conversely, it is direct realization of one’s Self in all beings (*sarva bhūteṣu ca ātmānam*), thus reinforcing, each other and removing any shortcomings in one another. It is a direct Awareness (*aparokṣa anubhūti*) of the Unity of all Existence. Brahman is underived pure original Consciousness (*prajñānam brahma*) within all, states the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (III.5.3), which enables them to reveal (*bhā*) themselves, and is the source of all existence and experience.

#### BRAHMAN AND THE UNIVERSE

According to *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (II.1), Brahman is of the nature of absolute underived Existence—Consciousness—Infinity (*satyaṁ-jñānaṁ-anantam brahma*) and is the source of all relative existence, knowledge, and boundless finite manifestation on the phenomenal plane. But from the absolute Infinite, the relatively infinite universe has emerged without infringing the character of the Infinite in the least (*Pūrṇam-adah, pūrṇam-idaṁ, pūrṇāt pūrṇam-udacyate; pūrṇasya pūrṇam-ādāya pūrṇam-eva avaśīsyate* (*Īśā Upaniṣad*). And as this universe has for its substratum Truth (*Satya*—*Sat* stands for both Existence and Truth, for Truth alone exists), it is phenomenally apprehended by the mind as a rational evolutionary process. The unmanifest subtle *avyakta* by stages projects grosser manifestations (*Tait. Up.*, II.1) guided by cosmic Law and Order (*ṛta*). But it is not an evolutionary process in a straight line, but a cyclic process (cf. *Gītā*, VIII.16-19; *Bhāgavata*, XI.24.21-27) of evolution and involution, like the seed and the tree cycle. In the process, more and more of the hidden Truth is manifested. There is no hiatus or disjunction anywhere in existence. It is unbroken continuous One Existence appearing as different things at different levels from the most subtle to the most gross, one leading to the other. As the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I.3.10-11) says: *Indriyebhyaḥ parāhyarthāḥ, arthebhyasca paraṁ manaḥ, manasastu parā buddhiḥ, buddherātmā mahānparaḥ; mahataḥ param-avyaktam, avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ, puruṣāt na paraṁ kiñcit sā kāṣṭhā sā parāgatīḥ*. ‘The elements are subtler (i.e. superior and more pervasive) than the senses (for the senses along with their objects are evolved from these subtle elements), mind is subtler than the elements, the intellect is subtler than the mind, the ego is subtler than intelligence, and the Unmanifest (Creative

Power of Being) is subtler than the ego, and Puruṣa (Being) is subtler and more pervasive than the Unmanifest—that is the end that is the Supreme Goal.' On the macrocosmic scale, the ego is represented by Hiraṇyagarbha, and the Unmanifest, by the inscrutable primal Energy-Matter—*Prakṛti*—the Creative Power of Puruṣa or Brahman as Īśvara. Compare, *Bhāgavata*, XI.6.16: 'Receiving energy from Thee (the Infinite Brahman), the Puruṣa of infallible power, along with Māyā (*avyakta*), holds within Himself the Mahat (Hiraṇyagarbha or Cosmic Ego or Intelligence), like the embryonic state of this universe. This Mahat, backed by the same Māyā, projected from within itself the golden sphere of the universe, provided with outer-coverings (i.e. enclosed in different layers of cosmic existence of varying subtlety).

#### ĀTMAN IS TO BE REALIZED

Because everything of the manifested universe is Brahman (*sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*—*Chā. Up.*, III.14.1), by knowing That—the Self or Brahman—everything of This (phenomena) becomes known (*tasmin vijñāte sarvaṁ-idaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati*—*Muṇḍ. Up.*, I.1.3; *Br. Up.*, II.4.5). Therefore that Ātman is to be sought after, is to be enquired into and realized: *Ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ* (*Br. Up.*, II.4.5); *sa anveṣṭavyaḥ, sa vijijñāsītavyaḥ* (*Chā. Up.*, VIII.7.1). Then man knowing his true infinite immortal nature rises above all sorrow, all delusion, all fear (*śoka, moha, bhaya*) and remains in his blissful nature (*Īśa Up.*, 7; *Tait. Up.*, II.7-9).

#### MAN, GOD, AND THE UNIVERSE: THEIR INTER-RELATIONSHIP

Though from the noumenal (*pāram-ārthika*) point of view everything is Brahman alone and there is nothing other than it—*brahmaiva idaṁ sarvaṁ* (*Māṇḍ. Up.*, 2; *Muṇḍ. Up.*, II.2.11); *etadātmayam-*

*idaṁ-sarvaṁ* (*Chā. Up.*, VI.8.7); *ekam-evaṁ advītiyaṁ* (*Chā. Up.*, VI.2.1), from the phenomenal point of view, what is the mutual inter-relationship between the living beings (*jīvas*), the universe (*jagat*), and God as the Lord of the Universe (Brahman as Īśvara)? What must be the attitude of man towards these and how should he conduct himself? These questions also occupy the mind of the Upaniṣadic Ṛṣis. On the basis of their insights, great thinkers have built up systems of philosophy which all come under the name of Vedānta. In these systems all the three aspects of God as extracosmic (*Dvaita*), intra-cosmic (*Viśiṣṭa-advaita*) and supra-cosmic (*Advaita*) in the senses explained already, are propounded and paths of realization delineated.

These are not really exclusive conceptions, but only indicate the psychic journey of man from the external to the internal, until he reaches the goal of Reality in the inmost core of his personality. These are different stages of psychic evolution and not external independent realities. The internal psychic states are projected externally as seen in a mirror (*viśvaṁ darpaṇa dṛśyamāna-nagarī tulyaṁ nijāntargatam*), or as in dreams where the ego projects its own universe which, though internal, appears to be outside of oneself (*paśyan ātmani māyayā bahirvodbhūtaṁ yathā nidrayā*), as Śaṅkara says in *Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra*. Similarly, though we apprehend this projection of the universe empirically in an evolutionary process in an externalized space and time with a cause and effect relationship, space, time, and causality themselves are the products of Māyā, the principle of relativity, the Divine Power that makes the Absolute appear as relative (*māyā kalpita deśa-kāla-kalanā vaicitrya citrikṛtam*).

Personality is a viewing point and the external corresponds to man's view of his own personality. When man's locus of



personality is in the body (*deha*), he finds there is a corresponding concrete external universe, of which his body is a part, and there is a Lord of the universe, with a divine form and attributes, separate from the universe and its beings. The beings and the universe are dependent on the will of the Lord. When man's locus of personality is in the living soul within the body (*jīvātmā*), the universe also is instinct with a soul, and the soul of the universe is God, of whom the universe is the body. The souls are a part of Him, who is the Universal Soul (*paramātmā*). He controls the universe and the souls from within (*antaryāmin*, *sūtrātmā*), just as the soul controls the body from within. Finally, when man's locus of personality is in the Self, the Ātman, transcending the body and soul, the universe and God are transcended in Brahman who is one with the Self. The bodies, which are parts of the universe, and the souls which are parts of God are seen merely as the manifested glory of the One Self or Brahman, the sole Reality, the sole Existence. A devotee sings: *Deha buddhyā tu dāso'ham, jīva buddhyā tvadamśakaḥ; ātma-buddhyā tvamevāham, iti me nīcī-tāmatih*—'O Lord, when I consider myself the body, you are the Master and I am Thy servant; when I think of myself as the soul, I am a part of Thyself; and when I realize that I am the Self, verily I am Thyself, this is my conviction.'

These three main conceptions of Dvaita, Viśiṣṭa-advaita, and Advaita are interspersed with numerous shades and grades according to psychic or emotional necessities, but they are all comprehended by one or the other of these three main concepts.

#### GOD IN POPULAR RELIGION

Apart from these philosophic and quasi-philosophic conceptions, there are popular versions of these conceptions in the Smṛtis and Purāṇas, which also are accepted as

secondary authority in Vedānta, to meet the needs of devotion or practical spiritual life of people at different stages of mental growth, understanding, and capacities. These Smṛtis and Purāṇas render abstract philosophic conceptions of Truth into picturesque and poetic living deities with divine and philosophic attributes for the sake of worship and meditation in the daily life of the people. They have given inexhaustible inspiration to art, architecture, and sculpture; music and song; poetry and literature, innumerable hymns and joyful rituals and festivals, and have permeated the people's lives through and through. In one word, philosophy has been rendered into living religion. As the *Kulārṇava Tantra* says:

*Nirviṣeṣam param brahma*

*sākṣātkartumanīśvarāḥ;*

*Ye mandāḥ te'nukalpyante*

*saviṣeṣanirūpaṇaiḥ—*

'Those people of weak intellect, who are not able to realize the Absolute Brahman which is without any attributes, are helped to think of It through forms with attributes.'

Or as *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* says with regard to Kālī: *Manaso dhāraṇārthāya śighraṁ svābhīṣṭasiddhaye, śukṣmadhyāna prabodhāya ... arūpāyāḥ kālīkāyāḥ kalamātur- mahādyuteḥ, guṇakriyānusāreṇa kriyate rūpa-kalpanā—*'To facilitate concentration of mind, and for the speedy fulfilment of aspirations, the glorious Kālī, the Mother of Time (*kāla*=time; Kālī is Time personified for in Time everything comes into existence, flourishes, and decays), who is really without form, is invested with forms consistent with Her attributes and functions.'

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEITIES

Brahman in relation to the universe is Īśvara, or the Lord, with the threefold functions of projection, sustenance, and dissolution or reabsorption of the universe.

In relation to these threefold functions, He is a Trinity (*trimūrti*). These threefold aspects are personified into three separate deities—Brahmā (Creator), Viṣṇu (Protector), and Śiva (Destroyer). At the second stage, they are conceived as male principles and their Powers (Śaktis) through which they function are personified into their female counterparts or spouses. Gradually, from philosophic conceptions, they descend to be popular deities or gods with their own families and retinue (subsidiary powers). Then again the curve takes an upward turn and each god, by a process of synthesis, abstraction, and refinement is raised to the philosophic conception of Īśvara or the Supreme Lord performing all the three functions of creation, preservation, and destruction. Then He is identified as the manifestation of the Impersonal Brahman, the Reality. The female counterparts also are similarly sublimated to the Power of Brahman—Māyā, Prakṛti, etc. Thus, to the followers of Śiva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇapati, Sūrya, etc. their respective deities cease to be merely subsidiary gods, but represent the God (Īśvara) Himself, performing all the threefold functions, and ultimately, in their true nature, they are thought of as and identified with the supreme Absolute Brahman.

Similarly, those who conceive the Supreme God as female (*Devī*), as Mother instead of as Father of the universe, identify the Devī with the conception of Īśvara and attribute to Her the threefold functions of the Divine, just as the followers of Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, etc. do in the case of their deities. Then the Devī again is thought of as the Power (Śakti) of Brahman, and ultimately is identified with the Absolute Brahman. In the Tāntrika literature, Śiva (not one of the Trinities) stands for Absolute Brahman, and Devī is His Śakti creating the universe, in the place of Īśvara. She is Īśvarī. Śiva is Mahā-kāla (The

Great Time), and His Śakti is Mahā-Kālī. Śiva and Śakti are non-different like the light and its brilliance. The Trinity, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are looked upon as Her three forms. Devī is also conceived in many popular forms with different names and attributes.

#### MEDITATION ON THE DEITIES

As already stated Reality is beyond all genders, but can be conceived of in any manner for facility of meditation. The *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (V.10) says:

*Naiva strī na pumān eṣaḥ na  
caiva-yaṁ na puṁśakaḥ;  
Yaṁ yaṁ śarīram-ādatte tena  
tena sa yuijyate—*

'This One is neither woman nor man, nor is This neuter. It is connected with the body which It dwells in and is described as such.' So, the Divine can be described in all ways for It is manifested in myriads of ways (*ibid.*, IV.3):

*Tvaṁ strī tvaṁ pumān asi tvaṁ  
kumāra uta vā kumārī;  
Tvaṁ jīrṇo daṇḍena vañcasi tvaṁ  
jāto bhavasi viśvato mukhaḥ—*

'Thou art woman, Thou art man, Thou art boy and the girl too; Thou art the old man tottering with a stick, Thou art manifested everywhere.'

All subtle things share this characteristic as we see in empirical experience too. The life principle itself is neither male nor female, but works through male and female physical bodies or in asexual micro organisms. Similarly the electrical energy is neither fan, nor light, nor motor, but works through different machinery and manifests differently. So the Divine Spirit animating all these forms may be conceived or addressed in any way suitable. That is how God is addressed as our Mother and Father, etc. The Divine Mother also is

similarly conceived as male or female and beyond both :

*Purnrūpam vā smaret devīm  
strirūpam vā'pi cintayet;  
Athavā niṣkalārṇ dhyāyet  
Saccidānandalakṣaṇām—*

'Let the Divine Mother be thought of in male form or in female form ; or let Her be meditated upon as formless with the attributes of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.'

God may also be contemplated in non-human forms of animals, plants, or images (*pratimā*) with or without form. He may be meditated upon in objects like the sun, the sky, time, etc. which reflect some of His characteristics (*pratika*), such as all-pervasiveness, non-attachedness, equality for all, removal of darkness (of ignorance), source of life and activity, etc., or as Word (*Logos*) symbols like *Om*, knowing full well that the supreme Reality is beyond words and speech (*avāñmanasa gocara*) and there is no symbol which can really represent It (*na tasya pratimā asti yasya nāma mahadyaṣaḥ—Śvet. Up., IV.19*). What is important is Divine Communion and a rapport with the Divine Reality and not the form in which It is conceived and worshipped. What is important in food is nutrition and not the names and forms of various dishes. They are conceived differently because of difference in tastes and temperaments and stages of development, but the object of love and worship is the same Divine Reality. As the *Śiva-mahimna Stotra* puts it:

*Rucinām vaicitryāt ṛju-kuṭila  
nānā pathajuṣām;  
Nṛṇām eko gamyaḥ-tvamasi  
payasām-arnava iva—(7)*

'O Lord, due to variations in tastes, people conceive You in different forms and names and follow different paths, whether straight or meandering ; but, ultimately, Thou art the only Goal of all people, just

as the ocean is the one goal of all rivers.'

The Indian hymnal literature is full of such universal sentiments. To quote another from *Śrī Hari-śaraṇāṣṭakam* (1):

*Dhyeyam vadanti śivamevahi kecit-anye;  
Śaktim gaṇeśam-apare tu divākaram vai;  
Rūpaistu tairapi vibhāsi yataḥ-  
tvamekaḥ ...—*

'Some describe Śiva as the goal of meditation, some say it is Śakti (the Divine Mother), some say it is Gaṇeśa ; some say, verily, it is the Sūrya ; but, O Lord, everywhere in all these forms also Thou alone art shining.'

#### THE NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DEITIES

These different deities with their myriads of forms, statues, families, and retinues, serving as containers and purveyors of the same Sat-Cit-Ānanda Brahman (Infinite Existence-Consciousness-Bliss), intimately live, move, and have their being among the people and give them the needed emotional and psychological satisfaction. They serve as objects of worship and adoration and bring the Sat-Cit-Ānanda Brahman within the reach of all, according to their own inclinations, temperaments, and capacities.

Though God can be conceived in any form and worshipped, certain forms become convenient and useful and avoid confusion in social life. They have been visualized and adopted by saints and sages and have come down to us by tradition. They are often symbolically conceived embodying divine attributes and principles and are of great help in meditation. These conceptions, in some respects, may be compared to popular descriptions of abstract science in concrete terms or the working models that are made to understand and appreciate subtle phenomena as in the case of the models of the structure of atoms or of

DNA molecule. It is not to be imagined that God or gods being conceptions are imaginary only and have no phenomenal existence. Though imagined, like currency bills, they have empirical value. Reality being of the very nature of Consciousness, and not insentient material substance, abiding as the Self of all beings and things, responds by appearing in these very forms in which It is conceived. Reality is like the gold that supports paper currency. It is this Supreme Reality alone which is apprehended by our minds in all these ways on the phenomenal plane.

To illustrate, again, from modern science, though our views of matter have changed and everything is reduced to subtle energy-particles, still in practical life their manifestation as atoms, molecules, elements, compounds, and various objects of utility is not superseded. Further our ideas of many of the laws governing energy, material bodies, time, and space have changed. But the old conceptions are also true to a particular extent and they serve the purpose as far as they go. Each view has its own validity in operation in its own limited sphere (*sva-kāle satyavat bhāti*) and these views have different purposes to serve. Similar is the case on the spiritual plane. In passing, it may be pointed out that the 'scientific' view of things, which itself has been changing from time to time, is also one of the standpoints only, valid in its own particular sphere, and is neither the only view of phenomena possible, nor is it co-terminus with Reality. The *Bhāgavata* says: 'That from which a thing originates, into which it dissolves, and abides also in it in the intermediate stage, that alone is Real. The modifications have a mere phenomenal existence. ... A state from which another state originates and into which it is dissolved, is also relatively called real' (*Bhāgavata*, XI.24.17-18). 'Therefore, we accept as true the causal

order and enumeration of the categories upheld by the different exponents, just as they put it; for there is reason behind them all (*Ibid.*, XI.22.9).

#### GOD LISTENS TO HIS CREATION

It is always to be kept in view that Reality is not only Impersonal Absolute Brahman, but is also Personal Īśvara, under whose guidance the whole universe consisting of the living and the non-living evolves (*Gītā* IX.10; cf. *Bhāgavata*, XI.22.17-18). He listens to His creation for He says: 'I am the Father of this world, the Mother, the Sustainer, and the Grand Father (i.e. Impersonal Reality); the Purifier, the One thing to be known, the Om (i.e. the Word), and the Scriptures.' He is also 'The Goal, the Supporter, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge, the Friend, the Place of Merging, the Storehouse (of all Power), the Seed Immutable (of the universe)'—(*Gītā*, IX.17-18). The Lord assures the devotees in the *Gītā* (VII.21; IX.23) that He accepts and grants the prayers of the devotees in the very form in which they worship Him (*Yo yo yām yām tanum bhaktaḥ śraddhayā-arcitum-icchatī, tasya tasya-acalām śraddhām tām eva vidadhāmi-aham*) as also in the different ways in which they come to Him, for men in all ways tread the path that leads unto Him (*Ye yathā mām prapadyante tāmstathaiva bhajāmyaham; mama vartma-anuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaṣaḥ—Gītā*, IV.11). He is the essence that runs through all forms in the universe, like the thread in a necklace of beads (*mayi sarvam-idaṁ protaṁ sūtre maṇigaṇā iva—Gītā*, VII.7). The *Bhāgavata* also emphasizes this truth (cf. III.9.11; III.24.31). The *Gītā* is the Great Charter of Spiritual Liberty, Freedom of Worship, and Equality and Fraternity before the Lord. He is easily pleased and is easily approachable by all who want Him alone, including the greatest sinner

(cf. *Gītā*, VIII.14; IX.22,26,30-32; X.10-11; XVIII.66). The Lord is our very own.

In the *Gītā*, the Lord has declared that He not only appears to devotees in the form in which they worship Him—for He infills the forms conceived by their minds, though He Himself is without form, just as water takes the shape of the different vessels when poured into them—, but also He Himself will take special forms on His own accord and live among men from time to time when there is need (*Gītā*, IV.6-8; IX.11), like water freezing into ice-bergs and taking shape and form in the formless ocean. Though there is an apparent form, the content of it is the same water, the same Infinite Sat-Cit-Ānanda Brahman.

Reality is Infinite and indivisible and is of the nature of underived Sat-Cit-Ānanda. Time and space and all other phenomena are derived from It, through Its creative Divine Power. The 'Projection (of the universe) in its varied forms goes on for the experience of the soul, through an unbroken succession of causes and effects, until the term of its continuance is over, according to the will of the Lord' (*Bhāgavata*, XI.24.20). The whole of manifestation—God, gods, universe, and all the living beings—is permeated through and through with It and It abides as the Self of all. This realization, and living in that light, is the Highest Worship (*Parāpūjā*).

If there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite, like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Kṛṣṇa and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahmanic or Buddhistic, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for, every human being, from the lowest grovelling savage not far removed from the brute, to the highest man towering by the virtues of his head and heart almost above humanity, making society stand in awe of him and doubt his human nature. It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature. ...

May He who is the Brahman of the Hindus, the Ahura-Mazda of the Zoroastrians, the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Jehovah of the Jews, the Father in Heaven of the Christians, give strength to you to carry out your noble idea !

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(At the World Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1893.)

## THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE

REV. JOHN POTHEN, M.A., B.D.

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### I

**M**ETAPHYSICALLY speaking, the beginning of Christendom is at a point outside time. Historically speaking, its beginning is within time and very clear.

#### THE EARLY HISTORY

During the government of Augustus and Tiberius, in Palestine there appeared a being in the form of a man. He was a profound teacher and tremendous orator. He had a high potential of power and a distracting method. He had an effective verbal style and was quite often ambiguous in his statements. He often threw debating points on his critics. He agreed with everything on the one hand and denounced everything on the other. He was present at doubtfully holy feasts. He associated with rich men and loose women. He was critical of the hierarchy, while He preached obedience to them, and while encouraging everyone to pay their debts, He radiated a general disapproval of every kind of property.

Then He talked of Himself and His own unequalled importance. He claimed He is God and prophesied that for this He would be put to death by His own people and would rise from the dead and would go

back to God who He is and would send another Power to illumine, confirm, and direct that small group of stupefied and helpless followers.

All His prophecies came true. And His frightened followers remained in Jerusalem in a secret group waiting for the new power which He promised. That too happened when at a particular moment they received the new power, when the heavenly mysteries opened upon them and there was communicated to that group of Jews, in a rush of wind and dazzle of tongued flames, the secret of the Holy Spirit. The Church was historically born.

From here, on that day itself the Church spread to further lands—through people who were witnesses of the happenings associated with the endowment of this new power on the disciples of Jesus—to Libya and Cyrene, strangers of Rome and the rest. Before ever the official mission began, the dispersed thousands, who on that birthday of the Church had caught something of the vision and heard something of the doctrine and had even been convinced by vision and doctrine to submit to a Rite called Baptism, had returned to their own land, if not as missionaries, yet as witnesses. The Holy Spirit took His own means to

found and to spread Christendom before a single missionary had taken even one step from Jerusalem. Yet this was but a demonstration, as it were; the real work was now to begin, and the burden of the work was accepted by the group in the city—that work was the regeneration of mankind. The Apostles set out to generate mankind anew and to turn the world upside down.

They had not the language, they had not the ideas, they had to discover everything. They had only one fact, and that was that it had happened in Palestine. The birth-place of the Church thus stood on the boundary between the East and the West. It is significant that this infant religion is sometimes called essentially Eastern. But it soon spread to the West and the East, and one of the disciples of Jesus is said to have come to Kerala and spread Christianity in the south-eastern part of India, thus, without any shadow of doubt, making Christianity indigenous to India long before Christianity ever reached some of the western countries. It spread to the West more easily because of the nature of the Roman Empire who were masters of Palestine. The dispersion of the Jews in the Roman Empire meant that the earliest preachers of Christianity found in every town of the Empire a religious community whose background was the same as their own. Thus the extent of the Roman Empire helped to spread Christianity more easily to the West. Also, in the Roman Empire both material and cultural development had reached a stage peculiarly fitted to assist the advance of a new faith. At the opening of the Christian era, to the culture of the time Judaism contributed monotheism and morality; Rome, organization; Greece, philosophy; the East, mysticism and a gift for worship. Christianity was to take advantage of all these. But in other respects she appeared less fortunate. The Church

did not step forth on to an empty stage, but into an arena full of warring sects and rival faiths. But it remains true that religion and culture were in the melting pot waiting to be freshly moulded, that men were conscious of a great need, that every question was an open question, and that if Christianity won in the end it did so not simply because of favouring circumstances, but on its own merits.

When we pass from the first century of the Christian era to the second, third, and fourth centuries, we cannot help being rather disappointed. St. Paul and the Gospels and the happenings of the first century lead us to expect something better than what we actually get. It was the age of small men in the pagan and Christian world. But even though individual leaders were lacking, the Christian community as a whole exhibited a bright picture in their quality of faith, heroism under fierce persecution, and in the tributes of unwilling admiration that not only countless brave deaths, but also countless virtuous lives extorted from their persecutors.

This was a period of defence of the Christian faith by certain leaders of the Church who made a type of apologetics. Christian apologetics arose to answer the intellectual, philosophical, and political charges against the Church. Amongst the great apologists is Justin Martyr who agreed that the Christian faith is not only philosophically satisfying, but also empirically verifiable, and that it teaches loyalty to whatever Government their adherents find themselves under except when matters of conscience, human freedom, and God's sovereignty are trodden underfoot.

The early centuries of the Church were also a time when heretics arose with their distorted or exaggerated views about the Person of Christ and the nature of the Christian faith. The Church had to defend her faith against the onslaughts of heretics.

For example, there was a heretic called Marcion who taught that Christ was not human except in outward appearance. There was the most famous heretic called Arius who taught that Christ was not God, but a creature, a demi-God—a type of divine creation of God, and that God was unknowable like the Gods of the Greek Philosophers. It was against the teachings of Arius that, under the leadership of Athanasius, the Great Nicene Creed was formulated which Christians recite at most of their public worship even today.

The Church triumphed over philosophical attacks through Apologetics, and over heresy by orthodoxy, as is seen in the Church's Creeds.

From the early days of the Church, there was an extermination campaign against the Church, like Hitler's 'Final Solution for the Jewish Problem'. The Roman Empire waged a fierce persecution against Christians under Nero and his successors. The intolerance of Christianity with which it denounced all other religions; the terror struck by some Christian leaders who tortured human minds by threats of eternal death, fire, and hell; the place of honour and equality the Church gave to women; the vast and organized nature of the Church and its seeming hostility to the government, and its claim from its members of absolute obedience, were some of the reasons for persecuting the Church. The persecutions, though extremely cruel and barbarous, while they lasted, could not affect the growth of the Church, as it is said, 'the blood of martyrs is the very seed of the Church'.

Emperors Nero (A.D. 64-68), Trajan (A.D. 110), Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 176-180), Decius (A.D. 250), Diocletian (A.D. 303-305) were the worst of persecuting emperors who were set on exterminating the Christians. Then came Emperor Constantine, who having conquered Rome in A.D. 313, met his one remaining

rival, the Eastern Emperor Licinus at Milan, and they agreed to issue an Edict (Edict of Milan) terminating persecution and securing toleration for Christianity throughout the Empire. The conversion of Emperor Constantine to Christianity marks the period of Christianity becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire. The total result, however, is disappointing because as much seems lost in quality as gained in quantity. Most Christians of the fourth century and after were more concerned about the Creed and theology than about the Gospel and faith.

Let us now have a quick look through the period extending from the collapse of the Roman Empire to the end of the Reformation, i.e. from A.D. 400 to 1700. These thirteen centuries may be divided into four periods.

#### THE DARK AGES (A.D. 400—1050)

The main external feature of this period is the endless strife of the barbarian tribes or peoples out of which the European nations were to grow. No settled life was possible. All the arts and sciences decay, and the Church itself is barbarized. The monastery is the only refuge of civilization. People looked back to the orderly and prosperous life of the Roman Empire and longed for the return of that Golden Age. Others despaired of this and looked forward only to the end of the world. A great new world-religion arose in the East, Islam, a reversion to the strictest Jewish monotheism, with the addition of a new revelation through Mohammed. This religion seemed likely to wipe Christianity out of existence. It conquered Jerusalem, northern Africa, and Spain, and was only stayed in the centre of France in A.D. 732. Gathering its forces again, it attacked by a different route, conquered Asia Minor in the eleventh century, crossed into the Balkan country about A.D. 1350, and from A.D. 1530 onwards held Hungary



right down to the seventeenth century. Even today the earliest homes of Christianity, Jerusalem and Antioch, are for the most part inhabited not by Christians but Mohammedans.

In English history this period begins with the Anglo-Saxon invasions and ends with the Norman conquest.

#### THE PAPAL PERIOD (A.D. 1050—1300)

Out of this dismal confusion arose a new and beautiful civilization. At the centre of this new order stood the Papacy, which in its great days was perhaps the most remarkable institution in history. The Julius Caesar of this new and strange 'Roman Empire'—for such it may well be called—was Hildebrand, also known under his papal name as Gregory VII. He was a contemporary of William the Conqueror and gave his blessing to the Norman conquest. This great Christian civilization covered western Europe with splendid monuments of architecture, the Gothic cathedrals; it organized those romantic adventures, the Crusades; it founded the universities, and produced in them a great school of learning in which some part at least of the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans was re-discovered and applied to new uses; it produced great saints, such as Anselm and Francis of Assisi, and, in Dante, one of the great poets of the world.

The English history of this period begins with William the Conqueror and ends with the greatest medieval king, Edward I.

#### THE COLLAPSE OF THE PAPAL ORDER (A.D. 1300—1521)

The Papacy fell through its own fault. The Popes began to use their religious authority for worldly ends. In the great period of the Papacy, when kings defied Popes, the people were generally and quite rightly on the side of the Popes. Now the people, and even the national leaders of

the Church, tended to support the kings. Soon thoughtful Churchmen, such as the English Wycliffe, began to put forward theories which suggested that the whole Papal organization was contrary to the true Christianity. Papacy, meanwhile, allowed itself to be captured by the kings of France. For seventy years (A.D. 1305-1378), the Popes deserted Rome and lived at Avignon in France. The Papacy became a French institution. Then followed the Great Schism (A.D. 1378-1415); rival Popes, one at Avignon and one at Rome, each denouncing the other as the agent of the devil. Then came an attempt to restore the central organization by setting up a great international Parliament or Council side by side with the Papacy. This only led to quarrels between the Pope and the Council. Meantime, a great revival of interest in classical culture, the Renaissance, was leading many of the best minds of the day to despise Christian civilization altogether. The Popes themselves were caught in the tide of the new movement.

Thus, when Luther raised the standard of revolt in Germany, attacking Popery in the cause of Christ, half Europe sprang to his support.

#### THE STRIFE OF CREEDS

Luther's Reformation failed to 'reform'; it became a rebellion, a revolution. The Church was split into rival camps. This horrifying event compelled Rome to reform itself, and then set in a great movement called the Counter-Reformation, in which the leading part was played by a new order, the Jesuits, founded by Ignatius Loyola, who was as truly a reformer as Luther himself. The old immorality was expelled, and with it all that was best in the intellectual and artistic movements of the Renaissance. Both sides grimly prepared for a war to the death. On the Protestant side a second and more vigorous and consistent

form of Protestantism was founded by the great Frenchman, Calvin, in the city of Geneva. John Knox and the Scottish Presbyterians and Covenanters, Cromwell, Bunyan, Milton, and the English Puritans are disciples of Calvin. Rome fought the Calvinists with the Inquisition.

Then ensued the religious wars. Kings and princes chose their sides, less from religious motives than from political convenience. All the horrors of religious fanaticism, political greed, and the hypocrisy which disguised the latter as the former, were seen combined. The strife only ended with the exhaustion of the combatants and the grudging recognition that complete victory was impossible for either party.

Stated thus in outline, it seems an appalling story, and so in many ways it is. None the less, when we look beneath the surface we shall find much splendid energy, much devoted idealism.

#### PROTESTANTS AND MODERN MISSIONARY WORK

It is a deplorable fact that while the Counter-Reformation spurred the Roman Church to missionary energy hitherto unexampled, as though to 'call a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old', the early Protestants were quite indifferent to missionary work. Some of the leading reformers actually opposed it. The first active missionary leader of importance in England was Dr. Bray, a clergyman of the Church of England, who was struck by the ignorance of the clergy at home and by the still greater ignorance of the clergy in the American colonies. His efforts led to the foundation of two great societies which are still actively at work today; the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (1698), to provide parish libraries and books for the clergy; and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701), to organize direct

missionary work among settlers and natives in the colonies. Just a hundred years later two other societies were founded by the energy of the Evangelicals; the Church Missionary Society (1799), which is the most extensive Protestant missionary society in the world; and the Bible Society (1804), which has translated the Bible, in whole or in part, into four hundred languages, many of which it has for the first time reduced to writing and equipped with alphabet, grammar, and dictionary. Missionary interest was, however, slow to produce volunteers, and much of the early work of both missionary societies was done by Germans.

The Chief non-conformist missionary societies are the London Missionary Society, founded in 1795, which is mainly supported by the Congregationalists, and the Wesleyan Missionary Society, founded in 1813.

In British eyes, the greatest missionary field was naturally India, with its immense and varied populations under British rule. The pioneer of British missions in India was William Carey (1761-1834), a poor shoemaker, who became a Baptist minister, and by constant study learnt Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He met with every discouragement. At the Baptist Conference he was denounced as 'a miserable enthusiast', and the East India Company, in an outburst of unwonted eloquence, declared that the scheme of sending missionaries to India was 'pernicious, imprudent, useless, harmful, dangerous, profitless, fantastic. It strikes against all reason and sound policy, and brings the peace and safety of our possessions into peril'. Times changed. Before the end of his long life, Carey was employed by the Governor-General as a teacher of Bengali in his college for training young servants of the company; and forty years or so after his death, Lord Lawrence, one of the greatest of India's Viceroy, said: 'Notwithstanding all that the English people

have done to benefit India, the missionaries have done more than all other agencies combined.'

The number of native Christians in India today is about a little over 2 per cent. of the whole population. Though the number is steadily growing, it is small; but missionaries today are not much concerned with statistics of conversions. In India such statistics are specially misleading. Most of the open converts come from among the poor and ignorant, the outcasts; more important is the genuine but silent change of ideas that is going on among the high caste Brahmins themselves. Many of these are very closely in sympathy with Christianity. Some of course, come over and sacrifice all for Christianity.

In the sphere of education, mission schools which are now under government inspection and receive state grants, have proved a valuable supplement to the government schools. The government schools, ever since, under the influence of Lord Macaulay (1834), it was decided to provide a purely western type of education, have been dominated by the examination system, and train the memory to acquire a mass of superficial and ill-digested knowledge. The mission schools, on the other hand, nearly all of which are open equally to converts and non-converts, are free to build up a more elastic and truly educational system, based on an understanding of Indian history, and a pride in Indian literature and Indian institutions.

I have not said much about the history of the Eastern Church which came to our shores and, as tradition says, St. Thomas brought to India. This Church lived an exclusive and isolated life until over a century ago when, due to Protestant influence, they awoke to the reality of the necessity of imparting Christian influence to the society at large. But like the Western Church, fragmentation into various compet-

ing denominations plagued the Church. The Orthodox Church of Kerala fragmented into various sects till finally a true reformation took place over a century ago, due to the influence of the Anglican Church, when the reformed Church called Mar Thoma Church (Church of St. Thomas) came with humanitarian, educational, social, and Evangelistic ideals. With it came a general revival of the Church in Kerala, which has shown itself in high-literacy, education, and social consciousness—and also, alas, in Communism!

✓The question of denominationalism has often worried the Indian Church as a matter which grieved the heart of Jesus Christ, the head of the Church. So, with Indian Independence came the Church of South India which is a union of four denominations. In 1970, the Church of North India, the Church of Pakistan, and the Church of Ceylon will come into existence which will be united Churches formed out of seven different denominations. So the Church lives in an age of unity which is the work of the Holy Spirit, who brought the Church into being in the first place.

From the 1920s onwards there has been in India a steady attempt at making the Church indigenous. Christianity is not a foreign religion in India as I said already. But Christians brought in elements of foreign culture into the Church which is disastrous. Now we have Indian music, Indian motives, Indian art, and so on to enrich our faith, and Christianity will come to its own in India when the Church and the faith have been 'baptized' in our rich culture and civilization.

## II

### INSPIRATION FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Necessity, duty, obligation, command, responsibility, privilege, and joy are placed

on the Church by Her Lord, Jesus Christ, to serve others. People who think that our Lord Jesus Christ only commanded His disciples to go and baptize and to 'Do this' with regard to the perpetration of the Last Supper, are mistaken. Observance of only these two commands can only produce an ingrown and selfish community. The same Lord Jesus commanded his followers, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'. He once gave them an illustration of Christian service as the type of service which flow from our love for God to our neighbour, and the word 'neighbour' means all mankind, without any distinction of caste, colour, creed, or nationality.

Jesus said, 'Go and do thou, likewise'. He not only asked His disciples to 'go and do likewise', but He went about doing good, serving mankind irrespective of their faith or country. His only criterion for help was human need. Where there was need and desire to be helped, it was always supplied and received. He healed the sick, He raised the dead, He fed the hungry, He befriended the sinner, He forgave sinners and visited them, He healed all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. Those who had genuine need resorted to him and all requests with faith were amply supplied. He made men and women whole. He grieved over poverty, He sighed over pain and suffering, He wept at the graveside of a friend, He wept over the sin of His people, He had compassion over a widow who lost her only son. He was a friend of the friendless, and help of the helpless, a haven for the tempest-tossed, a friend of sinners. He rebuked the wealthy who kept their wealth to themselves. He rebuked the little faith of His disciples when they pleaded helplessness when the sick and the suffering were brought to them. He gave His disciples power and authority to heal the sick and to forgive sinners in God's

name. He commanded all His followers to 'Go and do likewise'.

Once Jesus gave them a picture of what would happen when all mankind will have to give God an account of their stewardship and deeds.

So the quality of Christianity is measured not by the number of times a Christian has gone to the Church, not by the number of times he has taken Holy Communion, not by the number of converts he has brought into the Church, *but* by the standard and quality of service he has rendered to the world, to God's people. The last questions that Jesus shall put to us will not be, 'How many times did you go to Church? or take your Communion?', or 'How many non-Christians did you convert?', but 'Have you fed the hungry?', 'Have you clothed the naked?', 'Visited the prisoners?'—because in doing these we are doing it to Him and in denying these to mankind, we are denying these to Him.

#### THE CHURCH: A PIONEER IN SERVICE TO MANKIND

So down the ages the Church has been a pioneer in service to mankind. Even people who are hostile to the Church will not deny them the credit for unselfish service to mankind. No doubt, there are stray cases where social service is done with baser motives which the Church, and above all, the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, Himself, decries. Woe to us, if we did not serve mankind for the sake and love of God.

The Church has always been a pioneer in education, healing, and social service, because of and for the sake of Him who died for all men everywhere. He, therefore, is the inspiration for all Christian social service.

Think of education in our own country. The Church is the pioneer of the present-day educational system of our country. Leaders of our nation, political, social,

cultural, and so on, are mostly products of Christian institutions or were taught by those who have been educated in Christian institutions. Why did these missionaries, who pioneered these institutions, leave their country and home and come to uncongenial, and sometimes unfriendly and even hostile, conditions on no salary and gave up their best, nay, their lives even in the service of their fellow men in far-off countries? So if we enquire after modern Christian educational system we discover that it runs back to the genius of John Knox. But John Knox was not a teacher, he was a great preacher of the Church of Scotland.

Or take the United States of America, with all its prosperity, vitality, idealism, and extraordinary liberality. And when one asks enquiringly as to what lies at the back of this large life, one comes to the Pilgrim Fathers, who were not politicians or social reformers, but men and women who gave up everything for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, who left their homes and the green fields of England, in simple and splendid loyalty to Him. So at the very root of the American Republic and all that is noble in her life is the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Or again, think of missions in their industrial and civilizing aspects. Take such a mission as Livingstonia in Africa. Go out and see what has been done there and you find schools and colleges and hospitals. You will find trade and boats upon the lake and highways and cultivation of the soil. And then, back of all that civilization, where a century ago was blood and terror, you see the rugged face of Dr. Livingstone. Now Dr. Livingstone was not a trader. He was something more than a Consul or explorer. He was a man whose sense of service to mankind was inspired by the Lord Jesus. So going out to see what has happened in the very heart of the 'Dark Continent', you come to Jesus of Nazareth.

Multiply all that by fifty from the New Hebrides to Madagascar. Everywhere a growing civilization, and at the back of it—the Lord Jesus.

#### CULTURAL SERVICE AND SOCIAL REFORM

In the field of cultural service to mankind too we find men and women leading the world with Christian standards. Poets and artists must remember that. I think of English poetry. Where did it begin? Not in the love of nature, but in the inspirations of religion. I think of architecture, that 'frozen music', especially in Europe and the Western world. When common people lived in hovels, when domestic architecture was undreamed of, when private dwellings were comfortless and shapeless, art, genius, and increasing toil in loving and sacrificial spirit of service were being lavished in the service of the faith. I think of painting, that most heavenly art, and I discover at the birth of modern western painting, not the portrayal of mountains or of forests, but the figures of the Virgin Mary and Her Child Jesus.

Again, one thinks how true this is in the great sphere of social reform. Who led the way in the reform of prisons? It was certainly not the general philanthropist. It was men like Howard, whose hearts the Lord Jesus had touched and who had felt the power of His compassion. Who toiled for the emancipation of the slave? It was not our champion of the rights of men. It was men like Wilberforce, inspired by the conviction that where the spirit of Jesus is, there is liberty. Go out to see what has been done for women—enquire what has been done for children, for the leper, the outcast, and the criminal. We find that in all these works of compassion, the Lord Jesus had inspired men and women.

Go down to the slums of our own cities and tell me who are toiling there for no gain?—Moral philosophers?, I rarely meet

them. Doctrinaires?, they are at home discussing social problems. Politician?, yes, sometimes; but they go there to catch votes! I alight on Christian men and women (and thank God that in India today, the Ramakrishna Mission and the welfare societies of other religions too do it with great devotion and spirit of service). In our Calcutta slums alone, we find the Salvation Army with its self-effacing and sacrificing officers and men, we find the Roman Catholic Church, with its Missionaries and local Christian workers—the most notable of them, Mother Teresa of world fame working and slaving for the poor. ✓

When a drunkard is made himself again, when the poor woman in the street is rescued, when little homes that once were pig-sties become models of neatness and cleanness, in 90 out of 100, at the back of everything you come to Jesus as the inspirer and guide.

Let me give you some concrete examples of Christian service in India and in the world today :

#### CASA

One hundred and forty-two families, who had lost their homes in the Koyanagar earthquake last year, have moved into their new houses provided by CASA, Christian Agency for Social Action, Relief, and Development. Constructed at a cost of Rs. 3,55,000, the houses provide quake-proof living accommodation to the villagers of Wanjoli, Gojagaon, Nawjav, and Dicholi in Satara district, Maharashtra.

A joint venture between CASA and the Government of Maharashtra, which provided for each house-building material worth Rs. 950, the houses were completed in 50 days.

The total rehabilitation project of CASA in the Koyanagar area involves rebunding of fields, agricultural assistance to farmers, and construction of roads, schools, and community buildings.

Immediately after the earthquake last year, CASA opened free kitchens in four villages of Satara district which for a month fed 6,000 persons twice everyday. In addition, 166 temporary shelters were built in seven villages of Sangli and Satara districts. During the emergency phase, CASA also provided to the victims large supplies of garments, blankets, medicines, and gift-clothing received from Church World Service and Luthern World Relief Organizations in the U.S.A. Volunteers from colleges and churches in Poona, Sangli and Satara helped in the distribution of relief material and the construction of temporary huts. Individuals, churches, and various organizations in India have raised Rs. 35,000 in addition to the overseas agencies which contributed directly or through the World Council of Churches for the Koyana Rehabilitation Programme of CASA nearly Rs. 3,00,000.

#### WORLD AND HUNGER

Population and economic experts indicate that the world has left about 12 years to ward off a catastrophic food shortage. If the people of the world fail in these 12 years, the resulting world chaos of hunger could bring on another dark age for civilization.

In the past two centuries, the Church ✓ has moved significantly in mankind's development through her efforts in the fields of education and medicine. It must now be concerned for man's hunger. The role played by the Church in these other fields helped to make history. Governments and voluntary agencies of the world are making great strides toward the solution of the food and population problems. The critical point at which the issues will be decided is at the grass-root level. It is at this level that the Church has effective relationship and can bring about effective results.

In the year 1966, when the drought in

India so clearly demonstrated to the world the precariousness of mankind's food supply, various agencies in most western nations took up large offerings to help the people of India's famine areas. It is reported that the Dutch people contributed \$4,500,000. The Germans, the English, the Australians and many other nations gathered large amounts of money and resources for the same purpose. The U.S. Government sent 1,000,000 tons of grain. In the United States churches indicated their concern by contributions. The Church World Service of the National Christian Council in the United States handled for the hungry of the world more than four billion pounds of food, and spent \$100,000,000 all over the world. At the same time the Methodists in America gathered together \$1,180,000 (more than Rs. 88,00,000).

#### TWO AGENCIES

This Methodist contribution is being administered by two agencies in India. One is CASA, Christian Agency for Social Action, Relief, and Development of the National Christian Council of India. The other is the India MCOR (Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief).

With these resources India MCOR has been able to finance a nutritional aid programme for many thousands of children in hostels. It has financed the digging or the blasting or the deepening of around 200 wells at a cost of some Rs. 285,000. Also it has spent about Rs. 1,95,000 to give additional equipment and capital development to church farms. It has spent around Rs. 2,21,200 for heavy equipment for well

projects in various areas. It also has furnished funds to some 35 schools for midday school feeding programmes. Rs. 90,000 has been spent on food preservation projects.

The MCOR's approach to the church for agricultural projects is under two categories. The first is that of putting idle church land under cultivation.

The second category of aid from MCOR is for already existing agricultural efforts of Methodist institutions. Where any school, hospital or church has a responsibly managed agricultural project already and needs capital funds for further development, application may be made for help. Grants to such projects will be made on the merits of each individual case after thorough investigations.

#### EXTENSION WORK

In co-operation with the bishops on the one hand and AFPRO (Action for Food Production) on the other, MCOR is aiding in a programme of education for leadership in the fields of extension and community development. Recently there was conducted at the Training Institution of the Government of India at Nilokheri in Haryana a training course for extension workers. Many church workers attended this course which was financed by MCOR.

Various other possibilities are being explored to bring the Church in India into vital participation in activities related to mankind's hunger. Efforts to remove the root causes of hunger are just as important as emergency programmes of feeding the hungry.

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### Symposium on Sister Nivedita

The Institute, in collaboration with the Akhil Bharatiya Nivedita Vrati Sangha, held a two-day symposium on 'Sister Nivedita' on Monday, 29 April and Tuesday, 30 April 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

At the first session, on Monday, Revered Swami Chidatmanandaji, President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas, presided.

The programme commenced with a Vedic invocation by the students of the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Vivekananda Vidya-Bhavan, Dum Dum, followed by words of welcome from Dr. Roma Chaudhury, President of the Nivedita Vrati Sangha. Principal Amiya Kumar Mazumdar expounded 'Nivedita's Conception of Dharma'. 'Nivedita's View of Life' was the topic of Pravrajika Vedaprana, Principal, Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Vivekananda Vidya-Bhavan. Dr. Subimal Mukherjee, Head of the Department of Political Science, University of Calcutta, spoke on 'Nivedita on Civic and National Ideals'.

The second session on Tuesday was presided over by Pravrajika Sraddhaprana, Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Sarada Mission.

After Vedic invocation by the students of the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Vivekananda Vidya-Bhavan, a talk on 'Nivedita's Thoughts on Education' was given by Pravrajika Amalaprana. Dr. Uma Roy, Assistant Professor of Bengali, Bethune College, Calcutta, then spoke on 'Nivedita, the Poet'. 'India through the Eyes of Nivedita' was the subject of the speech by Sri Pranab Ranjan Ghosh, Lecturer in Bengali, University of Calcutta, and Srimati Sudha Bose, Assistant Teacher, Muralidhar Girls' School, spoke on 'Nivedita on Art.'

### Celebration of Shakespeare's Birthday

On 1 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m., the Institute observed the birth anniversary of Shakespeare in the Vivekananda Hall. Professor P. K. Guha, Emeritus Professor, Jadavpur University, where he was also Dean of the Faculty of Arts, spoke on 'Shakespeare's Play-world', and Shri Sushil Kumar Mukherjee, Senior Professor of English, Scottish Church College, Calcutta, on 'Introducing Macbeth'. (These lectures have been published in the September 1968 issue of the *Bulletin*.)

The programme concluded with the screening of the film 'Macbeth' (shorter version) and 'Poet's Eye'.

### Birthday Celebration of Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore's Birthday was celebrated at the Institute on Wednesday, 8 May 1968 at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. The function commenced with 'Rabindra Sangeet' by Sri Debabrata Biswas followed by recitations from Rabindranath by Sri Sudhanshu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B. Shrimati Maitreyi Devi then gave a talk in Bengali on 'Social Thinking of Rabindranath'. The English version of Sri Satyajit Ray's film 'Rabindranath' was screened at the end.

### Buddha Jayanti

The birth anniversary of Bhagavan Buddha was observed at the Institute on Thursday, 16 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. The programme included invocation by the monks of the Bengal Buddhists' Association, led by Bhikku Dharmapala; a talk on 'The Life and Message of Buddha' by the Hon'ble Mr. Chief Justice D. N. Sinha; and the film show entitled 'Our Buddhist Heritage'.



**Shankara Jayanti**

On Wednesday, 29 May 1968 at 6.30 p.m. the Institute observed the birth anniversary of Sri Shankaracharya at the Vivekananda Hall.

The programme commenced with the chanting of the 'Shiva-mahimna Stotram' (in Sanskrit) by the members of the All-India Shankara Institute. Devotional songs were sung by Shrimati Chhabi Banerjee and Sri Purnendu Roy, and recitations were

given by Kazi Sabyasachi.

Dr. Roma Chaudhury, Principal, Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta, gave a talk on 'Shankara's Message for the Modern Man.'

The programme concluded with the portrayal of some select scenes from the Sanskrit Drama 'Shankara Shankaram' by the members of the Prachya Vani, Calcutta, an organization devoted to the promotion of Sanskrit Literature and Culture.

**NOVEMBER CALENDAR**

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

**SCRIPTURE CLASSES****THE CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD**

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th November*

**SHRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM**

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th November*

**THE KATHA UPANISHAD**

Swami Bhuteshananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

*2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th November*

## CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

Indo-German Music Festival

in collaboration with Max Muller Bhavan

Programme Schedule for Western Music

Monday, 4 November 1968, at 6.30 p.m.: Concert of Classical Music

Tuesday, 5 November 1968, at 6.30 p.m.: Concert by Duo Zignondy

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00 for each day

## FILM SHOWS

Devotional Films (in Bengali)

Tuesday, 12 November 1968, at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, 26 November 1968, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00 for each day

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR NOVEMBER 1968

*Mahatma Gandhi Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 2 November, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 30 November, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

## *Programme*

Songs, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Shows

## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

November 6      **A Symposium on Sister Nivedita's Life and Thought**

In Celebration of the Concluding Ceremony of Nivedita Birth Centenary

*Participants:* Pravrajika Sraddhaprana

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.

Sankari Prasad Bose, M.A.

*President:* Dhirendranath Das Gupta

*News Editor, Hindusthan Standard*

- November 13      **The Psychological Background of the Tantras**  
*Speaker:*      Tripura Sankar Sen, M.A.  
*President:*      J. C. Banerjee, M.A.
- November 20      **Two Cultures**  
*Speaker:*      Sisirkumar Ghose, M.A., D.Phil.  
*President:*      J. C. Mazumdar, M.A., I.A.S.
- November 27      **Metaphysics of the Body**  
*Speaker:*      The Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji  
*President:*      Saroj Kumar Das, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

**SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA**

*Monday, 11 November, at 6.30 p.m.*

**SHIVA-KATHA** (in Bengali)

**The Concept of Shiva in the South**

**By**

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.

**A THREE-DAY SEMINAR ON**

**How University and College Libraries Can Serve Students and Faculty**

*Sponsors*

The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture

United States Information Service

Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres

*Programme Schedule*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Thursday, 31 October: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. | } With a break for<br>Lunch<br>1 p.m. to 2 p.m. |
| Friday, 1 November: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.   |   |
| Saturday, 2 November: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. |   |

Admission by invitation only

**A SYMPOSIUM ON**

**Cell: Its Structure and Function**

*Monday, 18 November, at 5 p.m.*

*Sponsors*

The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture

The Life Science Centre

University College of Science

# BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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SOME PHASES OF ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

SWAMI ANANYANANDA

*Swami Ananyananda, formerly Joint Editor of the Prabuddha Bharata, was also one of the Editors of the Vedanta for East and West, a bi-monthly published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London, of which he was the Assistant Minister. He was the Assistant Secretary of this Institute in 1964-65. At present, the Swami is associated with the project of bringing out a rearranged up-to-date new edition of The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda undertaken by the Advaita Ashrama, the present publishers. The following is the text of a lecture the Swami gave at the Institute on 11 May 1968, under the title 'The Vedānta in All Its Phases'.*

**T**HE philosophy founded on the Vedas, is known as Vedānta, the essence or the end of the Vedas. This philosophy of Vedānta, from time immemorial, has spread to different climes at different times, whenever there was a need for it. Whenever it has done so, it has gone in the typically and characteristically Indian way. To use Swami Vivekananda's words: 'Permeating the whole thought-world with its power, silent, unperceived, gently, yet omnipotent, like the dew that falls in the morning, unseen and unnoticed,

yet bringing into bloom the fairest of roses—this has been the thought of the Upaniṣads, the philosophy of the Vedānta.'

## THE GIST OF THE VEDĀNTA

In the *Uttara-Gītā*, there is a well-known verse which gives the gist of the Vedāntic teaching thus:

*Ślokārdhena pravakṣyāmi yaduktam  
grantha-koṭibhiḥ;  
Brahma satyaṁ jaganmīthya jīvo  
brahmaiva nāparaḥ—*

'What is discussed in hundreds of thousands of scriptures regarding the ultimate Truth, I will compress it in half a verse. It is this, that Brahman alone is real and the world is unreal, apparent; and that the *jīva*, the individual soul, is verily Brahman. In reality, there is no difference between the two.'

This is the essential teaching of Vedānta, Vedānta as represented and expounded in Advaita, which is Vedānta *par excellence*. This verse briefly but clearly expresses the Vedānta theory in essence; and its practice also is suggested by implication. The principal teaching of Vedānta is that Brahman, the Absolute, is alone absolutely real; that all the phenomena, all the names and forms in manifestation, are not real from the ultimate or absolute standpoint; and that the soul of man, the *jīva*, indeed, the essence of everything, is nothing but Brahman. *Ayam ātmā Brahma*, 'this Ātman, this Self of man, is verily Brahman', declares the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*. The Vedānta practice consists, to put it in one word, in the realization of this identity between the Ātman and Brahman. When that realization takes place in the heart of man, all his doubts are dispelled, the knots of his heart are rent asunder, and his *karmas* are destroyed; he becomes a liberated soul. So says the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*: *Bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiḥ chidyante sarvasaṁśayāḥ, kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi tasminḍiṣṭe parāvare* (II.2.9).

The Vedānta philosophy is very ancient, and the tradition says that it has no beginning in time. It is the outcome of the Vedic and the Upaniṣadic thought, which happens to be the background and the basis of all orthodox Indian philosophical systems that have been thriving on the sacred soil of India, providing spiritual nourishment and inspiration to her children down these scores of centuries.

## THE SOURCE-BOOKS AND SCHOOLS OF VEDĀNTA

The Vedānta literature is vast. Principally, books of Vedānta are three: the Upaniṣads, the *Brahma-Sūtra*, and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. In the Upaniṣads, we come across philosophical concepts which are not merely absolutistic, but also theistic in character. While most of the Upaniṣads are predominantly absolutistic in their teaching, there are some which are definitely theistic. The currents of philosophical thought are not organized or systematized in the Upaniṣads. This organization or systematization is effected in the *Brahma-Sūtra* or *Vedānta-Sūtra*, in which a master mind, Veda-Vyāsa, has formulated a beautiful philosophy from the scattered philosophical thought-currents present in the Upaniṣads. For a practical application of the religion and philosophy of the Upaniṣads, we have to turn our attention to that well-known book, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which is rightly described as an Upaniṣad in the colophon to every chapter in the book itself. These three together, namely, the Upaniṣads, the *Brahma-Sūtra*, and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, constitute what is known as the *prasthāna-traya*, or the three broad bases of the Vedānta schools.

It has been the practice in India that every philosophical system, which claims to speak for and on behalf of Vedānta, and which wishes to be called by, and associated with, the sacred name of Vedānta, has got to take its inspiration from these *prasthāna-traya*, and trace its doctrinal differences and interpretations to them. Thus have come into being several schools of Vedānta, ranging from the Dvaita (Dualism) of Madhvācārya to the Advaita (Monism), of Śaṅkarācārya. In between, we have several schools of Vedānta, either leaning towards dualism more and more or towards monism more and more—each having a dash of

Dvaita or Advaita, a little more or less. The most prominent among these schools is Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānujācārya. One thing was definitely required of all these schools, and that is that they all must show that the *prasthāna-traya* supported their respective philosophical doctrines.

So we have several commentators, *ācāryas* as they are called, on the *prasthāna-traya*, beginning with Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, who interprets them from the Advaitic point of view, and ending with Śrī Madhvācārya, who interprets them from the Dvaitic standpoint. In between these two extremes, we have the Viśiṣṭādvaita of Śrī Rāmānujācārya, the Svābhāvika-bhedābheda of Śrī Nimbārkaācārya, the Śuddhādvaita of Śrī Vallabhācārya, the Bhedābheda of Bhāskara and Yādava, the Acintya-bhedābheda of Śrī Caitanya. We shall not enter into a detailed discussion of the intricacies of the philosophical differences and divergences of doctrines of these several schools of Vedānta, or their religious beliefs and *sādhana*s (spiritual practices). Suffice it to say that basically all of them can be brought under three main heads, allowing for minor doctrinal differences—Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Dvaita.

#### ADVĀITA: THE CULMINATION OF VEDĀNTA

Here, we are chiefly concerned with the first mentioned, namely, Advaita, and its theory and practice. For, Vedānta reaches its culmination there. By usage, in common parlance, Vedānta has come to mean Advaita Vedānta, showing thereby the powerful impact and the influence of the personality and philosophy of Ācārya Śaṅkara on Indian thought. During his short life of only thirty-two years, Śaṅkara not only wrote his thought-provoking commentaries on the *prasthāna-traya*, but also travelled the length and breadth of India propagating the philosophy of Advaita and establishing it on firm foundations. He

is also known as Śaṅmata-sthāpanācārya, one who revived and gave a firm basis to all the six religious systems of the country. Besides, he also composed hundreds of hymns and prayers in praise of the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon.

The teachings of Vedānta are impersonal, inasmuch as they do not owe their origin to any particular person or prophet. Vedānta is not built round any person, but on principles. Its teachings voice the profound spiritual experiences of highly evolved souls, called *ṛṣis*, who had touched the rock-bottom of reality and directly and immediately had the intuitive experience of the highest Spiritual Reality (Paramātmān). These teachings are not mere hypothetical theories produced by speculative thinkers, but tested truths in the crucible of experience in the hearts of highly developed spiritual men and women. They are spiritual realizations of a high order, and like scientific truths on the material plane hold good for all time and for all people and are capable of universal application and realization. As such, their appeal is universal.

First, dealing with the theoretical aspect, Vedānta speaks of the divinity of the soul, of its innate perfection and its inborn freedom. It proclaims the fundamental spiritual verities of life—of man and nature, and shows the supremacy and finality of Spiritual Reality. It declares that the Reality is One without a second—*Ekam eva advītiyam*, and everything else is its phenomenal manifestation. Its appeal to man is spiritual—to realize his real spiritual nature and to be free from the thralldom of matter. Vedānta always will appeal to anyone who is awake to the spiritual order of things. To one who is spiritually sensitive, Vedānta will not only be a 'solace of one's life, but it will also be a solace of one's death', to borrow an expression of the well-known German philosopher, Schopenhauer.

## ESSENCE OF VEDANTIC TEACHING

The opening verse of the *Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad*, one of the oldest of the Upaniṣads, and traditionally enumerated as the first of the major ten Upaniṣads, first not in any logical or chronological sense, makes a very significant statement, which is the very essence of the Vedāntic teaching. It says: *Īśāvāsyam idam sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyām jagat, tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasyasviddhanām* — 'All this—whatsoever moves on the earth—should be covered by the Lord. Protect yourself through that detachment. Do not covet anybody's wealth. (or, do not covet, for whose is the wealth?)' In other words, the verse says: 'Whatsoever there is changeful in this world, all that is to be covered by the Lord.' This declaration of the Upaniṣad provides, as it were, the basis on which the entire superstructure of Vedānta is built. This idea forms the philosophical as well as the practical religious background of the whole of the later-day Vedānta literature. It states the truth clearly and emphatically, and urges all to realize it. It speaks of the spiritual oneness of all existence, for everything is permeated by the Lord. God is covering everything; God is in everything; God is everything, says the Upaniṣad. Realize this truth and be free—that is the sum and substance of the message of Vedānta.

This single verse of the *Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad* can be said to be the soul of our Vaidika Dharma, or Hinduism, as it is popularly but wrongly called. For the whole history of Hinduism, in all its phases, is but an understanding and an expression of the truth of the statement—All is Divine. Mahatma Gandhi once said about this verse: 'If all the Upaniṣads and all other scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes, and if only the first verse in the *Īśā Upaniṣad* were left intact in the memory of Hindus, Hinduism would live for ever.'

## REALIZE THE DIVINITY OF ALL

Vedānta teaches the divinity of all; it says that man is essentially divine. In fact, everything in the universe, animate and inanimate, is basically and potentially divine. This Divinity is one and universal, pure and perfect, infinite and eternal. It is spiritual and unconditioned by time, space, or any other adjunct. It is the basis of all manifestation, of all names and forms. The purpose of life is to realize this Truth and to be one with it. This is the goal of religion, according to Vedānta. This is the end and aim of every kind of spiritual struggle. Swami Vivekananda, who in recent years made the treasures of the Vedānta accessible to all, and brought them to the common people at large, has beautifully and forcefully compressed the entire Vedāntic teaching in the following few statements, which truly breathe the spirit of universal religion. He says:

Each soul is potentially divine.

The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal.

Do this either by work (*karma*), or worship (*bhakti*), or psychic control (*yoga*), or philosophy (*jñāna*)—by one, or more, or all of these—and be free.

This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details.

These statements of Swami Vivekananda, in a nutshell, express the whole scope of Vedānta—both in its theoretical and practical aspects.

Vedānta says that Brahman, the ultimate Reality, is like an infinite ocean of Sat-Cit-Ānanda, of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, and that we—every kind and form of life in manifestation—are like bubbles, ripples, and waves on that ocean. In essence, the bubbles, the ripples, and the waves are not different from the ocean on which they appear and subside. It is all water only, but names and forms differ and endure for a while. They emerge from,

and enter into, the same source. Similar is the case with this universe of diverse names and forms. They are all verily Brahman—*Sarvaṃ khalu idaṃ Brahma*. They emerge from It, live in It, and return to It at the time of dissolution. Names and forms are temporal, empirical, fleeting, not permanent or enduring. They appear and disappear on the ocean of Brahman, which alone is permanent and enduring. Brahman is Truth, It is Knowledge, and It is Infinite—*Satyam jñānam anantaṃ Brahma*—says the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*.

Knowing that we are divine, we must realize it in our life, in this very life. That is the goal of Vedānta. It urges us to realize the Truth, to intuitively perceive It, in this very life, here and now. Otherwise, great will be the calamity warns the *Kena Upaniṣad*: *Iha cedavedit atha satyasmasti, na cedihāvedit mahatī vinaṣṭiḥ*—‘If one has realized here, then there is truth; if he has not realized here, then there is great destruction.’ To achieve this end, Vedānta advises us to tread a path quite different from the one that is chosen by the ordinary worldly-minded people. This different path is the path of true religion, true spiritual life, pursued with all patience and perseverance, in all sincerity and devotion to the ideal. Different individuals, because of their individual capacities, tastes, and temperaments, may choose different methods of approach. But Vedānta is emphatic that, at the end of the journey, they all meet at the same point, namely, Brahman, which is the source and the stuff of all phenomena.

#### VEDANTIC APPROACH TO RELIGION

Religion, says Swami Vivekananda, is the manifestation of the divinity already in man. That is the essence of religion—this unfoldment of the divinity that lies hidden in every being. This definition, it hardly needs to be pointed out, has the widest

application, because it admits of every religious pursuit tending towards the manifestation of the divinity that is latent in man. Every path that leads to this ultimate good—*niḥśreyasa*—is good, and so welcome, no matter what form it takes. Every earnest endeavour that leads the soul towards God deserves to be helped and encouraged. Vedānta accepts all spiritual paths, all forms of worship, all religious pursuits, as true and spiritually beneficial. It is all-inclusive, and gives a helping hand to everyone that is marching towards the goal supreme. It has no quarrel with this dogma or that doctrine, this school or that system, for Vedānta knows that every one of them is helping the soul that is wending its way towards God.

It is in this sense that Vedānta is claimed to be universal, as it exhibits a spirit of reverence towards diverse religious paths and methods. As a matter of fact, Vedānta welcomes diversity in religious methods, for it recognizes the spiritual needs of different people who are at different stages in their spiritual growth. This is what is known as *adhiḥkāribheda* in Vedānta, that is, recognition of differences in the spiritual competence or capacity of different individuals and their different needs. The spiritual competence does vary from individual to individual; all are not of the same attainments at the same time. They require to be helped and handled differently, and hence is the need of the diversity in religious methods. Vedānta does not denounce this diversity. On the contrary, it encourages it, as it is necessary for the spiritual growth of diverse types of minds.

Vedānta does not seek to destroy any particular mode of worship or religious path. On the other hand, it helps one and all by encouraging them, leading them by the hand, and pointing to the final goal that has to be reached at the end of the journey. Help everyone from where he



stands, and no condemnation—that is the watchword of Vedānta, so far as religious pursuit is concerned. The goal, as Swami Vivekananda has pointed out, is to be free, to manifest the divinity that is already in us. And this can be achieved 'either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy'; indeed, by any means that is suitable to one's temperament, religious inclination, or spiritual urge. The only condition that Vedānta lays down is that the aspirant should be earnest in his efforts and seek the goal with real spiritual fervour.

#### VEDĀNTA: THE BASIS FOR ETHICS AND MORALITY

According to Vedānta, religion is a way of life. Understanding the truths of Vedānta, being intellectually convinced about them, and practising them daily should bring about a transformation in our life, in our behaviour, in our dealings with others. In other words, it should enable us to build up an excellent character, moral and spiritual. There should be a correlation and correspondence between our conviction and conduct. Jesus Christ said: 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.' Why should I love my neighbour as myself? To this question, Vedānta provides the answer. It says that your neighbour is yourself in another form and having a different name. The same divinity that is in you, giving you life and light, is in him as well, and in everybody else. Divinity is the basis of all existence. Without it, we cannot live for a moment. Perceive that divinity in all and serve them in all humility. The more we become conscious of our own divine essence, the better we will be able to perceive divinity in others and act accordingly. Such a perception expresses itself in love, sympathy, and compassion for all.

The soundest basis for all morality and ethics is provided by Vedānta. The practice of the perception of divinity in all leads

to a feeling of oneness of all. When a person feels that he is one with all, how can he injure others by his thought, word, or deed? Whom will he injure? Is there anyone apart from himself to be injured? Will one injure oneself? It is all he himself—the same God existing in everything and in everybody. The *Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad* beautifully expresses this idea, when it says: *Yasmin sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmaivābhūdviṣānataḥ, tatra ko mohah kaḥ śokaḥ ekatva-manuṣāyataḥ*—'When to the man of realization all beings become the very Self, then what delusion and what sorrow can there be for that seer of oneness?' He is not afflicted by the world in any manner, nor by the twofold forces of attraction and repulsion, as he sees God in everything, and serves everybody in that spirit. To such a person, service of others becomes a form of worship of God. All the activities that he engages himself in, get transformed into acts of worship, and bring spiritual benefit by purifying his heart and mind. There is no selfishness in such a person, for his little self is no longer there to demand all his attention. His self has become identified with the universal Self, the Self of all things and beings.

#### DIVINE HUMANISM

In the light of Vedānta, all philanthropic work, all humanitarian service, undergoes a thorough transformation, for it is no longer philanthropic or humanitarian, but all work and all service is elevated to the level of the worship of God. Service of man, then, is equal to worship of God. This attitude of Vedānta elevates not only the doer of service, as his act becomes spiritual in content, but it uplifts the receiver of such a service also, because he is raised to the position of God accepting worship from His devotee. When we understand Vedānta in the proper light, and view things in the right perspective, there can be nothing called

secular. Everything is spiritual and sacred. Life itself becomes religion. All modes of service to man become transformed into different paths of realization. This is humanism at its best, based on the divinity of the human soul, which may be called 'divine humanism'.

It is no doubt true that significant pronouncements like 'Man is the measure of all things', 'Man is an end in himself' have given rise to great humanistic, democratic, and socialistic movements and institutions. But, as we have seen, they have not delivered the goods, mainly because they are confined to the physical, the socio-economic dimension of man. It needs hardly to be pointed out that this is a very limited vision of the human personality, which overlooks man's essential divine nature, his spiritual dimension. All kinds of afflictions come to us because of this incomplete understanding of man and his nature. The moment we dive deeper and understand ourselves completely, in all our dimensions, and readjust our physical, economic, and social life in tune with that new understanding, that very moment will bring solace to our heart and clear away all sorrow and misery. We will then realize the true nature of man, what he really is, how to approach him, and how to serve him. Humanism based merely on materialistic theories, or socialistic principles, has only landed us in the quagmire of politics, national and international. And humanity is crying in despair to be saved from its self-appointed saviours.

#### THE VEDĀNTIC VIEW OF MAN

The Vedāntic approach reveals man in his true perspective and exposes to view all the dimensions of his personality. It brings a spiritual content to bear upon the endeavours of man to live a good and happy life. It is this spiritual content that provides a true meaning to human life and its

aspirations. Without it, our life is only an aimless wandering, very similar to that of the animal.

All men are equal in the eyes of Vedānta, for it recognizes no privileges of any kind, particularly in the spiritual realm. No one is superior to another because of birth or position in life. As the same divine power is behind all, supplying energy and understanding to everyone, it is open to one and all to strive for and attain the highest. The differences that we do find between one and another are of our own creation. Since we are ourselves responsible for the circumstances in which we find ourselves, we can also undo them and get out of them ourselves. That is the hope that Vedānta holds before all; that is what Vedānta promises to everyone. What we are today is the result of all that we did in the past; no one else was responsible for it. And so, the future lies in our own hands; it is dependent on us, on what we do at the present. It is the present that determines the future. Hence is the exhortation of the scriptures that this life should be so shaped and conducted that it would enable us to realize our true nature and attain perfect peace, bliss, and happiness. This, in short, is the spiritual import of the Vedāntic teachings.

The Vedānta has a social message, too. The teaching of equality of all, and of no exclusive privileges to anyone, has a great message to humanity on the social level as well. For it would mean not only the recognition of the dignity of the individual, but also the dignity of the labour that he does. All items of work in society become equal to one another in value, since all types and all kinds of work are necessary for the maintenance of society. A professor who teaches in a college is as much a unit of society as a plumber who does his humble job.

## VEDANTA AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Practice leads to perfection, this is a well-known saying. The Vedāntic teachings have to be practised daily in our lives to feel their impact and to experience their blessing. No amount of theoretical knowledge or intellectual understanding will do. One must try to live the life truly and earnestly. There is no other way ; no short cut to success in spiritual life. The way Vedānta prescribes to live it is the way of discrimination, *viveka*, and dispassion, *vairāgya*. It asks us to develop the capacity to discriminate between what is eternal, *nitya*, and what is ephemeral, *anitya*. It asks us to follow the eternal and the real. God or Self alone is real and eternal ; and the world, with all its good and bad things, is ephemeral, ever-fleeting, and unreal. We have to turn away from the world and cultivate a spirit of dispassion. We are not to run after the things of the world and get entangled in their meshes ; on the other hand, we have to withdraw ourselves mentally from the world and its objects by gradual stages. This withdrawal from the world is, indeed, a very difficult task. But then, without it, true religion never can begin. Tremendous dispassion is the first condition of all religious life. Aptly, therefore, has the path of religion been compared to the sharp edge of a razor. Religious life is like walking on the edge of a razor. *Kṣurasya dhārā nīṣitā duratyayā durgamā pathastat kavayo vadanti*—‘The wise ones describe that narrow path to be inaccessible and as difficult to tread on as a sharpened razor’s edge,’ says the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. One has got to be very wary and ever alert. At the end of the journey is the promise of immortality, of infinite peace and bliss, and of eternal freedom.

Jesus Christ has said : ‘He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.’ For the sake of God, we shall have to lose this life ; we shall have to give up this world,

for man cannot serve both God and Mammon. It is said by a great medieval mystic: *jahān kām tahān nahī Rām ; jahān Rām tāhān nahī kām*—‘Where there is *kāma*, desire for worldly objects, there is no Rāma, God ; and where there is Rāma, there is no *kāma*.’ God and the world cannot be had together, simultaneously.

As the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* puts it: *Na karmaṇā na prajāyā dhanena tyāgenaike amṛtatvamānaśuḥ*—‘Not by work, not by progeny, nor by wealth, but by renunciation, some have attained immortality.’ One who has attained the highest spiritual experience can remain and work in the world, for he sees God only in everything. The world will have neither attraction nor distraction for such a one, and work no longer binds him down to this earth. He is a free soul untouched and unaffected by the mundane things of the world. So it is said, and rightly said, too, that true religious life begins with a spirit of real dispassion—*vairāgya*. Discrimination and dispassion go together to strengthen the mind of the aspirant.

Dispassion leads to detachment. This is an important aspect of spiritual life—this spirit of detachment. Whatever work we are engaged in should be performed with this spirit of detachment. Work done in this spirit will have no binding effect on us, causing *karma* and the consequent rebirth to enjoy or suffer that *karma*. Such a work will not taint us, as the scriptures say. That is a negative or prohibitive injunction regarding work : Do not get attached. But there is a positive injunction also, which is : Do all work in a spirit of dedication—dedication to God. Negatively, we are not to get attached to any kind of work ; we are not to expect any fruit of work for ourselves. Positively, we are to work for work’s sake, and to dedicate all work as an offering to God, seeking only His blessings and guidance. These four

mental qualities are indispensable for every sincere aspirant—the qualities of discrimination, dispassion, detachment, and dedication—and they provide a sure basis, a firm foundation, for his spiritual life.

#### TURN THE MIND INWARD

In order to equip ourselves with these qualities, Vedānta directs us to turn our mind inward. As long as the mind goes after the world and the various sense-objects, it cannot collect itself and concentrate on the Truth which is within us. The mind that runs after sense-objects gets dissipated; it cannot give itself a higher direction. The mind should be purged of its baser desires before it can turn towards the higher pursuit of self-knowledge. Hence is the importance laid on the purity of mind for every spiritual aspirant. It is only in the pure mind that the Self is revealed—the mind which is sharpened and rendered pure by concentration and meditation, which has become calm and collected, and which is not easily agitated and ruffled by sense-objects and desires. 'Blessed are the pure in heart', said Jesus Christ, 'for they shall see God.' And the declaration of the Upaniṣad is that one who desires immortality should turn inward and perceive the inner Self, and he should not run after the things of the world.

Withdrawing from the world does not mean running away from it. As it has been very expressively stated, it means, 'Be in the world, but not of it'. Live in the world knowing its true nature, its apparent as well as real nature. Then you will not be caught in its net. Apparently, the world, with all its names and forms, its attractions and repulsions, its loves and hatreds, its joys and sorrows, its gains and losses, is unreal; it is ever changeful and never enduring. Significantly, the Sanskrit word for world is *jagat*, which means that which

is always changing. But from the absolute standpoint, the world is nothing but God; for God alone is enveloping everything, as the Upaniṣad declares. The real nature of the world is divine. As long as we do not perceive that divinity, which is the core of everything, life in the world is always slippery. Knowing this fundamental truth about the world, try to live in it in the best way possible, says the Upaniṣad.

#### VIVEKANANDA'S PRACTICAL VEDANTA

This is practical Vedānta, as Swami Vivekananda has called it. This is Vedānta in practice—to see God in everyone and serve each one as such, as well as to perceive intuitively one's own divine nature and realize it here and now. Swamiji, who was a living and blazing embodiment of the teachings of Vedānta, combined these two ideals in one significant statement and gave it as the motto for the monastic organization he founded—the Ramakrishna Order. The motto is: *Ātmano mokṣārtham jagaddhitāya ca*—'For Self-realization and for the good of the world.' It means that everyone in the Order, or to make it more comprehensive and all-inclusive, every spiritual aspirant should take his stand on the teachings of Vedānta, as we have been discussing so far, and work not only for his own Self-realization, but also for the good of the world, seeing the divine everywhere, in everything, and in every being.

Swami Vivekananda has been described as the prophet, as the patriot-saint, of modern India. He wanted a thorough reform of Indian society. He says: 'I want a root and branch reform.' 'I do not believe in reform of titbits.' Swamiji conceived the idea of a new India built on the foundations of the Upaniṣads.

Swamiji even conceived of a twofold mission of Vedānta—one as applied to the world outside, which he called his *foreign policy*. According to this, Vedānta and its

ideals would be broadcast throughout the world, in order to bring home to people everywhere their divine consciousness, so that they may try to live a better life on the basis of that understanding. The second part of the mission of Vedānta, he called his *domestic policy*. According to this, the regeneration of India would be brought about by infusing and instilling the glorious ideals of Vedānta into the hearts and minds of our teeming millions. These ideas and ideals would bring them real life by infusing strength, moral and mental, and enable them to solve their various problems.

Throughout his *Complete Works*, this idea of bringing back the life-giving and strength-giving ideas of the Upaniṣads to play their role in society is found scattered. He was never tired of repeating them, time and again. When these grand Upaniṣadic teachings are brought to play their role in society, what the effect will be, I prefer to present to you in Swamiji's own inspiring words, collected at random from several places from his *Complete Works*.

'Strength, strength is what the Upaniṣads speak to me from every page. . . . Strength, O man, strength, say the Upaniṣads, stand up and be strong. Ay, it is the only literature in the world where you find the word *abhiḥ*, fearless, used again and again; in no other scripture in the world is this adjective applied to God or man. *Abhiḥ*, fearless.'

'And the Upaniṣads are the great mine of strength. Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the whole world; the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energized through them. They will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the miserable, and the down-trodden of all races, all creeds, and all sects to stand on their feet and be free.'

'You will understand the *Gītā* better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. . . . You will understand the Upaniṣads better and the glory of the

Ātman, when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men.'

'Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want. And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upaniṣads, and believe—"I am the soul".'

'Have faith, as Naciketā. . . . I wish that faith would come to each of you; and every one of you would stand up a giant, a world-mover with a gigantic intellect—an infinite God in every respect. This is what I want you to become. This is the strength that you get from the Upaniṣads; this is the faith that you get from there.'

'These conceptions of the Vedānta must come out, must remain not only in the forest, not only in the cave, but they must come out to work at the bar and the bench, in the pulpit, and in the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and with the students that are studying. They call to every man, woman, and child, whatever be their occupation, wherever they may be. And what is there to fear!'

'If the fisherman thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better fisherman; if the student thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better student. If the lawyer thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better lawyer, and so on; and the result will be that the castes will remain for ever. It is in the nature of society to form itself into groups; and what will go will be these privileges.'

'And that is what we want, no privilege for anyone, equal chances for all; let every one be taught that the divine is within, and everyone will work out his own salvation.'

'You cannot help anyone, you can only serve: serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. . . . Blessed you are that that privilege was given to you, when others had it not. Do it only as a worship. I should

see God in the poor, and it is for my salvation that I go and worship them. ... Bold are my words; and let me repeat that it is the greatest privilege in our life that we are allowed to serve the Lord in all these shapes.'

'Bring light to the poor, and bring more light to the rich, for they require it more than the poor. Bring light to the ignorant, and more light to the educated, for the vanities of the education of our times are tremendous.'

These are only a few of the inspiring exhortations from Swamiji. One can go on quoting from him for hours. But, here, we have limited ourselves to about an hour. And so, I should come to a close. But before doing that, I wish to sum up the main points that I presented to you this evening.

#### RESUME

First, Vedānta declares that Brahman, the Absolute, is the ultimate Reality of everything, and all else is only an appearance, and has Brahman only as the substratum. Only as Brahman, everything is real; and so, everything is divine.

Secondly, Vedānta teaches the divinity of man, which is first to be realized in individual lives and then perceived in all things and beings. Religion is this manifestation of the divinity already in man.

Thirdly, Vedānta accepts all modes of worship as pathways to the same spiritual goal. In fact, it recognizes the need for variety in religious paths to suit individual temperaments and inclinations. Vedānta lends a helping hand to everyone and lifts him up from where he stands. It insists on

the acceptance of all paths as leading to the same goal.

Fourthly, Vedānta says that religion is a way of life. The teachings of Vedānta are to be practised in our daily life. Its main teaching that man is essentially divine provides the soundest basis for true ethics and morality. It can initiate a new form of divine humanism which will have a spiritual basis. In the light of Vedānta, all social work, all humanitarian service, and all philanthropic activities become transformed into worship of God. Service of man becomes equal in value to worship of God.

Fifthly, Vedānta recognizes no privileges for anybody, for all are one and the same in essence, in Spirit. The portals of Vedānta are open to one and all. It recognizes not only the dignity of the individual, but also the dignity of the work he does. All work is sacred; there is nothing secular in the eyes of Vedānta. Thus it has not only a spiritual message, but a social message also.

Sixthly, Vedānta says that the road to perfection lies through discrimination, dispassion, detachment, and dedication. The spirit of renunciation is indispensable. By renunciation and withdrawal, Vedānta does not mean running away from the world. It only exhorts us not to get attached to the things of the world as they appear, but to know their real divine nature.

Lastly, Vedānta asks us to see God in everything and to conduct ourselves in a manner in which we can truly express this attitude. Realization of the Self, which is divine, and service of man, seeing God in him, are the twin ideals that Vedānta presents to everyone.

## THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN MODERN THOUGHT—IV THE INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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I SHOULD like to introduce my discourse by posing a preliminary doubt. Thus the question may be raised whether we could at all speak of a philosophy of man proper in the context of Indian thought. When I pose this question, I have naturally in view the philosophy of man as it finds place in modern western thought—particularly in the shape of what is known as 'philosophical anthropology', i.e. a philosophically oriented theory of man, offering a total view of the nature of man and his place in the universe.

Now the reasons for this possible doubt may be put forward in a twofold manner. In the first instance, it may be pointed out that man *as man* has hardly been the theme of the Indian philosophic enquiry. The question of man as such—his place and significance in the total scheme of things—has seldom been posed in right earnest as a question worth considering. On the contrary, the question of man seems rather to have been subsumed under some ulterior metaphysical issues, instead of being treated on its own merit.

Secondly, even if there were a reference to man, it is only in the context of his spiritual freedom. And the latter, i.e. *mokṣa*,

though regarded as the highest end of man—*paramapuruṣārtha*, could hardly be regarded as anything else than an eschatological ideal. That means an ideal pertaining more to a theological doctrine concerning final things as well as individual beings—usually associated with such concepts as heaven, hell, after-life, etc.

Besides these two reasons for doubting, further, perhaps, a corollary to the first point may be urged. As a result of the neglect by the traditional Indian mind of the actual *human* status of man, there seems to be missing in the development of Indian thought any positive science of man. (Of course, one might say, even in the West the emergence of the so-called human sciences, like anthropology, sociology, etc. apart from the biological sciences, has been relatively recent phenomena. But in the history of European thought we can trace systematic attempts towards scientific generalizations concerning the natural phenomena connected with man's life.) Thus there had hardly been any systematic attempt in classical Indian thought at constructing biological, psychological, and sociological sciences, although there might be existing certain empirical findings in these spheres.

The point is that the scientific perspectives which could urge and also contribute towards the making of a comprehensive theory of man were not forthcoming.

#### MAN IN THE METAPHYSICAL CONTEXT

These doubts, however, need not be regarded as unassailable. On the contrary, they should rather stimulate our search for a positive orientation of the concept of man in the context of classical and modern Indian thought. Before answering the doubts posed in the beginning, we may indicate one fundamental point to be taken into consideration in this regard. There is an essential ambiguity, as the tradition of Indian thought has it, regarding man's position in the order of Reality. On the one hand, the whole of cosmic explanation is *jīva*-centric, i.e. centred round the individual as a *jīva*. For it is the *mokṣa* or liberation of *jīva* which generally served as the original motivating force behind all the philosophizing of the Indian mind. To that extent it might be urged that the world-order was conceived in the light of this deeper demand of the human self for liberation.

But, on the other hand, the entire status of the *jīva* itself had been posed absolutely in the metaphysical context. *Jīva* was thus sought to be viewed not from the standpoint of the natural order but essentially from that of a higher transcendental order. Consequently, the human life of the individual was looked upon essentially as a stage in the cosmic drama in which the soul was supposed to progress towards liberation.

#### INDIAN CONCEPTION OF MOKṢA

Let us now turn to the question of liberation and consider whether the classical Indian conception of *mokṣa* stood entirely for an eschatological ideal, as it has some-

times been urged by the modern critics, particularly in the West. We know that in all the Indian schools of philosophy, whether orthodox or heterodox—except the solitary exception of the Cārvākas—the end of liberation of the individual self has been held as the highest value. This end, however, has been conceived of in various ways. In certain schools, such as Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, for instance, the goal has been explained as the absolute negation of all sufferings (*duḥkhasya atyantābhāvaḥ*). In the theistic system of Rāmānuja, again, it is equivalent to the approximation of the individual self to the nature of the supreme Being—*brahma-sārūpya*, as they put it, or in certain other Vaiṣṇavic systems as *brahma-sāyujya*, i.e. proximity to the supreme Being. In Advaita Vedānta, on the other hand, *mokṣa* is conceived as nothing but a complete identification of the individual self with the supreme Self, for *jīva*, on ultimate analysis, is of the very nature of Brahman. In a *Nāstika* system, like Buddhism, again, liberation is characterized as the cessation of all sufferings coming from the world-process.

An acquaintance with these conceptions of *mokṣa* may possibly suggest to us the notion of negativity and absolute transcendence of the world-order as necessarily connected with the ideal of perfection. From this we are apt to be led to an eschatological sense of liberation. This is particularly to be felt in connection with the Buddhist conception of *Nirvāṇa*, which only implies the absolute extinction of all desires. Also in certain *Āstika* views, such as that of Nyāya, we come across a negative tendency, so far as *mokṣa* is defined as the negation of sufferings. All these might prompt us to entertain an attitude of doubt towards the very concept of *mokṣa* itself, particularly as regards its bearing on the conception of man. How far could it provide the guiding notion of a philosophy of man as he lives his life in this world?



### THE JIVANMUKTA IDEAL

Now in answer to such a point of doubt we might refer to the concept of *jīvan-mukta*. This concept seems to be explicitly—or at least implicitly—accepted in most of the classical schools of thought, nay, even earlier than the age of systematic philosophizing. I may mention, by way of illustration, certain typical cases representing the ideal of *jīvan-mukta*, as distinguished from *videha-mukta*, i.e. the liberated while in the living embodied state, as against an extra-mundane state possible only beyond this life. The concept of *jīvanmukta* would certainly render the ideal of perfection more in human and intelligible terms.

Thus, to begin with, we may cite a representative instance in the *Mahābhārata*. In a series of verses in the dialogue between Sagara and Aṣṭanemi, the *Mahābhārata* associates the ideal of the free man with an attitude of passionless serenity attainable in this life. This attitude of detached self-possession may indeed be regarded as the running theme through the various conceptions of the *jīvanmukta*.

Indeed we are impressed by the presence of almost a positivistic standard in the conception of *mokṣa* quite early in the development of Indian thought. In the later Vedic period, in the period of the Upaniṣads, the ideal of *jīvanmukta* was already there—the ideal of *mokṣa* as realizable in this life of ours, and not an ideal to reach in a life beyond. The aim of man was put forward as the progress towards *mokṣa* in the present life, and not in a hypothetical hereafter. It was the notion of an ideal which could possibly operate within the farthest bounds of human experience. Though not a mere intellectual ideal, the notion of *jīvanmukta* could yet get over the dogma of *mokṣa* in the eschatological sense, which took the shape of the notion of *videhamukta*.

A few representative illustrations of this

*jīvanmukta* ideal may be cited from earlier thought—right from the Upaniṣads. Thus in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (III.iii.14), we come across the following significant verse containing the idea of liberation even in the embodied state :

*Yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye'sya  
hṛdi śritāḥ;*

*Atha martyo'mṛto bhavati atra brahma  
samaśnute.*

While commenting on this *śruti*, Śaṅkarācārya remarks: *atra ihaiva pradīpanirvāṇavat sarvabandhanopāśmād brahma samaśnute brahmaiva bhavati ityarthah*. So, Śaṅkara stresses on the element of 'here' (*ihaiva*)—in this very world, when all bondage ceases.

Coming, again, to the age of systems, in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika or in the Viśiṣṭādvaita system of Rāmānuja, although the *jīvanmukta* ideal was not formally recognized, yet there was a recognition of the possibility of man reaching here a state of enlightenment. Such a state could transform man's entire outlook—and that is the truth about ideal of *jīvanmukta*. In the Sāṅkhya-Yoga system also the attitude of the *jīvanmukta*, similar to that of the perfected man as in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika ideal, finds its recognition. In all these schools of thinking the highest ideal of perfection has been basically conceived of as detached participation in life.

As for the view of Advaita Vedānta in this regard, we find in the Advaita view the high watermark of Indian thought and culture. In spite of the identification of *jīva* with Brahman, individuality as the centre of action is still retained in Śaṅkara's thought. The individual, however, at the moment of liberation is admittedly endowed with the universality of spirit—*Samyagdarśanakālam eva tatphalaṁ sarvātmatvaṁ darśayati*.

Besides the *Āstika* schools, in the *Nāstika* tradition of Buddhism and Jainism also we

can find some positive reference to the concept of the perfected man. The Buddhist conception of *nirvāṇa* itself is a positive notion, and does not imply a state following death. On the contrary, it signifies the condition after perfection has been reached, and while the individual continues to live in an enlightened state. The example of the Buddha himself, leading a fully active life in a perfected state long after his *nirvāṇa* had been accomplished, may well be cited. So the state of *arhat* or the liberated one does not mean annihilation. The Jaina view of *arhat* also is similar to the Buddhist view and the essence falls in line with the *jīvanmukta* ideal.

#### THE EMPIRICAL AND LIBERATED INDIVIDUAL

In pursuance of this brief reference to the notion of *jīvanmukta*, our next question would follow from the earlier one. Even when the ideal of *jīvanmukta* is cited, the question arises: In referring to the Self as having an ideal pure status, whose liberation is actually meant? How is the Self in the liberated state to be characterized? To put the question from another side: How is the free Self in the ideal state of liberation to be connected to the actual empirical individual—to the man who is actually striving for liberation? Now the general trend at least of the *Āstika* systems had been to define man in terms of *jīvātmā* or *jīva*. Ātman had been recognized as the deeper and more ultimate principle behind the manifold of empirical existence, both human and natural. The inmost truth of man, so far as it is the cosmic Self, also proves to be the inmost truth of the world.

It is this deeper principle of Ātman which generally provides for the Upaniṣads the central theme, the ultimate question of philosophic enquiry. It is also declared as the object of highest value. Thus in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (*Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa*) we come across that emphatic

declaration—apparently a prescriptive statement—concerning the supreme significance of Ātman. *Ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitaḥ*. The prescriptive, rather than descriptive, character of the Upaniṣadic declaration points to the need of realizing the Self as the higher and deeper principle which is not to be brought in line with the common state of affairs.

At this stage we should consider certain positive points that may be traced in the classical Indian view at large on the issue of man in the scheme of liberation or perfection. Firstly, it has to be noted that the generally accepted point of departure in the enquiry after Ātman is the physical bodily reality that is *jīva*. The latter is primarily defined as the bodily one (*dehī*). In all the systems of Indian thought one finds an unreserved acceptance of the place and importance of the body and bodily stage in the scheme of human reality. One need not seek for this recognition of the bodily level only in the Carvāka school, although the latter put forward the extreme point of view of body-soul identification—*dehātmaivāda*. Even Śāṅkara, with his idealistic theory of pure consciousness, recognized the natural stage of body-soul identification (*dehātmādhyaśa*) as the primary level of false identification (*adhyāśa*). The latter alone effects such common usage as 'I-body'; for all practical purposes, the body is me, although such subsequent usage as 'my body'—also no less common—would point to a possible distinction between the 'I' referred to and the body.

Similarly with regard to the sense-organs, the vital principle (*prāṇa*), and even the mental states—the self is naturally represented as involving identification at each state. It is essentially accepted as a physico-mental complex.

Secondly, *jīva* is taken necessarily as involved in the worldly process of changing events; it is, in other words, the world-

involved being (*saṁsāri*). To begin with, *jīva* is not taken as *asaṁsāri*, i.e. as having a world-transcending extra-mundane character, although on ultimate analysis it is often sought to be posited at the ideal stage as that. *Jīva* is thus looked upon as part of the causal process of worldly events—a process that inevitably centres around his body, for the body serves as the medium of communication with the outer world.

Besides the bodily and the worldly character of the individual, another point is also to be noted in this connection. In the different philosophies, which otherwise admit an ideal state of pure Self, standing apart from the physico-mental complex—*dehendriyādi vyatirikta*, a possible link between the empirical and the ideal states have generally been admitted. From the obvious bodily level to the ideal spiritual level—it is shown to be a process of gradual transition and inwardization. Distinctions of the different intermediate stages between the bodily level and the ideal pure Self—the stages of the mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), and egoity (*ahaṁkāra*), besides the senses (*indriya*) and the vital principle (*prāṇa*)—have been sharply brought out. This is particularly to be found in the Sāṅkhya-Yoga systems, while the course of discipline generally prescribed and adopted in the various systems follows the practical teaching of Yoga.

#### EXISTENTIALISTIC STRAIN IN THE INDIAN OUTLOOK OF MAN

A further significant feature to be taken into consideration in attempting a positive reconstruction of the Indian view of man is the positive stress on the principle of existentiality of the Self. The pure essence of Self (*ātmā*) is said to *exist* in a deeper sense—in a more ultimate sense. Thus, to illustrate this typical existential stress in the Indian tradition of spiritual Self-realization, a couple of passages from the *Kaṭha Upa-*

*niṣad* may be cited (III iii. 12-13):

*Naiva vācā na manasā prāptum śakyo na cakṣuṣā;*

*Astīti bruvato'nyatra katham tadupalabhyate.*

*Asti ityeva upalabdavyaḥ tattvabhāvena cobhayoḥ;*

*Asti ityeva upalabdhasya tattvabhāvaḥ prasīdati.*

Moreover, the common Vedāntic formulation—in the Upaniṣads and in Advaita literature—of the Self as 'existing, manifesting and endearing' (*asti bhāti priyam*) can, of course, be referred to.

Now, an allied trend, connected with this existential stress, is the deep-seated valuational approach to the principle of Self. Like the existential strain ('*asti*' etc.), the reference to Self as the dearest one (*priyam*), as the seat of all bliss (*ānanda*), has also to be taken into consideration. Of course, such bliss, which is said to be the very essence of the Self, should not be considered as exactly continuous with the notion of pleasure in the mundane sense. There would be a qualitative difference between the two, worldly pleasure and the said bliss, so far as the latter, unlike the former, arises out of a sense of complete fulfilment is spiritual in nature and of all wants and transcendence by the realization of the Self or Ātman—*ātmakāmaḥ āptakāmaḥ*, as the Upaniṣad declares it.

However, it may still be urged that there is not an absolute discontinuity between the two orders of happiness—the empirical-psychological order of pleasure and the transcendental order of *ānanda*. Is not the same expression, happiness (*sukham*), used in regard to the Infinity (*bhūmā*)? In this context, that well-known passage from the Yājñavalkya-Maitrēyī-Saṁvāda of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is well worth mentioning. *Ātmanastu kāmāya sarvaṁ priam bhavati*. Every object—be it a person or a

thing, it is said, becomes dear to us only for the sake of our own Self. Thus the motive force behind all our attitudes of love lies in Self itself. The latter, of course, is not to be understood in any narrow egoistic sense. It rather provides the clue to an enlightened hedonism, nay of altruism.

#### INDIAN CONCEPTION CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF MODERN EXISTENTIALISTS

As shown above, we may rightly speak of a certain 'existentialistic' strain present in the Indian outlook on man. Existence is inwardly felt to be the very essence of man which is unfailingly manifest. It is not posited as a mere hypothetical principle but inwardly felt as the concrete reality. In this respect the notion of Ātman as the existent inner essence of the subject seems obviously to come very close to the basic contention of western Existentialism.

Nevertheless the difference between the two outlooks is no less fundamental. Human existence is posited in existentialism, as discussed in the earlier article (See October 1968 issue of the *Bulletin*.) in an irrationalistic attitude—the non-cognitive attitude of the will. For the existentialist, human reality lies *in action*; it is *made*, as Sartre would put it. For Vedānta, on the other hand, the essence of human self, which is pure consciousness (*caitanya*), is something ever accomplished (*pariniṣṭhita*). The radical existentialist position is that there is no human essence but only action in the heart of a negative situation. An existentialist like Camus or Sartre would emphasize the fundamental absurdity of the human nature in an alien universe.

In the Vedāntic—or one may say the Indian—view, on the other hand, there is no ultimate alienation of human reality from the underlying order of reality. There is rather a deeper harmony between man and the ultimate scheme of things. This element

of deeper harmony finds its expression either in the notion of *sāyujya* or *sārūpya* as in the theistic systems, or in the form of non-dualistic identity (*abheda*) between *jīva* and Brahman as in the absolutistic system of Advaita<sup>1</sup> Vedānta. The classical Indian position is thus saved, one might urge, from the otherwise negativistic and irrationalistic outlook of the modern existentialist.

In referring to the classical Indian conception of man and life, the analogy of *light* inevitably comes in. The essence of the human person (*puruṣa*) has repeatedly been conceived of in the image of self-effulgent, ever-shining light—the light of self-manifest (*svayamprakāśa*) consciousness. Accordingly, the movement (if at all it can rightly be called a movement) from the individual centre of *jīva* to the higher Self i.e. Paramātman, has been visualized as the relation between the smaller centre of light and the higher centre. And the latter has very often been symbolically represented as the Sun itself, which is the physical source of all light. Turning to the existentialist orientation, we find the picture rather reversed. Here the individual, himself involving darkness, as it were, moves towards a greater darkness engulfing him in his encounter with Nothingness.

In both existentialism as well as in Vedānta, however, the stress on inwardization is present. Only with existentialism the process of subjectivization is a morbid one—it is a process leading to the contingent groundless human existence. In Vedānta, on the other hand, the process of subjectivization that is recommended is necessarily directed—at least ideally—towards the higher Self, the innermost pure Self (*pratyagātman*). The latter is to be realized as the deeper underlying background of the individual. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (II.1.1) typically presents the ideal of self-realization:

*Parāñci khāni vyatṛṇat svayambhū;  
Tasmāt parāñi paśyati nāntarātman—  
Kaścīd d'īraḥ pratyagātmānam aikṣat;  
Āvṛttacakṣuḥ amṛtattvam icchan—*

'The senses have been created with outgoing tendencies; so man generally sees the external objects and not the inner Self. One who is bent on the realization of the true inner self, the aspirant after immortality, must turn his mind completely inwards from the outer world of objects.'

#### THE DEGENERATION OF THE CLASSICAL IDEAL

Now even when such a sublime conception of man as entertained in the Vedāntic tradition as a whole is taken into consideration, the demands of a modern humanist may still be hard to be satisfied. In a view which is, after all, attuned to the supramundane ideal of the liberated Self—the latter being ideally dissociated from the world—a neglect of the 'human, all to human' (in the Nietzschean language) can hardly be denied. At least that became the dominant notion in the classical outlook as it took its shape down through the centuries. It might be that the original insight into the higher dimension of human consciousness lost in the course of history its living force and imperceptibly degenerated into a lifeless formula from which the vital content of living experience gradually receded to the background.

This degeneration of the classical ideal of a spiritually integrated man might be to an extent attributed to certain socio-historical factors. But apart from the larger socio-historical question, which is outside the scope of our present discourse, at least one vital drawback in the classical conception of man could be pointed out. It is the lack of correlation, metaphysically viewed, between the spirit in man on the one hand and the reality of history and the forces of social change, on the other. In other words, the philosophical signif-

icance of *time* seems rather to be ignored. In that sense, much of the realism of the human situation, embedded as it is in the process of history and social evolution, seems not to have been taken into account. Consequently, a significant content in the concept of man goes unheeded.

This does not, however, lead to an underestimation of the Vedāntic outlook on human personality and its destiny. To put the rationale of the outlook, the true subject or self is not an *object* of knowledge, but it is its very precondition. It is different indeed from all objective counterparts of the body, senses, mind, etc. The reality behind the empirical self is to be emphasized. The empirical self is not a self-contained individual; rather it is 'the expression or focussing of something beyond itself'. Further, the inner subject contains essentially within itself a detached principle, typically represented as *sākṣin*, a principle which is freely related to, but not involved in, the empirical process. As we have already noted, the ideal of *jīvanmukta* connotes the same notion of a detached, though active, self.

Here I may refer to a modern exposition or orientation of the classical Vedāntic ideal in the interpretation of S. Radhakrishnan. In freely explaining the ideal, Radhakrishnan remarks (*An Idealist View of Life*, Ch. VII): 'Human progress lies in an increasing awareness of the universal working in man. Through the exploring of nature, the striving after wisdom and the seeking of God, the individual struggles to achieve a harmony between himself and his environment. He finds this goodness in what is more than himself.'

Now, at this stage, I may pose in respect of the classical ideal a relevant problem for us in the contemporary situation. If we take a larger historical perspective, the Indian genius seemed to have shifted substantially from its original organic vision

of Self as the pure centre of consciousness and at the same time in harmony with the universal order of existence. This deviation indeed resulted in an unfortunate breach between the spiritual and the secular or mundane orders of reality. The former was gradually looked upon as the denial of the worldly, consequently tending to degenerate into a narrow credo. The only question I propose to put at this stage is whether this degeneration of the fuller spiritual view of man could be substituted by any other effective view. What one may well miss in this context is an enlightened humanism, as one would come across, to take a formidable instance, in the history of European thought and culture since the age of Renaissance and of Enlightenment.

THE SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE:  
RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA'S  
CONTRIBUTION

Now, a keen awareness of this degeneration of the spiritual conception of man and of the divorce of the secular from the spiritual is conspicuous by its presence in the principal leaders of thought and culture of modern India from the nineteenth century. After centuries, when the integral vision of the nature of man had been gradually declining, the advent of the modern era—one that is sometimes referred to as the Indian Renaissance—saw respective attempts by great minds to correlate the Upaniṣadic ideal of spiritual man (*amṛtasya putrāḥ*) to the mundane level of man's natural and social life. Thus, right from Rammohun down to Rabindranath and Gandhi, we witness such attempts—sometimes expressly, sometimes implicitly. On the one hand, we observe the drive towards reviving and recalling the original vision of the integrity of the spirit in man. On the other hand, a deeper and bolder acceptance of the reality of the actual state of man in society was at the same time urged.

This double-edged drive often took the shape of a glorification of the divinity in man, coupled with an appeal to the service of common man. This trend is pre-eminently present in the religio-social movement ushered in by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Ramakrishna's motto: 'Jīva in Śiva' as well as his significant use of the expression, 'Nara-nārāyaṇa', were directed towards a rapprochement between the extra-mundane level of pure spirit and the worldly level of human life in society. This trend was further pursued by Vivekananda, who inaugurated what he called 'Practical Vedānta' in his attempt to bridge the gulf between the transcendental ideal of spirituality and the reality of the contemporary human situation. Accordingly, he translated the Vedāntic tenet of Jīva-Brahman identity in terms of the divinity in man. 'Each man is potentially divine, and the goal is to manifest that divinity', he declared.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MAHATMA  
GANDHI AND TAGORE

This practical re-orientation of the Vedāntic idealism went towards reawakening a sense of inner self-respect and dignity in the Indian humanity in the beginning of this century. Vivekananda's motto of 'man-making religion' and 'man-making education' served to restore to a large extent the place of man in his actual social context of living—a point which had almost been passing into oblivion during the centuries preceding. Coming to Mahatma Gandhi, however, in more recent times, we come across a steady recognition of man as he is actually placed in society. Accordingly, there is a bold stress on the ethical content of man, accompanied by a keen sense of social realism.

In this connection, I may particularly mention an original orientation of the concept of man, as we find it in Rabindra-

nath Tagore. In Tagore, we come across a pre-eminently aesthetic approach towards the solution of the question of man, thus harping on a distinctive note in the renaissance thinking of modern India. He, no doubt, upheld the classical ideal of the individual in tune with the universal. Nevertheless, in realizing the deeper harmony between man and the universal order of reality, Tagore put up the direct intuitional approach of the artist—the 'religion of an artist', as he himself preferred to call it. He essentially believes in 'man's universe'—one which is meaningful, and has value only in relation to the creative perception and appreciation of the human person. There is a deep-lying sense of reality which is creatively felt in the self-expression of human personality. As Tagore puts it, there is 'creative unity' between the Infinite and the finite individual. 'Limitation of the unlimited is personality'—that is how Tagore would explain the unique status of the human person in his *weltanschauung*. He thus firmly recognizes the worldly status of man, partaking the manifold life of nature and fellow-beings, and ever seeking his creative self-realization and fulfilment in transcending the narrow limits of his egoity towards a universal life.

#### CONCLUSION

Now, all these noble attempts of the great minds of modern India at re-orientation of the classical conception of man in the contemporary context of Indian social life, have certainly contributed towards the emergence of a new image of humanism. When we take the historical perspective of modern India into consideration, the respective roles played by these leaders of thought and culture in reinstating the faith in man, with all his social, ethical, and national aspirations, could

hardly be over-emphasized. Rammohun, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Tagore, Gandhi—each in his own way, attempted to restore in the modern context that original classical vision of the spiritual man. In this attempt, however, the emphasis seems to go often in favour of an idealized image of man rather than of the natural man. For, the frame of reference was no doubt provided by the Upaniṣadic ideal of pure Spirit, so far as man in ideal essence was sought to be represented as the spark of Infinity.

So, to repeat the question in conclusion: How far have the revivalist views referred to above—whether religiously, aesthetically, or ethically oriented—contributed towards the making of a contemporary philosophy of man? The latter would no doubt imply a systematic view of man, having a concrete bearing on, and operative significance for, the contemporary situation of life and society. Such a view has further to meet the challenge of the theoretic demands of knowledge as pertaining to various human disciplines and sciences, as well as the demands of social realism operating in the contemporary life of man in society—let us say, the Indian man.

You will certainly agree with me that there is today a need for such a philosophical anthropology, though it need not take on the form of a hard and fast system. It should rather be such as might take in a relevant manner certain basic insights of the classical Indian outlook. It should, at the same time, be in a position to integrate in a meaningful manner the contents of social realism embedded in the contemporary human situation. Such a synthetic outlook, I believe, may indeed emerge, when we take into consideration the interplay of various factors of social cohesion, phases of human experience, and deeper understanding of things and beings.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS CHICAGO, 1893

#### SYMPOSIUM ON RELIGIONS AT CHICAGO

Under the auspices of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago, a Symposium on Religions was held in the auditorium of the Lutheran School of Theology on Sunday, 15 September 1968, in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the historic World Parliament of Religions organized at Chicago in September 1893 at which Swami Vivekananda, representing Hinduism, made a powerful impact and laid an enduring foundation for the bridge of understanding between India and the West in general and the United States in particular. A large cosmopolitan audience had come from far and near and filled the auditorium.

Opening the proceedings at 10.00 a.m. with a Vedic prayer and welcoming the speakers and the audience in a felicitous speech, Swami Bhashyananda, Minister-in-charge of the Society, said: 'On this auspicious occasion we have assembled here to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the World Parliament of Religions which was a gathering representing the world's best religious knowledge and wisdom. Much water has flowed down the river of human life since that event. We need to evaluate the changes in human life and in the world's religions that have taken place since then. We have to test them in the light of reason and the scientific spirit of the modern age. We have met here for this purpose.'

The Swami then read three messages out of the many that he had received for the occasion. The first was from His Holiness Srīmat Swami Vireswaranandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Math and

Mission, Belur Math, India. The President's message said:

'I am glad the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago is celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. To this Parliament Swami Vivekananda, the Hindu monk, carried the message of peace and good will, the solidarity of man based on his inherent divinity, and the harmony of all religions. These ideals are still needed greatly today to establish peace and brotherhood in the world. I hope the celebrations will stress once more these great ideals held before the Parliament in 1893 by the Swami and other speakers. I wish the celebrations all success.'

The second message was from His Eminence Cardinal Cody of the Roman Catholic Church, U.S.A. His Eminence said:

'I am delighted to know that a symposium is being held by the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago to bring about an interfaith understanding. I am glad to convey my best wishes for the success of this interfaith undertaking.'

The third message was from His Excellency U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General said:

'I am happy to know that the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago is holding a Symposium of Religions to bring about harmony and understanding among the principal faiths of the world and thus helping to foster a bond of



friendship and brotherhood which is most needed at the present hour. I am glad to convey my good wishes for a most successful celebration of this anniversary.'

After invocalional music, eastern and western, by Mr. R. Bhatodekar and friends and Miss Eleanor Paschal respectively, Professor E. A. Burtt, author, and previously Sage Professor of Cornell University, and President of the Symposium, gave his introductory speech. In his speech, he narrated some of the significant developments that led up to the convening of the Parliament of Religions as an integral part of the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893 to commemorate the fourth Centenary of the discovery of America by Columbus. He pointed out that the President of the Parliament of Religions had ventured to say:

'It is my conviction that within a hundred years people from many lands will flock to the scenes of the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago to receive inspiration, as they have for centuries flocked to Westminster Abbey in London, to St. Peters Church in Rome, and to the holy shrines of Jerusalem.'

The next speaker, Rabbi Asher Block, Head of the Jewish Center, Little Neck, delineated the spirit of interfaith tolerance to be found in Judaism by citing from scripture, history, injunctions for spiritual practice, and the lives of mystics. He pointed out that Micah, the prophet of the Old Testament, voiced that spirit when he declared: 'Let all the peoples walk each in the name of the Lord, his God, but we will walk in the name of the Lord, our God forever and ever'; and that the Prophet Malachi widened the concept of universal tolerance when he asked: 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?'

The Rabbi then gave a bird's-eye view of the spiritual injunctions of Judaism, which are, mainly, scriptural study, devotional

practices, and moral conduct. After summarizing these basic teachings, he asked:

'Is this a partisan faith or a world outlook? The amazing thing about any of the outstanding scriptures, be it the *Gītā*, the Sermon on the Mount, the Eightfold Path, or the Ten Commandments, is that there is hardly a word in them that is esoteric or parochial in nature. If we could for a moment detach ourselves from the particular origins and historical associations that have clustered around these teachings, it would be impossible to differentiate one from another. God, prayer, and morality, these are the universal and perennial themes that underlie them all.'

Historically, the 'Jews not only refrained from forcible conversions, they even refrained from missionary activity'. Rabbi Block pointed out that, with but a few exceptions, Judaism kept to the policy that each faith walked in the name of God as it understood Him.

Coming to what he deemed the most important element in the spirit of religious tolerance, the Rabbi turned to the mystical aspect of religion:

'I use the term "mystical" in the sense in which the mystics themselves like to use it, namely, experiential, that which pertains to the actual experience or realization of religious truth. At the stage of realization, the mystics of all religions speak exactly the same language. In the lives of Moses and Isaiah, Jesus and St. Francis, Kṛṣṇa and Buddha, Zoroaster and Mohammed, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, we find reflected that spiritual reality we call God.'

Concluding, as ways to religious harmony, the Rabbi rejected religious eclecticism as well as unity based on political, social, and economic considerations. He said:

'Let each religious community cultivate its own garden intensively. For only in that way can we be certain to produce fruit and, then, when the fruit is pro-

duced, it shall be evident to all how nourishing and sustaining that fruit is to everyone's spiritual life.'

Professor Michio Kushi of the Department of Comparative Religion, Boston University, speaking next on Buddhism, said that Buddhism was the religion of enlightenment which Buddha achieved in his twofold knowledge of the impermanence of all things including the ego, and the immortality of Truth. He stressed that many people follow Buddhism together with their own beliefs and do not fear any contradiction as they accept a universal life built on the foundation of the highest human qualities.

Swami Ranganathananda of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, India, who had specially come to Chicago to participate in the Symposium and to undertake a year-long lecture tour of the United States at the invitation of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago, speaking on Hinduism, referred to those salient features which had imparted strength and steadiness to this most ancient and yet most modern among the world's religions. By its stress on experience as the criterion of religion instead of creed or dogma, and by the thoroughness of its study of the entire range of religious phenomena, Hinduism has acquired a philosophic and spiritual comprehensiveness which has made it not a religion but a *federation* of religions, held together by the cord of love and finding expression in active toleration and acceptance. He quoted the words of Swami Vivekananda uttered during his speech at the Chicago Parliament of Religions (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I, p. 4): 'From the high spiritual flights of the Vedānta philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the low ideas of idolatry with its multifarious mythology, to the agnosticism of the Buddhists and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have

a place in the Hindu's religion.' Swami Ranganathananda continued:

'The Hindu religion is derived from the Vedas, and from later scriptures which follow in the wake of the Vedas. By the Vedas the Hindu means, primarily, not the books, but the accumulated treasury of knowledge in the form of spiritual truths discovered at different times by different sages, some of whom were women. The most central of such truths are those of the essential divinity of man, the spiritual solidarity of the universe, religion as the realization of this divinity, the diversity of the paths leading to such realization, and harmony and concord amongst the different paths. "To the Hindu, then," said Swami Vivekananda in his speech at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, "the whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. Every religion is only evolving a God out of the material man and the same God is inspiring all of them." From the five-thousand year-old *Rg-Veda*, with its message of *Ekam sat; viprah bahudhā vadanti*—"Truth is one; sages call it by various names", to Sri Ramakrishna in our own age, with his message of *yata mat tata path*—"As many religions so many paths", through the contributions of Kṛṣṇa in the fourteenth century B.C. and the Mauryan Emperor Aśoka in the third century B.C., Hinduism has consistently manifested a mother-heart of comprehension and compassion in its dealings with all other religions. Ever since Swami Vivekananda brought the pulsations of that mother-heart to the western world through the Parliament of Religions of 1893, the world's religions have been steadily moving in the direction of both intra-religious and inter-religious unity and harmony. This is making possible the steady pooling of the spiritual resources of the great religions with a view to feeding

the spiritual hunger of man in the modern age.'

Speaking next on Zoroastrianism, Mr. Keki Bhote of India, Founder-President of the Zoroastrian Association of America, referred to the fundamental moral and spiritual teachings of his ancient religion, its extreme smallness as to the number of adherents, its close kinship with India's ancient Vedic religion, and its influence on all the middle eastern religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The afternoon session began at 2.00 p.m. with the speech of Father Robert Campbell, Professor of Theology, DePaul (Catholic) University, Chicago, on Christianity. Dwelling mainly on the conflict of the traditionalist *versus* modernistic in modern Christianity, with special reference to Catholicism, Father Campbell said :

'Had I been giving this talk ten years ago, I would have given an optimistic picture of Christianity, a Christianity in its ascendancy with its adherents constituting one-third of the human race. But in the ensuing years it seems to me that there has developed a crisis in Christianity, the worst crisis in its history. I shall take my own denomination, Roman Catholicism, as an example. You are all familiar with the adverse reception given to the Pope's encyclical on birth control by Catholic priests and laymen alike. This is just one example of the breakdown of authority which is endemic in present-day Christianity. The Pope's recent statement as to the nature of the Catholic credo represented the traditional view of Catholicism. Yet it also met with a resentful reception from many directions.

'So here are two different currents in Catholic Christianity, the traditionalistic and the modernistic. As a speaker on Christianity, if I were to present just one aspect of it, many would say, "Well, that is not Christianity as I know it". Every Christian

denomination shows this division ; it is no longer Catholic *versus* Protestant ; rather, this new alignment is between conservative *versus* liberal. The traditionalist group holds that God has revealed the Truth to us as to the nature of Himself, as to how man should live, and as to the after-life. These truths are eternal and unchanging. It is our duty to find out His will in these matters. But the modernistic, or call it the liberal or the humanistic or the secularistic, group does not agree with this. It believes that truth is a relative thing, that these doctrines and dogmas are not fixed things, they change, and that we are coming to the point where we deny some things that we formerly affirmed as sacred truths. The traditionalist group affirms that Jesus is God and is unique. No other person can be mentioned in the same breath with him. But the modernistic group takes issue with this and says that Jesus is divine, true, but any one of us can be divine. And of course this strikes a very responsive chord with the Hindu outlook that the divine is in all of us. This liberal Christian outlook is sympathetic to a great extent to the Hindu outlook. As a matter of fact, on many points, I think, you will find the liberal Christian outlook moving in the direction of the East in much of its philosophy—both in its concept of an impersonal God and in the concept that we are all divine. The same obtains in the attitude toward man : traditional Christianity, according to the liberal group, was charged with a pessimistic outlook arising from its dogmas such as original sin. This concept is very offensive to liberal Christianity which holds that man is perfectable by training and proper education. In attitude to the world also there is a cleavage between the two groups. Whereas the traditionalist group considers the world a danger and an enemy, the liberal group considers this a very wrong view and affirms that it can

be improved and that we should devote ourselves to building a more humane society instead of pining to go to a heaven.

'In the Roman Catholic Church, for the last five or six years, the rebellion against authority has been a move in the direction of challenging the infallibility of the Pope, the ideas of heaven and hell, and many other traditional doctrines. The liberal group says: "Don't worry about the old-fashioned things such as seeking converts, etc., but let us develop ecumenism, develop better relations with other religions." In my own University, surveys taken of Catholic student attitudes show a great swing toward the liberal views within the last five or six years.

'I know that the great Swami Vivekananda would himself be in favour of most of the trends in the direction of liberal Christianity; because his teaching was: "Don't be concerned about doctrines or dogmas or churches or temples but manifest the divinity within the soul by controlling external and internal nature and be free", and the liberal Christian would echo these sentiments one hundred per cent. The Swami told us that the old religions said he was an atheist who did not believe in God, that the new religion tells us that he is an atheist who does not believe in himself and in mankind. Now this attitude will be echoed wholeheartedly by the humanistic, modernistic Christian approach. Although the Swami would not endorse all the modernistic attitudes, perhaps its moral code he would not endorse one hundred per cent, still I think he would be in favour of its central trends which seem to be moving in the direction of the unity of religions which he was hoping for. I think this trend in the direction of humanism would be applauded by Swami Vivekananda if he were here today. ... We can all agree on this: that this Symposium, whose purpose is to develop fuller under-

standing of each others' religions, is a good thing.'

Speaking on Islam next, Mr. Wadi' Haddad, Associate Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Princeton University, New Jersey, said:

'To discover the universal aspects in any one religion is to discover the universal aspects in all religions. We must be open-minded. There are in every religion men of faith; as these get closer and closer to God, they become more and more inclusive in their outlook. Islam has produced such men and women; and they represent its universal dimension.'

Speaking next on the special theme of 'The Ideal of Universal Religion', Swami Ranganathananda referred to the problem of the conflict between the traditional and the liberal, posed by Father Campbell, as the basic problem of all religions today.

'During the seventy-five years that have passed since the Chicago Parliament of Religions', said the Swami, 'there has been a steady erosion of peoples' faith in religion as traditionally understood. This process had its beginnings in the sixteenth century but has become accelerated during the past few decades. The acrimonious theological debates of that century and the Thirty Years War between the Catholics and Protestants during the next century initiated the process of shifting western man's allegiance from a striving for a Kingdom of God in Heaven to a striving for a kingdom of man on earth. Humanism became the watchword of western development. But this new faith—the faith in man—received a severe jolt from the Second World War from which it has not as yet been able to recover. Man's inhumanity to man on a colossal scale, which was practised before and during that war, made man lose faith in himself also. Today, therefore, he has no focus of faith, neither God above nor man in and around him. He

lives for the moment ; and science has provided him with exciting pleasures of the senses to fill his every moment. But his movements are wobbly and aimless ; his spiritual malnutrition finds expression, in his individual and collective life, in an inner restlessness and tension, a constant search for worldly substitutes, mostly harmful, and a general sense of meaninglessness.

'It is in the context of this dilemma that we have to reassess the place of religion in human life and human fulfilment, and the changes the religions of the world have to undergo to be able to contribute to that end. Father Campbell vividly placed before us in his lecture the crisis that is facing Christianity, especially Catholic Christianity, during the past few years. It is obvious that such a crisis is facing every religion today. Modern world conditions and modern education are forcing all religions to justify themselves at the bar of reason. No religion can escape the critical scrutiny of its own youthful followers. Hinduism has been experiencing this scrutiny, reverent as well as irreverent, for over a hundred years ; it had, however, the inestimable advantage of the most progressive and enlightened spiritual leadership in the modern age in its Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Christianity is passing through such scrutiny today in a more intense fashion. Religions like Islam will experience it to vast dimensions in due course. Swami Vivekananda taught Hinduism to welcome such rational scrutiny so that all its deadwood may be removed, allowing its tested truths to shine and inspire the modern Hindu to acquire the necessary spiritual strength to face the challenge of modern materialism. He exhorted all other religions too to respond to the modern challenge in the same way and, uniting their spiritual energies, throw a counter-challenge to modern materialism and worldliness, and thus help restore to modern man

his spiritual integrity and true dignity.

'It is when religions undergo this process that they bring out the central truths that form their spiritual core and reveal their everpresent universal dimension. This, and not religious uniformity nor religious eclecticism, is what Hinduism understands by universal religion, the ideal and reality of which it manifested gloriously in the modern age in the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Long before the first Parliament of Religions at Chicago, Vivekananda had witnessed a living Parliament of Religions in his master, Sri Ramakrishna. In the light of his life and message, Christians will discover the ideal of universal religion in Christianity, Mohammedans in their Islam, and all others in their respective religions. And the confluence today of the spiritual energies of the world's religions with the kindred energies of modern science, Swami Vivekananda held, will alone be capable of leading man, individually and collectively, to life fulfilment.'

Professor Burtt, in his concluding presidential speech, referred to the common stress on universality in all the speeches of the day and suggested that this was a happy augury for the future. He concluded by expressing his hope that the first Centenary of the Chicago Parliament of Religions, to be celebrated twenty-five years hence, may well see Vivekananda's message, and mankind's hopes, of inter-religious unity being realized.

John Pickens, President of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago, then proposed a vote of thanks to all the participants. Closing prayers were said by Swami Bhashyananda and Father Campbell, and Mrs. Dipika Kripalani sang the Sufi song in Hindi, beginning with the line, 'All that exists art Thou, O Lord', which used to be sung often by Swami Vivekananda to Sri Ramakrishna. The Symposium came to a close at 5.00 p.m.

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### DECEMBER CALENDAR

*(All Functions Open to the Public)*

*Children below 12 years are not allowed*

#### SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

*On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*5th, 19th, and 26th December*

SHRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

*On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali*

*6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th December*

THE KATHA UPANISHAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

*On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

*7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th December*

#### CULTURAL PROGRAMME

*(Children below six years are not allowed)*

##### FILM SHOW

*(Devotional Film in Bengali)*

*Tuesday, 3 December 1968, at 6 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only      ..      .. Re. 1.00

##### MUSICAL SOIREE

By

Agni-Vina

*Tuesday, 17 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only      ..      .. Re. 1.00

##### ORCHESTRA

By

Calcutta Institute of Music

*Tuesday, 31 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

Admission by ticket only      ..      .. Re. 1.00

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR DECEMBER 1968

*Sri Sri Ma Sarada Devi Galpa Āsar*

First Saturday, 7 December, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

*Jishu Khrista Galpa Āsar*

Last Saturday, 28 December, at 4.45 p.m., for Seniors (10-16 age-group)

*Programme:*

Songs, Recitations, Story-telling, and Film Shows

## LECTURES

*On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English*December 4      **Acharya Brajendranath—The Thinker***Speaker:*    Srimat Anirvan*President:*   D. M. Bose, M.A., Ph.D., F.N.I.December 11     **Aesthetics and Modern Ethics***Speaker:*    Pavitra Kumar Roy, M.A.*Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Visva-Bharati University**President:*    S. K. Nandi, M.A., B.L., D.Phil.December 18     **Naipal—A Literary Artist***Speaker:*    Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.*President:*    Srikumar Banerjee, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

## SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA

A Series of Three Lectures

on

**New Frontiers of International Law**

(Specially organized on the occasion of International Year

for Human Rights 1968)

in collaboration with

International Law Association, Calcutta Centre

*On Mondays at 6.30 p.m. in English*

- Monday, 9 December 1968, at 6.30*

(in Bengali)

By

## A Five-Day

on

The symposium has been specially organized on the occasion of the 21st International Geographical Congress India, 1968, to provide an opportunity for workers in these fields of different parts of the world to meet together, take part in the discussion of particular problems of these areas, which are sometimes singular, complex but interesting.

## Subjects for Discussion and Time Schedule

Monday, 9 December 1968: 9 a.m. — 12.00 noon  
1.30 p.m. — 4.30 p.m.

Tuesday, 10 December 1968 : 9.00 a.m. — 12.00 noon  
1.30 p.m. — 4.30 p.m.



## SECTION III

**Agriculture, Farming, and Industry**

Wednesday, 11 December 1968 : 9.00 a.m. — 12.00 noon  
1.30 p.m. — 4.30 p.m.

## SECTION IV

**Regional Growth and Patterns**

Thursday, 12 December 1968 : 9.00 a.m. — 12.00 noon  
1.30 p.m. — 4.30 p.m.

## SECTION V

**Population and Settlement**

Friday, 13 December 1968 : 9.00 a.m. — 12.00 noon  
1.30 p.m. — 4.30 p.m.

Admission by invitation only

## CELEBRATION OF

## THE HOLY MOTHER SRI SRI SARADA DEVI'S BIRTHDAY

*Saturday, 14 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Programme:*

Matri Bandana (in Songs)

**Sri Sri Mayer Katha**

(A talk in Bengali)

By

Roma Chaudhury, M.A., D.Phil.

Devotional Songs

## CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS EVE

*Tuesday, 24 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m.*

*Programme:*

Christmas Carol

By

Catholic Students' Union

Readings from the Bible

Talk on

**Jesus Christ: His Spiritual Mission**

By

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

Giti Alekhya

**The Birth of Christ**

Music : Sunil Datta and others

Commentary : Nimai Kumar Mukherjee



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