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MYTHS AND SYMBOLS: A STUDY OF INDIA'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

H. K. DE CHAUDHURI, M.A., DR. PHIL.

Dr. H. K. De Chaudhuri is a speaker and a writer. Of the several books written by him, Amṛter Sandhān *in Bengali, and* Tattvajijñāsā, *a treatise on Epistemology in Sanskrit, deserve special mention. Under the general title 'Myths and Symbols' Dr. De Chaudhuri gave two lectures. The first one of this series which he delivered at the Institute in June 1968, is reproduced below.*

A CRITICAL semantic study and evaluation of myths and symbols with which Indian thought and culture is highly impregnated may prove illuminating. Here an attempt to unravel the mystery of the spiritual life of ancient India is made from the standpoint of the philosophy of myths and on the basis of various branches of modern learning connected with myths and mythical thought, viz. Ethnology, Psychology, Comparative Religion, etc. Myth (Gk. *Mythos*) signifies ancient sacred narratives and sagas of a people in general, the holy repertoire of sacred events, that together with cults and rituals reflect the life and world-view of the people and their common holy tradition, in short, the sacred tradition, Smṛti, and the sacred history, Itihāsa-Purāṇa, as meant in ancient India.

The function of myth, whether ancient or modern, has been and is to stabilize tradition and institutions, and in early times the role of myth has been all the more conspicuous. Every myth, whatever its nature, recounts some event or events that are believed to have taken place *in illo tempore* and make out a meaningful precedent and pattern for all actions and situations by repeating them. (cf. Mircea Eliade, *Traite d'historie des religions*, Paris. *Pattern in Comparative Religion*, Eng. tr.

by Rosemary Sheed, London/New York.) Myths were viewed as unwritten history of sacred events which actually happened in the past; and it was believed that the chanting or narration of proper myths during religious ceremonies and the like was highly efficacious. A myth is not a product of imagination or fantasy, nor is it a symbolic representation or allegorical interpretation of any significant phenomena which gained currency later on in satisfaction of any intellectual or scientific curiosity. As Malinowsky, the great pioneer in the field of mythological study, correctly and explicitly says (*Myth in Primitive Psychology*, London, 1926, p. 2):

'Myth as it exists in a savage country, that is, in its living primitive form, is not merely a story told but a reality lived. It is not of the nature of a fiction such as we read in a novel, but it is a living reality believed to have once happened in the primeval times and continuing ever since to influence the world of human destinies.

'As our sacred story lives in our ritual, in our morality, as it governs our faith and controls our conduct, even so does this myth for the same.'

Malinowsky clearly demonstrates that myth is not symbolic; it is a direct expression of the subject-matter, 'a narrative resurrection of a primeval reality told in satisfaction of deep religious wants, moral cravings, social submissions, assertions, even practical requirements' (*ibid.*, p. 3). A myth is neither symbolic nor allegorical in sense, nor is mythical thought couched in language containing any secret meaning or any ideal content intelligible in terms of its image. (cf. E. Cassirer, *Philospophie der Symbolischen Formen*, II Band. Eng. tr., *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. II, 'Mythical Thought')

Myth cannot be regarded as a product of imagination or fantasy or any kind of speculation invented merely to explain the actiology of events and phenomena, customs and beliefs underlying religions or social institutions, as many eminent writers believed at an earlier stage of research. (e.g. Andrew Land, *Language, Myths and Rituals*; Tylor, *Primitive Culture*; Frazer, *The Golden Bough*) At the same time, the interpretation of myths from the standpoint of psycho-analysis of the Freudian school or on the lines of depth psychology of Jung is merely partial and onesided.

Meaning and Role of Myth

Here we would briefly analyze the meaning of myth and examine its role in the life of the community. A myth is not a weird mass of confused incoherent ideas; it is highly significant and pregnant with meaning. In its very meaning and essence myth has more a practical significance than a theoretical bias. It signifies a particular mode of approach for solution of certain fundamental problems affecting life as a whole, especially in its primitive stages; in other words, it is a way of reaction to significant phases of life-situation. This explains why the recital of myth has been an essential element of religion. A myth cannot be explained in terms of natural phenomena; the model of myth has been the society and not nature. In the primitive stage myth has been the projection of man's social outlook. (cf. E. Durkheim, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*. Eng. tr. *Elementary forms of religious life.*) It has been aptly characterized that the history of a people is determined by its mythology and not its converse, viz. mythology by history. (cf. Schelling, *Philosophie der Mythologie*)

Myth is a form of thought rather than intuition; in its earlier stages of development, human thought has been pre-logical and interwoven with mythical thought (cf. Levy Bruhl, *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés interieures*, Paris [1910] Eng. tr.

How Nations Think, London/New York. [1926], *La mentalité primitive*, Paris [1922] Eng. tr. *Primitive Mentality*, New York [1923]). Its salient characteristics are that it is somewhat akin to meaningful dream experience and lacks elements of empirical and conceptual thinking. But it is not on par with the language of the collective unconscious. There is no clear line of demarcation between mere 'representation' and 'real' perception. The principles of '*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*' and '*juxta hoc, ergo propter hoc*' are characteristic of mythical thinking; unlike empirical thinking it is not concerned with specific causes and their generalized effects. But such thinking which is not causal is not arbitrary either. A mythical phenomenon means materialization of some event or metamorphosis of some concrete material form into another, e.g. creation myths of emergence of the universe from the cosmic egg or 'golden germ/womb' (Hiraṇyagarbha) as it is called in the Vedic mythology (*Ṛg-Veda*, X. 121; cf. *Ṛg-Veda*, X. 82).

The myth is primitive history, *Urgeschichte* and the basis of cultural history. The basic forms of all cultural life, viz. art, language, law, ethics, religion, etc. are all rooted in mythical consciousness and thought. Rites and myths are interconnected, but rite precedes myth. Rites are not originally allegorical, they have a real basis; and myths are narratives or dramatization of the events underlying the rites. Myths provide the basis of rituals and incorporate holy beliefs and tradition relating to rites which are sacred ways of worshipping, praying, chanting, sacrificing, and making offerings, etc. An important element of ritual which has survived in most cultures, including the Indian, is that myths are recited as part of the religious function; there is a sort of dramatization of myths at various ceremonies. There is hardly any outstanding myth which is not an unveiling of a 'mystery', the revelation of a primeval event introducing a constituent phase of reality or a kind of human behaviour. (cf. Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Rêves et Mystères*. Paris [1957] Eng. tr., *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, London [1960])

Mythical Experience

Although mythical experience is somewhat akin to dream, there are fundamental differences between the nature of myths and that of dreams. According to Jung (C. G. Jung, *Symbole der Wandlung*, Eng. tr., *Symbols of Transformation*), myths are early expressions of the Collective Unconscious and are intelligible in terms of symbols which are found to occur in dreams as well. But it may be urged against this view that the dream lacks the essential characteristics of myth, its wholeness, its exemplary and universal character. The mythical experience has been compared to the ecstatic experience of Shamans of archaic societies which is somewhat analogous to mystical experience of latter-day saints. (Mircea Eliade, *Myths Rêves et Mystères*, Paris [1957]). Similarly, Shaman's mastery of fire is analogous to that of mystical ascetics of India, which is supposed to imply transcendence of human condition.

Mythology and Language

Mythology and language are very closely inter-related. The development of language shows the gradual emergence of the human mind from its myth-making stage to that of logical thinking, i.e. conceptual thought. The original bond between the mythico-religious consciousness and linguistic thought is that the verbal structures appear as entities endowed with mythical powers and the word in fact is a primary force charged with sanctity. (Ernst Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, II Bd.) In Indian philosophy, the word or more appropriately the creative word, i.e. logos,

has been viewed as *akṣara* (lit. imperishable) and is equated with Brahman, i.e. an aspect of divine reality or *śabda*-Brahman (Regarding the doctrine of *śabda*-Brahman [*eternal verbum*], see *Vakypadīya* of Bhartṛahari), the verbal representation of Brahman.

Myths Classified

In spite of certain radical differences among peoples living in various stages of culture, striking affinities regarding the general characteristics of myths are noticeable. There are various types of myths and they can be classified from different points of view. First, myths can be analyzed under the two broad categories, viz. theogonic and cosmogonic. The former category includes myths about the birth of gods and their activities, and the latter embraces myths relating to the origin of the universe and the recurrent cycles of life (*mahāyuga*). According to the subject-matter, myths fall under various classes the most important of which are the following: (1) those connected with the origin of gods (*devas*), demons, heroes, etc.; (2) those connected with the origin of the universe; (3) those connected with extraordinary natural phenomena, e.g. earthquakes, tempests, etc.; (4) those connected with periodical seasons; (5) those connected with the origin of mankind and creatures; (6) those connected with customs and institutions; (7) those relating to life beyond death and the land of the dead; and (8) those based on various kinds of events and objects. Again, myths have been classified according to aetiological basis: (1) meteorological, (2) physical, i.e. those connected with natural phenomena, (3) ritual, (4) historical, (5) artistic, (6) ethical, (7) mystical, and (8) allegorical. This latter classification is obviously unscientific.

Nature of Indian Mythology

With these preliminary observations, we now turn to the main subject under discussion. First, we would explain the nature of Indian mythology, rather the types of mythology, viz. Vedic, Epic and Purāṇic, Buddhist and Jaina, which together constitute the Indian mythology; and we would then briefly elucidate the nature of certain myths which have profound bearing on the unfolding of the spiritual life of India. Unlike mythologies of certain other countries, the Indian mythology has a definite character of its own, despite numerous common affinities. It is an *ensemble* of mythologies intimately interconnected, but, at the same time, possessing distinct brands of their own, which, together constitute the common Indian mythology. The Vedic mythology cannot be said to represent the oldest mythology of India, nor is it a mythology in the making. (See M. Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Literature*, Eng. tr., *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. 1. Regarding our view see: *Louis de la Vallee Poussin: Le Vedisme.*) It is a clear evidence of stratification in respect of mythological themes. The Indus valley civilization points to the existence of an earlier and more primitive mythology which is unconnected with the Vedic mythology, but which has striking points of resemblance with the Purāṇic mythology. The Indus valley civiliza ion discloses types of thought and culture which might have been the forerunner of later developments which came to be known as Hinduism at a much later age; and this *Ur*-Hinduism must have flourished since the pre-Vedic times.

The link between Vedism and the great Epics and Purāṇas may be said to be extremely slender not only in the spheres of mythology and religion, but also in several other domains. It may be that Vedism, which was mostly a priest-ridden culture, was grafted later on the prevailing types of religious thought, viz. *Ur-*

Hinduism, when some kind of synthesis had been achieved, and the epics and the Purāṇas which go back to hoary past and were compiled in stages, were finally codified, possibly during the early Gupta age. In our opinion, the picture of thought and culture as preserved in the Vedas is characteristic of a section of the early Indian society dominated by the Vedic priestly class, while the picture that the epics and the Purāṇas depict is that of the people. The Purāṇas do not reflect the tradition of a priest-ridden community. The Purāṇic literature has been treated as the Veda of the Vedas (*Vedānāṁ Vedaḥ*), the first among the '*Śāstras*' conceived by Brahmā and then the Vedas came out of Him (*Purāṇaṁ sarvaśastrāṇāṁ prathamaṁ brahmaṇā smṛtam—Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII.i.1). According to tradition, the characteristics of a Purāṇa are fivefold. (e.g. *Kūrma*, p. 1.1.12. Regarding main subjects of Purāṇas, see *Matsya*, II., 22-24) A Purāṇa is said to contain accounts of origin and creation of the universe (*sarga*), dissolution and renovation of the universe (*pratisarga*), genealogy of gods and *ṛṣis* (*vaṁśa*), ages and periods of Manu (*manvantara*), and chronicles of dynasties (*vaṁśānucarita*).

Vedic Mythology

It can be aptly remarked that the Vedic mythology has neither any beginning nor any end. (Louis Renou, *Religions of Ancient India*, London [1953], p. 12). Various strata of mythical thought are discernible in the Saṁhitās and it is not possible to reconstruct the *Ur*-Vedic or the primitive form of the Vedic mythology. Again the Brāhmaṇas represent progress of mythological thought in different planes, viz. reorientation of the Vedic thought, i.e. sacrifice on magico-religious lines (e.g. *Yajño vai viṣṇuḥ* the symbolic meaning of which will be explained later); and the Upaniṣads which are generally anti-ritualistic reveal conspicuous trends towards symbolical interpretations of mythical thought. But generally speaking, any symbolical interpretation of the Vedic mythology is untenable. (cf. Aurobindo, *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, Pondicherry [1957]. According to Aurobindo, the Vedic *devas* may be said to represent vital mental functions). Again it is equally unsound to interpret the Vedic mythology in terms of ritual alone; many myths do not point to their ritual counterparts and liturgical applications (*viniyoga*). The Vedic mythologies as revealed in the Saṁhitās bear evidence of a much advanced stage of thought. It is not possible in this short sketch to give any analysis of the character of the Vedic gods (*devas*). They are shining deities presiding over heaven, sky, earth, etc. and they grant prayers (*Devo dānād vā dīpanād vā dyotanādvā*, Nirukta, VII.15), and many of them seem to possess common characteristics. Thus, as thought advanced, the *devas* came to be regarded as not only akin but identical. 'The sages speak of the One in many ways; they call Him Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan (*Ekam sad viprāḥ bahudhā vadantyagniṁ yamaṁ mātariśvāna māhuḥ*, *Ṛg-Veda*, I.64.46)'. 'They conceive the One Reality in diverse forms' (*Ekam santam bahudhā kalpayanti*, *Ṛg-Veda*, X.114.5). Prajāpati is the God above all gods and embraces all things. This pantheistic colouring adumbrated in the later hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* is fully noticeable in the *Atharva-Veda* (Skambha Sūkta, X.7.14, 25, 29).

Hindu Mythology

The epics, viz. the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the Purāṇas are the principal sources of the Hindu mythology, and they are closely interlinked. But it cannot be held, as already indicated, that they are rooted in the Vedic literature. (e.g.

Winternitz sought to make out that the Purāṇas have their roots in the Vedic literature because certain myths and legends occurring in the Vedic Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas reappear in the Purāṇas [*Geschichte der indischen Literatur*, I. Bd.]. But this fact alone does not substantiate his thesis. Generally Purāṇic myths are different.) They represent traditional accounts not only of ancient myths and heroic sagas, legends, and folk-lore but are also the repository of ancient learning. Itihāsa-Purāṇa signifies ancient sacred history and tradition and heroic saga. Although they were compiled at different stages and finally codified at a much later age, they point to the mythical age, and this mythology reflects a more primitive, in the sense of earlier, stage of thought and culture. The epic and Purāṇic tradition must have existed, side by side, among the people including a great section of non-Vedic Aryans. The Paraśurāma episode (regarding the exploits of Paraśurāma, see *Mahābhārata*, Vanaparva, 98 Adhyāya [Calcutta Edition]. He is also referred to as an *avatāra* in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 1.3.20. [Cal. edn.]. He is said to have denuded the world of Kṣatriyas twentyone times.) may be said to represent the struggle between Brāhmaṇism and the new order led by Kṣatriya princes on behalf of the people (*viś*). Eventually, there must have been a sort of compromise between Vedism and the precursor of what can be termed as Hinduism. Similarly, the battle of Kurukṣetra represents the struggle between the orthodox order led by Kurus, of whom Duryodhana was the king, and the newer order ranged on the side of the Pāṇḍavas under the guidance of Kṛṣṇa and the emergence of the latter in the forefront.

Now, let us look at the picture of the divinities as presented by the Vedas on the one hand and the epics and the Purāṇas on the other. The picture of theogony as presented by the Purāṇas is an interesting one. Of the numerous divinities who play the minor role of *devas*, Brahmā (etymologically the Vedic Brahman) emerges into the limelight as a personal deity. He is the creator of the universe. Viṣṇu, the sun-god of the Veda, assumes likewise a different role, viz. that of the preserver of the universe. Śiva, a new deity remotely connected with the Vedic Rudra, appears on the scene as the destroyer of the universe and as a great god (*mahādeva*), great ruler (*maheśvara*). These three together represent the trinity of the Purāṇas or the three phases of the Supreme Reality. Unlike the Vedic deities, the Purāṇic deities have a distinct individuality of their own. Of the trinity, Brahmā gradually recedes into the background, while Viṣṇu and Śiva emerge into the forefront. Each assumes the role of the Supreme Deity according to the attitude which is reflected in the final codification of the respective Purāṇas. Here we keep out of account minor *devas* who also play a significant role in the Purāṇas.

A few words may be said about *asuras* before we turn to our account of heroes. In the *Ṛg-Veda*, the word *asura* is, generally speaking, an appellation of *devas* (cf. the Avesta concept of Ahura which signifies the Supreme God) except in a few cases. It might have signified a being possessed of occult power, later called *māyā*. (*Indro māyābhiḥ pururūpa īyate*, *Ṛg-Veda*, VI. 47. 18) The Purāṇic concept of *asuras* gifted with supernatural powers, lends support to this view. The derivation from *sura* (god), a term first traceable in the Upaniṣads is improbable. In the *Ṛg-Veda*, the epithet '*asurahan*' or '*asuraghna*' (*asura*-slayer) is applied to Indra (VI. 22.4), Agni (VII. 13.1), and Sūrya (X. 170.2). The *Atharva-Veda*, however, exhibits in its theogonic and cosmogonic hymns a new type of mythical thought and a world of gods and demons. The Brāhmaṇas present a vivid picture of

the *asuras* who have become veritable demons hostile to the *devas*. Vṛtra remains the chief Asura and the legend of hostility between Indra and Vṛtra is further developed. The epics and the Purāṇas present a different conception of *asuras*. They are the offspring of Prajāpati, the Lord of Creatures; the children of Diti are Daityas and those of Aditi are Adityas. The Daityas were older than the Devas, and the enmity between them commenced at the churning of the Milk-ocean for the sake of ambrosia. The Purāṇas depict *asuras* as mighty beings devoted to Brahmā; they practise *tapas* and become often invincible. The *devas* defeat them very often by means of stratagem. The hidden meaning of the myth of the Churning of the Milk-ocean (*Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, I. 9, *Mātsya*, p. 249, 250, and 251 chapters, *Mahābhārata*, 'Ādi Parva') and the inner significance of the conflict between the *devas* and the *asuras* may be interpreted as follows. It presages the conflict of ideology and the *devas* sought to perpetuate their supremacy by vanquishing *asuras* and by depriving them of nectar which would make them immortal and ensure an equal status for them.

Avataras

The conception of incarnation of Godhead is fundamental to mythology in general and especially so in the case of the Indian mythology. The *avatāra* myths originally centred round Viṣṇu who had become the principal *deva* of the Purāṇas. The deeper significance is that an *avatāra* appears in order to protect the virtuous and to chastise and destroy the wicked and for the establishment of *dharma*, the reign of law, on earth. (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, VI. 8) The real implication of the myth is that since primordial times there have been heroes, i.e. creatures possessed of supernatural powers in human, semi-human, or animal forms. The epics and Purāṇas give different lists of Viṣṇu's *avatāras*. The conception is not altogether foreign to the Vedic mythology. (A few parallels may be cited. Prajāpati assumed the form of a tortoise and created beings, and all creatures are said to be descendants of Kaśyapa [*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VII. 5.1.5.]. The peculiar exploit of the Boar incarnation, viz. raising up the earth from the bottom of the ocean is alluded to in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* [XIV. 1.2.11] Regarding the Dwarf incarnation there is the Vedic parallel [*Ṛg-Veda*, I.22.17-15; I.154-1-4; I.155.4; VI.49.13 etc.: *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, I.2-5.1]). The *Garuḍa* and *Bhāgavata* Purāṇas mention twenty-two *avartāras* in all. The Purāṇas give detailed description of the heroic exploits of the *avatāras*. The usual list is of ten *avatāras*: Matsya (Fish), Kūrma (Tortoise), Varāha (Boar), Narasiṁha (Man-lion), Vāmana (Dwarf), Paraśurāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, and Kalki. The myths concerning Matsya, Kūrma, and Varāha *avatāras* are reminiscent of the theriomorphic conception of the deity in primordial times; Narasiṁha suggests therio-anthropomorphic conception of the deity. Vāmana signifies the manifestation of the Supreme Principle in the minutest as well as in the highest forms. Paraśurāma represents the Brāhmaṇic hero who sought to establish the supremacy of the Brāhmaṇic culture by force. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are different representatives of the Supreme Hero; and their myths are replete with heroic exploits. Regarding Buddha, the Enlightened One, the myths, glorifying his extraordinary deeds, had already accumulated by the time the Purānas which mention him, were compiled. The last *avatāra*, Kalki, who is the redeemer of mankind, is supposed to appear on the scene at some future appropriate time. In this connection, it may be pointed out that the Kṛṣṇa mythology reflects the growth and development of a new cult and order, and the gradual collapse and final debacle of an

older cult and system. The triumph of Kṛṣṇa marks the ascendancy of the Kṛṣṇa cult, the major religion of India.

Heroes and Hero-sagas

It would be relevant to state here a few words about heroes and hero—sagas. All ancient mythologies are replete with hero-sagas. The hero is conceived as a god, and the gods are conceived after the images of the heroes. (cf: Wundt, *Elemente der Völker Psychologie*. Wundt sought to prove that god is created after the image of the hero and not the hero after the image of the god.) The hero appears in various forms and most mythologies speak of child-heroes who are child-gods. The picture of the child-god is very nearly identical in all ancient mythologies. The child-god is usually an abandoned infant reared elsewhere, and he is exposed to extraordinary dangers. The mother or foster-mother has a peculiar part to play. As the child grows up, he performs wonders and becomes invincible. As indicated already, the typical hero-god who answers fully to this description is Kṛṣṇa. Jung, in his interpretation of the child-god concept, seeks to show that the child born out of the 'golden egg' represents child's coming into being out of the womb of the Unconscious, i.e. produced out of the depths of the human psyche. It symbolizes the pre-conscious and post-conscious nature of man; the former is the unconscious state of early childhood and the latter is an anticipation by analogy of life beyond death. (cf. G. Jung and C. Kereny, *Introduction to the Science of Mythology*)

Siva Cult

The difference between the Vedic Rudra and the Purāṇic deity Śiva, is far more striking than their resemblances; and it would be correct to hold that Śiva may have been the principal non-Aryan deity of *Ur*-Dravidian age. Presumably, he or his prototype figures as an important deity in the Indus valley civilization. This is indicated by the representation of the three-faced deity wearing a horned head-dress and seated cross-legged on a throne with *penis-erectus* and surrounded by elephant, tiger, buffalo, and rhinoceros and with deer appearing under the seat. Such representation fits in with the description of Śiva as *trimukha* (Three-faced One), *paśupati* (Lord of beasts), *yogīśvara* (Lord of Yoga), *mahā-yogī* (great Yogin seated in a *padmāsana* posture). His worship may have prevailed both in the iconic and phallic forms as would appear from a large number of conical and cylindrical stones (*liṅga*). The Dakṣa episode (*Skandha Purāṇa*, 1-5 chapters, *Padma Purāṇa*, V. 36-41, 44) clearly shows how Dakṣa who ignored Śiva was humiliated and how his sacrifice was spoilt and finally how Śiva was glorified. Śiva became the cosmic god (Īśāna, ruler), Maheśvara (the great Lord) and the real Paśupati(the Lord of all creatures), *paśus* being viewed as creatures. The *liṅga* worship also acquired new symbolic significance. Several myths connected with Śiva are most significant. The impact of the ascetic will-power generated by *tapas* is glorified by the myth of the descent of the Gaṅgā from heaven to earth through matted hair on the head of Śiva, the divine *yogī*, at the earnest supplication of the pious king, Bhagīratha. It shows most graphically the triumph of the Yoga cult of which Śiva is the supreme upholder. Again the dance of Śiva who is also Naṭarāja, the king of dancers, is symbolical of the divine sport of the Lord of the universe.

The Cult of Mother-Goddess

The cult of the mother-goddess which is somewhat linked up with the Śiva cult must have prevailed since remote ages; but this orgiastic cult of the mother-goddess

gained formal recognition at a much later age when the Śākta Tantras began to be codified. That the cult was prevalent in the Indus valley civilization is evident from *terra cotta* figurines found there. It existed in various forms and the mother-goddess was addressed by different appellations: Ambā (Mother), Jagadambā (Mother of the World), Pārvatī (Mountain-dweller), Kālī (the Dark Goddess), Karālī (the Terrible Goddess), etc. All these appellations are highly significant, and the cult acquired new symbolic implications.

Mythical Conception of Time and Space

The mythical world-view is one of vision and trance. All reality and all events are projected into the fundamental opposition of the sacred and the profane and thereby they assume a new meaning, rather a mythical illusion. Events and objects of a sacred character are unduly magnified, while the profane ones unduly underrated. The mythical conceptions of time and space which have prevailed in ancient India are significant in this context. All orientation in time presupposes orientation in space and the experience of temporal relations develops only through those of spatial relations. Mythical time and space in the sacred sphere are beyond reckoning; they have other applications in the profane sphere. The mythical time is reckoned in terms of ages or world-cycles. Each world-cycle is sub-divided into four *yugas* or world-ages, viz. Satya or Kṛta (the Perfect Age), Tretā (the Age in which one quarter of *dharma* declines), Dvāpara (the Age in which half of *dharma* declines), and Kali (the Dark Age in which three-quarters of *dharma* declines). One cycle of the four *yugas* is called a *mahāyuga* (the Great Yuga) which consists of 12,000 heavenly years according to the reckoning of *devas*, or 4,320,000 years according to human reckoning. The reckoning is as follows:

Divine reckoning			Human reckoning
Satya Yuga	4,000+ 800	(representing	1728,000
Tretā Yuga	3,000+ 600	twilight)	1296,000
Dvāpara Yuga	2,000+ 400	„	864,000
Kali Yuga	1,000+ 200	„	432,000
	10,000+2,000	„	4320,000
	−12,000 years (1 Divine year =360 human years)		

One thousand *mahāyugas* constitute a single day of Brahmā, a *kalpa* which is marked by the creation or rather emanation of the universe out of Brahmā and a similar period constitutes a night of Brahmā, its dissolution or reabsorption (*pralaya*) into Brahmā. Each *kalpa* is sub-divided into fourteen *manvantaras* (i.e. Manu-intervals) terminating with a deluge, and each interval is named after a Manu, the hero who escapes the flood. The present period is called the interval of Manu Vaivasvata, the seventh *manvantara* of the present day of Brahmā. The myth of deluge appears in other mythologies as well. (cf. Deluge in Bible *Genesis* 6-9 [regarding the deluge stories see *Encycloapaedia of Religion and Ethics*]).

Buddhist and Jaina Mythologies

Myths and legends have centred round the earlier Buddhas, Gautama Buddha (the enlightened sage of the Śākya clan, Śākyamuni), and Bodhisattvas (those on way to the perfect knowledge and illumination, i.e. Buddha-hood); and Jinas (triumphant saints of Jainas), including Vardhamāna Mahāvīra. There is no clear evidence of any Buddhist canonical literature appearing within two hundred years of the demise (*mahāparinirvāṇa*) of Gautama Buddha (c. 487 B.C.) and the Buddha had already undergone a kind of mythical apotheosis. There are various accounts of the former Buddhas and Tathāgatas (those who appeared in similar states) and the popular

descriptions of the land of pure bliss (*sukhāvatīvyūha*). The conception of Bodhisattva (lit. one whose *sattva*, being or essence, is intelligence) is clearly one of Mahāyāna origin, and in this pantheon Avalokiteśvara stands supreme. He would remain a Bodhisattva until the redemption of mankind and would rescue sufferers. Next to Avalokiteśvara, the saviour and the embodiment of compassion, the most important Bodhisattva is Manjuśrī, the embodiment of wisdom. Another striking feature of the Buddhist mythology is that it absorbed many elements, characteristic of the Hindu pantheon. The Hindu and Buddhist Tantras bear striking resemblances in regard to many points. The Buddhist Tantras present the picture of minor divinities, especially female ones, viz. Tārā, Yoginīs and Dākinīs, whose conceptions are embedded in popular thought.

Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the Great Hero alias Jina, the Victorious One (d. 467 or 477 B.C. according to most scholars, but 527 B.C. according to tradition), has, like Gautama Buddha, become the subject of a mass of myths. Mahāvīra's life has many striking points of similarity with that of Buddha, the Conqueror of Māra (also occasionally referred to as Jina). (cf. Aśvaghosa's *Buddhacarita* and Bhadrabāhu's *Kalpasūtra*.) Both had to face many an ordeal before attaining supreme enlightenment. There is a long line of twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras or Tīrthakaras (lit. 'forders') (The Metaphor is analogous to that of Latin *pontifex*, Roman image of a bridge.), the perfected saints who have attained omniscience and who are teachers of humanity. The twenty-third Tirthaṅkara, Pārśva, who is believed to have died 250 years before Mahāvīra, is generally regarded as the founder of the religious system developed by Vardhamāna Mahāvīra.

Symbolic Meanings of Myths

In the course of development of thought, myths are modified, and they acquire new meanings; in other words, they come to be associated with symbols, and symbolic significance is attached to them. In elucidating myths, their primary and original signification should not be overlooked. Both rites and myths undergo vital changes with the progress of religious thoughts. The living myths acquire newer sanctity in consequence of their reorientation on symbolic lines, but the element of myth is never wholly eliminated. Again, with the progress of thought, myths decay and symbols become secularized when sanctity attached to them suffers diminution; but they never disappear. India's treasure of myths and symbols is immense, and Indian thought, especially religious thought, is intelligible only on a clear grasp of myths and symbols with which it is permeated.

(To be concluded)

THE DIVINITY OF ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

BATUKNATH BHATTACHARYA, M.A., B.L.

Sri Batuknath Bhattacharya, formerly Professor of English, Surendranath College, Calcutta, is an eminent scholar in the field of comparative religion and philosophy and has contributed several articles on various subjects in different journals. The following is the text of a lecture Sri Bhattacharya gave at the Institute in September 1966.

TO AFFIRM the divinity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Mahābhārata* is a venture of hazard, for on this ground great names join issue. Two questions arise at the outset: What is our idea of Divinity and what are its attributes? A divine being is spoken of as Bhagavān, i.e. possessing certain uncommon powers. These are variously listed. According to one *śloka, bhaga* denotes omnipotence, prowess, renown, grace, knowledge, and non-attachment. Another verse defines a divine person as one who has knowledge of the creation and dissolution of the universe of the comings and goings of creatures, and of the false knowledge (*avidyā*) that causes bondage and of the true knowledge (*vidyā*) that liberates the souls.

These godly qualities may well be illustrated in Śrī Kṛṣṇa from the *Mahābhārata* text as generally accepted wherein the sages have tried to present Śrī Kṛṣṇa from different view-points—as an ideal man, a god-man, an incarnation, a divine being and also God Himself. The thirteen episodes, narrated below, show Him in His aspect of the Divine.

THE THIRTEEN EPISODES

(1) *Jarāsandha Surprised and Slain*: The first of the episodes is the overthrow of Jarāsandha—the tyrant of Magadha—who held a number of princes captive and intended to immolate them as human sacrifices. This formidable opponent had to be put out of the way before Yudhiṣṭhira could perform the royal sacrifice. Accompanied by Bhīma and Arjuna, Śrī Kṛṣṇa enters his capital (Rājagṛha) by a secret hill-path and surprised him in his palace and challenges him to a duel with any one of them. In his pride of prowess, Jarāsandha chooses, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa desired and anticipated, to fight Bhīma. Bhīma splits his body into the two halves which was the only way of putting an end to his life, as the Rākṣasī Jarā had magically joined them into one at the time of his birth.

(2) *Two Aspects at Rājasūya—Humility and Majesty*: In the concourse of princes, sages, and priests at the Rājasūya sacrifice Śrī Kṛṣṇa's role ranges from the humblest to the highest. At the reception of guests, Vāsudeva (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) washed the feet of the holy Brāhmaṇas, and Arjuna honoured the guests with unguents. Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Man, it may be recalled, did the likewise at the Last Supper, washing the feet of his own disciples. On the other hand, in the magnificent gathering of the highest dignitaries at Indraprastha, the honorific *arghya*—the tribute of supremacy—was offered to him. Bhīṣma, the Kuru patriarch, proclaimed him the most illustrious in that assemblage. He was the sun that illuminated darkness, the air that brought cheer to a windless spot. Bhīṣma's

fervent praise of Kṛṣṇa incensed Śiśupāla, the Chedi prince, and he poured forth the vial of venomed abuse. Bhīṣma rejoined to affirm the pre-eminence of Kṛṣṇa who was fit to be worshipped not by them only, but by the three worlds. For Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) was the knower of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, and was of boundless valour, uniquely gifted with skill, prowess, and self-possession; he had acquired fame and possessed highest wisdom, modesty, splendour, patience, sagacity, and contented spirit. All these ever abide in him. He is the cause of creation and destruction of the worlds, all-pervading, and ever-present. He is Keśava, the slayer of the demon Keśī, adds Sahadeva, and of limitless power—the adorable one. Nārada, the celestial sage, asserted that those who did not adore the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa were dead-alive and unfit for colloquy. Śiśupāla's princely retinue enraged at this signal honour to their adversary prepared for fight. In the clash of arms, Madhusūdana (Kṛṣṇa), who had forgiven him one hundred times as promised to his mother, cut off Śiśupāla's head with his fiery disc. The Rājasūya sacrifice was completed by Yudhiṣṭhira under Śrī Kṛṣṇa's protective might.

(3) *Draupadī Saved from Shame*: The glory of Rājasūya is followed by the defeat and disgrace of the Pāṇḍavas at the insensate game of dice. Yudhiṣṭhira's last stake in the game was queen Draupadī herself, and her also he lost. She was dragged to the august assembly by Duḥśāsana who tried to strip her. In her shame and distress, she called on Vāsudeva for succour, and as *Dharma* or embodiment of righteousness, Kṛṣṇa protected her honour rendering her clothing miraculously inexhaustible.

(4) *Durvāsā Foiled*: Forfeiting all, the Pāṇḍavas submit to twelve years' exile in the forest and one year's sojourn incognito. Indignant at their wrong and suffering, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was furious but was pacified by Arjuna who recalled to him his austerities and exploits in previous incarnations. The heart-broken Draupadī he consoled and forecast the dire fate in store for the enemy. Prompted by the implacable Duryodhana, the irascible sage Durvāsā once came with his disciples to test her hospitality. It was past midday and everybody had finished his meal, and as usual Draupadī last of all from the never-failing plate—the gift of the Sun-god—which would always be full until she had eaten for the day. The untimely guests were to return after bathing; and Draupadī in her helpless agony implored the far-away Vāsudeva, the Lord living in all beings, for help. He appeared there and tasting a particle of food still sticking to the plate exclaimed that he was satiated with a sumptuous meal; strangely the bathing guests too were strangely appeased of their hunger, and felt satiated.

(5) *Duryodhana's Threat Baffled*: Śrī Kṛṣṇa's miraculous powers were proved more strikingly still, when as a last throw, Vāsudeva, as peacemaker and friend of both the Kuru and Pāṇḍava sides, sought out the usurper at Hastināpura and intimated the most modest Pāṇḍava terms of peace—that they be given only five villages for their patrimony. At the open conference in the royal court, Śrī Kṛṣṇa shone in his glory and majesty, as the foremost figure in Bhārata. His noble words were acclaimed by all as just and righteous except by the perverse Kuru Chief, Duryodhana, who, finding Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone in his court and thinking him helpless wanted to seize him as a captive. At this foolish attempt of Duryodhana, Śrī Kṛṣṇa broke into a loud laughter and manifested his cosmic form. Duryodhana and others saw from his limbs issued gods and demons and heroes and his divine weapons; all

present were frightened and were anxious to propitiate him.

(6) *Duryodhana Politely Fooled*: When Duryodhana's perversity made war inevitable, both Duryodhana, the Kuru Prince and Arjuna, the Pāṇḍava Prince, repaired to Dwārakā to seek the help of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Yādava chief, according to the prevalent practice. They arrived at the same time. The former sat at the head of the couch and at the feet the latter awaiting Śrī Kṛṣṇa to wake up from rest. Waking up, Śrī Kṛṣṇa dividing his forces gave unto two, each the choice between himself and the Yādava army. Duryodhana thought it better to choose the latter, and Arjuna was happy to have Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Puruṣottama (best among men), who alone, he knew, could vanquish all foes. The incident shows at its best how Śrī Kṛṣṇa managed a difficult situation with courtesy, astuteness, and insight into character, to the satisfaction of both the parties and his own desire to be associated with the virtuous Pāṇḍavas.

(7) *The Gītā Gospel Revealed*: The next and the most famous glimpse of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is on the Kurukṣetra battle-field as Pārthasārathi, the charioteer of Arjuna. On the very eve of the fight, Arjuna is stricken with a strange dejection of spirit, unbecoming of a Kṣatriya hero. This occasions the exposition of the unique Gospel of harmony between spiritual truth and social duty—the *Bhagavad Gītā* or Song Divine. Here again, the revelation of the Cosmic or Universal Form lifts the Pāṇḍava champion to a breadth and height of outlook unimagined, and confronts him with the mysteries and immensities that enfold existence. Overwhelmed by the vision of awe-inspiring form, Arjuna prays to Kṛṣṇa to resume his familiar form as his friend. Arjuna regains his calm, his doubts and misgivings are dispelled. Listening to the sublime teaching which was the essence of the Upaniṣads—the ideal of desireless action, the synthesis of work, knowledge, and devotion, the assurance of the validity of all Godward approaches, and strivings– Arjuna accepts his role as fighter in the righteous cause and performs his duty.

(8) *His Own Vow Yields to the Devotee's Resolve*: The fourth day of the battle saw Arjuna hard-pressed. Bhīṣma vowed that he would make Kṛṣṇa wield arms against his resolve, and put Arjuna, devotee and protegee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in peril of his life by his skilful archery. Vāsudeva prepared himself to lay aside his resolve not to weild arms, and jumping down the chariot pushed forward to finish the two foremost Kuru leaders. At once his Sudarśana disc, fiery and razor-edged, flashed in his hand with the brilliance of a thousand lightnings and he made for Bhīṣma, the mighty Kuru general. Bhīṣma drew back instantly, saluted Śrī Kṛṣṇa and said that he was honoured by this gesture of the Lord and would ever rejoice to receive at His hand good on earth or salvation by death. Arjuna was put on his mettle, swore he would fight his utmost, and holding Kṛṣṇa's feet persuaded him to resume the Charioteer's post.

(9) *Deceptive Sunset to Kill Jayadratha*: On the fourteenth day of the battle, Arjuna who had taken the vow either to kill Jayadratha, who had killed his valiant young son Abhimanyu by besieging him with large numbers, before sunset or plunge himself into fire, found the opponent formidably guarded by the Kaurava stalwarts who wanted to thwart his vow. There was little chance for Arjuna and it was nearing sunset. In this crisis, Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to his rescue and covered the sun with his disc and made darkness overspread the sky giving the impression that the sun had set. The Kauravas became remiss and an ex-

ultant Jayadratha, sure of his win, stood up with his head high above the Kaurava guards as he was tall. Immediately, at the instance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna severed Jayadratha's head, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa withdrew his disc and the sun was still to be found on the horizon.

(10) *Unconcerned at Ghaṭotkaca's Death*: On the same day Karṇa's shafts caused such havoc in the ranks of the Pāṇḍavas that to keep Arjuna unscathed for more decisive feats, Ghaṭotkaca, Bhīma's valiant Rākṣasa son, was sent forward to bear the brunt. His death cast a gloom over the Pāṇḍava camp. Only Śrī Kṛṣṇa rejoiced inwardly for he knew that ultimate good that would ensue from it, as otherwise Ghaṭotkaca would have become a problem later on with his immense strength and Rākṣasa blood. Thus at one stretch he accomplished two purpose unobtrusively.

(11) *Parīkṣit Unborn Saved*: When the invincible Droṇa, misled by Yudhiṣṭhira's half-truth, flung away his arms and was slain, his son, Asvatthamā, in revenge, uses his deadliest weapon to destroy the sole seed of the Pāṇḍava progeny in Uttarā's womb. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with his mighty disc saves both mother and the yet unborn Parīkṣit.

(12) *End of the Yādavas Worked Out*: In the Strīparvan of the *Mahābhārata*, the ever-virtuous Gāndhārī, at the sight of the numberless heroes lying slain and their corpses being embraced disconsolately by the womenfolk—mothers, wives, and sisters, is beside herself with agony and curses that Śrī Kṛṣṇa in his lifetime would see a like fate—death and destruction—among his kinsfolk—the Yādavas. This curse was brought about by Śrī Kṛṣṇa himself, as the Yādavas, though his kith and kin, had become drunk with power and were unsafe. Thus he showed great detachment, even where his own people were concerned, in destroying evil and establishing *Dharma*.

(13) *Anu-Gītā Episode*: In the Aśvamedha Parvan of the *Mahābhārata*, long after the war, Arjuna prays to Śrī Kṛṣṇa to refresh his failing memory as to the sublime lessons imparted to him at Kurukṣetra. It was all done, says Vāsudeva, under a glowing inspiration and could not be recalled. But for his favourite's benefit he revealed the mysteries of the soul entering and leaving the body at birth and death under the laws of karma; the path of self-realization; attainment of Brahmahood and emancipation. *Anu-Gītā* or the *Gītā*-sequel is the name given to this further body of teachings.

Mahabharata: The Epic of Visnu Cult

Let us now turn to some literary and theoretical aspects of the question. The *Mahābhārata* is generally regarded by modern scholarship as a medley of various creeds and cults, but it may easily be shown to have been intended as a Vaiṣṇava work *par excellence*, i.e. a work to extol the Divinity of Viṣṇu (in His incarnation as Kṛṣṇa). It begins with salutation to Nārāyaṇa and ends with a *śloka* on the purifying effect of its perusal on all sinners:

Vidhūya sarvapāpāni tamāṁsīva
divākaraḥ;
Modate viṣṇuloke'sau viṣṇuvat nātra
saṁśayaḥ—

'Purged of all sins, like the sun dispelling all darkness, he, without doubt, rejoices in the Viṣṇuloka even as Viṣṇu.'

The elaborate Nārāyaṇīya section of the Śāntiparvan proves this Vaiṣṇava character of the epic, and in countless passages Śrī Kṛṣṇa is identified with the supreme God, Hari-Nārāyaṇa. The dominant central figure in the saga is Pārthasārathī (Kṛṣṇa

as charioteer of Pārtha or Arjuna). He, as steersman, enabled the Pāṇḍavas to cross the formidable river of the Kurukṣetra campaign (*sottīrṇā khalu pāṇḍavaiḥ raṇanadī kaivartakaḥ keśavaḥ*).

The *Gītā* ends with the stanza:

Yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanurdharaḥ;
Tatra śrīrvijayo bhūtiḥ dhruvā nītirmatirmama—

'Where abide Kṛṣṇa, the master of *yoga*, and Pārtha, with the bow, there is fortune and victory and prosperity, and unfailing policy; this is my conviction.'

Bhīṣma, the wisest, the purest, and the most selfless of the heroes of the saga, confesses his implicit faith in the divinity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in beautiful hymns. Most fervent are Bhīṣma's homage paid to Kṛṣṇa's divinity at the Rājasūya, on the Kurukṣetra battle-field, and from his couch of arrows awaiting a hero's death.

The last hymn, fitly designated *Stavarāja*, the Hymn Royal, ranks in grandeur and sublimity with the *Gītā* cantos on the *viśvarūpa* and the *vibhūtis*. In reply to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Śāntiparvan, he says: 'This high-souled Keśava is the eighth part of the Supreme Person.' At the last breath, he addresses him as the eternal, supreme Soul. The mocking Pauṇḍra, the unrighteous unbeliever Duryodhana, and the openly hostile Kaṁsa, and his ilk apart, this is the overwhelming conviction of the characters as well as the readers of the great epic.

Bankimchandra's Approach and Faith

Living in an age overshadowed by Comte's positivism and humanism and the Spencerian ideal of education, the great Bankimchandra, with his judicial acumen, tried to embody these prevalent thought-trends in his powerful study of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and rejected as textual interpolations whatever jarred on his thesis of the perfect model of manhood. It is open to question, however, if the sage Vyāsa's design or purpose in depicting the unique human-divine personality would be served if all that verges on the superhuman were excised—if the hymns to his divinity, the cosmic form manifestations, the use of the terrific Disc in crisis, the anxiety to protect and the gesture of partiality, the deceptive sunset, the bid to fight with arms—these features accepted by tradition were to be left out as apocryphal. 'I myself believe', says the sage writer, 'in His divinity but my object is to discuss His human character. I firmly believe that He is God Himself.' 'Rightly judged', he says elsewhere, 'no one other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be admitted as the incarnation of God.' '*Dharma* or Righteousness prospers when a finite, embodied God appears.' He sums up the character of Śrī Kṛṣṇa thus: 'A worldly person, a householder, a statesman, a warrior, the punisher of evil-doers, an ascetic, a propagator of *dharma* (the law of rectitude), a personality of varied deeds.' Though inclined to regard Bhīṣma's splendid hymn as well as the *Gītā* as outside the canonical Vyāsa text, Bankimchandra uses as captions to the sections of his study verses from the former, which all point to the divine attributes. The seven verses appended to the parts of *Kṛṣṇacaritra* signify that knowledge is His being; He is the Supreme Cosmic Illusionist; He is Truth personified, He is the great doer, He is the serene passionless creator and destroyer and the Indweller in all creatures, He is the ever-awake Witness of acts—good and evil; and He is the Terrible One, the Great Time, who consumes the universe at the end of each aeon. Altogether, it is a long set of 116 stanzas lauding the forms and aspects of Divinity which a tradition of religious culture from the Vedic age onwards had inculcated in the Hindu mind. The

Deity is unknowable and yet to be known. He is the source and embodiment of Knowledge, and is Truth itself. He is both immanent in the world and also transcendent. The cosmos is his multiform manifestation. He is the Cause of causes. He is the Goal of the spiritual disciplines. He stands for the powers and faculties, the aims and impulses that move mankind. From Him emanated all the gods and incarnations known to legend and history. He is the highest Divinity, Hari-Nārāyaṇa, and he has appeared on earth as Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva who in human form exhibits the Divinity's visible and convincing descent to the earth, as expounded in the 'Puruṣottama Yoga' of the *Gītā*.

The Philosophic Background

Indian concepts of the Godhead exhibit more depth, variety, and completeness than in other theologies. For, theism in this land has sought to take note of all types of ethico-spiritual aspirations and speculations of man. It has dismissed no authentic experience as irrelevant, nor passed off-hand judgements on any creed from the standpoint of a narrow rigid dogma. The supreme crime for the follower of an Indian sect, as Sister Nivedita's unforegettable sentence runs, shall be the criticism of any other as if it were without the bounds of the Eternal Faith (*Sanātana Dharma*).

A basic and inalienable conviction of the rational mind is that the ultimate Reality (Brahman) is beyond man's cognition as an object, beyond his peculiarly fashioned and limited senses, though aided by his reason and memory, and in rare cases, by intuition and occult meditative powers, because It is the eternal subject. The more one knows, the more is he aware of his ignorance. He who thinks he knows, does not know; he who says he does not, may yet know It—says the Upaniṣad. It is unknown to the knowers, and known to the unknowing. Brahman is hence predicated by negatives and is attributeless, undifferentiated, beyond name and form, beyond the dualities of subject and object, substance and attribute, cause and effect, beyond the reach of mind and speech. But no devotional approach (*saṁrādhana*) is possible to the attributeless, *nirguṇa*, differenceless, *nirviśeṣa*, Over-soul, which is dissociated from the cosmic process. Devotion can be directed to the deities which are superimposition on the Reality for the purpose and are withdrawn into the Ineffable, the sole, one and secondless (*ekamevādvitīyam*). All creation is a quarter of Him, the three quarters remain imperishable in the empyrean (*pādosya viśvā bhūtani, tripādasyāmṛtaṁ divi*). Hence the need universally felt for the *saguṇa* (attribute endowed), *saviśeṣa* (differentiated), *dvaita* (dualistic) concept—personalized and humanized, accessible and responsive to prayer and communion. Indeed, the Vaiṣṇavas rank above the undefinable Brahman, Its attribute-clothed aspect, Who is adorned with all auspicious qualities or excellences (*sakala kalyaṇaguṇādhāra*).

In relation to inert matter and sentient creatures, the *Gītā* finely distinguishes the immanent and transcendent aspects of the Godhead. These are—*aparā prakrti* (Nature) and *parā prakṛti* (comprising the eternal souls), and last or highest of all, the transcendent unity which comprises the abstractions of finite and infinite—the Supreme Person—Puruṣottama. 'Two are the Persons in the universe—*kṣara* and *akṣara*. *Kṣara* is all Nature, that is destructible, and the immutable one within is called *akṣara*. And the transcendent person is another, designated as Paramātman, who, the imperishable and mighty Lord of all creatures, upholds and pervades the three worlds. As I transcend *kṣara* and excel *akṣara* too, I am in the Vedas and the world renowned as Puruṣottama' (VII. 4-5).

Krsna Cult Ancient and Widespread

Unique pre-eminence belongs to Śrī Kṛṣṇa among the historical-legendary persons to whom the Hindu offers divine honours. Others are Divinity's parts or fractions. He is God himself—says the *Bhāgavata*, and the long drawn discourse in the Śāntiparvan on the duties of different orders and stages in life begins with salutation to *Dharma* that is great, and to Kṛṣṇa, the Dispenser of all fruits. Again, of Yudhiṣṭhira as the tree of *Dharma*, the trunk is Arjuna, Bhīmasena the branches, the two sons of Mādri are the flower and fruit, full-grown, and the root is Kṛṣṇa. The worship is offered to Him that all thorugh the Epic focuses a tradition that goes back to Vedic sources. Nilakaṇṭha, in his *Mantrabhāgavata*, cites a text which joins together the two phases of his personality. He tends cows on the Vraja pastures, and as a charioteer reins in horses on the battle-field. Another verse points to the all-pervasiveness of the Kṛṣṇa theme. Even as the nave or hub of a wheel touches the outer rim (through the spokes), so all poems are related to Him as their subject. Worship Him, the supreme God, from Whom the three primal qualities (*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*) emanate for the creation of the world. The tradition of Vāsudeva worship, evidenced unbroken through the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Paṇini's grammar, the laudatory strings of names in the Śāntiparvan hymns, and Nārada's songs of praise, confirms the long Vaiṣṇava devotional culture that they crystallize. There is the familiar Bengali adage—no song without Kānu (Kṛṣṇa). He lived eternally in the ecstatic songs of Mirābāi and Suradāsa, the lyrics of the Ālwār saints, the *abhaṅgas* of Māhārāṣṭra saints, the poems of rapture and poignant separation of the devotees of Bengal. The supreme pathos and beatitude of the *padāvalis*—for ever-present Kṛṣṇa-consciousness.

Divinity is a topic surpassingly abstruse and elusive, and the difficulty is magnified beyond measure when it is humanly manifested. And yet religious history is mostly the account of 'the manifestation of the Divinity already in man', in the words of Swami Vivekananda. The *Gītā* iterates the idea in the verse: 'Though never-born and imperishable in nature, I, the Lord of all creatures, subduing My own nature take birth by My own *māyā* (power of illusion).' And again it says: 'Creatures deluded or infatuated, disesteem Me when I take recourse to the human form, not knowing My highest aspect as the God Supreme of all creatures.' The *Caitanyacaritāmṛta* has the oft-quoted line: 'Of all playful feats of Kṛṣṇa, the best is his play in the human role, the human image is his very own image.' History would be poor indeed if denuded of the Divine drama enacted in the human figure—in all ages and climes. In all the cantos of the *Gītā* but the first, it is the Highest Impersonal Being become Personal that speaks in the first person singular, and His concrete, tangible, attributes are held up before us. As Kavirāj Krishnadas says, 'the qualities of Kṛṣṇa yield a fuller joy than the bliss of Brahman'.

Divinity Known by Faith

Though such be to the eye of faith and the heart of devotion, the Supreme Reality humanly incarnate, constant have been Man's complaints and criticisms of his Maker. 'Not by means of the Vedas, nor by austerities, nor by pious gifts, nor by the ritual of sacrifice am I capable of being thus seen, as you have seen Me, but by single-hearted devotion, O tormentor of foes, alone is it possible thus to know and see and to be absorbed in Me'—assures the *Gītā*. But Man's quarrels with his Maker have not yet ceased. And Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a unique portrayal of the Godhead in human

mould, is a perennial call and help to *Homo Sapiens* to compose his ideas on Divinity and to understand the ways of God with men and to rationalize them, if possible. Inscrutable are the ways of providence—it is commonly said: And the *Bhāgavata* has the verse: 'No man knows, O King, what He intends to do, and even sages in trying to know become confused.' The plan and processes of the animate and inanimate worlds which are being unravelled by degrees are by some deemed imperfect, and, in his tentative understanding of them, sophisticated man thinks that as Creator he would have given a better account, as the moral governor he would have shaped the world's affairs to happier issues and rid it of evil and pain, disease and death. The intellect is a faculty, some indeed admit, modelled on the simplicity of cosmic matter and not on the inner mechanism of living organism. No wonder, therefore, that Vāsudeva in Whom as the Divinity the mysteries of existence are climaxed should have, except to the eye of faith, his share of misconception. The corrective to all this is Religion—the function of which, as Goethe in his wisdom puts it, is to reconcile man to the inevitable.

The Riddle of Godhead

At Nathdwara in Mewar, a slab of ebon marble, on which curious art works changes of attitude and raiment eight times a day, stands for Giridhārī (the Hill-lifter), the *prabhu* (Lord Kṛṣṇa), whom Mirābāi worshipped with passionate adoration. It is a fit symbol of the Lord from Whom speech recoils along with the mind unable to reach, and Who is, at the same time, the person of a thousand heads, eyes, and feet, Who covers the universe on all sides and transcends it by ten digits. He is the magnet that draws to itself, like metal filings, all the subtleties of theology, the perplexities of ethical judgement, and the intricacies of social behaviour. With the divinity of Kṛṣṇa is involved the basis of the religious sentiment, the elements of the idea of God which a scientist has termed theoplasm. Sanctity, truth, justice, the self-secure sovereign soul, perfect knowledge, and power unlimited—are the rooted optatives of human nature. These are implanted in us by a Power outside and other than ourselves and are evolved and articulated and projected upon the silver screen of the ultimate Reality. The *Gītā* says—'The *sāttvika, rājasa* and *tāmasa* qualities are from Me, you should know, but though they are in Me, I am not in them.' Are not these noble impulses when ascribed to God just homonyms of terms in our lexicon? When we try to reconcile their conflicts, are we not in endless mazes lost? 'Evil and good alike are shadows cast on the wall by our sense of personal convenience', i.e. magnified and distorted—as Nivedita has remarked (*The Web of Indian Life*).

The East is often charged for a lively sense of this mystery with slackness of the moral fibre. But nuclear ethics and politicalizing of all virtues are yet to be made congruous with the law of *Dharma* or Righteousness. These anomalies of the moral sense are symptoms of a transitional and evolving ethos. The distinctive spirituality of the modern world, remarks Nivedita, is ability to think of things as a whole. The resultant is a sense of harmony —mankind's sorest need of the hour. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the symbol of the synthesis of the human and divine, of the highest mystery wrapt in our gross vesture that makes the Godhead lovable and akin to us. As Puruṣottama, He stands at the end of the diverse paths of devotion and self-realization. 'I serve them all in the manner they seek refuge in Me, for men pursue My path alone on all sides, O Pārtha', says Śrī Kṛṣṇa

in the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* is the spirit of which Śrī Kṛṣṇā is the embodiment. In jest and earnest He has been called all sorts of names: He is the master-player or performer—Raṅganātha ; the capricious gallant —*Lampaṭa* ; the crest-jewel of the crafty *Caturaśiromoṇi*; the arch spoiler who relieves men of sins piled in many births –Hari. He is the exemplar of the acme of serene virtue, balance and detachment, and same-sightedness set out in this Gospel of Harmony—the *Guṇātīta*, the *Sthitaprajña*, the perfect contemplative and devotee—*Yogī*. He reconciles the claims of social duty and self-realization, of the active worldly life and quiet meditation as in the Śāntiparvan verse—'One rule for the equanimous and another for the diverse-minded'. 'Of the ocean', Kālidāsa says, 'the nature is not definable like Viṣṇu's, either as such or as thus far'. 'The essence of divinity is the transcendence of all expectancy, the absolute sovereignty of will'—*ananyāpekṣitvam*. So the *Gītā* says (III. 22):

Name pārthāsti kartavyaṁ triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana
Nānavāptam avāptavyaṁ varta eva ca karmaṇi—

'O Pārtha ! I have no duty to perform in the three worlds, nothing not gained, nothing to be gained. Yet do I persist in my action.'

'*Lokavattu līlākaivalyam*—(He acts) as men of the world, it is mere sport—as Vyāsa's aphorism says.'

The *Bhāgavata* affirms the limitless variety of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's manifestations (III. IX. 11):

Tvaṁ bhakti-yoga paribhāvita hṛtsaroje
āsse śrutekṣitapatho nanu nātha puṁsām ;
Yad yad dhiyā ta urugāya vibhāvayanti
tattadvapuḥ praṇayase sadanugrahāya—

'O Lord, Thou abidest in the heart-lotus of men who have purified it by devout communion with thee by following the path laid down by scripture. O Infinite One, out of grace for good souls, Thou assumest those forms that they by their mind conceive.'

OF HUMAN FREEDOM. By Jean Paul Sartre. Edited by Wade Baskin. Philosophical Library, New York, pp. 158+xiii. $4.75.

The book under review, a collection from Sartre's 'finest and most significant writings', presents the range and diversity of Sartre's thinking on those issues which directly affect the freedom and the rights of man. The selected pieces represent Sartre's thought for more than two decades and necessarily the changes wrought therein, suggest the resolution of the existential crisis through art, the reconciliation of existentialism and Marxism and the discovery of personal meaning and values through the social function.

The book aims at the outset 'to make a layout' of the meaning of existence. Sartre's 'Nausea' advances themes that have since become commonplace: Nothingness, the absurdity of life, man's solitude and alienation, man's confrontation with anguish and despair. The traditional means for escaping from Nausea—rational humanism, civic enterprises, travel, adventure, scholarly research, human love—are found wanting. The metaphysical anguish which Sartre's hero 'Roquentin' experiences as a result of his confrontation with the chestnut tree—now a familiar image in literary criticism—is the turning point in his life, for in the loathsome view of his own existence he glimpses the possibility of creating his own essence and perpetuating his own freedom. His plight is the plight of modern man, who must reestablish the meaning of human freedom in an irrational world. The philosophical basis of Sartre's idea of human freedom was laid in 'The Psychology of Imagination'. Herein Sartre examines the function of consciousness in creating a world of unrealities, probes the nature of the psychic life and mind's complex ties with the outer world, defines the intentional structure of the image and the uniqueness of man's freedom to create. Herein he concludes that the imagination was the necessary condition for the freedom of empirical man in the midst of the world.

The first full exposition of the doctrine of freedom is in the monumental but difficult 'Being and Nothingness'. This work established Sartre's reputation as the leader of the philosophical movement generally associated with his name today. In the section of 'Being and Nothingness' excerpted in the book under review, Sartre shows that the freedom of man cannot be separated from the being of man, that human freedom precedes human existence and makes it possible, that consciousness of freedom means consciousness of our own possibilities, that freedom is the basis for all human activity and that responsibility is simply the logical requirement of the consequences of our freedom.

Sartre, in his writings, emphasizes that the writer must concern himself with contemporary problems and issues; he must use his own freedom to promote the freedom of all men. In 'Anti-Semite and Jew' he examines objectively a problem rooted in the existential situation. His logical exposition leads to the inescapable conclusion that an abridgement of the rights of one man is the enslavement of all men and that 'not one Frenchman will be secure so long as a single Jew can fear for his life'. Roquentin's decision to turn to writing as a possible solution to the existential problem may have been the prelude to a theory of aesthetics abumbrated in 'What is Literature', the volume in which 'Why does One Write?' was first published. In his classic literary manifesto, Sartre defends the right of the artist to be committed to a

cause. According to him, the writer has not only the freedom but also the obligation to become involved in contemporary issues. He concludes that the freedom of writing implies the freedom of the citizen and that writing was, a certain way of wanting freedom. 'Saint Genet' may be subtitled 'Freedom to do Evil'. The world of brutality and betrayal recreated in his works provides Sartre with the springboard for a new assault on those who would suppress human freedom, for, to him, Evil is a myth which 'right-thinking' people have developed by depriving human freedom of its positive power and reducing it to its negativity alone. 'Search for a Method', the work from which the final selection is taken, was written as a partial answer to critics of 'Being and Nothingness' who complained that there was no room in his philosophy for any positive social theory. How could the individual cultivate his own freedom and at the same time contribute to the society to which he belongs? The answer to this crucial question is fully elaborated in 'Critique of Dialectical Reason'. 'Search for a Method', the concluding essay, is a useful summary of the larger work in which he analyzes man's relation to the group, the nation, history, and the universe. In it we find the author's most recent attempt to provide a philosophical system to bridge the gap between Marxist and non-Marxist thought. In the concluding part of the essay, Sartre expresses the hope that Marxist thought will take on the human dimension and will become the foundation of all enquiry. Thus he looks toward the foundation of a social order in which the full implication of man's unique freedom will be realized.

S. K. NANDI

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INSTITUTE NEWS

Kalidasa Jayanti

The birth anniversary of Mahākavi Kālidāsa was observed at the Institute on Wednesday, 19 June 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. The programme commenced with recitations from Kālidāsa's *Meghadūtam* by Pandit Anath Saran Sastri, Kavyatirtha, which was followed by a talk (in Bengali) on 'Kālidāsa: The Immortal Poet' by Professor Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

The programme concluded with a *Gīti-Ālekhya* entitled 'Barsha-Abahan' (based on Tagore's *Barshamangal*) by Rabi-Chakra.

Janmastami Celebration

On Monday, 19 August 1968, at 6.30 p.m. the Institute celebrated Janmastami (the birth anniversary of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa) at a solemn function held in the Vivekananda Hall.

The programme commenced with the chanting of 'Divine Glory of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa' by Srimati Bani Das Gupta, which was followed by a talk in Bengali on 'Bhakter Bhagavan' by Professor Narayan Chandra Gaswami, M.A.

The function came to a close with a programme of *Lila Kirtan* (devotional songs) by Srimati Bani Das Gupta and Sri Panchanan Bhattacharya. They were accompanied on tabla by Sri Brajarakhal Das.

Students' Day Home

The following table presents at a glance the work of the Students' Day Home for the months of July, August, and September 1968:

	July	August	September
Total number of students enrolled	772	772	596
Average daily attendance	245	256	276
Average number of students daily taking meals or tiffin	175	184	221
Total number of text-books issued	7,089	8,950	12,726

Film Shows

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

i. 2 July 1968: 'Pather Panchali' in Bengali.

ii. 10 September 1968: 'Haris Chandra' in Bengali.

iii. 12 November 1968: 'Bhagini Nivedita' in Bengali.

iv. 26 November 1968: 'Svayam Siddha' in Bengali.

v. 3 December 1968: 'Vrindavan Lila' in Bengali.

vi. 17 December 1968: 'Bagha Jatin' in Bengali.

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 July, August, and September 1968:

Main Library

	July	August	September
Total number of books	56,476	56,580	56,663
Number of books added	342	104	83
Number of books purchased	156	79	75
Number of books received as gift	167	—	2
Number of books withdrawn	—	—	—
Number of periodicals accessioned	19	25	6
Number of books issued for home study	3,426	3,799	3,188
Number of books issued for reference	9,382	10,673	7,982

Reading Room

Number of periodicals in the reading room	362	362	365
Average daily attendance	474	475	436

Junior Library

Total number of books	1,563	1,563	1,571
Number of books added	—	—	8
Number of books issued for home study	401	301	175
Average daily attendance	16	12	11

Children's Library

Total number of books	4,300	4,301	4,325
Number of books added	1	1	24
Number of books issued for home study	770	790	659
Average daily attendance	29	30	30

Guests

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

Mr. and Mrs. R. Haavaldsen, Electrical Engineer from Norway, teaching at Regional Engineering College, Warangal;

Professor Harold Wilcox from U.S.A., on a tour;

Mr. Charles Stanley, student from U.S.A., on a study tour;

Miss Margit Riedl, music teacher, from South Africa, on a holiday tour;

A group of fifteen professors to attend seminar on 'Contemporary American Literature' organized by U.S.I.S., Calcutta in collaboration with the Institute;

Professor W. L. Highfill, from North Carolina State University, on a study tour;

Old South Odyssi group of nineteen school students headed by Dr. Henry David Gray, on a study tour;

Mr. and Mrs. Kiaus Petersen, lecturer, from Germany, on a tour;

Dr. John Victor Boulton, Ph.D., lecturer in Bengali at London School of Oriental Studies, for research in Bengali;

Miss L. D. Obbarius, Visiting Professor of Russian, at Jadavpur University;

Mr. and Mrs. Carl S. Pederson, Professor of Bacteriology, from U.S.A., to deliver lectures at the Jadavpur University;

Mr. Jean Barbault, student from Paris, on a tour;

Professor D. S. Merrion, from U.S.A.;

Miss Leila Laughlin, student from U.S.A., on a tour;

Mr. D. G. Javitoh, teacher from France, on a tour;

Mr. and Mrs. A. Manuel, teacher, from Malaysia, on a tour;

Dr. Peter P. Coukoulis, Psychologist, from U.S.A., on a tour;

An FAO cultural group consisting of twenty-two members from France on a cultural tour;

Dr. M. A. Hall, Biochemist and Mrs. Hall, a Microbiologist, from U.K., on a lecture tour;

Miss Ingrid Spieckermann, Electron Microscopist, from West Germany, on a tour ;

Mrs. Lillian F. Noyes, University teacher from Texas, U.S.A., on a study tour ;

Professor M. L. Sondhi, M.P., from Delhi, on a visit ;

Sri Satish Loomba, Secretary, A.I.T.U.C., New Delhi, on a visit ;

Dr. G. Williams, Professor of Electrical Engineering, University of Sussex, England, as a Visiting Professor ;

Professor David Shugar, Professor of Bio-Physics, from Canada, on an educational tour ;

Miss Sally Trammell, student from U.S.A., to study Indian classical dance ;

Dr. S. Mathai, Vice-Chancellor, Kerala University, to deliver lectures at the Calcutta University ;

Dr. Friedrich Kussmaul, Curator of Leinden Museum, Stuttgart, Germany as a guest of Ministry of Education, Government of India ;

Mr. Richard Knottenbelt, teacher, from South Rhodesia, on a voluntary work ;

Lt. Col. Joginder Singh Mann, Speaker, Punjab Legislative Assembly, with his wife ;

Edward Kerrigan and Bob Bakanic, both dancer, from Hollywood, U.S.A., to visit Ramakrishna Mission centres in India ;

Dr. V. L. Semiotrochev, from U.S.S.R., WHO consultant and Dr. R. M. Sayamov, from U.S.S.R., WHO consultant, for study ;

Mr. Ievan Williams Hughes, LL.B., Principal, Harlech College, U.K., with his wife and two sons, on a tour ;

A group of twenty-eight members to attend Museum Camp, 1967 ;

A group of sixteen members from Uzbekistan, on a cultural tour ;

Brahmachari Kalikananda and Brahmachari Jayanta from Ananda Ashrama, California, U.S.A., on a tour ;

A group of twenty-six members from U.S.S.R., on a tour ;

Dr. M. C. Thuraiappah, Chief Health Inspector, Malaysia, on a WHO Fellowship ;

Twelve members of French Concert Group for a concert ;

Mr. Yoshito Hakeda, Japanese teacher in U.S.A., with his wife and son, on a tour to India ;

Dr. Roguer Olsson, Professor of Zoology, from Sweeden, to deliver lectures at the Calcutta University ;

Mr. J. F. Newland, Electrical Engineer from Netherland, on a tour ;

Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Mukerji, Retired Professor of Metallurgy, from U.S.A., on a visit ;

Dr. and Mrs. Philip R. Whits, Professor of Biology, from U.S.A., on an official visit ;

Mr. and Mrs. Dethridge, Judge, from Australia, on a holiday tour ;

Mrs. M. Murray, from New Australia, on a tour ;

Miss P. Engleman, student from U.S.A., on a tour;

Mrs. H. F. Boehnke, retired teacher, from U.S.A., on a study tour;

Dr. S. E. Demetrian, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Bucharest, in a study;

Dr. M. T. Moqtaderi, Diplomat from Tehran, on his way to attend convocation at Santiniketan;

Madam Sophia Wadia, to attend Centenary Celebration of Sister Nivedita;

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Mcintosh, from U.S.A., to visit friends;

Dr. and Mrs. Bosi Sen, to attend Nivedita Centenary Celebration;

Mr. and Mrs. Volkov, UNESCO Expert, from Moscow, on a tour;

Srimati Nandini Satpathy, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, on an official tour.

JANUARY CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

9th, 16th, and 30th January

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st January

THE KATHA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

4th and 25th January

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(*Children below six years are not allowed*)

DANCE DRAMA

Tagore's

Valmiki Pratibha

By

Udaya Shilpi

Tuesday, 7 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S BALLET

Anka-Malar-Deshe

By

Pujarini Asar

Tuesday, 14 January 1969, at 6. 30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

FILM SHOW

Swamiji (in Bengali)

Tuesday, 21 January 1969, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S GROUP BALLET

Programme:

Bharat-Natyam

and

Kathakali

Direction :

Kalamandalam Govindan Kutty

and

Srimati Thankamani Kutty

Tuesday, 28 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. Re. 1.00

Swamiji Galpa Asar

First Saturday, 4 January, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6–9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 25 January, 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

January 1 **Religion and Philosophy**
Speaker : S. R. Duraiswamy Sastri, M.A., Ph.D.
President : J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

January 8 **The Gita Gospel for the Age**
Speaker: Batuknath Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L.
President : Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

January 15 **Greek Tragedy and Sanskrit Drama**
Speaker : Rev. R. Antoine, S.J.
President : Sushil Kumar Mukherjee, M.A., LL.B.

January 29 **Foundations of the Indian Republic**
Speaker : Nirmal Chandra Basu Roy Chaudhury, M.A., Ph.D.
President : Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L.

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA

Thursday, 2 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

SIVA KATHA

(*in Bengali*)

on

THE CONCEPT OF SIVA

in

THE SIVAYAN KAVYA

By

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L.

Monday, 6 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

Subject : **United Nations and Human Rights : Challenge and Response**

Speaker : Bonomali Das, M.A., Barrister-at-Law

President : Subimal Roy, LL.B., Barrister-at-Law

BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF MANOMOHAN GHOSH

Monday, 13 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

Programme

Talk on:

Manomohan Ghosh: The Poet and Professor

By

P. K. Guha, M.A.

President: Srikumar Banerjee, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

Saturday, 18 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

Programme:

Vivekananda Stotram

By

Purnendu Roy

Talk on:

Bharat-Atma Vivekananda (in Bengali)

By

Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

Film Show:

Documentary film on the life of Swami Vivekananda

President: Swami Bhuteshananda

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MYTHS AND SYMBOLS: A STUDY OF INDIA'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

H. K. DE CHAUDHURI, M.A., DR. PHIL.

Dr. H. K. De Chaudhuri is a speaker and a writer. This is the last of the series of two lectures delivered by him at the Institute respectively in June and July 1968. The first lecture appeared in the Bulletin *for the last month.*

WE HAVE discussed in our previous lecture the nature and function of myths and their role in the history of human thought and culture. Now we propose to discuss the nature and function of symbols and their inter-relation, i.e. how myths come to be associated with symbols and acquire newer and deeper meanings which are more pregnant in the history of human thought and culture.

THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF SYMBOLS

The term 'symbol' derived from the Greek word '*symbolon*' means a visible or audible sign or an emblem which implies some kind of thought, emotion or experience connected with the entity symbolized. In early times, the symbol was never a mere sign but a secret sign, i.e. one embodying a mystery. Now a symbol stands for something or represents some idea connected with something; but originally a symbol denoted, aetiologically or otherwise, what it signifies. Every symbol had or has the characteristic of a mystery sign or emblem and the meaning of the symbol is intelligible to those who are familiar with its symbolic essence as from allegory which is heterogeneous to the symbol.

Symbolism is inherent in the very texture of human life. Indeed, all expressions of thought or experience is somewhat symbolic; but the interpretation of symbol which is connected with the development of meaning is variable. A symbol is always a sign but it is much more than a meaningful sign; and the symbolic function is not surely an

indication or sign function, but it has an emotive aspect as distinct from the cognitive aspect (Urban, *Language and Reality*). In other words, all symbolic relations are meaning relations but not all meaning relations symbolic. The nature of a symbol is such that the primary and natural meaning of both the entity and the word connected with it is modified in certain ways and a new meaning relation of a different kind is evolved. Husserl (*Logische Untersuchungen,* II Bd.) emphasizes sharply the differences between the genuinely symbolic, the really significative sign, and the really designatory sign. Signs are not symbols, nor is a symbol a representation comparable to a picture. A symbol does not create new meaning but is useful in deciphering the hidden meaning. The function of a symbol is little more than emotive and vaguely pragmatic. Man's world of experience is a world of symbols which is highly adjustable. The question concerning the meaning and function of a symbol may be tackled from various points of view, specially logic, metaphysics, psychology, comparative religion, philosophy of language, etc. Without entering into any academic discussion we would merely indicate here the meaning and function of a symbol. A symbol may be best described in the words of Cassirer (Cassirer, *Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen*, III Bd. Eng. tr. *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. III, New Haven, London, 1957, p. 93) as embracing 'the totality of those phenomena in which the sensuous is in any way filled with meaning, in which a sensuous contact while preserving the mode of its existence and facticity represents a particularization and embodiment, a manifestation and incarnation of meaning'. Originally the meaning was a spontaneous creation and it gradually acquires an emotive and feeling tone directly excited by the symbol. The main characteristics of the symbol may be briefly summarized as follows (See Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith*, London, 1957, Ch. II): (1) Symbols have one characteristic in common with signs, but they point beyond themselves to something else, e.g. a red light is merely a sign for stopping but a red flag is a symbol. (2) A symbol participates in that which it represents and opens up levels of reality which are otherwise closed to us, e.g. all acts create symbols for a level of reality otherwise unattainable. (3) Symbols cannot be produced intentionally ; they grow out of the individual or the Collective Unconscious and cannot function as part of the psychical life. (4) Finally, symbols cannot be invented. Like living beings they grow and die, they develop and mature as the situation ripens and they decay when the situation changes.

Inter-relation between Myths and Symbols

Human thought is essentially interlinked with mythical thought which is, however, subject to constant re-interpretation in the light of newer thought. Similarly, human experience is greatly clothed in symbols which are variable and manifold. Even for animals many things acquire the meaning and character of symbols, e.g. sound of a bell represents food to Pavlov's dog (cf. Pavlov on 'Conditioned Reflexes'). Similarly, children acquire meaningful experiences which are largely symbolical. From a psychological point of view the function of myths and symbols may be regarded as twofold, viz. regressive and progressive. The former implies that they revive into consciousness the repressed, the unconscious, archaic urges, hidden cravings, dreams, and other psychic contents in various forms, while the latter function in that they reveal new goals, new ethical insights, and possibilities.

According to the school of Freud (S. Freud, *Vorlesungen zur Einfuhrung in die*

Psycho-analyse; *Die Traumdeutung*), myth is the language of the Unconscious which finds its echo in the works of art, in dreams, in the thought of the child, the primitive man and the goal. In human life repressed contents or unsatisfied tension appear in disguised forms as lapses of various kinds, dream symbols, neurotic symptoms, and symbolization means compensation (*Ersatz*) of impulse objects (*Trieb-objekte*) through symptoms which may be called symbols. According to Jung (C. G. Jung, *Aion*, Eng. tr., London, 1959, *Symbolik des Geistes*, *Introduction to the Science of Mythology*) and his followers, myths and legends are products of the Unconscious and they tend to revive them and facilitate re-establishment of the connection between the conscious and the unconscious. The separation of these two psychic halves which do not meet in new of their opposite character leads to dissociation of personality, the root of all neurosis. It is the function of the symbol which derives as much from the conscious to unite them. Jung does not regard the symbol as an allegory or a sign, he interprets the symbol as the best possible way of describing and enunciating an object that is not completely knowable. It may, however, be pointed out in this connection that the views of both these schools, viz. Psycho-analysis and Depth Psychology are one-sided and partial, these being based mostly on the findings of abnormal psychology. But some sort of a link between archaic or primitive myths and symbols produced by the unconscious is undeniable. The world of symbols unfolds its own laws to which man subjects himself; language, technic, scientific procedure, thought and culture, etc. have their immanent logic in the unfolding of symbolic thought. There are different kinds of symbolic thinking characteristic of people of different types of culture; likewise, there are different ways of symbolic thinking characteristic of different types of people, viz. the child, the poet, the artist, the philosopher, the unbalanced mind, and also all the religious persons, notably mystics; myths, images, and symbols are not products of fancy or imagination; they respond to deep-seated impulses and needs and fulfil a definite function, viz. that of revealing hidden phases out of the depths of the human psyche.

Types of Symbols

There are various types of symbols viewed from various points of view. The classification of symbols and symbolism depends on how the main problem is approached and tackled. Urban classifies symbols into three classes: (1) extrinsic or arbitrary symbols, (2) intrinsic or descriptive symbols, (3) insight symbols as used in poetry and religion (Urban, *Language and Reality*, London, 1939). Evelyn Underhill distinguishes between three classes of mystical symbols, viz. those of divine transcendence and idea of pilgrimage, those of love and cravings, and finally those of divine immanence and transmutation (Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*).

We propose to divide fundamental symbols into three categories: (1) Mythical and religious symbols or symbols of faith, which have evolved in the course of development of religious thought, (2) linguistic and ideological symbols, and (3) mathematical and scientific symbols. Again, the religious symbols fall under the different classes: (1) symbols of divine objects, (2) symbols of divine transactions, and (3) symbols of sacred acts. The material of religious symbols is myth.

Symbol, Allegory, and Metaphor

It seems necessary to distinguish between symbol, allegory, and metaphor for a correct interpretation of symbolic thought in India. Symbol, allegory, and metaphor possess certain common characteristics but they are essentially quite different from one another. An allegory is the description or

representation of a subject under the artificial guise of another suggesting something similar or analogous in some way or other, and it is far from a symbol. On the contrary, metaphor reveals graphically or geographically certain similarities between the main subject and what stands as the metaphor by way of illustration, without losing its identity. Symbolical thought may be metaphorical but not allegorical, although loosely speaking, poetic symbols may partake of the nature of allegory. A few instances of highly typical metaphors characteristic of Indian symbolic thought are given below.

Life

The universe is viewed as a rotating wheel of existence (*Saṁsāra-cakra*). From another point of view, it is the wheel of Brahmā (*Brahma-cakra*) which rotates ceaselessly at the will of Brahmā. The analogy has been graphically worked out in the *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (I. 4, 5). It is a wheel with one felly (i.e. Prakṛti, the root cause), with three ties (i.e. three constituent principles, viz. *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*), sixteen ends viz. five organs of perception (*jñānendriya*), five organs of action (*karmendriya*), and the mind (*manas*) and five elements (*bhūta*), fifty spokes (i.e. forces which move the wheel), twenty counter-spokes (i.e. organs of perception and action and their objects), six sets of eight constituents (viz. Prakṛti with its eight causes of the five elements), mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), ego (*ahaṁkāra*), physical ingredient (*dhātu*), with the eight constituents of the body, *aiśvarya* (eight forms of sovereignty), *bhāva* (eight states), *deva* (deities with their eight classes), and *ātmaguṇa* (eightfold virtues). Its one rope (viz. Karman) is manifold and it has three different paths, viz. those leading to *dharma* (merit), *adharma* (demerit), and *jñāna* (knowledge), and the delusion (*moha*) arises from two causes, viz. good and bad works. Again, it is viewed as a river of five streams originating from five sources (i.e. fivefold cognition), whose waves are the five vital breaths, whose source is the fivefold perception with five whirlpools, which has the torrent of fivefold misery of fifty varieties and which has five knots (See *Sāṁkhyakārikā* for details). The metaphor of a wheel is also applied to the concept of time, *Kālacakra* which ceaselessly rotates. In this vast wheel of Brahmā, the life-centre, as it were, of all things, the *haṁsa* (self viewed as the free swan) flutters about (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, I-6). From another point of view the self resides in a cave, as it were (*ātmāsya yantor nihito guhāyām*). Again, the inner self (*antarātmā*) which is of the size of a thumb abides in the hearts of men (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II. 1-12, III. 17; *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, III. 13, V. 8), here the symbolic significance of an immanent self infinitesimal in size is hinted at. Again, the individual self is regarded as a charioteer with the body as his chariot (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 1-3. 3-4 [cf. Plato's parable of the chariot, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*.]). The relation between the supreme self (*paramātman*) and the individual self (*jīvātman*) and the relation between Ātman and the Universe have been clearly explained by means of certain metaphors which is briefly referred to here: (i) Ātman creates the universe out of himself in the sense of its emanation from him and dissolution or reabsorption in him. Here the analogy is drawn to the spider emitting the thread from itself and reabsorbing it (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, V.1.1.7). (ii) How the supreme self and the individual self stand *vis-à-vis* the world is brought out by the metaphor of two birds and one tree (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III, 1-1, 2)—

Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ
vṛkṣaṁ pariṣasvajāte;
Tayoranyaḥ pippalaṁ svādvatti anaśnan
anyo abhicākaśīti.

They embrace the self-same tree, the one

(individual self) partakes of the fruit thereof whereas the other (supreme self) merely looks on. (iii) The emanation of the universe out of Brahman is analogous to the emanation of sparks from the blazing fire (*ibid.*, II. 1-1). (iv) The individual self (puruṣa) abides in unison with the supreme self; this is compared to the embrace of wife and husband (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. 3. 21-22). (v) Finally, Ātman is immanent in everything as butter is inherent in milk (*Amṛtabindu*, 20), etc.

The epics and the Purāṇas are replete with metaphorical illustrations. It has been stated that the self is Puruṣa because he abides in the *pura*. The *Mahābhārata*, (XII. Ch. 251. 9-13, Calcutta edition) works out beautifully the metaphor of '*pura*' (lit. city or citadel). The body is a '*pura*' and *buddhi* (intelligence) is its mistress, the mind inside the body is minister to this intelligence, senses (*indriya*) are citizens and mind's effort is directed for them. Thus the mind easily falls a prey to bodily desires. The citadel must therefore be guarded. Again, the worldly life is viewed as a river in flood (*ibid.*, Ch. 247). This gruesome river full of crocodiles in the shape of carnal desires, etc. winds its course on all sides and sweeps away all things; it flows on to the ocean of *saṁsāra* (lit. circuit of mundane existence) which is hard to cross. It is the wise or those who know the self that can cross this deadly river. From another point of view, the flowing rivers eventually merge into the ocean of reality and lose their identity casting off names and forms; and the knower freed from the bondage of name and form, attains the Supreme Person who is more sublime than the sublime (cf. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III.2.8, *Praśna Upaniṣad*, VI.5, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI.10).

Interpretation of Symbols

It has been discussed that a symbol does not create the meaning but helps in deciphering the hidden meaning. This is all the more significant in case of religious thought. For a proper understanding of the essence of religious thought and its growth and development, it is necessary to grasp the meanings of myths with which religious thought is permeated and to unravel the mystery in the light of religious symbols. In our interpretation of symbols the following principles have been adopted: (1) Every symbol or *qua* symbol stands for something real and substantive, even when vague and indefinite; it is never wholly imaginary or fictional. (2) Every symbol has a dual reference, namely, to the original entity and the entity for which it stands, the relation between these two contents being essentially created. (3) Every symbol has essential reference to the real and a meaningful reference related to the real. Thus, it has a dual reference and dual meaning.

Myths and Religious Symbols

It has been discussed that the characteristic feature of all religious thought is essentially mythological, and that the myths and the bases of all religious rites are closely interwoven. It is myths which provide the basis of religious rites. With the progress of religious thought, myths are viewed from newer angles of vision, and they thus acquire newer significance. The re-interpretation occurs mostly on symbolic lines which are fraught with new meanings, and which acquire new sanctity. Thus, there is very close inter-connection between myths and symbols, especially religious symbols. Myths tend to become symbolical but the element of myth is never wholly eliminated.

In this connection, we would briefly discuss how certain significant myths of ancient India, both Vedic and non-Vedic, acquired symbolic pregnance; and we would

seek to decipher the significance of their meaning-complex. The process of transformation of Vedic myths into symbolic ones is already noticeable in the *Brāhmaṇas* and much more elaborately worked out in the Upaniṣads.. Similarly,. the hidden meanings of a large number of conspicuous myths of the epics and the Purāṇas are intelligible only in terms of their symbolic references.

Cosmogonic Myths and Symbols

First, we refer to cosmogonic myths, i.e. myths relating to the origin, etc. of the universe and how they came to be interpreted at a later stage of thought. Water (*āpaḥ*, implying water in the collective sense) appears to be the source of all existence, *fons et origo*; it symbolizes the entire cosmos, i.e. it is the symbol of reality. It ensures long life and stimulates creative energy; it is the principle of all healing. The Vedic prayer runs as follows: *Āpaḥ hi sthā mayobhuvastā na urje dadhātana* (cf. also *Ṛg-Veda*, I.23, 21-22, *ibid.*, X.9.1) -- 'The waters, indeed, are the healers. May they give us strength.' The water is the foundation of the whole world (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VI.8.2.2, XII.5.2.14). Nārāyaṇa floats on the primeval waters. In the Upaniṣads, the conception of the primeval waters still survives. The waters represent cosmic life, '*prāṇa*' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I.5.13). 'It is just water that assumes different forms of this earth, this atmosphere, this sky—gods, men, animals, etc. Water, indeed, is all these forms. Meditate on water' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII.10.1).

Then there is the deluge myth (this has reference to the Purāṇic conception of *manvantara*, terminating with the deluge) which symbolizes dissolution (*pralaya*) in primeval waters, i.e. in the ultimate source of emergence and finally re-emergence of a newer order.

In this connection we may refer to the myth of the primeval cosmogonic egg (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XI.1.6.1.H, *Manu Saṁhitā*, 1.5.H); the similar myth is traceable in Polynesia and certain other countries, viz. Indonesia, Iran, Greece, Phoenicia, Central America, West Coast of South America, etc. (see Dixon, *Oceanic Mythology*, Boston, 1966). 'Verily, in the beginning this universe was water, nothing but a seat of water. The waters desired "how can we reproduce". They practised *tapas* and became heated. ... A golden egg was then produced. Time did not exist then. The golden egg floated about. ...' The *devas* then came into existence. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* elucidates fully the idea. It says, in the beginning there was non-being and then emerged being (cf. *Nāsādīya Sūkta*, *Ṛg-Veda*, X.129.1ff). It then developed into an egg, it lay in that state for a period and then burst open. The two parts came out of the egg shell, one of silver and the other of gold. The former is the earth and the latter the sky and the fluid within is the ocean.

The outstanding symbolism of the centre may be viewed as that of the tree which also occurs in the mythologies of several other countries, notably Scandinavia. The cosmos is pictured as a great tree (e.g. *Atharva-Veda*, II.7.3, X.7.38). The universe is described as an inverted tree with its roots in the sky and the branches spread downward on the whole earth. There are various descriptions of this imagery. This eternal *Aśvattha* whose roots go upward and whose branches grow downward is the pure Brahmā who is called the Immortal One (*Amṛta*). All the universe rests in it and nothing transcends it (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, VI.1). Its branches are the ether, air, fire, water, and earth, etc. (*Maitrī*, VI.4). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* (XV.1-3) says: 'There is an indestructible tree the roots of which lie above, the branches below and its leaves are the hymns of the Veda; whoever knows

this knows the Veda. Its branches are spread downward; the products of three *guṇas*, sprouts are multifarious objects and its roots which are the causes of *karma* (which is of the nature of *dharma* and *adharma*) pervade the sphere of mankind.' Similar idea occurs in the *Mahābhārata* (41, 8-9, Calcutta edition). The tree has its roots in the *avyakta* (lit. the unmanifest) and its stems, branches, twigs, leaves, etc. comprise the entire universe, i.e. whatever exists. The symbol of the *Aśvattha* tree signifies that Brahman is above and beyond the cosmos which is an emanation from Him.

In this connection it may be observed that it is dubious whether this is a pure Vedic imagery. At Mohenjo-daro in the third millenium B.C. a divine epiphany is traceable in a *ficus religiosa*. The tree is represented in a manner reminiscent of the Mesopotamian sacred tree (See Marshall, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*, Vol. I, London, 1931).

Another picture of the cosmos is that of the world-wheel as represented in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (I.3-6) which has been already referred to. Those devoted to meditation and contemplation behold the self-power of the Divine hidden by its own qualities (*ibid.*, 1-3). The soul is described as *haṁsa*, the symbol of purity fluttering in the sky. Elsewhere (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, I.3.3-4) Ātman is described as the rider in the chariot of the body with intellect (*buddhi*) as the chariot-driver, mind as reins, and senses as horses. The self when associated with the mind and the senses is the enjoyer (*bhoktā*). Here the picture of Ātman as drawn is more metaphysical than symbolic The cosmic vision which Arjuna beheld in the divine body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is most graphically described in symbolic language in the majestic verses of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (XI. 15-50).

Theogonic Myths and Symbols

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the principal Upaniṣad of the *Sāma Veda*, enunciates the symbolic implication of *Sāman* and *Sāma*-chanting called *Udgītha* at the very outset. This Upaniṣad (I.2.1-14) offers the symbolic explanation of the warfare between the *devas* and the *asuras* referred to in the *Brāhmaṇas*. Here a brief account based on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1-3. 1-9) is given below. The Purāṇas and epics which are replete with the legends of warfare between the *devas* and the *asuras* may be referred to for details. The *devas* and the *asuras* who were the offspring of Prajāpati were of two different kinds. The *devas* were younger and *asuras* the elder ones; and they vied with one another for gaining the world. Being unable to overcome the *asuras*, the *devas* betook themselves to the *Udgītha* chant. They resolved that they would vanquish the *asuras* at the sacrifice by means of the *Udgītha*. Thereupon, they asked the organ of speech to sing the *Udgītha* for them and it sang for the *devas* for their enjoyment (*bhoga*) and for its own self for bliss (*kalyāṇa*). Finding this loophole the *asuras* struck it with evil. Then the *devas* importuned *prāṇa* (vital airs) to sing for them and it also sang likewise, i.e. for enjoyment of the *devas* and for bliss for itself. The *asuras* came to know of this and struck it with evil. In this manner, the *devas* approached the eye, the ear, and the mind who did exactly like their predecessors and the *asuras* struck them with evil. Then the *devas* asked *prāṇa* to sing for them alone and it did so. Then the *asuras* failed to strike *prāṇa* with evil and they were soon scattered in all directions like the cold of earth hitting a stone. Thus the *asuras* were vanquished and the *devas* became supreme. The symbolic significance is that the good uncontaminated by self-interest triumphs over the evil and it is the *prāṇa* which is the

essence of organs, called *āṅgirasa*. The above version occurs in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1-3. 1-9), and a similar episode is contained in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (1-2. 1-10) where the *prāṇa* is conceived as identical with the *Udgītha* which is to be advised. Śaṅkara in his commentary gives a symbolic interpretation of his own (*ibid.*, 1-2. 11) treating the episode as an allegory. The *devas* signify luminous functioning of the senses as against the *asuras* who represent dark functioning of the senses; and a constant warfare between them has been going on inside the body of every individual and what is spiritually beneficial has been indicated in the form of an allegory. It may be pointed out in this connection that the Purāṇas present a different picture. There the warfare between the *devas* and the *asuras* represents clash between the two types or systems of thought and culture; the *devas* upheld the traditional system as against the *asuras* who sought to acquire by practice of *tapas*.

Here we cite another legend illustrating how the *devas* became immortal and it also shows the symbolic significance of the *Udgītha* contemplation (i.e. chanting of the mystic syllable '*Om*' and contemplation on its meaning). The *devas* who were afraid of *mṛtyu* (death) took refuge in the threefold knowledge (*trayī vidyā*) and covered themselves by muttering hymns and formulae which came to be known as *chandas*, because they covered themselves with these, i.e. took refuge therein and elevated themselves beyond the grasp of *mṛtyu*. The chanting of *Sāman*, i.e. *Udgītha* is identified with the syllable '*Om*', the symbol of *akṣara*, the imperishable. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (I.1.1-13) begins with the elucidation of its symbolic significance which is the quintessence of the essences (*rasānāṁ rasatamaḥ*), the highest and the supreme, namely, the *Udgītha*.

The dialogue between Śākalya, the learned, and Yājñavalkya, the sage, as contained in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III-9. 1-28) elucidates briefly but clearly the meanings of the concept of the *deva*. Śākalya enquired of Yājñavalkya how many *devas* there were, and he replied at first that there were as many *devas* as were mentioned in the invocating formula, viz. three hundred and three, alternatively three thousand and three and he then explained at the repeated instance of Śākalya that the number might be reckoned as 'thirty-three', 'six', 'two', 'one and half', and ultimately 'the One'. But Śākalya persisted in asking, 'which are these three thousand and three' and 'three hundred and one'. Yājñavalkya replied: 'These are the powers (*mahimānaḥ*) of the *devas* who are thirty-three' and these thirty-three *devas* were eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, twelve Ādityas, and finally, Indra and Prajāpati. The Vasus ($\sqrt{vas}$) are so called because they sustain the world, and they are fire, earth, wind, atmosphere, sun, sky, moon, and stars on whom the world is set and by whom the world is sustained. The eleven Rudras are: ten vital breaths or organs (viz. five organs of perception and five organs of action) and Ātman as the eleventh. They are called Rudras because they make us lament ($\sqrt{rud}$) when they depart from the mortal body. The Ādityas represent the twelve months of the year; they are so-called because they constantly revolve ($\sqrt{ādā}$), sustaining the universe thereby. Finally, Indra signifies the principle underlying thunder, and Prajāpati the entity presiding over sacrifice. According to the reckoning of the *devas*, they are six—fire, earth, wind, atmosphere, sun, and the sky, which are the constituents of the universe. Then the three *devas*, according to another reckoning, signify the three worlds. The two *devas* are '*anna*' (lit., food, the sustaining principle) and *prāṇa* (lit., vital breath, i.e. the animating principle) which

support the universe. Then the one who purifies, viz. the wind, constitutes one and half *devas*. Finally, *prāṇa* in the sense of the cosmic principle, is Brahman who is the One and the Ultimate. Yājñavalkya further explains that the nature of Puruṣa is comparable to the tree that has its roots in Brahman who is of the nature of knowledge and bliss and who is the ultimate cause (cause of all causes).

A few more words may be said about the symbolic meaning of the *Udgītha*. The sacred syllable '*Om*' which represents the *Udgītha*, the quintessence of essences (*rasānāṁ rasatamaḥ*) is the verbal symbol which signifies the *akṣara* (lit., the imperishable). The symbol which stands for the *akṣara* in the primary sense came to be known as *akṣara* or the syllable in the secondary sense. 'One should meditate on *Om* which signifies the imperishable' (*Omityetad akṣaraṁ udgītham upāsita, Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, I.). Its elucidation in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is as follows: Earth is the essence of all that exists; the essence of earth is water; the essence of water is plants; the essence of plants is Puruṣa (Person); the essence of a puruṣa is speech; the essence of speech is *ṛk* (hymn); the essence of *ṛk is sāman* (chant); the essence of *sāman* is *udgītha* (loud chanting). This is the quintessence of all essences, the highest, the eighth in the series, i.e. the supreme, namely, the *udgītha* (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 1-1. 1-3). The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* seeks to reconcile the teachings of the three Vedas, the triple forms of learning (*trayī*) thus: 'Verily, *vidyā* (knowledge in the sense of the supreme knowledge) and *avidyā* (secondary knowledge which is unreal knowledge) are different, whatever one does with knowledge (*vidyā*), with faith (*śraddhā*), with mystic devotion (*upaniṣad*), that becomes the more powerful. Such is the explanation of this syllable (I.1.10). The *Udgītha* is identified with *prāṇa* which implies the sustaining principle of life, vital breath and psyche (1-2. 10. 1-32), with the blazing sun, the dispeller of darkness and fear (1-3, 1-5). In this connection the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* speaks of certain more symbolic implications regarding the *Udgītha*, *Ṛk*, *Sāman*, etc. (1-4, 10; II. 1-22). The hidden meaning is that *Sāma* (*Sāman*) which is of different kinds is measured in itself and leads beyond death. Likewise, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* gives the symbolic interpretation of the word '*Sāma*' as implying the same (*sāma*), the principle of equality, unity of life and psyche (*prāṇa*) (1-3. 22-25). Similarly, the meaning of *Yajus* is the principle that unifies; all beings are united (*yujyanti*) and combined (*samyañci*) (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 13. 2-3). The essence of all this is symbolized by the *Gāyatrī*, the Ṛg-Vedic *mantra* composed in the *Gāyatrī* metre (*Tat savitur varenyaṁ bhargadevasya dhīmahi dhīyo yo naḥ pracodayāt, Ṛk* III. 62. 10 'We meditate on the supreme energy of the God, *Savita* [Sun stimulator]; may it stimulate our intellect) (III. 62-10). The mystical significance of the threefold knowledge (*trayī vidyā*) is symbolized by the *Gāyatrī* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* V. 14. 1-8).

Sacrifice: Its Symbolic Meanings

The sacrifice is an essential element of the Vedic religion and the *Brāhmaṇas* contain descriptions of the sacrificial ritual in all its punctiliousness. The concept, however, began to acquire symbolic significance during the period of the principal *Brāhmaṇas*. That *Yajña* implies an act of self-discipline and self-surrender is already hinted at in the *Yajur-Veda* (V.14): *Yuñjate mana uta yuñjate dhīyaḥ*—'They harness the mind and they harness their thoughts.' This is said of the sacrifices. The *Yajña* is conceived as a 'Being who has four horns, three legs, two heads and seven

hands. Thrice bound the bull roars. The great Lord has penetrated among the mortals'. *Catvāri śṛṅgāḥ trayo asya pādāḥ dve śīrṣe sapta hastāso asya tridhā baddho vṛṣabho roravīti maho devo martyān āviveśa* (*Ṛg-Veda*, IV.58.3). This stanza is a puzzle of the *Ṛg-Veda*. Sāyaṇa interprets it as relating to Fire in the form of the sacrifice and/or to Sun as well because of their revelatory character. The sacrificial fire has four horns of the nature of the Vedas and its three legs are analogous to three pressings of the *Soma* juice in the morning, noon, and evening; it has two heads, viz. *Brahmaudana* and *Pravargya* ceremonies, seven arms, viz. seven metres and it is thrice bound by *mantra*, *brāhmaṇa*, and *kalpa* (ritual); it is *Vṛṣabha* because it showers fruits (*phalāni varṣatā*) or roars. This great God has entered among mortals, i.e. it is the sacrifice performed by mortal sacrificers. The explanation of the whole thing in the form of Sun is as follows: The four horns are the four directions, three legs, or the three Vedas, two heads are day and night, seven arms are seven rays; it is thrice bound in three regions, viz. earth, atmosphere, and heaven or by three seasons, viz. summer, rain, and autumn and it makes sound; it has entered into mortals, i.e. it controls them (Sūrya being the soul of the mobile and the immobile, *Ṛg-Veda*, I.115.1). The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, (I.4.4-1) explains clearly that 'with the mind and with speech they perform the sacrifice and it is conveyed to the *devas*' (*manasā ha vai vāk ca yujan devebhyo yajñam vahati*). In the course of a dialogue between the King Janaka of Videha and the sage Yājñavalkya it is emphasized that the essence of *yajña* does not consist in the material offerings but the offering of self (*ibid.*, XI.3.1). The symbolic significance of the Agnihotra is thus summed up in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI.3.1.1.). Speech of this Agnihotra is the Agnihotra cow and mind is her calf. Mind and speech are the same and yet distinct. They, therefore, tie up the calf and the mother with one and the same rope. Fire is faith (*sraddhā*) and ghee, truth. Likewise, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* gives symbolic interpretations of the sacrifices such as *darśa*, *pūrṇamāsa*, etc. A symbolical interpretation of offerings is cited here. The invocation, *prāṇa* (vital breath), is a principal ceremony; technically, it is of the nature of subsequent offering (*anuyāga*) and, therefore, in a ceremony the former is invoked first and then the latter.

In this connection, a few words pertinent to the topic may be said about the much discussed *Puruṣamedha* (human sacrifice) and *Sarvamedha* (total sacrifice). The mystical significance of the *Puruṣamedha* is thus explained in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XIII. 6-2.1). (It is quite uncertain whether the *Puruṣamedha* is reminiscent of human sacrifice at a far distant age, i.e. in primitive age). 'These worlds are but a stronghold. This is the Puruṣa, this one purifies. He lies in the citadel (*puri śete*), and is, therefore, called puruṣa. Here in these worlds is his food which is "*medhas*", mental vigour or power. Therefore, it is called *puruṣamedha*. Here one gets persons endowed with vigour.' In the *sarvamedha* sacrifice, the sacrificer, *yajamāna*, makes an offering of all things and attains to supremacy (*ādhipatya*) and sovereignty (*svārājya*) over all creatures.

Incidentally, we may refer to the *Yūpa* ceremony, i.e. the ceremony suggestive of ascent to heaven. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (II. 2. 6. 1-2) says that the *devas* ascended to heaven by performing sacrifice, and apparently, *ṛṣis* and *yajamānas* preserve it as a relic of the difficult ascension to heaven (*dūrohaṇa*). The *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* (VI. 6. 4-2) describes that the priest makes for himself a ladder and a bridge for reaching the celestial world. All mystical visions in the stages of trance and ecstasy include an

ascension of some sort to heaven.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (I.1.2) begins wih a symbolic account of the *Aśvamedha*, horse sacrifice and the role of the sacrificial horse. The horse stands for the entire cosmos; verily, the dawn (*uṣā*) is his head, the Sun (Sūrya) his eye, the wind (*vāta*) his vital breath, the universal fire (*vaiśvānara agni*) his open mouth and other limbs and organs represent other parts of the cosmos. The mystery of the horse sacrifice is thus explained. In the beginning there was non-Being and this was caused with death (*mṛtyu*), and Being emerged out of non-Being. He thought that he might have a body and there arose a body which swelled (*aśvat*) and it became a horse (*aśva*) fit for cosmic offering, and, therefore, the horse-sacrifice is called *aśvamedha*. The universe which is its embodiment grow out of it, the various parts representing the various limbs. He who realizes this, i.e. he who knows the sacrificial horse as the symbolic embodiment of Prajāpati and realizes at the same time that he represents divinity becomes identified with the deity himself.

An analogous idea has been more lucidly expressed in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (III. 16, 17). A person's entire life has been symbolically viewed as a *Soma* sacrifice. The first twenty years constitute, as it were, the morning *Soma*-libation; the next forty-four years the mid-day libation, and the succeeding forty-eight years the third libation. The philosophy of sacrifice was enunciated by Mahidhora Aitareya. Again, it has been explained (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, IV. 16) that it is the sacrifice which purifies; as it advances it purifies the whole world and it is, therefore, called a *Yajña* (i.e. that which purifies) and its two paths are mind and speech. The Brahmā (i.e. Brāhmaṇa priest) purifies by the fire of his mind, while the *Hotṛ* (invoker), *Adhvaryu* (performer of the sacrificial ceremony) and *Udgātṛ* (singer) do so by means of speech. The inner significance is succinctly contained in the following statement of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VIII. 5): 'What people call sacrifice is *Brahmacarya*, i.e. the state of the *Brahmacārin*, i.e. of one who feels himself in attunement with Brahman. What is sacrificed is the life of the *Brahmacārin* and only in this way one attains Ātman.' In another context the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III. 9-21) elucidates the inner significance thus: 'The essence of *Yajña* is based on *dakṣiṇā*, i.e. offering of self, which again is based on *śraddhā* or faith which is rooted in the heart itself.' Many later Upaniṣads explain the different types of sacrifice and their symbolic significance.

The hidden significance of the Vedic concept of *Yajña* is that the *Yajña* itself is the symbolic embodiment of Puruṣa and the *devas* offered sacrifice to the *Yajña puruṣa* by means of the *Yajña* (*Yajño vai puruṣaḥ yajñena yajñaṁ ayajanta devāḥ*, *Ṛg-Veda*, X. 90. 16). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* (IV. 28) refers to five types of *Yajñas* which are all acts of purification, viz. (1) *dravya-yajña*, offering of materials, (2) *tapoyajña*, ascetic sacrifice, (3) *yogayajña*, *yajña* in the form of *Yoga*, i.e. mastery of body, mind, and self, (4) *svādhyāya*, sacred study, etc. of the Vedas, and (5) *jñānayajña* i.e. *Yajña* in the form of acquisition of spiritual knowledge.

Symbolism in the Epics and Puranas

The sacred myths contained in the epics and the Purāṇas may be said to represent the spiritual life of ancient India in terms of symbolism. Incidentally, they present a picture of ancient Indian thought and culture which is also symbolically toned. In our treatment of the myths, we have briefly referred to this matter. Generally speaking, the Purāṇas seem to glorify non-priestly culture, and highly appraise will power derived from *tapas*. Paraśurāma,

the Brāhmaṇa seer, sought to denude the world of Kṣatriyas twenty-one times but even then he met with scant success. What is glorified by the myth of the descent of the Gaṅgā from heaven to earth through the efforts of Bhagīratha is the omnipotence of the will-power. Śiva, the divine Yogī, is the arch-ascetic of the *devas*. Eventually, there was some sort of a reconciliation between the spiritual power derived from practice of *dharma*, and the will-power born of *tapas*. Likewise, the *Mahābhārata* account of the battle of Kurukṣetra seems suggestive of a struggle between representation of the Vedic culture ranged on the side of the Kurus under the leadership of King Duryodhana and those of a mixed culture, Vedic, non-Vedic, and non-Aryan, on the side of Yudhiṣṭhira under the spiritual guidance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the eventual rise of the cult associated with Him.

(concluded)

TOWARDS THE SPIRITUAL SOCIETY

SISIRKUMAR GHOSE, M.A., D.PHIL.

A keen student of English literature and an experienced educationist, Dr. Sisirkumar Ghose is attached to the Department of English and Modern European Languages, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. He has also taught abroad. His published works include: Aldous Huxley, The Later Poems of Tagore, Mystics and Society (1968), Tagore for You (Ed.). *The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. Ghose at the Institute in August 1968.*

TO TALK of self-renewal to a society hell-bent on destruction and in the midst of chronic crisis may sound like an ultimate irony. But the irony or paradox—between what we are and what we need and should be—may point to a truth we have missed almost throughout our history: the truth or possibility of a spiritual society.

But before the spiritual society can become a reality, certain conditions, and they are not easy, have to be fulfilled. The first of these conditions is an openness of the general mind to such a possibility. One must conceive the necessity of the idea of change before the change can take place. But what do we find when the idea is mooted or the individual enters upon that conversation of the mind with itself which Arnold characterized as a mark of the modern? Misunderstanding, at best approximations.

Spirituality remains not only misunderstood, it has also very largely misunderstood itself and its function in the making of a new order. For instance, there is a fixed feeling that spirituality is un-social, if not anti-social. People think of it as something unprogressive, reactionary, and cut off from the rest of life. Even in India, land of so-called spirituality, we are faced with an almost established estrangement between life in the world on the one hand and spiritual growth and perfection on the other. In fact, as Sri Aurobindo once put it, when a man turns his vision and energy inward and enters on the path of *Yoga*, he is supposed to be lost inevitably to the great stream of our collective existence and the secular effort of humanity. In other words, the greater life is looked upon as a form of civil death. And, what is worse, the view is not wholly unjustified. Who has not heard of Karl Marx's notorious dictum: Religion is the opiate of the people? One could of course hit back and tell the Marxist that the hope of an economic utopia is the opiate of the political revolutionary. But more important than picking holes is the fact, often overlooked, that religion is not spirituality, and that the spiritual person is not a social cipher or anomaly. Those whom the world often calls parasites are indeed the salt of the earth.

SOME DISTINCTIONS

What, then, is the aim, method, and nature of spirituality as a social factor? This will involve us in a series of questions regarding the nature of man, mind, goals, and of course the problem of ends and means. It is not possible to go into the details just now, and prepare a blueprint

for Utopia. All the same, the hypothesis of spirituality or of the evolution of the spiritual man and of noosphere is in the air. The way of the Spirit may be the untried way out—unless we are to go under. This hypothesis we shall briefly consider. This will mean, to begin with a few distinctions, between normal society and spiritual society. Incidentally, we shall learn something about religious society too. How did society come into being and what is its normal image of Man? Take the second question first. Normal society everywhere looks upon man as a physical, vital, and mental being, mind-life-body, and it seeks to provide, within limits and as best as it can, satisfaction for each of these needs or aspects of his total being. Briefly, this is man's accepted image of himself as a rational animal, which is at best an uneasy compromise. One remembers Hume's amazing conclusion that 'reason is, and ought only to be, a slave of the passions' (*Treatise on Human Nature*, Book II, Part III, Section 3). As regards the first question, how society was formed, it is not unnatural to imagine that it must have come about by a modification of the herd or gregarious instinct. Before societies could form, there must have been open or implied contracts, conventions, laws, and customs, and, since no adjustment is likely to be perfect, there was bound to be a tension of antagonism, between rival interests: at least between self-interest and the larger interest of the group. This conflict in the heart of civilization has never been fully solved, not even in the New Civilization of Communism, which recently claimed Boris Pasternak as one of its martyrs, and, earlier, Mayakovsky. This unsolved conflict or absence of harmony is the inevitable price of civilization, or Civilization and its Discontents, as Freud put it. The perfect civilization is yet to be. Some doubt if it will ever be.

As civilization gets going, something happens along the way. For some reason or the other, after a time, every society or civilization has decayed. This is a fact. Today the Decline of the West, in whose single doom we are invited to witness the coming universal Nothingness, is being announced from different quarters. The decline of civilizations has become an occasion for ritual lamentation with most of our sociologists and historians, in fact with every sensitive person. Carpenter, Wells, Sorokin, Schweitzer, Toynbee, and others are taken up with this problem to the exclusion of others. There is no doubt that the biggest question of our times is Death or rebirth. Perhaps the question carries the answer within itself. The decaying tissues prepare a formative process which we do not fully understand. In the analysis of experts as well as in our own immediate experience we are up against the Sphinx's query, the age-old problem of spirituality and politics, which we must somehow solve or else disappear from the earth scene :

> But though thy pride is great, thou
> hast forgot
> The Sphinx that waits for thee beside
> the way.
> All questions thou mayest answer, but
> one day
> Her question shall await thee. That
> reply,
> As all we must ; for they, who cannot,
> die.
> She slays them and their mangled
> bodies lie
> Upon the highways of eternity.

How then shall we come out of the perpetual cycle of failure and frustration? By running away or plunging into the indifferent Absolute, by denying that the problem exists? Faced with the inescapable shadows, the twilight hour of civilizations,

the more advanced minds of the race incline to look upon civilization itself as a disease or at best an inadequacy. It is indeed a delicate balance, the kettle may blow off any moment. To the tired spirit of the disillusioned thinkers, civilization appears to have created more problems than it has solved, poisoned life at its roots. In their distress some of them play with the idea of unhistorical, unlikely, impossible reversions to an earlier paradisal state of society, or Back to Nature. In prophets like Rousseau and Nietzsche (and our Vinova Bhave) we are torn between the rival claims of the Noble Savage, the Teutonic Superman and the idyllic *Rāma-rājya*, none of which is within the range of possibility or an ideal. Or the intended way out. But, then, what *is* the way out?

Old Discovery?

The remedy lies, perhaps, in the one element that we have systematically denied or neglected in our social system or building—the spiritual element, the soul of which we hear and speak so much. For most of us the soul is but a word, an empty word at that. But the stone left aside by the builders might become the cornerstone of a new humanity, a new race. The new architecture that would follow the change of heart, as a poet of today puts it. This, then, is our first necessity: to know the soul and allow it to take over.

The fact is, after a point, even to have a healthy body, a strong vitality, and an active mind is not enough. All this will not carry man far, no more than a distance. Then, for want of a further aim, he flounders or, else, falls back. Or goes gaga, like the absurd modern young men and women, the Hippies and the Beats, who, as Toynbee has said, have had too much cake. The values of civilization are, perhaps, means and not ends. There may be a state beyond civilization and beyond history as we have known these. The spirit of modern revolt may be an obscure pointer towards that. The destiny of civilization is towards a leap or change, in motive and growth, towards a civilization of consciousness, to use Whitehead's phrase. It is no doubt a dream, because we have seen through the glass (of our nature) but darkly. The dream does not deny the material formula, but the material formula is limited and must be re-cast in terms of higher values, of the soul or the Next Higher Development of Man. It must know its place. This is where the spiritual motive comes in, as an integrating factor. For even if you add a religious system to the plan of normal society that does not help. The pieties of Asia and of the Middle Ages in Europe ended in unspeakable stagnation, nor could the ancient intellectual cultures of the West escape doubt and disillusionment. The Stoics, for instance, could think, but were helpless to save. In our present crisis, the uncritical adoption of cybernetics, faith in automatic Progress and reliance on Know-how are not going to be of much help. If there is no light other and more than reason, it is unlikely that we shall escape the fate of earlier civilizations. Reason by itself cannot long maintain the race on its march. There is a wide-spread fear in the world today that our hour to quit has come. This shows that the mind-life-body formula leads nowhere. It is a vicious circle that we must break through, if only we know how to.

For that we have, of course, to look within. There is some hope in the modern turn towards subjectivity, in the researches into extra-sensory perceptions and all that, the new turn in methods of education and its objective, in new trends of evolutionary philosophy, and the new depth psychology. There is some chance that in the turn towards inner, subjective values,

in the undiscovered self or the energies of the psyche, we might get back to the source, the soul. No wonder *Modern Man in Search of His Soul* is the title of a book by one of the most sensitive, mystically-minded of our psychologists, Carl Jung.

An old discovery, the sceptics will shrug or shout. The soul-stuff, they will say, is nothing new or nothing much. It is but another ruse to lead us Back to Religion. It is nothing of the sort. For here we must distinguish between religious and spiritual society. The discovery of the soul was no doubt there in the older religions. But the manner in which most religions have *used* this discovery has been unspiritual in the extreme. What most religions have done is to catch the human soul and bind it on the wheels of a sacrosanct and regional socio-religious order—a lifeless machine. Machinery has been its besetting sin. One cannot be saved *by* the machine, one can only be saved *from* the machine.

It is no less true that in most religious societies the idea of salvation has tended to be both individual and other-worldly. Also, in order to make the supreme discovery, the individual had to flee society. It was, one could say, freedom *from* society rather than freedom *in* society. In mystical literature this tendency has been described as Withdrawal. But Withdrawal without Return is not complete and makes no sense. In many of the older cultures, the spiritual seeker or aspirant, often a recluse, withdraws into a monastery, *muth*, cave, mountain fastness or desert, or a special community, more or less insulated from the rest of society. It is a marginal existence, a necessary strategy but hardly a total or happy solution. As for the social use of the discovery, it led, as it always does, to a formalization, or mechanization of dogma and ritual. Such a formalization tends to become increasingly compulsive, intolerant, that is un-spiritual. In a hide-bound society to differ or to 'experiment with truth' was to play with fire, for which one had to die or to suffer eternal damnation, sometimes both, as with the Spanish Inquisition. It was indeed a jealous God that watched over the non-conformist. In such a narrow, fear-ridden society, Freedom had turned into its exact opposite: a waste and shame of the spirit. Or, in Orwell's satirical phrase: Freedom is slavery. Religion, what crimes are committed in thy name! That cry can be heard still in the various substitutes than pander to the public. The falsehood of the old social use of religion is shown amply by its effects: the squalor, ignorance, ritualism, repression, the division between life and spirit, till, in the end, the whole thing becomes an infamy and the bolder spirits cry out: *Ecrasez l' infame*, the infamy must be destroyed. Down with religion!

The Spiritual View

The spiritual aim and life are different from those of both religious society and of normal society. This comes out clearly in its concept of man and his destiny. For instance, the spiritual view looks upon mind, life, and body, as instruments and not as ends. But it does not convict them, for that reason, as normal members full of disease fit only to be cast aside in the journey towards an eternal Absolute. Its philosophy is not puritanic but inclusive, not ascetic but integral. The true spiritual aim in society will regard Man as not merely a summation of mind, life, and body but as a soul incarnated for a divine fulfilment upon earth. It will provide man and society with a progressive purpose, which, however, is to be realized here and now, *ihaiva*. Briefly, the spiritual aim and life look upon man as being essentially divine. It also believes in the *possibility* of his whole being becoming divine. In fact, the essential and eventual Godhead of

Man is its sole creed or dogma. This is its image of Man or hope for man. In Marcel's words we may call it a metaphysic of hope. As with man, so with society. The spiritual aim in life will look upon society as a kind of collective soul and not as a machine of which we are but cogs and replaceable parts. To the spiritual view Mass Culture or Organization Man is a heresy and a foolishness. Its efficiency is the efficiency of an inhuman universe.

From this basic spiritual attitude or hypothesis, all else follows; this is what will determine the manner of its operation in society. It is a thing that has not been done before. To that extent it is a gamble or an adventure. Briefly, spirituality will not try to impose itself upon either man or groups of men. It will be nothing like 'Conform or Perish'. One must grow from within. And the people who form this group will come together spontaneously, with open eyes. True spirituality is not an imposition but a natural growth, an inner guidance which one has the freedom to accept or to refuse, provided of course one is prepared to take the consequences.

The wise spiritual guide, within and without, respects the nature of the person, respects the so-called lower members of the society. He deals gently with these recalcitrant parts, these apparently undivine instincts and impulses that make up most of the normal man's living. But of course he does not leave them to themselves. The same attitude is revealed in his dealings with philosophy, arts, science, and ethics. He does not coerce or demand agreement, but holds the truth before each of these disciplines, the truth to which, if left free, they will of themselves come or verge. A faith in a larger reconciliation, because of its greater sense of unity and not rejection and suppression, is the way of the spirit or soul. Spirituality holds on to the destiny of human efforts and helps man to that end. Unity, freedom—after all, you cannot be forced to be free—and mutuality are the laws of the spirit and these will also be the motives of its operation in society. That is, as against the coercive pressure of religious groups, spirituality, even in its early stages, will be marked by unfettered liberty and infinite variation. This might make the coming of a spiritual society more difficult but the difficulty has to be admitted as a matter of fact.

The Secret

The problem is one of Change from Without and Change from Within. In the mystical view, the conditions under which men live upon earth are the result of their stage of consciousness. To seek to change the conditions without changing the stage of consciousness is a vain chimera. This is what convicts most political revolutions of insufficiency and ultimate failure. We must reject, as Schweitzer has pointed out, the modern man's belief in redemption of the world by Things. We must never lose sight of the fact that we can only spread the Kingdom of God in the measure in which we manifest it within us. In the light of such a remark, it is easy to see that what we have had so far are religious societies rather than spiritual society. And almost every religious society carries its own load of guilt, for it has tried either to impose itself on unwilling and uncomprehending masses, on an unregenerate human nature, else it has conformed, or, in the end, compromised and capitulated. That will not be the way of a spiritual society. It will neither compel nor compromise. And of course it will not seek refuge in a set dogma or a departure into the other worlds. It will be a free association of peoples striving spontaneously for a fuller life. It need have no quarrel with science, except that it will develop or

re-discover a higher science of man, more progressive and advanced, than what is known today. It will complement the science of things with the science of the self.

The secret of a spiritual society, and its chance of success, lies elsewhere. It is in a change of gear, so to speak, in a continually evolving set of ideas and institutions. It lies in the elevation of our will and consciousness to a higher plane than that of vital and the mental. In short, we have to choose between the domination of the vital-mental urges in us—fear, desire, ego, etc.—and the spontaneous obedience to the spiritual dictates of one's being and nature. This is by no means an easy task and yet only when this has been done, shall we be on our way to the Truth, live in the light of the Spirit, which is our real being and nature. Supposing we are able to operate this, it 'will be a leap or an ascent even more momentous than that which Nature must have made from the vital mind of the animal to the thinking mind still imperfect in our human intelligence'. To the extent that a whole society or representative group makes this admission and tries to fulfil the conditions of such a living shall we be on the way towards a spiritual society. At the moment all that one can say is that few societies seem to qualify. Not many care for or understand these motives and are, therefore, unwilling to co-operate with this emerging idea or the institutions needed to embody it. Hence the overall confusion, turn where you will. For want of a unifying idea our atomized society is tumbling about our ears. Many would say, *nihataḥ pūrvamevaḥ*, death sentence has already been passed against it. The judgement is: unfit to survive. Believers in the spiritual society do not accept that judgement. On the contrary, they incline to think that our difficulties may be opportunities, and spiritual society may be that ultimate remedy.

What Is Needed

Obviously, a change of this nature is not likely on a large scale in the society. Much rather will it begin with the individual. This increases the responsibility of every one of us. The mass follows but lamely. Our first need, therefore, is of individuals who have seen or felt in themselves the pressure of this coming idea or truth and tried, in their own way, to shape themselves in the image of that truth. But, again, isolated individuals are not enough. There will have to be, sooner or later, groups, voluntarily formed, of the like-minded. It is clear that a spiritual society will live, like the individuals that compose it, not in the ego, but in the spirit; not as the collective ego, but as the collective soul. And how will the elimination of ego be brought about? It will be brought about not by persuading or, what is more common, by forcing the individual to immolate his personal will, aspiration, and responsibility in the collective image, aims and egoism of the all-powerful Party and State. We will socialize the souls of our citizens, such had been Adolf Hitler's boast. That meant a sad reversal to the primitive past and the resurrection of the *Rākṣasa*, armed with all the powers of modern science. That way lies danger. Luckily, the Titan falls by his own weight, *mola ruet sua*.

It is also not enough that the spiritual aim or idea should take hold of the mind of the general people. Considering things as they are, that itself will be no doubt a considerable gain, but not enough. The reason is simple. The way men deal with an idea, or an ideal, is to be satisfied with the profession of an aspiration, and leave it at that. Frequently, the holding of an idea, the membership of a cult or a

club, or church, becomes an excellent excuse for *not* living according to it. We all know the power of doubletalk, we see it being practised everywhere almost all the time.

If the spiritual aim and life is to be more than a pleasing idea, the one thing needed must take precedence over all others: the dynamic recreation or transformation of the individual in the divine image. 'In a word, godhead; to remake ourselves in the divine image.' Therefore, the individuals who will most help the future in the new age that is coming upon us will be those who recognize spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the hour. They will see in this man's real business in the world, the justification of his existence, without which he 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. The evolution or conversion will be the one ideal and endeavour of the pioneers. They will not be unaware of the difficulties on the way, though, to a deeper view, these may be opportunities. The question is: Have such men ceased to exist? One hopes not. Indeed, there is reason to believe that these men are there, perhaps not many, an invisible, growing brotherhood, the movement towards human unity and the unitary man. According to Lancelot Whyte: 'Many persons have reached the conclusion that a major change in human awareness and behaviour is now taking place.' Through the ruins of our times, this self-styled Age of Anxiety, the outline of a free society has appeared in the thoughts of many a lonely thinker. Perhaps, as yet only the eye of faith can see it. But every change in motive has begun like that, with a few. That, by itself, is not a cause for scepticism. 'For every goal that draws us on, the thing desired exists' (Edmund W. Sinnott, *Matter, Mind and Man*).

Crisis and Choice

At present, mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis, and not merely a crisis in civilization as many imagine, in which is concealed a choice of its destiny. We are the victims of a dreadful imbalance, of disproportionate development. A stage has been reached in which the human mind has achieved in certain directions an enormous development while in others it stands arrested and bewildered and can no longer find its way.

And in what landscape of disaster
Has your unhappy spirit lost its road?

Our proliferating technology has no matching wisdom or insight. What is imperative is that there should be a turn felt in humanity by some or many towards the vision of this change or choice, and the will to make it real, to find the way to a new social order, a new group or world community not bound by any limitations of the past. For, 'not till the Time-Spirit in man is ready' can anything be really done. That turn or trend towards a new social outlook, the Just City, is not altogether absent—how else are we all here?—and it must increase with the tension in world history. Our 'carnivorous idols' have to give place to more life-giving ideals. The decline of civilizations, as Toynbee has aptly suggested, is an opportunity for religion. But, then, as we have seen, religion cannot deliver the goods. What is needed is something different, a new spiritual aim and life never wholly or successfully tried out before. Our greatest days may lie ahead of us. For that, we may have to return to the ancient idea and secret of a Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth, the ideal of a gnostic or spiritual society, *sadhūnāṁ rājyam*, an ideal world, 'where comes neither rain nor wind'. Here

is the prospect of a new adventure in which, one way or the other, we are all involved. The prospect includes the possibility of peril as well as triumph. What we do with it will be the measure of our creativity, the meaning of our life, our faith for living.

It is such a change or re-shaping of our lives, this hope of a superior collective life which men of goodwill everywhere are beginning to seek. Could this be History of the Future, a new thought that has appeared on the horizon? The new thought according to which it is a spiritual, essential change of consciousness, not the surface manipulation which is the method of Mind and Reason, that can alone create a life other than it now is and rescue it from its present distressed and ambiguous figure. Simply : one has to go inward in order to change the outward. As once we had to pay the price for civilization—for civilization and all its discontents—so now we may have to pay the price for trans-civilization, a transformed world, the dream of ages. (In the words of Jibanananda Das, *Kolkātā ekdin kallolinī tilottamā habe*). All that one can say is that it is well worth the price. This was one of Swami Vivekananda's great dreams: the spiritualization of the race. Do we have the faith, courage, and the sense to learn and live it out? *That* is the question. That will make all the difference, and decide between deliverance and disaster. What are we going to do about it?

Swami Vivekananda Centenary Endowment All India Annual Elocution Competition (1968)

Swami Vivekananda Centenary Endowment All India Elocution Competition for the year 1968 was held at the Institute on Monday, 30 December and Tuesday, 31 December from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This Endowment was created in the year 1963 out of a donation of Rs. 10,000 by Sri J. C. De, former Secretary and Treasurer, State Bank of India, Calcutta, and 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.

The Competition was open to both college and university students (Senior Group) and school students (Junior Group). The subject for the Senior Group was 'Swami Vivekananda and His Educational Ideals' and for the Junior Group 'Swami Vivekananda and Service of Man'. 55 students from different parts of India participated in the Competition in the Senior Group and 32 competitors, chiefly from West Bengal, participated in the Junior Group. Participating students showed high proficiency in their speeches.

Prize Distribution Ceremony

On Tuesday, 31 December 1968, at 5 p.m. the Prize Distribution Ceremony for the Competition was held in the Vivekananda Hall of the Institute under the chairmanship of Sri Dharma Vira, Governor of West Bengal, who also distributed the prizes. Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji, President of the Managing Committee of the Institute, in his welcome address explained the aims and objects of the competition. Sri Sajal Kumar Mitra of St. Joseph's College, Calcutta (first prize winner of the Junior Group) and Sri Vidyarthi Chatterjee of Presidency College, Calcutta (first prize winner of the Senior Group) spoke on their respective subjects. Principal J. C. Banerjee, 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 be definite path-finder in the turmoil among the present generation of the student community in this country. Sri Dharma Vira, Governor of West Bengal, in his presidential address emphasized the need for the dissemination of the ideas and ideals of Swami Vivekananda among the present student generation of India. He expressed the hope that if the students of India read more of the books of Swami Vivekananda and follow the teachings of this great patriot-saint of India, it will definitely bring a regeneration of the student community in this land. 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; six candidates in the Senior Group and nine candidates from the Junior Group received certificates of merit along with a book. After the Prize Distribution Ceremony, Swami Akunthananda, Secretary of the Institute, offered vote of thanks to the Chair and also to the student participants and the audience.

Special Lectures

The Institute organized a series of seven lectures on 'Rabindra Manas' (In remembrance of Rabindranath Tagore) with a view to providing an opportunity partic-

ularly to the youth and interested individuals to better understand and appreciate the different aspects of Rabindranath's contribution to the world of thought.

Sri Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A., Principal, Barasat Government College, gave the first lecture of the series entitled 'Tagore's Humanism' on Tuesday, 7 May 1968, at 6.30 p.m.

The second lecture on 'Rabindranath and Vivekananda' was delivered by Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L., on Monday, 13 May, at 6.30 p.m.

Srimati Chitrita Devi spoke on 'Rabindranath, the Universal Poet' on next Monday at 6.30 p.m.

The subject for the fourth lecture was 'Rabindranath and the Upaniṣads' on which Sri Hiranmay Banerjee, Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, spoke on Monday, 27 May, at 6.30 p.m.

Dr. P. B. Gajendragadkar, Vice-Chancellor, University of Bombay, presided over this lecture.

Sri J. N. Mullick, President, West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, delivered the fifth lecture on 'Educational Ideals of Rabindranath' on Monday, 3 June, at 6.30 p.m.

'Rabindranath: His Short Stories and Novels' was the theme of the sixth lecture given by Dr. Asutosh Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D., on Monday, 17 June, at 6.30 p.m.

The concluding lecture of the series was given by Sri Sombhu Mitra on 'Rabindranath and His Dramas' on Monday, 24 June, at 6.30 p.m.

Symposium on An Approach to Fourth Five Year Plan

On Wednesday, 11 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m. a symposium on 'An Approach to Fourth Five Year Plan' was held at the Institute's Premananda Hall. Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., was in the chair.

Dr. Bhabatosh Dutta, M.A., Ph.D. spoke on 'Industry', while Professor Rakhal Dutta, M.A., and Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., dwelt on 'Agriculture' and 'Social Welfare' respectively.

Symposium on Swami Vivekananda

The Institute organized a two-day symposium on Swami Vivekananda in commemoration of the Platinum Jubilee Celebration of his participation in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago (1893)

The first session began on Saturday, 14 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. The day's function commenced with a programme of invocation by Swami Ananyananda. Professor Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A., Srimati Santwana Das Gupta, M.A., and Sri Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A., Principal, Barasat Government College, were the participants and Swami Gambhirananda presided.

The second session, held on Monday, 16 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m., was observed as Youth Day. After the invocatory song 'Jaya Vivekananda' by Sri Dhiren Bose and Srimati Kalyani Kazi, Sri Sankar Basu Mallick read out 'Chicago Address' of Swami Vivekananda. Sri Haripada Bharati, M.A., then gave a talk in Bengali on 'Swami Vivekananda in the Parliament of Religions (1893): Its Impact on the Modern Mind'. The programme concluded with a film show on 'The Life of Swami Vivekananda'. Swami Lokeswarananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, presided.

United Nations Day

United Nations Day was observed at the Institute on Thursday, 24 October 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall. On this occasion, an exhibition of United Nations Publications was organized in collaboration with the Oxford University Press.

Mr. Robert A. Collinge, Information Officer, USIS, Calcutta, gave a talk on 'Human Rights Year and the United Nations'. Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., presided.

The programme concluded with a film show depicting the activities of the United Nations.

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 1968:

	October	November	December
Total number of students enrolled	731	763	786
Average daily attendance	215	391	313
Average number of students daily taking meals or tiffin	207	300	245
Total number of text-books issued	10,801	20,338	15,034

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 1968:

Main Library

	October	November	December
Total number of books	56,773	56,966	57,398
Number of books added	110	193	432
Number of books purchased	39	100	210
Number of books received as gift	71	93	222
Number of books withdrawn	—	—	—
Number of periodicals accessioned	—	—	—
Number of books issued for home study	2,540	3,345	3,128
Number of books issued for reference	5,464	9,026	6,299

Reading Room

Number of periodicals in the reading room	365	365	365
Average daily attendance	401	495	393

Junior Library

Total number of books	1,579	1,579	1,594
Number of books added	8	—	15
Number of books issued for home study	172	160	202
Average daily attendance	10	9	10

Children's Library

Total number of books	4,344	4,344	4,367
Number of books added	19	—	23
Number of books issued for home study	504	565	835
Average daily attendance	24	18	32

Guests

Among those who stayed at the Institute's International House between January and March 1968 were the following:

Mr. Mohammed Wahby, Deputy Chief Representative, League of Arab State Mission, with his wife;

Dr. and Mrs. H. Liebaers, from Brussels;

Miss Cindy Hall, student from California;

Professor B. M. Shmakin, Visiting Professor of Geology, from U.S.S.R.;

Miss H. Plötz, from West Germany;

Miss Helene Vreeland, from California;

Professor E. A. Burtt, Sage Professor of Philosophy (Emeritus) at Cornell University, U.S.A., with his wife, to deliver Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghose Lectures of the Calcutta University at the Institute;

Miss Ellen P. Chamberlayne, social worker, from New York;

Dr. and Mrs. W. R. Holmes, From U.S.A.;

Mr. Robert S. Payton Jr., Civil Servant from U.S.A.;

Professor Stanley Briggs, Lecturer, University of Leeds;

Mr. Tokujiro Nakamura, an artist from Tokyo;

Dr. George H. Cady, Ph.D., Professor, University of Washington, with Mrs. Cady;

Dr. Samuel Mathai, Vice-Chancellor, University of Kerala;

A group of twenty-six members of Association Francaise des Amis de l' Orient, from France ;

Mr. E. Pastaleka, UN expert, from Czechoslovakia ;

Dr. and Mrs. E. A. Bruce, from California ;

Mrs. Harriet F. Boehnke, Retired American Teacher, from Hongkong ;

Miss Rosemaria Schudith, from West Germany ;

Dr. Harry F. Meiners, staff scientist, American Embassy, New Delhi ;

Dr. William R. Riley, staff scientist, American Embassy, New Delhi ;

Mr. G. M. Masken, writer, from London;

Professor (Dr.) A. L. Basham, Head of the Department of History, North University, Canberra, Australia ;

Mr. Guennadi Kozlov, Director, Polytechnical Museum, Moscow ;

Mr. Jan Milipsky, research worker of History, from Czechoslovakia ;

Dr. G. P. Malalasekar, Chairman, National Council of Higher Education, Government of Ceylon, and Mrs. Malalasekar ;

Mr. S. Gylseth, Norwegian Consulate ;

Professor (Dr.) Fleming Axencrone, from Copenhagen, Denmark ;

Professor J. A. Kane, Physicist, from U.S.A. ;

Professor M. A. Broun, Physicist, from Leningrad, U.S.S.R. ;

Miss P. Ng. Soo Ching, Librarian and UNESCO fellow from Kuala Lumpur.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th February

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th February

THE KATHA UPANISAD

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

1st and 8th February

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(*Children below six years are not allowed*)

FILM SHOWS

Devotional Films (in Bengali)

Tuesday, 4 February, at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, 11 February, at 6 p.m.

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

INDO-ENGLISH MUSIC

Orchestra

by

Calcutta School of Music

Tuesday, 25 February, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR FEBRUARY 1969

Sri Ramakrishna Galpa Āsar

First Saturday, 1 February, at 4.45 p.m. for Juniors (6–9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 22 February, 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

February 5 **Life and Art**

Speaker: S. K. Nandi, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil.

President: Kalyan Kumar Ganguly, M.A., D.Phil.

February 12 **Material Basis of Heredity**

Speaker: A. K. Sharma, D.Sc.

President: S. M. Sircar, D.Sc., F.N.I.

February 19 **Western Influence in Tagore's Thought**

Speaker: Bhabatosh Datta, M.A., D.Litt.

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

February 26 **Journey to the End of Night**

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

President: P. K. Guha, M.A.

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA

VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY LECTURES (1969)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

On Mondays at 6.30 p.m. in English

February 3 **Interpretation of Vedanta as a Social Force in the Nineteenth Century (Lec. No. II)**

Speaker: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B., I.A.A.S. (Retd.)

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

February 10 **Interpretation of Vedanta as a Social Force in the Nineteenth Century (Lec. No. III)**

Speaker: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B., I.A.A.S. (Retd.)

President: R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.

* These lectures are the second and the third lecture, respectively, of a series of five of which the Inaugural Lecture was delivered on 14 January 1969.

Friday, 14 February, at 6.30 p.m.

Subject: **Present and Future Development in Indian Agriculture**

Speaker: Theodor Bergmann, Ph.D.
Lecturer in Agricultural Economics
Institute of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology
University of Stuttgart-Hohenheim, Germany

President: Rakhal Datta, M.A.
Reader in Economics, University of Calcutta

Monday, 17 February, at 6.30 p.m.

SIVA-KATHA

(in Bengali)

on

The Concept of Siva

in

Sivaratri

by

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B., I.A.A.S. (Retd.)

STEPHANOS NIRMALENDU GHOSH LECTURES (1969)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

A series of 8 lectures on Religion of Love : A Comparative Study of Vaiṣṇavism, Christianity, and Sufism

Programme:

Monday, 24 February, at 6.30 p.m.

Subject: **Evolution of the Religion of Love**

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D.
Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University

Tuesday, 25 February, at 6.30 p.m.

Subject: **Stages of Realizaton in Love**

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Pandit Srijiva Nyayatirtha, M.A.

* These lectures will be followed by a series of six lectures in March-April 1969.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Programme:

Invocation

Talk in Bengali

on

Parama Purusa Sri Ramakrishna

by

Achintya Kumar Sengupta, M.A., LL.B.

Devotional Songs

by

Panchanan Mukhopadhyaya

Saturday, 22 February, at 6.30 p.m.

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AN APPROACH TO EUGENE O'NEILL

HIMANSU NATH GANGULI, M.A., D.PHIL.

Dr. Himansu Nath Ganguli, Principal, Gurudas College, Calcutta, is the author of several books like A Tribute to Knut Hamsun, The Orchestra—in classical literature and in Eliot and Sartre, *and* Realism In Drama. *He gave this lecture at the Institute in July 1968.*

EUGENE O'Neill, the only American dramatist to have been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, has no dearth of admirers in his own country or abroad. He has no dearth of denigrators either. O'Neill's world is one of dipsomaniacs; his characters are all haunted or obsessed, his poetry and passion are all 'phoney', his dramatic sense is poor and his expression infinitely the poorer—these constitute the gravamen against the 'No. I Exhibit' of the American Drama. O'Neill's eulogists, on the other hand, discover in him men and women in the grip of great and mighty passions such as have been found in Sophocles and Shakespeare, and the few other mightiest among us, an unerring sense of what constitutes high and noble tragedy in life (and, *ipso facto*, of literature), and an instinctive realization of the truth that the drama, even though a hybrid product being partly literature and partly theatre, is *essentially* poetry, grand and intensely moving poetry. Unfortunately, his votaries, rather gratuitously, often make too much of the qualities that are supposed to be specifically American in him tending to reduce an artist with a 'universal mind' into a regional writer. So, admirer or detractor, he who writes on O'Neill often makes a wrong approach, an approach that either completely obfuscates the O'Neill-image, or presents it out of focus. It is interesting that Sean O'Casey once wrote to O'Neill with the latter's spontaneous approbation that his plays were more Irish in character than American. And no wonder, for O'Neill had Irish blood in him. But an Indian, or for

the matter of that, a Bengali approaching him with a quality of mind which Keats calls the 'negative capability', a mind shorn of prejudices and inhibitions, completely open and receptive, cannot fail to be struck by beliefs and ideas in O'Neill that are traditionally associated with the Indian or even the Bengali way of life and thought.

His First Drama: Beyond the Horizon

His first full-length drama *Beyond the Horizon* is a simple folk-play ideally suited to the taste of mediocre, respectable, middle-class people of whom the bulk of the theatrical audience consists. It demonstrates the virtue of wisdom in love (though Shakespeare, Bacon, and other master-minds and even O'Neill himself in his later plays proclaimed the incompatibility of love and wisdom), punishes the unfaithful wife, approves of industry and integrity of character, deprecates speculation or get-rich-quick methods, and last but not least, placates the vanity of the self-righteous, successful wiseacres of the world by painting in lurid colours the tragic futility of romantic escapism or sentimental, poetic idealism.

Yet, this apparently simple and realistic play with all its *immediacy* is strongly reminiscent of Tagore's symbolic play *The Post Office*. Amal, the child-hero of *The Post Office* and Robert, the young hero of *Beyond the Horizon* have a good deal in common. Amal is a valetudinarian, condemned to stay indoors and allowed only occasionally to peep through the window into the alluring beauty of life and movement, the sun, the hills, the fields, and the sky. He lives in visions, visions of idyllic beauty and love and freedom beyond the horizon. Freedom *does* come to him at the close of the play with his *death*, for his death is an emancipation of his soul. Robert, a sickly child, was also pushed by the side of the west window just to peep through it and dream of the beyond. 'Those were the only happy moments of my life then, dreaming there at the window.' Frustrated in love at the age of 23, Robert is about to go out on a sea-voyage for 'it's just Beauty that is calling me'; he is just enchanted by 'the mystery and spell of the East', 'the freedom of great wide spaces, the joy of wandering on and on'. His mature love and pang of bafflement certainly do not suit a child of Amal's tender age and the finer and purer atmosphere of Tagore's symbolic play; but the wistful nostalgic speeches quoted above might as well be put into Amal's mouth. The death, in either case, whether of Amal (all beauty and innocence) or of Robert (soiled, corrupted, and embittered) is an escape from the tyranny of matter into the freedom of the spirit. *Dramatically* speaking, it is their inevitable end, for in the noblest of tragedies, soul always prevails over the littleness of the flesh.

Robert was an escapist to the manner born, and for him to have loved and married a woman of the world and undertaken worldly responsibilities was a fatal blunder. The tragedy of his wife Ruth, is that of a practical, unromantic girl hastily marrying an incorrigibly romantic idealist. She deserves no sympathy and completely forfeits it as she exultantly proclaims to the face of her husband her love for his elder brother, Andy. In fury, Rob calls her a 'slut', and the well-meaning critics think no better of her. But she is just an ordinary woman with normal failings. She is no potential murderess like Christine (of *Mourning Becomes Electra*), she is miles and miles away from professional sluts like Mildred (in Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*) or Barbro (in Knut Hamsun's *Growth of the Soil*), or even characters like Emma Bovary (of Flaubert) or Elodie (of Anatole France's *The Gods Are Athirst*) who, though no sluts, are slaves to passion. 'A slut', 'a slut', cried Arthur Fenwick in Maugham's

play *Our Betters*, when his mistress Pearl had been discovered locked up in the tea-house with young Tony. Maugham gives a satirical picture of a frivolous and flippant society where almost every woman is a potential slut. Ruth's world is radically different and she is certainly no coarsely sexual, vulgar, immoral woman who easily sells her body. Robert realized before his death that Ruth was a hapless, foolish girl more sinned against than sinning. She and her husband, both foolish and ill-starred, suffered acutely for their folly and were chastened and mellowed by their suffering and so, rewarded in the long run. Rob finds his goal, a higher beatitude through death, while Ruth, mundane and unimaginative, finds domestic peace in a union with Andy.

The father, James Mayo, is not merely typical of the New England farmers. His blatantly possessive attitude towards his sons and towards his landed property, as also his primitive, unrelenting fury would appear neither melodramatic nor unnatural to those who are in close touch with the simple, unsophisticated village farmers of the other parts of the world, notably of India. And the soft, feeble, timid, self-denying character of his old wife is still quite a familiar sight in our country, probably, also elsewhere, despite the world-wide suffragette movement. The ambivalence of human mind is a universal fact. Mrs. Mayo rightly points out that it was Mayo's inability to forgive Andrew openly that had broken his heart and precipitated his death. The outer conflict of the plot is supplemented by the inner conflict in almost all the characters.

Conflict and contrast largely determine the pattern of the play. Extrovert Andy is a foil to the introvert Rob, Mrs. Mayo—tender, wistful, refined, and delicate—sets off not merely James Mayo—aggressive, coarse, hard-headed—but also the ever-fretful, self-centred Mrs. Atkins. The child Mary with her simple purity and innocence is a living commentary on the artificiality and guilt that have crept into the conjugal relationship of her parents. Nature herself has a dual role in the play. She is a hard task-mistress enjoining duty and labour, but she is also the contrary—the abiding homeland of beauty, leisure, freedom, and truth. The horizon of *Beyond the Horizon* becomes clear and sun-lit when the clouds that threatened to engulf it pass away. The end of the story uniting Andrew with Ruth answers the need of the drama itself. Tragic errors have no doubt been committed, but Aristotle's Hamartia has been followed by Anagnorisis or recognition. The frail, erring human beings have passed through the ordeal of penance, recognized their errors and been redeemed.

Anna Christie—A Difference

Anna Christie, evolved out of the one-Actor *Chris*, is also a folk-play with this difference that the sailors here have replaced the farmers. And what a difference! It is a sharp transition into a new, stark, grim world of which the principal occupations seem to be dissipation and debauchery. In his *Three Voices of Poetry*, Eliot points out how in a poetic drama, the voices of the author and the character are sometimes in unison. 'It ain't your fault, and it ain't mine, and it ain't his neither. We're all poor nuts, and things happen, and we just get mixed in wrong, that's all', Anna says to Chris, and practically sums up O'Neill's philosophy.

The land in *Beyond the Horizon* has a dual role: it summons us to work, it also opens up a vista into the realm of beauty and freedom. In *Anna Christie*, the sea and the fog both corrupt and redeem. As forces of destruction, they ruin Chris, and as creative, re-generative powers, they save and bring ecstasy and freedom to Anna, as they are found doing to Edmund, O'Neill's *alter*

ego in his posthumous, autobiographical play *Long Day's Journey into Night.*

In the first Act of *Anna Christie* at Johnny-the-Priest's saloon at New York, there is hardly any bawdy roistering or drinking brawl. There is hearty, *jovial,* boisterous fun where everybody is everybody else's friend. And the play is a strong plea for friendship, understanding, and sympathy. Anna's appearance gives Marthy her 'number' immediately. But the dialogue shows that belonging as she does to Marthy's profession, she is pining for a sea-change. The deeper aspect of her character is revealed when she breaks down at the irony that her father takes her to be innocent and unsophisticated. She breaks into a sob and it should be an uncontrollable paroxysm of grief when represented on the stage. The play is replete with the finest examples of irony. 'One glass don't go to your head, Ay promise' and many other speeches have a Sophoclean ring, for in Sophocles, words used for irony are always true in a grim sense never intended by the speaker.

''T is the strumpet's plague to beguile many and be beguiled by one', said Iago, a shrewd observer of mankind. Those who are acquainted with the works of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, eminent Bengali novelist, find nothing new in Anna's metamorphosis. To dismiss Anna's love as spurious, and the happy ending of the play as cheap and unconvincing is to shut one's eyes to her tragic past. For, her sex-life or enforced dissipation, since its inception, had been a matter of loathing and disgust to her. The fog and the sea bewitched her holding out the promise of a new life, an escape from the stuffy, sordid atmosphere of her painful past. To Mat Burke, Anna on a coal-barge with her tantalizing glamour was a mermaid. To Anna, Burke—handsome, healthy, rising from the romantic sea—was an Apollo. Pity strengthened the romantic love as it did in the case of Desdemona. Mat and Anna were both sinners, but both hated sin and were sick of it. In fact, in *Anna Christe*-world, everyone is intrinsically good. Chris, a thorough-going rake seeks a defence against his guilt-consciousness by projecting his failings on 'dat ole devil, sea'. He is in the grip of a higher power of evil against which his spirit is willing to fight, but his flesh is weak. He is to be pitied rather than hated, for his life is a hell paved with good intentions. When Marthy says of Chris, 'he is a good one', it is her genuine sentiment. And even Marthy is 'a good girl', as Chris remarks. She deliberately bluffs that she is still in demand among the younger lads, and hastily leaves Chris to facilitate a happy union between the father and the daughter. *Anna Christie* is a triumph of human goodness, of human soul, of human *being* as opposed to *doing.* In *Beyond the Horizon,* the heroine sinned and is purged through suffering; in *Anna Christie,* sins have not warped the souls of the sinners. It is not *deed* that matters; *Not on the Vulgar mass/Called 'work' must sentence pass.*

The Emperor Jones and The Hairy Ape

The Emperor Jones and *The Hairy Ape* are both highly stylized, flying off at a tangent from the so-called realism. The plays are called *expressionistic* and without attempting to define what German expressionism actually stands for, we may try to find out the distinctive traits of this particular genre, revealed in this couple of plays. O'Neill wrote them in complete ignorance of the German movement, but when mechanistic science no longer regarded matter as a fixed, static entity, and when there were hurry and bustle outside and mental distraction inside making a prolonged concentration impossible, life and the world would naturally appear to a sensitive dramatist as so many fragmentary, kaleidoscopic scenes

constantly shifting and dissolving.

The drama is a co-operative art, and notably in *The Emperor Jones* the total dramatic impact depends on the successful co-operation of acting, stage decor, background accessories including meaningful sounds, rustlings, and silences. The character Jones, the dress and surroundings, the heathen devil-dance in the back-ground with the tom-tom rhythmically beating, the phantasmagoria—all tend to evoke a weird, fearful atmosphere where monologues are no outrage on man's inherent sense of probability. Even William Archer, the fanatical protagonist of realistic drama, conceded that in extreme nervous tension, soliloques, as in *Hamlet*, are *possible*. The situation in which we find Jones in the opening of the drama is typically Shavian, even the cocky, half-serious, half-mocking vein in which he bandies arguments with Smithers is worthy of Shaw. By elaborate and perpetual play-acting, he has not only hypnotized the natives, but also himself. He has become a megalomaniac who has deluded himself into believing in his own myth of silver bullets. His Christian education, astute intelligence and cool reasoning are entirely unavailing against his hyper-sensitive conscience and so, his perfect nonchalance and self-possession are all a pose. As in *God's Chillun Got Wings*, so in *The Emperor Jones*, O'Neill shows his implicit faith in heredity as a potent force in human life. It is not merely the past deadly crimes that leap up before Jones in phantom shapes, but also, the past of the entire Negro tribe. Jones is a victim of *compulsion-neurosis* and is led by his own fear-complex irresistibly to the spot which he tries to avoid. F. L. Lucas, in *Literature and Psychology*, says that Macbeth with his guilty conscience *draws retribution upon himself*, and the witches are mere symbols of the forces that operate in his guilty mind. So does Jones and so are the apparitions of *The Emperor Jones*. In fascinating scenes of beauty and terror, the play embodies the truth that one may break away from jails with impunity but not from the octopus of conscience, one may violate the laws of the state but not those of heredity or gene.

Yank, the hero of *The Hairy Ape* represents, when the play opens, a self-assertive, agressive, fierce, and brutal physical energy, absolutely sure of itself. He is the natural leader of the stokers and pities those who travel 'first cabin' as they are helplessly dependent upon others who labour for them. 'We belong and dey don't. Dat's all'—this sums up his philosophy. He does not take much time to realize that all others belong—the gorilla caged in the zoo and the millionaire President of the Steel Trust and his daughter. Only *he* does not, he is neither on earth nor in heaven, taking 'the worst punches' from both. It is a staggering perception that one should be either an animal or a man, either a gorilla or a Douglas. When Junius Maltby in John Steinbeck's story perceived that 'A growing boy should not be brought up like a little animal', his fool's paradise was shattered to pieces. The tragedy of disillusionment is far more intense in O'Neill's tremendously forceful play.

The characters and the action of *The Hairy Ape* are schematized. The playwright warns that the scenes 'should by no means be naturalistic'. The fireman's forecastle is a 'cage' and the men—cursing, laughing, singing—are 'beasts in a cage'. The civilized white people are 'Neanderthal' men with a 'natural stooping posture', suggesting quadrupeds. The voices of the people are 'chorused,' have 'a brazen metallic quality', and their throats are no superior to 'phonograph horns'. It is a picture of human beings who are partly *beast* and partly *machine*. The play has frankly a social significance and once happened to enjoy popularity in Russia. But Long, the Trade Unionist and the members of the I. W. W.

who abuse Yank as a 'brainless ape' and an *agent provocateur* are as ridiculous as the wistfully romantic and rhapsodical Paddy. There is an undercurrent of satire in the play though it closes on a crescendo of tragic emotion. It has been given the sub-title of *The Comedy of Ancient and Modern Life*, because the ancients or our savage forefathers whom Yank represents, and the moderns represented by Mildred with her absurd, hollow pose, or the Fifth Avenue plutocrats with their extreme affectation are all indulging in antics. Yank is a human gorilla, his love or hate is all of the blood, even his thinking is nothing cerebral for the gigantic gorilla is also shown squatting like *The Thinker* of Rodin. Yank is forcefully drawn as an individual, but he is a symbol of not merely the under-dogs or the have-nots, but also of the missing anthropological species that was post-monkey but pre-man. O'Neill makes an audacious excursion into a stage of life out of which the evolution of the earliest Negro, the forefather of Emperor Jones was a distinct progress towards civilization.

The Great God Brown

These two expressionistic plays have rich, symbolic overtones, but *The Great God Brown* with its complete distortion of reality is frankly symbolical. O'Neill here penetrates boldly into what he calls 'behind-life', and yet, his symbols are not merely, as he claims, 'recognisable human beings', but instinct with life and individuality. The facile metamorphosis of one character into another by the donning and doffing of masks, and the various purposes for which the mask-machinery has been used, infringe verisimilitude. But the grosser laws of realistic probability are hardly applicable to the shifting shadow-world of symbols, whether of Tagore or of Yeats or of Maeterlinck. The Prologue and the Epilogue of *The Great God Brown* stretch out the time and space dimensions of the play making the events a tiny bubble on the ocean of eternity and showing (as Bennet and Knoblock show in *Milestones*) that through all generations and through all the march of events, human minds and their passions and problems remain intrinsically the same. And so remain the eternal verities—youth and romance, beauty of nature, undying life and love.

Dion, essentially spiritual and poetic, with a 'child-like religious faith in life becomes 'the bad boy Pan',—sensual, jealous, cynical—when he wears the *persona* or the mask. Billy Brown's malicious treatment of Dion, a budding artist at the age of four, combined with his father's tyranny and Dion's own essentially artistic temperament in developing in him vanity, ruthlessness, auto-eroticism which, as C. G. Jung tells us, the artists and the neglected, illegitimate children often develop (Jung's *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*). The real Dion loves Margaret who alone could infuse life into his weak, introverted self. But Margaret loves the sensual Pan, the Dionysus in Dion, to wit, the masked self of Dion and not his essential self which is Saint Anthony. A weak woman is invariably attracted by a He-man; so was Ibsen's Solveig enamoured of wild Peer Gynt and Margaret's name-sake in Goethe's *Faust* of whom O'Neill claimed his heroine to be a 'direct descendant' infatuated by the boon companion of Mephistopheles.

O'Neill's concept of the ideal woman involves two complementary aspects. She must have, as Margaret has with her mask on, 'the abstract quality of a Girl', a sweet, tender love for all and sundry, but she must also incarnate (as does Margaret without the mask) intensely personal, devoted passion for her one true beloved. Besides, as Ibsen's Solveig in *Peer Gynt*, O'Neill's ideal woman is both a loving wife

and a loving mother to the man she passionately loves.

In *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, C. G. Jung draws an elaborate distinction between the individual and the persona, and beyond question, Jung's theory exercises a great influence upon O'Neill. Margaret's mask, as the tragedy develops, no longer remains the symbol of the abstract Girl, but serves a different dramatic purpose. The mask become a masquerade, a brave optimistic attitude, worn to hide Margaret's inner torments. Throughout their career, the lovers, Dion and Margaret, play at cross-purposes; for, while Margaret in love belongs not to the dirty earth but to the moon, the Dionysus in Dion being a burlesque of the real Dion capers like a monkey in the moon. It is only when Dion was dying that he realized that Margaret's dissolving softeness needed to be supported by strong, virile love. Dion's so-called masterpiece, the design of the Cathedral was a deliberate, colossal mockery; for, he termed it the 'First Supernatural Bank' that stood for 'the immortality of the moral belly'. Who can deny that the tycoons are keen on investing money not only in the banks of Wall Street, but also in the banks of heaven by purchasing religious merits, so that both the here and the hereafter may be equally assured? And who does not know that all that the people care about is their belly and not their souls, and the all-too-materialistic prigs flaunt their soulless cheap ethics which are poles asunder from spiritual elevation?

Brown was no Marco of *Marco Millions*. By worshipping the God of Success and resolutely denying Pan, he went partly against his inherited instinct, for his father was a little wild and romantic. When in the mask of Dion Brown loves Margaret, she feels him to be much warmer, much more full-blooded than Dion; for Brown was manlier. But loving by proxy literally tears him to pieces, and the most cynical and painful utterances in the play are Brown's, not Dion's. 'Man is born broken. He lives by mending. The grace of God is glue!' So, life is all patch-work,' all a make-believe; true love, ideal happiness are unattainable. There are both irony and poetic justice in making Brown who bullied Dion in his childhood, undergo the same purgatory as Dion. Reclining on Cybel, Brown realizes on the eve of his death that peace can be had only through suffering. He symbolizes a return to Christian faith in resurrection after crucifixion, a faith in a seasonal revival of life after death enshrined in the primitive myths and rituals.

Cybel, called the 'Mother Earth', is really the Phrygian nature-goddess Cybele, the daughter of the sky and the earth. She represents the dual function of the primordial impulses. The primitive, dark instincts, unsocial and immoral, if properly canalized will be sublimated into the highest creative energies of man. They are the fountain-head of the best and the worst in human beings and the best is imbedded in the worst. Cybel is thus a sensual blonde girl gratifying purely animal impulses, and is also 'chewing gum like a sacred cow' representing the mellow wisdom of the accumulated experience of the earth and the profound calm of the eternal verities. One recalls George Meredith who knew that man must unite with his intelligence the intuitions of the heart and the soul, he must respond to the call of the Earth Mother, the sacred fountain of health and wisdom. At the close of the play, the name *Man* has been given to Brown, because he is no longer the great God of Success, but has combined in himself all the qualities of a complete man—healthy, go-ahead materialism leading to worldly success, animal passion, and a lofty spiritual enlightenment. It is by his calm death that Brown could design the 'Temple of Man's

Soul' which Dion had wanted him to do. The play, *The Great God Brown*, is O'Neill's story of 'Man in Search of a Soul'. And the Soul is discovered through suffering and death.

O'Neill's Magnum Opus: Mourning Becomes Electra

Mourning Becomes Electra, O'Neill's *magnum opus*, a trilogy, is really a monumental work modelled admittedly on the classical Electra plays. But to one not versed in the classics, this stupendous tragedy would suggest Dostoevsky's world of crime and punishment, of lust, treachery, horror, murder, and inevitably, also of *Macbeth*, for the kinship of the Russian master with the author of *Macbeth* has been noticed by many, including Dover Wilson and Wilson Knight. It is a world where there is darkness *without* and *within* the protagonist's soul, where evil stalks about in the murk and brings its own retribution. Everything here is on a grand, colossal scale and the protagonists, Christine and Lavinia, mother and daughter, are both caught up in the violent whirlpool of their uncontrollable passions, as inexorable as the Fates or the weird sisters. In *Desire under the Elms*, the mother throttles the son, in *Mourning Becomes Electra*, the wife murders the husband ; and in each case, the murderer is goaded by sexual urge. Lust plays, it seems, a larger role in *Desire* than in *Mourning*. But Cabot's character (in *Desire*) has something of the rigid austerity of the Patriarchs of the Old Testament, and his tragic disillusion with its chastening influence—the grand finale, with Cabot realizing that God is hard and lonesome, and with Eben and Abbie, in a sort of spiritual exaltation gazing at the rising sun—sloughts off all that is carnal and sordid.

Miss Edith Hamilton in *The Great Age of Literature* has noted in detail how the atmosphere of Macbeth's castle and Agamemnon's palace are the same. Both O'Neill in *Mourning Becomes Electra* and Jean-Paul Sartre in his Electra-play, *The Flies* take their cue obviously from Aeschylus and Sophocles and while Sartre makes the entire city filthy, it is only the tomb-like, sinister quality of the Mannon House that has been repeatedly stressed by O'Neill. The Mannon House is also reminiscent of Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, for the Mannons and the Rosmers have both their own 'way of thinking', and the damned Mannons, like the Rosmers, neither laugh nor cry. Fate, Pride (Hubris) as also the overwhelming Curse *motif* are, of course, present in *Mourning*, but they do not inexorably determine the course of events as in the classical plays ; for, here at the root of all the crimes is sex. In the classics, the brother does not kill himself nor does the sister undertake a life-long penance. On the other hand, after a spell of agony, both marry and are, presumably, happy. In O'Neill, when Lavinia (the counter-part of Electra) flings herself upon Peter (counter-part of Pylades whom Electra married) but cries out, 'Take me Adam!', she at once realizes that Peter cannot substitute Adam, and that the ghost of Adam has been relentlessly haunting her and so she declines to marry, and decides to entomb herself in the gloomy Mannon House 'until the curse is paid out'. Penance, we may be reminded, is the theme of Eliot's Orestes-story *The Family Reunion*, and though weak persons do repent in Sartre's Electra-play, *The Flies*, a stout rejection of penance, is its avowed theme.

Clytemnestra has at least two grave charges against Agamemnon in extenuation of her crime, viz. the callous sacrifice of Iphigenia and his own 'harlotries'. Even in Sartre, Agamemnon is the 'old lecherer'. But the only crime of which Christine holds Ezra and Vinnie guilty is snatching

away her cry-baby Orin. Casually, she also remarks that Ezra was silent and mysterious. Whatever O'Neill may say in his 'Notes', *the play's the thing* and in the play itself, there is nothing to vindicate her mad, reckless, devouring passion for Adam Brant. As in *Macbeth* or the classical plays, *Peripeteia* plays an important role. The voluptuous, middle-aged, sex-obsessed woman kills her trustful husband for the sake of her passion, and succeeds only in destroying the object of her passion. Brant is burnt up, as it were, by the volcanic fire of her criminal, implacable passion. As in *Macbeth* or the *Moralities*, the conflict between good and evil leads inevitably to the complete defeat of the latter.

Captain Brant has no semblance of relation with the shadowy, craven bully Aigisthos of the Greek tragedies. In Sartre's play Aigistheus is like Karl Capek's robots, without feeling, incapable of laughter and tear, a mere instrument of *order*. O'Neill's Brant is intensely human, vibrant with a sense of honour and a romantic love for the sea and the ship. While starting with hatred for Ezra's wife, he falls over head and ears in love with her. 'The son is an exile ... always dreaming of his wrongs ... and driven by the old savage doctrine ... of the duty and manliness of revenge'—these words of Gilbert Murray in describing Euripides' Orestes were really applicable to O'Neill's Brant before he had fallen in love. O'Neill's Orestes, i.e. Orin, is radically different. He is a neurotic, and with the neurosis accentuated, becomes a sex-pervert, makes his sister, his mother—surrogate, and ultimately ends his life by an ignominious suicide. To quote Gilbert Murray again, 'He (Orestes) is ... a man subject to overpowering impulses and to fits of will-less brooding. Lastly, he is very young, and is swept away by his sister's intenser nature'. The description is fairly applicable to Orin. It appears that Euripides' Orestes has been split up into two characters—both sons—in O'Neill's trilogy, with this divergence from the original that the motive force of the action of these sons is neither an oracle nor a devotion to father foully murdered, but a passionate attachment to their mothers.

Clytemnestra, Lady Macbeth, and Christine have, *mutatis mutandis*, the same overwhelming personality and the same evil energy. Lavinia, remarkably alike in appearance with her mother, is equally so in temperament—jealous, greedy, obssesively possessive, completely free from scruples and guided by uncontrolled passions. But so long as the imperious mother was alive, Vinnie was forced to repress herself. In Sartre's Electra, a free, youthful, light-hearted girl is gradually transformed into a guilty, harried, self-tortured woman. In O'Neill's Lavinia, a sombre, brooding, *apparently* puritanic woman is turned into a passionate, free, and frank lover of life. Macbeth was blind to the enemy *without* and felt secure from the attacks of all men of women born. Lavinia was blind to the enemy *within* and felt secure, once her brother, the only witness of her crime, had killed himself. But the enemy within—her passion for Adam Brant—proved more powerful than any external foe. Defeated by her enemies, viz. her own children, Christine shot herself, and a dazzling rocket was thus blown out. But the daughter, with all her likeness to the mother, had to die by inches, for of outward enemy she had none. She had to secure ransom from her conscience. The Mannon House is repeatedly spoken of as a tomb. It becomes a tomb of the dead members of the family, and what is worse, a living tomb of its last surviving member. Legions and legions of fighting earthly forces are no match for the still small voice within. O'Neill tells us that it is here in our conscience that

the Fates or the Witches work, it is here that the cosmic moral order asserts itself.

The World of Lazarus Laughed

The world of *Lazarus Laughed* is a criss-cross of religion and barbarism, of godliness and bestiality, of the spirit and the flesh, of the real and the transcendental. Lazarus rises above the ugliness of the world but while the Messiahs come and go, the Caligulas go on for ever. Idealists would possibly have ended the play with Lazarus' laughter losing itself 'into the infinity' and the stirring proclamation that there is no death. O'Neill ends it in a note of cynical realism with the grotesque antics of Caligula accompanying the words—'Men forget'. Yeats' play *The Unicorn from the Stars* opens with Martin's intimations of immortality in a trance, and terminates in the full realization of immortality in an apocalyptic vision, and consequent physical death of Martin. O'Neill, on the contrary, commences his play with the physical death and spiritual transfiguration of Lazarus. In Yeats' play, the picture of the real world is shot and transfused with the light of the unreal, so much so that even the brutality of a socio-political uprising is not brutal enough. We find in Yeats ignorant, superstitious, groping, and blundering humanity, in O'Neill sinister, insidious, foul, distorted specimens of mankind. In Yeats, there is a poetic contrast between the two worlds, but hardly any dramatic conflict; for Martin, the hero of the play, is above it and none fight or conspire against him; even the constables are not permitted to assault him. In O'Neill, it is an intensely human and dramatic conflict between two opposing worlds. So parents fight against children and kill one another, the lover kills her rival and also, her adored (Pompeia kills Miriam and Lazarus); fear, jealousy, and conspiracy abound. Lazarus has risen above suffering, decay, and death; he rejuvenates as fast as his wife Miriam ages. Her mother's heart bleeds for the suffering humanity; for, they are all her children, and while all others are infected by the triumphant laughter of Lazarus, Miriam never laughs. Thus, both the earth and the heaven seem equally real—one silhouetted against the other. A Jacob's ladder seems to link the frail and ugly earth with the resplendent heaven, and the angels are seen not only ascending but also descending.

His Other Plays

Strange Interlude has a strange theme and a strange technique. A ceaseless experimentor, O'Neill tried the interior monologue or stream-of-consciousness method confined to psychological novels in the theatre. He succeeded in making a theatre-going public interested in the tortuous and complicated processes of the human mind, but the purely literary or dramatic quality of the play can hardly account for the phenomenal popularity it once enjoyed. Two other plays, *Dynamo* and *Days without End* written practically in the same technique show the necessity of faith in human life, faith in a loving, forgiving God.

The Iceman Cometh deals with social derelicts and reminds one of Gorky's *The Lower Depths*. Satin's fulminations against lies and pipe dreams, and panegyric on truth are echoed by Hickman, but Hickman is the hero of O'Neill's play whereas Satin or the other moral preacher Luka is hardly integral to Gorky's plot. Gorky's picture is of a stupid, futile world where even the actor's suicide is sudden, almost accidental. In O'Neill, Parritt, a sinner kills himself, and Hickey hands himself over to the police as an escape from the clutches of the 'Furies' within human mind. *The Iceman Cometh* may thus be said to be O'Neill's *Family Reunion*. But the play

lacks dramatic verve and action. Moral messages have been sought to be imparted through enunciation. The play is thus, at best, a *tour de force*.

The last play to be published before O'Neill's death is *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. Deep and tender pathos, poetic rhapsody, low pagan, Synge-like humour, sparkling witticisms, a sense of the inscrutable mystery of life, of the inconsequence of human actions, of the essential nobility of the human soul and the chastening influence of suffering—all these combine to invest the play with a unique grandeur. Andre Gide, in his *Dostoevsky*, remarks that the Russian master's conception of life sprang from 'a contact between the Gospels and Buddhism, the Asiatic mind'. Christ teaches us to suffer and Buddha to renounce. Suffering and renunciation are the creed of O'Neill in *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. 'Christ, I ought to suffer!' cries out James, the sinner. Josie renounces her lower cravings and this voluntary renunciation—a complete physical separation—rounds off the spiritual union of James and Josie, and lifts the drama to a higher plane of sublimity. At the close of the drama, there is a note of despair, but there is also a sense of deep spiritual harmony and peace in which all earthly discords are hushed. Nina of *Strange Interlude* has only physical exhaustion, and her 'afternoon love' for Marsden involves neither Christian remorse nor Buddhistic renunciation. Harry of *The Family Reunion* renounces the world as an act of atonement, but it is for O'Neill's Josie to find love's fulfilment in the supreme virtue of renunciation. Tagore's faith that the cup of union becomes brimful with the pang of separation is applicable even to the vulgar society of *A Moon for the Misbegotton*.

Conclusion

To sum up, O'Neill's vision of reality encompasses both the real and the ideal, the phenomena and the noumena. The visionary symbolists are often blind to reality, and their flight to a never-never land is an escape from the actual to the ideal. The positivists, on the other hand, confine themselves to hard, tangible fact. O'Neill's *weltanschauung* comprehends reality in all its variety and complexity, surface reality, depth reality (i.e. the unconscious), and the higher spiritual reality. Lazarus is neither an abstraction nor a negative. A cross of Darwin and Will-to-Power may constitute a Nietzschean Superman; O'Neill's Superman is one who will rise to the Divine or on whom the Divine will descent—a very close approximation of the Supreman of Sri Aurobindo.

He gives us living men grappling with living problems of the soul and the mind. For the erring and the fallen, he brims over with sympathy; but, he never forgets that the wages of sin is death and hates sin. He hates both puritanism and dissipation, for both are a denial of a full-blooded life and happiness. God's good and bad world is his own, and, in his dramas, there is 'God's plenty'.

TWO DECADES OF DVC

AMIYA KUMAR GANGULY

Sri Amiya Kumar Ganguly, Editor, United States Information Service, Calcutta, gave the following lecture at the Institute in July 1968.

CREATED as an independent agency on July 7, 1948, closely on the lines of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the United States, the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) harnesses the waters of the Damodar River and its tributaries for the purposes of flood control, irrigation, and power generation. Subsidiary aims are navigation, soil conservation, pisciculture, and promotion of public health.

What has happened in the valley is a tale of unremitting toil to make a rapid forward progress. It is a story of how waters once wasted and destructive have been tamed and now resuscitate worn-out lands to revolutionize the life of the people.

THE PROJECT

The Damodar Valley project is the first large job of mechanized construction in India and is doubtless the largest one taking a unified development.

The TVA covers an area of approximately 44,000 square miles, the DVC about 9,000 square miles. The Damodar Valley is rich in minerals and has large deposits of copper and kyanite, iron ore, coal, mica, chromite, fireclay, and china-clay.

Following a visit to the Damodar Valley in May, 1951, General R. A. Wheeler, Engineering Advisor to the World Bank, observed: 'It is an amazing project, located in the most important part of India.'

The project comprises four storage dams —Tilaiya, Konar, Maithon and Panchet; three thermal power stations—Bokaro, Durgapur, and Chandrapura; three hydroelectric power stations—Tilaiya, Maithon, and Panchet; an irrigation barrage at Durgapur with canals and distributaries, and an extensive power transmission grid.

DAMODAR TAMED

The story of a great change in the Damodar Valley begins with the Damodar River, now put to work for the benefit of six million people of West Bengal and Bihar. Although it does not match the mighty rivers of India from the point of view of size, its flood flow is heavy.

Rising in the Kamarpet Hill of the Chotanagpur plateau in Bihar, the Damodar winds its 336-mile way to the Hooghly River about 35 miles below Calcutta. The Bihar-Bengal boundary line serves like a watershed dividing the basin into two distinct sub-areas. Upstream from this boundary, the Damodar receives numerous feeders and the drainage area is composed of uplifted, eroded surfaces and submontane headwaters territory. Downstream is the West Bengal alluvium where the river throws out a number of distributaries. The periodic floods have worn down the top soil of the upper region and devastated the fertile plains of West Bengal, with a consequent decline in the agricultural yield.

THE FIRST PHASE

The first phase of the Damodar Valley project has been completed. Four mighty dams—Tilaiya Dam on the Barakar River, Konar Dam on the Konar River, Maithon

Dam on the Barakar River, and Panchet Hill Dam on the Damodar River—tower high above the river beds that wind through the region. Hydro-electric power stations at Tilaiya, Maithon, and Panchet dams together with the thermal power stations at Bokaro, Durgapur, and Chandrapura send power humming along a network of about 1,000 miles of transmission lines.

The water discharged from the dams is diverted into a vast network of canals through a gigantic barrage located at Durgapur. This barrage forms the heart of the lower valley's irrigation system, and supplies water to 1,550 miles of irrigation and navigation canals. Its principal canal is navigable, and provides an 85-mile 'highway' which joins the Hooghly River, 35 miles upstream of Calcutta.

Completed ahead of schedule in April, 1955, the 2,271-feet long and 38-feet high barrage is located on the boundary line separating Bankura and Burdwan Districts in West Bengal. It is opposite Durgapur Railway Station on the Eastern Railway. The upstream distance from the barrage to the Panchet Hill Dam is 38 miles and to the Maithon Dam is 43 miles. The bridge over the barrage furnishes a vital link between Burdwan and the Bankura Districts.

The DVC supplied water to 6.90 lakh acres of kharif crops and 40,000 acres of rabi crops during 1966-67. Last April, it saved about 15,000 acres of boro and high-yield paddy in the Hooghly and Burdwan districts by keeping up supply of irrigation water until the end of the third week of the month, though such supply is usually stopped at the end of March.

In 1964, the operation and maintenance of the Durgapur Barrage and the irrigation system were handed over to the Government of West Bengal on an agency basis.

The Dams

The four dams the DVC has built provide flood control, irrigation, and electric power.

The Tilaiya Dam with the attached hydro-electric station, completed in 1953, impounds the Barakar River at a stream bed elevation of 1,135 feet above the sea level at a point about 130 miles above its confluence with the Damodar. The first all-concrete dam constructed in India, it is located in a narrow gorge with steeply rising banks in Hazaribagh District, Bihar, about 261 miles by road north-west of Calcutta and 14 miles from the Kodarma Railway Station on the Grand Chord line of the Eastern Railway. The dam is 99 feet high and 1,200 feet long. On the upstream face of the dam spreads a 22.8 square-mile reservoir. The catchment area is 380 square miles.

The Konar Dam stands on the Konar River at a stream bed elevation of 1,254 feet above sea level in Hazaribagh District, 23 miles above its confluence with the Damodar. A composite structure with a concrete spillway, the dam was completed in September, 1955. It is about 32 miles east of Hazaribagh Town and connected by good roads with two railway stations—Hazaribagh Road on the Grand Chord Line and Gumia on the Barka Kana Loop Line of the Eastern Railway. The dam is 160 feet high and 12,487 feet long, and the catchment area above the dam is 385 square miles.

The reservoir covers 10 square miles and total reservoir capacity to the top of the gates is 2.37 lakh acre-feet. It provides cooling water for the Bokaro Thermal Power Station (19 miles below the Konar Dam on the Konar River) and stores water for irrigation in the lower valley.

Located on the Barakar River in Dhanbad District, Bihar, the Maithon Dam is seven miles above the confluence of the Damodar and its main tributary, the

Barakar, and 43 miles above the Durgapur Barrage. Kumardhubi Railway Station on the Grand Chord Line of the Eastern Railway is only three miles from Maithon.

One of the two key dams in the DVC programme, the Maithon Dam is of rolled earth construction with a concrete spillway at one end and an underground hydro-electric powerhouse at the other. The dam rises 164 feet above river-bed and lengthwise comes to 15,892 feet. The reservoir covers 41 square miles and its capacity to the top of the gates is 11.04 lakh acre-feet. The catchment area is 2,430 square miles. Flood control and irrigation constitute the primary purposes of this dam.

Built on the Damodar in Dhanbad District, Bihar, at a point of its debouching into the plains of the lower valley, The Panchet Hill Dam is located about five miles south of Chirkunda Railway Station on the Grand Chord Line of the Eastern Railway, three miles upstream from the confluence of the Damodar and the Barakar, and 38 miles above the Durgapur Barrage.

The Panchet Hill Dam is 134 feet high above river bed and 22,155 feet or about 4½ miles long. The largest of the four dams, it is a composite earth-cum-concrete structure. The reservoir covers 59 square miles and impounds 12.14 lakh acre-feet of water. The catchment area above the dam is 4,234 square miles.

With the completion of the Maithon and the Panchet Hill Dams, the lower valley is assured of considerable flood protection. There have been at least six occasions when the peak discharge, if unregulated, would have been far in excess of the flow of 3 lakh cusecs recorded in the 1943 flood, which did enormous damage and disrupted rail and road communications to Calcutta. In 1950, the Government of West Bengal assessed the damage caused by the 1943 flood; the total loss at 1950 prices was estimated at Rs. 7,96,00,000. One can easily compute the far greater loss that might have been caused by subsequent floods, which would have exceeded the investment in the dams.

Power System

The DVC planned its power system as part of the scheme for the unified development of the valley. It entered the field of power supply on commercial lines in 1952 when it commenced supply with power purchased from the Sindri Fertilizer Factory's power station. The DVC's own generating stations commenced power supply from the following year. The growth of the system has been spectacular and it keeps on growing at a fast rate. During the first year of operation, the DVC sold about 79 million units of electrical energy and earned a revenue of about Rs. 41 lakhs. During the year ending March, 1967, 3,717 million KWHs were sold and a revenue of Rs. 21.50 crores was earned.

The DVC power system is the largest in the country and it generates over 11 per cent of the country's total power output. The present capacity of the DVC system is about 1061 MW from the thermal power stations at Bokaro, Durgapur, and Chandrapura and the hydro-electric stations at Maithon, Panchet Hill, and Tilaiya.

The Thermal Power Station at Bokaro was commissioned in 1953 and at Durgapur in 1960. The first and second units of the Chandrapura Thermal Power Station were put on stream in 1964 and 1965. Its third unit is also ready.

All the power stations of the DVC system are connected to a 132 KV grid. The grid consists of 862 route miles of 132 KV transmission lines. There are also 119 route miles of 33 KV lines for supplying the consumers at convenient points. Apart from the Tata Iron & Steel Company, the Indian Iron & Steel Company and the

Associated Cement Company, the DVC does not supply power directly to any private industrial unit. It supplies bulk power to the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation, the State Electricity Boards of West Bengal and Bihar, the Sijua (Jharia) Electric Supply Co., and the Dishergarh Electric Supply Co., who are responsible for distribution to individual consumers in their licensed areas. The DVC also supplies power for electrification of the Eastern and South-Eastern Railways.

The DVC power stations are interconnected with the Coke-oven power station of the West Bengal Government, the thermal power staion of the Sindri Fertilizer Factory and the hydro-electric station at Rihand in U.P. All these power stations operating side by side form the nucleus of a zonal grid system in the eastern region. Power from all these generating units are fed into the DVC system for utilization in the principal industrial region of the country.

The major industries located in Jamshedpur, Durgapur, Burnpur, and Kulti areas draw power from the DVC system. The coal mines of Jharia and Ranigunj which produce about 80% of the coal of the country operate with power supplied by the DVC. The only copper extraction plant in the country at Ghatsila is also a DVC client.

Andrew M. Komora

Late Mr. Andrew M. Komora, an unassuming American, joined the DVC as Chief Engineer on December 1, 1950. He brought his engineering experience of the Tennesse Valley and a similar river-valley scheme in South America to the completion of the first phase of the Damodar Valley project, and retired in May 1959 after more than eight years of service. Without a trace of fanfare, he had helped the DVC to move ahead, concentrating most of his efforts on the four dams—Tilaiya, Konar, Maithon, and Panchet. In addition to his work with the dams, one of his assignments was to weld a group of young Indian engineers into a smooth working team.

Komora had to plough through a lot of initial difficulties to bring about a marked speed-up in the industrial and agricultural face-lift of the Damodar Valley. Despite the welter of complicating factors, the construction of four dams plus the Bokaro Thermal Power Station, and the Durgapur Barrage with a network of canals commanding nearly a million acres had been completed in a decade.

Komora had added greatly to his credit by being modest about his own contribution to the DVC project. Asked about the Indian engineers, in whom he infused the confidence to meet a new challenge, he observed: 'I am proud of my colleagues.'

As to my question whether the four dams were fully adequate to meet the needs for flood control in the valley, Mr. Komora replied, 'The present four dams now constructed by the DVC will control any flood on record. As an example, a flood in September 1959 slightly higher than anything on record came down the valley and was successfully controlled by the four dams. This prevented the town of Burdwan and the surrounding area from being completely flooded out. However, I would like to emphasize that the present four dams will not control a flood, which, we engineers anticipate, may come down the valley of approximately one million cusecs. It will be necessary to complete the balance of the DVC programme by constructing additional four dams.'

In Komora's death six years ago, DVC lost one of its closest associates. But his zeal and enthusiasm in tackling challenging difficulties will remain a source of inspiration for generations to come.

Soil Conservation

The Soil Conservation Department of the DVC was set up in Hazaribagh in 1949 to deal with the problems of soil erosion in the upper catchment area of 4.4 million acres. In this area, ruthless exploitation of forests, over-grazing, and improper land management have exposed the surface of the soil to the beating rains. It has resulted in the erosion of soil by run-off water, silting of the stream beds, and frequent floods in the lower basin.

Although the four dams already built across the Damodar and its tributaries have considerably reduced the flood menace for the time being, they will not be in a position to do so for long; because, the silt which has been depositing in the river beds is now being trapped in the dams. That is why the DVC has been entrusted with the task of reducing the silting rate of the reservoirs through soil conservation measures in the catchment area.

According to Dr. Hugh H. Bennett, distinguished U.S. soil scientist, soil conservation is 'the most efficient known system of using and managing land for maximum profitable production on a sustained basis'. This is being done by the DVC which has put a premium on the crop production in this programme. It has been helping the farmers to raise a crop from their eroding lands after terracing the area. In addition, it has introduced methods for raising better crops like boro paddy, arhar, maize, groundnut, etc. in place of the low yielding millets like gondli, marua, and an oil seed crop saraguja.

In 1950, the Department set up the Soil Conservation Experiment Station on a 355-acre plot at Deochanda, 24 miles from Hazaribagh, to work out effective techniques of soil and water conservation for the eroded and gully-ridden region. This Station advises local farmers on the best methods to adopt on their lands.

The entire upper valley has been air-photographed to formulate an intergrated plan of proper soil and water conservation.

Soil conservation surveys are conducted for grouping lands on the basis of their characteristics. The laboratory of the Department has carried out investigations on the nutrient status of the soils from different localities, and also carried out several manurial experiments with different crops.

The Engineering Division of the Department designs and supervises the building of structures for retarding run-off, disposing excess run-off, trapping silt and retarding flood. In addition, it carries out hydrological investigations to collect basic data for designing engineering structures with more precision and economy.

A 210-acre Experiment Demonstration Farm, established at Panagarh (West Bengal) in 1956, investigates various agronomical problems of the irrigation farming in the lower valley and conducts experiments concerning crop rotations, intensity of cropping, physico-chemical changes in the soil, sub-soil water levels, and drainage problems of perennial irrigation. The findings of these studies are extended to the farms of this area in collaboration with the Agricultural Department of the Government of West Bengal.

The Department's farms at Panagarh, Deochanda, Sewai, Urwan, Bundu, Konar, Maithon, and Panchet are also contributing toward the country's food production programme through their continuous research programmes.

By the Third Five Year Plan, a total of 1,06,582 acres in the upper valley has been afforested jointly by the DVC Forestry Section and the Bihar Forest Department. Large-scale planting is being taken up in the denuded forest areas which constitute about 40 per cent of the total forest area. The process of introduction of

improved species of trees ensures effective cover to denuded lands.

All the soil conservation measures aim at maximum and sustained production without waste from any acre of land in the entire watershed. The DVC is very much alive to the waste problem and has drawn up a comprehensive scheme for the treatment of the eroded areas in the upper Damodar watershed.

Check Dams

The plots of land which are heavily gullied are treated by constructing earthen Check Dams across them to hold back the soil which is being washed down from above. These Check Dams impound quite sizable volumes of water along with the silt at places. Some 1,113 such structures have so far been built on an area of 42,000 acres. Already 70 Check Dams have become perennial sources of water.

The Check Dams help in the following ways: (1) the direct storage of water and debris load brought down by flowing water, (2) the increase of the wetted surface area and inducement of the underground or sub-soil storage, and (3) the moderation of flash floods of the stream flow and consequent reduction of the bed and bank erosion in the downstream area.

The most important role the Check Dams have played is in the form of direct storage of debris load and storage of water. It has proved a boon to the local farmers. The capacity of retaining water of these Dams has considerably helped ease water scarcity of the community residing nearby. Constructed with the active cooperation of the villagers, these Dams have also brought a portion of cultivated lands under lift irrigation and augmented the food potential of the area.

The upper valley has but a small irrigation system. The cultivated lands have to depend largely on the monsoon rainfall. The erratic rain has ever been a cause of despair. Much of the rain water comes down in a series of storms and moves down the stream channels. The Check Dams aim at storing at least a portion of the rain for future use of the farmers in times of scarcity. This activity goes a long way toward planning a better water management programme by the farmers without any prejudice to the water yield of large reservoirs.

Finance

'The difficulties of the DVC', Komora once explained to me, 'are infinitely greater than those of the TVA. Practically, all the machinery, both construction and permanent equipment, must be purchased from abroad. Under existing world conditions it is a sellers' market. Requirements must be anticipated well in advance of actual needs. No ready pool of experienced construction engineers was available in India.'

At the request of the DVC, Harvey Slocum, the famed dam expert and former Director of Construction, Bhakra-Nangal Project, paid a visit to the Maithon Dam in April 1955 to review the works. He stated that the overall progress, taking all factors into consideration, was good and that the quality of the work was above average.

These were some of the reasons why the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) singled out the DVC among other river valley projects undertaken in various States of India, as an agency deserving its assistance to offset the shortage of foreign exchange. The first loan was of $ 16.72 million, the second of $ 10.50 million, and the third, $ 22 million.

Besides, the Chandrapura Thermal Power project has received U.S. Government dollar loans totalling $ 41.3 million (Rs. 30.98

crores) plus P.L. 480 rupee loans totalling Rs. 20.07 crores.

In addition to the loans, the P.L. 480 grants have been helping the DVC in a major way by enabling it to provide free soil testing facilities to farmers of the region for better and sustained production from their own lands, to reduce silt-load and to produce more food, fibre, and water.

From the U.S. P.L. 480 funds, the DVC received a grant of Rs. 2.5 crores for soil and water conservation. In terms of work, the grants help in (a) bringing under re-forestation 40,000 acres of denuded forest lands, (b) protecting and improving 16,000 acres of gullied area, and (c) terracing 45,000 acres of sloping uplands. In addition, P.L. 480 grants will also help in (i) soil survey of about 700 sq. miles of the upper catchment area for soil conservation planning, (ii) research work on the utilization of the foreshore area for increased food production, and (iii) analysis of chemical and physical properties of soils.

INSTITUTE NEWS

Symposium on Mahatma Gandhi's Life and Thought

In celebration of Mahatma Gandhi's Birth Centenary, the Institute organized a symposium on 'Mahatma Gandhi's Life and Thought' on Saturday, 26 October 1968, at 6.30 p.m. This was the first of the series of programmes to be held at the Institute during the Centenary Year.

The day's function commenced with an opening song by Srimati Supriti Ghosh. Professor K. N. Sen, M.A., spoke in English on 'Educational Ideas of Mahatma Gandhi', while Sri Man Kumar Sen dwelt in Bengali on '*Atma-Kathay Mahatma*' (Mahatma in his own words). The programme also included the screening of a documentary film on 'The Life of Mahatma'. Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., presided.

Symposium on Sister Nivedita's Life and Thought

The Institute, in celebration of the concluding ceremony of Nivedita Birth Centenary, organized a symposium on 'Sister Nivedita's Life and Thought' on Wednesday, 6 November 1968, at 6.30 p.m. in the Vivekananda Hall.

The participants included Pravrajika Sraddhaprana, Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L., and Srimati Santwana Das Gupta, M.A. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji presided.

The programme concluded with devotional songs by Sri Gautam Bose.

Holy Mother's Birthday

The Holy Mother Sri Sri Sarada Devi's birthday was observed at the Institute on Saturday, 14 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m. at a solemn function held in the Vivekananda Hall.

The programme commenced with '*Matri Bandana*' by Sri Purnendu Roy, which was followed by a talk in Bengali entitled '*Sri Sri Mayer Katha*' (Sayings of the Holy Mother) by Dr. Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil.

The day's function came to a close with a programme of devotional songs by Sri Purnendu Roy, Sri Dhananjoy Bhattacharya, Srimati Sumitra Sen, Srimati Sumitra Mukherjee, Sri Dhiren Bose, Srimati Chabi Bandopadhyay, Srimati Nirmala Misra, and Sri Pankaj Mallick.

Special Lectures

'Two Decades of DVC' was the theme of a special lecture given by Sri Amiya Kumar Ganguly, Editor, United States Information Service, Calcutta, on Monday, 15 July 1968 at 6.30 p.m. Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., B.L., presided. The lecture has been published in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

On Tuesday, 20 August 1968, at 6.30 p.m., Dr. Ram Shankar Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D., Department of Sanskrit, Banaras Sanskrit University gave a special lecture in Bengali on 'Patanjala Yoga Darsan'. Dr. Kalyani Mullick, M.A., Ph.D., presided.

'The Capitals in the History of India'

was the theme of a special lecture given by Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm, Ph.D. on Monday, 23 September 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. Benoy Chandra Sen, M.A., Ph.D., presided.

Professor Wolfgang Leonhard, Visiting Lecturer at the History Department, Yale University, U.S.A., gave a special lecture on 'World Problem Number One: Maintenance of Peace' on Tuesday, 19 November 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Professor K. N. Sen, M.A., presided.

On the occasion of The International Year for Human Rights (1968), the Institute, in collaboration with the International Law Association, Calcutta Centre, specially organized a series of following three lectures entitled 'New Frontiers of International Law':

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice A. N. Roy gave the first lecture on 'The Position of the Individual in International Law' on Monday, 2 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Sri B. R. Sen, formerly Director-General, FAO, presided.

The second lecture on 'Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights' was given by Dr. Bhabatosh Datta, M.A., Ph.D. on Monday, 16 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D., Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, presided.

Sri Bonomali Das, M.A., Barrister-at-Law gave the third and the concluding lecture on 'United Nations and Human Rights: Challenge and Response' on Monday, 6 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Sri Subimal Roy, Barrister-at-Law, presided.

Film Shows

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

i. 21 January 1969: 'He Mahamanab' (Based on the life of Swami Vivekananda) in Bengali.

ii. 4 February 1969: 'Headmaster' in Bengali.

iii. 11 February 1969: 'Sri Sri Tarakeswar' in Bengali.

iv. 25 February 1969: 'Swamiji' in Bengali.

Guests

Among those who stayed at the Institute's International House between April and November 1968 were the following:

Miss D. Gregory of National Science Foundation, from U.S.A.;

Dr. V. V. Serdyuk, Dean of the Faculty of Physics, Odessa, from U.S.S.R.;

Dr. I. I. Yegorov, Professor of Economics, from Moscow;

Professor Yasuaki Nara, Professor of Sanskrit, from Tokyo;

Mr. Gregg Fosse, student from U.S.A. ;

Professor N. P. Klepikov, UNESCO Co-ordinator to the U.G.C., from Moscow ;

Mr. and Mrs. Pravit and their son from Bangkok ;

Professor N. N. Trofimov, Professor of Geology, from U.S.S.R. ;

Dr. G. M. Dobrov, scientist, from U.S.S.R. ;

Dr. A. G. Butkovsky, scientist, from U.S.S.R. ;

Mr. and Mrs. P. M. Monie, Librarian, Psychologist, from Australia ;

Professor Richard Teall, Professor of Philosophy, University of Notre Dame, U.S.A. ;

Mr. M. Sydney Smith, student from Geneva ;

Professor Jack M. Anderson, Professor and Mrs. C. L. Riggs, Professor Jan List Boal, Professor Ancel C. Mewborn, Professor Thomas D. Stickler, and Dr. Arthur G. Rouse, all from U.S.A., Consultants, Summer Institute, Jadavpur University ;

Mr. Geoffrey Ellerby, Chief Inspector, Education, U.K., and Mr. D.T.E. Marjoram, Inspector of Schools, U.K., both Consultants, Summer Institute, Jadavpur University ;

Professor Robert C. Brasted, from U.S.A. ;

Professor and Mrs. G. H. Waynick, from U.S.A.;

Mr. Josef F. Schindling, an engineer from Germany ;

Dr. D. P. Detwiler, U.S. Government Officer on an official tour ;

Professor R. C. Jennison, Professor of Electronics, from England ;

Miss Kristin Gylseth, student from Norway ;

Mrs. Marina Rouse, teacher, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. Lyle C. Hall, teacher, from U.S.A. ;

Madam G. Kolihalova, Research Worker from Moscow ;

A group of 17 members of Stephens College, U.S.A., to attend Seminar ;

A group of 27 members of German Volunteers from West Germany, on a Volunteers' Service to India ;

Dr. J. C. Gille, Professor, from France ;

Mrs. Helen Stute, a tourist from U.S.A. ;

Mrs. Geraldine Bogdanovich, a tourist from U.S.A. ;

Mr. Kenneth J. Jaros, a tourist, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. and Mrs. William J. Moore, a teacher of Religion from U.S.A. ;

Mohammed Nabi Shifai, Head of Biochemistry Department, Kabul ;

Mrs. K. H. Steinkraus with three children, from U.S.A. ;

Miss Sandra Kharny, student from U.S.A. ;

Dr. Marian Edwards, University Lecturer from England ;

Professor Valeri Postnov, UNESCO Expert, from Leningrad University ;

Professor Heinz Kny and Dr. Wolfgang Rocksch, both lecturers from German Democratic Republic, on a study tour ;

Mr. and Mrs. William Samuel from U.S.A. ;

Dr. Sewell P. Champe, Professor of Biology, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. M. G. Lan, student from Malaysia ;

Mr. Cech Vaclav, from Czechoslovakia ;

Professor Jerome Lejeune, Professor of Medicine, from France ;

Miss Joan Silverberg, student from U.S.A. ;

Professor Wernar Gottschalk, Director, Institute of Genetics, University of Bonn ;

Professor (Dr.) C. Pavan, Professor and Head of the Department of Genetics, University of San Paulo, Brazil, and Mrs. Pavan, Assistant Professor of Genetics ;

Professor (Dr.) Erich Wolf, Director, Institute of Genetics, University of Berlin ;

Professor (Dr.) A Vaarama, Professor and Head of the Department of Botany, University of Turbu, Finland ;

Professor (Dr.) Dahmen Moutschen, Assistant Professor of Genetics, University of Liege, Belgium ;

Professor (Dr.) Jean Moutschen, Head of the Department of Genetics, University of Liege, Belgium ;

Professor (Dr.) Barigozzi, Professor of Genetics, University of Milan, Italy, with his wife ;

Professor (Dr.) K. Patau, Professor of Genetics, from U.S.A. ;

Professor (Dr.) Walter S. Flory Babcock, Professor of Botany, from U.S.A. ;

Professor Ivan H. Hunziker, Professor of Genetics, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina ;

Mr. Ali Hebeish, from National Research Centre, Cairo ;

Miss Valrae Raynolds and Miss Sandra Leff, student from U.S.A., on a study tour ;

Miss Lauren Anita Corwin, Research Scholar, from U.S.A. ;

Mrs. Olive M. Gorton, B.B.C. Producer, from Manchester ;

Mr. Nicholas Salt, a student from Manchester ;

Professor D. Rothermund, Professor of History, University of Heidelberg and Mrs. Rothermund ;

Mr. Joel Scherk and Miss Genevieve Gaube, from France ;

Mr. and Mrs. Rouvin Philippe, from France ;

Mr. Roland Douglas Org., from U.S.A. ;

Dr. S. A. Kouzamine, from Moscow ;

Professor (Dr.) Mukhtar Hamza, Under Secretary of State Ministry of Social Affairs, U.A.R., U.N. Consultant ;

Miss Christine E Collins, from England ;

Professor and Mrs. K. Johrnan, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. D. Sokoloski, Teacher, from Canada ;

Dr. S. Swierczkowski, Mathematician, from Poland ;

Mr. W. Kienzle, Engineer, from Germany ;

Professor Janos Ay, Professor, Budapest University, on a study tour ;

Professor Georges Bonn, from U.S.A. ;

Rajguru Vamadeva Muni of Thailand with Mr. N. L. Vishin and Miss Chanthima as a guest of Indian Council for Cultural Relations ;

Mrs. Marleen Boers, from U.S.A. ;

Professor and Mrs. Phillip S. Myers, from U.S.A. ;

Professor and Mrs. Otto A. Uyzhara, from U.S.A. ;

Dr. Maria Silva, from Brazil ;

Dr. L. Sternbach, from Poland, U.N. Official ;

Professor H. L. Strauss, Professor of Chemistry, from U.S.A. ;

Professor (Dr.) M. Pecsi, Professor of Geography, from Budapest ;

Mrs. Stella G. Faussett, from England ;

Mr. Yuzov Okumura, from Japan ;

Professor N. P. Klepikov, UNESCO Expert, from U.S.S.R. ;

Professor Makoto Aramaki, Professor of Geography, from Tokyo ;

Dr. Asher P. Schick, Professor of Geography, from Jerusalem ;

Professor (Dr.) A. J. Wiggers, Professor of Geography, from Amsterdam ;

Mr. F. L. Wattier, UNESCO Expert, from Belgium ;

Mr. and Mrs. James Santucci, from U.S.A. ;

Mrs. Spencer and her son, from Australia.

MARCH CALENDAR

(*All Functions Open to the Public*)

(*Children below 12 years are not allowed*)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th March

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th March

THE KATHA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th March

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(*Children below six years are not allowed*)

GITI ALEKHYA

Abir

(Spring Festival)

by

Rabi Chakra

Tuesday, 11 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

WESTERN MUSIC

Concert

by

Calcutta Youth Orchestra

Tuesday, 18 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

GITI ALEKHYA

Din-O-Ratri

(Based on Tagore's Songs)

by

Triveni

Tuesday, 25 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR MARCH 1969

Sri Caitanya Galpa Āsar

First Saturday, 1 March, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6–9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 29 March, 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

March 5 **The Role of Vedanta Societies in the United States and Japan**

Speaker: Amiya Kumar Ganguly
Editor, United States Information Service

President: Swami Bhuteshananda

March 12 **National Integration and the Role of the Intelligentzia**

Speaker: Ajit Krishna Basu, M.A.

President: Sukumar Mitra, M.A., LL.B., Ph.D.

March 19 **Poetic Image in Kalidasa**

Speaker: Ramaranjan Mukherjee, M.A., Ph.D.

President: Hemanta Kumar Ganguli, M.A.

March 26 **Religions at the Dawn of Civilization**

Speaker: Pritibhushan Chatterji, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil.

President: Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA

Monday, 3 March, at 6.30 p.m.

SIVA-KATHA

(in Bengali)

The Concept of Siva

in

Siva Tandava

by

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY LECTURES (1969)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

Monday, 10 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Interpretation of Vedanta as a Social Force in the Nineteenth Century (Lec. No. IV)

Speaker: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

President: Bhupati Majumdar

The last and the fifth lecture of the series will be delivered in April 1969.

STEPHANOS NIRMALENDU GHOSH LECTURES (1969)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

A series of 8 lectures on

Religion of Love : A Comparative Study of

Vaisnavism, Christianity, and Sufism

Programme:

Monday, 17 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Prayers and Concentration of Thought (Lec. No. III)

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil.

Tuesday, 18 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Love and the Spirit of Service (Lec. No. IV)

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Krishna Gopal Goswami, M.A., P.R.S., D.Phil.

Monday, 24 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Rammohun Roy's Contribution to Comparative Religion (Lec. No. V)

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

Tuesday, 25 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Some Eminent Indian Interpreters of Christianity (Lec. No. VI)

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

Monday, 31 March, at 6.30 p.m.

Christianity and Neo-Vedantism of Swami Vivekananda (Lec. No. VII)

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Swami Vitasokananda

Tuesday, 1 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Impact of Christianity on Society in the Nineteenth Century (Lec. No. VIII)

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Rev. H. L. J. De Mel

The First and the Second lectures of the series were delivered on 24 and 25 February 1969.

BULLETIN
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ANTHROPONYMY: A STUDY IN ONOMASTICS

M. K. SEN, M.A., D.PHIL.

Dr. M. K. Sen, a Lecturer in English at the University of Burdwan, West Bengal, and author of several works including Sura-Sandhān (*Book of Bengali Verses*), English Poet-Critics and Their Views on Poetic Communication, *and* Inter-War English Poetry, *delivered this lecture at the Institute in June 1968.*

PHILOLOGY (rather, Linguistics) means 'love of words' (rather, 'speech'), and it is with words of speech that literature is made. One can, therefore, reasonably expect a lover of literature to be also interested in the study of language. Unfortunately, however, the state of things is different. The average educated person treats the study of literature and the study of language as two different disciplines, poles apart from each other in nature. As a matter of fact, a linguist is clap-trapped at a distance; while a man of letters is admired and loved. The very attitude, of course, is wrong.

'MORE STRONG THAN ALL POETIC THOUGHT'

The potency of words has been appreciated and noticed by men of letters and their critics since times immemorial, and it is being more and more recognized by modern writers. Homer and the Greeks called words *epea pteroenta*, 'winged words'. In the *Ṛg-Veda*, *vāk* or speech describes herself as *rāṣṭrī*, 'belonging to the state', *saṅgamanī vasūnām*, 'the gatherer of good things', *cikituṣi* 'most knowing or most thoughtful' and *prathamā yajñīyānām*, 'the first of the adorable ones'. Benedick had said about Beatrice that she spoke poniards, and that every word she spoke stabbed (*Ado*, III. i). For Maupassant, some words emitted a kind of light when in contact with others. Tennyson has described the 'word' in *In Memoriam* as 'more strong than all poetic thought'. For the heightened sensitivity of the imaginative writer, this independent linguistic unit, i.e. the 'word'

has always had its own fascination. Horace likened words to birds, and Shelley to a cloud of winged snakes; while Milton considered words to be 'nimble and airy servitors tripping about us at command' (*Apology for Smectymnus*). Words were to Dickens 'a large superfluous establishment' waiting upon writers like liveried servants on a state occasion.

If words themselves are so fascinating, a systematic study of their structure, origin, and growth ought to have appealed to the ordinary educated person. As stated earlier, it has been otherwise. And for that a false conception of the subject has been responsible. 'Scientism'—a notion that arts and science are two absolutely separate disciplines—is now dated. That there is a dynamic interdependence among all human disciplines, just as there is a dynamic interpenetration of the modalities of time is now accepted by most of our scholars. Things have, fortunately, already taken a good turn along this direction as well. One may say that the end of the days of 'linguism'—a notion that Literature and Language as disciplines are strangers—is in sight. (*Linguism* has got a totally different meaning in India nowadays.) It is not long when the Professor of a Language will command the same respect and admiration from an undergraduate, as will command the Professor of Literature of that Language. The names of the Brothers Grimm come to one's mind in this connection. The world at large has seen how it has been possible on the part of the same individual to become immortal in both spheres. Grimm's *Fairy Tales* and Grimm's *Laws of Consonantal Changes in Indo-Germanic* are equally famous.

Word-pawns in the Speech-chessboard

A special branch of Philology, however, has grown so much in bulk that it does no longer need a brief to be held on its behalf. This is 'Semantics' or the Science of Meaning; more accurately, the theory of signs. We shall limit ourselves to a study of English semantics only, for lack of space. Thanks to Greennough and Kittredge's *Words and Their Ways in English Speech*, M.A.'s in English of Indian Universities are familiar with the four semantic phenomena of Degeneration, Improvement, Specialization, and Generalization of Meaning. It is not necessary to dwell on this point more than this. We may, however, point out to those whose aversion to linguistic studies is rather pronounced that an eye for etymological informations while looking up a dictionary only does credit to the inquirer, and in no way takes away from his prestige as a scholar. As a matter of fact, each English word tells a story. And Mario Pei's *The Story of English* has been eminently suitable as a title to his scholarly work. How can we honestly say that a person who does not know that a daisy is 'day's eye', or, for the matter of that, a lady is simply a 'leaf-kneader', or a marshall is just a 'mare-servant', or a biscuit is 'twice-cooked' can be relied upon to use the English language with any discrimination?

Most of the principal themes of modern semantics are traceable to stray remarks of Greek and Latin writers. Changes in the meanings of words reflecting social and other changes arrested their attention. Thucydides, Sallust, Cicero, Horace, Proclus, etc. all had said something or other that anticipated Ogden, Richards, Orwell, Nyrop, Bloomfield, etc. Greco-Roman ideas about changes in meaning may have had indirect influence on modern students of semantics. Other factors were, however, directly responsibile for the growth of a regular science of meaning in the nineteenth century. The rise of comparative philology and the Romantic Movement in Literature played an important role in the emergence

of a full-fledged science of meaning. Thus, Wordsworth contemplates the mystery of words (*Prelude*, Bk. V) :

... Visionary power
Attends the motions of the viewless winds,
Embodied in the mystery of words.

Admitting the strange properties of the words they were using, the Romantic writers looked to the philologists for help. Balzac felt the need for a special science dealing with the meaning of words, and he wrote thus in the opening pages of his philosophical novel *Louis Lambert* (1832), 'What a fine book one could write by relating the life and adventures of a word'. Of course C. Chr. Reisig, in his university lectures at Halle on Latin philology, had by then set up 'semasiology', the study of meaning, as one of the three main divisions of Grammar.

Breal seems to have been the first to give semantics the dignity of a science. Of this there is evidence in his *L'Annuaire de l' Association pour l'encouragement des etudes grecques en france* (1883). (The *Oxford English Dictionary* notices the first appearance of the term 'Semantics' under 1665 ; the example is taken from J. Spencer's *Prodigies* ; ''Twere easie to show how much this Sementic Philosophy ... was studied'.) Thus Breal, 'The study where we invite the reader to follow us is of such a new kind that it has not even yet been given a name'.

Since this study, no less than phonetics and morphology, deserves to have a name, we shall call it Semantics, i.e. the science of meaning. Breal's *Essai de Semantique* (1897) and Herman Paul's *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte* (1880) gave prominence to semantic questions, ran into several editions, and were fondly noticed by such language-conscious readers as the poet Paul Valèry.

In the twentieth century, semanticists gradually emancipated themselves from the general field of rhetoric to the special disciplines of philosophy, psychology, sociology, history of civilization, etc. Nyrop, Stern, Trier, and Saussure ushered in a new outlook in the study of semantics. Saussure visualized language as an organized totality or *gestalt* in which the various elements are inter-dependent, and derive their significance from the system as a whole. This vision lies at the root of what has come to be known as Structural Linguistics. The structural current in Europe has been powerfully reinforced by the American school of Linguistics, founded by Leonard Bloomfield.

In Jose Trier's monograph on terms of knowledge in German, one notices an application of Saussure's principles of structural linguistics. He elaborated Saussure's comparison of language to a chess-board where no pawn or power could be added, removed, or displayed without altering the entire system of relations on the chess-board. Trier termed this chess-board of linguistic relationships 'semantic field'. His theory of semantic fields, however, had to wait till the Second World War came to a close. About 1950, the new semantics got into its stride. It has discarded the single-track historical orientation of earlier times and shifted its emphasis on to description. Attempt has also been made to study the inner structure of the vocabulary. It is in modern semantic studies that the impact on language of thought can be seen most clearly. Language is no longer taken merely as an instrument for expressing our thoughts but is regarded also as an influence shaping our thoughts and directing them into specific channels. B. L. Whorf's writings are good examples of this. Liaison between linguistics on the one hand and mathematics and philosophy on the other has already started. Deep and sincere discussions of philosophical problems in the long run end in semantics (cp.

Tagore's satiric reference to logicians' play on the pharses *pātrādhār taila* and *tailādhār pātra* in the poem 'Yathāsthān'.) For uncritical use of ill-defined abstractions cannot be to the liking of a conscientious philosopher. And philosophical semantics is inextricably intertwined with Symbolic Logic or with the 'Theory of Signs'.

Etymologically, 'semantics', 'semasiology', 'semantique', 'semantic', 'semiologie', are all ultimately derived from Greek '*semeion*', 'sign'. The theory of signs had been anticipated by the Greek philosopher Aenesidemus, pioneered by the American logician C. S. Peirce; it came into its own with the publication of Englishmen Ogden and Richards' *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923) and of the first part of Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1923). Gradually, 'Semiotic' was divided by scholars into three branches: 'pragmatics', dealing with the origin, uses and effects of signs within the behaviour in which they occur; 'syntactics', dealing with combinations of signs; and 'semantics', dealing with the meanings of signs.

The theory of signs is concerned with finding the bond of kinship running through a wide variety of phenomena in our everyday world, the fact that all signs point to something beyond themselves. Clouds indicate impending rain, dogs scrape at the door when they want to get out, and a host of similar occurrences may be interpreted as signs. Human beings employ a vast number of signs for communication of ideas: gestures, whistles, traffic lights, flags, shorthand, morse codes, braille alphabet, etc. The symbols of Mathematics and Logic, etc. make up the wide world of linguistic and non-linguistic signs used by human beings (the new subject of Commucationistics, as taught in some American Universities, deals with the communication of ideas, from primitive man's grunts and squeals down to the modern 'television'). Words, as it were, are so many 'objective correlatives' to feelings and emotions. This is necessitated by the intriguing 'isolation' of a writer as a human being. This is an aspect of what philosophers call the 'problem of other minds'—that is, this business of communication.

Language, therefore, has to be studied against the background of a general theory of signs. And it is thus that linguists come into contact with aesthetes, philosophers, electrical engineers, mathematicians, communication engineers, and others. The rise of these studies has created its own problems. Often the Linguist (or Linguistician?), in spite of the genuineness of his desire, is handicapped by his ignorance of mathematics, to make the contribution that he wants to make. A voluminous literature on the subject, however, is already in the market, thanks to linguists who know mathematics. J. Whatmough, Colin Cherry, and P. Guiraud deserve mention in this connection. Again, inclusion of so many other disciplines are likely to make the subject rather unwieldy. The subject proper, in all its ramifications, may not be surveyed adequately: these are the vagaries that are present, I believe, in all works of this kind.

But it is a happy sign that the days of Scientism are gone. Symposia and research projects are bringing together workers from different fields of disciplines. Such subjects of study as 'Glossodynamics' or 'Glossostatics' are being heard of.

Each English Word Tells a Story

In this paper we propose to deal with a special branch of Semantics, viz. 'Onomastics'. Speaking more accurately, we intend to take up one of the divisions of Onomastics which includes 'toponymy', the study of place-names, and 'anthroponymy', the study of the names of

men. Our concern in this paper will be 'anthroponymy', and more precisely, one aspect of it only. Names play an important part in human relations and, as such, they are often endowed with magic potencies. (Tribal lores are to be looked up in this connection.) Studies may be and have been made under the aspects of uniqueness, identification, denotation, and connotation, grammatical criteria, and acoustics of Proper names. An interesting field of investigation is the comparative study of proper names and common nouns.

The main difference between proper names and common nouns lies in their function. Proper names are identification marks, generally, while common nouns are meaningful units. But the borderline between these two categories can by no means be final. Proper names derived from common nouns show clear traces of their origin. Blackpool and Newcastle, Smith and Carpenter, Pearl and Heather, all obviously carry traces of their origin. Again, the name of proper nouns turned common is legion. Cicero has lent his name to garrulous guides known as *cicerones*. To Nicholas Chauvin of Rochefort, a soldier in Napoleon's army, whose demonstrative patriotism was generally ridiculed we owe the word *Chauvinism*, with a lower-case initial 'c'. In the former case, the cause of the change in meaning has been 'metaphorical'; in the latter, it has been 'metonymic', founded on a relation between inventor and invention.

Sometimes, when a proper name becomes an ordinary word, it is used as a verb. The verbs 'to boycott', 'to macadamize', 'to burke', and 'to bowdlerize' are among the numerous examples of this class.

When this semantic change takes place, i.e. a proper name turns into an ordinary word, the range of meaning is considerably extended. An identification mark becomes a meaningful symbol. New words are formed in cases like 'to beg' formed by back-formation from 'beguer', noun from Lambert Begue, a proper name. All this is interesting study, and also rewarding. Here is the proof of the contention that almost each English word tells a story. The names of such semantically changed words being legion, as has earlier been stated, we shall, in the next section, condense the list selecting only those examples which, in our judgement, possess a more general appeal. Cases of Biblical characters and places—names becoming ordinary words with extended meanings have been left out of this discussion, as also the familiar histories of such words as 'tommy' (from 'Thomas'), 'doll' (from 'Dorothy'), 'ancillary' (from 'Ancilla'), 'poubelle'—dust-bin (from 'M. Poubelle', inventor). An austre single-track treatment of what is technically known as 'anthroponymy' has been our aim.

Proper Nouns Turn Common

We shall deal with a handful of cases of semantic transfer, which are likely to strike the general reader as interesting. It is not our intention to bore him with a weighty list of proper names-turned-common nouns.

We are all acquainted with 'albert', a kind of watch-chain. This watch-chain owes its name to Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, who used such a chain. We also know that 'bakelite' is a widely-used synthetic resin or plastic made from formaldehyde and phenol. Etymology tells us that this material owes its name to L. H. Bakeland, who invented it. 'Jawahar coat' in Indian language is merely metaphorical. Had the dress been termed just 'Jawahar' it would have come under Anthroponymy. The same principle applies to such Bengali phrases (near—anthroponymous) as *Kānāy Bhāgne*; *Gadāi laskari cāl*). In the case of 'albert' the origin is undisturbed, while in the case of

'bakelite' a separate noun has been formed on the basis of the inventor's name. In other words, 'albert' is transparent while 'bakelite' is opaque.

Sometimes proper names are converted into verbs through an elaborate process. The verb 'to beg', referred to above, is a case in point. Lambert Begue started a mendicant order or friars in the Netherlands, who begged alms from door to door just as religious mendicants in many countries still do. The French formed a noun from Lambert's surname, and that was 'beguin' or 'beghard', meaning 'one who begs'. Later they formed a verb from that noun by 'back-formation', and that was beguiner, meaning 'to ask for food, money, etc.' (Beguinage, in Belgium at least, a workhouse, an asylum for old people.) The English apparently shortened this French verb and admitted the shortened form, 'to beg', into their dictionary. This back-formation dates back to A.D. 1200.

The term 'billycock' is used synonymously with 'bowler', a kind of round, low-crowned, felt hat. This sort of hat is said to have been originally designed for one William Coke in 1850. 'William' naturally becomes 'Bill' and 'Coke'—'cock', and the intervening 'y' is evidently indicative of popular adoration of the hat. There indeed is thus a story element in the history of these word-formations.

'Beugainvillaea' is an instance of people forgetting the persons behind words, however 'transparent' the words may be. This tropical plant with large bright-coloured bracts was discovered by the French navigator, M. Bougainville in 1750. The same kind of history belongs to the case of a host of other names for flowers, such as 'dahlia', 'camellia', 'magnolia', 'zinnia', 'gardenia', etc. The flowers were given the names of their discoverers or planters. The flowering evergreen plant brought from China and Japan into France by the Jesuit botanist M. Kamel was given the name 'camellia'. Tagore uses it as title for one of his prose-poems.

One Dr. T. Bowdler published an expurgated edition of Shakespeare, in 1818. By mid-nineteenth century the verb 'bowdlerize' came into widespread use. To 'bowdlerize' thus means to edit a work after weeding out its objectionable passages. There was a certain Burke in Edinburgh, who used to strangle people and sell the dead bodies to hospitals for dissection. Ultimately, he was guillotined in 1829 for his homicidal activities. During the execution angry spectators shouted out: '*Burke* him, *Burke* him—give him no rope!' These are two instances of a proper name being used as a verb. 'Boycott' provides us with another instance, and its history, being well-known, is not given here.

Formation of adjectives is also not rare. The ancient Greek poet Anakreon wrote convivial and amatory verses. Such poetry is now described as 'anacreontic' after him.

The word 'Charlatan', borrowed from French, is often used in English. Its history is quite interesting in as much as it offers scope for debate. Louis XVIII is reported to have said in his death-bed: '*Allons, finissions —eu, Charlattendu*' which may be made to mean either 'come on, let us get it over, charlatans' or 'come on, let us get it over, Charles is waiting', Charles being Charles X, his brother and heir to the throne!

The formation of the common noun 'cicerone' from the proper name Cicero indicates how a man's name is transferred to a whole class of persons. All garrulous guides in tourist departments of modern cities are described by a word deriving from the great Roman orator!

That the 'diesel' engine has been named after its inventor is too well-known a fact to need repetition. Similar are the cases of many electrical and mechanical units of

measurement such as 'farad', 'joule', 'ohm', 'ampere', 'watt', 'volt', etc. which are more or less 'transparent', so to say. Such words where a person's name has been applied with little or no distortion, may be termed 'forget-me-nots' in the garden of words.

The name of the language 'Esperanto' offers an interesting study. This is an artificial language designed as a speech-medium for persons of all nations. Dr. Zamenhoff, in A.D. 1887, invented this language in the ambitious expectation that people all over the globe would communicate with one another in his language. He described his project under the pseudonym of 'Esperanto' which is traceable to Latin *Spero*, hope; so that the pseudonym may be said to have signified 'a hopeful person'.

The word 'georgette' represents a class of words which denote wearing apparel and have borrowed the names of their manufacturers. This thick-silk dress-material has taken on a French dress-maker's name. Similar are the stories behind such words as 'silk', 'batiste', 'bloomer',—etc. 'Garibaldi', a kind of woman's or child's blouse, originally of bright red, belongs to the class of 'albert', discussed earlier. The connecting link, obviously, is the red shirt of the Italian patriot (1807-82) and his followers.

Though 'mythological' in nature, the story behind the word 'hyacinth' appears credible. This genus of bulbous plants with bell-shaped flowers of various colours may have owed its name to Greek *huakinthos*, an youth supposed to have been loved by Apollo. Perhaps the English gold coin 'jacobus' struck in the reign of James I and worth 20-24 s. is also another such example.

'Lynch', as a transitive verb, is well-known. When a person is executed in a self-constituted illegal court, he is said to be 'lynched'. This word is of U. S. origin, although scholars doubt the authenticity of the story that we are now presenting. Charles Lynch, a Justice of the Peace in Virginia, was known for illegally punishing persons. As it so often happens in the history of words, the idea of illegally punishing, or of taking the Law into one's own hands, assumed important proportions in course of time and has survived in the verb under discussions, with the stigma that it deserves.

In certain cases, fine literary touches are obtained. The sinuous windings of a river, known as 'meanders' derive from the Phrygian river *Maiandros*. 'Narcissism' or self-love, is another word of classical origin recalling the story of Echo and Narcissus.

The origin of the word 'Pasteurization' is too well-known to be discussed in detail. So it is with 'Quisling', a fifth columnist. 'Saxhorn', a musical instrument made of brass is called after its inventor A. Sax.

Under 'S' in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, we come across two words, viz. 'Silhouette', and 'Stengun', whose histories, though possibly unknown to the majority of readers, are highly interesting. A 'Silhouette' (*n.* and *v. t.*) as we all know is the 'portrait of a person in profile showing outline only, all inside the outline being usually black on white ground or cut out in paper'. M. Silhouette, French Finance Minister in 1759, whose policy of parsimony which appeared to be rather shady is responsible for the word.

A 'sten-gun' is a light-weight machine-gun. Its inventors were Messrs. Shepherd and Turpin. Their initials made 'st', and 'en' of 'England' was affixed to 'st' to indicate the inventors' nationality. Thus the word grew to be 'sten' (-gun).

Indian Words

It may be both interesting and profitable to study the history of ancient India, and the etymologies of words in the various Indian languages, and then to arrive at similar etymons or truths about, one may guess,

quite a number of Indian words of similar origin. If taken up in earnest, this may well keep a research-worker occupied whole-time for a couple of years. The proverbs of Indian languages (particularly in the North) indicate that thought-processes of Indians using very different languages are of a kindred nature. While in U. P., they say, '*Kāṅhā Gaṅgā Teli, Kāṅhā Rājā Bhoj*!'—to expressly state that there is a world of difference between two persons' calibres—in West Bengal, they say, '*Kothāy Gaṅgārām Telī, ār Kothāy Rājā Bhoj*!'. One should not be surprised if after researches are done, it is found, for example, in Indian languages, that such flowers as *Śephālikā, Mallikā, Cāmelī,* etc. owe their names to actual persons in recorded history in the same way as has been shown in the cases of English and French. In present times, of course, it is rather the other way round: men and women are given names of flowers!

Words, in fact, are like the fossils of the rocks; they embody the thought and the knowledge of the society that first coined and used them, and if we can find out their primitive meaning by the aid of the comparative method, we shall know the character of the society that produced them, and the degree of civilization it had attained. The palaeontologist can reconstruct the animal life of the past ages of the globe with no greater ease than the comparative philologist can reconstruct the life of bygone and forgotten communities. If the fragment of a fossil bone can tell us the history of an extinct world, so, too, can the fragment of a word reveal to us the struggles of ancient societies, and ideas and beliefs that have long since perished.

A. H. SAYCE

Introduction to the Science of Language

MAHATMA GANDHI'S IDEAS ON EDUCATION

KHAGENDRA NATH SEN, M.A.

The following is an address given by Professor Khagendra Nath Sen, a well-known educationist and formerly Principal of the Asutosh College, at a symposium on 'Mahatma Gandhi's Life and Thought' held at the Institute on 26 October 1968.

MAHATMA Gandhi was as much of a revolutionary in the field of education as he was in the political field, and in either field, he was a revolutionary with a difference. He was a visionary but with the zeal of a pragmatist, a theorist but with a practical outlook.

THE BASIC EDUCATION

Gandhiji's interest in education lay primarily in the field of elementary education, or as it came to be known later on, 'Basic Education'. The period and span of this education, as Gandhiji conceived it, included a part of the secondary stage also, since it covered the age-group 7-14. By contrast, his views on higher education were not spelt out in any great detail. It is well-known that in his scale of values, he gave a low priority to Collegiate or University education. 'If all the collegians', he wrote, 'were of a sudden to forget their knowledge, the loss sustained by the sudden lapse of memory would be as nothing compared to the loss that the nation has sustained through the ocean of darkness that surrounds three hundred millions' (*The Harijan*, July 13, 1968). Again, addressing the Wardha Conference in 1937, Gandhiji said: 'I think we can postpone the question of higher education for some time ; but the problem of primary education cannot be postponed even for a minute.' In fact, Gandhiji would not like the State to spend any money on Colleges. It was his view that the Colleges should be supported by private endowments (or fees), or financed by relevant organizations: for instance, engineering or industrial concerns should finance scientific or technological institutions, commercial organizations should finance commercial education, while medical institutions should form part of hospitals, and so on.

This preponderating interest in primary education was characteristic of Gandhiji, because it underlined his passionate zeal for solving the problem of mass illiteracy and ignorance on the highest priority basis. Secondly, as we shall see, Gandhiji's scheme of education was integrally linked to his over-all scheme of solving the otherwise intractable problem of mass poverty by his scheme of education through a village craft. Thirdly, Gandhiji's scheme of Education was meant to be a type of education which would be self-supporting not only for the school but also for its pupils. Having regard to the fact that he had to contend against not only the desperate condition of the Indian masses, but also the apathy and indifference of the British *Rāj* in India, Gandhiji had to turn his sails towards the prevailing wind by proposing a scheme that would not make any demand on the public exchequer. It was a scheme based on the sense of self-respect of the nation, and on the principle of self-help.

The fact remains, however, that with more than twenty years of independence, and even after forty years since the time when Gandhiji was propagating his scheme of self-

supporting basic education meant for all children of the age-group 7-14, we are still grappling with the problem of removing mass illiteracy and providing education for all children, and this in spite of our having spent crores of rupees for the purpose. In 1937, the State was spending about Rs. 6/7 crores on primary education ; today, we are spending more than Rs. 40 crores on primary education alone: but have we reached Gandhiji's objectives? During the three Plan periods, that is, from 1951 to 1966, we have spent an amount in the neighbourhood of Rs. 400 crores on elementary education alone, and that for the age-group 6-11. Gandhiji would have been truly shocked at our performance!

Taking Basic Education first, certain ideas stand out prominently in the scheme advocated by Gandhiji. He proposed that education should be compulsory and free for children between the ages 7 and 14. The home, according to him, is the best school for children below the age of 7. Secondly, education was to be made independent of Government aid. Thirdly, it should be self-supporting, being based on the training in some useful handicraft which, apart from its role in making education self-supporting, should be prized for its own value as 'the spearhead of a silent social revolution'. The education that was to be imparted would be completed at an age when, according to the prevailing educational structure, the child would be in class VIII of a secondary school. In fact, Gandhiji wanted to bring up the education of children attaining the age of 14 to the then Matriculation standard, *minus* English. After this, the children, properly trained in a useful craft and acquiring the necessary skills, would take up a vocation that would not only make them self-supporting, and in most cases self-employed, but contribute to the regeneration of the village itself. It would be a double-edged weapon for removing mass illiteracy as well as mass poverty. It would be, to repeat, the spearhead of a silent social revolution.

The Segaon Method

Gandhiji's philosophy of education was based on his experience of educational methods he had already followed elsewhere, especially in Sevagram. These were based on certain principles which were known as the 'Segaon Method'. This method was explained in some detail by Shri K. G. Mashruwalla in the issue of the *Harijan* dated December 4, 1937. Gandhiji himself thought that the 'Segaon Method' could be applied, with appropriate changes, also to the higher stages of education. The formulations also provided the framework of what later came to be known as the Wardha Scheme of education. Gandhiji himself called it 'National Basic Education'. The present scheme of Basic Education has, of course, made important deviations from its prototype formulated at Wardha, of which the most noteworthy has been the exclusion of the self-financing aspect of the Wardha Scheme on which Gandhiji had laid so much stress. It is on record, however, that even at the Wardha Conference, voices were raised against the idea that children should be made to pay for their own education through the sale of the products turned out by them in their schools. The critics included men like Dr. Zakir Husain (our present President), Professor K. T. Shah, Kaka Saheb Kalelkar, Sri Ravishankar Shukla, Sri Piyarelal Sharma, Sri B. G. Kher, and others. The scheme was attacked mainly on the ground that it was based on the exploitation of child labour. There was also the fear that the products of child labour would not be able to compete with the factory-made goods. Misgivings were also expressed as to what would happen to the market if 35 million children began to produce marketable goods after being supplied with free

raw materials as well as marketing facilities.

To each of these objections and doubts Gandhiji had an answer . He claimed that his scheme was designed not to exploit the child but to save him from disaster. His scheme would make the child self-confident and brave by their paying for their own education with their own labour. He would be made to feel that he did not belong only to his parents but also to the village and to their country and that he must make some return to them. Again, by giving the children village-based and self-supporting primary education, they would be made 'true representatives of our culture, our civilization, of the true genius of our nation'. As regards the fear that under Gandhiji's scheme, teachers would be 'slave-drivers', Gandhiji asked whether children became slaves of their parents at home when they carried out their parents' instructions. Acharya Vinoba Bhave regarded the criticism as 'absurd' for he thought that the schools would automatically evoke an unprecedented interest in the parents who would keep vigilant watch on their wards as well as their teachers. So would the school inspectors.

On the question of the machine, Gandhiji's ideas are well known. He put the question in his characteristic way: 'When we have 30 crores of living machines, why should we depend on the dead ones?' Machines, according to Gandhiji, 'will only help in making all the 35 crores of the people of India unemployed'. The Machine Age is the age of exploitation, and if India takes to the machine, she becomes an exploiting nation. In any case, a scheme of primary education meant for hundreds of thousands of our villages cannot obviously be machine-based. Moreover, a handicraft, more than a machine, evokes a creative response and provides a medium for the training of the intellect as of the senses, thus producing a better type of man than a mere mechanic.

The Pedagogic Aspects

A few words may now be said on the pedagogic aspects of Gandhiji's educational ideas. In Gandhiji's words, the training in handicrafts was to be the basis of the 'whole education of the child'. It was not merely confined to the teaching of some handicrafts mixed with liberal education; it meant that the whole scheme of education should evolve out of the practical training given in the basic craft. Thus, referring to the teaching in *takli* spinning, for instance, Gandhiji pointed out that it presupposed imparting of knowledge of various varieties of cotton, different soils in different parts of India, the history of the ruin of the handicraft and its political reasons which, again, will necessarily include the history of British rule in India, *plus* knowledge of arithmetic, of weights and measures and so on. One would also suppose that such training would include a knowledge of India's climate and an understanding of the socio-economic set-up of the Indian village. It would, in that sense, be a fairly complete and realistic scheme of education for village children, without burdening them with a load of practically useless subjects.

The Basic National Education Committee (better known as the Zakir Husain Committee) appointed by the Wardha Conference to give a practical shape to its resolutions drew up a syllabus of subjects for basic education, each with definite course-objectives, together forming an integrated approach to the fundamental aims of basic education. The subjects included: (i) the Basic Craft; (ii) the Mother Tongue; (iii) Arithmetic, Geometry and Rudiments of Book-Keeping; (iv) Social Studies, including a simple outline of Indian history with a history of Indian national awakening and of appreciation of

India's struggle for social, political, and economic freedom; (v) celebration of national festivals, study of world geography in outline with a fuller knowledge of India and its relations with other lands together with knowledge of social institutions and public utility services; (vi) training in citizenship and co-operative study of newspapers preferably brought out by the student community; (vii) General Science including Nature Study, Botany, Zoology, Physiology, Hygiene, Physical Culture, Chemistry, Knowledge of Stars; (viii) stories of great scientists and explorers; (ix) Drawing; Music; and Hindusthani.

At first glance it would appear that the list is quite heavy reading; but then it has to be realized that the standard of Basic Education, as and when completed, would correspond to the Matriculation (*minus* English), and would cover a span of seven years (age-group 7-14). The greatest stress, of course, was laid on the significance of making productive work the fulcrum of the entire educational system. The Zakir Husain Committee took great pains to bring out the psychological, social, economic, and educational justification of this aspect of the scheme.

This fundamental aspect of the scheme—education through the training of the senses—is not a new idea in the field of child education. Great educators, like Froebel, Montessori, Pestalozzi, Comenius, and others had already popularized the new approach and blazed new trails in the field of child education. Rabindranath's experiment at Santiniketan was not only dictated by unfortunate early experiences of his own school life; his ideas bore striking resemblance to the theories of Rousseau as expressed in his *Emile*. Professor John Dewey, the eminent American philosopher and educator, has also elaborated his thesis of education through experience. Dr. Zakir Husain himself pointed out to the Wardha Conference that Gandhiji's method was 'not very new' since both Russia and America had experimented with it. At present, work experience forms an integral part of the Soviet system of education as well as in that of the Republic of China. A careful study of Gandhiji's scheme would, however, reveal a much wider background than a mere pedagogic experiment would suggest. It was part of a wider scheme of the socio-economic regeneration of the Indian village inspired by a strong sense of national revival and rooted in the Indian ideal of non-violence. The child was to be the 'spearhead of a silent social revolution', and his education must be impregnated with that high social purpose. In his book on *Basic National Education* he says:

'My plan ... will provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes. It will check the progressive decay of our villages and lay the foundation of a juster division between the "haves" and the "have-nots" and everybody will be assured of a living wage and the right to freedom. And all this will be accomplished without the horror of a bloody class war or a colossal capital expenditure as would be involved in the mechanization of a vast continent like India. Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported machinery or technical skill: lastly, by obviating the necessity of highly specialized talent, it would place, the destiny of the massess, as it were, in their own hands.'

Applicability in the Present Context

Today, after a complete change in the political and administrative set-up of the country, many of the cardinal features of the Gandhian scheme appear to have be-

come out-dated and, perhaps, unnecessary. It has already been stated that the scheme of Basic Education as finally accepted by the Government has deviated from many of the points of the original Wardha Scheme. The self-financing aspect of Basic Education is no longer insisted upon. Further, Gandhiji's thinking had left unsolved the question of the integration of Basic with Higher Education, both general and technological. A child, passing out of a Basic School at the age of 14 would be too immature to join a University. The fact that, under Gandhiji's scheme, English is excluded from the curriculum of the Basic Schools further makes it difficult for the Basic School boy to join higher centres of learning and research or to take up a professional course like that of Law, Medicine, Engineering, etc. A revision of the curriculum of the Senior Basic Schools may, perhaps, provide the answer; or the whole set-up of the Basic School system may have to be revised. At present there is a good deal of confusion due to the existence of two parallel sets of primary schools, one Basic and the other non-Basic. It had hitherto been the Government's policy to convert the non-Basic Schools to the Basic type and a good deal of time, labour, and money have been invested in the expansion of the Basic Schools. In 1960-61, direct (annual) expenditure on Basic Schools exceeded Rs. 28 crores. In that year, there were 80,000 Basic Schools with a total enrolment of 97 lakhs of pupils and teaching staff strength of 2,64,000. Some years ago, an Assessment Committee on the performance of the Basic Schools found that, compared to the average non-Basic Schools, the average Basic Schools had improved the character and the habits of the children, their resourcefulness, their capacity for doing things and their powers of understanding. This went far towards the fulfilment of the fundamental objectives of Basic Education. In fact, the Assessment Committee observed: 'If basic schools do not generally furnish a better picture, it is largely due to the fact that educational administration still remains unimaginative and unable to keep pace with the fresh demands of a new situation.'

In view of these facts it is surprising that the Education (Kothari) Commission should have recommended the virtual liquidation of the Basic Schools, or rather, their absorption into a uniform school system. The only concession that the Commission appears to have made to the idea of Basic Education is the recognition of the value of 'work-experience' as an essential part of school education. This aspect of the Commission's recommendations has not yet received the attention that it deserves.

Conclusion

We can conclude by saying that in the new fields of educational experimentation that have now opened up before the nation, Gandhian thought now faces an entirely new generation and new testing techniques. But the Indian village, by and large, still remains essentially what it was in Gandhiji's time. A plan of education suited to the needs and requirements of the village, and not merely to make it an appendage of the city or a residual claimant of what the city can spare, is yet to come. Fortunately, there is now a greater awareness of our duty to this neglected stratum of our society, which in the field of education, is noticed in the increasing emphasis now being placed on the expansion of primary education throughout the country. That this is now informed with a sense of urgency provides a ray of light in the prevailing gloom. In view of these facts, and, in spite of the

views of the Education Commission, I would plead for a careful re-examination of Gandhiji's educational ideas, to see whether they are really archaic, as so many of us seem to think, or whether they can be applied with greater force and effectiveness in solving the problem of mass education.

Getting by heart the thoughts of others in a foreign language, and stuffing your brain with them and taking some university degrees, you consider yourself educated. Is this education? ... The education that does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion—is it worth the name?

We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet. ...

The end of all education, all training, should be man-making. The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called education.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE UNITED NATIONS

ROBERT A. COLLINGE

Mr. Robert A. Collinge is the Information Officer of the United States Information Service, Calcutta. Given below is his address at the function organized by the Institute on 24 October 1968 to observe the United Nations Day.

BY proclamation of the United Nations General Assembly, the year 1968 has been designated Human Rights Year. It is, therefore, fitting that we turn our attention to the basic question of human rights in today's world.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

'Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world.'

So begins the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Universal Declaration goes on to state that:

'Every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.'

Yet forced labour still exists for political or economic reasons in 24 United Nations Member Countries, and many of the other basic freedoms stated as essential in the Declaration and in the Charter are not universally observed. As all of us know only too well, freedom from hunger, disease, and ignorance still remain a dream for many citizens of Member Nations.

It is obvious that our commemoration should include a re-dedication to continue the struggle toward achievement in the hope that twenty years from today another speaker before another audience can celebrate the accomplishment of the basic objectives of the Universal Declaration. For, in the words of a former General Assembly President, the Hon. Nazrollah Entezam of Iran, 'Patience has limits, and there is nothing worse than frustrated hope'.

It should be remembered that the United Nations was founded at San Francisco in 1945 to: 'Save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ... to reaffirm faith in the fundamental human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.' If one of the basic human rights is peace, then the United Nations has been a success in its relatively short period of existence, since none of the 'small' wars the world has experienced in that time have grown into major conflicts—and most of the world has indeed been saved from the scourge of war. United Nations' peace keeping efforts have had a profound effect in Africa, on Cyprus, and in other areas of the Globe.

But even in this Human Rights Year, the world has witnessed on several continents a series of tragic acts that have denied human rights by terror, aggression, starvation, and other forms of coercion. The conscience of the world has been stunned by these acts—men are beginning to understand that the rule of law and justice is imperative if nations are not to perish under

a reign of force and violence. As President John Fitzerald Kennedy put it: 'Peace is, in the last analysis, basically a matter of human right.'

The international community has every right to expect each sovereign state to honour this most fundamental of human rights, and to provide its citizens and the citizens of its neighbour nations with a climate of peace—freedom from aggressive action against honourably established and popularly supported government. A violation against this type of government, as the world has recently seen, is a violation against the human rights of its people.

When Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill prepared the statement now known as the Atlantic Charter, and the forerunner of the Universal Declaration, four basic freedoms were outlined: Freedom from fear, freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, and freedom from want.

Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights there are many kinds of rights and freedoms mentioned—not granted by the mere act of ratification but established as goals toward which to work. The twenty-nine articles of the Universal Declaration expanded these basic goals to include human rights in the political, social, civil, economic, and physical realms.

The Contribution of the U.S.A.

My countrymen and I are proud that the principal architect of the Universal Declaration was the wife of President Roosevelt. My countrymen and I are also proud of our own role in the quest for the achievement of the goals of the UN Charter and the Declaration. We are proud that the United Nations was founded in San Francisco and that it has made its home in New York. We are proud that it was a no-interest loan from the Government of the United States that made possible the construction of the United Nations Building, and that it was a contribution of land from a private American citizen that made possible the site for the building—a donation of some of the most valuable land in the world—at no cost to the United Nations.

We are proud of our record in assisting the free nations of the world in their efforts toward freedom—the American taxpayer pays each year 48 per cent of the operating cost of the United Nations out of his own earnings. He contributed materially to the reconstruction of Europe and Asia after the most devastating war in history, and thereby contributed materially to the stability of today's world and to the preservation of peace—the basic human right.

It is only right and just, however, that the Nation which survived World War II as the strongest should have turned its attention to those not so fortunate—to those lucky to have survived at all. In these materialistic times, when the cynic seems to have become the philosophical voice of the moment, it is well to keep in mind that it was the *average* American, not wealthy, not without sacrifice, not without his own worries and difficulties, who chose to increase his own taxes that the world might recover more quickly from the scourge of war—a war he did not start. This was done because it was right.

We of the United States are not unaware of our own problems—problems well-known to the world—and we are not proud of some of the moments and events in our history in the areas of human rights. Our record does show, however, that through the efforts of a number of compassionate men, which culminated in the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 as President of the United States, we abolished slavery and made the first steps toward the incorporation of the minority into the majority, hundred years ago, at bitter cost to the

country in terms of lives, political catastrophe, and great destruction.

But again—this was done because it was right. No man should ever be owned by another. It is natural, however, for a young, unsophisticated nation and people attempting to create a country in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to make mistakes as a part of the growth toward maturity. To learn from those mistakes and to correct them is one test of the *achievement* of that maturity—and we believe that in the period since the end of World War II we have come a long way toward the establishment of basic human rights for *all* of our citizens. Five civil rights bills have been passed by the American Congress in that time, reinforcing the fundamental rights granted by our Constitution and expanding them to include all Americans.

Thus we find that in the American Presidential Election next month, more Negroes will stand for office and will participate in the voting than ever before in our history. In the American Government establishment we find Negroes serving as elected officials at local, state, and national levels.

A Negro serves on the bench of the United States Supreme Court, a Negro holds office in the Cabinet, and a number of Negroes are serving abroad as United States Ambassadors.

While progress does not indicate a task completed, it does indicate that the American Negro in the past twenty years has made more progress toward social justice than in any other period in our history. Today, no state college or state university in the United States bars Negroes from enorlment at either the undergraduate or graduate level, and no occupation or profession is closed to the Negro who chooses to enter it.

Our Government and people believe that justice, equality, freedom, and dignity for all men are the mastics which will bind the United Nations and the world community together, and we are trying to correct the flaws in our own country in harmony with the aims of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1965, directed against *apartheid.*

We know that it is not enough, however, to condemn, to declare, to proclaim, to announce—the individual rights of any man must be secured for him through concerted action by the combination of an enlightened people and a morally motivated Government. One man cannot secure all of these promises by his single action—he must be a part of a nationwide, or a worldwide movement.

The individual must know what these universal rights are—one of the purposes of Human Rights Year is to enlarge the understanding of the principles of human rights.

'Rights not perceived cannot be prized', as President Johnson has stated; 'rights not understood are rights not exercised and soon weakened or destroyed. If nations are not to rely forever on a fragile balance of fears, they must find confidence in making justice the guiding principle of their national and international affairs.'

The Achievements and Prospects

Despite the pessimistic tones, we can see, on this United Nations Day, signs all around us of success in the sacred battle to secure these rights. In the twenty years since the Declaration, over *one billion* people have come out from under foreign rule into the clear light of self-determination and nationhood. One-third of all the people of the world have become free of colonial rule since the world turned its concern from war to individual liberty.

It is significant that men and women who were student revolutionaries twenty years ago are now in charge of their nations' governments or have already given way to younger people or more effective advocates of change. Nationalism has turned over the world—what better indication than within the United Nations itself, where today there are 128 nations represented, but where there were only 58 members in 1948 when the Universal Declaration was promulgated?

And so we see that two most important and profound achievements can be credited tonight to the United Nations and its activities in favour of freedom: First, the passing of twenty-three years without a major war despite constant confrontations between major powers and despite the advent of the hydrogen-bomb generation of the nuclear age; and second, the end of the era of colonialism and the rise of nationalism in its stead.

But there are other advances through international cooperation, all of them directly or indirectly a part of the appeal of the Universal Declaration. Malaria control has become commonplace throughout the world, largely through United Nations World Health Organization activities, and the destructive, evil narcotics trade is slowly coming under control. Family planning is a fast-growing concept in the more enlightened nations and the children of the world are receiving a constantly growing level of assistance through UNICEF.

The great Kemal Ataturk, father of modern Turkey, once stated that the wealth of a nation lay in its children. Today, because it is the right of the child to live, to be active, to be healthy, to be educated, all over the world new nations are enriched as their children live instead of dying.

Yes, there has been progress and it has been significant. We can hold in our minds the vision of a world of cultural pluralism, of independent people following their own dreams, diverse social systems, economic orders, and political creeds, and know that this world can participate in mutual enterprise based on *consent*. The world can construct, bit by bit, a new system of world order based on common interest, to defend the human rights of the individual man and the individual woman and the individual child. The vision is coming to pass.

INDIA AND THE U.S.A.

Here the sovereign Republic of India and the United States are sharing a common experience—you in your first twenty years of life, and we in our past twenty years of existence—meeting the never-ending drive for individual freedom. We in the United States have turned with vigour to the task of ending the inequities which exist between various elements of our community; you in India have turned to self-government after colonial rule and have succeeded in establishing a viable and democratic method of constitutional government with widespread and active citizen participation and protection.

Thus, the goals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the Human Rights Year, are under active pursuit in our two nations. If we could be joined in this quest by the other two of the four largest nations in the world, the cause of peace, as the most important of all the human rights, would be well served.

This is not the time for man to cringe—instead, it is a time for him to rise and be free to live his life as he selects. One of the greatest Bengalis, poet Rabindranath Tagore, puts it this way:

> Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
> Where knowledge is free;
> Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

For those of us who have achieved this freedom, it is time to recall those who have not been so fortunate—the oppressed, the enslaved, the sick, the illiterate, the starved, the persecuted. It is for them that we must tonight re-dedicate ourselves and pledge to continue our efforts during the *next* twenty years, to the conquest of our world's man-erected Everest—the achievement of the recognition of the dignity and the inalienable rights of all members of the human family to live in freedom under justice with peace. Since the world is not a dream, the rights of man must not be left an illusion.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights....

Article 25

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services....

Article 26

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit....

BOOK REVIEW

NEW METHODS OF KNOWLEDGE AND VALUE. By Robert E. Shiller. Philosophical Library, Inc., New York. 164 pp. $4.00

In the book, under review, the author confirms his general background in philosophy with his professional experience as a 'Doctor of Jurisprudence' and as a 'Master of Business Administration'. This unusual combination gave him an approach peculiarly his own, and he rightly pointed out that Methodology was fed by all scientific disciplines and intended to feed back to them. The objects of methodological investigations were all the other sciences, in their formal aspects. The results of the present investigation were intended to be used by all the scientists, methodologists, or anybody concerned with knowledge. Being in the broadest canvas of enquiry, the author had to find his way into unknown lands again and again. Mere 'logic' did not satisfy him. He felt that in the human situation much more than reasoning was involved; perceptions, irrational elements, values and the interrelation of all these aspects formed the core of human experience. So logic had to be understood in a broader 'theory of knowledge'. According to Shiller, good old logic as well as the 'modern theory of knowledge' existed obviously for the purpose of assisting and serving other sciences. He found the true validity of philosophy in such a position.

The author told us in unequivocal terms that classical abstractions and classifications had prevailed in all sciences, natural as well as cultural. Investigations were usually promoted by a 'problem' and started with a description of the factual situation, according to identifications and abstractions of universal elements. This meant transformation from perceptions into concepts by intuition (thought-images of elements of observation). The author then argued to a tentative theory, to concepts by postulates which were expressed in thoughts of images or of symbols. From there he deduced down to concepts of intuition and correlated those concepts to actual perceptual verification. Shiller did not hesitate to accept the classical abstract methods in cultural sciences. But they had to be adjusted to the fluidity of the cultural content—the flexible valued interests. For such an adoptation he had recommended two approaches, both of which were based on a recognition of the existential particularity of culture.

In a space-age, natural science prides itself on its measurements and on its mathematical involvements. Shiller told us that cultural sciences dealt with values and they were also measurements. They were less precise since they had to be usually in a few brackets. Our cultural facts did not permit of more precision. On the other hand, such limited precision and its tools, had so far hardly been used, at least not in theoretical work. Herein he noticed the beginning of a new area. In all cultural sciences, a better recognition of values will permit considerable progress. This act of recognition entails that every problem is to be broken down carefully into its components, that every solution has to be separated into criteria and that the relations between both should be similarly treated. In assessing values, there are differences between the methods of cultural science and those of natural sciences, and this was not over-looked. The author rightly remarked that the differences were only gradual.

Natural science had grown to precision and success by measurements and mathematics, which were the conceptual tool of magnitudes and logic. Values could accomplish a parallel growth in cultural sciences. Needless to say, measurements alone could not have produced today's splendour of natural sciences, and mathematics could hardly substitute for good theories or gifted probable hypothesis. But measurements and mathematics were indispensible. The same, according to Shiller, would apply to cultural sciences as well as to our theories of knowledge. In our theories of knowledge and values and in the field of scientific methods —specially in cultural disciplines—the author asked us to know the past, exist in the present, and do our best to point to a future. Thus, in a way, Aristotle's idea of the 'beginning-middle-and-end' theory has been represented in a new phase of cybernetics.

S. K. NANDI

Seminar on Chromosome—Its Structure and Function

A Seminar on 'Chromosome—its Structure and Function' was held from 11 to 13 August, 1968 at the Institute. The Seminar was organized by members of the Cytogenetics Laboratory, University of Calcutta, and was sponsored by the University Grants Commission and this Institute. The Seminar was inaugurated by Professor S. N. Sen, Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta.

A number of geneticists representing Canada, U.S.A., Italy, Belgium, Germany, Brazil, Argentina, Finland, and different parts of India participated in the Conference and the topics covered plant, animal, and human chromosomes.

Amongst the different speakers mention may be made of Professors W. S. Flory, K. Patau, C. Barigozzi, W. Gottschalk, A. Varama, B. E. Wolf, J. Lejeune, C. Pavan, J. Moutschen, P. N. Mehra, S. P. Rai Chaudhuri, and J. Hunziker.

Professor Flory (U.S.A.), on behalf of the delegates, gave a vote of thanks to the Organizing Committee.

Guests

Among those who stayed at the Institute's International House during December 1968 were the following :

Mr. Carroll F. Raaum, Teacher, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. and Mrs. William A. Tym, from U.S.A. ;

Miss Yvonne Itin, from Geneva ;

Dr. Y. Ohta, Geologist, from Japan ;

A group of thirty-nine members of International Honours Programme, from U.S.A., on a study tour ;

A group of seven members of 'Yoga-Tour' from Australia, to study *Yoga* ;

Mrs. Mary Aldridge, Writer, from U.K. ;

Mr. J. Purev, Writer, from Mongolia.

Besides, the following participants at the International Geographical Congress held at the Institute, also stayed :

Professor J. O. Adejuwon, from Nigeria ;

Dr. Chak Lam So, from Hongkong ;

Dr. G. Bora, from Budapest ;

Dr. L. J. Bonifativa, from Moscow ;

Professor V. V. Volski, from U.S.S.R. ;

Professor A. M. Ryabchikov, from Moscow ;

Professor B. W. Langlands, from Kampala, Uganda ;

Professor T. Sekiguti, from Tokyo ;

Professor H. R. S. Davies, from Swansea, U.K. ;

Professor J. Delvert, from Paris ;

Dr. P. D. A. Perera, from Ceylon ;

Dr. N. P. Perera, from Ceylon ;

Professor E. A. Boathing, from Ghana ;

Professor N. Pye, from U.K. ;

Professor R. W. Steel, from U.K. ;

Dr. and Mrs. R. G. Ward, from New Guinea ;

Miss Helen L. Smith, from U.S.A. ;

Professor R. J. Harrison Church, from U.K. ;

Professor Hilgard O'Reilly Sternberg, from California ;

Professor Guy Lasserre, from France ;

Professor Taiji Yazawa, from Tokyo ;

Professor John Chappell, from U.S.A. ;

Professor George Benneh, from Ghana.

APRIL CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

10th, 17th, and 24th April

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th April

THE KATHA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th April

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(Children below six years are not allowed)

CHILDREN'S GROUP BALLET

Kathakali

and

Bharat Natyam

Direction:

Kalamandalam Govindan Kutty

and

Srimati Thankamani Kutty

Tuesday, 1 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

MUSICAL SOIREE

Songs from Gitanjali

By

Institute of Music

Burdwan University

Director:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

Music Direction:

Nilima Sen

Tuesday, 8 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

DRAMA

(in Bengali)

Svargiya Sahitya Basar

By

Mancha Lekha

Composition: Swapan Budo

Direction : Sailajananda Mukherjee

Participants : Eminent Writers of Bengal

Tuesday, 15 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

FILM SHOWS

Tuesday, 22 April, at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, 29 April, at 6 p.m.

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

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR APRIL 1969

Gautam Buddha Galpa Āsar

First Saturday, 5 April, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6–9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 26 April, 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

April 9 **Religion as a Social and Political Force in America**

Speaker: Allen C. Deeter, M.A., Ph.D.
Professor of Religion and Director of the Peace Studies Institute, Manchester College, Indiana, U.S.A.

President: Swami Budhananda
President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati

April 16 **Journey to the Moon**

Speaker: Robert A. Collinge
Information Officer, USIS, Calcutta

President: Krishna Kamini Rohatgi, M.Sc., Ph.D.

* The lecture will be followed by screening of the following films:

(1) Destination: Man

(2) Flight of Apollo 7

(3) Apollo 8: Journey around the Moon

April 23 **Problem of God in Indian Philosophical Systems: God in Vedic Literature (Lec. No. 1)**

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

President: Srimat Anirvan

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA

STEPHANOS NIRMALENDU GHOSH LECTURES (1969)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

A series of 8 lectures on

Religion of Love: A Comparative Study of

Vaisnavism, Christianity, and Sufism

Programme:

Tuesday, 1 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Impact of Christianity on Society in the Nineteenth Century (Lec. No. VIII)

Speaker: Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.

President: Rev. H. L. J. DeMel
Metropolitan and Lord Bishop of Calcutta

* Last lecture of the series.

VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY LECTURES (1969)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

A series of 5 lectures on

Interpretation of Vedanta as a Social Force in the Nineteenth Century

Programme:

Wednesday, 2 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Social Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo (Lec. No. V)

Speaker: Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

President: S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D.
Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University

* Last lecture of the series.

MAHAVIRA JAYANTI

Thursday, 3 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Programme:

Invocation:

Jaina Temple Songs

Talk on:

The Life and Message of Mahavira (in Bengali)

By

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

Film Show:

Our Jaina Heritage

President: Kumar C. S. Dudhoria

SPECIAL LECTURE

Monday, 7 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Samkhya-Yoga Philosophy

Speaker: Ramsankar Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D.
Professor of Research Affairs
Banaras Sanskrit University

President: Nagendra Narayan Chaudhuri, M.A., Ph.D.

SISTER NIVEDITA LECTURES (1968)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

A series of 3 lectures

on

Sister Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Culture

Programme:

Monday, 21 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Culture (Lec. No. I)

Speaker: Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

President: R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.

Monday, 28 April, at 6.30 p.m.

Nivedita's Conception of Dharma (Lec. No. II)

Speaker: Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

President: Swami Budhananda

Monday, 5 May, at 6.30 p.m.

Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Philosophy (Lec. No. III)

Speaker: Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

President: J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

SHAKESPEARE DAY

Programme:

Talks on:

Shakespeare's Significance for India Today

By

Amalendu Bose, M.A., D.Phil., F.I.A.L.

The Religious Note in Shakespeare

By

P. K. Guha, M.A.

Film Show:

Select scenes from *Macbeth* and other Dramas

Wednesday, 30 April, at 6.30 p.m.

BULLETIN
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IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON SOCIETY

SYAMADAS CHATTERJEE, D.Sc., F.N.I.

Dr. Syamadas Chatterjee is Professor and Head of the Department of Physics at the Jadavpur University. He was post-Doctorate research fellow at the National Research Council, Canada, and was also a Visiting Scientist and a Visiting Professor in different foreign countries. He has many research publications to his credit. The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. Chatterjee at the Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies in November 1968.

IN THE past, the life of nearly all mankind was spent in a struggle for existence. Mother Earth demanded much tribute in the form of labour. Labour was the necessary payment of man to nature for his existence. In fact, the potentiality of man for giving labour represented a natural element of his wealth. It was a guarantee for his existence. Man toiled from morn till night for his food, clothing, and shelter. For most men, life was a monotonous existence. Science was housed in the dens of the charlatans. It sought close companionship in the black arts.

THE NEW ERA OF ELECTRICITY

And then, barely more than a century ago, a new page in the drama of history opened. The power of steam was harnessed, and the time and burden of travel shrank. Soon came the era of electricity. It was an era in which each successive discovery added further to the comfort of mankind. More and more of the world's work was done by the forces of inanimate things than by the toil of the arm and hand. The seeker after truth had tasted conquest. He was encouraged to enter new domains. Science was out to conquer nature. Search for new things was no longer a dubious occupation,

a companion to witchcraft. It became a legitimate and recognized ambition of the curiosity of man. It turned out that pure idealistic researches started with no immediate utilitarian purpose. There was no hint of a promise of future service to mankind, and yet, it actually yielded fruits in service to mankind far beyond the wildest dreams of the investigators.

Today we stand heirs to all this wealth of nature's resources. The labourer of today has at his disposal conveniences which no king possessed a hundred years ago. Imagine if Emperor Aśoka could have had installed in his palace at Magadha a refrigerator, electric light, and a telephone with the other end at the residence of his queen at *Rājagṛha*; if Śrī Caitanya could have gone on pilgrimage to Puri in an automobile; if Śaṅkara could have visited his monasteries in an aeroplane. Today, an ordinary artisan in U. S. A., for instance, has these conveniences. His facilities outshine all the luxuries of the world of ancient times. Yet, he who possesses these things today is often an unhappy and disgruntled person. He seems to have a grievance against something or somebody as his main source of mental exhilaration.

The Reasons for Man's Unhappiness

In the midst of all this potentiality for happiness if man is still unhappy, what is the reason for this state. What does he seek for his goal of happiness and why can he not attain it? Man is an active animal. Through thousands of years of history he has become accustomed to count the gains of his labour. In the past such gains have, for the most part, consisted in the accumulation of the means of existence without the necessity of forced labour of the slave. Now, as more and more of the world's work is being done by machines, the amount of toil necessary for existence is being reduced. Unfortunately, however, the machine age has ushered in an era of perpetuation of toil with enhanced efficiency. It has produced a new realm of strife, a strife between machines. Thereby the equilibrium of life becomes upset to a degree. Thus the little that man needs for his existence fails to reach its proper goal of distribution in the turmoil of activity created by the operations of inanimate things.

Let us now analyse this trend towards perpetual increase of the so-called utilitarian activity beyond a certain limit. Let us imagine the case of a despot who gains control of the affairs of the world. He looks down upon our civilization. He whips up the speed of things. He has been egged on by the increasing efficiency of the appliances which man has designed. He comes to the conclusion that in comparison with these appliances man himself is a very inefficient animal and ought not to exist. If we ask this despot about the purpose of this marvellous organization without man, perhaps he would reply that it constitutes a beautiful, smooth running machine which, like a picture or a symphony, is an end in itself, and that he likes to see it run.

Let us now plead with this despot to let man live. We surmise that he may object on the ground that man may tamper with the machinery which is in perfect running order. Let us make a bargain with him to the effect that man may be allowed to live provided that he will guarantee never to do anything which, in the sense of the old meaning of things, can be called useful. Man shall not be deprived of the inspiration of continuing his researches in science. He shall be allowed to continue the enrichment of arts. He shall be kept as a kind of domestic pet of this despot, with no duties other than those concerned with amusing himself.

Now, of course, I do not wish to imply that we have reached the stage, even in the most developed countries, at which the ideal

has been achieved. Yet I do envisage this ideal as a limiting one to which the machine age should naturally tend to. It is what the mathematicians call an 'asymptotic ideal'; something which is continually approached but never actually realized. What I wish to emphasize, however, is that even today it may be true that many of the troubles of our economic existence lie in the failure to recognize the trend towards this ideal. In the attainment of such an ideal wealth has no meaning, because the aims for which it exists are already attained.

I surmise that many will feel unhappy in this Utopian world. Their future activities will lie outside the realm of what they have been accustomed to regard as useful. In an attempt to appraise the ultimate value of things, let me narrate here, in the words of late Dr. W. F. G. Swann, a supposed conversation between a pure utilitarianist and an artist of the 'Art for Art's' type. The conversation is about the pictures which Michelangelo painted in the Vatican.

Utilitarian: 'Of what use are these pictures? They do nobody any good, and only wasted the time of Michelangelo who painted them.'

Artist: 'And what kind of creative work would you regard as of use?'

Utilitarian: 'Well, the development of the steam engine or the automobile.'

Artist: 'But why are these of use?'

Utilitarian: 'Because they enable one to move about faster and get more done.'

Artist: 'But why move about faster and get more done?'

Utilitarian: 'Because by doing so you create wealth for yourself and others; you save time and are enable to enjoy more leisure.'

Artist: 'And what is the use of money and leisure? Is it not rather boresome to have nothing to do?'

Utilitarian: 'Oh, it is not necessary to do nothing. You can travel and enlarge your mind.'

Artist: 'But what is the good of travelling? You only get seasick and very tired.'

Utilitarian: 'Oh, it is a wonderful experience to travel. You can go, for instance to all those places of classic renown: Paris, Venice, London.'

Artist: 'But, is that not very disturbing? I hear that many of these places are unsanitary. The food is not what you are accustomed to, and sometimes the people are not over-friendly.'

Utilitarian: 'Those are but small matters, they are far outweighed by all of the other riches you fall heir to. You can bask in the exhilarating sun of the Alps. You can drink in the beauties of the Mediterranean. You can visit ancient Rome; and by the way, when you are there, do not fail to see those marvellous pictures which Michelangelo has painted in the Vatican.'

It, therefore, seems that the only ultimate excuse for the existence of things utilitarian is that they provide the means whereby we may enjoy the things non-utilitarian. So in the life of mankind one recognizes two types of activities: (i) utilitarian; and (ii) non-utilitarian.

In bygone ages, for the most part, there was no danger of saturation in the utilitarian sphere. Nature claimed all the effort that man could give as the price of his existence. The non-utilitarian effort was reserved for the favoured few, who had managed to acquire a large proportion of the fruits of the labour of their fellows.

The New Discoveries of the Modern Age

Nowadays, the discoveries of science have

revolutionized the plans of the world's work. We have almost reached the stage in which the very continued effort of man in the utilitarian field can bring about a lack of equilibrium. A condition may arise when people may have to be idle. Because, if they work more they would upset the equilibrium. He who is forced to work that he may survive feels a grievance against nature. But he who is condemned to inaction lest his efforts should cause trouble has an even greater grievance.

In the past, support of science has been justified because of the utilitarian advantages to be expected of it. Today we are approaching the other end. Man is to be invited to keep his hands off machinery. If this extreme is not accompanied by non-utilitarian ends, then the despot's rule will prevail. He may seek the complete elimination of man as an inefficient parasite upon the workings of the Universe. In the old days the cry of 'Art for Art's sake' or 'Science for Science's sake' was supposedly the cry of the fanatic. In the future this cry will be the cry of all mankind as a reason for his existence, and as an end in itself. For, if relieved of the effort directed towards utilitarian ends, man becomes ashamed to do anything. He will be suspicious as to the lack of his usefulness. In fact, he will become the most colossal bore in the universe, and it will do well for the despot to get rid of him.

In the last analysis, is not happiness, in the broadest sense, the goal of mankind? It is the promised land to which science has brought us and the land the future invites us to cultivate.

What is the trouble with our existing civilization? Perhaps we have invented too many things for our enjoyment and entertainment. We have invented so many labour-saving devices that the mere operation of all these devices leaves a person less time to relax than a century ago. It is a wonderful thing to listen to the radio the first time we hear it. After sometime it exercises only its noise-making potentialities. So modern contrivances give only superficial pleasure, which soon wears out and leaves the subject with a feeling of discontent.

Happiness itself is a strange thing. I do not believe that it is determined by the status quo of the individual, no matter how high the level of the status quo. It is determined rather by the progress of the individual from one state to another. Never will there be an age in which a being of the state of development as man can expect happiness except as the result of progress through effort expended on something.

According to Bertrand Russell, 'There are certain things that our age needs, and certain things that it should avoid. It needs compassion and a wish that mankind should be happy; it needs the desire for knowledge and the determination to eschew pleasant myths; it needs, above all, courageous hope and impulse to creativeness. The things that it must avoid, and that have brought it to the brink of catastrophe, are cruelty, envy, greed, competitiveness, search for irrational subjective certainty, and what Freudians call the death-wish.'

'The root of the matter', Russell continues, 'is a very simple and old-fashioned thing, a thing so simple that I am almost ashamed to mention it, for fear of the derisive smile with which wise cynics will greet my words. The thing I mean—is love, Christian love or compassion. If you feel this, you have a motive for existence, a guide in action, a reason for courage, an imperative necessity for intellectual honesty. If you feel this, you have all that anybody should need in the way of religion. Although you may not find happiness, you will never know the deep despair of those whose life is aimless and void of purpose, for there is always something that you can

do to diminish the awful sum of human misery.'

Russell symbolizes human struggle in a beautiful metaphor:

'Mankind is in the position of a man climbing a difficult and dangerous precipice, at the summit of which there is a plateau of delicious mountain meadows. With every step he climbs, his fall, if he does fall, becomes more terrible; with every step his weariness increases and the ascent grows more difficult. At last there is only one more step to be taken, but the climber does not know this, because he cannot see beyond the jutting rocks at his head. His exhaustion is so complete that he wants nothing but rest. If he lets go he will find rest in death. Hope calls: "One more effort—perhaps it will be the last effort needed."

'Irony retorts: "Silly fellow! Haven't you been listening to hope all this time, and see where it has landed you."

'Optimism says: "While there is life there is hope."

'Pessimism growls: "While there is life there is pain."'

Does the exhausted climber make one more effort, or does he let himself sink into the abyss?

I believe the answer may be known in no distant future.

Science: A Universal Benefactor of Humanity

Science was regarded as the essence of the human mind. It has been the most promising source of material benefactions. To Macaulay, the function of science was to be a universal benefactor of humanity. In his essay on Bacon, he writes:

'Ask a follower of Bacon what the new philosophy, as it was called in the time of Charles the Second, has affected mankind, and his answer is ready, "It has lengthened life; it has mitigated pain, it has extinguished diseases; it has increased the fertility of soil; it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendour of the day; it has extended the range of human vision; it has multiplied the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance, it has facilitated intercourse, correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business; it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour against the wind. These are but a part of its fruits, and of its first fruits. For it is a philosophy which never rests, which has never attained, which is never perfect. Its law is progress. A point which yesterday was invisible is its goal today and will be its starting-post tomorrow.'

A modern Macaulay would have a different and more chastened view of the fruits of science. He could point to comforts and powers far beyond the imagination a hundred years ago. There are the direct intellectual effects: the dispelling of many traditional beliefs, and the adoption of others suggested by the success of the scientific method. Then there are effects on technique in industry and war. Then, chiefly as a consequence of new techniques, there are profound changes in social organization which are gradually bringing about corresponding political changes. But one has to admit that the modern material science has no more solved the problem of Universal Wealth and happiness than had the moral science of the ancients solved the problem of universal virtue. Today the fruits of science are revealed in war, financial chaos,

voluntary destruction of goods which millions need, general under nourishment, and the fear of more terrible wars in future. It is not therefore surprising that many scientists are turning more and more away from the view that the development of science in itself leads automatically to a better world.

Thus, in his presidential address to the British Association in 1932 Sir Alfred Ewing said :

'In the present-day thinkers' attitude towards what is called mechanical progress we are conscious of a changed spirit. Admiration is tempered by criticism, complacency has given way to doubt ; doubt is passing into alarm. There is a sense of perplexity and frustration, as in one who has gone a long way and finds he has taken a wrong turning. To go back is impossible ; how shall he proceed? Whither does this tremendous procession of discovery and invention tend? What, after all, is its goal? What its probable influence upon the future of the human race?

'The pageant itself is a modern affair. A century ago it has barely taken form and had acquired none of the momentum which rather owes us today. The cornucopia of engineer has shaken over all the earth, scattering everywhere an endowment previously unpossessed and unimagined capacities and powers. Beyond question many of these gifts are benefits to man, making life fuller, wider, healthier, richer in comforts and interests and in such happiness as material things can promote. But we are acutely aware that the engineer's gifts have been and may be grievously abused. In some there is potential tragedy as well as present burden. Man was ethically unprepared for so great a bounty. In the slow evolution of morals he is still unfit for the tremendous responsibility it entails. The command of Nature has been put into his hands before he knows how to command himself.

'More and more does mechanical production take the place of human effort, not only in manufacturers but also in all our tasks, even the primitive task of tilling the ground. So man finds this, that while he is enriched with a multitude of possessions and possibilities beyond his dreams, he is in great measure deprived of one inestimable blessing, the necessity of toil. We invent the machinery of mass production and for the sake of cheapening the unit we develop output on a gigantic scale. Almost automatically the machine delivers a stream of articles in the creation of which the workman has had little part. He has lost the joy of craftsmanship, the old satisfaction in something accomplished through the conscientious exercise of care and skill. In many cases unemployment is thrust upon him, an unemployment that is more saddening than any drudgery. And the world finds itself glutted with commodities, produced in a quantity too great to be absorbed, though every nation strives to secure at least a home market by erecting tariff walls.

'Where shall we seek a remedy ? I cannot tell. Some may envisage a distant utopia in which there will be perfect adjustment of labour and the fruits of labour, a fair spreading of employment and wages and of all the commodities that machines produce.

'Even so, the question will remain. How is man to spend his leisure he has won by handing over nearly all his burden to an untiring mechanical slave ? Dare he hope for such spiritual betterment as will qualify him to use it well ? God grant that he may strive for and attain it. It is only by seeking he will find. I cannot think that man is destined to atrophy and cease through cultivating what, after all, is one of his

most God-like faculties, the creative ingenuity of the engineer.'

Some turn away from science in sheer despair of anything being done with unregenerate human nature. Others immerse themselves more than ever in the actual scientific work, refusing to consider at all its social consequences because they know that these will probably be harmful. Only the fortunate few can say with G. H. Hardy in his famous apostrophe on pure mathematics:

'This subject has no practical use; that is to say, it cannot be used for promoting directly the destruction of human life or for accentuating the presenting inequalities in the distribution of wealth.'

The Consequences of Scientific Knowledge on Society

Bertrand Russell has applied his vast range of knowledge and his profound intellectual resources to an examination of the consequences of scientific knowledge and technique on society today and in the future. He begins by considering the effect of the development of scientific ideas as a solvent of the many traditional beliefs of earlier days. He claims that the great contributions of the seventeenth century thought were:

(a) the emphasis which it laid upon the importance of observation as against the acceptance of tradition;

(b) the development of the conception of natural law as governing the whole organization of the Universe both on the material and on its biological side;

(c) the recognition of the fact that the earth was not the centre and that man was not the purpose of the Universe. This 'dethronement' of 'purpose' was fundamental to the development of science in the eighteenth century. As Russell says, although it is still open to the philosopher or the theologian to hold that everything has a purpose, it has been found that the purpose is not a useful concept when we are in search of scientific laws. Russell points out that science has degraded man in one way, as far as contemplation is concerned, since it has reduced him from a centre of the universe to an infinitesimal speck in the cosmic life, but at the same time science has exalted him by providing him with an almost unlimited capacity to exert power. Russell then passes on to consider the general effects of the scientific technique. Science may be regarded as having two functions:

(a) to enable us to know things and (b) to enable us to do things.

It is the second of these aspects which has become of vital importance in modern times. The Greeks were much more concerned with the former. The earliest techniques to become significant were those of physics and chemistry and as a result the discovery of gunpowder made for the supremacy of the state as the major organ of the organized life of society, the mariner's compass revolutionized man's conception of his world, and the development of stream, electric, and finally atomic power caused a rapid expansion in every aspect of life. In the long run, the application of science to the techniques of biology, physiology, and psychology is likely to prove as important, if not more so, as the early developments in physics and chemistry.

The ultimate result will possibly be, as envisaged by Aldous Huxley in his *The Brave New World*, an attempt at the scientific breeding of human beings. The most obvious and inescapable effect of scientific technique is that it makes society far more organic in the sense that it increases the interdependence of its various parts. This is true in the case of agriculture, but far more important in the industrial life of the great city. The ramifications of the organized life of a great city spread far beyond

the factory and cover every aspect of existence. One important consequence is the extent to which the increase of organization brings into existence the 'tyranny of officials', culminating in the building up of totalitarian power. Such a regime fosters laziness and lack of adaptability to new circumstances.

Russell suggests that there may be three points of view leading to three different kinds of political philosophies. You may view an individual (a) as a common man, (b) as a hero, and (c) as a cog in the machine.

The first view leads you to the old-fashioned Democracy, the second to Fascism and the third to Communism. Democracy, if it is to recover the power of inspiring vigorous action, needs to take account of what is valid in the other two ways of regarding the individuals. In a good social system every man will be at once a hero, a common man and a cog. The cog theory as a result of mechanization is the most devastating of the three.

What science may do is to increase the proportion of your life in which you are a cog, to the extent of endangering what is due to you as a hero or as a common man. According to Russell, no society can be progressive without a leaven of rebels, and modern technique makes it more and more difficult to be a rebel.

The Evils and the Benefits

The connection of science with war has grown gradually more and more intimate. Indeed science plays a decisive part in war. One nuclear physicist is worth more than many infantry divisions. The atom bombs, and still more the hydrogen bombs, have caused new fears, involving new doubts as to the effects of science on human life. Some eminent authorities, including Einstein, have pointed out that there is a danger of the extinction of all life on this planet. We are perhaps living in the last age of man, and if so, it is to science that he will owe his extinction. According to Russell, 'If human life is to continue in spite of science, mankind will have to learn a discipline of the passions, which in the past was not necessary. A clear choice must be made between Reason and Death'. And by Reason, Russell means 'willingness to submit to law as declared by international authority'.

Thus there are two ancient evils that science, unwisely used, may intensify: they are tyranny and war. However, science can confer two kinds of benefits; it can diminish bad things, and it can increase good things. Considering the former, science can abolish poverty and excessive hours of labour. In the earliest human communities, before agriculture, each human individual required more than two square miles to sustain life. Subsistence was precarious and death from starvation must have been frequent. And so, agriculture has been a technical advance of the same kind of importance as attaches to modern industry. Nevertheless, agriculture also introduced slavery and serfdom, human sacrifice and wars.

Furthermore, soil and raw materials are being used up so fast that scientific progress may not continually make good this loss by means of new inventions and discoveries.

Science has also conferred an immense boon on mankind by the growth of medicine. There is no obvious limit to the improvement of health that can be brought about by medicine. And so, man's life span is prolonged. Population increases and may outrun the increase in food production rendered possible by technical improvements. Indeed the population of the world is rapidly increasing, particularly in the eastern hemisphere, and the capacity for food production is diminishing. Such a

state of affairs obviously cannot continue very long without producing a cataclysm.

Science can abolish poverty; it can do away with excessive hours of work; it can raise the standard of life. It can result in the diminution of lawlessness, and it can also lead to a vast increase in education and opportunities. Indeed, science offers the possibility of far greater well-being for the human race than has ever been known before. It offers this on certain conditions: abolition of war, even distribution of ultimate power, and limitation of growth of population.

Science, in its early stages, had few social effects except upon the small number of learned men who took an interest in it, but in recent times it has been transforming ordinary life with ever-increasing velocity. Now the question may be asked whether, in fact, it is probable that society will persist in being scientific. If it does, it must almost inevitably grow progressively more and more scientific, since new knowledge will accumulate. If it does not, there may be either a gradual decay, like the cooling of the Sun by radiation, or a violent transformation, like those that cause novae to appear in the heavens. The former would show itself in exhaustion, the latter in revolution.

The more power-driven, complex, and delicate our civilization becomes, the more the likelihood arises that a collapse will take place. According to Charles Lindbergh, an overemphasis on science weakens human character. It upsets life's essential balance. Science breeds technology. Technology leads to infinite complication. Examples are everywhere: in the intricacy of government and of business corporations; in automation and labour relations, in war, diplomacy, taxation, legislation, in almost every field of modern man's routine.

From the growth of cities to that of military power, the medical requirements to social welfare benefits, when progress is plotted against time, exponential curves result to which we cannot easily conform. But what action should scientific man prescribe as a result? Suppose technologists conclude theoretically that they are destroying their own culture. Are they capable of taking action to prevent such destruction?

The failures of previous civilizations, and the crises existing in our own, show that man has not evolved the ability to cope with limitless complication. He has not discovered how to control his sciences' parabolas.

Resume

Broadly speaking, we are in the middle of a race between human skill as to means and human folly as to ends. Given sufficient folly as to ends, every increase in the skill required to achieve them is bad. The human race has survived hitherto owing to ignorance and incompetence, but given scientific knowledge and competence combined with folly, there can be no certainty for survival. Knowledge is power, but it is power for evil just as much as for good. It follows that, unless man increases in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow.

The primitive emphasizes the factors of survival and the mysteries beyond them. Modern civilization emphasizes increasing knowledge and the application of technology to man's way of life. The future of humanity depends on our ability to combine the knowledge of science with the wisdom of Nature.

Life is an unresting march towards an ever receding goal. The road is long, but there is no reason for losing sight of the ultimate hope.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF TANTRAS

TRIPURA SANKAR SEN, M.A.

Professor Tripura Sankar Sen is Head of the Department of Philosophy at the Muralidhar Girls' College, Calcutta. He has written many books and among his books mention may be made of Ūniś Śataker Bāṅglā Sāhitya, Bhārat Jijñāsā, Vaiṣṇava Sāhitya, *and* Śākta Padāvalī. *The lecture reproduced below was given by Professor Sen at the Institute in November 1968.*

THE word 'Tantra' is used in a wide sense to include any treatise on any branch of learnig, such as Philosophy, Science of Medicine, etc. but in a technical sense it means *Mantra Śāstra* or *Āgama Śāstra*, which gives us a practical course of spiritual discipline for awakening our secret powers or for attaining liberation.

Human beings may be broadly classified into three types which are *sāttvika*, *rājasika*, and *tāmasika*. The first type are spiritually minded and are lovers of peace and tranquility. The second type are heroic, possessing courage and being fit competitors for the struggle for existence. Tenacity of purpose and indomitable will-force characterize them. The last type are unconscious about their inherent powers; just as the sun is obstructed by cloud, so also their knowledge is over-clouded by *ajñāna* or ignorance.

INTRODUCTION

The Tantras, which cover a vast field of literature dealing with different topics, both secular and spiritual, are divided into *sāttvika*, *rājasika*, and *tāmasika*. The *Sāttvika* Tantras deal with the ways of self-realization, the *Rājasika* Tantras show us the way to prosperity and material success and the *Tāmasika* Tantras deal with such actions as lead to the cure of fatal diseases, killing of enemies, etc. So there are Tantras of higher as well as of lower order. The Tantras of higher order emphatically declare that the goal of human life is Self-realization or the attainment of perfection through a rigorous course of spiritual discipline. These Tantras make a synthesis of the ideals of *Karma*, *Jñāna*, and *Bhakti*.

In India we come across different religious sects with their numerous subdivisions. Now, the different religious sects claim to follow different Tantras which they regard as authoritative. Thus, we have Śaiva Tantras, Śākta Tantras, Vaiṣṇava Tantras, the Tantras prevalent among the Nāth Yogīs, and among other mystic religious cults which are probably the off-shoots of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The Tantras have also been subdivided into those that are in conformity with the Vedas and those that are at variance with them. If, by the term 'Veda' we mean knowledge of universal truths or eternal verities, the Tantras which deal with the methods of self-realization are surely to be included under the Śrutis. The great Tāntrika scholars like the late Sivachandra Vidyārṇava and Swami Nigamananda are of opinion that there is no opposition between the Vedas and the Tantras, because the Tantras are as much revealed texts as the Vedas.

The Tāntrika sages and seers realized that India is a unity in the midst of

diversities. Though in India there is a cultural unity, yet the people of the different parts of India differ in their manners and customs, in their tastes and temperaments. In the Tantras, India has been divided into three Geographical regions which are known as *Viṣṇukrānta* spreading from the Vindhya Hills to Chittagong and hence including the whole of Bengal, *Rathakrānta* spreading from the Vindhya Hills to Maha-China and hence including Nepal, and *Aśvakrānta* including the rest of India (probably greater India). Sixty-four Tantras are prevalent in each of these subdivisions, the total number of Tantras being one hundred and ninety-two.

The Tāntrika *sādhakas* claim that the Tāntrika methods of worship and self-realization should be followed by men living in the *Kali Yuga* as they yield quick results. It is said that the scriptures particularly suited for the men of *Satya Yuga, Tretā Yuga, Dvāpara Yuga,* and *Kali Yuga* are the Śrutis, the Smṛtis, the Purāṇas, and the Tantras respectively.

The aim of the present essay is not to deal with the different aspects of the Tantras but to point out briefly the psychological background of these.

The Psychological Background

Man is said to be the masterpiece of God's creation. The saying of the Bible that man is made in the image of God has a far-reaching significance. The Vedānta and the Tantras declare that man is essentially divine. Those who hold the mechanical theory of Evolution believe that man is essentially an animal, a creature of instincts and emotions. All his actions are determined by such instincts as the instinct of self-preservation, sex-instinct, instinct of submission, instinct of self-assertion, etc. Man is thus a curious combination of animality and divinity. Hamlet says—'What a piece of work is man!' To his mind man is 'noble in reason', 'infinite in faculty', 'express and admirable in form and moving', 'like an angel in action', 'like a god in appreciation'; he is 'the beauty of the world', 'the paragon of animals', and yet nothing but 'quintessence of dust'. The Tāntrikas take into consideration the complete man with all his flaws and ring a message of hope for mankind.

That men differ in their degree of intelligence, in their tastes and temperaments is a fact which has been accepted by modern psychologists. Our life is determined to a great extent by our heredity and environment, and by the hypo-activity and hyper-activity of our endocrine glands. Louis Berman says: It is these glands of internal secretion that 'make one man a dynamo of creative energy and another a flotsam on the sea of life'. This statement, though exaggerated, contains an element of truth. In the field of education we are confronted with the problem of precocious and various types of backward children. Jung, the famous psychiatrist, lays emphasis on two types of persons, viz. the introvert or the self-centred type, and the extrovert or sociable type. There is also another classification of persons into active and contemplative types. The classification of persons into *sāttvika, rājasika,* and *tāmasika* types, according to the predominance of one *guṇa* or another, has been accepted by all Indian thinkers, but one of the special features of the Tantras is that the Tāntrika texts recommend different courses of spiritual discipline for these three types. Professor Upendra Kumar Das, in his monumental work on 'Bhāratīya Śakti Sādhanā', says: 'The Tantras are the only scriptures which have room for every form of Religion from the lowest form of belief in the supernatural to the highest form which consists in self-realization, and

a systematic course of discipline is recommended for all.'

We should remember that *adhikāra-vāda* which, as Swami Vivekananda says, is a marvellous doctrine and which is one of the chief aspects of Indian culture, has been as much accepted in the Tantras as in others scriptures, but it is only the Tantras which emphatically declare that none in the world need despair, because the door of spiritual progress is open to all.

One of the main points of the Freudian theory of Psycho-Analysis is that our mental disorders are due to the repression of anti-social desires which are driven to the Unconscious. Modern psychologists offer us many evidences in favour of the existence of unconscious mental states. The Yogins and the Tāntrikas of India discovered long, long before Freud, that the unconscious Region of the human mind is the storehouse not only of feelings and desires, but also of wrong beliefs and impressions acquired through series of births. The Tāntrika *sādhakas* declare that the biological instincts in man should never be repressed but should be directed in the right channel under the guidance of a spiritual preceptor who, being a man of realization, never fails to lead others to the path of perfection. Such a guide is far more preferable to a doctor or a psychiatrist because he can always 'minister to a mind diseased'. The modern psychologists tell us that our libido (sex-urge in the Freudian sense or neuro-psychic energy in the sense used by Jung) should be sublimated but they have not been able to devise any method of complete sublimation. Here the Tāntrikas have their own methods, not only of the complete sublimation of the libido but of entire transformation of human body and mind. The Tāntrikas emphatically declare that our subtle body which is the unconscious storehouse of desires should be utterly destroyed before liberation can be attained. Sri Aurobindo says—'To raise nature in man into manifest power of spirit is its method, and it is the whole nature that it gathers up for the spiritual conversion'.

This spiritual conversion occurs when the *Kuṇḍalinī*, which is compared to a snake lying asleep in the subtle body, is awakened and it rises upwards to meet the thousand-petalled lotus, the higher consciousness centre and as it rises up, the *cakras* which are the sources of all our energies are opened. Sri Aurobindo describes the ascent of *Kuṇḍalinī* and the bloom of the lotuses in his inimitable style thus (*Sāvitrī*, VII. 5):

All underwent a high celestial change:
Breaking the black Inconscient's blind
mute wall,
Effacing the circles of the Ignorance,
Powers and divinities burst flaming forth:
Each part of the being trembling with
delight
Lay overwhelmed with tides of happiness
And saw her hand in every circumstance
And felt her touch in every limb and cell:
Life now obeyed to a diviner rule
And every act became an act of God.

It is evident from the above lines that the devotee enjoys unalloyed bliss when his *Kuṇḍalinī* is awakened. But the *cakras* and the serpent-power are not visible to the naked eye or the microscope. When a true disciple undergoes spiritual discipline under the guidance of a *guru* who has realized the highest spiritual truths, his *Kuṇḍalinī* is awakened in due time.

Spiritual Progress

The Tantras emphatically declare that spiritual progress is to be attained gradually under the guidance of different *gurus* or spiritual guides. It is said that just as a bee desirous of gathering honey runs from one flower to another, so a spiritual aspirant, desirous of acquiring knowledge, should be under the guidance of different

gurus. This is quite psychological. In the field of secular education also we first of all get ourselves admitted in a primary school, then we receive education in a secondary school, afterwards we enter into a college, and finally we are admitted to the Post-Graduate classes. A real preceptor is one who can transmit his spiritual power to the disciple and can 'speak like a man with authority'. There is an English proverb which says: 'It is the live coal that kindles others, not the dead'. In the *Tantrasāra*, the virtues of a real disciple and a real preceptor are explicitly stated.

Enjoyment and Liberation

The Tantras emphatically declare that there is no real opposition between enjoyment and liberation. The Tāntrikas say—It is generally heard that where there is enjoyment, there is no liberation, and where there is liberation, there is no enjoyment of worldly objects; but those who surrender themselves to the lotus-feet of the goddess may have enjoyment and liberation at their sweet will. The Tantras also declare that our inclinations, when put under proper restraint, may lead to liberation. The Tāntrikas, who were the greatest psychologists of the world, were fully aware of the danger of repression. Those who are ignorant of the Tantras are generally shocked to learn that the Tāntrikas use alcohol, meat, fish, etc. as an aid to their *sādhanā*. But the Tāntrikas declare that the five *tattvas* have a spiritual significance only for those devotees who have made some progress in the path of spirituality (vide, the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*) but for those who are inclined towards enjoyment these terms should be taken literally. For instance, when alcohol is sanctified by *mantras* and the dose is moderate, it may be an aid to concentration. But the Tantras repeatedly warn us against the evils of intemperance and the dangers of adultery. The Tāntrika scriptures show us how we can sublimate our passions without repressing them.

The Tantras describe the seven stages of spiritual progress. In each of the stages we have some duties to perform but when we reach the seventh stage or the final goal, we transcend all worldly duties. The Tantras deal with seven *acāras* technically known as Vedācāra, Vaiṣṇavācāra, Śaivācāra, Dakṣiṇācāra, Vāmācāra, Siddhāntācāra, and Kaulācāra.

In the language of Sri Aurobindo we may say that the Tantras teach us integral Yoga. The final aim of the Tantras is the attainment of the knowledge of reality through *karma*, *bhakti*, and *yoga*.

Spiritual and Philosophical Truths

Sri Aurobindo says—'The Tantras contain the highest spiritual and philosophical truths, not broken up and expressed in opposition to each other as in the debates of the thinkers, but synthesized by a fusion, relation, or grouping most congenial to the catholicity of the Indian mind and spirit.'

The following remarks on the *Theory and Practice of Tantra* by Carl Grant Zolliner are illuminating.

'Tāntrikas devote their whole life and energy to the fearless investigation of truth. Under the direction of what are considered to be the greatest teachers in the world, the initiated undergoes a course of training which modifies his organization from a psychological as well as a physiological point of view. If the imagination be diseased, it is with a sudden jerk, restored to its equilibrium.'

The Tantra itself is very bold, but its boldness is its beauty; for it is the boldness of chastity, of a lofty and tender morality, for which we must drop pride and speak of things as they are. Religion, in its higher sense, as every man sees it, is to

him not only a rule of action by which he lives and progresses, but it formulates the rule by which he must die and pass into the mysterious realms of a future life (Quoted from Swami Nigamananda's *Tāntrika Guru*).

The Human Body

The Tantras emphatically declare that the human body is the temple of God, and in order to worship a god we must first become a god. There are some Tāntrika disciplines which entirely transform the body and mind of the worshipper. Thus the worshipper entirely loses his ego-consciousness and realizes his identity with the worshipped. In the *Rudra Yamala Tantra*, human body is described as a *Śiva-tīrtha*, that is, a holy place where Lord Śiva resides. 'The mind' says Plotinus 'that wishes to behold God must itself become God (vide, *In Tune With the Infinite*, p. 218, New and Revised Edition). To become God is really to be born again. 'Unless you are born again', says Christ 'you cannot enter into the kingdom of God'. Trine calls it the spiritual birth, and when a devotee is born again, his body and mind are entirely transformed and whatever he does, he does under the guidance of the Deity. St. Paul reminds us that we are the temples of God and the Spirit of God dwells in us. But there is a truth higher than this, the devotee must realize that he is identical with God. What the Indian psychologists call *bhāvanā* is a process of auto-suggestion and the spiritual aspirant may transform even his physical body through this process and may become a god-man. To realize one's identity with Brahman is the ultimate aim of the Tāntrika discipline. So a devotee must repeat the following formula regularly —'I am identical with God and am no other than God, I am Brahman and not an object of lamentation, I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute, I am eternally free.'

The Tāntrikas have their own methods of transforming the physical body to a spiritual body which is known as *sādhanā-deha*, and these methods have been worked out in the Tantras in the minutest details. These methods are (1) *Bhūta-śuddhi* (purification of the five *bhūtas* [elements] which compose the material body, or the purification of the gross as well as the subtle body which is the storehouse of unconscious desires), (2) *Āsana-śuddhi* or sanctification of the seat in which the devotee is seated through *bhāvanā*, (3) *Prāṇāyāma* or breath-control, (4) *Nyāsa*, which means that the devotee should think deeply that in every limb of his the Deity dwells, (5) *Japa* which means that some *mantra* must be consciously repeated and its significance should be meditated upon. Being perfectly pure in body and mind, the worshipper realizes his identity with the Deity, and at the same time he is eligible for worshipping the god or goddess.

That the physical body can be thoroughly transformed through the power of suggestion is a fact that has been scientifically proved. Trine says: 'The power of suggestion so far as human mind is concerned is a most wonderful and interesting field of study. Most wonderful and powerful forces can be set into operatior through this agency. One of the world's most noted scientists, recognized everywhere, as one of the most eminent anatomists tells us, that he has proven from laboratory experiments that the entire human structure can be completely changed, made over, within a period of less than one year, and that some portions can be entirely remade within a period of a very few weeks.

In India there are saints who preach that the *summum bonum* of life can be reached only by renouncing worldly objects. According to them the main

obstacle to attaining liberation is our attachment to our bodies. The spiritual aspirants should, therefore, always think that the human body is not only subject to changes and ultimately to dissolution, it is also full of filthy and loathsome substances such as rheum, phlegm, urine, stool, etc. The *Yogopaniṣad* and the *Śānti Śataka* of Silhana Misra tell us that if you desire to overcome your lust or sex-appetite, you are always to think of the transitoriness and loathsomeness of the human body. The Tāntrikas, on the other hand, emphatically declare that the human body is essentially divine. To be born as a human being is itself a great privilege, because it is only human beings who can become gods through *sādhanā* or spiritual discipline. The biological evolution, as formulated by Charles Darwin, states that different species have originated through millions of years culminating in the advent of human beings, who again, proceed from barbarism to higher and higher grades of civilization. The theory of evolution was not only anticipated by Aristotle but also by Indian thinkers who hold that we had to pass through the stages of different sub-human species numbering eighty-four lakhs before we could be born as human beings. Now the end of human life being the attainment of liberation we are to undergo a regular course of spiritual discipline including worship, recital of *mantra*, *homa* or performance of sacrifice, *japa*, etc. Sri Aurobindo says on the efficacy of *Mantra*—'The *Mantra* can not only create new subjective states in ourselves, alter our psychical being, reveal knowledge and faculties we did not before posses, can not only produce similar results in other minds than that of the user, but can produce vibrations in the mental and vital atmosphere which result in effects, in actions, and even in the production of material forms on the physical plane,'

Different kinds of *Japa* are also recommended in the Tantras which help the devotee in transforming his body and mind culminating in *ajapajapa*. By the term *Japa*, as we have said, is meant the repeated recital of some *mantra*. *Ajapajapa* is the ceaseless vibration of the sound '*Ham*' and '*Saḥ*' (which signifies 'I am He') along with our inhalation and exhalation without any effort on the part of the devotee.

Various kinds of bath for bodily and mental purification are also recommended. By the term mental bath is meant the worship of Viṣṇu. We should notice that *Tāntrika Gāyatrī* is accessible to all, irrespective of caste and creed. It is said in the *Bhūta-śuddhi Tantra* that Tāntrika *Tarpaṇa* and Tāntrika *Praṇava* are meant even for a *Śūdra*.

We have already spoken of *Bhūta-śuddhi*. It is said in the *Viśuddheśvara Tantra* that the term *Bhūta-śuddhi* means purification of the body composed of the five elements so that it may be utterly transformed and united with Brahman. The devotee realizes through this process that every thing, whether animate or inanimate, is Brahman; that is, Brahman is immanent in the world and so our material bodies are, from the transcendental standpoint, nothing but Brahman. Regular practice of *Prānāyāma* or breath-control is not only conducive to physical and mental health, it also helps us to attain longevity and concentration of mind.

Like other *Śāstras*, the Tantras also declare that what is in the macrocosm is also in the microcosm. So our little body contains all the *Pīṭhas* or holy places associated with the different parts of the Divine Moher's body. What the Tāntrikas call *Pīṭhanyāsa* is the meditation of different *Pīṭhas* in different parts of our body. So we see that the Tāntrikas recommend various methods for the sublimation of the

libido and for the transformation of our whole being.

Conclusion

We have said that the aim of Tāntrika *sādhanā* is realization of Self which is identical with Brahman. Says the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*: 'It is not by *Japa*, or *Homa*, or by fasting that a man becomes liberated, it is by realizing his identity with Brahman that a man becomes liberated. But *Japa*, *Homa*, *fasting*, etc. are not useless as these lead to self-purification without which no man can attain liberation. The Tāntrikas have discovered (if I may use the term) various processes which help the devotee to awaken his inherent vital, mental, and spiritual energy, to sublimate completely his animal nature, to transform his entire being and to overcome the terror of Death. The followers of the Śākta cult, again, realize that all women are the different manifestations of the Divine Mother (who is terrible to the wicked but beneficent to the devotees) and thus they conquer lust without any effort. The Vaiṣṇavas, who are the followers of Vaiṣṇava Āgama, on the other hand, distinguish between mundane and supramundane lust, between *Kāma* and *Prema* and direct their love towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whom they regard as the sweetest, the most charming and captivating of all beings. Modern psychology has not yet been able to discover any method, by following which we may transform our whole being and overcome the terror of Death. The followers of the Śaiva Āgama also aim at freeing themselves from the fetters which bind them to the world and at becoming Śiva themselves. The worshippers of Kāli the Mother compare their hearts to places for burning dead bodies, and they burn, through strenuous efforts, all their desires so that the Divine Mother who is supposed to have her abode in a cremation-ground may reside in their hearts. To them, the goddess, who appears to be most horrible to the sinful and ungodly, appears as a kind and affectionate Mother. To such devotees Death has no terror, death rather appears to them as a kindly mother who takes them into her lap after the worries and turmoils of their lives. The Śākta conception of the goddess Kāli has been magnificently brought out in Swami Vivekananda's poem 'Kālī the Mother'. That Death has absolutely no terror for devotees like Rāmaprasāda and Govinda Chowdhury is evident from some of their beautiful songs which inspire and elevate us when we are care-laden and fatigued in the journey of life.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE ARYAN ECLIPTIC CYCLE. By H. S. Spencer. With a foreword by Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. H. P. Vaswani, 795/3, Padamjee Park, Poona-2. 1965. 442 pp. Rs. 25.

IS THE SO CALLED YOUNGER AVESTA REALLY YOUNGER? By H. S. Spencer. With a foreword by Dr. K. M. Munshi. H. P. Vaswani, 795/3, Padamjee Park, Poona-2. 1965. 104 pp. Rs. 6.50.

ARE THE GATHAS PRE-VEDIC? AND THE AGE OF ZARATHUSHTRA. By H. S. Spencer. With a foreword by Sri Jatindra Mohan Chatterjee. H. P. Vaswani, 795/3, Padamjee Park, Poona-2. 1965. 126 pp. Rs. 7.50.

THE AGE OF ZARATHUSHTRA. By H. S. Spencer. With a foreword by Sri Prakasa. H. P. Vaswani, 795/3, Padamjee Park, Poona-2. 1965. 41 pp. Rs. 3.00

THE MYSTERIES OF GOD IN THE UNIVERSE. By H. S. Spencer. With a foreword by Sri Morarji Desai. H. P. Vaswani, 795/3, Padamjee Park, Poona-2. 1967. 184 pp. Rs. 20.

SEQUEL TO THE MYSTERIES OF GOD IN THE UNIVERSE. By H. S. Spencer and others. Compiled and Edited by Tony Rigsdale Sherwood. H. P. Vaswani, 795/3, Padamjee Park, Poona-2. 181 pp. Rs. 10.00.

The first four books deal mainly with the tenets of the Iranian religion, the exact historical background behind their prophets and gathas and their Indian counterparts; the nature and quality of the tenets in a quantitative world and the calculation of dates of their origin. *The Aryan Ecliptic Cycle* and *The Age of Zarathushtra* remind us of the similar attempts of reputed Indian scholars like the late Lokamanya Tilak who tried to base the Vedas on astronomical data, resurrect an Arctic Home for the Aryans and establish an ecliptic cycle as in 'Orion'. Mr. Spencer has also tried to rewrite the ancient history of the Aryan Family of Nations, mainly Iranians, based on Early Zoroastrian evidence and later researches of scholars like Dr. Geiger and Dr. Firmi. He pushes back the Avestha Gatha to seven thousand years before Christ and to the days when the Arctic region was getting frozen and the Atlantic warmer. Abraham, Kṛṣṇa, and Christ lived and preached, according to him, long before the present accepted dates. These are, no doubt, original views but highly controversial and we are not competent to go into polemics over them, but hail the writer as an indomitable exponent of new ideas. The author has rightly stated, as pointed out by Sri J. M. Chatterjee, that the Gathas are not really pre-Vedic. Rudra is both 'Deva' and 'Asura' in the *Ṛg-Veda* and 'Mazda Yasna' is nothing but 'Pitri Yāna' of India. King Varuṇa is also called an 'Asura' reminding us of 'Ahura Mazda' and a significant word is 'Ugra Manyu' corresponding to 'Angra Manyu' of the Gathas. Parsu Rām may not be the Rāma of the Parsis, being a phonetic vagary, but it may be conceded that Pāṇini, whose grammatical exposition was composed before Gautama Buddha, felt himself free to give a special illustration of the prefix 'up' added to the root 'stha' to explain Upastha (Avesta) to mean *mantra*. He has tried to determine the age of Zarathushtra by calculating spiritual cycles in the Vernal Equinoctral period and finding out the date of historicity of Yima Vivanghao (Yama Vivaswat) which he claims, is described in chapter II of the Iranian Vendidad. The

presentation of the Trident or *Trišūla* to Yima Vivanghao by Asho Ahura Mazda himself is symbolic of Rudra becoming Śiva, and, according to the author, Śiva and Asho Ahura Mazda Ameshpand, are comparable and identical.

The Mysteries of God in the Universe is a book well worth pondering over because it raises fundamental questions of every philosophy –Who am I? Where do I come from? Where do I go? Do I exist after death?—live questions, which have intrigued the curiosity, brain, intellect, and intuition of millions of men and women throughout the ages. Dr. H. N. Banerjee, the famous parapsychologist, has written a valuable introduction and I would only quote him: 'The author's effort is indeed praiseworthy. He has made a critical study of the sacred books of various religions and has succeeded in bringing forth those concepts which weave these apparently different religions into a common single thread.' Such an attempt is always laudable. Since the publication of the book called *The Mysteries of God in the Universe* an annexe to that volume entitled *Sequel to the Mysteries of God in the Universe* has been compiled from Mr. Spencer's notes and essays supplementing his main theme that the human spirit unfolds itself in subsequent births, thus completing a cycle of experience, and life is an onward journey from death to death and from death to life again. He claims that Gautama Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, Solomon, all speak of this great mystery which is embedded in the Aryan thought as one of the highest philosophical truths rather than the relic of a savage totem or ancestor worship. Mr. Spencer, through his painstaking researches and a deep insight has correctly shown by ample quotations from modern writers and sages that the theory of reincarnation, though rejected by established Churches is not a proposition to be dismissed as a will-o-the-wisp. The Chapter, 'Christ in You—The Hope of Glory' is particularly illuminating and the author thereof has quoted copiously from the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharsi, and others. He could have referred also to the masterly exposition of this philosophy of rebirth in Sri Aurobindo's *Life Divine*, Chapter XX, Vol. II, Part II. But why is there a succession of human births and not one alone? To this question his answer was –'For the same reason that has made the human birth itself a culminating point of the past succession. ... For the soul has not finished what it has to do by merely developing into humanity, it has still to develop that humanity into its higher possibilities. ... It is rebirth that gives to the birth of an incomplete being in a body, its promise of completeness and its spiritual significance.' That reminds us of Swami Vivekananda's great realization—'Man is not yet. He will have to be.'

In the nineteenth century, God was dying, and the intellectuals and not merely the spiritual leaders or thinkers were trying to resurrect Him in Man. A new radiant

humanism with or without spiritual stings was supposed to be the complete answer. Man became God and God became Man. Today Man's death-pangs are already evident. He is today being replaced by robot and automatons, and the sense of humanism is being shattered by higher technological developments at an almost break-neck speed. But as Dr. Radhakrishnan says—Man is a teachable animal and by a sympathetic understanding of the past gropings and stumblings of mankind he can avoid if not error, at least its repetition. I do not know what super science in a super cosmic age will teach us. But let us still believe in Man and his evolution not in a Schizoid self-alienation. Mr. Spencer has indicated the way.

SUDHANSU MOHAN BANERJEE

INSTITUTE NEWS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

MANAGING COMMITTEE: APRIL 1969—MARCH 1970

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SWAMI GAHANANANDA

Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratisthan

Swami Vivekananda's Birthday Celebration

Swami Vivekananda's birthday was celebrated at the Institute on Saturday, 18 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m. at a solemn function held in the Vivekananda Hall. The portrait of Swami Vivekananda in the background of the dais was decorated on the occasion.

The day's function commenced with *Vivekananda Stotram* by Sri Purnendu Roy, which was followed by a talk in Bengali on '*Bhārata-Ātmā Vivekananda*' by Principal Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A. The programme concluded with a documentary film on the life of Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Bhuteshananda, Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, presided.

Christmas Eve

On Tuesday, 24 December 1968, at 6.30 p.m. the Institute celebrated the Christmas Eve in the Vivekananda Hall.

The programme began with Christmas Carol by Catholic Students' Union followed by reading from the Bible Sri Nirmal Pandey.

Professor Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A., then gave a talk in English on 'Jesus Christ: His Spiritual Mission'. The function came to a close with a *Gīti-ālekhya* (music *cum* commentary) entitled *Āvirbhāv* (the birth of Jesus), written by Sri Nimai Kumar Mukherjee. Songs were composed by Sri Sunil Datta. The participants included Sri Sunil Datta and others in music and Sri Nimai Kumar Mukherjee in commentary.

Birth Centenary Celebration of Manomohan Ghosh

The Institute observed the Birth Centenary of Manomohan Ghosh on Monday, 13 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m. at a solemn function held in the Shivananda Hall. Srimati Latika Ghosh, daughter of the poet Manomohan Ghosh, recited a few selected pieces from the works of the poet, while Professor P. K. Guha, M.A., gave a talk on 'Manomohan Ghosh the Poet and Professor'.

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

Symposium on 'Swami Vivekananda in the Eyes of Youth'

A symposium on 'Swami Vivekananda in the Eyes of Youth' was held at the Institute on Monday, 20 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

Sri Shyamal Datta Gupta, Srimati Tilottama Mukherjee, Sri P. L. Dutt, and Srimati Maitrayee Ganguly spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda—the Man', 'Swami Vivekananda's Message to Indian Youth', 'Swami Vivekananda and Socialism', and 'Swami Vivekananda's Message to Indian Women' respectively.

Swami Akunthananda, Secretary of the Institute, 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 1969 :

	January	February	March
Total number of students enrolled	775	777	777
Average daily attendance	274	284	225
Average number of students daily taking meals or tiffin	236	233	182
Total number of text-books issued	13,090	12,392	10,791

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 1969 :

Main Library

	January	February	March
Total number of books	57,508	57,712	58,040
Number of books added	110	204	328
Number of books purchased	110	191	148
Number of books received as gift	—	—	164
Number of periodicals accessioned	—	13	16
Number of books issued for home study	3,139	2,584	3,015
Number of books issued for reference	6,235	5,981	6,470

Reading Room

Number of periodicals in the reading room	368	368	368
Average daily attendance	390	389	395

Junior Library

Total number of books	1,594	1,597	1,605
Number of books added	—	3	8
Number of books issued for home study	195	144	171
Average daily attendance	10	10	10

Children's Library

Total number of books	4,369	4,370	4,389
Number of books added	2	1	19
Number of books issued for home study	759	720	843
Average daily attendance	31	30	30

Guests

Among those who stayed at the Institute's International House between January and March 1969 were the following:

Professor (Dr.) Yan Zizka, Visiting Professor, from Czechoslovakia;

Professor (Dr.) Frantisek Kouril, Visiting Professor, from Czechoslovakia;

Twelve members of S.M.T. group from Australia on a tour to India;

Miss M. Signer, from Zurich, Switzerland;

Professor (Dr.) Louis Davin, from Brussels;

Dr. D. B. Anderson, University Lecturer, from U.K.;

Professor Gheorghe Ivanescu, Professor of Linguistics, from Rumania;

Professor Z. Smerda, from Brno, Czechoslovakia;

Professor and Mrs. R. A. Shaw, from Kent, U.K.;

Dr. Miloslav Krasa, from Praha, Czechoslovakia;

Dr. M. Walk, Mathematician, from German Democratic Republic;

Dr. I. S. Szanto, Head, X-Ray Department, Hungary Academy of Science, Budapest;

Dr. A. Franks, Government Official, from London;

Professor R. E. Hester, University Lecturer, from York, England;

Dr. J. Aarons, Scientist, from Boston, U.S.A.;

Mr. Leslie Kirkley, Director, Oxfam, from Oxford;

Kanta Devi, from Honolulu, U.S.A. ;

Professor G. E. Krichevsky, Professor of Chemistry, UNESCO Expert, from Moscow ;

Professor L. Farkas, Professor of Organic Chemistry, from Budapest ;

Professor B. Soskic, University Professor, from Belgrade ;

Dr. J. W. Wright, Physicist, from U.S.A. ;

Miss Maria Giacomo, F.A.O. Nutritionist;

Mr. Charles H. Capwell, from U.S.A. ;

Mrs. Kanagasundaram and her daughter, from Singapore ;

Mrs. K. Antonova, Historian, from Moscow ;

Professor (Dr.) A. L. Basham, from Australia ;

Dr. H. Hormann, Scientist, from Munich;

Professor and Mrs. B. L. C. Johnson, Professor of Geography, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia ;

Professor Leonard Joy, from Institute of Development Studies, Sussex ;

Dr. J. Kolmas, Professor of Oriental Institute, from Prague ;

Dr. N. V. Morozov, Professor of Physics, from Moscow ;

Dr. (Mrs.) V. K. Ivashkova, from Moscow ;

Mr. M. M. Gorelik, Interpreter, from Moscow ;

Mr. M. R. Rosen, a student, from Canada ;

Mr. S. Mahalingam, Civil Engineer, from Malaysia ;

Professor T. J. Bardos, Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, from State University of New York ;

Miss Shahla Sepehri, Librarian, from Tehran ;

Professor Zeljko Bujas, Professor of English, from Yugoslavia ;

Dr. G. M. Shastitko, Scientist, from Moscow ;

Dr. D. Goldfavb, from Moscow ;

Dr. and Mrs. N. Dubinin, Scientist, from Moscow ;

Dr. Konstantin Raclavsky, Professor of Brno University, from Czechoslovakia ;

Professor Vasile Barbinta, Chemist, from Rumania ;

Dr. D. S. Kothari, Chairman, U.G.C., India.

MAY CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

Children below 12 years are not allowed

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th May

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th May

THE MUNDAKA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st May

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(Children below six years are not allowed)

DANCE DRAMA

Tagore's

Valmiki-Pratibha

by

Udaya Shilpi

Tuesday, 6 May, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

FILM SHOW

Tagore's

(1) Pujarini (2) Abhisar

(3) Puratan Bhritya (4) Dui Bigha Jami

Tuesday, 13 May, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

DANCE DRAMA

Tagore's

Taser-Desh

by

Nrityer-Tale-Tale

Tuesday, 20 May, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR MAY 1969

Rabindra Galpa Āsar

First Saturday, 3 May, at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6–9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 31 May, 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

May 7 **Some Thoughts on Tagore**

Speaker: S. K. Nandi, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil.

President: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B

May 14 **The Religious Life in the United States**

Speaker: Leslie M. Bates

President: Swami Ananyananda

May 21 **Role of Imaginative Speculations in Linguistic Researches**

Speaker: M. K. Sen, M.A., D.Phil.

President: P. K. Guha, M.A.

May 28 **Contemporary Philosophical Psychology : Scope and Problems (Lec. No. 1)**

Speaker: Pritibhushan Chatterji, M.A., D.Phil.

President: J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA

Sister Nivedita Lectures (1968)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

A series of 3 lectures on

Sister Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Culture

Programme:

Monday, 5 May, at 6.30 p.m.

Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Philosophy (Lec. No. III)

Speaker: Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

President: J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

* Last lecture of the series.

Monday, 12 May, at 6.30 p.m.

RABINDRA JAYANTI

(Public Celebration of Rabindranath's Birthday)

Recitations from Tagore

by

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

Talk in Bengali

on

Rabindra-Pratibhar-Swarup

by

Asokbijay Raha

Rabindra Adhyapaka and Adhyaksha

Rabindra-Bhavana

Visva-Bharati University

Songs from Tagore

by

Surasagar Dhiren Bose

Monday, 19 May, at 6.30 p.m.

SIVA-KATHA

(Discourse in Bengali)

on

Rabindranather Siva

by

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

BULLETIN
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THE PATHS OF YOGA IN THE GĪTĀ: JÑĀNA-YOGA

SWAMI ANANYANANDA

Swami Ananyananda, formerly a Joint Editor 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 lecture reproduced below was given by the Swami at the Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies on 29 January 1969.*

THE word '*yoga*' is derived from the root '*yuj*', meaning 'to unite', 'to join', and having the same meaning as the English word 'yoke'. *Yoga*, as used in the Indian religious terminology, means the spiritual union of the devotee with his chosen deity, or of the individual self with the supreme Self. The type of union depends upon the attitude of the seeker or the path chosen by him according to his temperament and inclination. There are several *yogas* or paths of union with the divine. Amongst them, four *yogas* are well known and quite familiar to most seekers. They are *karma-yoga, bhakti-yoga, rāja-yoga,* and *jñāna-yoga*—the path of selfless and dedicated work, of love and devotion, of concentration and meditation, and of knowledge and philosophy.

Our subject now is the last-mentioned one—*jñāna-yoga*, as it is delineated in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which has been described as the Bible of Hinduism. The most outstanding exponent of India's thought to the West in recent times was Swami Vivekananda, who has four different books on the above-mentioned four *yogas*. In dealing with our subject, we shall have recourse to both the *Gītā* and *Jñāna-yoga* of Swami Vivekananda.

India's Religious Tradition

To be free, *mukta*, is the goal of religion, of all spiritual endeavour, no matter by what means or method one attains it. The choice is wide open. In fact, the paths leading to it may be as many as there are earnest seekers. Like the different radii of a circle converging at the centre, all the paths ultimately lead to the same goal. It is up to the aspirant after freedom to choose the particular method suitable to his own peculiar bent of mind and aptitude. This scheme is in perfect accord with the sacred spiritual tradition of Indian seers who declared in the Vedas: 'Truth is One; sages call It by various names.' This Vedic sentiment of the unity of truth has been echoed and re-echoed time and again in the religious history of India by her sages and seers, god-men and saints. India is well known for her spirit of religious toleration and absence of religious persecution.

The author of the *Gītā* puts it in the mouth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who declares: 'As men approach me, so do I accept them; men on all sides follow my path, O Pārtha' (IV. 11). (The translation of the verses in the *Gītā*, throughout this article, is taken from *The Bhagavad-Gītā* by S. Radhakrishnan, George Allen and Unwin Ltd. London.) Coming to the post-Buddha period, we have the inscriptions of Aśoka, which exhort: 'The basis of all religions is the same, wherever they are; try to help them all you can, teach them all you can, but *do not* try to injure them.' Again, one of the medieval saints of India says: 'Various are the types of vessels used for burning lamps; various are the kinds of oils, too; even the wicks are made of different materials; but the light given out by all these lamps is the same, and the effect of this light is the destruction of darkness.' Very recently, in our own times, came Sri Ramakrishna, who has been acclaimed as the prophet of the harmony of religions, who, in his own life, having lived and practised several moods and methods, and having attained the same enlightenment in each and every one of them, declared: *Yato mat tato path*—'As many faiths, so many paths.'

The Gita: the Book

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* is the Book of the Hindus; they swear on it. It is their sacred scripture. If there is any one single book which can truly and fully represent the Hindu thought and spirit in the realm of religious life, it can be said that it is the *Gītā*, without any exaggeration or fear of contradiction. The *Gītā* is pre-eminently a manual on spiritual life and thought, *adhyātma-śāstra par excellence*, as it has been rightly looked upon by millions of Hindus. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan says that the *Gītā* 'is more a religious classic than a philosophical treatise'. The *Gītā* contains the quintessence of the Upaniṣads, the sum and substance of the Vedāntic thought, as it has been beautifully expressed in a well-known verse found in the *Gītā-dhyāna*: 'All the Upaniṣads are cows; the cowherd is Śrī Kṛṣṇa; the calf is Arjuna; and the nectarean milk is the great *Gītā* (4). At the end of each chapter of the *Gītā*, in the colophon that is repeated everytime, we get the expression '*gītāsu-upaniṣadsu*', showing thereby the similarity as well as the synonymity of the two terms '*gītā*' and '*upaniṣad*'.

It is in these colophons, again, that we repeatedly come across the two expressions *brahmavidyā* and *yogaśāstra*, as the *Gītā* expounds, throughout its eighteen chapters, not only the *science* of the supreme Self, but also the *art* of union with It. 'The *Bhagavad-Gītā* gives us not only a metaphysics (*brahmavidyā*), but also a discipline (*yogaśāstra*)', to use the language of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. And the title of every

chapter ends with the suffix '*yoga*' attached to several other words, which express the content of the particular chapter, e.g. *sāṁkhya-yoga*, *dhyāna-yoga*, *vibhūti-yoga*, *kṣetra-kṣetrajña-yoga*, etc.

True to the religious tradition of India, the *Gītā* upholds and expatiates on several paths to union with the divine. As such, we find the ideas of all the principal *yogas* sprinkled all over the book, though there are specific chapters bearing the names of *karma-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, etc. It is rather difficult to isolate these ideas and treat them separately under one chapter. For instance, the second chapter is designated *sāṁkhya-yoga*, in which we come across several verses breathing the sentiment and spirit of *jñāna*. Of course, the two words *sāṁkhya* and *jñāna* are used synonymously in the *Gītā*. Then again, in the thirteenth chapter, entitled *kṣetra-kṣetrajña-yoga*, we have a long list of the qualities and characteristics of true *jñāna* (XIII. 7-11). In several other contexts also, we get glimpses of the flash-lights of *jñāna*.

Classification of the Gita

The *Gītā* as a whole, consisting of eighteen chapters, has been classified variously by different scholars. There is the most common division of the *Gītā* into three groups of six chapters each. According to this division, the first group of six chapters (1 to 6) deals with *karma-yoga* and *rāja-yoga*, although the fourth chapter, designated *jñāna-yoga*, intervenes in between. The second group of six chapters (7 to 12) deals with *bhakti-yoga*, and the third group (13 to 18), with *jñāna-yoga*. There is likely to be some difference of opinion regarding this division. But, by and large, this may be acceptable as good and reasonable enough.

Then there is the traditional classification by the famous commentator, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, who also divides the entire book into three groups of six chapters each. According to him, the first set of six chapters expounds the nature of *tvam*—the *jīvātman*; the second set deals with the nature of *tat*—the Paramātman; and the third set expounds the relationship between the two and establishes their identity and oneness. An Advaitin himself, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has explained the whole of the *Gītā* from the Advaita point of view, naturally emphasizing *jñāna* in his treatment.

As stated earlier, to the spiritual seeker as well as to the discerning student, there is ample inspiration in the *Gītā* for *bhaktas*, *karmins*, and *yogins*, too. Besides, there have been other commentators, both ancient and modern, who have commented upon the *Gītā* as a book that speaks principally of *karma* or *bhakti*, emphasizing selfless work or devotion: Tilak's *Gītā-rahasya*, for example.

What Is Jnana-yoga?

What is *jñāna-yoga*, then? From the traditional classification of the *Gītā* by Madhusūdana Sarasvatī just mentioned, it would appear that the end and aim of the scripture is the establishment of the identity of the individual self with the supreme Self —of the *jīvātman* with the *Paramātman*. *Jñāna-yoga* then is the means by which *jñāna* or knowledge is employed to attain this spiritual culmination. As a matter of fact, this is the culmination that is repeatedly brought to our notice throughout the vast Vedāntic literature, principally the Upaniṣads. It has already been stated that the *Gītā* contains the essence of the Upaniṣadic teachings. There is a popular verse in the *Uttara-Gītā*, oft-quoted by the Vedāntins, the second half of which declares: 'Brahman is real, the world is unreal, apparent; the individual soul is none other than the universal Soul; and there is no fundamental difference between the two.'

Jñāna-yoga must ultimately lead one to an intimate and intuitive realization of the

significance of the verse quoted above, which is but an echo of the great Vedic statements, *mahāvākyas*, such as: *Sarvaṁ-khalu-idaṁ-Brahma*—'All this is verily Brahman'; *Tattvamasi*—'That thou art'; *Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi*—'I am Brahman'; *Ayam-ātmā Brahma*—'This Self is Brahman'; etc. In this kind of a universal experience, which is felt both emotionally and intellectually, the realization becomes complete and unique. There is a total awareness of one's spiritual Self, which is all-pervading, not exclusive, but all-inclusive. In such a state of transcendental spiritual realization, nothing is excepted or rejected, but all is included and accepted. One sees oneself in all manifestation, and all the manifold manifestation in oneself. One embraces the entire universe of animate beings and inanimate objects within oneself. Such sentiments are expressed throughout the Upaniṣadic literature, portraying the glory of one who has attained the supreme spiritual realization. In the *Gītā* itself, we have a verse which proclaims that such a one attains *samadarśitva*, samesightedness; the *jñānin* 'sees all with an equal eye, a learned and humble Brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, or even a dog, or an outcaste' (V. 18). A perfected soul works for *lokasaṅgraha*, the good of the world, like Janaka and others (III. 20).

Prerequisite Qualities

What are the prerequisite qualities of a seeker on the path of *jñāna*? The several Vedāntic treatises speak of what is commonly known as *sādhana-catuṣṭaya*—the four qualities that *must* be present in an aspirant on the path of knowledge. They are: (1) *Nitya-anitya-vastu-vivekaḥ* -- discrimination between the Real and the unreal; (2) *Ihaamutra-phala-bhoga-virāgaḥ*—aversion to the enjoyment of fruits (of one's actions) here and hereafter; (3) *Śamādiṣaṭka-sampattiḥ* - possession of the six attributes, such as control over the mind, control over the senses, self-withdrawal, forbearance, faith in the scriptures and in the words of the *guru*, and self-settledness or concentration on the Truth; and (4) *Mumukṣutva*—an intense yearning for spiritual freedom (*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 19-27). Having acquired these qualities by constant exertion, *abhyāsa*, the seeker of Truth should approach a *guru*, a *Brahmaniṣṭha*, one who has himself realized the Truth, and is established in Brahman, and seek guidance from him. The *Gītā* lays down the attitude in which one should approach the *guru*: 'Learn that by humble reverence, by enquiry, and by service. The men of wisdom who have seen the Truth will instruct thee in knowledge' (IV.34).

In the book on *Jñāna-yoga* by Swami Vivekananda, referred to earlier, we get a lucid exposition of the whole range of the subject in about sixteen chapters, presented in a way intelligible to the modern man and in modern terminology. Among all these lectures, we may particularly focus our attention on the following: 'The Real Nature of Man', 'Māyā and Illusion', 'God in Everything', 'Realization', 'Unity in Diversity', 'Immortality', 'The Ātman', and 'The Real and the Apparent Man'. As the Swami expounds these themes, he has at the back of his mind some of the principal Upaniṣads as a whole, or some chief thought-currents running among some of them.

The Basic Spiritual Reality

The seeker on the path of knowledge, both by *viveka* and *vicāra*, discrimination and understanding things in their proper perspective, must eventually arrive at the perception of the one basic spiritual Reality that is all-pervading, ever present, without beginning or end; which is eternal, ever free, ever pure, all-knowing. It is this one universal Reality that is described as Sat-cit-ānanda—existence-knowledge-bliss

Absolute. With the perception of that Reality, that changeless One among all these changeful phenomena, that Unity amidst all this variety, which, in truth, is none other than one's own Self, the *jñānin* develops a genuine detachment towards the things of the world, *vairāgya*, and turns his mind away from them. He realizes that the Self is no doer of actions. Of him, the *Gītā* says: 'While all kinds of work are done by the modes of nature, he whose soul is bewildered by the self-sense thinks, "I am the doer"' (III.27). 'But he who knows the true character of the distinction (of the soul) from the modes of nature and their works, O Mighty-armed (Arjuna), understanding that it is the modes which are acting on the modes (themselves), does not get attached' (III.28).

In this context, it will be useful for us to know what the second chapter has to say as regards the characteristics of one who has realized the nature of the soul. 'As the soul passes in this body through childhood, youth, and age, even so is its taking on of another body. The sage is not perplexed by this. Contacts with their objects, O Son of Kuntī, give rise to cold and heat, pleasure and pain. They come and go, and do not last for ever; these learn to endure, O Bhārata. The man who is not troubled by these, O chief of men, who remains the same in pain and pleasure, who is wise, makes himself fit for eternal life. Of the non-existent, there is no coming to be; of the existing, there is no ceasing to be. The conclusion about these two has been perceived by the seers of Truth. Know thou that that by which all this is pervaded is indestructible. Of this immutable being, no one can bring about the destruction. It is said that these bodies of the eternal embodied (soul), which is indestructible and incomprehensible, come to an end. Therefore, fight, O Bhārata.'

'He who thinks that this slays, and he who thinks that this is slain, both of them fail to perceive the truth; this one neither slays nor is slain. He is never born, nor does he die at any time, nor having (once) come to be does he again cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, permanent, and primeval. He is not slain, when the body is slain. He who knows that it is indestructible and eternal, uncreate and unchanging, how can such a person slay any one, O Pārtha, or cause any one to slay? Just as a person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new, even so does the embodied soul cast off worn-out bodies and take on others that are new. Weapons do not cleave this self; fire does not burn him; waters do not make him wet; nor does the wind make him dry. He is uncleavable, he cannot be burnt. He can be neither wetted nor dried. He is eternal, all-pervading, unchanging, and immovable. He is the same for ever. He is said to be unmanifest, unthinkable, and unchanging. Therefore, knowing him as such, thou shouldst not grieve' (II. 13-25).

Characteristics of a Sthitaprajna

The same chapter, entitled *sāṁkhya-yoga*, enumerates the characteristics of one who is firmly established in wisdom, *sthitaprajña* (II. 55 to 72): 'When a man puts away all the desires of his mind, O Pārtha, and when his spirit is content in itself, then is he called stable in intelligence. He whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows, and is free from eager desire amid pleasures, he from whom passion, fear, and rage have passed away, he is called a sage of settled intelligence. He who is without affection on any side, who does not rejoice or loathe as he obtains good or evil, his intelligence is firmly set (in wisdom). He who draws away the senses from the objects of sense on every side, as a tortoise draws in his limbs (into the shell), his intelligence is firmly set (in wisdom). The

objects of sense turn away from the embodied soul who abstains from feeding on them, but the taste for them remains. Even the taste turns away, when the Supreme is seen. Even though a man may ever strive (for perfection), and be ever so discerning, O Son of Kuntī, his impetuous senses will carry off his mind by force. Having brought all (the senses) under control, he should remain firm in *yoga* intent on me; for he, whose senses are under control, his intelligence is firmly set. When a man dwells in his mind on the objects of sense, attachment to them is produced. From attachment springs desire, and from desire comes anger. From anger arises bewilderment; from bewilderment, loss of memory; and from loss of memory, the destruction of intelligence; and from the destruction of intelligence, he perishes.'

'But a man of disciplined mind, who moves among the objects of sense, with the senses under control and free from attachment and aversion, he attains purity of spirit. And in that purity of spirit, there is produced for him an end of all sorrow; the intelligence of such a man of pure spirit is soon established (in the peace of the self). For the uncontrolled, there is no intelligence; nor for the uncontrolled is there the power of concentration; and for him without concentration, there is no peace; and for the unpeaceful, how can there be happiness? When the mind runs after the roving senses, it carries away the understanding, even as a wind carries away a ship on the waters. Therefore, O Mighty-armed, he whose senses are all withdrawn from their objects, his intelligence is firmly set. What is night for all beings is the time of waking for the disciplined soul; and what is the time of waking for all beings is night for the sage who sees (or the sage of vision). He unto whom all desires enter as water into the sea, which, though ever being filled, is ever motionless, attains to peace, and not he who hugs his desires. He who abandons all desires and acts free from longing, without any sense of mineness or egotism, he attains to peace. This is the divine state (*brāhmīsthiti*), O Pārtha, having attained thereto, one is (not again) bewildered; fixed in that state at the end (at the hour of death), one can attain to the bliss of God (*brahmanirvāṇa*).'

The Fourth Chapter: Jnana-yoga

We may now turn our attention to the fourth chapter, which is designated *jñāna-yoga* proper. The catholicity of the Indian outlook in matters religious from very ancient times, to which reference was made in the beginning, is portrayed clearly in the eleventh verse of this chapter. Though quoted earlier at the very outset, it bears repetition. 'As men approach me, so do I accept them; men on all sides follow my path, O Pārtha.' Verses 19 to 24 describe the nature of work performed by one who has developed the universality of vision born of wisdom, and who is free from selfish desire. 'He whose undertakings are all free from the will of desire, whose works are burned up in the fire of wisdom, him the wise call a man of learning. Having abandoned attachment to the fruit of works, ever content, without any kind of dependence, he does nothing, though he is ever engaged in work. Having no desires, with his heart and self under control, giving up all possession, performing action by the body alone, he commits no wrong. He who is satisfied with whatever comes by chance, who has passed beyond the dualities (of pleasure and pain), who is free from jealousy, who remains the same in success and failure, even when he acts, he is not bound. The work of a man whose attachments are sundered, who is liberated, whose mind is firmly founded in wisdom, who does work as a sacrifice, is dissolved entirely. For him, the act of offering is

God, the oblation is God. By God is it offered into the fire of God. God is that which is to be attained by him who realizes God in his works.'

Verses 35 to 38 are in praise of wisdom. 'When thou hast known it, thou shalt not fall again into this confusion, O Pāṇḍava, for by this thou shalt see all existences without exception in the Self, then in me. Even if thou shouldst be the most sinful of all sinners, thou shalt cross over all evil by the boat of wisdom alone. As the fire which is kindled turns its fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, even so does the fire of wisdom turn to ashes all work. There is nothing on earth equal in purity to wisdom. He who becomes perfected by *yoga* finds this of himself, in his self, in course of time.'

The rest of the chapter emphasizes that faith is necessary for wisdom (39 to 42). 'He who has faith, who is absorbed in it (i.e. wisdom), and who has subdued his senses gains wisdom; and having gained wisdom, he attains quickly the supreme peace. But the man who is ignorant, who has no faith, who is of a doubting nature, perishes. For the doubting soul, there is neither this world, nor the world beyond, nor any happiness. Works do not bind him who has renounced all works by *yoga*, who has destroyed all doubt by wisdom, and who ever possesses his soul, O winner of wealth. Therefore, having cut asunder with the sword of wisdom this doubt in thy heart that is born of ignorance, resort to *yoga* and stand up, O Bhārata.'

It is interesting to note in this connection that the *Gītā* does not make any distinction in the attainments of a *jñānin*, or a *bhakta*, or a *yogin*, or a *karmin*. For the qualities and characteristics attributed by the *Gītā* to a *sthitaprajña* (II. 55 ff.), a *bhakta* (XII. 13 ff.), a perfect *yogin* (VI. 6 to 9 and 18 to 32), a *karma-yogin* (III. 17 and 27 ff.), and a *guṇātīta* (XIV. 22 ff.) are strikingly similar. Even the language used to describe them is almost the same, which only goes to prove the point made out at the beginning to show that all the paths eventually lead to the same goal.

JIVANMUKTI

From these foregoing paragraphs, it becomes abundantly clear to us that the fruit of *jñāna* can be had and enjoyed here and now, in this very life. It is not a state of post mortem excellence. It is like 'a fruit in one's palm'—*karatalāmalakavat*—as a popular Sanskrit saying has it. It is this ideal of realization of the universal consciousness in life, with our eyes wide open, that is held aloft in Vedānta, the ideal of *jīvanmukti*, free while yet living in this body. The *Gītā* itself speaks in glowing terms of one who has attained to wisdom in this mortal life. 'Even here (on earth), the created (world) is overcome by those whose mind is established in equality. God is flawless and the same in all. Therefore are these (persons) established in God' (V. 19).

Such a perfected soul attains equanimity of mind and equality of vision. The *Īśā Upaniṣad* declares: 'He who sees all beings in the very Self, and the Self in all beings, feels no hatred by virtue of that (realization). 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?' (6, 7). In the thirteenth chapter of the *Gītā* also, we have similar sentiments expressed regarding one who has become universal in his vision. 'He who sees the supreme Lord abiding equally in all beings, never perishing when they perish, he, verily, sees. For, as he sees the Lord present, equally everywhere, he does not injure his true Self by the self, and then he attains to the supreme goal' (XIII. 27, 28).

Message of Strength and Fearlessness

This idea of a universal vision leads us to another important and very pertinent thought-current that flows through the entire Vedāntic literature—that is the message of fearlessness. It is this message of fearlessness, and consequently of strength and vigour, that caught the imagination of that lion of Vedānta, Swami Vivekananda. The Swami was never tired of repeating this message of strength and fearlessness before our countrymen, whom he wanted to raise from a deep slumber of self-forgetfulness, and enable them to stand on their feet once again as a nation. 'Infinite strength is religion and God', he said, and added further: 'This I lay down as the first essential in all I preach; anything that brings spiritual, mental, or physical weakness, touch it not with the toes of your feet. Religion is the manifestation of the natural strength that is in man.' 'So I preach only the Upaniṣads. If you look, you will find that I have never quoted anything but the Upaniṣads. And of the Upaniṣads, it is only that one idea of strength. ... Strength and fearlessness.'

'Strength, strength it is that we want so much in this life, for what we call sin and sorrow have all one cause, and that is our weakness. With weakness comes ignorance, and with ignorance comes misery. It (the Advaitic realization) will make us strong. Then miseries will be laughed at, then the violence of the vile will be smiled at, and the ferocious tiger will reveal behind its tiger's nature, my own Self. That will be the result. That soul is strong that has become one with the Lord, none else is strong.'

To quote him further: 'Strength, therefore, is the one thing needful. Strength is the medicine for the world's disease. Strength is the medicine which the poor must have when tyrannized over by the rich. Strength is the medicine that the ignorant must have when oppressed by the learned; and it is the medicine that sinners must have when tyrannized over by other sinners; and nothing gives such strength as this idea of monism. ... Assert thy strength, thou Lord of lords and God of gods. Regain thy lost empire. ... Help thyself out by thyself. None else can help thee, friend. ... Get hold of the Self, then. Stand up. Don't be afraid.'

There is a common saying current among the Vedāntins, which says: *Dvaitādvai bhayaṁ bhavati*; *advaitameva abhayam*—'Fear comes with the idea of duality or separateness; *advaita* or non-duality is verily fearlessness.'

Conclusion

To conclude, an aspirant on the path of knowledge, or *jñāna-yoga*, must cultivate the habit of not attaching much importance to his body or paying much attention to his bodily needs, gradually developing at the same time a total absence of the sense of ego. He must grow, by constant practice, into an awareness of the spiritual Self, which will destroy all his baser instincts. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* proclaims: 'All the knots of his heart are rent asunder, all his doubts are dispelled, and all his *karmas* are destroyed, when he realizes that Being which is both high and low' (II. 2.9). Another important, but less known, treatise on Vedānta, known as *Dṛg-dṛśya-viveka*, expresses these ideas in very telling words, when it says: 'With the disappearance of the attachment to the body, and with the realization of the supreme Self, to whatever object the mind is directed, one experiences *samādhi*' (30).

What is required of an aspirant is earnestness and sincerity. He must have faith in the path chosen and implicitly follow the directions given to him by his *guru*. Patience and perseverance in the

face of all kinds of odds and obstructions surely chasten the mind of the seeker, and strengthen his spirit to undertake this spiritual adventure with a smile on his face. It is practice alone that leads to perfection.

Wherein lies the originality of the *Gītā* which distinguishes it from all preceding scriptures? It is this: Though before its advent, *Yoga*, *Jñāna*, *Bhakti*, etc. had each its strong adherents, they all quarrelled among themselves, each claiming superiority for his own chosen path; no one ever tried to seek for reconciliation among these different paths. It was the author of the *Gītā* who for the first time tried to harmonize these. He took the best from what all the sects then existing had to offer, and threaded them in the *Gītā*. But even where Kṛṣṇa failed to show a complete reconciliation (*Samanvaya*) among these warring sects, it was fully accomplished by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa in this nineteenth century.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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THE POETIC SOUL OF NIVEDITA

UMA RAY, M.A., D.PHIL.

Dr. Uma Ray is Assistant Professor of Bengali at the Bethune College, Calcutta. She is also part-time Lecturer in the Post-graduate class at the Rabindra Bharati University. Among the books written by her, Sañcāriṇī *and* Aranya Mon *deserve special mention. The following is the text of a lecture Dr. Ray gave at the Institute in June 1968.*

SISTER Nivedita—the Nivedita of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda is better known to us as a great woman, a great devotee, whose religious aspirations and philosophical outlook are more akin to an Indian than an European mind. Her all-round perfection, however, did not exhaust itself in religious thoughts only. She herself once declared in an article named 'How and Why I Adopted the Hindu Religion', that she loved India as the birth place of the highest and best of all religions. In the same breath she also declared that she loved India 'as the country that has the grandest mountains, the Himalayas; as the place where the sublimest of mountains are located, the country where the homes are simple; ... the woman unselfishly.'

In these sayings, we feel the poetic nerve of Nivedita, her love for Nature.

DESTINED ROLE OF NIVEDITA IN THE REGENERATION OF INDIAN NATIONAL LIFE

She plunged herself in the deep and forceful currents—the social, political, ethical, and cultural events of the nineteenth century India, the eventful India, the colourful India, the changing India—India with a sublime past and looking forward for a glorious future. All through her life, her untiring efforts were for the awakening of the national spirit of India. The chief aim of her life was to uplift India in her former glory. She devoted her whole life to this end. She was looking forward for a harmonious blend of past and future with the present. She was proud of India—India of high thinking and simple living.

The other-worldliness of India never did put this world aside. The cloud pours down its rains on soil as well as on rivers and mountains. In the same way, religion, in its true sense, not only fills the soul with spiritual bliss, but also fulfills all the cravings of a human soul. History says, while religion was not in a decadant state in India, India played a glorious part in every sphere of life including social and political also.

The very life of Nivedita bears proof to the test. Her life shows how her educational and revolutionary interests were united with religious aspirations—how her life attained a beautiful fullness and perfection unparallel as yet.

Her life was itself a poem. As in a poem words are coined with minute precision, rhythm and metre are chosen with perfection and exactness, and the emotion is served in an universal way, so all her aims and activities together with her manifold intellectual interests, aimed at a spiritual bliss, a fullness, holy and beautiful.

On 29 July 1897, Swami Vivekananda wrote to her: 'Let me tell you frankly that I am now convinced that

you have a great future in the work for India.... India can not yet produce great women, she must borrow them from other nations. Your education, sincerity, purity, immense love, determination, and above all, the Celtic blood, make you just the woman wanted.'

And she fulfilled her master's demand. She complied with her master's order, and while doing it she did reveal her poetic soul in her innumerable writings, as a full-blown flower diffuses its fragrance.

I shall now try to place before you a little of the fullness of her poetic self as revealed in her writings. But before that, I must explain the very nature of her poetic self.

Distinctive Feature of Nivedita's Poesy

Poetry is the reflection of life; but as a reflection is not the thing itself, as the character of reflection changes according to the character of the thing on which it is reflected, so we may take poetry not as a reflection, but as an idealization of the thing.

This world is put in a different colour in our internal organs which is technically called *antaḥkaraṇa* comprising *buddhi* (intelligence or the second principle of the 25 principles of Sāṁkhya), *aham* (the Ego or the third principle), and mind (the internal organ of perception and cognition, the instrument by which the objects of sense affect the soul). According to the speciality or distinctive character of impression, unconsciously left on the mind by the past good or bad actions, where therefore produces pleasure or pain; the emotional approach to life is tinged with different colours, and expressed in different ways. In literature, a human soul reveals the impressions so received in three ways—sensual, emotional, and intellectual. Although these three elements are inseparably mixed together, still by a special power, called '*Vikalpa Vṛtti*', allowed to a word, we can differentiate between the three elements and classify literature under three categories, namely, sensual, emotional, and intellectual. The real significance of these classifications is this—a literature is termed sensual, emotional, or intellectual according to the element which constitutes the most part in its making and which plays the most important role in the expression of ideas.

Literature takes many hues, and poetry is a kind of literature in which the inner self of a thing is revealed in its pure form. A flower has a form, a colour, a touch, and a fragrance. The soul of poetry may be compared with the fragrance of a flower. The experiences of the outer world through the sense-organs may be described or put as they are, in a story or a novel. But in a poem, a reflection on the experiences is put in suitable embellishment or symbol in a suggestive way. It is something like unheard music, something like musical light, something like a new star born out of two stars—the word and its meaning. It is the perfection—the soul of a poem.

But there is another world. Here the self is expressed through multicoloured senses which intermingle, associate, and dissociate, put in fence and set free, are amassed and cracked, join, disjoin, and rejoin, and are gathered and scattered. It is a magic-world where old forms attain new forms every moment. Thousands of desires, emerging from a bleeding heart merge into nothingness. Here the soul sings while bleeds. It weeps like a desolate woman, forgotten and forsaken. Here a lonely heart gropes in the darkness, fumbles in the foamy waters of senses, and finally takes its shelter behind the baffle-walls of so called social sanctities. It's dreams are drowned in deep waters of sensual allurements. In the words of Rabindranath Tagore:

Bakṣha haite bāhir haiyā āpana bāsanā mama
phire marīcikā sama
Bāhu meli tāre bakṣhe laite
bakṣhe phiriyā pāinā
Jāha cāi tāhā bhul kare cāi
jāhā pāi tāhā cāi nā—

'My desires—emerging from my heart wander about like a mirage. I stretch out my hands to have them back to my heart again, but they elude me. What I want, I want it through confusion and what I get, I do not want it.'

This is the tragedy of life.

Nivedita's poetic soul did not belong to this world of alluring and eluding desires. A sure footing was her's. Her poetic soul did not belong to a world where 'things like evening clouds change their colours and shapes every moment'—*sandhyābhrulekhava muhūrtarāgāḥ*. She knew what she did want and what she did not.

There is also another world of poetry. Here the soul, like a detached spectator looks on the mind—mind thirsty and hungry, led astray, crushed and crumbled. It clutches everything coming near it. The spectacles of life change incessantly like a magic scroll but the soul is not moved. Here the self as if, is divided in two halves, and one looks at the other's activities in a disinterested way. Here the poet says (*Śeś Saptaka*):

Oi ekṭā anek kāler budo
āmāte miśiye āche ek haye
O cseche kata lakṣa pūrvapuruṣer
rakter prabāha beye
Kata yuger kṣudhā or kata tṛṣṇā.
Jīrṇa kare oke dine dine pale pale
bāsanār dahane
Orā jarā diye ācchanna kare āmāke
je āmi jarāhīn.
Oporer talāy base dekhbo oke
or nānā kheyāler āveśe
Āśā nairaśyer othā-parār sukh-duḥker
ālo-āndhāre
Dekhbo āmi jemān kare putul nāc dekhe
Hāsba mane mane
Mukta āmi svaccha āmi svatantra āmi—

'There he is—the old man of old times
He lies in me becoming one with me.
He has come with the flowing stream of blood of thousands of ancestors of mine,
His hunger is of many ages—also his thirst,
The fire of desire is consuming him day by day in every moment,
He tries to overcome me with his decaying state—
Me—who is beyond decaying.
I shall see him from above—
See him moving aimless—influenced by whims—
Rising and falling in light and darkness of pleasure and pain of hopes and dishopes—
I shall witness him as one witnesses a puppet-dance—and shall laugh at it
I—the free, I—the clean, I—the master of myself.'

Nivedita's poetic soul did not belong to this world also. She, the steady, the fierce, the free—the dedicated Nivedita of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda never felt the burning pang of small Ego—the old man of ages—hungry and thirsty, wearing out every moment in this world of burning senses.

She did not view at life in a detached way. But like a true mother, she took on her lap this weeping world—smitten with sorrow, and tried to pacify it with a cooing song.

And the song was divine too. She was a woman of psychic plane with divinity facing her. Her writings though bear witness to a very much powerful self, also breathe a sweet compassion (*madhura-ghana karuṇā*), and there her poetic soul is revealed.

Her love of Nature was deep, sincere,

and intense. In her 'Notes of Some Wanderings' she says:

'While day lasted, we had seen the rose-forests and the maiden-hair fern by the spring sides, and the scarlet blosoms on the wild pomegranate bushes; but with night-fall, only the fragrance of these and the honey-suckles was left to us and we journeyed on, content to know nothing save silence and star-light and the grandeur of the mountains.'

After visiting the Temple of Pandrenthan by the side of Jhelum, while returning with a dream and a sigh, wending back through the trees to the river side—the wonderful sight of sunset arose before them. She describes—'It was the time of sunset.' Such a sunset 'The mountains in the West were all a shimmering purple. Further North, they were blue with snow and cloud. The sky was green and yellow and fanged with red—bright flame and daffodil colours, against a blue and opal background.'

She has painted here the scene with her own colours.

In her book *The Master as I Saw Him*, while describing the fierce and melodious soul of India as revealed through her Master, Swami Vivekananda, she however could not forget the trees with ripe-red apples and blue forget-me-nots of Kashmir.

She could not forget the reaped fields on moonlit evenings, the red bronze of Amarnath crops, and the green young rice under tall poplars at Islamabad. The brilliant blue forget-me-nots of summer; the violet tinged small purple flowers of irises and their spear-like leaves and the iris-covered violet hillocks in autumn and spring. No, even a spiritual-minded great woman like Nivedita could not brush aside the memories of these small and sweet beauties of nature. At Pahlgam, sometimes she would like to sit on the pebble-worn bed of a mountain stream, and view at the sunset over the slopes, dark with pine-trees, and over the mountain at its head would look at the moon not yet full. Passing the snow line and pitching her tent beside a frozen river, she would enjoy a camp-fire made of Juniper. How many times she would listen to the verses quoted by Swamiji:

The stars are blotted out,
The clouds are covering clouds,
It is darkness vibrant, sonant,
In the roaring, whirling wind,
Come Mother come!
Dancing mad with joy.

In Devaprayāga, she sings of the terrific when she hears waters roaring, a perpetual tempest wailing, and the wind raging. In her lecture named 'Kālī and Her Worship', she calls Nature as the great awakener of human soul and speaking of Durgā terms her as the wonderful symbol of the power that manifests itself as Nature. While describing Kālī she takes to Nature's beauty and says about Kālī—'She is dark like an ominous rain-cloud. ... Her laugh beats the thunder-clap as hallow'.

An Ardent Lover of Humanity

Great was her love for humanity. With much tenderness she narrated many well-known stories of ancient Indian literature and termed them as *Cradle Tales of Hinduism*. With great tenderness she employed literary embellishments profusely. I now take the opportunity of placing some of them before you.

When Sītā was being bourne through the air by Rāvaṇa, Nivedita compared her with lightning against dark clouds and while describing the event she says: 'Like stars dropping from the sky because their merit is exhausted, so did her golden ornaments begin to fall to the earth. And anklets flashed as they dropped, like the circling lightning. And her chains shone, even as

the ganges throwing herself from heaven.'

She compared flowers fallen from the crest of Sītā with the rows of burning stars. How beautifully she employed *samāsokti alaṁkāra*—when she said—'The trees, waving their branches in the agitation of this flight, strove to whisper—"Fear not, fear not." And the mountains with their waterfalls and their summits towering upwards like uplifted arms, seemed to lament for Sītā.'

At one place she compared Damayantī with a bright lightning and her handmaids surrounding her with black clouds. At another place Sītā was compared with a fawn and the maid-servants who were employed by Rāvaṇa as guards were compared with wolves. Of course these embellishments smell of Sanskrit influence.

She told stories of Kṛṣṇa with an ease and grace unparalleled. But Rādhā-episode did not find any favour from her. There are reasons best known to her.

In her book *Studies From An Eastern Home*, she compared 'marigolds' with 'sanctuary lamps'. The marigolds use to stir in her a maze, a multitude of dreams and memories. She compared life to a river shore—whence we go to the high seas, yea —into the far space and mystery of death.

She compared Sri Sri Sarada Ma with a rock that stands like cloud and also shine. Discussing about Vedic sacrifices in her book—*Kālī The Mother*—she says 'from the central mass rises the blue-throated flame, while round the edge, leaving the fuel black and chared, curl those greedy red tongues of fire.'

She spoke about Dakshineswar sweetly—'On the left flowed the river, and the great barges went past swiftly, with sails full set. Beneath, the dead leaves stirred in the breeze or rustled under the footsteps of a mouse.'

Her poetic soul was not satisfied with stating the facts and figures only. Now and then she would cite poems mostly composed by her Master. She also composed some poems herself. The most remarkable of these poems is 'A Litany of Love: Invocation.'

Her book *An Indian Study of Love and Death* is a book of very high poetical value. Love and death, these two are a mystery to man. Why do we love? What is death? Why are we irresistibly attracted to each other? That is a mystery to us. We cannot explain it. She wrote this book *Because of Sorrow*, and the first essay 'An Office For The Dead' was written for a little sister. She says:

Dark is the night, and terrible is the storm
in the midst of burning-ghat.
Swift and deep is the river to bear away
the scattered dust.
Infinite is Time, into which hurry the
passing souls.
And Love cries and in vain to stay the
hand of death.
Verily are the flowers withered,
O Beloved, in our forests.
And all pools are emptied of their lotuses.
For us the voices of the singing-birds
become silent and dark clouds have
passed over the face of the stars.
Since thy feet come never again across
our threshold.
Neither is light seen again within thine
eyes.

She bids farewell to the dead and how tender she is when she says:

For all wounds and loneliness,
For all angry and impatient thoughts,
For all wherein we failed in love,
Or loving, failed to say to thee, we loved,
Forgive!
For all thy need in life,
For all thy need in death,
For labour that left thee weary
And for love that failed to comfort thee
Forgive!

She declares, 'Know then that love is strong in Death, that many waters cannot quench, nor the floods overwhelm it'.

She chants as if 'Mantras':

Thou terrible dark Night!
Thou, the Night of Delusion!
Thou, The Night of Death!
To Thee our salutation.
Thee we salute, Thee we salute, Thee we salute.

She also addresses the Soul:

Speed forth, O Soul, upon thy star-strewn path!
Speed, blissful one, where thought is everfree,
Where time and sense no longer mist the view,
Eternal peace and blessings be on thee.

To her 'Life is a rhythm, a rhythm of rhythms, and rhythm is but a continuous movement from one point to the reverse.'

She says in 'Of Love':

'I seemed to look through the windows of the body, and see the soul within, striving and aspiring upwards like white flame.'

This is Love Divine.

She compares loving heart with a soaring eagle and says that in love the Divine is revealed. She says 'Love is crowned by sorrow. And Love to be made perfect, needs sorrow as well as joy'. The Vaiṣṇava *Rasa*-theory also says this:

Na vinā vipralambhena sambhogaḥ puṣṭimaśnute
Kaṣṭāhite hi rāgādau bhūyan rago vivardhate.

The life-philosophy of Rabindranath was also the same.

In her Book *An Indian Study of Love and Death*, really the poetic soul of Nivedita to Ramakrishna and Vivekananda is best revealed.

A Singer of the Divine

To her the thirst for God was the whole meaning of Life. Her beloved was the Beloved only, looking through the window —only knocking at a door. Her Beloved has no wants, yet He clothes Himself in human need that she may serve Him. He has no hunger, yet He comes asking, so that she may give. She says: 'He calls upon me, that I may open and give Him shelter. He knows weariness, only that I may afford rest. He comes in the fashion of a begger, that I may bestow. Beloved, O Beloved, all mine is thine, yea, I am all thine. Destroy thou me utterly, and stand Thou in my stead!'

Nivedita's poetic soul is divine. In her 'The Communion of the Soul with the Beloved', she murmurs: A Long Silence. Silence and aloneness. ... All is so quiet. The lamps before the altar burn like distant stars. Out in the forest, the dead leaves fall from the winter boughs. The sea breaks, grey and tideless on the long curving shore. Only time flies. ... But I will not be carried. Time it is, that shall be conquered, memory shall not creep into the heart; to take place of love.'

Now I shall close my chapter by citing a poem composed by her. I have already mentioned about it and in this poem, everyone will feel, how a white flame emerging from human soul proceeds towards eternity ('Litany of Love: Invocation):

O Love, lifted high above all qualities and persons!
Love, delivering from bondage,
Love, casting out all fear,
Love, in which the body has no part,
Love, eternal—transcendent—universal,
Love of sacred heart, ever self-consumed in its own light,
To Thee our salutation.

Thee we salute. Thee we salute.
Thee we salute.

Soft wings of the divine motherhood,
Folding into their own deapth and shadow
all things that cannot bear the light,
All little children, crying out that they
are lost,
All error and defeat, all sin and sorrow,
All loneliness and weakness and all
unprotectedness and simplicity of love,
Thou the All pitiful, folding us closer to
one another beneath thee,
To Thee our salutation.
Thee we salute. Thee we salute.
Thee we salute.

Thou naked sword of purity!
Thou, that cleavest all bondage
Thou destroyer of ignorance,
Thou refuser of attachments,
Though that remainest ever Thyself,
Supreme Love, that manifestest Thyself in
Thy power, and passion is burnt to ashes.
Wondrous Equanimity, Foundation-stone
of holiness,
To Thee our salutation.
Thee we salute. Thee we salute.
Thee we salute

Thou tempest of the freedom of the soul!
Wind of the spiritual mountains,
Insatiable longing for self sacrifice,
Realisation of our self as all
Love for the sake of love,
Work for the work's own sake,
Renunciation without an object,
To Thee our salutation.
Thee we salute. Thee we salute.
Thee we salute.

Love all transcendent,
Tenderness unspeakable,
Purity most awful,
Freedom absolute,
Light that lightest every man,
Sweetest of the sweet, and
Most terrible of the terrible,
To Thee our salutation.
Thee we salute. Thee we salute.
Thee we salute.

O Infinite love, reveal to us thy face!
O Infinite love, awake and abide in us!
O Infinite love, burn us till we be
consumed!
We desire not to possess Thee.
We desire not to behold Thee.
We desire to become one with Thee.

MATERIAL BASIS OF HEREDITY

A. K. SHARMA, D.Sc.

Dr. A. K. Sharma is Reader in Botany and In-charge, Cytogenetics Laboratory, University College of Science, Calcutta. The lecture reproduced below was given by him at the Institute on 12 February 1969.

HEREDITY deals with the transmission of characters from parents to offspring, and the science dealing with heredity is termed as *Genetics*. This subject is indeed very young, being slightly over 100 years old. As the principle of heredity holds good in all living objects, this is the only discipline in science which unifies all living organisms ranging from the smallest —the viruses on the one hand, to the most complex of all—the human beings, on the other.

Though Darwin is not regarded as the father of Genetics, his doctrine of evolution in which a continuity of the characteristics of life was visualized, marked the inception of the Science of Genetics. This doctrine was promulgated at a period when science was purely compartmental and discoveries as such were apparently disconnected. During this period a series of discoveries was made, the scientists responsible for them being unknown to each other, though a synthesis of their contributions gave a concrete shape to the Science of Genetics in the beginning of this century.

THE COMPOSITION OF GENES

It was Mendel, the Plant breeder, who, working entirely in the field, found certain regularities in the appearance of progeny in his breeding experiments on Pea plants. This regularity in the transmission of characters was regarded by him as due to certain *factors* permanently located in every individual which are perpetuated from generation to generation. During this period another worker, Hertwig—an embryologist—detected the combination of male and female nuclei, that is, the process of fertilization in Sea Urchin. Simultaneously, Flemming noted the existence of certain permanent bodies which he termed the *chromosomes* located in each and every cell of the individual and which split longitudinally during cell division so that the two daughter cells formed contain the same number of chromosomes as the original. Johansen, another biologist, suggested the existence of permanent units in every individual called *Genes* which bear the hereditary characters. Meischer, a biochemist, isolated a chemical substance from Salmon sperm termed *nuclein*—which he considered to be of universal occurrence. It has been the work of this century to connect all these discoveries together, and it is now known that the Genes of Johansen are indeed factors obeying certain laws which Mendel discovered, are composed of the *nuclein* or nucleoprotein isolated by Meischer, are located in the chromosomes observed by Flemming, which reside in the nucleus, whose movement Hertwig followed during fertilization. Thus the combination of the efforts of a plant breeder, an embryologist, a chemist and other biologists resulted in the accidental birth of the Science of Genetics which ultimately deals with the Genes. From such a modest

beginning, this Science of Genetics has assumed enormous proportions and has penetrated into every avenue of biological and medical sciences due to its vast potentialities. About 11 Nobel Prize awards within the last few years are just an index of the tremendous progress attained in this branch and its implication in human welfare.

Afterwards the idea that gradually developed due to the researches of later workers is that the chromosome is chemically composed of nucleic acid of the deoxyribase type (DNA) and protein. In the earlier period it was believed that each DNA molecule is composed of a tetranucbotide, each nucleotide again being made up of sugar, attached with a glycosidic linkage with a base on the one hand and by an ester linkage with a phosphoric acid on the other. Of the bases, two are purines (Adenine and Guanine) and two are pyrimidines (cytosine and thymine), purine and pyrimidines alternating with each other. Though, no doubt, our idea about the structure of the DNA molecule has been much changed in recent years, the fundamental concept, that is, the constitution of a nucleotide, still remains the same. Protein was regarded as present in the form of polypeptide fibre, composed of at least twenty amino acids.

In view of the fact that gene has been regarded as nucleoprotein in nature, considerable debate was held as to the exact chemical substance responsible for gene specificity, i.e. the substance controlling heredity. As genes control all characters, visible, invisible, or even abstract, it must be assumed that the external expression of a character is the ultimate expression of a series of relay reactions set up at the gene level in every cell. As two characters are never identical, it is natural that the chemical reactions responsible for their expression are different. In that case the genes responsible for initiating such reactions should be chemically different from one another. In other words, genes, in order to control all genetic characters must be chemically diverse. An understanding of the basis of the chemical difference between gene and gene was expected to lead to the discovery of the exact gene substance. Genes being composed of both nucleic and protein, both these components were individually championed by different schools of workers as the gene substance.

The principal evidence for considering nucleic acid as the gene substance was derived from the fact that whenever by any genetical means the gene content of an organism was doubled, there was a corresponding duplication of the DNA content. On the other hand, critics of the nucleic acid theory consider that, as DNA is universally of the same type from viruses to human being, it does not possess the diversity needed to differentiate one gene from another. In other words, its uniformity goes against its control over genetic diversity.

On the other hand, the protein theory got tremendous support from a school of workers on the basis that there may be innumerable combinations of the twenty amino acids, each combination being responsible for the constitution of a single gene. On that basis protein was regarded as the actual gene substance responsible for controlling all hereditary characters. Nucleic acid was therefore not regarded as an important genetic substance.

The Genes and the DNA

The above impasse on the problem of the gene substance was accidentally broken in the late forties by a group of bacteriologists led by Griffith and others who observed certain interesting phenomena in strains of *Pneumococcus*—the bacteria responsible for pneumonia. In these bacteria, several strains were observed out

of which one strain was found to develop a gummy capsule in culture as against the other which did not develop such a capsule. While the two are grown together in the same culture, in the next generation only the capsulated ones were found. It was thought that the capsulated one is dominant over the non-capsulated type. Once in such parent culture it was noted that the capsulated individuals were all dead but even then in subsequent cultures, only the capsulated strain appeared. The phenomenon was rather striking as specially the same behaviour was noted while the extracts of the dead cells of capsulated strain were added to a pure culture of a non-capsulated type. It therefore amounted to *chemical hybridization* in which one of the parent strains is nothing but the chemical principle. Attention was therefore focussed to find out exact chemical constituents of the extract in order to get an idea of the genetic substance responsible for the transformation in *Pneumococcus*. On analysis, the extract was found to contain both DNA and protein. The two components were then separated and added in two different cultures of non-capsulated strain. Transformation into capsulated type occurred only in cultures to which DNA was added whereas the one containing protein did not show this transformation. This proved beyond doubt that DNA is the gene substance.

Simultaneously, the work of a group of virologists provided further evidence of the DNA nature of the gene. Viruses which attack bacteria are known as the bacteriophages. The latter has a structure comparable to that of a hypodermic syringe in which the syringe proper is protein whereas the fluid contained within it is DNA. At the time of a viral infection of *Escherichia coli* (bacteria) the DNA of the phage is only injected within the body of the bacterium whereas the protein part remains outside. After a certain period, the bacteria undergo death and lysis and innumerable phages with both protein coat and DNA core come out of the body of the bacterium. Such synthesis of the entire bacteriophage from DNA alone shows that DNA is the gene substance.

These two evidences taken in conjuction with the fact that there is a direct correlation between the amount of DNA and the gene dosage left no doubt that gene is essentially composed of DNA alone.

Though these evidences showed the nature of the gene, it was yet to be proved as to the extent to which the structure and functional capacity of DNA satisfies the requirement of a gene, i.e. its capacity to control all metabolic functions. Another outstanding discovery was made during this period by Watson, Crick, and Wilkins in 1953, when the double helical configuration of DNA molecule was demonstrated. It was shown that though fundamentally composed of the four bases, the sugar and the phosphoric acid, it is a long chain lighty polymerized molecule in which thousands of nucleotide molecules may be present. Two such long chain strands joined by their bases by hydrogen bonding constitute the molecule proper. The strands are complementary to each other, Adenine combining with Thymine and Guanine with Cytosine. The ratio, arrangement and proportion of the bases vary from species to species, which provide the necessary diversity in the DNA molecule.

Moreover, in such a long chain molecule in a chromosome which may run from one end to the other, distinct segments in the molecule may serve as different genes, i.e. the required diversity is provided by the molecule itself. Moreover, the complementary nature of the two strands provided a suitable template for the synthesis of new strands thus satisfying the capacity for self

reduplication—an essential attribute of the gene.

The Functions of DNA

Even then it remained for a number of investigators to prove the way through which DNA controls all metabolic functions. Before the chemical nature of the gene was established, it was already proved by a number of investigators led by Beadle and Tatum that the genes control all vital activities by helping in synthesis of specific enzymes needed for specific activities. Enzymes are essentially proteins and they are responsible for catalyzing all reactions. Though Beadle and Tatum's work was mainly carried out on the fungus *Neurospora Crassa*, the principle was found to hold good in all organisms, even in human being. To cite a specific instance the case of *Alkaptonuria* may be mentioned. Alkaptonuria is a genetic hereditary disease and the urine of alkaptonuria patients is black. This is due to the fact that an enzyme responsible for a certain metabolic stage for the formation of normal urine is absent in an alkaptoneuric patient. Normal individuals possess this enzyme where the patients do not. Therefore, the difference between a normal and an alkaptoneuric individuals is the presence and absence of an enzyme. On the other hand, genetic data have shown that such normal and abnormal individual differ only in relation to a single gene. That is, the single gene difference is correlated with single enzyme difference. More precisely, one gene is responsible for synthesis of one enzyme. Though this basic principle has been modified in recent years, the fundamental concept still holds good.

If, therefore, DNA is the gene substance then it should control all enzyme synthesis. But enzymes are principally active and synthesized in the cytoplasm of the cells whereas DNA is not formed in the cytoplasm and is present in the nucleus of the cells. On the other hand, enzyme polypeptide synthesis has been found to be associated with ribonucleic acid which is another type of neucleic acid, different from DNA in certain details. In fact, it has been shown that the segmence of amino acids in every enzyme which is specific in nature is being determined by the type of RNA which is associated with its synthesis. In that case the natural argument would be whether RNA should be regarded as gene substance. But other evidences already mentioned have shown that DNA is unequivocally the gene substance. In that case if it can be proved that DNA though residing in the nucleus is responsible for RNA synthesis and the latter being transferred to the cytoplasm directs the synthesis of protein, then only the supreme power of controlling heredity can be attributed to DNA molecule.

In order to arrive at a solution, a special technique was adopted which is known as *cell free culture*, in which the cell activities can be studied in the laboratory in culture by supplying all the necessary constituents of the cell excepting the cell itself. Here it was noted that if DNA is supplied, RNA can be synthesized and not *vice versa*. This provided absolute evidence that RNA is being derived from DNA.

Conclusion

Through the gradual refinement of the above methods as well as the invention of new ones a correct understanding of the way through which DNA controls all vital activities has been achieved. With these works the names of several outstanding scientists have been associated, namely, Nireubrg, Mathaei, Ochoa, Kornberg, Jacob, Monod and last but not the least, Hargovind Khorana, the latest Nobel Prize winner of whom every Indian is proud. It has been established that all the hereditary characteristics are written in the

language of the DNA molecule, the language being composed of only four alphabets, i.e. the four bases of DNA. This master molecule of DNA serves as the template for casting RNA molecules which bear therefore the same DNA language. This language in the cytoplasm is translated into the amino acid language of protein, the alphabet there being twenty. The mechaism through which this process of transcription and translation of the genetic language or the code is being carried out and executed concerns one of the vital lines of research in recent years. Though a number of missing links are yet to be filled in, one feels quite optimistic of the possibility of curing all genetic and hereditary diseases as well as cancer through artificial synthesis of specific nucleic acid molecules. The very synthesis of life may pose further problems which could not have been conceived earlier, but every scientist will go on enjoying the pleasure of search for truth —the eternal quest of mankind.

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BOOK REVIEWS

TOWARDS A NEW MORALITY. By Gerson G. Rosenstock. Published by Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40 Street, New York. 110 pp. $4.00.

The book so far as it appears to a non-western reader is a valient attempt to assess the ethical dilemma created by the atomic age ushered in by the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The author's main concern is to construct a dynamic reason for a new ethical man who would be in a position to answer the crucial moral issues of the day generated by the impact of a growing Super Scientific technological order. We are reminded of the great Oppenheimed Trial of 1955 when an appeal was issued by the scientists to the following effect—Here there is the problem which we present to you slark and dreadful and inescapable. Shall we put an end to the race or shall mankind renounce them? The light of a thousand stars is now in man's hands. It should light up the world and its civilization and not plunge them into total darkness.

All the worldover, the thinking men, be he a philosopher, a scientist or a social worker or even a political leader are pondering over the implications of today's strange dominant society, its mass democratization, its corporate bigness, its submergence of the individual to the collective organization and the mass-hysteria generated from angst (anxiety), frustration and alienation. Yet the concept of commitment is there. The world is becoming small and smaller. This world, we are actively contemplating, may not merely mean going to the Moon or to the Venus but the twenty-first century may see Man paddling in the milky way behind and beyond the magnetic wall of the present universe. These are not phantom stories of Jules Verne but actualities which may materialize in the foreseeable future. Yet Man is the pivotal point and he is still an awakened dreamer. His meditative life is a great adventure. As Romain Rolland in one of his last wills and testaments published by the same Philosophical Library of New York stated three decades ago that this visionary merely passes the pen to the man of reason, to the scientist and the historian. No is often an assertion and affirmation of life just as yes is.

There is no question that the book provokes enquiry, debate, and a calm examination of the moral commitment. The question posed is not merely the dialectic determination of what an individual man's relation to society should be, whether in politics or in economics, in an equitable distribution of wealth but also to what extent an individual man should submit to the collective Man and how is that collective Man's real wishes to be tested and not merely ascertained. Shall we be blind to chaotic existential phenomena or submit to a higher law? Shall we posit a God-idea whose existence or essence is not only unknown but is unknowable, i.e. it cannot be proved except by a process of intuitive experience which modern science dismisses with a wave of hand, though modern Psychology is speaking of the subconscious and superconscious layers of mind. On the whole the ethical man whom we used to know in the nineteenth century is almost dying in the twentieth just as the metaphysical God whom we cherished in the eighteenth had its death-pangs in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is true that there was a hectic attempt all over the world to find a bridge, a point of rapport by saying that Man was God and God was Man and one who served humanity was serving the inner divinity latent in him. In India, a Vivekananda, a Gandhi, a

Rabindranath, an Aurobindo tried this formula as a recipe for various ills in various dimensions and in the West, a radiant or a radical humanism tried to save Man from its own meshes. An Emerson or a Whitman, an Ingersoll or a Dewey or a Whitehead though differing from each other would try to find a Deity not only in the primordial and consequent nature but in the ultimate unity of man's noblest ideals and aspirations and an I—Thou, communiom of intimate and direct fellowship. We congratulate the author in bringing to surface the most pressing problem in human relations that as 'the solitary bastion of personal freedom in today's dominant society, the ethical man is the single hope of human freedom tomorrow'.

But how to get that ethical man survive has not been stated. That key solution each race, class, group, ideologist has to find out in his own way 'heart within and God overhead'. That God is man's own creation. 'I am able to love my God because he gives me freedom to deny Him' is not merely a poet's jargon.

SUDHANSU MOHAN BANERJEE

THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE MIND. By Walter H. Slack. Published by the Philosophical Library Inc. 15 East/40 Street, New York. 179 pp. $ 3.95.

This book like the one to which we have already referred to, is a study from another angle of ethical humanism of the various problems of life, death, and existence, without being wedded to any particular strand of thought, dogma or creed, any specific faith or religion, at the same time paying obeisance to the spirit of the same. The apt subtitle, as he himself hints should have been 'A Journal of Intellectual Development'. After all, Man is a teachable animal, said Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. In Man alone does the Universal come to consciousness. He alone is aware that there is a universe that it has a history and may have a destiny. When once this recognition arises pride, prejudice, and privilege fall away and a new humanity is born in the soul. Religion is not mere eccentricity, not a historical incident, not a psychological device, not an escape mechanism nor an economic lubricant induced by an indifferent world. It is as Dr. Radhakrishnan further points out an integral element of human nature, an ultimation of destiny.

In 92 notes, some almost expressed as aphorisms such as 'Man is his own greatest enemy' (59), or 'An equality of franchise is shared by all in the democracy of death' (33), or 'The Man is greater than he thinks himself to be' (42), and in some elaborately discussed paragraphs, the book reveals a somewhat complex, mixed but wide range of thought derived from Hellenic and Pythagorean ancestors right down to today's international communism, mixed Marxian dialectics and swiftly changing values in a world of tension and strain, both physical and psychical surcharged with atomic fissure and fusion, where technology has progressed in almost a break-neck speed. In between we find references to Christian morality, Islamic brotherhood, Hindu thought, Tibetan Buddhism, Gandhian satyagraha, apologetic but reverential references even to a Napolean Bonaparte or an Adolf Hitler as to the neo-platonism of the new Academy. All these colour the impressions received, but on the whole there is an undercurrent of optimism through these meandering labrynths which comes to the conclusion that 'Humanity has a right to demand a certain minimal threshold of morality both from the private and the scientist (read intellectual) because we can legitimately expect that his moral vision ought to be more acute. His training and intelligence

should make it easier for him to discern ethical niceties far faster than a man of cruder tastes and abilities' (p. 178). That is why the author could say with some authority that 'we are the product not of a gravity-like determinism but of a very malleable intellectual environment itself subject to the reforming pressure of education and nature' (p. 30).

The book is a doctoral dissertation and naturally the presentation is somewhat abstruse and academic, but the assumptions made and the conclusions drawn deserve the closest attention of the thinking elite. It is a almost commonplace to say today that no political thinker should allow himself to lose sight of the fact that he is not dealing with abstract categories, but rather with living, breathing human beings, each of them harbouring some secret hopes and dreams and, if I may add, some secret anxiety and frustration as well. It is therefore almost imperative that social and economic differentiation must never become so rigid that they blind us to the character and feelings of the men and the women composing various groups. This is in essence the conclusion to which the author comes and his remedy for the malady is the old moral posture. We need only practise 'Justice, Mercy and Understanding'. We hope he does appreciate the difficulty that all these very noble and loveable epithets require a text and a context, a definition and a demarcation, a heritage and a heresy, according to the needs of particular men and groups, their status, symbols, their intellectual attainments and environmental therapeutics Values change not only from age to age but from person to person. Justice may mean one thing to me and one thing to you. Prejudices die hard. Social circumstances may change one's outlook. Buddha and Jesus, Gandhi and Lin Yutang, Marx and Mao, Aristotle and Bertrand Russell, Bakunin and Sorel, Sorokin and Jean Paul Sartre, Guavera and Castro, may put different shades of meaning on the same epithets showing a different conceptual emphasis. The trouble is that in the realm of ideas we constantly reconstruct ourselves both subconsciously and superconsciously. We are prone to be influenced by prevailing moods and the character and coherence of social and moral values. Life becomes relative. Catch-phrases lose their glamour. New words and new worlds arise, with a new reestimation and a newer revaluation. *The Commonwealth of the Mind* does not envisage *Apre moi la delage* —'After me the deluge'—but calls for a revolution which is essentially and primarily an upheaval in thought than merely an upheaval in society through bombs or cataclysms. Can we posit an impersonal and amoral God within our Commonwealth of the Mind? The author has made an attempt to give an answer. Whether his diagnosis is right or wrong we do not know but the very fact that people are thinking about the prognosis is laudable. The very attempt is welcome. This world today has not only shrunk, but is too much with us. A journey to the Moon has become imperative for our mental health. We thank the author for a stimulating discourse.

SUDHANSU MOHAN BANERJEE

SRIMAT BHAGAVAT GITA: English rendering by Bani Basu and Kajal Sengupta from the original Bengali of Srimat Yatindra Ramanujacharyya: Sree Balaram Dharmasopan, Khardah, 24 Parganas, West Bengal. 475 pp. Rs. 12.00.

The author has stated in the Introduction that in the explanations and glosses offered, he has simply followed the great preceptors of the past, and has not made

any original contribution. This, we think, is a redeeming feature of the book. One's acquaintance with the thought-patterns of the great *Ācāryas* of a particular school being in most cases scanty, one should, in the beginning, try to be thoroughly grounded in the time-honoured ideas of a recognized philosophical and religious system, before attempting to study the *Gītā* in the light of the so-called original commentaries of recent times. We, therefore, recommend this book to all who desire to read this sacred text according to the tenets of the Viśiṣṭādvaita system. The get-up of the book is good and the price reasonable.

There are, however, a few minor defects, which, it is hoped, will be removed in the next edition. These are as follows:

(1) A large number of printing mistakes, sometimes as many as 4 or 5 in a single page (*vide* pp. 458, 460).

(2) The word 'Substance' is hardly appropriate, since what is given is not the gist or essence of the *ślokas* but a detailed clarification of the ideas contained in them. So it is really a gloss or a commentary.

(3) The word 'Syntax' too loses a part of its sense when a large number of explanatory words are invariably found mixed up with the translated words. The former should have been at least distinguished from the latter by having them printed in a different type.

(4) The word *sattvaḥ* often used does not seem to be grammatically correct. In the sense of one of the three *guṇas*, *sattva* is never used in the masculine gender.

SWAMI DHYANANANDA

INSTITUTE NEWS

Dr. Zakir Husain

We join the teeming millions of our countrymen in expressing our deep sense of sorrow at the passing away of Dr. Zakir Husain, the beloved President of India, on 3 May 1969. His sudden demise is an irreparable loss to the Nation at a time when his wise counsel and guidance was most needed. We pay our respectful homage to the departed soul.

The Management and the Staff of this Institute will always cherish the memory of Dr. Zakir Husain who visited the Institute on 1 January 1968 to inaugurate the ABC EXPO Seminar on Communication, held in collaboration with this Institute.

The Institute was closed immediately on receipt of the news of his passing away, and a meeting was held at the Institute wherein the following resolution was passed:

'The Secretary and members of the staff of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture and the students of its Day Students' Home deeply mourn the sudden demise of Dr. Zakir Husain, President of India, and convey their heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family. They earnestly pray for eternal peace of the departed soul.'

As a mark of respect to the memory of the late President, the Institute observed complete holidays on 3, 4, and 5 May 1969, and all the programmes for those days were cancelled.

JUNE CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th June

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

20th and 27th June

THE MUNDAKA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th June

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(*Children below six years are not allowed*)

Nazrul Sandhya

Programme:

1. Portraying select scenes from Sanskrit Drama

Agni-Vina

(Based on the Life of Nazrul Islam)

by

Prachya Vani

2. Nazrul Giti and Recitations from Nazrul Islam

by

Kazi Sabyasachi

Dhiren Bose

Sabitabrata Datta

Kazi Aniruddha

and others

Tuesday, 10 June, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

FILM SHOWS

Nabin Jatra

Tuesday, 17 June, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

Devotional Film

(in Bengali)

Tuesday, 24 June, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR JUNE 1969

Nazrul Galpa Āsar

First Saturday, 7 June at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6–9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 28 June 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

June 4 **Mahatma Gandhi: His Relevance to Our Times (Socio-Political)**

Speaker: Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, M.A., LL.B., D.Lit.

President: Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L.

June 11 **Sir John Woodroffe and Tantrika Literature**

Speaker: Tripura Sankar Sen, M.A.

President: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

June 18 **Samadhi : A Psychological Study**

Speaker: H. K. De Chaudhuri, M.A., Dr. Phil.

President: Swami Bhuteshananda

June 25 **Music and Art in the United States**

Speaker: Satyabrata Chatterjee
Assistant Editor, The Statesman

President: Robert A. Collinge
Information Officer, U.S.I.S., Calcutta

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA FOR JUNE 1969

SISTER NIVEDITA LECTURES (1968)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

A series of 3 lectures on

Sister Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Culture

Programme:

Monday, 2 June, at 6.30 p.m.

Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Philosophy(Lec. No. III)

Speaker: Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

President: J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

* Last lecture of the series.

Monday, 9 June, at 6.30 p.m.

SIVA-KATHA

(Discourse in Bengali)

on

Shankaracharyer Siva

by

Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

SPECIAL DISCOURSES

(in Bengali)

on

Bhagavata Dharma

by

Tripura Sankar Sen, M.A.

Fridays, 6 and 13 June, at 6.30 p.m.

BULLETIN
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LIFE AND MESSAGE OF THE BUDDHA

THE HON. MR. CHIEF JUSTICE D. N. SINHA

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court Mr. D. N. Sinha, presently Governor of West Bengal, is a distinguished Jurist with a wide recognition in India and abroad. The following is the text of a lecture he gave at the Buddha Jayanti celebration held at the Institute on 16 May 1968.

ACCORDING to Hindus, first there is the visible world, then the infinite void. Beyond it is the Great Silence, where dwells the Paramapuruṣa, the Supreme Spirit. When the world is beset with sin and evil triumphs over good, the Spirit stirs and takes material form so that good may once more triumph over evil.

In his inimitable book of poems, *The Light of Asia*, Sir Edwin Arnold began as follows (p. 1):

'The Scripture of the Saviour of the World,
Lord Buddha—Prince Siddhārtha styled on earth—
In Earth and Heavens and Hells Incomparable,
All-honoured, Wisest, Best, most Pitiful;
The Teacher of Nirvāṇa and the Law.
Thus came he to be born again for men.'

Buddhism is the religion of the followers of Gautama Buddha formerly known as Prince Siddhārtha. Gautama was born in the year 563 B.C., that is to say about more than 2500 years ago. He was the heir of a royal house of Śākyas whose little kingdom, a rich irrigated plain between the Nepalese foothills and the river Rāpti lay in southern Nepal. His father King Śuddhodana would have gone down unheard of in the corridors of time had it not been for his illustrious son. Buddha's personal name was Siddhārtha and his family name was Gautama. His mother's name was

Māyā Devī. The capital of the tiny kingdom was Kapilavastu, a tiny but busy provincial capital.

Buddhism is a religion of the followers of Gautama Buddha which formerly covered a large area in India and subsequently spread out to other parts of Asia. Unfortunately it is no longer widely prevalent in the country of its origin, but is widespread in Ceylon, Burma, Siam (Thailand), Cambodia, China, and Japan. It also spread into Tibet, the whole of Indo-China, Central Asia, and southern Siberia. It is said that some tribes of Tartars in the lower Volga region profess Buddhism even now. About one-third of the human race still professes Buddhism. Unfortunately, there exists no contemporaneous historical record of the life and teachings of the Buddha, and our whole knowledge rests upon religious documents which came into existence a considerable time after the death of the Buddha. The number of such documents known as the Buddhist scriptures are fortunately numerous.

The Pali Canon

As already stated above there is no contemporaneous record of his life and teachings as they were put into their present form after the splitting up of the community, which he founded into sects. Only one of the collections now exists in completeness in any Indian language, the canon of the Theravādins, 'the School of the Elders' in the Pāli language, which still flourishes in Ceylon. It was introduced by the Buddhist monks in Ceylon in the third century B.C. In the older school, the canon exists in a three-fold division the Tripiṭaka or the three-fold basket. This consists of (1) *Vinaya Piṭaka*, a collection of the 227 rules of discipline (*vinaya*) binding on the monks. The four most fundamental of these rules, violation of which involved expulsion from the Order, are those which forbid unchastity, theft, taking life or inciting to suicide or making a false claim to supernatural powers. A second set of rules follows, dealing with organization of the several communities, and a commentary now reckoned as canonical. (2) The most important section of the Doctrine (*dhamma*) is *Sutta Piṭaka* arranged in five collections of *suttas* or discourses called Nikāyas or Āgamas. The first four Nikāyas are common to the older school. They consist chiefly of the discourses attributed to the Buddha, but among them are included poems, legends, dialogues, and commentaries and a number of them are ascribed to disciples. They are classified as the *Dīgha Nikāya* and the *Majjhima Nikāya* which has reference to the length of the discourses. There is another sub-division—*Saṁyutta Nikāya* as also the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* which is a collection of minor works not recognized by all the schools. One of the most important items in the Pāli Canon is the *Dhammapada* or the 'words of the Doctrine', a collection of four hundred and twenty-three verses. The Jātakas are stories of the Buddha's previous births.

The Suttas

How much of the Buddha's life which we know is historically correct, it is difficult to say, and also how much of the teachings of the Buddha which is ascribed to him as genuine, is also not free from doubt. Traditionally some of the *suttas* like the *Dhammacakkapavattana-Sutta* meaning 'the *sutta* turning the wheel of the Doctrine' is ascribed to the Buddha. It is considered to be an exposition of the fundamental teaching regarding the goal of the disciples and the conditions for attaining it. It is supposed to have been delivered by the Buddha when he first began his mission at Sarnath in Benares. The *sutta* is addressed to 'him who has gone forth from the world' in the conviction that worldly life cannot give final happiness, and it repudiates

two extremes which he ought not to follow—profitless life of indulgence in sensual pleasure and the equally profitless way of self-torture. The middle way which conduces to enlightenment and *nirvāṇa* is said to have been won by the *tathāgata*. Enlightenment consists in the knowledge of the four Truths. The *first* truth is the noble truth of pain. Birth is pain, old age is pain, sickness is pain, death is pain. In short life itself is a succession of pains. The *second* is the noble truth of the cause of pain, and this is the craving for sensual pleasure called *tanha* (*tṛṣṇā*) or thirst. It is the craving that leads to an endless chain of birth and rebirth. The *third* is the noble truth of the cessation of pain, consisting in the conquest of desire, abandonment, and rejection of craving or *tanha*. These are the three truths the knowledge of which constitutes the state of *arhat*, the perfected disciple. The *fourth* truth consists in the actual means of arriving at these truths, the noble 'eight-fold path'—right thinking, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

As will presently appear from the history of Prince Siddhārtha's life and of his work, the spirit that moved him was a feeling of infinite compassion for those who are bound to the endless wheel of birth and rebirth and his immediate object at all times was the conquest of pain. The doctrine of the origin of pain is the well-known *paṭicca-samuppāda* which gives a list of the twelve causal states of the individual, each of which is supposed to determine the next: Ignorance, mental ailments, consciousness, mind and body, six senses, contact, feeling, craving, becoming, birth, old age, and death.

Gautama the Buddha—Sources of His Life

I shall now briefly tell you the life of Gautama Buddha. Even amongst the Hindus Śākya Muni is considered to be an *avatāra* and the history of his life is fairly well-known.

It is, therefore, strange that the Buddhistic scriptures were rediscovered in India by Western scholars. In India, the land of his birth, both the history as also the teachings of the Buddha had been almost lost. In 1824 Brian Hodgson, Resident of Nepal, discovered in the local monasteries of Nepal Sanskrit scriptures, (original) of the Buddhist canon. He sent copies of these texts to London and Paris. It was the patient work of the French Orientalist Burnoef who translated *Lalitavistara*, which first gave us the complete life of Gautama Buddha.

A few years later, the Pāli Canon was discovered in Ceylon which resulted in the learned works of Spence Hardy and Rhys Davids. Some scholars like Senart and Kern go to the extent of saying that the life of the Buddha is no more than a mythology. These theories are not now accepted. It is now accepted by scholars that the Buddha was a historical person.

Early Life

Siddārtha Gautama was born a son of King Śuddhodana. The King had no children although he had two wives. He was not born at the capital but at Lumbinī Park, a royal garden now in South Nepal, on the fullmoon day of the year 563 B.C. As a boy he led the normal life of ease of his birth and calling. There was great rejoicing in the capital upon his birth and the King called astrologers who forecast that the Prince might renounce the world and become a religious leader or else he will become a mighty king. Shortly after his birth his mother died and his step-

mother Gautami brought him up. It is said that one day the great ascetic Asita suddenly appeared at the royal capital and seeing the new born babe shed trears of joy. This is how Arnold describes the scene (*ibid.*, pp. 5-6):

'... 'Mongst the strangers came
A grey-haired saint, Asita, one whose ears,
Long closed to earthly things, caught heavenly sounds,
And heard at prayer beneath his peepul-tree
The Devas singing songs at Buddha's birth.
Wondrous in lore he was by age and fasts;
Him, drawing nigh, seeming so reverend,
The King saluted, and Queen Maya made
To lay her babe before such holy feet;
But when he saw the Prince the old man cried
"Ah, Queen, not so!" and thereupon he touched
Eight times the dust, laid his waste visage there,
Saying, "O Babe! I worship! Thou art He!
I see the rosy light, the foot-sole marks,
The soft curled tendril of the Swastika,
The sacred primal signs thirty and two,
The eighty lesser tokens. Thou art Buddh,
And thou wilt preach the Law, and save all flesh
Who learn the Law, though I shall never hear,
Dying too soon, who lately longed to die;
Howbeit I have seen Thee. Know, O King!
This is that Blossom on our human tree
Which opens once in many myriad years—
But opened, fills the world with Wisdom's scent
And Love's dropped honey; from thy royal root
A Heavenly Lotus springs: Ah, happy House!"'

In order to prevent this leaning towards asceticism, the King married him to a charming wife Yaśodharā by whom he had a son Rāhula. The growing boy Siddhārtha Gautama learnt his lessons with a remarkable speed as if he was the repository of all knowledge which blossomed forth at the touch of the teacher. One day the Prince driving forth from his palace saw an old man, then a sick man, then a dead man carried by, at the sight of which he asked the charioteer the meaning of what he saw. 'This comes to all men' said the charioteer and the Prince was troubled. There was born within him an overwhelming desire to find the cause of so much suffering, to remove that cause, and to teach the method of its removal to all mankind. At the dead of night he bade farewell to his sleeping wife and babe and in the great silence he went forth with his charioteer Chandaka. At the edge of the forest (still known as Chandaka Nivartana) he cut off his princely hair, exchanged his gorgeous robe for the robe of a mendicant and went forth into a homeless life alone.

He visited a noted sage at Vaiśālī, Ācārya Alar and practised the Hindu system of meditation and *sādhanā*, but it did not bring him relief. The Prince then moved to Rājagṛha, the capital of King Bimbisāra. In later years he was to spend a great deal of his life in this capital. From there he went to Gayā with five companion *sannyāsins* and practised austerity. He, however, found that there was everywhere intellectual theories but not that tearing of the veil which only would reveal to him the cause and cure of pain. He realized after six years of meditation and wasting his body to the bone that this was not the path where wisdom can be found. He then began to take food and nourishment whereupon his companions

grew disgusted and left him. Finally he sat himself at the foot of a tree (known as the Bodhi-tree) at a place which is now renowned as Bodh-Gayā in Bihar and vowed not to move until he had attained the supreme enlightenment. He said:

'Though my skin, my nerves, and my bones should waste away and my life—blood dry, I will not leave this seat until I have attained Supreme Enlightenment.'

The Supreme Enlightenment

He was tempted, assailed with all the remaining impurities of his human mind. He passed in review his former births, their causes and consequent sufferings. He shed the self which binds man to his limitations, and raised his consciousness to the very threshold of that Light which lies beyond all thought and all duality. Finally, as all the earth was lying silent at the moment of the fullmoon, he broke through the final barrier. Self was merged in All-self, consciousness was now coeval with the universe; a human mind, in full Enlightenment, was utterly and limitlessly free. Siddhārtha Gautama thus became the 'Buddha' or the enlightened one.

The Great Mission

He then realized that his mission lay, not in enjoying the supreme bliss or *nirvāṇa* at once, but in spending his life in preaching his message to humanity. He first went to Vārāṇasī where at Sarnath, in the Deer Park (Mṛgadāva), he preached his first sermon to the five ascetics who had earlier left him in disgust when he gave up his austerity. Soon his disciples were so many that he sent them forth to teach *dhamma* or law to all mankind. At this time he paid a visit to his old father, and his wife and his son as well as his cousin entered the Holy Order. Later his step-mother, and his wife did so. Sometimes it is said that Buddhism preached by the Buddha is completely different to Hinduism but this is incorrect. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan in his Foreword to *2500 Years of Buddhism* said:

'The Buddha did not feel that he was announcing a new religion. He was born, grew up, and died a Hindu. He was restating with a new emphasis the ancient ideals of the Indo-Aryan civilization.... The Buddha revolted against the ignorance and superstition, the dread and the horror, which accompanied popular religion.... Buddhism did not start as a new and independent religion. It was an offshoot of the more ancient faith of the Hindus, perhaps a schism or a heresy. While the Buddha agreed with the faith he inherited on the fundamentals of metaphysics and ethics, he protested against certain practices which were in vogue at the time. He refused to acquiesce in Vedic ceremonialism.'

Monier Williams in *Hinduism* says (pp. 81-82):

'In short, Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism appear to have blended, or as it were, melted into each other, after each had reciprocally parted with something, and each had imparted something.... Even in Benares the Chinese traveller Hiouen Tshang, found Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism flourishing amicably side by side in the 7th century of our era. In the South of India the Buddha's doctrines seem to have met with acceptance at an early date; and Ceylon was probably converted as early as B.C. 240, soon after the 3rd Buddhist Council was held under King Aśoka. In other parts of India there was probably a period of Brāhmaṇical hostility, and perhaps of occasional persecution; but eventually Buddhism was taken by the hand, and drawn back into the Brāhmaṇical system by the Brāhmaṇs themselves who met it halfway, and ended

by boldly adopting to Buddha as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.'

Attitude to God

Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* said, 'I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls'. The Sage Vyāsa said, 'we find perfect men even beyond the pale of our caste and creed'.

'How, then, can the Hindu,' said Swami Vivekananda, 'whose whole fabric of thought centres in God, believe in Buddhism which is agnostic or in Jainism which is atheistic?

'The Buddhists or the Jains do not depend upon God; but the whole force of their religion is directed to the great central truth in every religion, to evolve a God out of man'. Not only did the Hindus compromise with Buddhism but the Buddhists also saw that they must live side by side with their ancient counterpart. The Emperor Priyadarśī (Aśoka) said: 'He who does reference to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from their attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect. Concord, therefore, is meritorious, to wit, hearkening and hearkening willingly to the Dharma accepted by others'. But even if Buddhism is an outcome of Hinduism it is not an easy doctrine to master. Buddha did not speak about God which is an extraordinary thing in the world of religion. As the Japanese writer Suzuki says:

> 'If science surveys the objective world, and philosophy unravels intricacies of logic, Buddhism dives into the very abyss of being, and tells us in the directest possible manner all it sees under the surface.'

One of his disciples Malunkaputra once complained to the Buddha that he always avoided the mention of God and also many subtle matters of philosophy. The Buddha said:

> 'My son, a man was once hit by a poisonous arrow, his relations rushed forth and brought an experienced physician. The man said that "I must know who hit me with an arrow, his name, his caste, and his family. I must first know of the poison he used for inflicting a wound upon me, and the metal of which the arrow is made. Until I know all these I will not accept medical treatment." Do you think that this is a reasonable attitude to take? The first thing that has to be done is for the doctor to find out the nature of his wound and to treat him with medicine. When he is out of danger there will be time enough to answer his question. So, in this world we are all hit by the poisoned arrow of destiny. I am the doctor and believe in treating the wound —the other subtle questions will be answered in due course.'

Attitude to Life

The basic concept of Buddhism was that pain was everywhere, life was only a passing phase with no permanence. Everything that exists in the material world is ultimately destroyed. Therefore, the *tanha* or the thirst which compelled us to spend our life in sense enjoyment can only end in pain and more pain. According to the Buddha the human life was like a lamp. If you wish to destroy the flame you must see that it is not fed with oil through a wick. The flame is sense enjoyment, the senses are the wick and the oil are the material goods which cater for our sense enjoyment. According to the Buddha, as long as there is desire there cannot be a cessation of pain and man goes through an unending circle of birth and death as long as desire remains. He, therefore, advocated a rule of conduct which would cut at the

root of desire. If a man was able to destroy desire this rotation of births and deaths stops at once. This is the doctrine of Nirvāṇa. For this purpose the Buddha considered it unnecessary to mention about a God. Once when asked by a disciple about God, he told his chief disciple Ānanda to reply that as he himself did not know of God, how could he give any information on the subject!

Some Episodes

Before I proceed to tell you more about his teachings I will revert back to some episodes of his life. When he first visited Kapilavastu after his enlightenment, there was a rush to enter into the Holy Order under him. Persons belonging to the royal house as well as the nobility gathered to take *dīkṣā*. But the first person whom he ordanied was Upāli, son of a barber. This was perhaps to emphasize the point that Buddhism was against the caste system of the Hindus.

Anathapindika

The Buddha had a wonderfully attractive personality. A wealthy trader or *śreṣṭhin* of Śrāvastī, Anāthapiṇḍika was so tremendously attracted by him that he wanted the Buddha to stay in Śrāvastī. But where in Śrāvastī, would he find a place fit for the Lord to stay? In the suburbs of the town there was a garden called Jetavana which belonged to Prince Jeta. After spending a huge amount of money, the Prince had turned the wilderness into a wonderful garden. The *śreṣṭhin* had the boldness to face Prince Jeta and request him to sell the garden. The Prince was astonished. Almost banteringly he said that if the *śreṣṭhin* covered the whole garden with gold coins it will he his. To his astonishment, the *śreṣṭhin* did exactly that. He brought over cart-loads of gold coins and spread it over the garden, so as to cover it completely. Some say that the Prince, made a gift of the garden, since it was to be used for the Buddha. It is stated, however, in the *Cūḷavagga Jātaka* that the *śreṣṭhin* had to file a suit in the royal court and the Prince lost and had to carry out the agreement. In that garden, which came to be known as Jetavana, the *śreṣṭhin* established an enormous *vihāra* where the Buddha lived for nineteen long years.

Angulimala

The Buddha had a strange attraction which drew to him sinners of all descriptions. The most fascinating story is of Aṅgulimāla. Aṅgulimāla was a violent robber. He lived in the jungles of the kingdom of Kośala of which the king was Prasenjit, a disciple of the Buddha. The robber chieftain was adept in all kinds of crime—murder, robbery, loot, and incendiarism. The King and his subjects were at their wits end, since then the king's soldiers could do nothing. The robber's name was 'Aṅgulimāla' which means a garland of fingers. This peculiar name was given to him because he used to wear a garland of fingers which he cut off from his victims. In short even the mention of the name of Aṅgulimāla was sufficient to terrify the most courageous inhabitant of Kośala. The King often complained about this to the Buddha. Suddenly one evening the Buddha started walking into the forest where lay the den of this mighty robber. His disciples were aghast, but knew that once he has made up his mind there was no turning him back. Ultimately, he was left alone in the midst of the dense forest. Suddenly a shadow came out of the darkness and shouted him to stop. The Buddha said 'I am the *tathāgata*, the enlightened one. I have already stopped for I have controlled my senses. I want you to stop'. By this time, Aṅgulimāla had come up to face the Lord. He was astonished

that the very mention of his name was sufficient to terrorise the boldest inhabitant of Kośala and yet this elderly unarmed monk did not care a fig for him. There was a long talk between the Buddha and Aṅgulimāla, but at the end Aṅgulimāla surrendered. The next morning he shaved his head and took in hands an alms bowl and the attire of a monk. One day the Buddha was sitting in Jetavana when King Prasenjit arrived. He was very depressed and informed the Lord that in spite of employing all his troops he could not catch Aṅgulimāla who continued to spread his terror far and wide. The Buddha smiled and said: 'If at this very moment I can show you Aṅgulimāla amongst the *bhikṣus* what will you do'? King Prasenjit thought that the Lord was joking with him and he said: 'I shall show to him an honour due to a *bhikṣu*'. Thereupon, the Lord pointed his finger to a man with shaven head and the attire of a monk and said: 'This is Aṅgulimāla. So, keep your word, show him the honour due to a *bhikṣu*'.

The Lord had a magnetic hold on dumb animals. As his disciples grew in number, the Lord could scarcely find time for his meditation. Finally, his disciples started quarrelling with one another. In disgust, the Buddha left all his disciples and retired into a lonely forest where he spent the whole rainy season. The story goes that when he used to walk into the neighbouring villages each morning with his begging bowl, a huge wild elephant followed him as his constant companion. In fact, this elephant carried the alms bowl into which the villagers dropped the alms.

Kisa Gautami

Then, there is the wonderful story of Kisā Gautamī. Kisā Gautamī had an only child, but suddenly the child died. Weeping bitterly she carried the dead child before the Lord and laid him at his feet. She embraced his feet and said that the Lord could do miracles, so let him bring back life into the body of her dead son. The Buddha calmly said: 'Sister, before I do so, you must do something'. With eager voice Kisā Gautamī said that she was prepared to do anything that the Lord said. The Lord said: 'Go into the town and beg for a handful of mustard seed and bring it back to me. There was, however, a condition attached to it, for no alms must be accepted from a house where anybody has ever died'. Kisā Gautamī could scarcely wait. She thought that it was too easy a task to accomplish. For a whole day she travelled round the town. People were eager to give her alms after hearing of her said bereavement. But before she accepted their alms, she explained to them that she could only do so if no death in the house had taken place at any time. People laughed at her. They said that death was every-where and there was no house and no family which had no death, for death was inexorable and spared nobody. Kings and beggers were equally subject to its sway. At the end of the day, Kisā Gautamī was enlightened. 'If death was every-where' Kisā Gautamī thought 'how can I escape from it'? So, she came back and embraced the feet of the Lord and asked to be ordained in that path where death could be conquered.

Mahaparinirvana

The Buddha was surrounded by many disciples. Two of his best known disciples are Sāriputta and Moggallāna. The bone-relics of these monks are now preserved in a *vihāra* erected by the Government of India at Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh. But his favourite disciple was Ānanda who was his constant companion up to the time of his death. The Buddha died at the ripe age of eighty, when travelling on foot to Vaiśālī. On the road he rested in the mango garden

of his disciple Cunda who was a person belonging to a low-caste. To celebrate the visit of the Lord, Cunda prepared a curry. Some say that it was made of wild boar-meat, but others said that it was made out of the roots of a tree, known as *śūkara-maddava*. The Lord was not keeping in good health, but he did not refuse it since his disciple Cunda had prepared it with great care, love, and affection. Very soon thereafter he had an attack of acute stomach-ache and diarrhoea, which ultimately, resulted in his final *samādhi* and *mahāparinirvāṇa*. As he lay in his final *samādhi*, hundreds of *bhikṣus* and householders gathered round. His last words were 'Always remember my teaching—all things, big and small are subject to death and destruction. Nothing can be achieved by sense enjoyment, for all desire ends in pain. It is my teaching to you that you must end all desire, that you must extinguish the source of desire, that you must attain *nirvāṇa*. This was my first word and this is my last word'. Thus, in the Malla-śalavana of Kuśinagara at the dead of night, took place the *mahāparinirvāṇa* of the Lord.

Buddhism and Vedantic Monism

I shall now conclude by making some observations on the teachings of the Buddha. It is true that he spoke of no God, but neither did he express the opinion that God did not exist. Perhaps in this, Buddhism differs from orthodox Hinduism. According to the Upaniṣads, the Brahman only exists and nothing else. That is why it has been said: *Īśāvāsyamidaṁ sarvam* or cover everything with God. For the orthodox Hindus therefore, a Godless religion, or to put it in another way—a religion without God is almost unthinkable.

Swami Vivekananda once saw the vision of the Buddha. He said:

'While at school one night I was meditating within closed doors and had a fairly deep concentration of mind. ... from the southern wall of our room a luminous figure stepped out and stood in front of me. There was a wonderful radiance on its visage, yet there seemed to be no play of emotion on it. It was the figure of a *sannyāsin* absolutely calm, shaven headed, and staff and *kamaṇḍalu* in hand. He gazed at me for some time, and seemed as if he would address me ... Then a kind of fright seized me. I opened the door and hurried out of the room ... I have never met that figure since ... It was the Lord Buddha whom I saw. Lord Buddha is my *iṣṭam*, my God. He preached no theory of Godhead; he was himself God. I fully believe it. All my life I have been very fond of Buddha. I have more veneration for that character than for any other. Of course, I do not endorse all his philosophy. I want a good deal of metaphysics for myself. I entirely differ in many respects, but because I differ, is that any reason why I should not see the beauty of the man? I wish I had once infinitesimal part of Buddha's heart. Buddha may or may not have believed in God, that does not matter to me. He reached the same state of perfection to which others come by *bhakti*, love of God, *yoga*, or *jñāna*.'

Swamiji said, at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, on 26 September 1893 (*The Complete Works*, Vol. I., p. 19):

'I am not a Buddhist, as you have heard, and yet I am. If China, or Japan, or Ceylon follow the teachings of the Great Master, India worships him as God incarnate on earth. You have just now heard that I am going to criticise Buddhism, but by that I wish you to understand only this. Far be it from me to criticise him whom I worship as God incarnate on earth. But our views about Buddha are that he was not understood

properly by this disciples. The relation between Hinduism (by Hinduism, I mean the religion of the Vedas) and what is called Buddhism at the present day, is nearly the same as between Judaism and Christianity. Jesus Christ was a Jew, and Shākya Muni was a Hindu. The Jews rejected Jesus Christ, nay, crucified him, and the Hindus have accepted Shākya Muni as God and worship him.'

According to Swamiji, the Buddha preached nothing new. He preached something which is the logical fulfilment of both Hinduism and Buddhism. But the followers of the Buddha did not realize the real import of his teachings. He continues (*ibid.*, p. 25):

'Hinduism cannot live without Buddhism, nor Buddhism without Hinduism. Then realize what the separation has shown us, that the Buddhists cannot stand without the brain and philosophy of the Brahmins, nor the Brahmin without the heart of the Buddhist. This separation between the Buddhists and the Brahmins is the cause of the downfall of India.'

The other part of Buddhism which is difficult to understand is the concept of *nirvāṇa*. According to Hindu philosophy the ultimate end of religion is the meeting of the conscious being with the super-conscious. The Jivātman with the Paramātman. It is like a drop of water mingling with the ocean, where it loses all its identity. This is not exactly the Buddhistic concept of *nirvāṇa*. This is how a great Buddhist sage has put it:

'There is, brethren, a condition wherein there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, nor the sphere of infinite space, nor the sphere of infinite consciousness, nor the sphere of the void, nor the sphere of neither perception, nor non-perception: Where there is no "this world" and no "world beyond": Where there is no moon and no sun. That condition, brethren, do I call neither a coming, nor a going, nor a standing still, nor a falling away, nor a rising up: But it is without fixity, without mobility, without basis. That is the end of woe.'

Although there are these essential differences, there is an underlying unity. The Upaniṣads do not start by denying as Gautama does, the existence of an 'I', a knowing perduring subject; but nevertheless reaches the same conclusion by a process of elimination. The Hindu theory speaks of the transmigration of the Soul, but Buddhism speaks of transmigration of the Character. Both in Hinduism and Buddhism the individual is encouraged to press inward to find his own consciousness by a process of elimination. Buddhism seeks to attain this by the superposition of attributes called *upādhis* and the successive denial of each in turn. This is akin to the Vedāntic formula of discovering the Ātman or Brahman by the process of '*neti, neti*'—'not so, not so'. By this process in both the philosophies, the seeker comes to the timeless abyss and beyond that there is nothing.

According to Vedānta there are four states. The *first* is Waking Consciousness. When the soul is blinded by glamour (*māyā*), it inhabits the body and accomplishes actions and obtains satisfaction by food, drink, and enjoyment of sex. This is a waking condition, a living on the surface or empirical experience. In the *second* state there is dreamless sleep; and in the *third* state there is no empirical consciousness, but an identification with the Brahman. In the *fourth* or the final state there is neither Non-Being or Being. This nearly corresponds to the state of *nirvāṇa* which has sometimes been described by the Buddha himself as bliss, when the being is in a state of timelessness, free from dream and sleep alike.

Buddhism and the Samkhya School

In the Sāṁkhya school of Hinduism the monism of the Vedānta gives place to dualism. What in the Vedānta was the indivisible Puruṣa is now divided into Puruṣa and Prakṛti, Spirit and Nature. It is said that Buddhism derives many of its thoughts from the Sāṁkhya school and Maharṣi Kapila who formulated the Sāṁkhya doctrine might have given his name to Kapilavastu. Difference lies in the fact that Buddhism makes a tacit denial of Puruṣa because it refuses to discuss anything but the practical means of deliverance from pain. According to Sāṁkhya the individual Puruṣa does not migrate from body to body, but it is only the Jivātman which consists of the senses, *buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra*, and *manas* migrate from body to body and sets up a false ego. What, therefore, passes from body to body is this false reflection of the real Puruṣa. By attaining this knowledge the shadow is obliterated, and the reality is discovered. Buddhism believes in the shattering of this illusion, but refuses to discuss the nature or existence of the Puruṣa.

Buddism and The Yoga System

Perhaps the greatest similarities in the two religions will be found if we consider the Yoga system of Hinduism. '*Yoga*' or union is a system of inner discipline designed to secure the deliverance contemplated in the Sāṁkhya. Meditation is its chief instrument, the three phases of which are *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*. The underlying idea is concentration of thought by which the distinction between subject and object is obliterated. The spiritual exercises of the Buddhists are almost similar. But, is there really any difference between Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism as regards the penultimate? When asked about God the Buddha kept silent. Śaṅkarācārya, the doyen of Indian philosophy tells of an old story where the Sage Valiva was questioned by Vashkali on the nature of the Brahman, whereupon he kept silent. Vashkali repeated his question second and a third time. Thereupon the Sage replied :

'I teach you but you do not understand;
the Brahman is silence.'

So, where is the difference? It is only a question of phraseology. The Buddhists do not speak of the transmigration of the soul and yet say that when some one dies he is reborn in a new life. Both Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism regard the state of the world as hopeless and irremediable, and the urgency of deliverance from it is common to both, but the means may differ. The great follower of the Buddha, Emperor Aśoka said :

'He who does reference to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect. Concord, therefore, is meritorious, to wit, hearkening and hearkening willingly to the Dharma accepted by others.'

A Homage

It is necessary, therefore, that on this auspicious day we should pay our respect to the memory of Śākya Muni. With humble reverence I quote the following words of Sir Edwin Arnold (*The Light of Asia*, pp. 138-39) :

'OM, AMITAYA! measure not with words
Th' Immeasurable; nor sink the string of thought
Into the Fathomless. Who asks doth err,
Who answers, errs. Say nought!
The Books teach Darkness was, at first of all,
And Brahm, sole meditating in that Night :
Look not for Brahm and the Beginning there!

Nor him, nor any light
Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes,
Or any searcher know by mortal mind;
Veil after veil will lift—but there must be
Veil upon veil behind.
Pray not! the Darkness will not brighten! Ask
Nought from the Silence, for it cannot speak!
Vex not your mournful minds with pious pains!
Ah! Brothers, Sisters! seek
Nought from the helpless gods by gift and hymn,
Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruits and cakes;
Within yourselves deliverance must be sought.'

In the Preface of his *The Light of Asia*, Sir Edwin Arnold wrote (p. ix):

'The Buddha of this poem—if, as need not be doubted, he really existed—was born on the borders of Nepaul about 620 B.C., and died about 543 B.C. at Kusinagara in Oudh. In point of age, therefore, most other creeds are youthful compared with this venerable religion, which has in it the eternity of a universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an indestructible element of faith in final good, and the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom.'

To-day the world is in the throes of violence and intolerance and human civilization is almost at the breaking point. The need to-day of universal love and infinite compassion taught by the Buddha is greater than it ever was, in human history. Let us, on this auspicious day pray to him, to give us spiritual strength, so that the human race may not perish in the abyss of ignorance and intolerance. Let us repeat the prayer which are daily repeated by millions of lips all over the world:

'I take refuge in the Buddha
I take refuge in the Doctrine
I take refuge in the Order.'

EXPANSION OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA AND ABROAD

BHIKSU J. KASHYAP, M.A.

Bhikṣu J. Kashyap is Professor of Pāli and Head of the Department, Sanskrit University, Banaras. Ordained as a Buddhist monk at the Vidyalankara Pirivena, Colombo, Ceylon, he visited important Buddhist centres of learning in China, Japan, Burma, and Thailand for studies in Buddhism. A distinguished philosopher and Buddhist scholar Bhikṣu Kashyap is the Editor of the Devanagari Edition of the Pāli Tripiṭaka *(in 40 vols.) published by the Government of India. The following is the text of a lecture he gave at the Institute in September 1963.*

JUST after getting the great enlightenment, the first concern of the Buddha was—'to whom should I preach this noble doctrine, so profound as it is'. He saw that the group of five monks staying then at Isipatan near Banaras were the fittest persons to receive the sermon. He, therefore, came to them and preached his first sermon, known as the *Dhammacakkapavattana-Sutta* or the Turning of the Wheel of Law. They became his disciples and followers. The Buddha stayed there for the rainy season and moved about preaching his doctrine to the people. His following swelled day by day. When their number reached sixty he addressed to them—'Oh monks, wander forth for the good of the many, for the welfare of the many—and preach the *dhamma*, glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle, and glorious in the end'. And he said, 'let two not go in the same direction'. He wished that they should go in sixty directions and propagate his teachings as widely as possible.

This was the spirit of propagation and expansion that was infused by the Teacher in the Saṅgha at this very stage. This spirit kept burning in the Saṅgha for all these twenty-five centuries, and as a result of it we see a significant portion of the human population are followers of the Buddha. It is very difficult to say what is the exact number of the Buddhists in the world. They say it is about thirty per cent of the population of the world. As far as the census is concerned, it is said that the number of the Buddhists stands at the top. However, I do not give much importance to the figures of the census as far as a particular religion is concerned. But, one cannot ignore that it is a very significant fact that the nations of so many countries are followers of the Buddha. Buddhism has been given the prestige of being recognized as the state religion of so many countries. It is very interesting indeed to see how this great religion was propagated widely in this country and abroad.

SPREAD OF THE DHARMA IN INDIA

From Banaras the Buddha came over to Rājagṛha, the then capital of the Empire of Magadha, to preach to the King Bimbisāra. On the way, near Gaya, he had a great controversy in *yogic* feats with the great teachers dwelling on the bank of the river Nirañjanā. They were converted and became his disciples and followers. The people of Rājagṛha got very much excited when they saw that those great *yogins* as disciples of the Buddha. The King Bimbisāra was

also converted. He offered to build a *vihāra*, a monastery for the Buddha, to which the Buddha gave his acceptance. It was the famous Veluvana Vihāra, which became the headquarters of the Buddha for a long time. Great disciples like Sāriputta and Moggallāna joined him at this monastery. It was customary for the Buddha to go on long tours followed by his disciples in great numbers. This was as if a mobile institution. They were taught to practise meditation and also to study religious literature. In the course of his tours from place to place, the Buddha delivered sermons to the people and admitted them to his religion. Crossing the river Ganges he visited the city of Vaiśālī, the capital of the Vajjis, who became his disciples and built beautiful monasteries for the accommodation of his followers. He travelled over to the country of the Mollas, the present Gorakhpur and Devaria districts and had admitted large number of people to his religion. In the North, he went as far as his own native land of the Śākyas, on the border of Nepal, in response to an invitation he had received from King Śuddhodana, his own father. There, his own kinsmen at once became his followers. In those days Śrāvasti was a very flourishing city, where he had a very rich disciple, her name was Viśākhā. Once, while the Buddha was delivering his sermon, she was returning from her father-in-law's residence. She had costly ornaments and jewelleries on her body. She thought that it would not be proper for her to approach the Buddha in that manner. She, therefore, took out all the jewelleries, tied them in a bundle with a piece of cloth and put it in one corner. Some monk removed it to a safer place. She thought that as it was touched by a monk, it would not be proper for her to take the jewelleries for her own use. She made a donation of it for the construction of a monastery for the Buddha in Kauśāmbī.

The Buddha had his disciples also in the royal palace of King Udayana. Thus, we find that even during the life-time of the Buddha, his *dhamma* had spread all over India between the Kośi in the East and Kuru in the West; the Himalayas in the North and the Vindhyas in the South.

There is a reference to some disciples coming over from distant places like Sūnāparanta, the district of Thana, or some places near Poona. Once a monk came to him from Supārā for listening to him. The Buddha never halted at one place for a long time. He always moved from place to place with his band of followers. Even at the age of eighty he set forth from Rājagṛha for Kuśinagara where he had his *mahāparinirvāṇa*. This is a very interesting story as to how his headquarters got shifted from Rājagṛha to Śrāvasti. A great merchant of Śrāvasti, Anāthapiṇḍika, once visited Rājagṛha to see his daughter who was married to a merchant of that city. He happened to attend a discourse of the Buddha and became his disciple. At his request the Buddha agreed to come and stay at Śrāvasti. The merchant, Anāthapiṇḍika, purchased a suitable plot of land from Prince Jeta at a fabulously high price and built a monastery for him. The Buddha saw that this new centre was more suitable to him and shifted his residence from Rājagṛha to Śrāvasti.

After the passing away of the Buddha, India was left with a large number of *bhikṣus* devoted to the practice and propagation of Buddhism in the country.

The Great Mission of Asoka

The Emperor Aśoka (277-236 B.C.) became a great patron of Buddhism. He called the Great Council of the representatives of the saints, the scholars, and the *bhikṣus* of the country to revise and prepare an authentic edition of the scripture, the Pāli Tripiṭaka. This Council was presided

over by the Elder Moggaliputta Tissa. After the conclusion of the Council, the King organized missions to be sent out for the propagation of Buddhism in distant parts of the country as also to countries abroad. The religious history of Buddhism gives us a list of the leaders of those missions, as follows :

1. Madhyama Tissa—to Kashmir and Afghanistan.
2. Mahādeva—to Mahiṣpura, a city, lying between Vindhyācala and the Sātpurā ranges.
3. Rakṣita—to Vanavasī—the district of Kanara, Bombay.
4. Dharmarakṣita—to Aparānta a tract of land extending from the river Narmadā to Bombay.
5. Mahā Dharmarakṣita—to Mahārāṣṭra.
6. Madhyama—to Himācala.
7. Soṇa and Uttara—to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, Burma.
8. Mahendra—to Tāmraparṇī Dvīpa, Ceylon.

All these missions met with a great success. As they had the patronage of the Emperor Aśoka, they were received warmly wherever they went. They succeeded in converting to Buddhism the neighbouring nations in Asia.

In Ceylon

The king of Ceylon was Devanāmapiya Tissa, a great friend of Aśoka. Though they had not met together, they had regular correspondence and exchange of messages. So, he thought it desirable to send his own son for the propagation of the *dhamma* in the island. Prince Mahendra, as a monk, accompanied by four others, came to Ceylon. His purpose in bringing them was evidently to confer the higher ordination on anyone who desired to get it.

The Pāli Chronicles record that the first meeting of Mahendra and Devanāmapiya Tissa, who was on a hunting expedition, took place at the Missaka Pabbata, on the fullmoon day of the month of Jaiṣṭha.

At the very first meeting, Mahendra put the King to an intelligence-test to ascertain if he was sharp enough to understand the deep teachings of the Buddha. He was satisfied, and preached to him the intricate and deep philosophical problems. The King became a convert and took refuge in the Triple Gem—the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha with his family, officials, and the entire subjects. The King built a monastery for him at a suitable place and gave all patronage for the propagation, practice, and dissemination of the religion.

Many persons offered to join the Saṅgha as *bhikṣus*. When, some ladies in the royal palace expressed their desire to take the ordination of *bhikṣuṇīs*, and as it is not permissible for a *bhikṣu* to give the ordination of *bhikṣuṇī*, Mahendra requested the King to invite his sister Bhikṣuṇī Saṅghamitrā from Pātaliputra. Accordingly, a befitting invitation was sent to her. Bhikṣuṇī Saṅghamitrā accepted the invitation and came over to Ceylon, carrying a sapling of the Bodhi-tree with her. The sapling was planted near Anurādhāpura with due honour and great functions and celebrations.

Both Mahendra and Bhikṣuṇī Saṅghamitrā spent their lives in Ceylon in the service of the Saṅgha and Buddhism was established in the island of Ceylon. All communication with the people of Ceylon offered but little obstruction to the work of the missionaries. If we compare the language of the Aśokan inscriptions in India with that of Ceylon in the third century B.C., we shall find that the two languages were almost similar. Though there were slight differences between the two, it was possible for the speaker in one language to follow without much difficulty the ideas expressed in the other.

Ceylon witnessed a great revival of

Buddhism in the first century A.D. It is in this period that the Pāli Tripiṭaka was committed to writing on palm leaves at Alu Vihāra, Matala. Upto this time these scriptures and most of their commentaries were handed down orally from generation to generation. It is due to this that this great literature is available to us in all genuine originality. In the beginning of the fourth century A.D. the tooth relics of the Buddha were sent from India for safe protection in the Dhamma Dvīpa. In the fifth century A.D. Ceylon was visited by the great commentator, Buddhaghoṣa from India. He wrote an excellent treatise on Yoga, on *viṣuddha-magga*.

Towards the end of the twelfth century A.D. the Buddhists of Ceylon had a remarkable period in their history. It was during this period that they had a famous warrior king named Parākramabāhu the Great. He brought about a harmony in the Buddhist Saṅgha by giving due recognition and eminence to the original teachings of the Buddha.

In the fifth century A.D. about nineteen *bhikṣuṇīs* of Ceylon, headed by Bhikṣuṇī Devasarā, went to China on an invitation of the Chinese emperor and established the Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha. It is still flourising in that country, though unfortunately it has been lost in Ceylon.

In the middle of the thirteenth century A.D. Ceylon had a Buddhist king named Parākramabāhu II, who was a believer of the God Viṣṇu. He encouraged worship of Hindu gods as well as the local gods. It became a general practice in Ceylon to construct a Hindu shrine attached to the main temple of the Buddha. The peculiarity of this was that they were not recognized as Hindu shrines, but were called Buddhist Devālayas. The famous Kataragama Temple is a Hindu shrine dedicated to Kārtikeya. This is a shrine as holy to the Buddhists as to the Hindus.

Under the patronage of the Government of Ceylon, a nice edition of the Pāli Tripiṭaka is being published side by side with the Sinhalese translation. For giving prestige and recognition to higher studies in Pāli, the Government was pleased to raise two of the Buddhist monasteries to the status of universities. These two Buddhist monastic universities are functioning in the capital city of Colombo.

Ceylon has been the preserver and leader of the Buddhist movement from the very beginning. With the present awakening of cultural consciousness in Asia, Ceylon has risen once more to her great responsibility in regard to her ancient cultural heritage.

In Burma

The Ceylon Chronicle, *Mahāvaṁsa*, records the name of Soṇa and Uttara as the two Elders who were sent to Suvaṇṇabhūmi for propagation of the religion. It is said that hundreds and thousands of men and women of Burma got ordained and began to practise Buddhism.

We are not quite sure whether the Burmese had any contact with Buddhism before this mission. There is, however, a story of two ancient merchants called Tapussa and Bhallika, who were said to have got some hair relics from the Buddha. These relics were enshrined in a pagoda in Rangoon. On the basis of this story the Burmese claim that they had received the message of the religion as early as the enlightenment of the Buddha. In Burma, at present, over ninety per cent of the population are Buddhists. Among them, nearly a hundred thousand are monks. Generally speaking, they are the leaders of the nation. Their strength lies in the villages where all the social, cultural, and religious activities are centred in the temple or the monastery.

The Burmese Buddhist scholars have specialized in mastering the philosophical

literature of early Buddhism, called the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. Sunday schools are held throughout the country where the children are taught Buddhism.

Towards the advancement of Buddhist scholarship, Burma has made great contributions. In A.D. 1853-78 the Burmese king Mendun organized the Grand Buddhist Council at Mandaley, in which about fourteen thousand monks took part. The revised edition of the entire Tripiṭaka was inscribed on seven hundred and twenty nine marble slabs and were kept nicely protected by the side of the hills of Mandaley.

During the last Buddha Jayanti, 2500 Anniversary of the Buddha, the Burmese Buddhists organized another large Buddhist Council called the Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana. They started it on the fullmoon day of Baiśākh 1954 and in two years they completed the editing of the entire Tripiṭaka. These volumes were printed on most modern printing machines and were made available to the readers.

Lately, Buddhism was made the state religion of Burma. The Government established an international organization called the Buddha Sāsana Council for the propagation and advancement of Buddhism throughout the world. In Burma there are various centres opened for the practise of Buddhist meditation, where they give great facilities even to the foreigners to come, reside, and get training under able guidance.

In Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam

To the East of Burma we have four countries extending one after another. Though in area and population they are small, they have their own political independence, own history, and own national language and outlook. It is believed that Buddhism was introduced in Thailand in the third century B.C. by the same Aśokan mission that was sent to Burma under the leadership of Soṇa and Uttara. It is even said that they had died in Thailand and their relics are preserved at some places. All these four countries are followers of the Theravāda form of Buddhism ; its scripture is the Pāli Tripiṭaka. It is very interesting to note that though these countries had on several occasions political disunion, as far as religion is concerned, they had been cordial and helpful to one another. When Buddhism got some set-back in one country, it was helped by the other to regain its tradition and stability. They had great cultural connection and friendship with Ceylon. Batches of pilgrims from these countries have been visiting India every year for pilgrimage.

In Thailand, according to the latest statistics, there are nineteen thousand one hundred and fifty temples and one lakh and sixty-two thousand monks. They are all under the strict discipline of a head called Saṅgharāja. To give special respect to the Saṅgha, a *bhikṣu* is not tried for any offence by the court of the Government. But their cases are referred to the Saṅgha, and it is the Saṅgha which conducts the trial. The practice in the country is that everyone must get ordained as a monk at least for a limited period of time. Even the prince has to live in a monastery for some time as a monk and has to go out begging alms from the people ; so much so, that the prince is not coronated unless he has lived as a monk.

It is interesting to note that the *Rāmāyaṇa* has a national prestige in Thailand. In the royal temple at Bangkok, there are fresco paintings depicting the entire story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Every year *Rāma-līlā* was played with great enthusiasm, in which even the members of the royal family took enthusiastic part. In A.D. 1361 there was a powerful king in Thailand, who was a great patron of Buddhism. He sent some

learned *bhikṣus* and scholars to Ceylon for studies in Pāli Buddhism.

The archaeological finds in Cambodia prove that the Brāhmaṇical religion of Śaivism flourished for some time. Jayavarman (seventh-twelfth century A.D.) was a great patron of Buddhism. He left inscriptions in Sanskrit expressing his devotion to Buddhism.

Vietnam is known is Sanskrit as Campā. Buddhism had obtained a footing in the country before the third century A.D. We learn from the Chinese Chronicles that when the Chinese captured the capital city of Campā in A.D. 605, they carried away one thousand three hundred and fifty Buddhist works. From this important statement it can be inferred that Buddhism must have flourished in the country for a considerable period before the seventh century A.D. As this country is very close to China, it had also been greatly under the influence of the Mahāyāna form of Buddhism.

In China

During the first century A.D., Emperor Han Ming-te sent an embassy to India to bring Buddhism to his country, which managed to get two Mahāyāna Buddhist monks named Kāśyapa Mātaṅga and Dharmarakṣa along with many Sanskrit Buddhist texts and images. The Emperor built a special temple for them called the White Horse monastery. He also arranged for the translation of Buddhist texts into Chinese language.

Towards the middle of the second century A.D. a great Indian monk called Lokagra went to China for propagation, and translated several important Buddhist texts into Chinese language. In A.D. 250 a regular Council was organized by the Monk Dharmarakṣa. In the first quarter of the fifth century a band of *bhikṣuṇīs* went from Ceylon to China and established the Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha.

The famous Buddhist traveller and pilgrim Fa-Hien came to India and Ceylon early in the fifth century A.D. and took a great collection of Buddhist texts. He took an Indian scholar named Kumārajīva to China, who later became a great writer in Chinese language. From the accounts of Fa-Hien we learn that Buddhism was in a flourishing condition in Central Asia, Bhutan, and Afghanistan. The mission of Fa-Hien was greatly supplemented by the great scholar and saint Bhikṣu Hiuen Tsang who came to India at a later date.

The Buddhist activities in China kept close contact with the famous Buddhist university at Nālandā. The history of Nālandā reveals that there had been a regular exchange of students, professors, and books between Nālandā and the Buddhist institutions in China.

Today there are over five lakhs monks and nuns in China.

In Korea and Japan

It is admitted that China was responsible for introducing Buddhism in Korea. This took place during the fourth century A.D. At that time the country was divided into three parts called Simlo, Ko, and Pikin. It was the king of Simlo who first embraced Buddhism with his subjects. He made Buddhism the state religion in his State. After a short time the other two parts of the country also followed the lead given by the king of Simlo.

Korean Buddhists went to China for further studies in religion. Some Buddhist monks from Korea went even to the famous Buddhist university of Nālandā for studies.

The most glorious period of Buddhism in Korea (A.D. 593) began with Prince Shotoku, who was a grandson of the Japanese emperor of the time. He started movements to build temples and to organize Buddhist activities in Korea.

It is very interesting to note that amongst all the Buddhist countries it is Japan that is most active and alive to the religion. The city of Kyoto in Japan is just the same as Vārāṇasī in India. It is a town of temples and Buddhist institutions. There are many sects of Buddhism in Japan, and they have big Buddhist universities all over the country.

In Tibet

Buddhism spread all over Asia in about a thousand years after the passing away of the Buddha but it took a little time more to reach Tibet. Although it is adjacent to Nepal, the land of birth of the Buddha, the Tibetans were not in a position to receive the blessings of Buddhism until the seventh century A.D.

The king of Tibet, Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po, came to know of Buddhism after his marriage with a daughter of a Chinese Buddhist emperor. It is said that he also married another Nepali Buddhist princess named Bhrūkuṭi. Thus, it appears that there were two queens to assist the King in bringing Buddhism to Tibet. The King invited several Buddhist Pundits from India and made them translate all the Buddhist texts in a very systematic way. Before the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet there was a widespread cult called Bon (Phön). The believers of this cult were known as Bonpās. Thus, the form of Buddhism that developed in Tibet was very much influenced by this cult. Dalai Lama is believed to be the incarnation of Avalokiteśvara and Tasi Lama is the incarnation of Amitābha. In Tibet, cent per cent of the population are Buddhists.

In Nepal

Nepal is the birth-place of the Buddha. There are two communities in Nepal—Newars and Gurkhas. Newars are mostly Buddhist. It is said that Emperor Aśoka paid a visit to this country in 239 B.C. with his daughter Cārumitrā and gave her away in marriage to a Newar chief. He built five Buddhist monasteries in this country, out of which one is still existing at Aśokapatam. Nepal had a golden period of Buddhism from the third century A.D. to the eleventh century A.D. Even now more than half of the population of Nepal are Buddhists.

VISUDDHA-VEDANTA-PARIBHASA. By Swami Sachchidanandendra Saraswati. Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarsipur. 1969. 16 + 132 pp. Rs. 2.00.

In the present manual on Advaita Vedānta, the author has arranged topic-wise the ideas of Śaṅkara, which are scattered all over his extensive commentaries on the Prasthāna-trayas, and explained them in lucid Sanskrit. The numerous quotations from Śaṅkara have made the work useful as a handy reference book.

It goes without saying that to understand Advaita Vedānta, one must not rest content on going through the so-called 'made-easies' which, though very popular, can hardly be expected to give us a real insight into the actual terms, concepts, and methodology of Advaita Vedānta. This book is therefore undoubtedly a move in the right direction, as it familiarizes the student with the original statements of Śaṅkara, which process is essential for a proper understanding of Advaita Vedānta.

It is quite natural that all the expositions of the author may not be acceptable to all scholars; but that does not detract from the value of the book. For, 'it is the clash of thought, the differentiation of thought, that awakes thought'.

The author seems to have followed the well-known *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* of Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra in arranging the topics on Tat-padārtha-viveka (Topic No. 15) and Tvaṁ-padārtha-viveka (Topic No. 16). We, however, feel that it would have been more appropriate if the arrangement were reversed just as we have in Śaṅkara's *Vākya-vṛtti*, which method is suggested by Śaṅkara in his *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* also (*vide* Ch. XVIII, *ślokas* 181, 195, 222-223).

We heartily recommended this book to all lovers of Advaita Vedānta, both beginners and advanced students.

SWAMI DHYANANANDA

COLLECTED WORKS OF K. A. KRISHNASWAMY IYER. Adhyatma Prakash Karyalaya, Holenarsipur. 1969. 320+8 pp. Rs. 6.00.

This book is a collection of the miscellaneous writings, almost all on Vedānta, of late K. A. Krishnaswamy Iyer, the celebrated author of *Vedānta or the Science of Reality*. Included in this collection are two very long poems and two much shorter ones, and the rest are in prose. The article on the 'Philosophy of Advaita' is a reprint from the *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. III. These writings cover a period of near about four decades of the author's life, and as such, it is natural to find in them the thoughts of a developing mind. It is interesting to note that the author himself cancelled the last page of his note-book dealing with the 'Value of one's own experience as opposed to others' opinions' (*vide* p. 77) as his ideas on the values of mysticism and Vedāntic reason were completely changed in course of time vide the concluding portion of the 'Philosophy of Advaita' (p. 314), written some thirty-six years later. Since the author's ideas were in the process of development, it will not be proper to comment here on any of these miscellaneous writings.

The publishers have done a commendable work in bringing out this handy volume to preserve the minor works of an out-and-out Advaitist, and, we are sure, it will be of good use to all lovers of Advaita Vedānta in general and to the admirers of late K. A. Krishnaswamy Iyer in particular.

SWAMI DHYANANANDA

Special Lectures

On Friday, 14 February 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Dr. Theodor Bergmann, Ph.D., Lecturer in Agricultural Economics, Institute of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, University of Stuttgart, Germay, gave a special lecture on 'Present and Future Development in Indian Agriculture'. Sri Rakhal Datta, M.A., Reader in Economics, University of Calcutta, presided.

'Continuity and Change in Indian History' was the theme of a special lecture given by Dr. A. L. Basham, B.A., Ph.D., F.R.A.S., Professor of History of South Asia, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, on Thursday, 27 February 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. D. C. Sircar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., F.R.A.S., presided.

Dr. (Mrs.) Gisela Bonn, Ph.D., author and journalist from West Germany, gave a special lecture on 'Indo-German Relations: Past and Present' on Thursday, 27 March 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., presided.

Earlier in 1964, Dr. (Mrs.) Bonn visited the Institute in connection with the production of her television documentary film 'On India'.

'Samkhya-Yoga Philosophy' was the theme of a special lecture given in Bengali by Dr. Ramsankar Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of Research Affairs, Banaras Sanskrit University, on Monday, 7 April 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. Nagendra Narayan Chaudhury, M.A., Ph.D., presided.

Professor Kurt R. Stehling, Visiting Professor in Spacecraft, Oceanography, and Marine Technology at the Catholic University in Washington D.C., gave a series of two special lectures on 'Space and You' on Thursday, 24 and Friday, 25 April 1969, at 6.30 p.m. The first lecture dealing with the technical aspect of the subject was designed especially for the experts and science students; while the second was a popular lecture for the general public. Mr. Robert J. Boylan, Cultural Affairs Officer, U.S.I.S., Calcutta, presided.

An exhibition of spacecraft entitled 'Space and You' was especially organized on the occasion. The exhibition, jointly sponsored by the Institute and the U.S.I.S., Calcutta, lasted for six days from Monday, 21 April 1969 to Saturday, 26 April 1969 and remained open to the public from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., daily.

Film Shows

The following films were screened for the public in the Vivekananda Hall on the dates noted below:

(i) 8 April 1969: 'Bau-thākurāṇīr Hāt' (Based on the life of Rājā Pratāpāditya) in Bengali.

(ii) 22 April 1969: 'Bābla' in Bengali.

(iii) 29 April 1969: 'Mahākabi Girishchandra' in Bengali.

(iv) 27 May 1969: 'Arghya' (Based on four famous poems of Rabindranath: i. Pūjāriṇī; ii. Abhisār; iii. Purātan Bhṛtya; iv. Dui Bighā Jami) in Bengali.

(v) 17 June 1969: 'Nabin Jātrā' in Bengali.

(vi) 24 June 1969: 'Mīrā' (Based on the life of famous princess —devotee Mīrābāi) in Hindi.

Birthday Celebration of Sri Ramakrishna

Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was celebrated in a solemn function in the Institute's

Vivekananda Hall on Saturday, 22 February 1969, at 6.30 p.m. A beautiful portrait of Sri Ramakrishna, mounted on a raised dais especially made for the occasion, commanded the scene.

The day's function commenced with the recitation of Vedic hymns by Pandit Srijiva Nyayatirtha, M.A., which was followed by a talk in Bengali on 'Paramapurusa Sri Ramakrishna' by Sri Achintya Kumar Sengupta, M.A., LL.B. The programme concluded with devotional songs sung by Sri Panchanan Mukhopadhyaya.

Later, on Friday, 7 March 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Sri Dilip Kumar Roy (musician-devotee), presented an exclusive programme of devotional songs (*bhajan*) in praise of Sri Ramakrishna.

The programme was especially organized to mark the closing ceremony of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday.

Extension Lectures : Vivekananda Centenary Lectures (1969)

The Institute, in collaboration with the University of Calcutta, organized a series of five lectures entitled 'Vivekananda Centenary Lectures (1969)'. Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B., I.A.A.S. (Retired), gave these lectures on 'Interpretation of Vedānta as a Social Force in the Nineteenth Century'.

The inaugural lecture of the series was delivered on Tuesday, 14 January 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil., Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, presided.

The four remaining lectures were held on Mondays, 3 and 10 February, Monday, 10 March, and Wednesday, 2 April 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

The presidents for these four lectures were Dr. Saroj Kumar Das, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D., Sri Bhupati Majumdar, and Dr. S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D., Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, respectively.

School of Language

The 1969-70 session of the Institute's School of Languages commences on 1 July 1969. 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.

Duration of Courses: The normal duration of a complete course is two years, the first year leading to the Certificate and the second year to the Diploma examinations. There is also a third year Degree Course for Russian language. The duration of German Rapid Course, Hindi (Prarambhik and Pravesh), and Spoken English courses extend over a period of six months (two sessions in each academic year).

Class Hours: The School functions in the evening from 5.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. every day, excepting Sundays and Institute holidays. Each group of students has two one-hour lessons a week (German Diploma and French languages, however, has 3 and 4 hour lessons, respectively).

Method of Instruction: The school follows the Direct Method in teaching German and French languages ; Hindi through Bengali and other languages through English medium.

Certificates: After completion of a full course the students are required to sit for an examination (written and oral). Certificates of proficiency are issued to successful candidates.

Age Level: Intending participants of the School should not be below the age of sixteen years.

Qualifications: The minimum qualifications of an intending participant in the

School should be of School Final or Higher Secondary standard.

Fees: The fees for the various 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 (except Hindi).

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 is Rs. 15. Tuition fee for the French Certificate, Russian Degree, and German Rapid courses is Rs. 15.

Tuition fees should be paid in advance and not later than the 10th of each month for which it is due. Fees are payable for whole session, including vacation periods.

School of Sanskritic Studies

The 1969-70 session of the Institute's School of Sanskritic Studies commences in July 1969. 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, Sāṁkhya and Yoga, Vedānta, and Sanskrit literature.

The advanced Class of the School provides specialized and intensive studies in the following subjects: Vedānta, Sāṁkhya, 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.

School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies

The 1969-70 session of the Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies will commence in August 1969. The details of the courses will be announced in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

JULY CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st July

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th July

THE MUNDAKA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

5th, 12th, and 26th July

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(*Children below six years are not allowed*)

GITI-ALEKHYA

Bharat-Kandari Rabindranath

by

Geeti Manjari

Tuesday, 8 July, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

FILM SHOWS

Pather Panchali

Tuesday, 15 July, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

Aparajita

Tuesday, 29 July, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

In Aid of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama,

Narendrapur

The Junior Students of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama,

Narendrapur

presents

BHAKTER DAK

(Yatra)

Saturday, 19 July, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00, Rs. 2.00, Rs. 3.00, and Rs. 5.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR JULY 1969

Bankim Galpa Āsar

First Saturday, 5 July at 4.45 p.m., for Juniors (6-9 age-group)

Last Saturday, 26 July 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

July 2 **Yoga Psychology and Psycho-analysis**

Speaker: J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

President: J. N. Mahanti, M.A., Dr.Phil.

July 16 **Modern Bengali Aesthetics**

Speaker: S. K. Nandi, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil.

President: Haraprasad Mitra, M.A., D.Phil.

July 23 **National Education and Swami Vivekananda**

Speaker: Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.

President: Swami Lokeswarananda

July 30 **Contemporary Philosophical Psychology (Lec. No. II)**

Speaker: Pritibhusan Chatterji, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil.

President: Sailaja Kumar Bhattacharya, M.A., D.Phil.

KALIDASA JAYANTI

Programme :

Readings from Kalidasa

by

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

Talk On :

Kalidasa : A Poet and Philosopher

by

Sitanath Goswami, M.A., D.Phil.

Wednesday, 9 July, at 6.30 p.m.

BULLETIN
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EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

J. N. MALLIK, M.A., LL.B.

A distinguished jurist and educationist, Sri J. N. Mallik was Member-Secretary, State Law Commission, West Bengal, President, Calcutta Improvement Trust Tribunal, and till recently President, West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. His published works include: Law of Limitation, Law of Obscenity in India, *and* Law of Workmen's Compensation. *The lecture reproduced below was given by Sri Mallik at the Institute in May 1968.*

EDUCATIONAL ideas of Rabindranath, in a nutshell, is the result of the sad memory of his own school days. The cruelly dismal look of the class rooms, the 'cane incarnate' teacher, and the dull 'parrot-learning' method of teaching weighed heavily on the Poet's mind. Later, in *My School* (Pamphlet No. 1, Visva-Bharati), he expressed the unpleasant experiences of his childhood in bitter terms: 'Though I did not have to serve the penal full term which men of my position have to undergo to find their entrance into cultured society, I am glad that I did not altogether escape from its molestation. For, it has given me knowledge of the wrong from which the children of men suffer. The cause of it is this, that man's intention is going against God's intention as to how children should grow into knowledge'.

Speaking about his early school days, the Poet vividly describes in beautiful verses the mental inertia of the child:

Pāṭhśāla hāi tole
Matilāl Nandi,
Bale, pāth agoy nā
Jata kena man di.
Śeṣkāle ekdin
Gela caḍi ṭaṅgāy
Pātāgulo chinḍe chinḍe

Bhāṣālo mā Gaṅgāy.
Samās egiye gela
Bheṣe gelo sandhi
Pāṭh egobār tare
Ei tār phandi.

'In the class yawns
Matilal Nandi.
He says, his lessons do not progress
However attentive, he be;
At last, in desperation
he one day hires a post chaise
And reaches the river bank,
There he tears all the pages
and throws them into the river Ganges.
Thus floats away
all the conjunctions
nouns, prepositions
adjectives and adverbs,
This was his best way
for learning grammar.'

It speaks of the boy's reaction against the textbook, the method of teaching, and the uninteresting task:

Iskule jāy
Pakeṭe niye kāṭhbiḍāli.
Ekdin ekṭā hele sāp
Rākhle māṣṭārer deske
Bhāble, dekhi-i nā ki karen māṣṭār maśāy.

'He goes to School
with a squirrel in his pocket.
One day he puts a lean serpent
in the teacher's desk
to see his reaction.'

Here the boy did not understand his teacher and the teacher did not understand his ward. The boy protested against the dull routine of a school life which was not related to his life or liking and was away from living Nature:

Ambike māṣṭār
Āmār kāche duḥkha kare gela
Śiśupāṭhe āpnār lekha kabitāgulo
Paḍte or man lāge nā kichute-i
emon niret buddhi.
Āmi ballum se truṭi āmār-i
Thākto or nijer jagater kabi
Tā hale gubre pokā
Eta spaṣṭa hata tār chande
O chāḍte pārta nā.

'The teacher Ambica
one day came to me
and complained that my poems
are Greek to him.
He likes not to read them
Such a dull headed he was.
I told him the fault was mine
If he could have a poet belonging to his own world
Then even a chirping insect
Could be a distinct theme to him
whose rhyme and rhythm he could not forget.'

It brings out the sad effect of divorcement of the content of education from the child's realities of life.

Tagore's Scheme of Education

I have begun with some of the verses of Rabindranath which are strewn with his educational ideas with a freshness and a smile that compel more than pompous writings of educationists. Rabindranath wrote about one hundred and thirty articles on education spreading over nearly eighteen hundred pages. But he did not propound any educational theories like Plato or Rousseau, Hegel or Hume, Froebel or Locke, Dewey or Pestalozzi. Yet in his educational ideas, there are traces of Rousseau's belief in back to Nature, Froebel's playway of the kindergarten, Dewey's laboratory school, and Pestalozzi's mingling of craft and social service, with idealism and activity. His scheme of education aimed at the education of the whole man and so no aspect of the human personality was neglected and he achieved a synthesis not only in his philosophy of life

but also in his ideas of education between the physical, intellectual, spiritual, moral, and aesthetic needs of the human personality. He did not proceed from doctrines to life but from life to the doctrines, from man to his education.

The Ashrama School

About the starting of his Āśrama School at Santiniketan, he said that it was courageously new, being the product of daring inexperience; it owed its origin not to any theory of education but the memory of his own school days. He started it when he had crossed the age of forty. The institution grew out of his own experience, his urge as an artist and poet to reconstruct man and to reconstruct the nation. The child was to be allowed to grow freely. The nation was to be freed from bondage of ignorance, political, social, and spiritual bondage. He first determined the objective of education and then formulated what education was to be imparted and how it was to be imparted.

Tagore's Early Education

To appreciate his educational ideas, it is necessary, therefore, to know the background of his own school-days. In his *Jīvan Smṛti* (*Reminiscences*) he speaks about his terrible experiences in the schools of those days. Attending the school, he felt as if he had been put in a box. With its walls it looked cruel. The walls were like guards. There were no pictures, no adornments, no colour to attract children. Likings of children were ruthlessly ignored. There was utter injustice, intolerance, anger, and partiality. These has such a debasing effect that by way of relaxation from the indignities inflicted there, he started a class of his own, where the wooden railings were his students and he thrashed them to escape from his own feelings of frustation. Everything was mechanical including the singing in school. Teachers were abusive, children were beaten, classmates were vulgar. The whole atmosphere was repelling to him. His relation with the school was thus one of escape. He fled to Nature out of the cage. He speaks of his beginning of education in Nature. Nature as his teacher awakened his sense of wonder in the universe. Again and again he described in his poems in later life his sad experiences in the schools and how he played a truant:

Prāimārī iskule
Prāy jārā paṇḍit
Sab kāj phele rekhe
Chele kare daṇḍit.

'In primary Schools
the teachers there be
their first object is
to inflict corporal punishment to thee.'

More poignantly he writes in *Ākāśpradīp*:

Māṣṭārī śāsan durge sindh kālā chele
Klāśer kartabya phele
Jāninā ki ṭāne
Chuṭitām andarer upekṣita nirjan bāgāne.

Je paraś labhitām
Janinā tāhār kono nām;
Hayto se ādim prāṇer
Ātithy dāner
Niḥśabda āhabān,
Je pratham prāṇ
Eki beg jāgāiche gopan sañcāre
Rasa-rakta dhāre
Mānabśirāy ār tarur tantute,
Eki spandaner chanda ubhayer anute anute.

'From the ramparts of the School discipline
who had fled away from these forts
and burrowed out—I could still appreciate
what made me ruin into the deserted quiet
family garden.
The touch I would feel there,
I could not assess its value

It may be the silent call of the hospitality
of the original life,
That first vital spark

which gives motive power to
every nerve cell and blood corpuscle,
the same pulsation of ebb and flow
which flows in plant and in Man.'

Writing on Visva-Bharati, he writes :

'I am always a truant from my childhood. I have always avoided the teacher out of fear. I had learnt at the feet of those unseen teachers, who in this world, invisibly teach the lessons.'

Failure of English Education

Rabindranath not only observed the uncongeneal atmosphere in the schools, he also observed the sad condition of education in the country. He found the growth of a new educated class who had no identification with the masses. He saw the failure of the filtration theory of the English system of education. Education did not percolate from the top to the people at the bottom. They remained ignorant and dumb. The movement which had begun in 1844 with Lord Hardinge's plan to recruit Government Officers from students passing out of Government Schools and the growing emphasis on higher education in Law, Medicine, and Engineering which began after Wood's Despatch of 1854 quickly brought in a bouleversement of values and education became a passport to breadwinning under the foreign government ruling over the illiterate masses. On the one hand there were the toiling masses decaying in education—on the otherhand an educated class waxing like a parasite. Rabindranath found education as something abstract unconnected with the common social life, a mere tool for getting jobs—of being a clerk, a pleader, a Deputy Magistrate or a Munsif. He realized that education was to reach the common man. Man was to be freed. Education was to be freed of unreality and dependence of the West. It was to be attuned to concrete living. It was to be national and universal. Man was to be brought in tune with the Infinite and his fellowmen.

Tagore's Philosophy of Education

Rabindranath's ideas of education were experience-based and so his institution was not wedded to any doctrine. His ideals changed like 'a ripening fruit' as he says. He went on building system after system and then pulled them down. He had to realize the truth of life before he could say that education was to impart and unfold that truth. His ideas of education were integrated with his philosophy of life. The object of education was to give man the unity of truth—the essential unity among diversities. It was to give man the unity of knowledge and being. Man was to be brought up in harmony with himself and the universe.

Rabindranath believed that the only means of making the weak strong was education. Everything—food, health, production depended on it. Barren law and order could not sustain. That can never be the foundation of education. He was overjoyed to see the achievements in Russia in the matter of mass education. He saw the fulfilment of his dreams about love and action being the two primary steps in education. He saw whole of Russia awakening and striving. New avenues of hope had opened. Life was in flowingtide. Courage of the intellect and identification with the masses had achieved the wondrous results within a short period. He wanted education not only to be national but also nation-making as Nivedita puts it. Feeling for others was to be the keynote.

Tagore's Aim of Education

Education must achieve social efficiency. Rabindranath wanted education to be intended for man-making and not job-hunting. He connected education with the flow of life in society. It was not hothouse education but education in social environment and connected with concrete living. It was to reach those regions where cultivation was going on and the potter's wheel was rotating. The study of Economics, Agriculture, Health was to be integrated with the social life. He remembered that in ancient India, students were brought up not in the academic atmosphere of scholarship and learning only but in the atmosphere of living aspirations. The students took cattle to the pasture, collected firewood, gathered fruits, cultivated kindness to all creatures and grew in their spirit with their own teachers' spiritual growth. Education cannot be divorced from social realities. It does not consist in aping the processes of some foreign countries. It is for achieving closer contact with the neighbouring villages and the economic and social life there that he started Śikṣāsatra with a few village boys which subsequently developed into Sriniketan side by side with the Āśrama School. The village students were to be literate and trained in crafts and local industries.

Craft was to be a part of education not for its economic significance alone but also for its social and artistic significance. Not only it saves education from abstractness and inculcates a sense of social utility and responsibility, but it also develops the creative faculties and connects artistic activity and scientific knowledge with social usefulness. Knowledge without the joy of creation and application is dry, unappealing, and useless. Training in crafts and arts feeds the creative instinct and kindles the spirit of freedom and joy. Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath accepted it as a part of liberal education because it helped the growth of social efficiency and the full development of the human personality.

He wanted all students to know the facts of life, to know death and decay, the ever-recurring cycles of life and death. They were to tread the solid earth without soaring in realms of abstract learning. They were to be adjusted in body and mind to actual life. They were to know others, co-operate with others, and love others, so that after some years of schooling, they might not be misfits and egoists with an inflated sense of the intellect, mentally and physically tired for any useful social activity and unable to protect themselves with all their sense of a self-made world based on bookish knowledge.

Rabindranath might be an escapist from his school but was never an escapist from life. He lived in no ivory tower. With all his adoration for India's *tapovana*, he was not a pastist. With all his love for the life of crafts and life of the spirit, he was no ritualist. With all his love of knowledge, he was not lost in academicism. He substituted love and faith in place of cynicism and suspicion. He gave self-reliance and self-respect in place of dependence and slavery. He widened the horizons of knowledge. He made knowledge universal and not parochial. He did not discard the West. In education he combined the achievements of western science with the spiritualism of India. Matter was to be conquered and utilized for the human good. But, the human good was to have its mooring not in individual and chauvinistic aggrandizement but in the expansion of the self in universal good and universal consciousness.

Aim of education is often forgotten in building up the educational system. The aim is the fullest development of the human personality and achievement of social

efficiency. Rabindranath like the great thinkers of India wanted to relate the individual to the greatest source of love, life, and action, which is behind all creation. Education means the unfolding of the divine essence in man, the awakening of the soul and the consciousness. It is what Swami Vivekananda called the manifestation of perfection already in man. The educated man is a religious man—religion being the consciousness of the highest social virtues objectively and subjectively the consciousness of personal relationship of man with the Infinite. It is the true centre of gravity and this can be attained during our childhood by daily living in a place where the truth of the spiritual world is not obscured by a crowd of artificial necessities and where men live with a perfect faith in the eternal life.

In real man-making which is the aim of education, the human personality must be taken as a whole. Emphasis on economic or physical life should not neglect the aesthetic life. The individual is to be brought up in harmony with Nature and society. The aim of education is realization of unity, harmony, and peace through knowledge and experience. The solution of the relation between individual and society lies in the spiritual realization of unity with all creation and in social action and service with an unshaken faith in all human endeavours to make this world appetising, to improve the human conditions and to make this world worth living. He found the origin and essentials of education like Dewey in man's urge for communication with others, his interest in his environment, his creative faculty and urge for self-expression. Love and action—creativity and usefulness are the pillars of his educational system.

Mother-tongue: Best Medium of Education

Rabindranath observed how English as medium of instruction had deprived the masses from knowledge and intellectual enjoyment, how it repelled the children and how it created an artificial educated class. Mother-tongue was the best medium of education. But, he never rejected the English language. English was to give us facts, informations. But, just as Nature was to awaken the subconscious self into joy and freedom of self-expression and self-reliance, the inner life was to be awakened by the study of Sanskrit. The Indian mind was to be found there. Sanskrit was to open up the mental horizons, lend peace, dignity, and unity in the development of the personality. It was to give colour and life to the facts gathered through the English language. West was to help living. East was to give the meaning of life.

Tagore's Contributions to Child Education

Rabindranath's greatest contribution is his educational ideas about children.

(i) He wanted them to be brought up in an atmosphere of joy, freedom, and love. He laid great emphasis on the awakening of the creative aspirations of the subconscious mind of the children by coming in touch with Nature. Moral advice or textbooks did not mean much to children and were of little use. Children were to learn directly from things and persons. He wanted children to know the life as it flows in Nature. The life of a growing child was to be in touch with the life in Nature. He knew how Nature awakened the impulses, how Nature made the mind and body alert, how Nature unfolded the mysteries of Creation, the recurrence of life and death.

(ii) Rabindranath wanted privation in child's education. He wanted a child to know the struggle for life, the efforts of man to bring order out of chaos. A child might learn cooking, washing, and plucking fruits. He was to know his needs and solve them. The hardness of life was a good training ground. The rich were not to clothe their children with riches. In the enjoyment of a child, there is little difference between a poorman's child and a richman's child.

(iii) Rabindranath wanted to inculcate a spirit of belonging in the child's mind, a spirit of acceptance, of animation, of togetherness so that there might be no existentialist anguish of being lonely and unloved when grown up. The scope of free self-expression gives an opportunity for full development of the personality. The universalization of personality which is the meaning of full development requires a proper natural environment, a proper social environment, a proper atmosphere in the school during the formative periods of early life of a child. For transcending limitations of the little self, what is required is the ideal and reality of a greater life in front.

(iv) Education was to be a mission and a *vrata* (vow). It demanded fearlessness and doubtless pursuit of Truth. It demanded heroic action and selflessness.

(v) Rabindranath emphasized the value of a teacher in the educational system, almost like the *guru* (preceptor) in the forest sanctuaries of ancient India. Besides other aspects of service and learning under the personal care of the *guru*, there is one point of great importance which should not be missed by modern educationists. Rabindranath did not subscribe to the view that the children must be taught those things only which can be understood by children. While speaking of Satish Chandra Roy, he says that Satish Chandra could read Shakespeare and Browning before the children of the Āśrama School, he had never a feeling of distrust for the boy's capacity of understanding, he could talk and write to them about whatever might be the subjects in which he himself was interested. He knew that it was not at all necessary for the boys to understand literally and accurately but their minds were to be roused. Educational psychologists speak about the receptive mass in a child's mind. This is how interests in a child's mind are broadened and multiplied and deepened. It awakens the desire to know more later on. It kindles aspirations. It makes difficult subjects easy by creating ideas of familiarity with them beforehand. It turns the child's mind from job-hunting to treasure-hunting. J. B. Priestley also in *Margin Released* refers to one of his teachers with thankfulness and respect. Richard Pendlebury, he says, loved good writing and he knew how to communicate and share that love with his young students in the school. He was no Doctor of Philosophy for a thesis on the use of semi-colon in the later works of George Eliot but he wielded greater influence on Priestley than all the professors and teachers he heard later in Cambridge. It is the teacher's job to awaken interest in life and ideas, in matters which might be subjects for advanced study later on. It is unwise to confine the children's interest only to what is prescribed in a syllabus cut out according to the artificial standards of the intelligence of an average child at the age of ten or twelve.

(vi) In the beginning, he did not like children to learn according to any fixed syllabus or curriculum. He had thought of a student-centred education. He opened classes in music only when students demanded classes in music knowing something of singing beforehand. But he had to reject it later on.

(vii) He wanted the children to be loved, so that they might love in turn. There was no distinction of caste or creed in his school. The world was one. Student's interests in social life were kindled first by acquainting them with the life of men in the neighbouring villages. He wanted identification with others, beyond the class-room, so that later on there might not grow an educated class as distinguished from the labouring class, quite ignorant of the social environment and indifferent to fellowmen.

(viii) About the spirit of discipline among children, Rabindranath did not trouble much. He knew that lapses of children were not to be determined by standards of adults. He banished with difficulty the practice of inflicting corporal punishment on children. He knew that the spirit of co-operation and captaincy would enforce discipline from within. Further, he never expected and never wanted others to expect that a child would be a readymade man with a correct moustache from the beginning. He knew that children were moving and moving towards full development. It is movement that purifies :

Pavitra sadāi
Tumi tāi
'So you are
Always pure'

He addresses thus the flowing river in *Balākā*. He encouraged artistic and creative activity in preference to playing with mechanic or geometric toys. One who creates rarely hates or destroys. Creation of beauteous forms, acquaintance with measures of a dance or a song nourish a sense of discipline amidst freedom which can shape life to useful, good, and beautiful actions. This is the secret of discipline among students—to nourish their initiative and creativity, to foster artistic sensibilities and team work.

Conclusion

These are some of the educational ideas of Rabindranath. Rabindranath realized even in his life time that he had not the power to spread the education which he had envisaged. He regretted that there was no support for it anywhere in the country (*er samarthan chila nā deśer kothā-o*). He did not give up his convictions. He saw the growth of Visva-Bharati. He could not stem the enthusiasm for the traditional examinations, although he had wanted to depend more on class-records and opinion of teachers. And after his death, most of his ideas nurtured in sylvan surroundings appear to have been smothered under the dead weight of brick and concrete which adorn the University campus. A poet thus describes where once the Poet's School was born :

Sei prāntarer abaśeṣ āj abahelita, anādṛta.
Ātmā hāriye geche kṣudra beṣṭanīr
sīmār madhye.

'The last link of that limitless prairie is almost vanished, ignored. It has lost itself in the limit it has drawn up round its environment.'

It is true that there were some inherent defects. It is easier to say what education is than to educate a child. The teacher student relationship as he desired became irrelevant in view of student explosion to such numbers, which he had not dreamt of even, while speaking of mass education. What he advised was suited for a small class but a small class will not meet the needs of the hour. His idea about education according to the needs of a particular student can not be realized, because of the number of students that are to be educated in the country.

Rabindranath did not develop fully his ideas about higher education. He had been busy with his experiments in schools. But,

Visva-Bharati grew up as an all-India or all-World University, where he had to give up much of his ideas of teaching children in a small compass in a modern *tapovana.* He had not developed his ideas about a teaching University. So, at one stage, he declared that the aim of the University is not imparting education but producing knowledge (*viśvavidyālayer mūkhya kāj vidyā utpādan; tār gauna kāj sei vidyā dān karā*).

Rabindranath had no political party to take up his programme of school education. Mahatma Gandhi was more fortunate, although his ideas also have been greatly diluted now in practice. In our country, ideas have failed in action not so much for their inherent defects, as for the absence of a determined body of workers to apply them in practice. Those who admired Rabindranath and his institutions had other lives to live and were not so convinced about his teachings as to stick to them steadfastly for spreading them. Their social conditions subjected them to other forces.

Educational ideas of Swami Vivekananda have come to greater fruition in India through the devotion of a band of selfless workers with full faith in him and in the students to fulfil their master's wishes and vision. Rabindranath had no such advantage. It may, however, be asserted without hesitation that some of his fundamental ideas about education cannot be ignored in any pattern of education that may be evolved in this country.

TWO CULTURES ?

SISIRKUMAR GHOSE, M.A., D.PHIL.

A keen student of English literature and an experienced educationist, Dr. Sisirkumar Ghose is attached to the Department of English and Modern European Languages, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. He has also taught abroad. His published works include: Aldous Huxley, The Later Poems of Tagore, Mystics and Society (1968), Tagore for You (Ed.). *The following is the text of a lecture he gave at the Institute in November 1968.*

SLOGANS are snappy, short-lived but useful. If they simplify, they also dramatize. Among vogue words in use—not much these days—is 'Two Cultures', a word with a history. On October 6, 1956, C. P. Snow wrote in the *New Statesman* an article on 'Two Cultures', a problem which had been on his mind for some time. Placed as he was, 'by training a scientist, by vocation a writer', it irked him more than others. In 1959 he had another chance to air his views. This, the Rede Lecture, at Cambridge, provoked a long, acrimonious, inconclusive controversy. But what did Snow actually say?

POLARIZATION OF CULTURES

Commuting between scientists and writers (or 'literary intellectuals' as he calls them) Snow was often struck by the fact that 'these two groups ... had almost ceased to communicate'. An amusing incident, of an Oxford worthy who could not make himself understood in the company of some Cambridge mathematicians, is thrown in as a gag or illustration. The result of such non-communication can be dreadful. It's a house divided: 'The intellectual life of the whole western society is increasingly being split into two polar regions'. As a result of the split, a civilization without dialogue, there has developed 'between the two a gulf of mutual incomprehension—sometimes hostility and dislike, but most of all lack of understanding. They have a curiously distorted image of each other'. For instance, the non-scientists seem to have a rooted suspicion that the scientists, looking little better than technicians, are but shallow optimists who do not understand man's condition. On the other hand, the total incomprehension of science and what it stands for gives an unscientific flavour to the whole traditional culture (which, needlessly, Snow confuses with literary culture). For instance, he says, while the scientists have the future in their bones, writers do not wish the future to exist,—a breathtaking statement or accusation. As proof Snow refers to Orwell's utopian fiction, *1984*. This is a piece of complete, if characteristic, confusion and bound to shake one's faith in Snow's literary judgement. Orwell was not saying, 'The future should not exist', but that a future dominated by an unholy alliance of unscrupulous scientists and politicians had no right to exist and posed a great danger to the life of the free individual, a vastly different proposition.

The polarization, Snow goes on to lament, is sheer loss to us all. The examples that he gives from the reading habits of young

scientists—'Well, I've *tried* a bit of Dickens' —are as expected as they are frightening. But what about the other side, the literary side? The same impoverishment, the same lopsidedness, 'perhaps more seriously'. The reason is the non-scientists are generally blind to 'the exploration of natural order' or 'the scientific edifice of the whole world'. Snow seems to derive much satisfaction from the fact that most literary folk are quite ignorant of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. He gives a kind of reason in self-justification. The Second Law of Thermodynamics appears to him 'the scientific equivalent of *Have you read a work of Shakespeare?*' The equation is a little bizarre, the metaphor more than misleading.

Causes of Polarization

But how or why did this gap between the arts and the sciences develop? There are many reasons. One reason that Snow emphasizes is that writers and artists, towards whom he almost throughout takes a rather superior attitude, have not understood the Industrial Revolution. An aphorism sums up his attitude: 'Intellectuals, in particular literary intellectuals, are natural Luddites'. As for the criticism of men like Ruskin, Morris, Thoreau, Emerson, Lawrence and others, 'they tried', according to Snow, 'various kinds of fancies which were in effect no more than screams of horror'. (Was the horror unreal?)

Snow draws a further distinction between the industrial and scientific revolution. The industrial revolution, he points out, involves the use of machines, factory labour, a shift of population from the village to the city, it is a change that occurred almost unaware from the eighteenth to the early twentieth century. The scientific revolution, on the other hand, is of more recent origin. It is the 'application of real science ... the real stuff' and may be taken to have begun from the time when atomic particles were first made industrial use of. And this reminds Snow of another failing of the non-scientific brotherhood, that 'even highly educated members of the non-scientific culture' know little or nothing about industrial production. For instance, they do not even know how buttons are made. (Snow has a fund of humour, some of it unconscious.) Surprisingly, and sad to tell, some of our pure scientists can be devastatingly ignorant or uninterested in the productive processes or the intricacies of industry. Rutherford, for instance. In this respect the Americans and Russians seem to be better off and more aware of 'the world they are living in'. The Russians, in particular, 'have judged the situation sensibly. They have a deeper insight into the scientific revolution'.

The Rich and the Poor

The final section of his argument is taken up with 'The Rich and the Poor'. It is Snow's feeling that science or technology, a universal or transferable knowhow, can be used to advantage by *any* country or culture, be it Russia or China. It is also the 'one way out through the three menaces which stand in our way —H-bomb, over-population, the gap between the rich and the poor'. Casting a sympathetic look at the under-developed countries, he adds: 'Plenty of Europeans, from St. Francis Xavier to Schweitzer, have devoted their lives to Asians and Africans, nobly but paternally. These are not the Europeans whom Asians and Africans are going to welcome now'. That is a matter of opinion. One suspects a shortfall of St. Xaviers and Schweitzers in the European common market today.

Snow ends on a rather alarmist note. The time for catching-up, for take-off is

dreadfully short, he says. We must change our ways and attitudes before it is too late. Else the division of culture might recoil. Perhaps it already has.

Four years later, during which a whole literature had grown round the theme, he had a second look at the problem. Snow drew two reasonable conclusions: That his ideas could not have been original (indeed, they are not); and that there must be something in them (which is hard to deny). Reminding his readers that his lecture had been confined to conditions in England he refers, with satisfaction, to the United States where 'scientists of world-standing are talking to non-specialized classes: at the M.I.T. and Cal. Tech. ... students of the sciences are receiving a serious humane education'. He also brings forward a modification of his earlier equation or metaphor of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Instead of the non-scientists being made to learn the Second Law he now, mercifully, suggests the study of Molecular Biology at the school level.

Through science it is possible to remove unnecessary suffering, says Snow, an argument we have heard before. (What about genocide?) It is true, as Snow tells us, that it is only through science that most people can gain the primal things of life. And he makes fun of the 'pre-Industrial Eden', that dream of escapists. He also makes much of the fact that the young and the underprivileged of today are opting in large number for an urban complex of culture, that is a science-oriented culture. But when have these groups been the best judges? This is hardly a proof and more likely a point to ponder.

The Dilemma

As for modern literature, Snow makes short shrift of it. 'With a scientific revolution going on around us, what has literature made of it?' asks Snow. He does not wait for an answer. Many artists have in fact warned against it. But that he would not like. In any case, he has his own dilemma of which he is not fully aware. Dostoevsky's *Diaries* reveal him to be a rank reactionary, wholly cut off from the universe of reason and science, even of common sense. And yet, Snow himself admits a little ruefully, Dostoevsky remains one of the great writers of all times. But does this not disprove his very thesis? He also denies the charge that he has neglected to take account of the role of politics in modern life. Isolating, for the last time, 'one small corner of the situation, talking primarily to educators', Snow sums up his findings which are simple and true enough: 'It is dangerous to have two cultures which can't or don't communicate. In a time when science is determining much of our destiny, that is whether we live or die, it is dangerous in the most practical terms'. With that warning Snow has kept his peace for the present, though the chances are he might return to the theme, which is indeed the continuing theme of our time of troubles, a state of settled anarchy, a 'deranged society'.

The Communication Hazard

How shall we deal with Snow and his thesis of 'Two Cultures'? He begins with what may be called a communication hazard, between the arts and the sciences, their curious mutual distortions and misunderstandings. One does now know how far he represents science, but surely he does not give the impression of representing writers or literary intellectuals whom he loves to berate. To that extent he has perhaps missed his vocation, that of a missing link. As Trilling has pointed out, 'The even-handedness with which Sir Charles at first describes the split between the two

"cultures" does not continue for long'. He is as much a partisan as any one else and that limits his usefulness.

How does he propose to get over the danger and difficulty of culture broken into two? Apparently, the remedy is simple, elementary: Mostly by giving literary intellectuals heavy doses of scientific information and knowledge, such as the Second Law of Thermodynamics, how buttons are made, and Molecular Biology at the school level. As a solution this sounds pretty banal. What about the scientists? Presumably they will be given a course of (non-scientific) Great Books. Solving the world's problems by improving the reading habits of men and women is a curious fantasy of the Encyclopaedists which dies hard. Surely, the roots of the problem lie deeper, than that.

Also, is it a fact, as Snow often alleges, that literary intellectuals have been wholly unconcerned with science or with the industrial revolution? May be their approach and ultimate conclusions are not flattering to the pretensions of almighty-science-enthusiasts. The romantics were naturally and notably anti-Machine, 'natural Luddites', as Snow would say. But coming to modern times one may take the case of Aldous Huxley, hardly a romantic. An amphibian, equally at home in the arts and the sciences, in his maturer writings Huxley, who had once been enamoured of science and the so-called scientific picture of the universe, pleaded for nothing so much as for curative mysticism. Without mystical insight and the contemplative life, the world would be totally lost, such was his conclusion. Snow takes the supremacy and unanimity of science and scientists—the 'goddess of Applied Science'—for granted, he has no such qualms. In effect, he is but a late incarnation of H. G. Wells. Leavis has classed him as a 'Wellsian'. But in his later life H. G. Wells had a rude awakening from his dream of scientific utopias, as revealed on the bleak and agonizing pages of his last publication, *Mind at the End of its Tether*. Problems of meaning and value cannot be brushed aside with the self-assurance of a Snow. The self-assurance may well be a form of self-deception. No wonder of the many problems of a technologically-oriented society: Such as specialization, fragmentation, rootlessness, mass culture, welfare state, quantification, the confusion of ends and means, the absence of a coherent view of life, there is hardly a word, a surprising silence. Such insensitiveness is not likely to achieve the unity of being and unity of culture, at best it may procure or impose some kind of uniformity. And the problem will remain, if not grow worse.

The discreteness or communication hazard of modern culture will have to be tackled on other lines. True, the method and language of science are not the same as those of the arts. Also, different sciences may speak different languages, even on occasion the same science may employ different languages, the wave and particle theories of Physics, for instance. It is the same with the arts. A novelist may be tone-deaf, a painter may not be interested in reading. These are facts known to everybody. The way to solve the communication problem may lie through a recognition of levels and a general framework. The solution cannot come by either party claiming exclusive ownership of culture: Science demanding that the arts should accept a second-class citizenship; while the arts, in their turn, sniff at the sciences as little better than workable but fallible formulas, a mass of utilitarian know-how without any sense of know-why or ultimate purposes. As for the union of two disciplines, that is likely to be achieved only by a few. After all,

intellectual understanding is not the only form of understanding or cultural sharing. Culture means hierarchy, though hierarchy need not mean social injustice. All this will call for the restoration of rational inhibitions and purposeful sacrifice, maturity and humility. It is unlikely that our scientists, as represented by Snow, will be among the few and plead for an integral view of life and culture.

The Problem of Values

Let one example do. In *Our Threatened Values*, Victor Gollancz had said: 'Our central value is respect for personality'. Of this threat to personality posed by an impersonal science Snow has nothing to say, almost as if the problem did not exist. As for improving the standard of living with the help of science, the larger question of standard of life does not bother C. P. Snow. In spite of his perhaps sincere concern for the under-developed countries, his basic assumption is wonderfully naive. Listen to Adrian Cowley. The 'gap' between the industrial and under-developed countries can be quite misleading, says Cowley. And he illustrates: 'Statistically, the inhabitants of Burma must be counted among the most miserable in the world. They have an average annual income of only £ 20 a head.... In fact, the Burmese are a gay and carefree people and perhaps extract as much fun out of life as we do. They enjoy something which statisticians have not yet learned to measure'. Obviously Snow has never heard of *yenāhaṁ namṛtā syāṁ kimahaṁ tena kuryām* (what shall I do with that which will not make me immortal?). (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.4.3) Perhaps he would not have agreed or understood even if he heard of it. The insight is not unknown to Christianity. But, as a scientist, he may not believe in Christianity. Such elementary truths as that applied science can only provide instrumental but not essential values seem to have escaped Snow. Indeed, except for an uncritical and overall acceptance of the blessings of science he has little sense of values. He speaks more for *homo faber* than for *homo sapiens*.

When, therefore, he repeats his charge that modern arts and literature have not responded to the method and message of science he is again guilty of a large number of inaccuracies. Almost from the beginning of the modern times arts and literature have been taken up with nothing so much as the impact of science or technology on human society and consciousness. What about the 'Conditions of England Question' which lasted throughout the nineteenth century. Even Karl Marx, in a moving passage in *Das Kapital*, pays tribute to the writers for championing a human cause. May be the writers did not react in the way that Snow would have liked them to do. How could they? 'If the writers "shuddered away", it was not in maidenly disgust with machines and soot; if they uttered "screams of horror", it was out of moral outrage at what man has made of man.' Also modern science holds more possibilities than Snow seems to know or suggest, for instance, the possibility of what has come to be called 'cosmic art' or 'solar poetry', in which the art and poetry of vision achieves a new relevance in the integration of impulses and historic forces.

Conclusion

As for his final suggestion that the whole problem of Two Cultures is essentially a problem of education, the lessons may have to be devised in ways other than what Snow has indicated. Recollecting the achievements of science in anything but tranquillity gives one an entirely new per-

spective on progress, that comfortable myth of unexamined lives. Briefly, since the Renaissance, the Royal Society, the Age of Reason, and the Atom Bomb we have earned and inherited not only much New Learning but also considerable New Ignorance. Let us hope their brief period of overlordship and muddling over, the scientists, in their lucid moments, will learn as much as the non-scientists. Did not Robert Oppenheimer say: The physicist has touched sin? A confession for which he had to pay. It is idle and dangerous to think that science--without ethics--can ever be the key to a human future. After all, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. have the same science. Do they have the same culture? There are possibilities of life and culture unknown to both the narrow scientists and the narrow traditionalist. There is the possibility of a rectification, of self and society, an integral dream, a metaphysical community not intolerant of matter and its science. As many voices have been telling us, scientific knowledge may have to be matched with aesthetic wisdom and insight, in a common faith in 'one consistent cultural body'. Today we seek indeed a larger and completer affirmation, one that will include the claims of both matter and spirit, perhaps resolve the conflict of ends and means. 'Without the meaning there is no time.' This is what the age demands and the time grows ripe to make it real in the life of the individual as well as the race. This neither the partisans of the pre-Industrial past nor the partisans of a monolithic science can discover. It is only an integral vision that can deliver us from the terrors of history, the mutual bickerings of art and science enthusiasts. This is what we have to learn:

Here the impossible union
Of spheres of existence is actual,
Here the past and future
Are conquered, and reconciled.

To conclude: Culture is never two. Perhaps in a deeper sense we have not been cultured or educated. There are miles to go, if we do not admit the possibility of this further education we shall only fall a victim to that characteristic disease of our times: Schizophrenia. In that light Snow should be congratulated for having underlined, with his flash metaphor and 'very largely a mistaken book', the need for unity of being and unity of culture. But, himself prejudiced if not superficial, he has failed to see how the reconciliation will be brought about. A superior understanding of man and social reality, which is both fact and value, quality and quantity, escapes him quite. This is because of his congenital inability to see that in the midst of a proliferating technology, wisdom need not be lost. He complains that the writers and literary intellectuals have not understood the industrial and the scientific revolution. But has C. P. Snow himself? He thinks he has and that is a tragedy. Culture may have to be saved from those who profess to be its champions. We throw Snow's challenge back to him. Only, expressive of our faith and loyalty, we phrase it a little differently: Be thou whole.

BOOK REVIEW

THE SECULARIZATION OF MODERN CULTURES. Bernard E. Meland. New York Oxford University Press, New York. 1966. pp. XII + 164. $ 4.75.

The author is an erudite American scholar who had been long connected with theological and divinity schools in various universities. It is of particular interest to us that he was accredited to the University of Calcutta and the University of Poona as Barrows Lecturer for the second term in 1964-65. He is the writer of many books, the more well-known of which are *The Realities of Faith, The Revolution in Cultural Forums*, etc. It is more than significant that a close study of the recent changes in India, leading towards secularization had given him a definite outlook and had indirectly conditioned his mental climate too, so much so that the book under review was dedicated to 'Unforgettable days in India'. If we may recall incidentally that Romain Rolland dedicated his book *Journey Within*, a sort of his last mental will and testament, to his old walnut tree at Villeneuve, companion of his dreams and realized that a meditative life was a great adventure. That is what we find here in this book also, the material of which is based upon the lectures he delivered on the subject not only in India but also in the American Institute of Indian Studies and the University of Chicago. In his bold but nevertheless a brilliant attempt to assess the nature, area, and dimension of secularization in the modern world, he has first of all made an attempt to define what exactly is the association of ideas connected with it, which necessarily has to include not only those changes arising from historical necessities and consequent dissolution of historical sensibilities but also from the spread of science and technology. What is meant by 'Secularization'? He has taken a particular note of Indian conditions. Is it a departure from familiar ways, traditional values, historical sequences carrying an iconoclastic note and relinquishment of the spiritual or religious heritage that is basic in Indian tradition, including Buddhist and Jaina thought? Naturally present day advancement of science and technology, modern development of psychology and psycho-analysis, anthropological studies, biological researches and above all new trends of thought in political behaviourism, sex-relations, proletariat dictatorship, and communist ideologies—help this process. It is the commonest commonplace of a familiar cycle in every age and in every clime, that new ideas infiltrate, new ideas develop, new idols are enthroned. Youth revolts and elders stand by. This is the modernistic movement and though we cannot be punctillious about dates every age is tinged. In recent Europe and America we find it as a distinct adjunct of various liberal movements. In the Asian and African countries the process hitherto has been slow, particularly in countries where established religions had had their sway over men's minds. In India, the process can be studied a little dispassionately and more objectively not only for the fact that our forefathers had fortunately developed certain comparatively stable values in life, but also because of the fact that India's contact with Western thought, religion, culture, and science had given her a board-based foundation and a better perspective to work. We could really boast of our ancient moorings as a bulwork against the rushing tide, though it is more than a fact that our social values are daily changing receptive not only to the ideas that we are receiving from abroad but also to an internal and psychological dialectic and dialogue we are holding with ourselves.

The whole history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in India has been this reorientation of traditional values. God was being replaced by Man by our own men, divinity by humanity. It was a new experiment in secularization without losing the intrinsic merits. From Rammohun Roy to Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Rabindranath, Gandhi, Radhakrishnan, this attempt to humanize religion was a new pattern of secularization. Even Jawharlal Nehru's concept of a secular state laid stress on a dedication to the higher values of life, in art, literature, and science. While scientists like Albert Einstein still believe in a vision of 'unified field' and ultimate orderliness of the laws of the universe and a philosopher like Karl Jaspers in the 'life-order', we are more being accustomed to the Existentialists' concept of angst (anguish) and alienation. The book is a critical analysis of the despairs and dangers of the modern world, incidentally raising a question whether the so-called historic religions can survive under the pressure of secularization. This is a very big issue because a modern social community as such is not merely conditioned by its religion, its historical past, its ethnic or tribal heritage, its location, its complex but by economic and technological demands, its socialistic plans and programmes, rather than by its moral and amoral needs. Mr. Meland recalls that India's Santiswarup Bhatnagar once asked the American Physicist, the late Arthur Compton 'Show us that it is good to live in an industrialized community'. We are reminded of the famous Oppenheimer trial and the warnings the scientists gave. But the philosopher, taking up his pen is also, like the historian, prisoner of his time and place in a subjective sense. The insular mind as Toynbee says cannot read it without being stretched and enlightened and sometimes bewitched by the magic of distant vistas and exotic names. In the past we had been brought up in different cultural milieux but today when science and technology have conquered distances and put new wine into old bottles we have to appreciate one another's mutually alien cultural heritages and meet at a common understanding and recreate a God that will not fail. This is not trying to read philosophy from history but to present world events in a relative flux. Call it neo-white headian dynamism or creative altruism of Sorokin?

The book is a stimulating one and actively provokes thought. We live in a world which is an unfinished poem where deification of selfishness and force ungoverned titanism live side by side with haves and have-nots, lofty idealism and man's innate goodness.

SUDHANSUMOHAN BANERJEE

INSTITUTE NEWS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

GOL PARK, CALCUTTA 29

SCHOOL OF HUMANISTIC AND CULTURAL STUDIES

NINTH ACADEMIC YEAR: AUGUST 1969—MARCH 1970

PROSPECTUS

AND

SYLLABUSES OF COURSES

The Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies steps into its ninth academic year with the current session (August 1969 to March 1970).

Beginning in 1961-62 with a single general course of studies on the subject of the life, thought, and culture of the people of India, and of the rest of the world, the School has registered a steady progress year by year.

During the current session, the courses of studies have been reorganized with the following syllabus:

I. General Course: Heritage of Mankind

1. Historical Perspective
2. Faiths and Beliefs
3. Sociological Perspective
4. Literary Treasures of Mankind
5. World Community

II. Special Course:

1. Mankind's Philosophical Heritage
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 which was established in 1938 as a memorial to Sri Ramakrishna to propagate the great ideals of unity, harmony, and fellowship in India as also among the various peoples, cultures, and religions of the world.

In addition to other activities of the Institute, the School was established with a view to imparting an education designed to give a comprehensive human outlook: an 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 today greatly needs this educational approach in order to achieve global unity.

Method of Study

All the courses in the School are conducted in English. The subject-matter in the different courses are 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 (except on 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 seven groups are as follows and have to be paid at the time of admission:

GENERAL COURSE

HERITAGE OF MANKIND:

1. Historical Perspective	Rs. 8.00
2. Faiths and Beliefs	Rs. 8.00
3. Sociological Perspective	Rs. 8.00
4. Literary Treasures of Mankind	Rs. 8.00
5. World Community	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. Mankind's Philosophical Heritage	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.

Members of the Institute will be eligible for admission on payment of admission fee only.

Certificates

Certificates of attendance will be awarded to students at the end of the academic year.

DETAILS OF THE COURSES

1. General Course: Heritage of Mankind

First Term

1. Historical Perspective

Aim of the Course

The object of this course of 21 lectures is to provide a working knowledge of the cultural legacies handed down to mankind by the ancients in different parts of the world. This will enable the students to realize that cultural excellence is not the monopoly of a particular country, but each country has something to contribute to the evolution of a global culture. They will also develop sympathetic regard for the cultures and traditions of the various countries of the world.

Duration

The term will begin on 4 August 1969 and will end on 8 September 1969.

Second Term

2. Faiths and Beliefs

Aim of the Course

This course comprising 18 lectures is intended to acquaint the students with the faiths and beliefs that sustained different human societies through the ages. A proper understanding of the ultimate objective of the varying approaches to life would enable the students to cultivate a spirit of tolerance for all faiths and beliefs prevalent in different sections of humanity.

Duration

The term will extend from 12 September 1969 to 10 October 1969.

Third Term

3. Sociological Perspective

Aim of the Course

As the science of social relations and processes, Sociology is a specialized branch of modern knowledge of immense practical value. This course of 18 lectures has been included in this year's syllabus in order to provide an opportunity to interested students to familiarize themselves with the fundamentals of Sociology.

Duration

The term will extend from 13 November 1969 to 4 December 1969.

Fourth Term

4. Literary Treasures of Mankind

Aim of the Course

With a view to providing an insight into the literary treasures and humanistic traditions of mankind, this course of 22 lectures has been designed to cover Greek, Sanskrit, Persian, French, German, and English literature and also to deal with some representative authors, like Vālmīki, Homer, Kālidāsa, Dante, Goethe, Shakespeare, and Milton.

Duration

The course will commence on 5 December 1969 and end on 2 January 1970.

Fifth Term

5. World Community

Aim of the Course

The purpose of this course of 14 lectures is to advance the cause of international understanding and the building up of a peaceful world community.

Duration

The term extends from 5 January 1970 to 19 January 1970.

Special Course

1. Mankind's Philosophical Heritage

Aim of the Course

Philosophy is the eternal pursuit of truth and wisdom and is fundamental to all progress. Its study is essential to the acquisition of a comprehensive knowledge of man's cultural heritage. As the subject is vast, the present course is intended to give a bird's-eye view of the philosophies of the West and of India through a course of 32 lectures.

Duration

This course will commence on 22 January 1970 and end on 5 March 1970.

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 of 18 lectures seek to offer a general study of the two schools of Indian music, namely, Hindustani and Karnatic, together with the school of Western music helping toward the promotion and exchange of knowledge and an appreciation of each other's cultural legacy.

Duration

This course will commence on 14 August 1969 and end on 9 October 1969.

SYLLABUSES OF COURSES

1. GENERAL COURSE

SCHEDULE FOR THE FIRST TERM

Monday, 4 August to Monday, 8 September 1969

1. HERITAGE OF MANKIND:

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Monday, 4 August 1969

(1) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — Inaugural Address: Humanity and Culture: The Hon. Mr. Justice P. B. Mukharji

(2) 7.30. p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — Self-introduction by Students:

Thursday, 7 August 1969

(3) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — The Glory that was Assyria and Babylonia—I: Dr. S. R. Das

(4) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — The Glory that was Assyria and Babylonia—II: Dr. S. R. Das

Friday, 8 August 1969

(5) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — The Glory that was Ancient Egypt: Dr. Bratindranath Mukherjee

(6) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — The Glory that was Central Asia: Dr. Bratindranath Mukherjee

Monday, 11 August 1969

(7) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — The Glory that was Iran—I: Dr. Hiralal Chopra

(8) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — The Glory that was Iran—II: Dr. Hiralal Chopra

Monday, 18 August 1969

(9) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — The Glory that was India—I: Dr. R. C. Majumdar

(10) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — The Glory that was India—II: Dr. R. C. Majumdar

Friday, 22 August 1969

(11) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE GLORY THAT WAS CHINA AND TIBET—I: Professor Tripurari Chakravarti

(12) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE GLORY THAT WAS CHINA AND TIBET—II: Professor Tripurari Chakravarti

Monday, 25 August 1969

(13) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE GLORY THAT WAS ANCIENT GREECE—I: Dr. Amales Tripathi

(14) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE GLORY THAT WAS ANCIENT GREECE—II: Dr. Amales Tripathi

Friday, 29 August 1969

(15) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE GLORY THAT WAS ANCIENT ROME—I:

(16) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE GLORY THAT WAS ANCIENT ROME—II:

Monday, 1 September 1969

(17) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF ANNAM AND CAMBODIA: Dr. R. C. Majumdar

(18) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF BURMA AND SIAM: Dr. R. C. Majumdar

Friday, 5 September 1969

(19) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAVA AND BALI—I: Professor S. D. Mookerji

(20) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAVA AND BALI—II: Professor S. D. Mookerji

Monday, 8 September 1969

(21) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF ANCIENT MEXICO, PERU, AND OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN STATES—I: Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji

(22) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF ANCIENT MEXICO, PERU, AND OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN STATES—II: Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji

SCHEDULE FOR THE SECOND TERM

Friday, 12 September to Friday, 10 October 1969

2. FAITHS AND BELIEFS

Friday, 12 September 1969

(1) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE EAST: Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

(2) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE WEST: Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

Monday, 15 September 1969

(3) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN THE EAST: Dr. J. N. Mohanty

(4) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN THE WEST: Dr. J. N. Mohanty

Friday, 19 September 1969

(5) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — BUDDHISM: Dr. Sisir Kumar Mitra

(6) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — JAINISM: Dr. Sisir Kumar Mitra

Monday, 22 September 1969

(7) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — CONFUCIUS: Dr. K. K. Das Gupta

(8) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — LAOTSE: Dr. K. K. Das Gupta

Friday, 26 September 1969

(9) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — CHRISTIANITY—THE ORTHODOX FORMS AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM: Rev. R. Antoine

(10) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — CHRISTIANITY—PROTESTANTISM: Rev. R. Antoine

Monday, 29 September 1969

(11) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — ISLAM—I: Dr. Sukumar Ray

(12) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — ISLAM—II: Dr. Sukumar Ray

Friday, 3 October 1969

(13) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — PRIMITIVE OR PRE-HISTORIC RELIGION—I: Dr. Sailaja Kumar Bhattacharya

(14) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — PRIMITIVE OR PRE-HISTORIC RELIGION—II: Dr. Sailaja Kumar Bhattacharya

Monday, 6 October 1969

(15) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — ORGANIZED RELIGION—EAST: Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

(16) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — ORGANIZED RELIGION—WEST: Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

Friday, 10 October 1969

(17) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — COMPARATIVE RELIGION—I: Dr. Pritibhushan Chatterji

(18) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — COMPARATIVE RELIGION—II: Dr. Pritibhushan Chatterji

SCHEDULE FOR THE THIRD TERM

Thursday, 13 November to Thursday, 4 December 1969

3. SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Thursday, 13 November 1969

(1) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SCIENCE OF SOCIOLOGY—ORIGIN AND GROWTH—I: Professor M. C. Ghosh

(2) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SCIENCE OF SOCIOLOGY—ORIGIN AND GROWTH—II: Professor M. C. Ghosh

Friday, 14 November 1969

(3) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SOCIOLOGICAL THINKING IN THE WEST UP TO THE MIDDLE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—I: Professor K. N. Sen

(4) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SOCIOLOGICAL THINKING IN THE WEST UP TO THE MIDDLE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—II: Professor K. N. Sen

Monday, 17 November 1969

(5) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — VIEWPOINTS OF THE PIONEERS IN SOCIOLOGY—I:

(6) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — VIEWPOINTS OF THE PIONEERS IN SOCIOLOGY—II:

Thursday, 20 November 1969

(7) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — VIEWPOINTS OF MAX WEBER AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES—I:

(8) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — VIEWPOINTS OF MAX WEBER AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES—II:

Friday, 21 November 1969

(9) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIOLOGY IN AMERICA—I:

(10) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIOLOGY IN AMERICA—II:

Monday, 24 November 1969

(11) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIOLOGY IN EUROPE—I:

(12) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIOLOGY IN EUROPE—II:

Thursday, 27 November 1969

(13) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIOLOGY IN ASIA AND AFRICA—I:
Professor Parimal Kar

(14) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIOLOGY IN ASIA AND AFRICA—II:
Professor Parimal Kar

Friday, 28 November 1969

(15) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SOCIOLOGICAL THINKING IN INDIA BEFORE THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—I:

(16) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SOCIOLOGICAL THINKING IN INDIA BEFORE THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—II:

Monday, 1 December 1969

(17) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—I:

(18) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—II:

Thursday, 4 December 1969

(19) 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. — SEMINAR:

SCHEDULE FOR THE FOURTH TERM

Friday, 5 December 1969 to Friday, 2 January 1970

4. LITERARY TREASURES OF MANKIND

Friday, 5 December 1969

(1) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — GREEK LITERATURE—EPICS AND DRAMAS: Rev. R. Antoine

(2) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — GREEK LITERATURE—PHILOSOPHICAL: Rev. R. Antoine

Monday, 8 December 1969

(3) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SANSKRIT LITERATURE—VEDIC: Dr. Govinda Gopal Mukherjee

(4) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SANSKRIT LITERATURE—EPICS: Dr. Govinda Gopal Mukherjee

Thursday, 11 December 1969

(5) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SANSKRIT LITERATURE—PURANAS: Professor Tripura Sankar Sen

(6) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SANSKRIT LITERATURE—KAVYAS: Dr. Rama Ranjan Mukherjee

Friday, 12 December 1969

(7) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — PERSIAN LITERATURE—I: Md. Javiad Iqbal

(8) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — PERSIAN LITERATURE—II: Md. Javiad Iqbal

Monday, 15 December 1969

(9) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — FRENCH LITERATURE—I: Rev. R. Antoine

(10) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — FRENCH LITERATURE—II: Rev. R. Antoine

Thursday, 18 December 1969

(11) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — GERMAN LITERATURE—I: Dr. Georg Lechner

(12) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — GERMAN LITERATURE—II: Dr. Georg Lechner

Friday, 19 December 1969

(13) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — ENGLISH LITERATURE—I: Professor P. K. Guha

(14) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — ENGLISH LITERATURE—II: Professor P. K. Guha

Monday, 22 December 1969

(15) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—VALMIKI: Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

(16) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—HOMER: Professor N. Viswanathan

Friday, 26 December 1969

(17) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—KALIDASA—I: Dr. Sitanath Goswami

(18) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—KALIDASA—II: Dr. Sitanath Goswami

Monday, 29 December 1969

(19) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—DANTE:

(20) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—GOETHE: Dr. Georg Lechner

Friday, 2 January 1970

(21) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—SHAKESPEARE: Professor N. Viswanathan

(22) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS—MILTON: Professor Sushil Kumar Mukherjee

SCHEDULE FOR THE FIFTH TERM

Monday, 5 January 1970 to Monday, 19 January 1970

5. WORLD COMMUNITY

Monday, 5 January 1970

(1) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — WHY A WORLD COMMUNITY? Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya

(2) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — WORLD COMMUNITY: ITS SCOPE: Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya

Thursday, 8 January 1970

(3) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — WORLD COMMUNITY—ITS PROBLEMS:—I
Professor Basanti Mitra

(4) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — WORLD COMMUNITY—ITS PROBLEMS:—II
Professor Basanti Mitra

Friday, 9 January 1970

(5) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — UNDERSTANDING FREEDOM:

(6) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — DEMOCRACY:
Professor Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya

Monday, 12 January 1970

(7) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SOCIALISM:
Professor K. N. Sen

(8) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — COMMUNISM:
Professor Gautam Chattopadhyay

Thursday, 15 January 1970

(9) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — SCIENCE AND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION—I:
Dr. Shyamadas Chatterjee

(10) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SCIENCE AND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION—II:
Dr. Shyamadas Chatterjee

Friday, 16 January 1970

(11) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — CULTURAL BASES OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY:
Sri Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee

(12) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — RELIGION AND WORLD COMMUNITY:

Monday, 19 January 1970

(13) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA MOVEMENT AND THE WORLD ORDER:
Swami Lokeswarananda

(14) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — MANKIND'S COMMON DESTINY:
Swami Lokeswarananda

SPECIAL COURSE

1. MANKIND'S PHILOSOPHICAL HERITAGE

Thursday, 22 January 1970 to Thursday, 5 March 1970

WESTERN

Thursday, 22 January 1970

(1) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY: Professor J. C. Banerjee

(2) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY: PLATO AND ARISTOTLE: Dr. Pritibhushan Chatterji

Thursday, 29 January 1970

(3) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHERS OF THE WEST: Dr. Pritibhushan Chatterji

(4) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — RENAISSANCE—SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK IN PHILOSOPHY (MODERN PERIOD) BACON AND HOBBES: Dr. Tusar Kanti Sarkar

Monday, 2 February 1970

(5) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — EMPIRICAL PHILOSOPHERS—LOCKE, BARKLEY, AND HUME—I: Dr. Sailaja Kumar Bhattacharya

(6) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — EMPIRICAL PHILOSOPHERS—LOCKE, BARKLEY, AND HUME—II: Dr. Sailaja Kumar Bhattacharya

Thursday, 5 February 1970

(7) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — RATIONALISTIC PHILOSOPHERS—DESCARTES, SPINOZA, AND LEIBNITZ—I: Dr. Debiprasad Chatterjee

(8) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — RATIONALISTIC PHILOSOPHERS—DESCARTES, SPINOZA, AND LEIBNITZ—II: Dr. Debiprasad Chatterjee

Friday, 6 February 1970

(9) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — RATIONALISTIC PHILOSOPHERS—KANT: Dr. Pranab Kumar Sen

(10) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — ABSOLUTE IDEALISM—FICHTE, SCHELLING, AND HEGEL: Professor Debi Prosad Sen

Monday, 9 February 1970

(11) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — ABSOLUTE IDEALISM—FICHTE, SCHELLING, AND HEGEL: Professor Debi Prosad Sen

(12) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — IDEALISTIC RECONSTRUCTION—SCHOPENHAUER, MILL, AND SPENCER: Professor Debi Prosad Sen

Thursday, 12 February 1970

(13) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — NEO-HEGELIANISM—BRADLEY AND ROYCE: Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

(14) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — NEO-IDEALISM—CROCE AND GENTILE: Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

Friday, 13 February 1970

(15) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — RECENT TRENDS IN PHILOSOPHY—PRAGMATISM, LOGICAL POSITIVISM, AND THE ANALYTIC SCHOOL: Professor K. K. Banerjee

(16) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — RECENT TRENDS IN PHILOSOPHY—EXISTENTIALISM AND PHENOMENOLOGY: Professor K. K. Banerjee

INDIAN

Monday, 16 February 1970

(17) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — VEDIC PERIOD—SAMHITAS: Dr. Govinda Gopal Mukherjee

(18) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — VEDIC PERIOD—BRAHMANAS AND ARANYAKAS: Dr. Govinda Gopal Mukherjee

Thursday, 19 February 1970

(19) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — VEDIC PERIOD—UPANISADS: Dr. Sitanath Goswami

(20) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — EPIC PERIOD—MAHABHARATA AND RAMAYANA: Professor Tripura Sankar Sen

Friday, 20 February 1970

(21) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — HETERODOX SYSTEMS—CARVAKAS: Professor Hemanta Kumar Ganguli

(22) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — BUDDHISM AND JAINISM: Professor Hemanta Kumar Ganguli

Monday, 23 February 1970

(23) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — ORTHODOX PERIOD—NYAYA-VAISESIKA: Professor J. C. Banerjee

(24) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — ORTHODOX PERIOD—SAMKHYA-YOGA: Professor Debi Prosad Sen

Thursday, 26 February 1970

(25) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — PURVA MIMAMSA AND UTTARA MIMAMSA: Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

(26) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — SCHOOLS OF VEDANTA—DVAITA AND BHEDABHEDA: Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

Friday, 27 February 1970

(27) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — VISISTADVAITA: Dr. Roma Chaudhuri

(28) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — ADVAITA:

Monday, 2 March 1970

(29) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — CURRENT RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS—NANAK AND ARYA SAMAJ:

(30) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — CURRENT RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS—BRAHMO SAMAJ AND THEOSOPHY: Dr. Roma Chaudhuri

Thursday, 5 March 1970

(31) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA MOVEMENT: Professor J. C. Banerjee

(32) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

2. MUSIC APPRECIATION THROUGH STUDIES IN THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF INDIA AND THE WEST

(With Practical Demonstration and Film Shows)

Thursday, 14 August to Thursday, 9 October 1969

Thursday, 14 August 1969	
(1) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m.	NOTES, SCALES, RHYTHM AND TALAS: HINDUSTANI: Srimati Aparna Chakravarti
(2) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m.	RAGAS: HINDUSTANI: Srimati Aparna Chakravarti
Thursday, 21 August 1969	
(3) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m.	RAGAS: KARNATIC: Sri T. Srinivasan
(4) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m.	TALAS: KARNATIC: Sri T. Srinivasan
Thursday, 28 August 1969	
(5) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m.	FORMS: HINDUSTANI: Srimati Aparna Chakravarti
(6) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m.	FORMS: HINDUSTANI: Srimati Aparna Chakravarti
Thursday, 4 September 1969	
(7) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m.	FORMS: KARNATIC: Sri T. Srinivasan
(8) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m.	FORMS: KARNATIC: Sri T. Srinivasan
Thursday, 11 September 1969	
(9) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m.	INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: HINDUSTANI: Srimati Aparna Chakravarti
(10) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m.	INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: KARNATIC: Sri T. Srinivasan

Thursday, 18 September 1969

(11) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — FOLK MUSIC AND DEVOTIONAL MUSIC: Srimati Aparna Chakravarti

(12) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF HINDUSTANI AND KARNATIC MUSIC: Srimati Aparna Chakravarti

Thursday, 25 September 1969

(13) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — WESTERN MUSIC—I: MELODY AND RHYTHM: Miss Roma Chatterji

(14) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — WESTERN MUSIC—II: COUNTERPOINT AND HARMONY: Miss Roma Chatterji

Wednesday, 1 October 1969

(15) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — WESTERN MUSIC—III: FORM: Miss Roma Chatterji

(16) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — WESTERN MUSIC—IV: HISTORY: Miss Roma Chatterji

Thursday, 9 October 1969

(17) 6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m. — DANCE—INDIAN CLASSICAL:

(18) 7.30 p.m. to 8.20 p.m. — MUSIC CONCERT:

AUGUST CALENDAR

(*All Functions Open to the Public*)

(*Children below 12 years are not allowed*)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th August

THE SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

1st, 8th, 22nd, and 29th August

THE MUNDAKA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th August

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(Children below six years are not allowed)

FILM SHOW

BIPLABI KSHUDIRAM

Tuesday, 5 August, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

SANSKRIT DRAMA

PRASANNA PRASADAM

(Based on the Life of Sadhak Ramprasad)

by

Pracya-Vani

Tuesday, 12 August, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. 50 Paise

CHILDREN'S DRAMA

SWARTHAPAR DAITYA (in Bengali)

(Based on the story of 'The Selfish Giant' by Oscar Wilde)

by

Malay Gita Bithi

Tuesday, 19 August, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

Tagore's

SHYAMA (in songs only)

by

Nava-Gitanjali

Participants:

Suchitra Mitra, Dhiren Bose, Banani Ghose,

Bandana Singha, and others.

Tuesday, 26 August, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR AUGUST 1969

Ramayana Galpa Āsar

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

Last Saturday, 30 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 6 **Art and Machine**

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

President: Himansu Nath Ganguli, M.A., D.Phil.

August 13 **Sri Krishna : The Darling of Humanity**

Speaker: Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

President: Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil.

August 20 **Obligations of Society to our Youths**

Speaker: Jyotirindra Nath Das Gupta, M.A., B.T.

President: P. K. Guha, M.A.

August 27 **Alienation and Search for Identity in Contemporary Fiction**

Speaker: Sisir Kumar Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D.

President: Mr. Robert J. Boylan
Cultural Affairs Officer, U.S.I.S. (Calcutta)

BULLETIN
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SIR JOHN WOODROFFE AND THE TANTRIKA LITERATURE

TRIPURA SANKAR SEN, M.A.

Professor Tripura Sankar Sen is Head of the Department of Philosophy at the Muralidhar Girls' College, Calcutta. He has written many books and among his books mention may be made of Ūniś Śataker Bāṅglā Sāhitya, Bhārat Jijñāsā, Vaiṣṇava Sāhitya, *and* Śākta Padāvalī. *The lecture reproduced below was given by Professor Sen at the Institute in June 1969.*

SIR John Woodroffe was one of the few Orientalists of Europe who had a direct and first-hand knowledge of the different schools of Indian Philosophy and a deep, penetrating insight into the spirit of what he calls Bhārat-Dharma; but in some respects he stands alone and unique, viz. in his search for truths as embodied in the vast field of Tāntrika literature, in his realization of spiritual truths through Tāntrika *sādhanā* and in his interpretation of the Tantras in the light of modern Physics, Biology, and Psychology. He had the rare opportunity to sit at the feet of such illustrious Sanskrit scholars as Haridēva Sastri and such Śākta seers and saints as Sivachandra Vidyarnava. At the inspiration of Sivachandra he made a pilgrimage through the holy places of India before his initiation. He came in contact with Atalbehari Ghose, a lawyer of the Small Causes Court, Calcutta who had a very great admiration for the Tantras and who founded the Āgama Anusandhān Samiti. It was through Atalbehari Ghose and Pandit Harideva that Sir John Woodroffe first came to know of Pandit Sivachandra, the great Tāntrika scholar and seer. Ultimately Sivachandra initiated Woodroffe into Tāntrika cult and became his friend, philosopher, and guide.

Sir John Woodfroffe studied the original

Sanskrit texts with the *sraddhā* of a Naciketas and after his initiation devoted himself wholly to the propagation of Tāntrika literature so that misunderstanding against the Tantras, which ignorance only begets, might be removed from the minds of the so-called western and eastern scholars.

Sir John Woodroffe had also a very great admiration for Indian architecture, sculpture, and painting and his acquaintance with Havel, the then Principal of the Fine Arts Academy, Calcutta and also with Coomar Swami helped him to appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of Indian Fine Arts. Being a man of many-sided activities he tried his utmost to revive the cottage industries of India. As an educationist he warned us against the dangers of western education for Indians when it is attended with perfect ignorance of Indian religion and culture. Such education becomes devitalizing, dehumanizing, and demoralizing when it begets admiration for anything that is foreign and condemnation for everything that is Indian.

Like many other thinkers Shakespeare has also discarded the habit of continuous study. The Indian scriptures emphatically declare that keen intellect or voracious reading does not help a man to realize the ultimate Truth. Again it is often true that too much study makes a man voluminous but not luminous. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Shakespeare says that a man of deep erudition may make ample quotations from others' books but has no doctrine or theory of his own. To quote Shakespeare:

'Study is like the Heaven's glorious sun,
Which should not be deep searched with saucy looks,
Small have continuous plodders ever own,
Save base authority from others' books.'

In the case of Sir John Woodroffe, profound scholarship being attended with *sādhanā* helped him to realize the ultimate Truth. So what Shkespeare says does not apply to Sir John Woodroffe, who possessed a scientific bent of mind and a historical sense, the finest logical brain and the impartial and dispassionate attitude of a Justice.

Salient Features of the Tantras

We are not concerned this evening with Sir John Woodroffe, the famous jurist whose name is associated with *Civil Procedure of British India*, the law relating to British India and Evidence Act, we are concerned with Sir John Woodroffe, the great Orientalist who studied deeply the orthodox and heterodox systems of Indian philosophy and threw a flood of light on Tāntrika philosophy and religion. The practical religion of the Tantras which professes to give us enjoyment and liberation at the same time and which does not ignore the instinctive and emotional side of a man's nature though declaring the divine heritage of every individual human being had a great attraction for him. The Tāntrika rites and rituals which are based on the grand doctrine of Adhikāravāda or theory of competency and which recognize the various stages of spiritual development are, according to Woodroffe, excellent methods of gradual and progressive self-realization. Another thing that attracted Woodroffe to the Tantras is that the performance of Tāntrika rituals is open to all persons, irrespective of their race, caste or sex. Another salient feature of the Tāntrika scriptures that attracted Sir John Woodroffe is that these enjoin veneration for women as the manifestations of the Divine Mother to be the bounden duty of all devotees, who are repeatedly warned not to ill treat a woman under any circumstances. Sir John Woodroffe points out another salient feature of the Tantras

in his *Preface to Principles of Tantra*: 'According to the Tantra, alone of the great Śāstras, a woman may be a spiritual teacher (*guru*) and initiation by her achieves increased benefit. Thus initiation by a mother of her son is eightfold more fruitful than any other'. (We may here remember the initiation of Sri Ramakrishna the prophet and seer of Dakshineswar by Mother Bhairavī.)

Sir John Woodroffe takes great pains to interpret the Tāntrika philosophy and religion in the light of modern Physics, Physiology, and Psychology. The claim of materialism to explain the vast universe of inorganic, organic, and conscious objects lost its force with the scientists of the twentieth century; materialism has also failed to bridge the gulf between matter, life, and mind and matter which was once regarded as the ultimate stuff of the world has been dematerialized. The Tantras emphatically declare that the difference between the so-called inorganic, vital, and mental phenomena is one of degree, not of kind; in this world of diverse objects there are varying degrees of manifestation of consciousness and this theory of the Tantras is in accord with modern scientific investigations. The two aspects of the one ultimate Reality, viz. the static and the kinetic aspects wrongly attributed to matter are represented by the Tāntrikas as Śiva and Śakti. But nothing is really static, every thing is dynamic, as the term '*jagat*' implies. The scientists assert that what appears to be static is really a store-house of energy. According to the Tantras energy may manifest itself as physical, vital, mental, and spiritual, the last of which can be roused by *sādhanā*.

The figure of the Tāntrika Kālī, says Woodroffe, illustrates a very great scientific truth. 'The Divine Mother moves as the kinetic *śakti* on the breast of Sadāśiva who is the static background of the pure *cit* which is actionless (*niṣkṛya*); the Guṇamayī Mother being all activity.' (*Śakti and Śākta*, p. 669)

Sir John Woodroffe deals with *kuṇḍalinī-śākti* and the six *cakras* in one of the chapters of *Śakti and Śākta* but these are dealt with in fuller details in his voluminous work *The Serpent Power*. He deals with these topics from the standpoint of the western physiology and psychology and the Hindu standpoint of spiritual discipline. He tells us how by the application of *kuṇḍalinī-yoga* a man may become master of his body and mind as also the master of his life and death and how by arousing *kuṇḍalinī* the devotee can sublimate his libido or neuro-psychic energy for all times to come. Woodroffe says: 'When *kuṇḍalinī-śakti* sleeps in the *mūlādhāra*, man is awake to the world; when she awakes to unite and does unite, with the supreme static Consciousness which is Śiva, then Consciousness is asleep to the world and is one with the Light of all things'. (Woodroffe also refers to *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā* where this topic is fully discussed.)

This saying of Woodroffe very well compares to a well-known *śloka* in the second chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Woodroffe asserts that the so-called Indian and European scholars who have attempted to describe the *cakras* or centres of consciousness from a purely materialistic and physiological standpoint have been disappointed. He emphatically declares, without ever being dogmatic, that the Hindu rituals are quite rational and psychological leading to complete metamorphosis of the body and mind of the devotee. The Tantras suggest different practical methods suitable for different types of individuals, which gradually lead them to prefection.

The following are a list of works by Sir

John Woodroffe who often used the pen-name of Sir Arthur Avalon:

ENGLISH WORKS

1. *Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.*
2. *Principles of Tantra* (Translation of Sivachandra Vidyarnava's *Tantra-tattva with Preface and Introduction*).
3. *Śakti and Śākta* (Essays and Addresses).
4. *The Great Liberation* (*Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*).
5. *Garland of Letters* (Studies in Mantra-Śāstra).
6. *Hymns to the Goddess* (from Tantras and Stotras of Śaṅkarācārya).
7. *Tantrarāj Tantra* (A short analysis).
8. *The World as Power* (Reality, Life, Mind, Matter, Causality, and Continuity).
9. *Mahāmāyā* (The World as Power: Consciousness).
10. *Is India Civilized?* (A reply to Archer's work, *India and Her People*, in which he most unjustly and maliciously villifies the Indians as a barbarous people who should be dominated by the British for their own benefit. Sir John Woodroffe's work not only throws a flood of light on Indian civilization, it abounds in prophetic sayings which every Indian should remember even now.)

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH WORKS

11. *The Serpent Power* (Text and translation of *Ṣaṭcakranirūpaṇa* and *Padukā-pañcaka* with Introduction and Commentary illustrated with seventeen plates).
12. *Kāmakalā-vilāsa* (Text with translation and commentary).
13. *Hymn to Kālī* (*Karpurādi-stotra*). Text with translation and commentary.
14. *Wave of Bliss* (*Ānandalahari*). Text with translation and commentary.
15. *Greatness of Śiva* (Puṣpadanta's famous work *Mahimnastava*). Text with translation and commentary.
16. *Īśopaniṣad.* Text with translation and commentary.
17. *Kulacūḍāmaṇi Nigama.* Text with an an Introduction by A. K. Maitra, C.I.E.

INDIAN RELIGION AS BHARAT-DHARMA

Sir John Woodroffe says: 'To the Western, Indian religion seems a jungle of contradictory beliefs amidst which he is lost. Unless one can discover the main principles running through the so-called different Indian religions whether Brāhmaṇic, Buddhist or Jaina, he fails to realize that there is such a thing as Bhārat-Dharma or Ārya-Dharma'. This Bhārat-Dharma is embodied in the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and Vedānta, the different Smṛtis, the eighteen Purāṇas, and the Upapurāṇas, the different Āgamas including the Śaiva, the Śākta, and the Vaiṣṇava as well as the Buddhist Tantras. In order to make a proper assessment of Bhārat-Dharma we must take into consideration the religious and psychological significance of the different rituals. 'Ritual', says Woodroffe, 'is an art, the art of religion. Art is the outward material expression of ideas intellectually held and emotionally felt. Ritual art is concerned with the expression of those ideas and feelings which are specifically called religious. It is a mode by which religious truth is presented and made intelligible in material forms and symbols to the mind. ... It is the means by which the mind is transformed and purified'. (*Śakti and Śākta*, p. 12)

In one of the chapters of the masterly volume *Śakti and Śākta*, Woodroffe deals with the Hindu ritual and in another chapter he deals with the psychology of Tāntrika rituals which gradually lead a man to perfection or self-realization. One of the common characteristics of the different religions that have originated in India is the doctrine of the law of Karma which really means that every human being is the maker or builder of his own destiny. The law of Karma being inviolable, every man is the resultant of his past deeds and enjoys and suffers accordingly but at the same time he is building his future. According to Hindu scriptures and specially according to the Tantras it is a rare privilege to be born as human beings who alone, among all the created beings, can strive to attain liberation through knowledge and devotion and so those who waste their lives in vain pursuit after worldly pleasures are self-killers.

Lord Buddha was regarded as an incarnation of Viṣṇu in the Purāṇas. Ṛṣabhadeva, the first Jaina *tīrthaṅkara*, is described as an incarnation of Viṣṇu and Neminātha, the twenty-second Jaina *tīrthaṅkara* has been spoken of as the cousin of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Neither Buddhism nor Jainism (even in its original form) is atheistic or agnostic, they are off-shoots of the Brāhmaṇical religion revolting against the over-emphasis laid on *vaidika karma-kāṇḍa*. So Bharat-Dharma is, in a sense, synonymous with Brāhmaṇical or Vedic religion which includes the religions of the Smṛtis, the Purāṇas, and the Āgamas. Now, one of the grandest features of this Brāhmaṇical religion is its *varṇāśrama-dharma*, rightly understood, which gradually leads human beings to spiritual progress and ultimately to perfection or self-realization or *brahma-sājuya* (realization of the identity of the individual soul with the Suprme Soul) which, according to the Tantras, is the *summum bonum* of a man's life. Lord Jesus says: 'Unless you are born again, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God'. By following the Tāntrika rituals we are born again as god-men, our body and mind being utterly divinized.

Psychology of the Tantrika Rituals

The Tantras declare that one is entitled to worship a god or a goddess only when one, through the performance of rituals, becomes transformed to that god or goddess. The Tāntrika *sādhakas* were fully aware of the influence of the unconscious mind (which is a bundle of wholesome and unwholesome *saṁskāras*) on the behaviour or character of an individual. They also discovered the practical process by pursuing which (according to the dictates of the *guru*) the spiritual aspirant can gradually sublimate his libido and attain to perfection or self-realization. Sir John Woodroffe says: 'Man, in this system of Vedānta(the Tāntrika philosophy is a system of the Vedānta) is, though a contraction of Power, nevertheless, in essence, the self-same Power which is God. ... Man, being such Power, can by his effort, and the grace of his patron Deity, enhance it even to the extent that he becomes one with Divinity. And so it is said that by the worship of Viṣṇu a man becomes Viṣṇu'. St. Paul says: 'Know ye not that ye are the temples of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you'. The Tāntrikas also say that every human body is the tabernacle of the goddess and human being is essentially one with the Divine Mother possessing infinite capacities, potentialities, and powers; every spiritual aspirant should, therefore, try to manifest them by undergoing a long process of *sādhanā* under the guidance of a *guru*.

But why, it may be asked, should God be worshipped as Mother? To such persons Woodroffe puts the counter-question—Why should the Supreme Being who is sexless be spoken of as Father? Then he says: 'Divinity is spoken of as Mother because It conceives, bears, gives birth to, and nourishes the universe'. (*Śakti and Śākta*, p. 446)

The *sādhakas* or spiritual aspirants should exert their utmost to attain liberation, to become *jīvanmuktas* or god-men. Practitioners in malevolent magic follow the lowest form of Tantra and suffer the consequences of their misdeeds. A *sādhaka* should, therefore, mould his character and transform his body and mind by continued good thoughts. Sir John Woodroffe says: 'Sincere and continued effort effects the transformation of the worshipper into a likeness of the Divinity worshipped. (*Śakti and Śākta*, p. 452) ... Ritual produces by degrees transformation, at first temporary, later lasting'. (*ibid.*, p. 453)

The important Tāntrika rituals which effect the transformation of the *sādhaka* are: (1) *Mudrā* or specially designed gesture of the hands, (2) *āsana* or seat favourable to meditation, (3) *japa* or recital of *mantra* which is divine power manifesting in the physique of the spiritual aspirant, (4) *nyāsa*, and (5) *bhūtaśuddhi*. '*Mantra*', according to Woodroffe, 'is a mass of radiant energy' awakening our super-human *śakti* and the true meaning and significance of the esoteric *bīja-mantras* are to be learnt from a true spiritual guide. Woodroffe thus explains the term '*nyāsa*': 'The word means placing of the hands of the *sādhaka* on different parts of his body, at the same time, saying the appropriate *mantras*, and imagining that by his action the corresponding parts of the body of the Deity are placed there'. (*Śakti and Śākta*, p. 455) This is undoubtedly a process of conscious auto-suggestion. Woodroffe further says: 'By imagining the body of the Deity to be his body, he (the *sādhaka*) purifies himself and affirms his unity with the *devatā*'. (*ibid.*, p. 456) The term '*bhūtaśuddhi*' has been translated by Woodroffe as 'the purification of the elements of which the body is composed'. It is a psychological truth that thoughts are great forces and as we think, so we become. The Tāntrika *sādhaka*, by transforming his thought-process, is born anew and by being identified with the Deity, is entitled to worship the Deity.

The Pancatattva

The unjust condemnation of the Tantras in general is due to a misunderstanding of the *pañcatattva*, i.e. the ritual with fish, flesh, wine, woman, etc. First of all, we should remember that the Tantras never and under no circumstances encourage us to gratify our sensuous desires, they teach us the practical methods of spiritualizing our natural inclinations. Sir John Woodroffe says that the very opening chapter of the *Kulārṇava Tantra* points out 'the frailty of man, the passing nature of this world and of all it gives to man, and his duty to avail himself of that Manhood which is so difficult of attainment so that he does not fall but rises and advances to liberation'. (*Śakti and Śākta*, p. 567) Secondly, it has been repeatedly said in the Tantras that those who are lewd or sensuous or addicted to drinking and gluttony are not competent to follow these particular rituals. Thirdly, these rituals have also a very deep spiritual significance as shown in the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*. Woodroffe also points out that 'the *pañcatattva* ritual, in its full literal sense, is not for the *paśu* and the *divya* should be beyond it. In its fullest and literal sense it is for

the *vīra* and is, therefore, called *rājasika sādhanā* or *upāsanā*'. (*ibid.*, p. 572) To a *vīra sādhaka*, all that he does or thinks or speaks are instruments of worshipping the goddess and to him nothing is impure. The aim of the *vīra* is to transform his animal tendencies. It is also curious to note that the meaning of the *pañcatattvas* differs in cases of different *sādhakas*. Following the Tantras Woodroffe says: 'Wine may be wine (*vīra* ritual) or it may be cocoanut water (*paśu* ritual) or it may mean the intoxicating knowledge of the Supreme attained by *yoga* according as it is used in connection with the *vīra*, the *paśu*, and the *divya*, respectively'. (*ibid.*, p. 578) And so with the other four rituals. We should always remember that the Tantras classify human beings into *paśu*, *vīra*, and *divya* according to the predominance of *tamas*, *rajas* or *sattva* elements in them. The five *tattvas* are only meant for the *vīra*. But in spite of the repeated warnings given in different Tantras against the dangers that may be incurred by those who follow these rituals without being competent or without the guidance of a *guru*, there have been cases of abuses of such rituals. This is why the great Swami Vivekananda has condemned, in very strong language, the practice of *vāmācāra* rituals. Sir John Woodroffe, however, admits that some *sādhakas*, beginning from Purnananda and Sarvananda to the devotee of Tarapitha Vairava, have attained real *siddhi* by following these rituals. He concludes the chapter on *pañcatattva* by quoting a *śloka* from the Tāntrika text. He translates the *śloka* thus:

'He is a hero who has controlled his senses, and is a speaker of truth, who is ever engaged in worship and has sacrificed lust and all other passions.'

Elsewhere, Woodroffe says, in vindication of *pañcatattva*—'It is profoundly said, in the *Kulārṇava Tantra* that a man must rise by the same things which are the cause of his fall'.

The Tantrika Philosophy and Sadhana

The Tantras not only deal with the various methods of self-realization in their minutest details, they are also based on a very sound and practical philosophy. Sir John Woodroffe proves, with ample quotations and independent arguments that the essence of the Tantras is not opposed to the Vedas and the Vedānta. The Tāntrika philosophy has really its basis on the Sāṁkhya and the Advaita Vedānta systems though there are important points of difference between the Tāntrika metaphysics on the one hand and the two most important orthodox systems of Indian philosophy on the other. Sir John Woodroffe makes a thorough analysis of the concepts of *māyā*, *prakṛti*, and *śakti* and shows the essential points of similarities and differences among these concepts. A very deep student of all the branches of Indian philosophy, he ably points out how the thirty-six categories of the Tāntrika philosophy have developed out of the twenty-five categories of the Sāṁkhya system.

According to the Tantras, says Sir John Woodroffe, '*māyā* is not illusion, but experience of Time and Space, of Self and not-Self'. But the Śākta Tantras proclaiming the unity of the individual soul (*jīvātman*) and the Supreme Soul (*paramātman*) are really non-dualistic. Dualism, however, remains so long as the distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped persists. The Tantras lay a great emphasis on the gradual spiritual unfolding of the *sādhaka* and if we can remember that there are different stages of spiritual advancement, the alleged conflict of Śāstras disappears. The Tantras deal with various rituals which lead to the liberation

of the *sādhaka* but when liberation is attained, no ritual is necessary. The Tāntrika *sādhaka* makes no difference between (1) *guru* who is the embodiment on earth of the Ādinātha Mahākāla and Mahākālī, (2) *mantra* which is a mass of radiant energy, and (3) *devatā* with whom the devotee is identified before he can worship the Deity. Woodroffe admits that the Tāntrika rituals are practical and highly interesting to a psychiatrist.

Woodroffe deals with the Tāntrika conception of *cit śakti* and *māyā śakti*, matter and consciousness, the problem of creation as explained in the non-dualist Tantras and other ontological problems. He also deals with Tāntrika ethics and asserts that we find a very high standard of morality in the Tantras, especially in the *Mahānirvāṇa* and *Kulārṇava Tantras*. Even *vīra sādhanā* is based on a sound principle, as in such *sādhanā* the gratification of animal appetites takes on the grandeur of great rites, the cosmic activity of *śiva-śakti*. Woodroffe says: 'The dignity of worship is not offended by its associations with natural functions which are ennobled and divinized'.

Woodroffe shows us the distinction between *dhyāna-yoga* and *kuṇḍalinī-yoga* or *bhūtasuddhi* which, as we have said, means the purification of the elements of the body but which has been wrongly translated by Monier Williams. The *kuṇḍalinī*, says Woodroffe,is the Divine Cosmic Energy in bodies and the *cakras* of the cerebro-spinal system and the upper brain are centres of consciousness and so we should never attempt to describe them from a purely materialistic standpoint. We should, however, remember that there are Tāntrika practices which lead us astray from our goal and which are never approved by *sādhakas* of high order. We should scrupulously avoid such sinful practices as lead the performer to extreme sufferings and strive after the goal of self-realization.

A Defender of Indian Culture

Sir John Woodroffe had a very profound admiration for what he found grand and noble and dignified in Indian culture and especially in Indian Tāntrika literature. His deep and thorough acquaintance with the Tantras and the Tāntrika rituals and his practical *sādhanā* made him convinced that Indian religions and specially the Tāntrika religious practices had been unjustly, unfairly, and sometimes maliciously condemned by the so-called foreign scholars who are totally ignorant of Bhārat-Dharma and it had been most unfortunate that some of the Indian disciples of these western *gurus* (Indian not by culture but by accident) echo the same uncharitable and undignified statements which are far from truth and born of ignorance. Some of the western scholars had been very loud in their condemnation of India, and some, though more serious and sympathetic, have not always been correct in their assessment of Indian culture. Amongst those who have unjustly and maliciously condemned Indian culture to hide their ignorance about it, mention may be made of Harold Begbie who remarks in his *Light of India*—'Hinduism is the most material and childishly superstitious animalism that has masqueraded as idealism'. According to this critic, 'the absurd object of its worship is a mixture of Bacchus, Don Juan, and Dick Turpin. It is a pit of abomination as far set from God as the mind of man can go'. Sir John Woodroffe is always severe in his criticism of the western writers who misrepresent or throw heaps of abuses against Indian culture out of ignorance or some other motive. He also points out the errors committed by some true Orientalists whose

names I need not mention here. He took the vow, as it were, of representing Indian culture as revealed in the Tantras in its true colour when many western scholars regarded these as no better than necromancy and condemned the Tāntrika as a hocus-pocus or a juggler.

After the end of the World War I, William Archer, a literary critic, wrote an infamous book *India and Her People* in which he tried to show that the Indians are in a very low grade of civilization, nay, the people of India, without few exceptions, still remain in a barbaric state and it is for their good that they should be denied the right of self-determination. Sir John Woodroffe felt it his duty to vindicate Indian culture and civilization and to point out the ignorance of the so-called critics about India. In reply to the charges made by Archer about India, he wrote a most illuminating book *Is India Civilized?*, which was first published in November, 1918. In this book he emphatically asserted that the true end of civilization is not self-assertion or self-aggrandizement, the end of civilization is the attainment of perfection in the life of the individual and the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and this is the goal of Indian civilization. The ethical and religious ideals of the Tantras, rightly understood, lead to this goal.

Some of the sayings of *Is India Civilized?* are really prophetic. Woodroffe says that 'Indian culture has been facing a grave peril and it is the duty of every true Indian to awake, arise, and initiate the whole world to spirituality'. He asserts again and again that true civilization means moral and spiritual upliftment. The old order, he says, should not be destroyed when it is conducive to national welfare, because the nation that forsakes her language and culture loses herself. If India, says Woodroffe, wins freedom but forsakes her culture, it will no longer be independent India, for those who will be at the helm of affairs will be, in the language of Macaulay, anglicized in all respects except their colour. Regarding the activities of the missionaries he says that Lord Jesus never advised his disciples to preach his religion far and wide for their political and national advantages. He also warned us against the danger of our sending young learners to schools conducted by missionaries, because after completing their education there, they begin to regard their fathers as superstitious old fools. Though English education has contributed much to the awakening of India, yet the education which young men and women receive at universities is highly defective, because no moral and religious education having its foundation on Indian culture and tradition and at the same time being based on universal principles of ethics and religion is imparted to the future citizens of India. He also notices some points of similarity between Roman Catholicism and Tāntricism. (We should remember that Woodroffe was a Roman Catholic) He also affirms that it is only Bhārat-Dharma which teaches us not only to be tolerant but also respectful to the religion and culture of all nations. He was convinced that Bhārat-Dharma and the sound philosophical principles on which Indian religions are based will never die, for even if the Indians forsake them, the best sons and daughters of the western Aryans will supplement their store of knowledge accepting what is grand and noble in Indian culture.

O Arthur Avalon, the seer and the prophet of Neo-Tāntricism, you had once been our friend, philosopher, and guide. We now pay our homage of respect to thee in the language of Wordsworth :

'Avalon! Thou should'st be living at this hour,
The world hath need of thee. ...
Thy soul was like a star that dwelt apart,
Thou had'st a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked Heavens, majestic, free.'

Every one of these advances leads directly or in its intrinsic meaning towards a nearer approach between the mind of East and West and to that extent to a likelihood of a better understanding of Indian thought and ideals.

In some directions the change of attitude has gone remarkably far and seems to be constantly increasing. A Christian missionary quoted by Sir John Woodroffe is 'amazed to find the extent to which Hindu Pantheism has begun to permeate the religious conceptions of Germany, of America, even of England' and he considers its cumulative effect an imminent 'danger' to the next generation. Another writer cited by him goes so far as to attribute all the highest philosophical thought of Europe to the previous thinking of the Brahmins and affirms even that all modern solutions of intellectual problems will be found anticipated in the East. A distinguished French psychologist recently told an Indian visitor that India had already laid down all the large lines and main truths, the broad schema, of a genuine psychology and all that Europe can now do is to fill them in with exact details and scientific verifications. These utterances are the extreme indications of a growing change of which the drift is unmistakable.

Nor is it only in philosophy and the higher thinking that this turn is visible. European art has moved in certain directions far away from its old moorings; it is developing a new eye and opening in its own manner to motives which until now were held in honour only in the East. Eastern art and decoration have begun to be widely appreciated and have exercised a strong if subtle influence. Poetry has for some time commenced to speak uncertainly a new language, note that the world-wide fame of Tagore would have been unthinkable thirty years ago, and one often finds the verse even of ordinary writers teeming with thoughts and expressions which could formerly have found few parallels outside Indian, Buddhistic, and Sufi poets. And there are some first preliminary signs of a similar phenomenon in general literature. More and more the seekers of new truth are finding their spiritual home in India or owe to her much of their inspiration or at least acknowledge her light and undergo her influence. If this turn continues to accentuate its drive, and there is little chance of a reversion, the spiritual and intellectual gulf between East and West if not filled up, will at least be bridged and the defence of Indian culture and ideals will stand in a stronger position.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 20-21)

CHANGING SOCIETIES IN FRONTIER TRACTS OF BENGAL

P. K. BHOWMIK, D.Sc., D.PHIL.

Dr. P. K. Bhowmik is lecturer in Anthropology at the University of Calcutta. He is well known for his extensive field investigations on the problems of tribal people, particularly the Lodhās. He contributed a good many original papers in scientific journals and other periodicals on socio-cultural profile and trends of changes operating in different societies of frontier Bengal. His published works include among others: The Lodhās of West Bengal. *The lecture reproduced below was given by him at the Institute's School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies in January 1968.*

HISTORY of India dates back to prehistoric type of civilization, as borne by many stone implements of different shapes and sizes, which have been unearthed in many parts of this sub-contient, in the past. These are attributed to the people who were, in many cases, considered as the ancestors of the present-day primitive people of our country. In course of time, and due to normal historical processes of stress and strain, new cultural elements belonging to new groups of people of smaller or larger societies of variegated cultures penetrated into the mainland and gradually incorporated themselves into the matrix of the autochthonous basic cultural strata, and ultimately fused into a new and complex social phenomenon. It is an accepted fact that invasion, along with improved material life, better technological devices, coupled with development of communication and transport facilities, brought an overall change in the general socio-economic contour of the country. While on the one hand it threw a few small localized communities or groups of variable cultures and languages to inhospitable regions, on the other, it brought them into the greater fabric of social relationships, allowing them to be accommodated in the changing circumstances. Thus, conflict and composition are the visible characteristics of Indian societies, accentuated by historical events, though the variability, rather the nature of degrees of variability, differed from place to place, and time to time. It is true that all the societies are, more or less, dynamic. There are forces of continuity and change in all societies. So, in course of time, new societies appear in the place of old, and not necessarily these changes should be always abrupt. Due to various degrees of interactions, sometimes conflicts among the groups force many social groups of different nature into large social units by reinforcing social stratifications and gradually minimizing many group differences. As a result, adjustmental processes accelerate the existing social structures, institutions, and the community life in general, with a corresponding change in their sense of value-judgement and philosophy. This directly creates a consensus of opinion to accept the change of the traditional or the conventional system, or of the cultural values of the older generation, and generates an incentive to acquire further innovation or

change. Social and occupational mobility become pronounced in such cases, and people of lower status give up their older customs for the sake of the new, which belong to a higher culture. Again it augments the power of gradual tolerance of puritan or orthodox thoughts or ideologies.

The Physical Facts

This pattern of reaction or adjustmental processes of the people in a given society reflect a series of appreciable changes, conforming to some historical or political events, which can be designated as features of radicalism in a liberal sense. Sometimes, this becomes more vigorous in a frontier zone, in our country, having less Brāhmaṇical influence, or in the areas of a typical social contact-zone, where forces of de-Brāhmaṇization have spread up its roots far and wide. With this working hypothesis and on the basis of facts as observed by me, I have tried to emphasize some aspects of changes in the social groups of different sizes of frontier Bengal, i.e. western frontier of West Bengal. Here, some of their cultural life and action-patterns of the community life have been analyzed to show these trends of changes. Though it is a somewhat bigger task and beyond the capacity for a worker like me to assess and present the actual degree of changes, yet I have concentrated my efforts to focus a few aspects only, to show the changing phases and their profound effect on the mind and philosophy of the people. Possibly these, in time context, have formed bendings and angularities on the social structure in general. These have been scanned and interpreted with historical correlations. Though this observation is mainly centred in a given area of specified jurisdiction, yet it has very little scope for generalization at present. But, I think, a further study of similar nature and in similar strategic areas may reveal some common characters, making it possible to generalize the characteristic changes.

Geographical Influence on Culture Pattern

Frontier Bengal represented in this limited study is the western frontier of West Bengal. It is the zone lying between the rivers Suvarṇarekhā in the south and Rūpanārāyṇa in the north.

In many respects, it happily corresponds with the term 'frontier'. Firstly, it is a geographical frontier: The undulations of the Chotanagpur Plateau, with its lateritic topography, natural growth of *śāl* and other rich vegetations of the jungles, have come in front of alluvial soil, duly formed out of natural denudation and waves of the dancing bay. Secondly, it is a political frontier: It is the boundary of West Bengal, with which the boundaries of Bihar and Orissa merged. For a few centuries this region remained under the political domination of rival authorities. The Hindu kings of Orissa ruled the area for sometime, the Marathas invaded it many times, and a portion of it remained under their direct control even during the early days of the British rule. The Pathans enjoyed its royalty for sometime, but subsequently the Moghuls occupied the region. The Portuguese and the French also came in contact with the area through the river front. Ultimately came the British, headed by Job Charnock, who defeated the Moghul army at Khegree. Thus, we find that the area had some strategic importance to be designated as a political frontier.

Thirdly, it is a cultural frontier: The Sāntāls, Muṇḍas, Lodhas, Kherias, Mahālis, and a number of other aboriginal derivatives, who predominantly inhabit the area, still cling to their pristine culture. Other cultures like the Orissan culture (*Utkala*

Saṁskṛti) from the south, Rāḍ culture (*Baṅga Saṁskṛti*) from the north, also penetrated the area in stages, thus making it a cultural confluence or cultural frontier. With this background, I would like to described some historical facts, which may be correlated later with the social events, to show the nature of social changes punctuated by cultural transformations that have taken place in the area.

In the course of a historical study of this strategic region it can be said that in ancient times the area was submerged by Buddhism and Jainism, the former is borne out by the fact that in modern Tamluk or ancient Tāmralipti, Emperor Aśoka had erected a *stūpa* and many Buddhist monks sailed to distant places like Ceylon, Java, and other South-East Asian countries from this port. While, as a proof of the latter, many Jaina statues have been unearthed recently in the area, and its hinterland is still strewn with the ruins of Jaina temples. As a result, in the core of its social structure, we find that the Brāhmaṇical culture and philosophy had very little role to play. It can be further said that later Vaiṣṇavism also swayed a major portion of this tract. That the Brāhmaṇas had little political power and influence is revealed from old records, which show that out of 29 zamindars of the area, 8 were Kṣatriyas, 7 Mahiṣyas, 4 Utkala Brāhmaṇas, 2 Utkala Karans, 2 Dakṣin Rāḍiya Kāyasthas, 2 Sadgops, 1 Sām-Vedīyā Brāhmaṇa, 2 Bhatta Brāhmaṇas, and 1 Mānjhi aboriginal. This clearly indicates that the Brāhmaṇical ideas had very little scope to reorient the life and philosophy of the people of this region for a pretty long time, due to the lack of political power and social supremacy of the Brāhmaṇas.

During the first phase of the British rule, quite a number of rebellious insurrections took place in the area and the local people offered resolute resistance to the alien rulers. The history of their heroic resistance is revealed in Chuar or Pāik rebellion, Sāntāl insurrection, and the like. In the beginning of the present century, the people of the area took an active part in the *swadesī* (Nationalist) movement, which swept the country, by boldly facing British oppression and the gallows.

It is, however, very interesting to note that the people who took a leading part in the Non-Co-operation (1921) and Civil-Disobedience (1930) movements and revolted against the British during the Quit-India movement in 1942 and established a Parallel Government in the area, cast majority of their votes against the Indian National Congress in the first General Election after independence.

Social Movements

Varṇāśrama, with its caste-guilds and occupational patterns was very effective and strong for many centuries in India, and it could have effectively interlocked the then prevailing different caste-economic structures. But gradual growth of population, subsequent invasions from outside, and new economic enterprises developing through overseas trade and commerce, as introduced by some foreign nations, who came to this land, and changes in political sphere, the problem of social change had taken different characters, at different times and places. Besides, spatial demarcation, prolonged isolation, and gradual assimilation of regional cultures had segmented the big communities into many sub-groups, professing some isolated cultural patterns of separate identity. Here only eight caste or community groups have been studied, of which six belong to Scheduled Caste group, namely, (i) Pauṇḍras or the Pauṇḍra Kṣatriyas (land-holding and cultivating

group), (ii) the Namaśūdras (cultivators), (iii) Rājvaṁśīs (fishermen), (iv) Hāḍis (sweepers), (v) Doms (drummers), and (vi) Mucis (leather-workers). The (vii) Citrakars or Paṭidārs, who are traditional painters and scrollers, come next. The rest are the (viii) Lodhās, a tribal group. A total of 18 villages in 9 Police Stations of the district of Midnapore were surveyed to note the social change. A few cases of a different nature are also presented here just to show the nature of the change.

It should be noted here that these facts cover a period of sixty years (1900-1960).

Caste Prejudices

The Pauṇḍras were considered to be of a lower social status, and so there was no question of their inter-dining with the local Brāhmaṇas, Karans or Māhiṣyas, who held higher status. In a few cases, it was found that a few Māhiṣyas, out of love or affection, and as a protest against this so-called social injustice, took cooked rice from the hands of the Pauṇḍras. Later they were declared outcaste by the village elders. As a penal measure and atonement, they directed for shaving of their heads and making a benevolent gift to a Brāhamaṇa, after performing *cāndrāyaṇa* or purificatory ceremony. In many cases, there were imposition of fine too. In a few villages in Nandigram Police Station separate sitting accommodation was provided on the basis of caste status in *yātrā* or open-air theatrical performances, and separate *hookah* (smoking-pipe with long tube) arrangement was also made for these people.

After dinner, removal of the dining plates by the members of the lower caste groups were very common. In a village in Sutahata Police Station of the same district, one Pauṇḍra started a temporary sweetmeat shop in a fair, but it was subsequently burnt by the so-called higher castes. Such was the nature of social injustice and disabilities prevalent in the local society.

In course of time, social workers belonging to the Māhiṣya caste sided with a few rich and wealthy Pauṇḍras, to protest against this and to organize a feast to remove untouchability. The dominant features of this feast were as follows:

(i) Pauṇḍra people would cook and prepare meals along with the Brāhmaṇas or Māhiṣyas.
(ii) There would be no caste restriction in distributing food to the guests.
(iii) Invitees or the assembled guests should sit together in a row irrespective of their castes.

When this arrangement was made, it was given due publicity through meetings, posters, and pamphlets. There were counter-meetings also, headed by one Panchanan Tarkaratna and supported by many orthodox influential Brāhmaṇas, Karans, Māhiṣyas, and Kamilas or goldsmiths. But ultimately more than 15,000 guests were entertained in this feast in spite of counter propaganda.

In the same village, arrangement was made for propitiation of the wooden image of Gaurāṅga (Lord Caitanya) by the Pauṇḍras and to hold a great feast, which was so long denied to them. In this way, the Pauṇḍras gradually attempted their best to raise their social status.

The Namaśūdras of this area also, in many places, became Vaiṣṇavas by taking the surname 'Das'. They stopped widow marriage and restricted their womenfolk from going to the market on any occasion, as the local caste Hindus do not prefer all these, whom they wanted to emulate.

The Rājvaṁśīs are fishermen by profession. Very recently, a large number of them started the business of rearing spawns of fresh-water fishes and by this trade they earned a lot of fortune. They have

organized one association of their own, where many of their caste problems are discussed and solutions are suggested. Many of them have now started clubs in their own villages. In course of their movement, they attempted to improve their status by adopting surnames like, 'Barman' for 'Bar', 'Bhowmick' for 'Bhuinya', and so on, by which they are usually known.

The Hāḍis (sweepers) of this district were generally engaged for carrying palanquins. They are well-organized and their *pañcāyat* organization is also very strong. Now-a-days they are raising their voice in protest against many social disabilities, which they were made to suffer. Previously they used to visit the house of a well-to-do man uninvited during any festive occasion, and after taking meals, they were given a few *Paise* as gift by the house-owner. This practice is known as *kāṅgālī bhojan* (feeding of the destitute), by which, it is said, the performer earns the blessings of God. Now, the Hāḍis demand formal invitation and do not remove their dining plates in community feasts, which was a common practice. A few Hāḍis are now found to were *upavīta* (sacred thread), in immitation of the Brāhmaṇas.

The Mucis (leather-workers) are numerically small in this area, but in a few villages it has been noticed that they, with the help of local caste Hindu groups, are now getting the assistance of degraded Brāhmaṇas in their ceremonial affairs.

The Doms or drummers, sometimes practise bamboo-work and they claim themselves as Bāṅś-Kāyasṭhas, meaning 'scribes' doing bamboo-work. They also, like the Hāḍis (sweepers), demand formal invitation on festive occasions performed by higher castes, and in many villages they have organized the worship of Goddess Saraswatī with the help of a degarded Brāhmaṇa priest.

The Citrakars or Paṭidārs are traditional painters and scrollers. They are Muslim by faith, but stay along with the Hindus. A few years ago, a movement was started just after the partition of India, to convert them fully into Hindu faith, and in this, the Bharat Sevashram Sangha of Calcutta, took the lead. For this an arrangement was made to perform a *homa* (fire sacrifice) and a Brāhmaṇa belonging to higher status was chosen as the priest. Women of this caste were given conch-shell bangles and new red-bordered *sāḍīs* (length of cotton or silk worn by Hindu women). While the men folk were given wooden-bead necklaces on the occasion. They were given new Hindu names too. But later, in one of the villages, when they felt that none of their Hindu neighbours stood by their side to help solve their social problems on some personal ground, they again re-embraced Islamic faith by adopting Muslim names like Khudiram Citrakar converted into 'Khurshed', Jogen Citrakar converted into 'Jaynuddin', etc. with the help of a Muslim Kāzi.

The Lodhās are a denotified tribe, but most of them assert themselves as descendants of Savaras, as is found in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. They are anti-Brāhmaṇical. Very recently, a good many Lodhās of different villages have formed an organization with the patronage of a few social workers for their overall betterment. Now, a few Brāhmaṇas are also found to accept the priesthood of their community. They are now trying to constitute a distinct organization of their own to discuss their socio-religious problems.

Study of Temples

Altogether four temples have been studied by me to note the changes in respect

of worship patterns and the purposes, for which conventional worship was made. It has also been attempted to determine the attitude of the devotees belonging to higher castes towards the priests belonging to lower castes or tribes. These temples are :

(a) Caṇḍī temple of Betiya in Kharagpur Police Station—the priest belongs to the Mānjhi or fisherman caste—an aboriginal derivative.

(b) Jayacaṇḍī temple of Pitalkanthi in Sankrail Police Station—the priest belongs to the Lodhā tribe, but due to the influence of the local Brāhmaṇa zamindar, one Utkala Brāhmaṇa was also engaged as priest, but after the abolition of zamindary he has been deposed.

(c) Sarvamaṅgalā temple of Kesiari in Kesiari Police Station—a Utkala Brāhmaṇa is the priest.

(d) Brāhmaṇī temple of Narayangarh in Narayangarh Police Station—the Brāhmaṇa priest belongs to the Madhyaśreṇī section.

Conventionally, temples and shrines are considered as the seats of gods and goddesses. At the sametime, these are dumb witnesses of many changed conditions of human behaviour patterns too. This study of temples was continued for six months, which revealed that devotees belonging to altogether 47 castes and communities attended these temples to offer worship to the deities. They were comprised of Caste Hindus, Scheduled Castes, and Muslims. The total number of worships made were as follows :

TABLE I

Number of Worships

1.	Betiyā Caṇḍī	...	159
2.	Jayacaṇḍī	...	834
3.	Sarvamaṅgalā	...	766
4.	Brāhmaṇī	...	139

It will be interesting to note the purposes of the devotees, associated with the deities of these temples, for which they offer worship. These are as follows :

(1) Annual customary worship, (2) prayer and vow for cure of a disease, (3) gratitude after recovery from illness, (4) ceremony performed on an auspicious day, (5) prayer for health, (6) general prosperity in trade, (7) prayer for employment, (8) promotion and stability in service, (9) security in the jungle, (10) for abundant crops and good harvest, (11) after getting property, (12) for securing property, (13) for birth of a calf, (14) for cure of cattle disease, (16) prayer for a child, (17) gratitude for birth of a child, (18) for safe delivery, (19) for progress in education, (20) for success in examination, (21) for success in a law suit, (22) gratitude after success in a law suit, (23) for success in political election contest, (24) for victory in a football match, (25) for reputation in theatricals and opera, (26) for domestic peace and general welfare, (27) prayer for good match in a marriage, (28) celebration of first rice-eating ceremony connected with a baby, and (29) celebration for the first cooking of rice after harvest.

It is a fascinating study, how different caste and community groups seek supernatural help, the types of needs for which relationship with the supernatural is sought and maintained through these temples, and it is believed that these are fulfilled. In this connection it may be stated that most of the taxi drivers in Calcutta keep a picture of Mother Kālī in front of them to avert accident or injury, which it is believed could be avoided by the grace of the goddess.

Thus, these variegated people of different castes and creeds in this specific physical environment of political or historical background, in their needs and problems, in

their crisis and anxiety, always try to compromise with the supernatural forces, from time to time, by attributing immense potentiality to them, and surrendering themselves to their mercy. These supernatural forces have been placed in the forefront of the godheads to whom man surrenders, and whom man wants to please and satisfy. Sympathies are transposed, they are clothed, they are offered food, they are also given animal sacrifice and tried to be pleased.

This clearly indicates that Brāhmaṇical dominance was never an important factor in this region. The Brāhmaṇas have, more or less, migrated into this tract later, and in small numbers, and have very little political control over the ruling or prosperous communities living here. As a result, traditional Brāhmaṇical cults have been transplanted and somewhat assimilated very slowly into the matrix of the regional autochthonous folk-cults which have been revealed in course of this study.

Village Community

Three villages have been studied for this purpose to show the nature of relationships of the villagers belonging to various castes and community groups. One of these villages is Daharpur inhabited by the Caste Hindus, as well as tribals like, the Muṇḍās and the Lodhās. The second village is Kasba Narayangarh, which is a Muslim dominated village, and the third is Mirpur, a Christian village. Though religion segments the society vertically, yet there are features of compromise or tolerance amongst the communities living there. In the economic field, this type of relationship is more frequent. Most of the Caste Hindu groups are found to employ tribals, Muslims, and Christians as workers in their domestic as well as other activities. In many of the social festivals, Muslims are found to invite the neighbouring Hindus, specially at the time of marriage ceremony. The Hindus are found to participate in their wedding processions, taking uncooked meals, and offering presentations. There are ample examples of artificial relationship like, *Dharma Bābā* (ceremonial father), *Dharma Mā* (ceremonial mother), *Dharma Bhāi* or *Bon* (ceremonial brother or sister), or ceremonial friend known as *Dharma Sāṅgāt* or *Sai* or *Ful Sai*, etc.

Incidence of such relationships with the so-called high castes like Brāhmaṇas or Kāyasthas, are frequent with some lower castes like Hāḍis or the Karaṅgas, and the Kākmārās or even with the Muslims. In a few cases, it has been found, specially in regard to keeping of concubines, that inter-caste relationship is very frequent, though inter-caste marrige is not so frequent. This artificial relationship demands observance of certain formalities and offering mutual aid, and meeting social obligations with reciprocity, and I think, the group distances have been toned down to some extent by these. The Christians are found to prefer Bengali surnames in the present generation, but in cases of Muslims, this is not so frequent. The Christians are found to apply turmeric paste before wedding ceremony, just like the local Hindus. They are also found to mark their forehead and hair-parting with vermilion at the time of marriage ceremony. Paying subscription to Hindu worships or Muslim festivals, specially for Muharrum, is very common, and the Hindus are found to offer worship regularly to some Muslim spiritual potentialities. It has been mentioned early that in a good number of cases Muslims are found to offer worship to Hindu goddesses. A few cases are found at the Jayacaṇḍī temple of Pitalkanthi, where goat sacrifice was offered by the Muslim devotees.

Festivals and Folk Songs

In many festivals, specially at the time of *Gājan* celebration, the Brāhmaṇa priest is found at the top, performing some Brāhmaṇical rituals, but in the lowest rung, it is found that the devotees belong not only to the Scheduled Caste groups, but also to the Scheduled Tribe groups. This is an indication of the expression of the idea of tolerance. In the village life too there are current amongst the people, a good many proverbs or cap-verses, *chaḍās* (nursery rhymes) which, in many cases, reflect some radical features, because these generally convey the changing ideas against the traditional social norms. Some undertone of violence is also marked as a form of protest against conventional social systems.

Kāñcan Kāñcan dudher sar
Kāñcan jāve parer ghar
Hai-ta jadi vaper ghar.
Tuliyā khai-ta dudher sar.
Eta haila parer ghar,
Kai pābere dudher sar.
Khuḍā dila buḍā bar
O khuḍā tui jale duvyā mar.

In this nursery rhyme, affairs of Kāñcan, a tiny sweet girl, have been reflected. Kāñcan has no father. She has to stay with her uncle as guardian. She was given in marriage to an old groom by her uncle. So little Kāñcan raises protest and casts mild curses on her uncle.

Āluk māluk śāluk
Ban śāluker pātā
Hariṇ bale kātiyā duba-go
Chota thākurer māthā.

In the above verse, a lady wants to behead her husband's elder brother, who appears to her as a jumbled personality and whom she does not respect at all. She wants to kill him in the manner a stag is beheaded.

Kānta maḍā mār mārlu
Bhāṅgla hāter tāḍ
Kṣati habe kār?

In a domestic quarrel one Kānta seriously assaulted his wife, as a result of which her bangles were broken. She derisively asks her husband, 'Whose was the loss'?

In the folk songs sung at the time of *Karam* festival it has been noted that protest against social injustice is voiced in these songs:

Bhādar māser deuḍā
nā jāhiha cākurī
Bhije jābe lāl pāguḍī
Ghare je āche deuḍā
saru cāler puḍā go
Ār dāl besātī.

'O brother, don't go so far
In such downpour
and in this drizzling month of Bhādra!
Your red turban will be soaked
and fade out.
You could still hold on,
with our stocks of rice and pulses —
And avoid this foul month.'

Karma kapāl tālu
Kār kapāle māch cākā cākā
Kār kapāle ālu.

'Work, work hard and laboriously.
Some find fortune this way
and get a few pieces of fish
in their plate.
And those who do not,
only get a potato.'

In the *Tusu* festival, a few notable features are marked. '*Tusu*' connotes a doll, and the festival starts with the ceremonial marriage of a doll with another. This is a feminine festival and the songs are sung with dancing by the maidens and the women. The doll is generally placed on a brass plate and is made by the potter caste, in a crude form. But now-a-days it is celebrated at Jhargram and its neigh-

bouring areas with pomp and grandeur. The doll is quite large in size and so it is not placed on a brass plate, but fixed on a platform. At the time of immersion ceremony, it is kept on a cycle-rickshaw, as it is about four to five feet in height and quite heavy. Now *tusu* is going to change her physical features gradually and most of the younger people organize this under their leadership. In the songs of the *tusu*, many events and problems of social and political nature are also reflected. A few examples of these are given below to convey the basic idea.

Āndhār ghare chunc guli-i-chi
Bhāśur bale jāni ni
O bhāśur tor pāye paḍi
Didi jena jāne ni.

'I was mopping the floor,
with cowdung paste
In the gathering twilight.
And lo! there lay in it,
my husband's elder!
What a shame, I was off my guard!
Don't O! Brother!
convey this fact to your wife.'

This is a protest against the conventional social taboos which are common in many societies.

Ban jangal sab gela kailāśe
Jata duḥkha dicche corā congrese.

'All the forests on earth
have now receded into the heaven.
Our roots of misery are
the notorious Congress.'

In this way, in many songs and nursery rhymes protests are made against the conventional social system, which so closely inter-laced the groups together in their thickly woven fabric of traditions.

Conclusion

I have discussed a few trends of changes operating in different societies of frontier Bengal, as revealed in many of the action-patterns of the people. Although the evidences are few, yet they reflect some interstsing features. In respect of social mobility, i.e. attempts at raising caste statuses and ranks, the inter-action is more pronounced.

Again the study of the temples has revealed certain fascinating features about the peoples' idea of gods and goddesses, their purpose of worship, and the changing relationships with the deities. In the village or in community life, by face to face relationship through various socio-economic reciprocities, various castes and communities having different ranks and stations are seen to assist each other, which reflects an attitude minimizing sharp distances.

It has also been noticed in course of this study that the changing patterns of occupations are very dominant, because many of the non-traditional occupations like, rickshaw-pulling, work in printing presses, and industrial units, etc. have now emerged as new professions, and accommodate the surplus population, who have shifted from their age-old traditional or obsolete occupations. By studying the folk-songs, the nursery rhymes, etc. we get evidences of resolute protests not only against the conventional social systems or taboos, but also against different political motivations and practices. These types of changing phenomena are not only dominant in this area, but, more or less, have spread in varying degrees throughout the country. This clearly indicates that the people have reached a new socio-economic frontier, where the forces of de-Brāhmaṇization are in operation now in varying degrees, due to industrial and technological developments and the changing political situation in the country.

The caste-bound occupation is not in a position to sustain the society in a tradi-

tional way. So drifting is an automatic alternative for edjustment in the existing situation. Along with this, corresponding transformation of social structure and attitude are, more or less, spontaneous. Views about world affairs, individual philosophy, political outlook, new educational systems, all have already changed to a large extent. Historical evidences suggest that the de-Brāhmaṇical movements are not new in India, which became very strong, at times, through popular religious cults and movements. These, in course of time, have prepared a field of its own and encouraged many of the castes and communities, led by some prominent personalities, to defy and cut through its influence. In this respect, overseas trade started in this country by some foreigners gave opportunity to the people of the contact-zones to shift their professions, by providing them scope of various employment, and this by its own momentum, affected the traditional Indian social tranquility in a vigorous way. So even with the least influence of urbanization or industrialization, the society began to reorient itself in the de-Brāhmaṇical form since long past and, at present, it is almost free from its influence.

In this particular frontier tract, the features of changes are so pronounced that they reflect a radical character, which can easily be corroborated with some historical or political evidences. In this connection, it can be said that Brāhmaṇical conservatism had very little scope, all along, to subdue or influence the people living in this area. So radicalism which is observed here, can be considered as a frontier trait. Industrialization and gradual emergence of urban features also dealt a blow to the caste-bound occupations with their associated philosophy and outlook. It gave vent to radical ideas at many places, where we find a growing inclination and incentive to accept new professions which directly correspond to our concept of radicalism, or sharp or quick changes due to less dominance of the Brāhmaṇas.

In Chittagong, in East Pakistan, we also find the people responding to changes of radical nature not in social sphere alone, but also in political sphere. As it is a riverine port, it has much strategic importance as the river frontier. In this way, if all such frontiers of this country be examined critically from the sociological point of view, the same sort of radicalism or its mild varient can easily be observed at these places, and it will probably conform with our idea of radicalism.

Contrarily, a few frontier places of Brāhmaṇical influence may still reflect conservative characters, having less incentive on the part of the people to effect any change or innovation.

AESTHETICS AND MODERN ETHICS

PABITRA KUMAR ROY, M.A.

A keen student of Philosophy, Sri Pabitra Kumar Roy is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan. A prolific writer on philosophical subjects, particularly ethics, he is a regular contributor to philosophical journals, Indian and foreign. His published works include: Aristotle's Theology, Hume and the Ontological Argument, On Defining Ethical Terms. *The following is the text of a lecture he gave at the Institute in December 1968.*

ARISTOTLE says, 'the term "good" is used in as many different ways ... the word good cannot stand for one and the same notion... It seems to be different in kind of action and in different arts'. (*Nichomachean Ethics*, Bk. I—6-3, 7-1. Translation by F. H. Peters).

VALUE TERMS

It has been fashionable with the British analysts to hold that value terms whether in ethics or in aesthetics are equi-logical, i.e. the logical behaviour of value words are action-guiding in their import and are primarily concerned with evaluation both in moral and non-moral contexts. The value terms being basically non-descriptive are directly expressive of commendation in the context of choice.

AESTHETICS AND MORALITY

Berkeley, in his *Principles of Human Knowledge*, pointed to one of the ends of language as 'the putting the mind in some particular disposition' (*ibid.*, Introduction, 20), which 'arise immediately' in the mind. The tradition continues in Hume, for whom morality is akin to aesthetics owing to an element of immediacy. No contemplation of a state of affairs is a moral judgement. Moral judgements only occur when a sentiment of approval or disapproval is aroused. We 'feel' values. 'To have the sense of virtue', says Hume, 'is nothing but to *feel* a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character. The very feeling constitutes our praise or admiration'. (*Treatise*, Bk. III, Sec. I, Part I) The moral sentiment is a feeling of approbation or disapprobation. 'The case is the same as in our judgements concerning all kinds of beauty, tastes, and sensations. Our approbation is imply'd in the immediate pleasure they convey to us.' Hume would agree that though moral and natural beauty closely resembles one another, it is not precisely moral approbation which we feel, for example, for a beautiful body. But it is a difference in criteriological application of value terms, whereas the equi-logicality of the terms stands unaltered.

Since Hume laid the foundations of evaluative theory of value terms, it has been sought to establish the thesis that the logical apparatus of virtues and standards is general enough to cover moral as well as non-moral goodness. The descriptive meaning, however, is different as the case is moral or non-moral. But the evaluative meaning is the same—in both the cases we are commending, and thereby guiding choices, i.e. prescriptive. Let us state its main features:

(a) Value judgements (moral as well as non-moral ones) are prescriptive.
(b) Value judgements commend, or discommend, its subject.
(c) Its function is to guide action in relation to that subject.
(d) It implicitly evaluates other things of the same class and character as the named subject.
(e) This feature provides the element of universality which, it is claimed, belongs to all value judgements.
(f) Value judgement about actions have the same prescriptive character as those about other things.
(g) Its informative content of value judgements is secondary to its evaluative force.

Such a theory, as we come across instances of it, in P. Nowell Smith, Stevenson, and R. M. Hare, would require pure value words. All these writers contend that any value word will have a descriptive and an evaluative meaning, of which the latter is primary. They may also be said to believe that any word can be used evaluatively, and the word, whether or not there are other such pure value words which are used for commending alone, it may be admitted that pure value words are few in number. This group of thinkers have been rather casual in applying the arguments drawn from ethics to aesthetic matters, asserting that identical arguments prevail *mutatis mutandis*.

Aesthetic Judgements

The present paper proposes to consider some of the value words as used in aesthetic judgements and to bring out their different logical behaviour.

A pure value word is that which is entirely expressive of valuation and contain no other element. Words like 'good', 'bad' are thought to be the purest of the valuing words, and that they operate according to their own peculiar evaluative rules. The evaluative theory lays it down that value judgements about actions have the same prescriptive character as those about other things. To call an action good is to commend it, and to commend it is to imply that one ought to do likewise in the circumstances—similarly with value judgements on people. Judgements are moral, if they relate to people and their actions. 'Moral' or 'aesthetic' is only contextual designation of judgements. Analysis is neutral between contextual considerations. What is important is the logical study of language. Hare directs a whole argument against the view that the use of the word 'good' in moral contexts is totally different from its use in non-moral ones. The ultimate difference is only in the degree and kind of emotion felt in the one case and in the other. In fact there is no distinctive 'language of morals' at all, and *mutatis nomini*, no language of aesthetics as well.

The Uses of Value Words

But, actually, we do many things with the value words and their uses vary considerably in context. It is agreed that value words are emotive, but one qualification should perhaps be made. It may be put like this, the expression 'X is good' is nothing stronger than 'I approve of X'; but there is still good reason to say that there is a strong element of this in the way we use value words. Some value words are used more simply than others as straightforward expressions of approval. We feel with the people who are naive or are approaching a work of art for the first time, that the cry of pleasure before the object, whatever words are used, is wholly dominated by feeling. The sorting out of what is meant by it comes later. Any words

employed will change their meaning with their immediate context. But the word in this case is not likely to be 'good'. The emotive theory used the existence of feeling-loaded words as evidence for a general account of valuation in terms which, if not psychological, border on it. The important thing to emphasize here is that pure judgement words are almost never used in this feeling-loaded sense. In action, they are normally, if not always, derived of a strong psychological force. This is largely because much more expressive words are available for these tasks. Judging, moral or non-moral, is less personal an affair than choosing and deciding. Wittgenstein speaks of inference as 'a transition to an assertion, and so to the behaviour that corresponds to the assertion'. (*The Philosophical Investigations*, I, 486) Judging is not so much a word that describes a process as a word that marks the end of one. To regard valuation as mere expression of emotion is to lose sight of the terminative force implicit in the value judgements.

There is a specialized tone in the use of value words which is relevant to the special types of context in which they are used. We do not choose a judgement word like 'good' or 'bad' without having the circumstances so clearly marked out for us by quite definite conventions. Thus we might be said to be working by rule. We utter the word 'good' or 'bad' under such particular conditions that our meaning is quite delineated in almost any given case. This is similar to what Hare calls the 'inverted commas sense of good'. And we provide these inverted commas quite naturally. When we go with a friend to an art gallery we know each other's tastes, artistic experiences, and education and shape our use of the word to whatever special characteristic we wish to emphasize. We may both like early Rājput paintings, and as we stand in admiration before one such work, one may simply utter the word 'good' for all of our responses, for various sorts of appraisal. Because we know the painting and the person well, further explanation is not needed. And with a painting which is a very great work and very much admired, the expression may be used as a conscious understatement. One knows that superlatives are needed, but does not wish to use them and may still suggest them through that most general adjective 'good'. But this depends on more than one person knowing the painting well and sharing the knowledge of each other's opinion. Some one might misunderstand this use as understatement and think that one had meant 'merely good' rather than 'very great'. This change in use through varying contexts is, of course, characteristic of other uses of 'good' besides those of aesthetics. However, in aesthetics the 'inverted commas' sense is perhaps the most common. We do not normally reach for the pure value word when we express a judgement. Our words are likely to have more descriptive content so as to express a more definite feeling, or more precise discrimination.

There are several characteristics of the use of the word 'good' about works of art that should be pointed out. One convention for limiting its use occurs when it is used to indicate that something is good of its kind without necessarily meaning that the object is good as a work of art. When we say that 'this is a good example of the Bengal School of Painting' or speak in the same way of poem of the Vaiṣṇava School, we may simply be pointing out the characteristic qualities of a certain unfamiliar genre and not evaluating the work aesthetically. To appraise may not be to evaluate. We may

say that a particular painting is a less good example of its genre than another, but is still a better painting. We are often likely to find this when certain styles and forms have lost their vitality and still kept their hold on the artist. Then we detect excellence in the actual breaking away from the limitations of a genre. Critical discussions may be concerned with the relationship of genre to value of individual work. Genre words often have their own value connotations and the proper importance of them is often much in question.

A value word which we are often more inclined to apply to works of art is 'great' than 'good'. 'Great' is a word which expresses something of the scope of the work in question and has consequently more descriptive content. We speak quite naturally of the great masterpieces of art as belonging to a class of their own. Great works of art are identifiably different from those works of their time which in spite of their other merits were not outstanding. This fact points to some of the differences between the aesthetic use of 'good' and the more frequently discussed ethical use. While 'good' and 'great' mean quite different sorts of things when referring to people and actions, their difference in speaking of good works of art is normally one of degree. The principal point is that the use of pure value words in aesthetic matters is governed by conventions that restrict them rather sharply, and that they are not the most natural terms that we need to use in judgement. It is worthwhile to show that there is no very close connection of this use with that in ethics. To say that this or that is a good act or that Gandhiji was a good man is to make a quite serious statement in which the ethical weight is distinctly felt. On the other hand, to say that something is a good work of art is a quite non-committal sort of thing to say. Unless, of course, some special connection makes the commitment clear. Sometimes to say that Shakespeare is a good writer is to be almost ridiculous. It is to say something true enough, but altogether inappropriate. Truisms of this kind are not sound judgements when there are no relevant situations to which they are to be applied. And it is hard to think of situations in which we would feel the relevance of any similar remark.

I leave out the use of the comparative 'better' and the superlative 'best' because they do involve comparisons which imply a restriction among the sorts of things compared. We never say 'best' without specifying the range of comparison and giving various reasons for this rating. With novels this becomes very involved, and the reasons given become far more important than the rating itself. The vocabulary of superlatives, as evinced by the film makes' use of it, become rather worn through over use. There is no clear-cut linguistic. way to pointing to the height of artistic achievement without considerable amount of reason-giving, a willingness to specify, describe, and explain. A scheme for the grading of works of art, like Urmson's for moral acts could be set up only if the things being graded were of relatively simple kinds, and a standard could be devised to correlate a quite narrow range of possibilities. Let us take the example of the grading of apples. There are several kinds of apples and several uses to which they are put. And the task of setting down what kinds of apples are best and how the grading and selecting of them should proceed is not very difficult one. With works of art this kind of grading is impossible, and it is not of any use to establish such a scheme. For one thing there are no set purposes to which works

of art are put, so no criteria can be derived from purposes. And for another, the variety of kinds of art is so enormous that a grading scheme could never be devised which could account for them all. There are, of course, critical remarks which look like 'grading', which are a form of tactical and not a serious grading chart. Again, in such lists of 'the ten greatest novels' no real grading scheme is usually employed. Different works recommend themselves for different reasons, and such lists often work for variety rather than singleness of standard. Rabindranath once wrote for an autograph-hunter: 'Nature abhors superlatives'.

Superlative Value words

Dose not there exist a recognized natural hierarchy? Long tradition has placed such writers like Shakespeare, Dante, Kālidāsa or Rabindranath at the top of the literary heap. But placing below them are rather muddled and the contest is seldom seriously joined. The word 'greatness' points loosely to the sprawling company of the elect. The superlative has a character of its own, and acts as much as anything else as a claim upon our attention. It is a way of emphasis, of underlining.

May be that in matters of art we are not content with 'good' alone and love to use 'great' or 'greatest'. It has a more persuasive force in directing peoples' feeling of approval on anything the term is applied to. It does not have more descriptive content than 'good'. But like background music, it strongly disposes one toward works of art that is put in its sphere of influence. Superlative value terms are psychologically contagious, but aesthetically insignificant.

Pure Value words

One pure value word that has always had a traditional relevance to works of art is 'beautiful'. It has a limited role in judgement. It applies not only to works of art, but to things existing in nature as well. Beauty has been traditionally regarded as the object of perception by the senses. St. Thomas says, quite simply, that beauty is what is pleasing to the senses. It need not be limited to works of art. 'Beauty' has a veriety of uses. They commonly are the following.

We seldom add anything to the discussion of works of art by calling them 'beautiful'. There are many criteria for applying this word, but investigation usually moves away, from the word to the explanation. And in doing so any pure sense of the word is lost. Pure value words like this are simply prefaces to explanation. They come in the moment in which we do not know exactly what to say or may not desire to say it. Of course some people may not like to answer the question why something is beautiful. They may feel that murmuring this word of praise and admiration for their own need is sufficient. We accept this feeling without challenge because we already know a great deal about 'why'. We understand this preference for silence. For the inarticulate appreciation, and within certain limits we accept peoples' reasons for wanting their appreciation to remain so. Only in these circumstances, little or nothing is added by calling anything 'beautiful'. While pure value words may be very useful stages in explanation, or proper expressions of reation, they are of little importance in serious critical judgements.

It is also worth noticing that artists seldom use the word 'beautiful' in their own assessment of other artists' works which they admire. They invariably mention technical excellences, instead of using 'beautiful' as a predicate in the judgement to express any aesthetic quality.

Judgement words

In aesthetics, the judgement words are much more about ourselves and our feelings than about the objects with which we are concerned. It is a gradual transition from 'good' to 'marvellous', 'enchanting' or from 'bad' to 'terrible' to 'appalling' or 'disgusting'. The dispassionate quality of pure value word slips easily into the strong expressions of feeling. Even there are cases, in aesthetics, where the dryness of dispassion creates a powerful emotional effect. Value words, in aesthetics, refer to the states of mind, the qualities of works of art, in which role they are descriptive, and they also act as measures of judgement. Thus rather than the Janus principle which P. Nowell Smith has discovered in the double use of ethical terms, there is in value terms, in their aesthetic use, almost a Viṣṇu principle. Rather than facing in two different directions they have a multiplicity of incarnations, none of them is totally exclusive of the other. This is not the case of ethics.

Conclusion

We doubt then whether comtemporary accounts of the meaning of moral judgements can have applicability to aesthetics. In aesthetics we value rather than evaluate. We value Rabindranath for his lyricism, Hardy for his awkward honesty. This is appraisal. To appraise is to be concerned with a particular without being concerned with other particulars within a class. To evaluate something, by contrast, is to compare it with other particulars within a class. Evaluation entails appraisal of particulars but appraisal of particulars does not ential their evaluation. Criteria are for judging classes of particulars. Evaluative criteria can be specified prior to our inspecting a particular individual. In this sense they are *a priori*. To appraise a particular work of art is to describe it, and the description can only follow the inspection we make of the work. In this sense appraisal is *a posteriori*.

Again, aesthetic merit is a perception of the mind and not an inference, as the prescriptivist theory of ethics might seem to suggest. The aesthetic goodness of a thing is recognized and not argued to nor argued for. Aesthetic appraisals are not inferences but perception of the mind which people can be made to share. Such judgements are descriptive—valuational. Aesthetic discourse is appraisive, a description employing a certain order of concepts. Its whole point is to describe what is valued and enjoyed.

It may also be added that prescriptivism in thics is antinaturalistic in the sense that it is designed to take account of the gap between statements of fact and evaluative conclusions. Aesthetic appraisals allow for no such gap. And lastly, the analysis of moral terms is offered as a perliminary to theories about the rationality of moral inferences. Since aesthetic goodness could not be preludes to accounts of rationality in aesthetics, it should now be possible to say why recent accounts of moral judgements, in particular, prescriptivism, are not applicable to aesthetic judgements, which we call aesthetic appraisals. I, therefore, resent, the claim that what is said of moral judgements may *mutatis mutandis* be said of aesthetic judgements.

TATTVASANDARBHA (Vol. I. Part II of *Ṣaṭsandarbha* by Śrījīva Gosvāmin), Jadavpur University Sanskrit Series No. I. Edited by Dr. Sitanath Goswami, Reader, Jadavpur University. September, 1967. Published by Sri P. C. V. Mallik, Registrar, Jadavpur University. Pp. xxvi + 146 + Four Appendices from pp. 147 to 164. Rs. 6.00.

It is a great pleasure to announce through these columns the appearance of the publication under review. Śrījīva-gosvāmi-pāda's six *sandarbhas* known as *Ṣaṭsandarbha* are regarded in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava faith as the most authoritative interpretation of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata*, the Veda of this School. The six *sandarbhas* are respectively known as—*Tattva*, *Bhagavat*, *Paramātman*, *Kṛṣṇa*, *Bhakti*, and *Prīti*. Of these, the *Tattvasandarbha* occupies a unique place in the polemical system of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, although it is the shortest. It is, in a way, an introduction to all the other *sandarbhas* and, therefore, is assigned the primary place among them. Moreover, it points to the ultimate Reality (*tattva*) for which its expository expatiations have been unfolded by Śrījīva Gosvāmin, the illustrious author.

This edition of the *Tattvasandarbha* prepared by Dr. Sitanath Goswami is welcome from many points of view. Firstly, it is the only one edition critically edited with notes and comments in English. The five other editions referred to by Dr. Goswami in his Introduction lack in their critical approach of text-collation (really, five editions boil down to four, taking Sri Rāmanārāyaṇa Vidyāratna's original and second editions as one edition). Moreover, Dr. Goswami's edition is enriched with notes in English, which for the first time, will make this work reach all the corners of India and abroad. Notes are exhaustive and lucid. These touch the essential trends of the philosophico-theological doctrines of the Gauḍīya school of Vaiṣṇavism. The Introduction also is informative.

But about the language of English, we may point out a few instances where better words and forms could be used. For example, I.17 of p. xv (Introduction)—before 'with Ray Rāmānanda' the word 'along' should be used; I.24 of p. xvi (*ibid.*)—the word 'thing' should be replaced by 'fact'; II.23-24 of p. xvii (*ibid.*)—'unskilfulness' should be replaced by 'unfitness'; I.29 of p. xix (*ibid.*)—the expression 'must draw' could better convey the sense if replaced by the word 'catch'; I.10 of p. xx (*ibid.*)—the word 'pulverize' should be replaced by an expression like 'root out'. Instances could be multiplied.

In spite of this kind of deficiency, which can be remedied in a future edition, the labour bestowed by Dr. Goswami in preparing this edition of the *Tattvasandarbha* and the interest shown by the authorities of Jadavpur University to sponsor its publication deserve the congratulations of all students of India's culture and all lovers of spiritual values.

The printing and get-up are up to the standard. The price is moderately fixed.

BRATINDRAKUMAR SENGUPTA

TREASURY OF THOUGHT—Observations Over Half a Century. By Dagobart D. Runes. Published by Philosophical Library, New York. 1966. pp. 395. $ 6.00.

Dr. Dagobart D. Runes, author of *Pictorial History of Philosophy* (Philosophical Library, N.Y. $ 10.00) and some thirty books on philosophy and social history,

offers, in his latest, his observations on life, death, civilization, savagery, the universe and the Beyond.

Entries have been made lexicographically and topic-wise: *Christ, Christ Drama, Christians, Christianity, Churches, Cities, Citizens, Civil Rights, Civilization, Civitas Dei,* etc. Thus for ready reference are available the intimate thoughts of a modern great whom Einstein and Schweitzer accepted as a fellow-traveller.

The originality in Rune's thinking reveals itself in the entries than which no better proofs are imaginable. Examples: (under 'God') 'Praising God is fallacious. If perchance He is the kind praise would please, He is not much of a God, and if—as I think—He is oblivious of it, then wherefore the praise?' Elsewhere, (under 'Mind') 'Mind is an open garden and weeds are plentiful'. Again, (under 'Neurotics') 'It is not the neurotic who turns the world upside-down; it is the level-headed schemer with his tricks of charlatanry'. The volume is full of such 'provocative observations' (as the blurb says) on topics ranging from 'abstinence' to 'Zero'; and reminds an Oriental reader of the similar observations made by Kahlil Gibran.

M. K. SEN

PROCHRONISMS--ANACHRONISMS. By Joslin Decks. Published by Philosophical Library, New York. 1966. pp. 196. $ 4.00.

In the blurb the title is explained thus: 'Thoughts before their time, thoughts out of step with the times'. In point of fact, the book is a collection of aphorisms and observations made by the author about whom the publisher does not say a word.

The title, even when explained, strikes one as rather ambitious. On comparing it with Dr Rune's book one is inclined, much against one's wish, of couse, to record one's disappointment in finding the observations on men and manners made by Joslin Deeks neither 'provocative' nor 'challenging'. As old as the hills are such ideas (incorporated in this book) as 'Improve your style: as much as to say, improve your character'; 'Words are like banknotes--worthless unless they are backed up by gold, in this case by the gold of experience'; 'As the love of art decreases, admiration of the artist increases', etc. It beats one how such a commonplace observation as 'Life without war is inconceivable. Life is a war' passes off either as a 'thought before its time' or as a 'thought out of step with the times'! Some breeze of freshness, however, passes through: 'Often an explanation has proven more fatal to an idea or a belief than an open attack on it. This is the way 'Christianity died. It was explained away'; and, 'He has ruined himself completely. He began by treating all men as his equals, and ended by treating himself as their'.

Till the 1950's it used to be a publishing axiom that two titles along the same line and advertized around the same time meant disaster for *one* of the two; also for the publisher, in case the other one wasn't a best-seller! But the times may have changed; and the Philosophical Library, no doubt, knows better.

M. K. SEN

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

DEDICATION CEREMONY OF THE VIVEKANANDA MONASTERY AND RETREAT

The Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago (5423 South Hyde Park Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60615), U.S.A. celebrated the dedication ceremony of its Vivekananda Monastery and Retreat in its newly acquired eighty acres of orchard land (Ganges Township, Allegan County, Michigan State) with an impressive and solemn function on Saturday, 26 July 1969 in the presence of a large, cosmopolitan gathering drawn from the states of Rhode Island, New York, Canada, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Michigan, Illinois, and from Washington, D.C.

Swami Bhashyananda, the minister-in-charge of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago, and three other Swamies of the Ramakrishna Order, namely: Swami Satprakashananda (founder and minister-in-charge, Vedanta Society of St. Louis), Swami Shraddhananda (assistant minister, Vedanta Society of Northern California, Sacramento), and Swami Ranganathananda (visiting lecturer from Belur Math, India), participated in the function.

The proceedings commenced at 11.00 a.m. under a large, tastefully decorated canopy with the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sharada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, with a welcome speech by Swami Bhashyananda in which he elucidated the aims and objectives of the proposed monastery and retreat. This was followed by Vedic chanting by the Swamies and probationers of the Chicago centre, and devotional songs by Mrs. Kala Kriplani. Swami Shraddhananda then performed a brief traditional worship at the end of which the *ārati* song, consisting of a hymn to the divinity of Sri Ramakrishna, was sung by the devotees.

The three visiting Swamies as well as Professor Samual Clark of Western Michigan University and Mr. Glen Overton of Dowagiac, Allegon County, Michigan State, spoke briefly on the ideas and ideals of Vedānta, their association with the Sri Ramakrishan Order, and what spiritual benefit the people expect from this noble venture of the monastery.

Messages received from various Swamies in the United States wishing success for the function were also read.

Swami Satprakashananda, who was the only one present who had the privilege of seeing Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) thrice, then laid the foundation of the proposed monastery using as the foundation stone a piece of stone secured by Swami Bhashyananda from the house (now demolished) of Mr. George and Mrs. Mary Hale of North Dearborn Street, Chicago, where Swami Vivekananda received the warmest welcome from the Hale family upon his arrival in this great city to participate in the World Parliament of Religions 1893 and which remained his home in Chicago throughout his stay in America for the next five years.

The function came to a close at 4.00 p.m. after a rendition of classical music, both vocal and instrumental, given by Mrs. Veena Shukla, Dr. Manmohan Mazumdar, Mrs. Suman Nadkarni, Miss Karin Schomer, and Mrs. Hema Shende.

The local television station took a video tape recording of the whole proceeding for broadcasting later in the day.

INSTITUTE NEWS

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th September

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th September

THE MUNDAKA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th September

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(Children below six years are not allowed)

FILM SHOWS

Tuesday, 2 September, at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, 23 September, at 6 p.m.

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

Tagore's

DEVOTIONAL SONGS

(Prabhu toma lagi ankhi jage)

by

Bhanu-Tirtha

Participants:

Dwijen Mukherjee, Arghya Sen, Sushil Chatterjee,
Mekhala Pal, Dipti Biswas, Aurobindo Biswas, and others.

Tuesday, 9 September, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

BAUL AND PALLI GITI

by

Purna Chandra Das and Party

Participants:

Manju Das, Nabin Kayal, Jiban Krishna, and Purna Chandra Das

Tuesday, 16 September, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S DANCE DRAMA

Chander Deshe

by

Jonaki

Tuesday, 30 September, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 1969

Sri Krihsna Galpa Asar

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

Mahatma Gandhi Galpa Asar

Last Saturday, 27 September, 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

September 17 **Swami Vivekananda : The Impact of his Chicago Address on Hinduism**

Speaker: Swami Smarananda

President: Swami Swananda

September 24 **The Progress of Criticism in Bengali Literature During Nineteenth Century**

Speaker: Haraprasad Mitra, M.A., D.Phil.

President: Asutosh Bhattacharyya, M.A., Ph.D.

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF JANMASTAMI

Programme:

Invocation :

by

Purnendu Roy

Talk in Bengali

on :

Sri Krishna : Viswamanabatar Pratik

by

Swami Niramayananda

Talk in English

on :

The Krishna Legacy

by

Tripura Sankar Sen, M.A.

Devotional Songs

by

Supriti Ghosh

Wednesday, 10 September, at 6.30 p.m.

BULLETIN
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THE RELIGIOUS NOTE IN SHAKESPEARE

P. K. GUHA, M.A.

On 30 April 1969, the Institute observed the birth anniversary of Shakespeare. Professor P. K. Guha, Emeritus Professor, Jadavpur University, who was formerly the Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the same University, gave this lecture on the occasion. Professor Guha is the author of Tragic Relief *(Oxford University Press, 1932), and is well-known for his Shakesperian studies.*

SHAKESPEARE lasts because he is not a mere playwright but is also a poet with a heavenly vision. His plays embody not only his mind and art but also his soul which gives his plays a spiritual aspect. It lends his plays a sublimity which keeps up their level above the mere earthly plane. In his presentation of the world of men there is a pervading awareness of a providence governing the affairs of man. This mystical faith, embodied in his plays, in the invisible hand of God in the transactions of man in the world, reflects a rooted human instinct and contributes not a little to their universal appeal. Without this element Shakespeare's plays would have been a mere transcript of the visible and palpable and would not have embraced, as they do, the 'More things that there are in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy'. We might call it the religious note in Shakespeare, based on no particular theological creed but just an echo of a basic belief in men in the association of God in all that they think, feel, and do in life. It is this pious superstition that Goethe thought of when he said, 'Superstition is the poetry of life'.

This religious note is heard by us in all the serious plays of Shakespeare. The plays of Shakespeare gain in awe and wonder on account of the impression that they produce that their stage is set on the earth below but with the canopy of heaven

overhead. What is done by man in his plays seems to be viewed from above by an ever-watchful Providence. We feel that man plays his role on Shakespeare's stage with the gods as interested spectators. We meet with scattered indications of this in all his important plays. But in his Last Plays the gods are brought down to the scene of human action and Divine Providence is presented as the arbiter of human destiny.

Before taking up the Last Plays for detailed treatment as the consecrated formulary of Shakespeare's faith in a mystical association of God with the affairs of man, we might as well recall some of the striking lines in Shakespeare's previous plays that harp on this string.

In *The Merchant of Venice* God with his infinite mercy is held up before man as a model to follow, as an example that man should adopt in life. Portia says to Shylock, in order to soften his stony heart:

> It (mercy) is an attribute to God himself,
> And earthly power doth then show
> likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice.
> (IV. I. 195-97)

In the same play Shakespeare brings to our imaginative ears the music of heaven. Lorenzo says to Jessica:

> 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 here it.
> (V. I. 60-65)

The perturbations in Nature on the eve of a great crime are a significant feature of Shakespearian tragedy. These turmoils in Nature are not a mere pathetic fallacy but are dramatic symbols of divine disapproval of a human crime that is going to be perpetrated. In *Julius Caesar* there is thunder and lightning on the night before Caesar's murder. Caesar exclaims:

> Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace
> to-night:
> Thrice hath Calphurnia in her sleep
> cried out,
> 'Help, ho! They murder Caesar!'
> (II. II. 1-3)

In *Macbeth* the night before the murder of Duncan was strangely 'a rough night' and Lemnox thus describes it:

> The night has been unruly: where we lay,
> Our chimneys were blown down; and, as
> they say,
> Lamentings heard i' the air; strange
> screams of death,
> And prophesying with accents terrible
> Of dire combustion and confus'd events
> New hatch'd to the woeful time. The
> obscure bird
> Clamour'd the livelong night: some say
> the earth
> Was feverous and did shake.
> (II. III. 60-67)

Shakespeare has finely dramatized the warning of the gods to Macbeth, while he was proceeding to kill Duncan, with Macbeth's vision of an air-drawn dagger. Macbeth feels that the bloody business that he has in his mind has been perceived by a mysterious power and this was being presented before his eyes as a 'fatal vision', which was a symbol of encouragement or warning. Lady Macbeth contemplates the commission of her crime with the fear of being detected and prevented by the gods that would be watching her act from heaven. To hoodwink the gods she decides upon doing the deed in the dense darkness of the night. She exclaims:

... Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke
of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound
it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of
the dark,
To cry, 'hold, hold!'
(I. V. 51-55)

When Macduff receives the stunning news of a brutal massacre of his wife and children by Macbeth he cries out:

... Did heaven look on
And would not take their part?
(IV. III. 222-23)

When Hamlet sees before him the spirit of his dead father he is naturally seized with fear and turns for protection to the gods, crying out:

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
(I. IV. 39)

On the eve of his death, of which Hamlet has an instinctive sense, he realizes that the hour of death of every one is ordained by Providence. He observes:

... there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come:
(V. II. 232-35)

Shakespeare brings home to us his awareness of a living association of the gods with the affairs of men, in several striking passages in *King Lear*. Exasperated by his terrible sufferings which, he feels, are totally undeserved, Gloucester holds the gods responsible for his misfortune and exclaims:

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
They kill us for their sport.
(IV. I. 36-37)

This perverse notion of Gloucester about the gods is corrected by his son Edgar, and it is from him that we hear Shakespeare's view of the gods:

Think that the clearest gods, who make
them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd
thee.
(IV. VI. 74-75)

Lear, now redeemed and chastened, realizes the tremendous sacrifice of his good daughter, Cordelia, and has a vision of the gods blessing her noble act. He exclaims:

Upon such sacrifices, my, Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. ...
(V. III. 20-21)

When old Lear feels that there is none to help him in the world of man he turns to the gods:

... O heavens,
If you do love old men, if your sweet
sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down and
take my part!
(II. IV. 192-96)

In *Hamlet* Shakespeare's ideal man is defined as an image of God: What a piece of work is a man! ... in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!
(II. II. 323 et seq.)

If men are all full of faults, it is due to the design of the gods. This idea is expressed in *Antony and Cleopatra* with reference to the faults that were mixed in Antony with his great good qualities. After Antony's death, through the mouth of Agrippa, Shakespeare says of Antony:

A rear spirit never
Did steer humanity; but you, gods, will
give us
Some faults to make us men. ...
(V. I. 33-35)

In *Measure for Measure*, which has been characterized by Walter Pater as 'the epitome of Shakespeare's moral judgements', there is the following passage in which, through the mouth of Isabella, Shakespeare specifically states that all that man does is done by him 'before high heaven'. His arrogance and pride are watched and pitied by the gods:

> ... man, proud man,
> Drest in a little brief authority,
> Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,
> His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As make the angels weep; ...
> (II. II. 117-123)

We thus see that Shakespeare seems to consider his presentation of any human scene as incomplete if he does not link up with it the watchfulness of the Divine. This perhaps is the significance of the famous passage in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* where he thus defines the vision of a poet, through the mouth of Theseus:

> The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
> (V. I. 12-13)

We realize the full significance of these lines when we enter the region of the three Last Plays of Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. These plays, in particular, will be the subject of our discourse tonight on 'The Religious Note in Shakespeare'.

The Last Plays

The ways of man in man's own world is the spectacle that we see in Shakespeare's comedies and his tragedies. But in the Last Plays Shakespeare sweeps us away from the land of reality and wafts us to a realm of mystery and wonder. It seems that after writing Comedies and Tragedies, Shakespeare felt that he had to say 'One Word More', and that one word is that man's life is neither a comedy nor a tragedy but a romance. Man's life is governed not by man's own logic but by God's magic. Mysterious are the ways of God, and it is the ways of God and not the ways of man that regulate and determine his fate on earth. It is the ways of God that are revealed clearly and explicitly in the Last Plays. It is shown that God protects the good and sets right man's errors and wrongs, that God is benignant and merciful. The main function of the Last Plays is to justify the ways of God to man, the sublime purpose of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. These plays have been given by critics the title 'Romance', a new category devised for them. The happy ending of these plays prevented critics from placing them under Tragedies, and the gravely tragic matter that constitutes the situation of the plays precluded their inclusion among Comedies. So they have been called 'Romances' in view of the romantic and mystical character of the course of events presented in them. The designation is apt and appropriate, for here Shakespeare unfolds the romance of the wonders wrought by God by His inscrutable will and dispensation. We are more in heaven than on earth in these Last Plays. In the previous plays Shakespeare had been in the world of man, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. He now goes up to a region which is more a world of the gods than of man. Shakespeare is now 'On the heights', a happy expression used by Dowden in respect of these Last Plays where, from a lofty height, Shakespeare takes a panoramic view of life and sees into the life of things. He is now wise, large-hearted, calm-souled, resting in peace on an abiding faith in the essential goodness of man and the beneficence of God.

In each of these three plays wickedness triumphs for a time but never in the end. Truth and chastity pass through the furnace and come out unscathed and unstained. Happiness of lovers is broken by intrigues and misunderstandings and is restored by a fortunate discovery which only the omnipotent God could accomplish. Children are lost and are found again. Friends are estranged, and reunited. This happy miracle is traced to the benignity of an ever-merciful Providence and a fundamental goodness in the nature of man.

The invincible Prospero, the hero of *The Tempest* bides his time to charm good out of evil and to make the odds all even. Prospero is a concrete embodiment of the omnipotence and benignity of God. And so is Pisanio in *Cymbeline* and so is Paulina in the *Winter's Tale*. They all demonstrate the Biblical statement: 'With God all things are possible'. They are the symbols and agents of the all-powerful God.

The merciful providence of God that turns adversity into happiness rings in the words of Gonzalo in *The Tempest*, when the scattered kith and kin and sundered friends have been mysteriously re-united:

> ... Look down, you gods,
> And on this couple drop a blessed crown;
> For it is you that have chalk'd forth the way
> Which brought us hither!
> (V. I. 201-04)

Shakespeare's ecstatic vision of the essential beauty of man is sounded in the rapturous words of the enchanted Miranda in *The Tempest*:

> O, wonder!
> How many goodly creatures are there here!
> How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
> That has such people in't!
> (V. I. 182-85)

The dominant note of these Last Plays is that of a most intimate association of the gods with the affairs of men. Let us go into the plays, one by one, in quest of this note.

CYMBELINE

In *Cymbeline* the opening situation is frightfully ominous. Cymbeline, king of Britain, has lost touch with his two sons who had been stolen by Belarius, a banished Lord and were living in the forest, unknown to Cymbeline, in Belarius' care. Cymbeline's second wife, the present queen, had a son by her former marriage, named Clotten; and she wished that Clotten should marry Imogen, the daughter of Cymbeline, who was the sister of Cymbeline's stolen sons, Guiderius and Arviragus, now with Belarius, in the woods. Imogen secretly marries Posthumus, who is banished by Cymbeline at the instance of his vicious queen. Posthumus, at Rome, boasts of the virtues of Imogen, and one Iachimo, an Italian, who was a cynical believer in the inconstancy of women, enters into a wager with Posthumus to prove the infidelity of his vaunted wife. Iachimo goes to Britain, and by a trick gathers evidence to prove to Posthumus that his wife was faithless. Posthumus is deceived, and writes to his servant at the court, Pisanio to kill Imogen. Pisanio, an agent of protective Providence in the play, spares Imogen, provides her with a man's apparel and leaves her in a forest where she is entertained cordially by Belarius and the two sons of Cymbeline, Imogen's own brothers, who do not recognize their sister nor are recognized by her. A war brings them all together. Iachimo confesses his villainy, and Posthumus' misunderstanding about Imogen passes off. All is well and Cymbeline is full of joy at being reunited with his daughter and sons.

It was all the doing of God and how it came about passes human understanding. Let us hear how Shakespeare voices this mystery in his magic lines in the play :

When the good Pisanio reads the letter of Posthumus, his master, asking him to kill Imogen, of snow-white purity, for her alleged illicit relations with Iachimo, Pisanio exclaimed :

O master ! what a strange infection
Is fall'n into thy ear ! What false Italian—
As poisonous-tongu'd as handed—hath prevail'd
On thy too ready hearing ? Disloyal ! No :
She's punish'd for her truth, and undergoes,
More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults
As would take in some virtue. O my master !
Thy mind to her is now as low as were
Thy fortunes. How ! that I should murder her ?
Upon the love and truth and vows which I
Have made to thy command ? I, her ? her blood ?
If it be so to do good service, never
Let me be counted serviceable...
(III. II. 3-15)

The world would have been, one might say, a heavenly place if there were many more God-directed unserviceable servants like Pisanio.

The brave spirit of spotless innocence bursts forth in these words of Imogen when she is told by Pisanio that she would have to leave Britain :

Hath Britain all the sun that shines ? Day, night,
Are they not but in Britain ? I' the world's volume
Our Britain seems as of it, but not in't ;
In a great pool a swan's nest: prithee, think
There's livers out of Britain.
(III. IV. 139-43)

Imogen feels that the vast canopy of God would be over her head wherever she might go.

When Clotten is out in pursuit of Imogen, Pisanio says :

...Flow, flow,
You heavenly blessings, on her ! This fool's speed
Be cross'd with slowness ; labour be his meed !
(III. V. 166-68)

When Imogen is lovingly received and entertained by Belarius and her two unrecognized brothers, she exclaimed :

These are kind creatures. Gods, What lies I have heard !
Our courtiers say all's savage but at court :
Experience, O ! thou disprove'st report.
(IV. II. 32-34)

Imogen has put on male attire and has assumed a false name, but she feels that as her intention is good there is no falsehood in her lies. She says :

... If I do lie and do
No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope
They 'll pardon it...
(IV. II. 377-79)

The gods are, as it were, among the characters in the play. Echoing the same sentiment, Pisanio who had told a lie to his master, says :

... the heavens still must work.
Wherein I am false I am honest ; not true to be true :
(IV. III. 41-42)

Britain wins the fight against Rome. Posthumus, who fought for his country, unknown and unrecognized, attributed the miraculous victory of Britain over the mighty Rome to the aid of God :

... all was lost,
But that the heavens fought ...
(V. III. 3-4)

The British army was totally routed, but, all of a sudden, the old Belarius and Cymbeline's two unknown sons rushed out of a narrow lane, stepped into the field and turned the tide. A Lord exclaimed :

This was strange chance :
A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys !
(V. III. 51-52)

How tellingly does Shakespeare show here : 'God can save by few as well as by many'.

Shakespeare's suggestion that the help of the gods and not the strength of men led Britain to victory is symbolized by the adoption of the classical device of 'deus ex machina'—God from the machine, in the shape of a dream vision of Posthumus—Jupiter descending in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle and throwing a thunderbolt. The penitent Cymbeline says to his daughter Imogen :

... O my daughter !
That it was folly in me, thou mayst say,
And prove it in my feeling. Heaven mend all !
(V. V. 66-68)

The holy infection of the ever-forgiving Providence seizes the grievously wronged Posthumus. When Iachimo goes down on his knees before Posthumus, he tells Iachimo !

Kneel not to me :
The power that I have on you is to spare you ;
The malice towards you to forgive you.
Live,
And deal with others better.
(V. V. 419-20).

Cymbeline, thrilled by Posthumus' generosity, says :

Nobly doom'd :
We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law ;
Pardon's the word to all.
(V. V. 421-23)

The play ends with some of the most pious words, that ever dropped from human lips, uttered by Cymbeline :

Laud we the gods ;
And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
From our bless'd altars...
(V. V. 478-79)

The Winter's Tale

Now to *The Winter's Tale*. The story is briefly this :

Leontes, king of Sicily, and Hermione, his virtuous wife, are visited by Leontes' friend, Polixenes, King of Bohemia. Leontes, most unaccountably, suspects the relations of his good wife Hermione with his innocent guest, Polixenes. He tries to have Polixenes killed but Polixenes escapes. Leontes imprisons Hermione who, in prison, gives birth to a daughter. Paulina, wife of Antigonus, a Sicilian Lord, tries to rouse parental love in the king's heart by bringing the baby to him, but in vain. He called the child a bastard and ordered Antigonus to leave it on the desert shore to perish. He disregards a Delphian oracle declaring Hermione innocent. He soon learns that his son, Mamillius has died of sorrow for his father's cruelty to his mother. Antigonus leaves the baby girl, Perdita, on the shore of Bohemia where she is found by a shepherd and is brought up by him. In order to save her life Paulina falsely reports

to the king that Hermione is dead. Perdita grows up in the shepherd's cottage. Florizel, son of King Polixenes falls in love with her and the love is returned. This is discovered by Polixenes, to avoid whose anger Florizel, Perdita, and the old shepherd, fly from Bohemia to the court of King Leontes where the identity of Perdita is discovered. Leontes, full of joy at getting back his daughter, grieves for Hermione. Paulina shows him a statue from which the living Hermione comes out. Polixenes appears on this happy scene and is reconciled to the marriage of his son with Perdita, whom he now finds to be the daughter of his old friend Leontes against whom he now bears no grudge. Paulina serves as the agent of merciful Providence and is the main instrument in bringing about the happy end. She has been aptly called by a critic 'Vigilant guardian of her royal mistress and rough-tongued conscience to the King'.

Let us hear the great passages in the play that reveal the mystery of God's omnipotence and benignity.

Paulina's righteous indignation against the king for his fantastic suspicion of his wife, vents itself thus:

> These dangerous unsafe lunes i' the king, beshrew them!
> He must be told on't, and he shall: the office
> Becomes a woman best; I'll take't upon me.
> If I prove honey-mouth'd, let my tongue blister,
> And never to my red-looke'd anger be
> The trumpet any more...
> (II. II. 30-35)

We hear the strident voice of the wrath of the gods in these impassioned words of Paulina. When Paulina comes to meet the king, with the king's new-born baby in her arms, the attendants would not let her in, saying 'he hath not slept to-night'. Paulina retors:

> Not so hot, good sir;
> I come to bring him sleep. ...
> (II. III. 32-33)

> Do come with words as med'cinal as true,
> Honest as either, to purge him of that humour
> That presses him from sleep.
> (II. III. 36-39)

We hear here the benignant voice of an all-loving Providence. The mad Leontes fails to know his kind and loving physician. God comes to him as such, in the guise of Paulina, to minister to his mind diseased. Leontes shouts out:

> Out!
> A mankind witch! Hence with her, out o' door:
> (II. III. 65-66)

Hermione is placed on her trial. She says to her judges, who were in the pay of her jealous husband:

> 'Tis rigour and not law. Your honours all,
> I do refer me to the oracle:
> Apollo be my judge!
> (III. II. 115-17)

The verdict of the Delphic oracle came: 'Hermione is chaste; Polixenes is blameless; Leontes a jealous tyrant, his innocent babe truly begotten'.

Leontes flouts the oracle and cries out:

> There is no truth at all i' the oracle:
> The sessions shall proceed: this is mere falsehood.
> (III. II. 141-42)

This impious hubris provokes at once the wrath of the gods. Immediately comes the news that the king's son Mamillius is dead.

Leontes softness and says :

Apollo's angry ; and the heavens themselves
Do strike at my injustice.
(III. II. 146-47)

To cure Leontes of his madness Paulina gives him a further shock by bringing him the false news that his queen, Hermione, too, has died. From now Leontes' penitence grows apace. One of his lords says :

Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd
A saint-like sorrow : No fault could you make,
Which you have not redeem'd ; indeed, paid down
More penitence than done trespass. At the last,
Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil ;
With them forgive yourself.
(V. I. 1-6)

Paulina brings home to the king the great virtues of his wife he had killed by his cruelty :

If one by one you weeded all the world,
Or from the all that are took something good,
To make a perfect woman, she you kill'd
Would be unparallel'd.
(V. I. 12-15)

Leontes realized at last the nobility of Paulina, and said :

O grave and good Paulina, the great comfort
That I have had of thee !
(V. III. 1-2)

Paulina takes Leontes to a statue and from it comes out Hermione. Leontes exclaimed :

O ! she's warm,
If this be magic, let it be an art
Lawful as eating.
(V. III. 109-11)

Hermione finds Perdita before her and her maternal love bursts out thus :

You gods, look down,
And from your sacred vials pour your graces
Upon my daughter's head !
(V. III. 121-23)

Leontes says to Hermione, pointing to Polixenes :

What ! look upon my brother : both your pardons,
That e'er I put between your holy looks
My ill suspicion. ...
(V. III. 147-49)

So here, too, as at the end of *Cymbeline*, 'Pardon' is the word to all.

The Tempest

Last, but not least, *The Tempest*.

This is the story in brief : Prospero, Duke of Milan, twelve years before, was ousted from the dukedom by his treacherous brother, Antonio, with the secret aid of Prospero's enemy, Alonso, king of Naples. Prospero and his little daughter, Miranda, were cast adrift on the sea and now live in a strange island. Prospero brought all his enemies before him by a magic storm. In the party was Ferdinand, son of Alonso. According to Prospero's design Ferdinand and Miranda fall in love and are married. Prospero forgives his enemies and throws into the water his magic wand and his books to go back to his dukedom where 'His every third thought shall be my grave'.

The Tempest may, quite reasonably, be interpreted as the dramatic last will and testament of Shakespeare. Prospero's lofty and serene view of life may be identified

with Shakespear's own outlook on life, his tolerant acceptance of all the ills of life. Prospero may be identified with Shakespeare himself when he breaks his staff, drowns his books and dismisses his airy spirits to return to his dukedom. It may be taken as a symbol of Shakespeare's own intended retirement from the field of imaginative enchantment, his magical creations as dramatist.

Lytton Strachey aptly observes about this play, *The Tempest*:

> 'A magic tempest is raised by art to work moral ends'.

Let us look into the play to find out how this is effected.

Miranda asks her father:

> How came we ashore?

Prospero replies:

> By Providence divine.
>
> (I. II. 158-59)

This little phrase, 'By Providence divine,' strikes the key-note not only of *The Tempest* but also of the other two plays in the group, as we have seen.

Prospero, by his magic, has invested this strange island with a wonderful music like the music of the spheres in God's own heavens. Caliban says to the astonished Stephano who had never heard such music:

> Be not afeard: the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
> Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
> Will hum about mine ears; and sometime voices,
> That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
> Will make me sleep again:
>
> (III. II. 147-52)

Prospero arranges a magic show to entertain the young couple, Ferdinand and Miranda. At the end of the show Prospero uttered the great lines in Shakespeare that can never perish:

> Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
> As I foretold you, were all spirits and
> Are melted into air, into thin air:
> And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. ...
>
> (IV. I. 148-56)

Here Prospero is on Olympic heights and from there he is viewing the fragility of all earthly things and the ultimate dissolution of the entire globe.

Next Prospero casts upon Man the gaze of his Maker who knows what man is made of and by what he is surronded, and says:

> ... We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep. ...
>
> (IV. I. 156-58)

When all his enemies are within his clutches Prospero pardons them all with his great words:

> Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick,
> Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
> Do I take part: the rarer action is
> In virtue than in vengeance: they being penitent,
> The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
> Not a frown further. Go, release them, Ariel.
> My charms I'll break, their senses I'll restore,
> And they shall be themselves.
>
> (V. I. 25-32)

So for Prospero too, as for Cymbeline and Leontes, 'pardon is the word to all.'

Alonso, who had deeply injured Prospero by snatching away his Dukedom, is full of penitence and says to Prospero:

Thy Dukedom I resign, and do entreat
Thou pardon me my wrongs. ...
(V. I. 118-19)

So 'pardon' is on every one's lips at the end, in this play as in the other two of the group. And *The Tempest* too ends with a prayer like the other two: Gonzalo, the good old man, thus leads the prayer:

I have inly wept,
Or should have spoke ere this. Look down, you gods,
And on this couple drop a blessed crown;
For it is you that have chalk'd forth the way
Which brought us hither!
(V. I. 200-203)

Conclusion

In the Last Plays Shakespeare presents in a concrete and concentrated form our instinctive belief in the hidden hand of God in the shaping of the fate and fortunes of man. Shakespeare had, as we have seen, voiced this belief of ours in scattered forms in diverse contexts all through his previous plays. This mysterious operation of Providence in the world of man is hinted at in the oft-quoted words of Hamlet:

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
(I. V. 166-67)

It is formulated in clear terms, also in words put on the lips of Hamlet, the most philosophical of Shakespeare's characters:

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.
(V. II. 10-11)

The nature of this divinity that gives the finishing touch to all human efforts and undertakings, as is suggested in this passage, is defined in the Last Plays: it is benignant and beneficent and full of love and goodwill for man.

D. G. James in his striking book *The Dream of Prospero*, 1967, rightly says: '*The Tempest* is Shakespeare's final meditation, conducted in the light of his great exploration of human life in the Comedies, the Histories and the Tragedies. ... Few will deny that *The Tempest* is one of the profoundest and most majestic of Shakespeare's creations; and that it shows every sign of being given by its creator, in his treatment of human life, a summary quality and an air of finality'.

The closing note of Shakespeare is thus a definitely religious note; and this wraps up the dramatic work of Shakespeare with a holy grandeur that sanctifies his entire drama. So the grandest theme of Shakespeare—the grace and mercy of God in His ways to man—is to be found in his Last Plays. We may apply to them the lines in Christopher Smart's *Song to David*:

Glorious the song, when God's the theme ...
He sung of God—the mighty source
Of all things—the stupendous force
On which all strength depends;
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes,
All period, pow'r, and enterprize
Commences, reigns, and ends.

SHELLEY AND GANDHI

SUKUMAR MITRA, M.A., PH.D., LL.B.

A keen student of English literature and an experienced educationist, Dr. Sukumar Mitra is the Principal of Charu Chandra College, Calcutta. The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. Mitra at the Institute on 23 April 1969.

IN the Gandhi Centenary Year I felt that Shelley and Gandhi would offer an interesting study.

It is a pity that Shelley could not finish or complete the *Philosophical View of Reform* which forms the subject-matter of this evening's talk.

The similarity and the close affinity between the two in certain aspects indeed make an interesting study. I am treading on new ground—striking a new line of investigation, if I may say so. As a student of literature, I am aware of the fact that in such matters likeness must not be pushed and stretched very far. I have tried to indicate the striking similarities between the two. I have a feeling that at certain moral plane and spiritual height likeness of thinking by like-souls is not very unlikely.

With all his physical ailment because of the pulmonary disease which Shelley was suffering from, with death creeping in at the very young age of thirty—Shelley was living in spirit almost ignoring his physical existence and he had those rare flights of imagination and sometimes that spiritual height whence he transcended the limits of time and space and became one with the Oriental spirit with all the fineness, subtlety, and sublimity inherent in Indian thoughts and culture.

SATYAGRAHI SHELLEY AND GANDHI

The prayerful saint-patriot, the redoubtable political leader of India, Gandhiji asked men and women to follow the path of sanity and sweet reasonableness to eschew violence and hold fast unto truth. With an unshakeable faith in the innate dignity of man and possibility of human development he gave the message of non-violence and *satyāgraha* to the humanity. Gandhi gave to the submerged humanity the clarion call of fearlessness, *ahiṁsā*, love, and hope. His non-violence and *satyāgraha* were put to hardest test in South Africa when he was carrying on with his struggle against the evils of apartheid, racialism, colour bar, and human indignities. He realized the immense difficulty in obeying the call of truth as a *satyāgrahī*. He gave new tone and new direction through his message of non-violence and *satyāgraha* to the progress of human civilization and human history and to the better human relations and better international behaviour. *Svarāj*, Gandhiji defined, did not only mean political freedom but freedom from hunger, want, and fear—we have *svarāj* or real freedom when we learn to rule ourselves and Gandhiji's *svarāj* can only be attained by the soul force. This is India's only weapon —the weapon of love and truth. Gandhiji

expressed it by the term '*satyāgraha*'—which is a necessary corollary to non-violence implying an implicit faith in the inherent goodness of man. Gandhiji wanted to spiritualize politics on the basis of truth, love, faith, sacrifice, and fearlessness.

There are striking resemblance between Gandhiji and Shelley in their ideals of truth, non-violence, *satyāgraha*, and *svarāj*. Shelley's illuminated soul manifested in flashes his deep faith in the soul force. A *satyāgrahī* indeed he was. Gandhiji's name has come to be associated with Ruskin and Tolstoy from whom he received inspiration. Luthuli of South Africa and Martin Luther King, the Peace Nobel Laureates are his followers, and Romain Rolland his biographer, but the spiritual affinity between Gandhi and Shelley, their common approach to the ideals of truth, non-violence, *satyāgraha*, and freedom is so remarkable and so striking and so close and so surprising that one wonders how these two personalities different in so many ways came to think alike on the very subtle theme of *satyāgraha*, non-violence, and freedom.

Shelley made a prophetic statement about India's freedom. 'India', Shelley held, 'will be benefited by the Christian missionaries; but it must in the end attain a freedom of its own'. Shelley went out to define this freedom—the *svarāj* as Gandhiji would like to have for India. Was he anticipating India's freedom gained through non-violence? Was he anticipating Gandhiji?

In the later sonnet on 'Political Greatness' Shelley says (*Transcripts and Studies*, 'Last Words on Shelley', Edward Dowden, p. 105):

Man, who man would be
Must rule the empire himself; in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

Is it not Gandhiji's idea of *svarāj*—when the soul shall stand supreme over the vanquished will and evils of life?

'What art thou, Freedom?' Shelley asked. ('The Mask of Anarchy', *The Complete Poetical Works of Shelley*, p. 338):

'Tis to be a slave in soul
And to hold no strong control
Over your own wills, but be
All that others make ye.

Freedom means to Shelley, bread for the labourer and a neat and happy home, clothes, fire, and food for the trampled multitude. (*ibid.*, p. 339):

Thou art Justice—
Thou art Wisdom—
Thou art Peace—never by thee
Would blood and treasure wasted to be
As tyrants wasted them.
... ...
Science, Poetry, and Thought
Of the dwellers in a cot
So serene, thy curse it not.
Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,
All that can adorn and bless
Art thou...let deeds, not words, express
Thine exceeding loveliness.

To the submerged humanity—suffering measureless wrongs and indignities, their rights trampled under feet—Shelley's Prometheus sent forth the message of hope, faith, and fortitude. Suffering, yet holding fast to truth. 'Prometheus is, as it were, the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature, impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends.' ('Prometheus Unbound', Preface, *The Complete Poetical Works of Shelley*, p. 201).

Shelley's Prometheus sets an ideal of moral excellence, of faith and fortitude in adversity, and mastery of the impulses of pain in heroic self-possession:

To suffer woes which Hope thinks
Infinite;

To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Home creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, no repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory. (*ibid.*, p. 264)

His Prometheus is unvanquishable in fortitude. His Asia, Panthea, and Ione were women with mission exalted and idealized. They may be prophets who could be martyrs and saviours—who were to emancipate the world by the vision of love, beauty, and truth.

If love, justice, hope, freedom, fraternity be real, then so is the wiser part of the inspiration of Shelley's radiant song.

'Prometheus Unbound has helped us to conceive more truly and more nobly of the possibility of man's life, its possibilities, fortitude, endurance, pitying sympathy, heroic martyrdom, aspiration, joy, freedom and love' ... He prescribed in words a sense of the measureless importance of one human spirit to the other, of the master to the disciple, of the spiritual leader to his followers, a man to woman, and woman to man. With a quickened sense of the infinite significance of the relations possible with our fellows, our entire feeling for life and for virtues which hide in it more marvellous than occult virtues of gem, is purified and exalted. Shelley told us to recognize the blessedness—blessedness in joy or in anguish—of the higher rule imposed on dedicated spirit, who live for a cause, or an idea, a charity or a hope and for its sake are willing to endure shame and reproach and a death and martyrdom.

Shelley, idealist as he was, lived in some important respects in closer and more fruitful relation with the real world than many of his contemporaries. Because he lived with ideas, he apprehended with something like prophetic insight those great forces which had been altering the face of the world during the nineteenth century and which may be summed up under the names of democracy and science; and he apprehended them not from the merely material point of view but from that of spiritual being uniting in his vision with democracy and science a third element not easy to name or to define, an element of spirituality which has been most potent in the higher thought and feeling of our times.

Spiritualizing Politics

Shelley wanted to spiritualize politics—this spiritualization meant that politics should be based on truth. In this respect the striking similarity between Shelley and Gandhiji is most significant and remarkable. It is strange but true. Gandhiji and Shelley's approach to the basic problems of non-violence and *satyāgraha* have been recorded in their two interesting treatises and *Philosophical View of Reform*, respectively. Truth is the keynote, in both their works. Both of them felt that truth ought to be the basis of politics and political reform.

Hind Svaraj or *The Indian Home Rule* was written in 1908 during Gandhiji's return voyage from London to South Africa in answer to the Indian school of violence and its prototype in South Africa. 'It teaches the gospel of love', wrote Gandhiji, 'in place of hate. It replaces violence with self-sacrifice. It pits soul-force against brute-force'. (*ibid.*, Preface, p. vi) Before giving out the details about 'Shelley's Philosophical View of Reform', an unpublished work of Shelley—access to which has been made possible by Dowden (and for which all gratitude to be expressed

to the eminent English critic) who has preserved for us a considerable portion of the work in his *Transcripts and Studies*, 'Shelley's Philosophical View of Reform'.

On the question of non-violence and *satyāgraha*, the similarity and affinity between the two are so close and striking that one may venture to state that in this respect Shelley was anticipating Gandhiji. In the last stanza of the dedication of his poem 'The Revolt of Islam' Shelley hopes Gandhi that truth will prevail upon confusion and fury. (*The Complete Poetical Works of Shelley*, pp. 38-39):

Truth's deathless voice pauses among
mankind!
If there must be no response to my cry —
If men must rise and stamp with fury
blind
On his pure name who loves them, —
thou and I,
Sweet friend! can look from our
tranquility
Like lamps into the world's tempestuous
night. —
Two tranquil stars, while clouds are
passing by
Which wrap them from the foundering
seamen's sight,
That burn from year to year with
unextinguished light.

Non-violence of Shelley

Shelley was always opposed to the idea of violence, and the brutality of physical force. It was Shelley's object to encourage men to desire and expect a vast transformation of society but a transformation which should be gradual and unstained by cruelty, crime or violence as Gandhiji said, 'True Democracy cannot come through untruthful and violent means'.

When the news of the Peterloo massacre reached Italy, Shelley was deeply moved and wrote that admirable poem 'The Mask of Anarchy' in which something of prophetic vision and something of prophetic exhortation were united. The Peterloo massacre reminds us of the Jallianwalla Bagh episode in India. Under order of the Magistrate the police charged the unarmed and peaceful mob in Peterloo at Manchester and killed hundreds and thousands of innocent people. It was cold-blooded murder. It was unprovoked assassination of innocent Englishmen which roused Englishmen to armed revolt against the Government. Yet Shelley did not counsel violence. He asked Englishmen to remain non-violent—holding fast unto truth.

'Calmness, moderation, the patience of unquenched hope and long suffering, the patience, if need be, of martyrdom—these it is to which Shelley exhorts the English people. "If force be arrayed against them", said Shelley, "let them confront the bayonet and the sword with tranquil unarmed breasts".' (*Transcripts and Studies*, 'Shelley's Philosophical View of Reform', Dowden, p. 46):

Blood for blood—and wrong for wrong —
Do not thus when ye are strong.

Gandhiji speaking on non-violence said — 'Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering—I have ventured to place before India the law of self-sacrifice, the law of suffering. ... Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit'.

Shelley asked Englishmen to suffer consciously and not to submit to the brute force. ('The Mask of Anarchy', *The Complete Poetical Works of Shelley*, pp. 340-341)

Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms and looks which are
Weapons of unvanquished war,
... ...
And if then the tyrants dare

Let them ride among you there,
Slash, and stab, and main, and hew,—
What they like, let them do.
With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay
Till their rage has died away.

Could Gandhiji go farther than this in proclaiming his unshakeable faith in non-violence?

The fact that moral force is stronger than brute force will be proved by an unarmed people. The evolution of life shows that it has gradually cast off its formidable armature of scales and carapaces and a monstrous quality of flesh until man was evolved who conquered brute force. The day will come when a weak nobleman absolutely unarmed will prove that the meek shall inherit the earth. It is logical that Mahatma Gandhi—weak of body and without material resources should prove the unconquerable strength of the meek and the humble hidden in the heart of the outraged and destitute humanity of India. Rabindranath's reference to Gandhi as above holds very true about Shelley when he asked his countrymen to eschew violence.

Shelley's *satyāgraha* is a necessary corollary of his unshakeable faith in the inherent goodness of man and innate dignity and possibility of human development. In realization of this perennial truth he transcended the limits of time and space and became one with the great souls of all times. Turning to Shelley's wonderful treatise on Philosophical View of Reforms —we are to express our deepest gratitude to the eminent English critic Edward Dowden ; but for his great efforts we could not have known that Shelley during the last few years of his life (he lived for 30 years only) was engaged in writing something which was very dear to his heart. To quote Dowden—'the work remains unfinished, incomplete and unpublished ... It presents with sufficient clearness an aspect of Shelley's mind which some readers will think it worth their while to study. It revealed Shelley essentially to be a *satyāgrahī*'.

Dowden writes, 'Through the kindness of Sir Percy and Lady Shelley, I have had the privilege of reading an unpublished prose work by Shelley, of greater length than any other prose writing of his ... It treats of a subject which often occupied Shelley's thoughts and profoundly interested his feelings ... those persons—and they are many—who would make themselves acquainted with the total achievement, in all its breadth and variety, of Shelley's extraordinary thirty years, should, in common with me, possess some acquaintance with a piece of writing belonging to his period of full maturity ... a better and happier life of man than the life attained in our century of sorrow, and toil, and hope'. (*Transcripts and Studies*, 'Shelley's Philosophical View of Reform', Dowden, p. 41)

Shelley wrote from Italy to Leigh Hunt, his friend and publisher in England, on 26 May 1820,—'One thing I want to ask you, do you know any bookseller who would publish for me an octavo volume, entitled 'A Philosophical View of Reform'? It is boldly but temperately written and, I think readable'. (*ibid.*, p. 41)

In my talk this evening, I can only refer to two or three topics contained in this book—which, in my opinion, are relevant to our understanding of Shelley as *satyāgrahī* and his affinity to Gandhiji's ideal of truth and non-violence.

These topics include—(a) Patriotism, (b) War, (c) Moral and Politics, (d) Caste System, (e) Reformation, and (f) the last incomplete sentence—very significant—the more refined a man the more non-violent is he,

Shelley on Patriotism

'The true patriot', Shelley wrote, 'will endeavour to enlighten and to unite the nation, and animate it with enthusiasm and confidence. For this purpose he will be indefatigable in promulgating political truth. He will endeavour to rally round one standard the divided friends of liberty, and make them forget the subordinate objects with regard to which they differ by appealing to that respecting which they are all agreed. He will promote such open confederations among men of principle and spirit as may tend to make their intention and their efforts converge to a common centre. He will discourage all secret associations which have a tendency, by making the nation's will develop itself in a partial and premature manner, to cause tumult and confusion. He will urge the necessity of exciting the people frequently to exercise the right of assembling in such limited numbers as that all present may be actual parties to the measures of the day. Lastly, if circumstances had collected a considerable number, as in Manchester on the memorable 16th of August; if the tyrants send their troops to fire upon them or cut them down unless they disperse, he will exhort them peaceably to defy the danger, and to expect without resistance the onset of the cavalry, and with folded arms the event of the fire of the artillery, and receive with unshrinking bosoms the bayonets of charging battalions. Men are everyday persuaded to incur greater perils for a manifest advantage. And this not because active resistance is not justifiable, but because in this instance temperance and courage produce greater advantages than the most decisive victory'. (*Transcripts and Studies*, 'Shelley's Philosophical View of Reform', Dowden, p. 67)

Shelley's view and expectations are in perfect tune and line with Gandhiji's idea of non-violence and *satyāgraha*—and the same has greater relevance to our times. It required uncommon soul force for a *satyāgrahī* to stand up to the beatings of the armed soldiers unarmed and bearing a look of clam and deliberate resolution to perish rather than giving up one's right.

Shelley continued to set forth the duties of the Patriot under circumstances of difficulty and danger. 'The Patriot will be foremost to publish the boldest truths in the most fearless manner, yet without the slightest tincture of personal malignity. He would encourage all others to the same efforts and assist them to the utmost of his power with the resources both of his intellect and fortune. He would call upon them to despise imprisonment and persecution, and lose no opportunity of bringing the public opinion and the power of the tyrants into circumstances of perpetual contest and opposition.' (*ibid.*, p. 68)

After the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, Gandhiji said, 'We must be prepared to contemplate with equanimity not a thousand murders of innocent men and women but many thousands before we attain a status in the world not to be surpassed by any nation. ... We hope therefore all concerned will take rather than loose heart and treat hanging as an ordinary affair of life'.

Shelley on War

The greatest evil resulting from war, according to Shelley, is that it creates a sentiment in favour of brute force, and diminishes our faith in moral influences. 'War waged from whatever motive', said Shelley, 'extinguishes the sentiments of reason and justice in the mind. The motive is forgotten or only adverted to in a mechanical and habitual manner. A sentiment of confidence in brute force and in a contempt of death and danger is considered as the highest virtue, when in

truth, however indispensable to (virtue), they are merely the means and the instruments highly capable of being perverted to destroy the cause they were assumed to promote. It is a foppery most intolerable to an amiable and philosophical mind. It is like what some reasoners have observed of religious faith—no fallacious and indirect motive to action can subsist in the mind without weakening the effect of those which are genuine and true. The person who thinks it virtuous to believe, will think a less degree of virtue attaches to good actions than if he had considered it indifferent. The person who has been accustomed to subdue men by force will be less inclined to the trouble of convincing or persuading them.' (*ibid.*, p. 73)

Shelley continued—'War is a kind of superstition; the parade of arms and badges corrupts the imagination of man. ... Visit in imagination the scene of a field of battle or a city taken by assault. Collect we into one group the groans and the distortions of the innumerable dying, the inconsolable grief and horror of their sorrowing friends, the hellish exultations and unnatural drunkenness of destruction of the conquerors, the burning of the harvests, and the obliteration of the traces of cultivation. To this in civil war is to be added the sudden disruption of the bonds of social life, and "father against son". If there had never been war there could never have been tyranny in the world. Tyrants take advantage of the mechanical organization of armies to establish and defend their encorachments. It is thus that the mighty advantages of the French Revolution have been almost compensated by a succession of tyrants; for demagogues, oligarchies, usurpers, and legitimate kings are merely varieties of the same class from Robespierre to Louis XVIII'. (*ibid.*, pp. 72-73)

Shelley on Reform

Referring to the subject of reforms, Shelley told that 'the central principle upon which all reforms should be based is that of the natural equality of man, not as regards property, but as regards right. ... Equality in possession must be "the last result of the utmost refinements of civilization"'. (*ibid.*, p. 64) Shelley was emphatic in his assertion that social and political justice, even to the least and lowliest are impossible of attainment by force.

The last para of 'Shelley's Philosophical View of Reform' which remains unfinished completely identifies Shelley with Gandhiji in ethical approach to religion and politics and readiness to sacrifice for the sake of truth, love. In place of hate, self-sacrifice, and against violence and brute force soul force are their objectives which men should aim at.

The incomplete last para of 'Shelley's Philosophical View of Reform' runs as below:

'Men having been injured desire to injure in return. This is falsely called an universal law of human nature; it is a law from which many are exempt, and all in proportion to their virtue and cultivation. The savage is more revengeful than the civilized man, the ignorant and uneducated than the person of a refined and cultivated intellect, the generous and—.' (*ibid.*, p. 74)

Shelley could not finish it. In 8 July 1822 in his thirtieth year he was drowned near Spezzia, Italy. The end came suddenly. The angel poet, *satyāgrahī* Shelley who saw the vision of a happier, better world based on truth, justice, and love could not complete his work but the little he could say will continue to inspire men and women to a sense of new value and to the realization of a new faith and power of the soul force,

Conclusion

Gandhiji and Shelley with their unshakeable faith in non-violence, love, truth, and *satyāgraha*—will lead new humanity on to a new path.

Non-violence has come to men and it will remain. It is the enunciation of peace on earth. With all his physical ailment because of the pulmonary disease which he was suffering from acutely in the last few years of his life, with death creeping in at the very early age of thirty, Shelley was living in spirit ignoring his physical existence and he had the rare flights of imagination and the spiritual heights which are attained only by a few. He transcended the limits of time and space and became one with the Oriental spirit with all the fineness, subtlety, and sublimity inherent in the Oriental thought and culture.

VEDANTA SOCIETIES IN AMERICA AND JAPAN

AMIYA KUMAR GANGULY

Sri Amiya Kumar Ganguly is the Editor, United States Information Service, Calcutta. Following is the text of a lecture Sri Ganguly gave at the Institute on 5 March 1969.

FROM the day Sri Ramakrishna was born dates the growth of modern India and of the Golden Age,' wrote Swami Vivekananda. It was Swamiji who addressed himself to the task of bringing about this Golden Age in a unique way.

THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

The future universal religion he blueprinted as one 'which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite, ... 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 ... and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centered in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature'. (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I. p. 17)

How Swamiji extracted the essence of the Vedānta philosophy from its age-old Indian incrustations and transferred it alive and intact to an American setting was admirably described by Marie Lousie Burke in her monumental work titled *Swami Vivekananda in America: New Discoveries.* She stated: 'Swamiji's attempt to formulate one religion, his concern with resolving the conflict between material prosperity and spirituality, and his insistence upon introducing the motive of compassion into the lives and works of men did not constitute the only elements that went into the evolution of the message he was to call Vedānta. So comprehensive and so diverse was this message by 1895 that there can be little doubt that during its formulative period he pondered over many other problems of modern life. There were, for instance, the current conflicts between science and religion, rationalism and faith, utilitarianism and mysticism, the spirit of self-reliance and the spirit of submission ... Being born a world teacher, he must have felt a spontaneous urge to seek a comprehensive solution to all the many and complicated problems that beset and imperilled the world'. (p. 596)

THREE STAGES OF VEDANTA

'All of religion', pointed out Swamiji, 'is contained in the Vedānta, that is, in the three stages of the Vedānta philosophy, the Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Advaita; one comes after the other. These are the three stages of spiritual growth in man. Each one is necessary. This is the essential of religion: The Vedānta applied to the various ethnic customs and creeds of India, is Hinduism. The first stage, i.e. Dvaita, applied to the ideas of the ethnic groups of Europe, is Christianity; as applied to the Semitic groups, Mohammedanism. The Advaita as applied in its Yoga-perception form, is Buddhism, etc. Now by religion is meant the Vedānta; the applications must vary according to the different needs, surroundings, and other circumstances of

different nations'. (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V, p. 82)

Vedānta has been aptly described as a sort of philosophical algebra, in terms of which all religious truth can be expressed. It teaches three fundamental truths: (1) That man's real nature is divine. (2) That it is the aim of man's life on earth to unfold and manifest this Godhead, which is eternally existent within him, but hidden. (3) That truth is universal. Although Vedānta is impersonal, it accepts all the great prophets, teachers, and sons of God, and those personal aspects of the Godhead who are worshipped by different religions. It believes that all are manifestations of the one Godhead. But it does not attempt to make converts. It helps us to a truer appreciation of our own religion. Sri Ramakrishna's life expressed, to a greater degree than that of any other teacher, the Vedāntic idea of religious universality. He reached that realization of identity with the Godhead which Christians call the 'mystic union' and the Hindus '*samādhi*'. He also tested the universality of his experience by following the paths of other religions, including Christianity and Islam. Thus he was able to say with absolute authority that all religions are true and that the ultimate Reality can be known by a member of any sect.

'To affirm this truth', observed Aldous Huxley, 'has never been more imperatively necessary than at the present time. There will never be enduring peace unless and until human beings come to accept a philosophy of life more adequate to the cosmic and psychological facts than the insane idolatries of nationalism and the advertising man's apocalyptic faith in progress towards a machanized New Jerusalem. All the elements of this philosophy are present ... in the traditional religions. But in existing circumstances there is not the slightest chance that any of the traditional religions will obtain universal acceptance. Europeans and Americans will see no reason for being converted to Hinduism, say, or Buddhism. And the people of Asia can hardly be expected to renounce their own traditions for the Christianity professed, often sincerely, by the imperialists who, for four hundred years and more, have been systematically attacking, exploiting and oppressing, and are now trying to finish off the work of destruction by "educating" them. But happily there is the Highest Common Factor of all religions, the Perennial Philosophy which has always and everywhere been the metaphysical system of the prophets, saints and sages. It is perfectly possible for people to remain good Christians, Hindus, Buddhists or Moslems and yet to be united in full agreement on the basic doctrines of the Perennial Philosophy'.

Vedanta Societies in America

Although the United States is primarily a Christian nation, followers of other religions are found throughout the country—among them, those who have chosen the Vedānta philosophy. Some fifteen centres have been established with a membership of about 5,000.

The centres are under the direction of Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order. They are guest teachers, not missionaries, who have come to the United States at the invitation of Americans wishing to establish centres where they may be instructed in the Vedānta philosophy.

Respect for other faiths is basic in the Vedānta philosophy, and has been an important feature of the Swamis' teachings. Sri Ramakrishna, after whom the Order is named, is known as the 'Prophet of the harmony of all religions'.

Three Early Societies

In 1893, Swami Vivekananda went to the United States as the representative of the Hindu faith to the Parliament of Religions held at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. He spent three years in the United States lecturing. Before his return to India in 1896, he founded the first American Vedānta Society in New York City in 1894.

The second and third Vedānta Societies in the United States were also established by Swamiji in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Subsequently, four direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna went from India to continue the work. From that time onward the Ramakrishna Order has had to meet an increasing demand for teachers. Although the Vedānta Societies in America are officially under the authority of the Order, each American centre operates as an independent unit and has its own board of trustees, made up of American citizens. At the present time there are fifteen centres in the United States—two in New York, one each at San Francisco, Barkeley, Carmichael, Hollywood, Santa Barbara, Trabuco Canyon, Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Portland, Providence, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.

The Retreats

Many of the Societies also have retreats. The Shanti Ashrama in the San Antone Valley, given to Swami Vivekananda in 1900, is the oldest. The California Societies also have two others—the Olema Retreat in Marin County and a retreat on Lake Tahoe. The Portland (Oregon) Ramakrishna Ashrama is a 120-acre tract with several buildings, and a temple, overlooking the Columbia River Valley; the Sarada Ashrama at Marshfield, on the Atlantic Ocean, serves both the Boston and Providence centres; the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre in New York maintains the Vivekananda Cottage at Thousand Island Park in New York State.

Some Eminent Vedantins

Gerald Heard, the novelist-philosopher, became a convert of Vedānta and was instrumental in establishing the monastery at Trabuco Canyon. Through Heard, Christopher Isherwood, Aldous Huxley, and John Van Druten became interested, and stayed at the Vedānta Society of Southern California's Hollywood centre for sometime as initiates.

Isherwood assisted the head of the Society, Swami Prabhavananda in translations of the *Gītā* and other books.

These Vedānta Centres are supported entirely through voluntary offerings of members and gifts from friends. The late Mary Morton, daughter of Levi P. Morton, Vice-President of the United States under President Benjamin Harrison, presented the 34 West Seventy-first Street, residence to the Vedānta Society of New York. An Italian nobleman, becoming interested in Vedānta while in Hollywood, donated the income from an orange grove to the Southern California Society. Gerald Heard gave the Society the Ramakrishna Monastery at Trabuco Canyon.

The Swamis are Cultural Messengers

The Swamis heading the centres are active in the religious, educational, and cultural affairs of the United States. Swami Nikhilananda of the New York Centre has served as a member of the seminar on inter-religious relations at Columbia University. He has also conducted a course on Hindu philosophy at Douglas College, New Brunewick, N.J. He has lectured and conducted chapel services at many other universities.

The head of the Portland (Oregon) Vedānta Society, Swami Aseshananda has lectured at Oregon colleges—Williamette University, Portland State College, Reed College, and others. Swami Vividishananda of the Seattle (Washington) Ramakrishna Vedānta Centre spent four weeks in Hawaii, holding classes, lecturing, and giving instruction.

Almost all of the centres maintain libraries or reading rooms for their members, which are open to the public, generally before services.

Some of the centres also carry on a publishing programme. Among the publications of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre in New York City are *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, the *Gītā*, and the *Upaniṣads*, translated into English and annotated by Swami Nikhilananda.

The Vedānta Society of Southern California issues translations of the *Gītā*, *Bhāgavata*, *Upaniṣads* and many new titles by Swami Prabhavananda, Christopher Isherwood and others. It has been publishing *Vedanta and the West*, a bimonthly since 1938, and stocks Indian books for distribution to American booksellers.

The Seal

Prominent at all centres is the seal of the Ramakrishna Order, designed by Swami Vivekananda, founder of the Order. The seal represents, in the words of Swamiji: 'The wavy waters in the picture are symbolic of *karma*, the lotus, of *bhakti*, and the rising-sun, of *jñāna*. The encircling serpent is indicative of *yoga* and awakened *kuṇḍalinī-śakti*, while the swan in the picture stands for the *paramātman*. Therefore, the idea of the picture is that by the union of *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti*, and *yoga*, the vision of the *paramātman* is obtained.'

The seal also bears the motto, in Sanskrit: *Tannohaṁsaḥ pracodayāt* (may the swan, supreme Self, lead us to Him).

The Vedanta Society of Northern California

The two largest and most active centres of the Ramakrishna Order in the United States are those of California.

Swami Vivekananda, who founded the first Vedānta Society in the United States, in New York, also founded the Northern California Society in 1900. Its headquarters are a handsome, buff-coloured, three-story building at the edge of San Francisco's Pacific Heights district. This new temple, dedicated in October of 1959, was built through the efforts of the Society's membership.

Until the new temple was built, the old temple, four blocks away, served as the main centre. This grey and red wooden structure, built in 1905 by Swami Trigunatitananda, is crowned with four terra-cotta-coloured turrets, a harmony of Hindu, Mohammedan, and Anglo-Saxon architectural forms.

Within the new temple, the altar represents the Vedāntic concept of divinity, with a figure of Christ enshrined at the extreme left, Buddha on the extreme right, and Sri Ramakrishna in the centre, with Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda at either sides.

The auditorium is open daily for meditation. Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, services are held in the new Temple and a class on Indian philosophy on Friday in the old Temple, all attended by members, and an equal number of interested non-members.

The Society maintains a monastery and a convent in San Francisco and branches of the monastery at the Olema Retreat and the Sacramento Centre. Members of the monastery and convent are citizens of the United States of America who have embraced Vedānta. Both the old and new temples have bookshops and the new

Temple maintains a library for members of the Society. To branch centres of the Society have been established at Sacramento and at Berkley, California. The Sacramento branch, informally started in 1949 at the home of a devotee of Vedānta, was affiliated with the Society in 1952.

Monastic and lay members of he centre have also built a chapel, dedicated in 1953, just outside the old city limits of Sacramento.

A number of special events emphasize the Society's ideal of harmony among religions. The birthdays of the worlds great religious teachers, such as Lord Krishna, Buddha, and Christ are observed by special celebrations which have a consistently strong appeal for members and non-members alike. And each year before the summer recess, a reception is held jointly by and for the members of the San Francisco Society, and the Berkley and Sacramento Centres, usually in the auditorium of the new Temple. Classical and religious music and the reading of a specially prepared paper on some religious or philosophical subject, all presented by the members are followed with discussion by the audience. Another popular event is the pilgrimage to the Olema Retreat, originated by the Berkley Branch Centre, established in 1939. The pilgrimage includes a programme of religious music, readings and meditation, out of doors. The Olema Retreat is a 2000-acre tract of fir forest and medowland, an hour's drive from San Francisco. In a secluded garden of the Retreat is a shrine to Lord Buddha—the first of the shrines to the great spiritual leaders of all religions which the Society plans to establish eventually at Olema.

Two other retreats maintained by the Society are a 150-acre tract on Lake Tahoe for use of the Swamis, and the Shanti Ashrama, about 80 miles from San Francisco at Livermore, in the San Antone Valley. The latter was given to Swami Vivekananda in 1900. It is little used since it has practically no water, and is not easy of access, but is kept for its historical association.

The Vedanta Society of Southern California

The Vedānta Society of Southern California, one of the most active of the Ramakrishna Order's centres in the United States, has its headquarters in Hollywood, California. It was founded in 1930 by Swami Prabhavananda, also the founder of the Portland (Oregon) centre. The main centre, a beautiful three-domed white temple flanked by cypress trees, sits serenely near the intersection of Hollywood boulevard and Vine Street with its soundproofed walls, impervious to the roaring traffic of two Hollywood's main arteries.

The Society held its classes and lectures in a rented hall until 1930 when Sister Lalita, who was Mrs. Carry Mead Wyckoff before she joined the Order, put her Hollywood home and modest annuity at the disposal of Swami Prabhavananda. Mrs. Wyckoff's home then became the Vivekananda Home. A further gift by Mrs. Wyckoff of a $ 10,000 insurance policy helped complete the temple, now the main centre. Today, in addition to the centre at Hollywood, the Society maintains the Vedānta Temple at Santa Barbara, the Sarada Math or convent also at Santa Barbara, and the Ramakrishna Monastery at Trabuco Canyon in California. In all establishments, morning and evening meditation periods are observed, daily worship is performed, and Rāma Nāma sung every fortnight. The Kāli Pūja and Śivarātri are celebrated annually, as are the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda, and the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi. There are also special

services on Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter.

Sunday lectures are given at both the Santa Barbara and Hollywood temples, and two classes are held weekly at the Hollywood centre, and one fortnightly at the Santa Barbara centre.

Since 1950, a bookshop featuring books on all religions has been maintained at the Hollywood centre. Through the Vedānta Press, the Society's publishing department, Indian books are stocked for distribution in the United States, and new titles on Vedānta are issued.

In the three establishments of the Vedānta Society of Southern California, there are a number of Brahmacharinis and Brahmacharis as well as two Swamis. These American monastics and nuns wear no distinguishing robes. The Vedānta Society of Southern California also maintains the Ramakrishna Monastery as a religious college. It was established as a college not only for resident students, but as retreat for other followers of Vedānta. The monastery in Trabuco Canyon, 65 miles south of Los Angeles, was opened in 1942. Assistance was given to the project by those interested in Vedānta. It was, in fact, at the Trabuco Monastery that Huxley wrote *The Perennial Philosophy*, and several of Heard's works were also written there. Life at Trabuco Monastery was modelled on Western monasticism, and principally according to the rules of St. Benedict. However, financial problems arose, and the experiment was discontinued. Gerald Heard then deeded the 300-acre establishment to the Vedānta Society of Southern California, which in 1949, formally dedicated it as the Ramakrishna Monastery.

Sri Sarada Math

The origin and growth of Sri Sarada Math or convent at Santa Barbara was due largely to the devotion and larges of a few individuals. The original property, with a generous bequest was provided by Spencer Kellogg, retired businessman, on his death in 1944. In 1953, Mrs. Ruth Sheets of Montecita, California, visited the convent and became very much interested in building a temple. On her death in 1955, Mrs. Sheets left a substantial bequest to the building fund. The temple, with its 38 Douglas fir trees as supporting pillars, was completed and formally dedicated in February of 1956.

Women were first formally accepted in the Ramakrishna Order in 1947. At that time seven young women left the Society's Hollywood centre to help in the establishment of the Order's first convent. At the present time, there are about twelve of the Sisters who divide their time between the Santa Barabara convent and the Hollywood centre.

The new Vedānta Society of greater Washington was recently hailed by its President as 'a welcome addition to the cultural and intellectual life of this area'. Dr. Kurt Leidecker, Professor of Philosophy at Mary Washington College for Women in Fredericksburg, Virginia, said: 'It was Swami Ranganathananda of India who really stimulated the Vedānta Society during his recent visit here.'

Swami Ranganathananda was in Washington in December, 1968, as part of a yearlong lecture tour of the United States. He addressed the September 1968 Symposium of Religions in Chicago, which commemorated the 75th anniversary of the 1893 Parliament of Religions at which Swami Vivekananda had spoken.

Vedanta Societies in Japan

In Japan, there are two Vedānta Societies —one in Tokyo and the other at Osaka. Swami Nikhilananda inaugurated the Tokyo Vedānta Society on May 3, 1959. Mrs. Haru Nakai and Mr. V. Sumitra Row are

the prime movers of this society, which has about 200 members including some young students. Two distinguished members of the Tokyo Vedanta Society are Professor and author Shoko Watanabe, who translated our poet Tagore's *Gītāñjali* into Japanese and Dr. Tsuyoshi Nara, who spent some years in India. Both of them speak Bengali fluently. The Society runs a monthly magazine titled *Fumetsuno Kotaba* which means The Universal Gospel. The Japanese translations of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, the *Gītā*, and the *Upaniṣads* appear serially in this magazine. Its publications include (1) *Words of Vivekananda*, (2) *Karmayoga and Other Lectures*, (3) *Practical Vedanta and Selected Lectures*, and (4) *Bhaktiyoga*.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude my remarks with a significant observation made by Pravrajika Saradaprana of the Vedānta Society of Southern California: 'The teachings of Vedānta are to me like a map of the spiritual realm, which was charted long ago by the explorers of the Upaniṣads, but which include the markings of the great discoverers of Spirit of all countries and ages. But what is so terribly significant to me is that in our time Ramakrishna and his disciples actually journeyed to that realm. It is their enthusiastic reports that made the idea of travelling there myself conceivable and desirable. When the Swamis in teaching Vedānta tell us that the true nature of man is divine, and the goal of life is to realize this divine nature, it is important to me that they can point in proof of such statements to the experiences of these men. Their lives show the possibility of realizing that divine nature and re-emphasize the fact that religion is essentially a matter of direct, personal experience. Again, the third Vedāntic premise, that the different religions are so many paths to God, was not a mere verbal formula with Ramakrishna, but an experience of the same ineffable truth which he realized by following the methods of the different sects of Hinduism, and the ways of Islam and Christianity. Therefore when I walked up the steps to the Vedānta temple, it did not mean a turning away from Christianity, but rather it was an exciting discovery of Christianity, because it was reading the teachings of the Bible and the lives of the Christian saints in the context of Vedānta that made them meaningful to me. I found a vaster world—a world where the boundaries between East and West were barely discernible, and where categories like Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, and Hinduism were not high separating walls but merely names for the different beautiful colours of light seen through a prism. I could see the magnificent mountain peaks in the distance and there the incarnations, prophets, and saints were beckoning all to climb up and see as they saw—the ocean of blissful consciousness behind every being and thing, and the variegated, changing universe as a joyous return to that ocean.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW EXTENSION OF THE VEDANTA TEMPLE OF ST. LOUIS

Preparatory to the formal dedication of the new extension of the Vedānta Temple of St. Louis (The Vedānta Society, 205 South Sinker Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63105, U.S.A.), an elaborate ritualistic worship was performed on Friday, 4 October 1968. The portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was installed, early in the morning, on the altar of the remodelled chapel by Swami Satprakashananda amidst chanting of Sanskrit hymns and singing of devotional songs by the Swamis and the devotees to the accompaniment of Indian musical instruments.

The formal dedication ceremony of the remodelled temple, however, was held on Sunday, 6 October 1968, at 10.30 a.m. The ceremony started with the chanting of Vedic hymns by Swami Satprakashananda, followed by the chanting of a hymn from the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* by Swami Ranganathananda and Swami Bhashyananda, who chanted together. This was followed by a brief welcome speech by Swami Satprakashananda in which he elucidated the aims and objectives of the remodelled temple and formally declared it open not only to 'all seekers and worshippers of God but also to all others who seek their own good'.

The three visiting Swamis, Ranganathananda, Shraddhananda, and Bhashyananda, spoke briefly on 'Appeal of Vedānta to Modern Man', 'The Quest of Peace', and 'Religion in the Age of Science', respectively. Professor Huston Smith of Massachusetts Institute of Technology unveiled the portrait of the symbols of the eight major religions of the world.

Messages received from the President of the Ramakrishna Order and from the various Swamis of the Vedanta Societies of America wishing success of the function were also read.

The function came to a close with the show of a very interesting film entitled 'Requiem for a Faith'. The film was made by Professor Huston Smith last summer among the Tibetan refugees in India. This was followed by a vote of thanks by Swami Satprakashananda and the benedictory prayer.

Basic scriptures of the world's major religions in original were displayed on the occasion. About one hundred and eighty devotees and guests attended the function.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ORIENTALISTS

The 28 International Congress of Orientalists will be held at the Australian National University, Canberra, A.C.T., from 6 to 12 January, 1971. Dr. R. R. C. De Crespigny, Secretary-General, announces that all scholars of the languages, history, literature, and culture of Asia are welcome.

Enquiries should be addressed to:

The Secretary-General,
28 International Congress of Orientalists,
Australian National University Post Office,
via CANBERRA CITY. A.C.T.
2601. AUSTRALIA.

Extension Lectures : Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghose Lectures (1969)

The Institute, in collaboration with the University of Calcutta, organized a series of eight lectures entitled 'Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghosh Lectures (1969)'. Dr. Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., gave these lectures under the general title 'Religion of Love : A Comparative Study of Vaiṣṇavism, Christianity, and Sufism'.

The inaugural lecture of the series on 'Evolution of the Religion of Love' was delivered on Monday, 24 February 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D., Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, presided.

The remaining seven lectures were held under the following schedule :

Lecture No. II, Tuesday, 25 February 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Subject, 'Stages of Realization in Love', President, Pandit Srijiva Nyayatirtha, M.A. ;

Lecture No. III, Monday, 17 March 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Subject, 'Prayers and Concentration of Thought', President, Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil. ;

Lecture No. IV, Tuesday, 18 March 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Subject, 'Love and Spirit of Service', President, Krishna Gopal Goswami, M.A., P.R.S., D.Phil. ;

Lecture No. V, Monday, 24 March 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Subject, 'Rammohun Roy's Contribution to Comparative Religion', President, Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A. ;

Lecture No. VI, Tuesday, 25 March 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Subject, 'Some Eminent Interpreters of Christianity', President, Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B. ;

Lecture No. VII, Monday, 31 March 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Subject, 'Christianity and Neo-Vedantism of Swami Vivekananda', President, Swami Vitasokananda ;

Lecture No. VIII, Tuesday, 1 April 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Subject, 'Impact of Christianity on Society in the Nineteenth Century', President, Rev. (Dr.) H. L. J. DeMel.

Seminar on Cell : Its Structure and Function

On Monday, 18 November 1968, at 5 p.m., a seminar on 'Cell : Its Structure and Function' was held at the Institute's Vivekananda Hall. The seminar was organized by the Life Science Centre, University of Calcutta, in collaboration with the Institute.

After a brief inaugural function in which, Swami Akunthananda, Secretary of the Institute, gave a brief speech welcoming the participants, delegates, and visiting scholars, followed by the inaugural address by Dr. S. N. Sen, M.A., Ph.D., Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta, and the message of hope and satisfaction expressed by Professor S. N. Bose, National Professor, at the pioneering zeal of the organizers of the Centre, the seminar broke up into three separate sessions to discuss the following topics:

Session I : Chairman, Dr. S. M. Sircar, Paper, 'Inside the Living Cell I', by, Dr. T. M. Das, 'Cancer Cell II', by, Professor S. C. Roy. Discussion : Dr. B. Mukherji, Professor N. N. Dasgupta, Dr. A. K. Sharma, Professor D. K. Roy,.

Session II : Chirman, Professor S. C. Roy, Paper, 'Transport of Matter Through Membrances', by, Professor S. K. Mukherjee. Discussion : Dr. T. M. Das, Dr. M. Adhikari, Dr. S. Mukherjee.

Session III : Chairman, Dr. B. Mukherji, Paper, 'Chromosome Today', by, Dr. A. K. Sharma. Discussion : Dr. A. S. Mukherjee, Dr. S. Bose, Professor G. K. Manna.

The seminar, the first of the series to be organized subsequently on every month by the Centre, came to a close with a vote

of thanks by Dr. T. M. Das, Convenor-Secretary of the Life Science Centre.

International Seminar on Humid Tropics (s.36)

A five-day international seminar on 'Humid Tropics (s.36)' was held at the Institute from Monday, 9 December 1968 to Friday, 13 December 1968.

The seminar was organized by the Department of Geography, Presidency College, Calcutta, in collaboration with the Institute on the occasion of the 21st International Geographical Congress India, 1968 with a view to providing an opportunity for scholars in these fields of different parts of the world to meet together, discuss, and exchange ideas about particular problems of their areas, which are sometimes singular, complex but interesting.

On 9 December 1968, at 11.30 a.m. Sri Dharma Vira, Governor of West Bengal, inaugurated the seminar in a brief but colourful function at the Institute's Vivekananda Hall. After the inaugural ceremony the seminar broke up into five sections, two sessions for each section, to discuss the following topics.

Section I: Monday, 9 December 1968, Subject, 'Geomorphology'.

Section II: Tuesday, 10 December 1968, Subject, 'Climate and Soil'.

Section III: Wednesday, 11 December 1968, Subject, 'Agriculture, Farming, and Industry'.

Section IV: Thursday, 12 December 1968, Subject 'Regional Growth and Pattern'.

Section V: Friday, 13 December 1968, Subject, 'Population and Settlement'.

Papers Discussed:

1. Mass Movement Associated with the Rain-storm of June 1966 in Hong Kong. By: Dr. Chak Lam So, University of Hong Kong. 2. The Problem of Reclamation in the Sunderbans, West Bengal, India. By: Professor Kashinath Mukherjee, City College, Calcutta. 3. Climatic Divisions in The Tropical Regions from the standpoint of Year Climate. By: Dr. Taiji Yazawa, Tokyo Metropolitan University, Tokyo. 4. Study of Tropical Alluvial Soil. By: Professor S. N. Mukherjee, Jogamaya Devi College, Calcutta. 5. Drought Incidence in West Bengal Plateau. By: Dr. Karan Gopal Bagchi, and Professor R. Bhattacharya, Calcutta University, Calcutta. 6. Vatu (mixed garden) Land Use in the West Zone of Ceylon. By: Dr. P. D. A. Perera, Vidyodaya University, Ceylon. 7. Suan Sema: An Illustration of Changes and Trends in Thai Vegetable Production. By: Dr. (Miss) Helen L. Smith, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. 8. Agroclimatic Factors of Rice Production in West Bengal. By: Sri Nikhilesh Das, National Atlas Organization, Calcutta. 9. Early Contribution of Indian Geography with Special Reference to Bengal Delta. By: Sri Nirendra Nath Sen, Calcutta. 10. Agro-Urban Development in Tamluk Area in West Bengal. By: Sri G. P. Swarnakar, Calcutta. 11. The Firestone Rubber Plantations in Liberia. By: Professor R. J. Harrison Church, London School of Economics, U.K. 12. Population and Sattlement in Bokaro Basin in Bihar. By: Professor Vishwanath Prasad Sinha, Patna University, Patna. 13. Pioneer Settlements in Northwestern Mato Grosso, Brazil. By: Dr. Hilgard O'Reilly Sternberg, University of California, U.S.A. 14. Human Adjustment in Bastar District, Madhya Pradesh. By: Professor P. C. Agarwal, Ravishankar University, Raipur. 15. Evolution of Settlement in Choto Nagpur. By: Professor Vishwanath Prasad Sinha, Patna University, Patna. 16. Rural Settlement Patterns in the Zaria Area of Northern Nigeria. By: Professor H. R. J. Davies, University College, Swansea, U.K. 17. Concept of

Erosional Surfaces in the Shillong Plateau. By: Sri M. K. Bandyopadhyay, and Sri Gouri Bandyopadhyay.

The seminar was attended by twenty-six foreign delegates from New Guinea, U.S.A., Hong Kong, Japan, Ceylon, France, U.K., Thailand, Australia, Ghana, Itali, Uganda, Singapore, and Nigeria, besides thirty delegates from different parts of India, and about two hundred visiting scholars.

OCTOBER CALENDAR

(All Function Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursday at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

9th October

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

3rd and 10th October

THE SVETASVATARA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturday at 6.30 p.m. in English

4th October

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(Children below six years are not allowed)

DEVOTIONAL SONGS

by

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee and Madhuri Mukherjee

Tuesday, 7 October, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSION FOR OCTOBER 1969

Vrati Galpa Asar

First Saturday, 4 October at 4.00 p.m., for (6-16 age-group)

Programme:

Bani Kumar's

'MAHISASUR MARDINI'

by

Members of the Children's Library of the Institute

LECTURES

On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

October 1 **Rolland, Rabindranath, and Gandhi**

Speaker: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

President: J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

October 8 **The Appeal of the Conception of God as Mother**

Speaker: Swami Vishwashrayananda

President: Swami Dhyanatmananda

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA

Celebration of the Birth Centenary of Mahatma Gandhi

in collaboration with

Gandhi Centenary Committee, West Bengal

Thursday, 2 October 1969, at 5.30 p.m.

Programme:

Sutra-yajna or Mass Spinning		
Devotional Songs	:	Sri Purnendu Roy, Srimati Bandana Sinha, and others
Silent Prayer		
Pledge		
Releasing 'Gandhi Rachana Sambhar'	:	Sri Shanti Swarup Dhavan, Governor, West Bengal and President, Centenary Committee
Welcome Address	:	Swami Akunthananda
Speeches	:	Sri Shanti Swarup Dhavan Sri Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee Sri Jayaprakash Narayan Sri P. C. Sen
Presidential Address	:	Sri Sankar Prasad Mitra
Concluding Song	:	Srimati Supriti Ghosh

PUJA HOLIDAYS

N.B. All lectures and discourses, including cultural and children's programmes, will remain suspended from Saturday, 11 October to Monday, 10 November 1969. The different departments of the Institute will, however, function as usual except during the Puja holidays from Friday, 17 October to Saturday, 25 October 1969.

BULLETIN
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UNIVERSAL RELIGION

P. N. BHATTACHARYYA, M.A.

Professor Pares Nath Bhattacharyya is the Head of the Department of Philosophy, Presidency College, Calcutta. He is also part-time lecturer in Philosophy, University of Calcutta. An eminent teacher of Philosophy, Professor Bhattacharyya is the author of Mano-vidyā *and* A Text-Book of Psychology. *The following is the text of a lecture he gave at the Institute in March 1964.*

UNIVERSAL religion has been conceived in more senses than one. But in no other sense than one has it been successfully conceived.

THE PROBLEM OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION

The present enquiry centres round the problem of universal religion as distinguished from the particular religions professed by particular sections of humanity. Each of the world-religions claims to be universal in the sense that it embodies what is noblest in man and affords him the scope for rising to union with or proximity to God. But universal religion so conceived is only a conceptual construction or logical device. As out and out a human concern, universal religion may mean what embraces or applies to every man in the universe. Thus horizontally or extensionally considered, each of the world-religions fails to be universal, for none of these is subscribed to or professed by humanity as a whole. Each, on the other hand, is embraced by a limited section of mankind. Instead of being the platform of universal unity or fraternity, most of these religions look down upon the votaries of other religions with suspicion and hatred. These religions, therefore, seem to be a far cry from being universal.

Considered from the above yard-stick, universal religion seems to be a play of words or an effusion of sentiment. Nor,

again, is it better than an idle dream to visualize a state of affair when man, hemmed in by limitations on all sides as he is, would liquidate all differences and come within the compass of one religion. Religion has its roots struck deep into the soil of human nature, which, in contact with the varied forces of environment assumes various forms. Some individuals, indeed, there are who, unable to build castles on the battle-field of life, build them in the air. They luxuriate on the imposing creatures of their imagination.

The Prospect for a Universal Religion

From a more speculative standpoint, however, the prospects for a universal religion seem to be brighter. Irrespective of whether humanity as a whole would one fine morning embrace one religion, the question here is whether man, rationally constituted as he is, should, rather must, transport himself to a face-to-face acquaintance with God. Quite a number of approaches may be made to universal religion from this standpoint. For example, universal religion may be conceived as the distributive unity of the particular religions of the world. That is to say, universal religion may be meant to imply the common and essential attributes of all religions so ascertained. Religion as a universal concept would, when stated in language, assume the form of a definition. Definition of a term brings it under another term denoting a higher class or its genus and at the same time differentiates it from its co-ordinate classes or species subordinate to the higher class. Thus reduced to its greatest common multiple, universal religion may mean nothing more or less than some sort of communion with or relation to the divine. But such a definition would not make the concept of religion the distributive unity of the particulars. It would leave out from its scope a world-religion like Buddhism. Again, to define religion as the propitiation of spirits would ignore religions more primitive than spiritism. Definitions of religion can be multiplied to show that not a single one covers all religions. Thus the quest of universal religion along this line seems to be futile.

Even taken for granted that it is possible to find out a universal religion which represents the common and essential attributes of all religions, such a concept proves useless. It gives at its best the bare skeleton of religion shorn of flesh and blood. Imagine a religion which has no temple, church or mosque to house it, no mythology to shroud it in mystery and no rites or rituals to externalize it. Such a religion without a local habitation and name would hardly be distinguishable from spiritualism or mysticism. It lacks the vitality of a dynamic religion canalizing the pent-up forces of the human soul along fruitful channels.

There is another aspect of the matter which is even more disconcerting. In reducing religions to their greatest common multiple, universal religion becomes poorer than the particular religions. In the process of eliminating the varying elements of religious life, the higher a religion, the more does it suffer. What is shared in common by monotheism on the one hand, and pre-animism on the other? It is simply a vague and undifferentiated consciousness of the infinite with not even a discriminative knowledge of the subject having it and the object of which it is had. In this pursuit of the common or universal the superior of the two is victimized, while the inferior one escapes unscathed. This reductive quest, therefore, ends in nullifying progress and evolution. The principle on which it is based is mechanical which explains the higher by the lower and the end by the beginning. But it is the end that explains the beginning and not the latter the former.

The end is the motive force directing the whole evolutionary process along ever-new and ever-progressive stadia of reality. Between monotheism and pre-animism the common element is a vague sense of the infinite, which, however, downgrades the former without any prejudice to the latter. But it is not pre-animism that explains monotheism. Rather, it is the latter that explains the former.

Positivistic religion or religion of humanity regards Humanity with capital H as the object of worship. Not man in the concrete but Man in the abstract or collective humanity which remains constant even through individual birth and death and perfect in the face of human imperfections, is the fittest object of adoration. Such a conceptualistic pattern of religion hardly deserves the epithet. A concept cannot elicit religious reactions which are legitimately due to a concrete reality. Besides, the social virtues which are called forth in religion must have sufficient ground in some being who is the origin of all the members of society thus held together by common interests. If all men are convinced of their divine origin then and then only can they feel themselves one. Moreover, worship is called forth by a being who is felt as superior to the worshipper. Humanity exalted to its maximum dignity is yet attended with imperfections of human nature. How, then can it serve as the substitute for God? Religion of humanity is no religion, what to speak of it as a universal religion.

Yet another approach made to universal religion is made from the standpoint of higher logic of the self-evolution of the Absolute Idea. Reason is satisfied with nothing short of absolute freedom from contradiction or all-comprehensiveness. Reason is of necessity led towards the realization of greater and greater harmony through the inherent dialectic of thesis and antithesis reconciled into synthesis culminating into the highest synthesis. Thought is reality and reality is thought. The Absolute of metaphysics and the God of religion differ in that while the former is pure thought, the latter is mediated through figurative or pictorial representations. The former is out and out intellectual and the latter is also the same with the difference that it belongs to the imaginal level of the intellect. Religion, so conceived, becomes the self-unfoldment of the Absolute Idea, the finite as cognizing itself as the infinite.

The above concept of universal religion, however, neglects the emotional and conative contents of the religious consciousness and over-emphasizes its cognitive character. Religion becomes a matter of interpretation regardless of its concrete contents. Again, taken for granted that only one of the world religions stands the acid test of higher logic, as claimed by its great protagonists, the question whether it is a universal religion, still remains undecided. This religion does not satisfy the divergent needs of different souls. It fails to rise equal to needs of men of all possible grades of excellence. It soars up so high as to recognize only the intellectual or noetic level. It serves more or less the same spiritual dish to feed the hungry mouths of different tastes and temperaments.

Vertically or intensionally speaking, it may be called a universal religion. But horizontally or extensionally considered, it fails to be so, for it cannot cater to the needs of all who embrace it. Religion is too delicate a matter to be thrust upon unwilling individuals. Yet vast masses of people have been converted by force with proselytizing zeal. Had it and other proselytizing religions been actually universal, they would not have been forced on unwilling millions. In religion spirit is in converse with spirit. Violence or physical

force is alien to its true spirit. A universal religion does not resort to force, which is a lame excuse for bad logic.

The Criterion of Universality

The criterion of universality is not to strip religion of all its peculiar or distinctive characteristics. It is not to present it in a cut and dry formula as a bare skeleton bereft of flesh and blood. It is not to reduce it to a ballet of bloodless categories. It is, on the other hand, the retention of these, preserving at the same time the general essence of religion. The lower religions must be retained in and transcended by a universal religion.

Religion of Man, is however, free from many of the defects of the above, as also of positive religion. It does not like religion of higher logic confine itself to the intellectual plane of mind but takes into account the whole wealth of the spirit in explaining what it considers to be universal religion. Again, it does not like positive religion make man as such the object of worship. On the other hand, it regards the truly divine nature of man as adorable. Man, properly to be called so, must rise to communion with God. But even this religion, however noble in its intention, does not adjust itself to the varying needs of men of diverse standards. Moreover, it verges on the Vedāntic religion which, in the Advaita sense, is more appropriately to be called mysticism or spiritualism. Again, the above religions along with all types of theism—monotheism, pantheism, and deism are addressed to the gifted few to the exclusion of those who walk in the high way of common sense. All religions of the above description allow vast majority of mankind to remain as if they had no religion at all.

It is not possible for an ordinary man earning his daily bread by the sweat of his brow, at the beck and call of the senses and satisfied when his physical and vital needs are fulfilled, to raise himself to the realization of an uncompromizing monotheism which conceives of God as devoid of name and form, who exists somewhere above or beyond the mundane sphere. Such a God cannot be represented through any image. The only planes in which this monotheistic conception is intelligible are the intellectual and the intuitive ones. It is absurd to think that the teeming millions are or ever will be able to rise up to the high altitude of monotheism. The result is that they remain in the dark as ever with no religion to suit their genius or with no spiritual recipes to maintain their mental health. These people cannot bask in the sun of religion, though they need it most. They miss its magic touch to purify themselves of the dross of blind and brutal impulses. With their moral sense undeveloped and primitive instincts untrained, they remain instruments ready for the nefarious purposes of power politics. Once let at large, with no conscience to curb themselves, they can be made to do whatever or eevn worse than whatever is asked of them.

A stimulus is received by its proper receptor-organs. Light is received by the eye and sound by the ear. If this is true of physical and psychological phenomena, it is more so of spiritual ones. Things of the spirit can be received only by their proper receptor-organs. If a religion inculcates lessons of the same spiritual excellence on all, regardless of their faculties of receptivity, it cries in the wilderness. Such lessons given to the incompetent bear poisonous fruits. Shakespeare's Caliban was taught to speak. The result was that with all the faculties left satanic, he turned his power of speech to using abusive language. *Aham Brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman: *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, 1.4.10)—such Advaita teaching to the

incompetent advances him a few steps more to hell. *Sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma* (All this is verily Brahman: *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III. 14.1)—such pantheistic sermons tend to divest the ordinary man of morality and conscience.

Realization of identity of the finite individual with the Brahman is, indeed, spiritualism of the highest order, but it is not religion which presupposes a duality of the finite and the infinite or the worshipper and the worshipped. As a matter of fact, Śaṅkara himself regarded religion in the sense of man-God relationship as only empirically real and ultimately unreal. Religion holds good only of a relational plane of experience, where God stands to the created order of existence as the magician does to his magical exhibits. Advaitism as the culmination of religion is suited to the selected few who satisfy the essential prerequisites of this discipline.

Sanatana Dharma

There is one religion, indeed, which is universal both vertically or intensionally and horizontally or extensionally as well. It is to the study and elaboration of this Sanātana Dharma that we shall now devote ourselves. This religion is universal in the sense that not merely does it go into the core or essence of religion in the form of highest monotheism but also extends over all the lower types of religion as well. This religion is universal in the sense that it leaves room for the exercise of all faculties of men belonging to all possible grades of perfection.

Individual differences are a psychological truth which universal religion recognizes and makes allowance for. The universe does mean not merely its common essence but all its parts as well. It is a unity distributed over all its parts. Universal religion also as an exclusively human concern must represent the unity which touches every part of human nature and transmutes it into a medium of divine transmission, so that not even the crudest propensities remain as they were. It takes into account all the data of our mental life and does not build itself in a vacuum.

Revelations

Revelation goes deep into the contents of universal religion. Religion without revelation, as J. S. Huxley calls it, hardly deserves the name religion. A transcendent reference makes religion what it is and reason in the discursive sense of the term is incapable of grasping it fully. While all other religions owe themselves to revelation mediated through a person or a number of persons as an historical event, a truly universal religion does not ascribe it to any personal medium, however exalted he might be. A person cannot depersonify himself to the extent of overcoming the imperfections inherent in him. Sanātana Dharma takes its stand here on the invulnerable ground of the Vedas which are *apauruṣeya* or supra-personal. Revelation consists of an eternal body of *śabda* (All sounds). Individual saints and seers are only the custodians and transmitters of these eternal supra-personal and infallible truths. The individual, who is always susceptible to egoistic influences, is shifted to the background and the supremacy of truth, which is no respector of person, comes to the forefront. Individual authority is substituted by that of the Vedas. The doors of religion are thrown wide open to all competent recipients of such truths and all are accommodated according to their requirements or position in the scale of religious life.

Individual Differences

Individual differences determine the point to be occupied by a person in this scale. The stimulus exciting the different

faculties of the human mind must be adequate ones. God as the repository of *sapientia* or wisdom, *potentia* or power, and *bonitas* or goodness, God as transcendent and immanent or both, finally, God as above all attributes forming the essential nature of the finite individual, however suitable for votaries of higher abilities, are inappropriate to the teeming millions, who are not high up in the scale of mental life. Give the patient the medicine he requires and not a remedy as a matter of routine, is the maxim of universal religion. *Adhikāri-bheda*, based on the scientific principle of individual differences, is a fundamental condition laid down by this universal religion. It is a commonplace that all recipients do not possess the same powers of receptivity. All men are equal in the sense that they are equally entitled to enjoy the fundamental rights of living. But that they differ from one another in the excellence of different qualities and capacities, is an incontrovertible fact. It is undeniable that their abilities differ and so do their suitable vocations of life. There is a general ability, which constitutes the common stock of all individuals. But there are *special abilities* too in which they differ.

The Varnasrama Dharma

The allocation of duties to individuals according to their qualities and capacities cannot, therefore, be left to the individuals themselves. It is, on the other hand, an imperative function exercised by universal religion. *Varṇāśrama-dharma*, then, follows as a necessary consequence of such religion. It is an institution calculated on the liberal basis of the common welfare of humanity. It is not a creature of power politics or vested interests but based on the scientific doctrine of the four fundamentally different sets of *guṇas* (qualities) corresponding to an equally fundamental fourfold pattern of *karma* (man's actions). Although the *guṇas* are three, viz. *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, which are of the nature of 'illumination', 'activity', and 'inertia', their presence and absence in varying degrees determine the four *varṇas* and their *karma*. The *Brāhmaṇas* are predominantly *sāttvika* and their *karma* consists of *śama* (equanimity), *dama* (self-restraint), etc. The Kṣatriyas are, in the second place, predominantly *sāttvika* and *rājasika*, their *karma* being brave actions like fighting. Thirdly, the Vaiśyas are predominantly *rājasika* and *tāmasika*, their *karma* being cultivation, commerce, etc. Lastly, the Śūdras are dominated over by *tamas* and their *karma* is service to the three *varṇas*. These collocations of the *guṇas* and *karma* are not uniformly distributed over all individuals. They differ according as one or another of these is predominant or subordinate in them. Therefore, they are eternal and unchangeable. So the fourfold *varṇa-bheda* (differences in vocational classes) is also eternal and unchangeable. *Varṇāśrama-dharma* is a necessary characteristic of the social structure of universal religion.

Varṇāśrama is a *dharma* and not a mechanism for exploitation. Universal religion as a dynamic force cannot allow it to stagnate and degenerate into a hereditary institution. Heredity is not the sole determinant of progress. Environment also, including the forces of education and learning, makes important contribution to progress. The Śāstras themselves bear testimony to the fact of individuals belonging to lower *varṇas* having been admitted into the higher ones. Viśvāmitra is an instance on the point. The problem of heredity in relation to environment as it bears upon *varṇāśrama-dharma* would be a fascinating and fruitful study. But it would, if undertaken here, be a deviation from the main course of discussion.

That the institution is founded on impersonal motives is borne out by the fact

that the higher *varṇas* have not absolved themselves from the obligation of shouldering heavier responsibilities. As a matter of fact, this *dharma* governs the different *varṇas* by rules stricter to the degree that they are scaled higher. If such a great institution has come to a sad plight, the blame is to be laid not at the door of this universal religion but of those who uphold it. Let the evils accumulated due to human egotism be eliminated by still another revision of it made by rightful and competent custodians of this universal religion. Such revisions had been made in the past from time to time.

The demolition of this majestic structure is inconceivable. What is conceivable is the proper redistribution of individuals over the four *varṇas* according to their *guṇas* and *karma*. A classless society is good in the sense that no class exploits another. But classes there are and there must be. Even the parts of an ordinary machine are not of the same class in the sense that they do not carry on the same work. Yet in another sense they are one, namely, they subserve the common purpose of operating the machine. Similarly, in the society governed by *varṇāśrama-dharma* the *varṇas* belong to different classes in that they function in different directions and yet they are also one in that they play an equally indispensable role in the economy of social welfare. Categorization is necessary and so admissible. But it becomes objectionable when impersonal or altruistic motives are thrust out by personal or egoistic ones.

Universal religion displays flexibility through rigidity, reformability through conservatism, and diversity through unity. This balance of forces accounts for the invulnerable strength of this *dharma*. With its mechanism carried to perfection, it survives in the struggle for existence even against heavy odds. Its inexhaustible vitality assimilates the truths of all religions and yet yields to none. It is strong and so not aggressive, self-sufficient and so not self-assertive, and spiritual to the core and so not exploitative.

Psychology of Universal Religion

Universal religion is the response of the total personality of man to the totality of the universe and even beyond it, integrated by the Supreme Person through certain eternal truths. As such it can not be confined to things of the spirit in a narrow sense but must be broadened out to everything that concerns man. It governs man as an individual and as a member of the family, society, state, nation, and humanity as a whole. It regulates the life of man from the cradle to the grave and even goes back to his ante-natal and post-mortem states of existence. So it cannot leave it to the individual to behave as he likes but controls him with a view to promoting the larger interests of humanity as a whole. Nay, its ken penetrates the whole universe, so that all the different orders of existence are arranged in a graded scale of interrelation.

Sanātana Dharma touches man at all his dimensions. It provides for all possible forms of religious doctrines and practices to make for the spiritual progress of people of all grades of excellence, and yet grasps them as necessary moments of one indivisible truth. Standing on the summit of reality, it appreciates the truth impregnating all religions of the world. All religions lead to God, is the universal message preached by it. It bears no ill will to even a particle of dust, for it is informed with the same Brahman that is the indwelling essence of everything. It conquers animosity and jealousy and violence born of them. Non-violence, forbearance, tolerance, and courage spring out of the realization that all are the children of one and the same God. So this religion alone

can address all the people of the universe irrespective of nationality and faith as *amṛtasya putrāḥ* (immortal children of God). And so, again, a faithful follower of this religion can look upon all mankind as his brothers and sisters. Thus the principle of unity in diversity is not kept confined to the Śāstras alone but carried down to the minutest details of life.

The lower is the anticipation of the higher, while the latter is the fulfilment of the former. Even the lowest stages of religion are informed with the spirit of the highest. It is for the benefit of the devotees that the One, formless, nameless, and all-pervasive Brahman, assumes different forms and names. From the choir of heaven to the furniture of the earth, everything is redolent with the tune infinite. Even a block of stone is at bottom the same absolute Truth. Nothing is negated. Everything is affirmed. Even a blade of grass is the same Brahman. So the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, rivers, lakes, hills, dales, stocks, stones, sons, daughters, wives, husbands, friends, and foes are nothing but God Himself. Each of these is worshipped as none other than the life of our life and the Soul of our soul. Let the critic pause and think why an Advaitin of the stature of Śaṅkarācārya himself behymned Viśvanātha, a block of stone, Annapūrṇā, an idol, or the Gaṅgā, a flow of water. The key to understanding this wonder is the synoptic vision of the pilgrimage of the spirit from the lowest to the highest point which enshrines the eternal Truth. The path of the spirit is one and continuous, it does not proceed by leaps and bounds.

Knowledge proceeds on step by step. Perception makes for memory and imagination, the latter leads to conception, and facilitates reasoning, which, finally, culminates in intuition or immediate awareness of God. The sensory or perceptual, imaginal, conceptual, and the intuitive stages constitute connected and continuous series and attention to or concentration upon each preceding stage prepares the mind for attending to and concentrating on the succeeding one. The ordinary devotee normally indentifies him-self with the body and the senses. He is in the perceptual plane of experience and can fix his mind on God as represented on the same plane. He can pray to and commune with the physical image of God and only gradually prepare himself for the imaginal or ideational plane in which he remembers, or races with the free trains of ideas of, the physical image of God. He attains more freedom from the limitations of the earlier stages with the development of the conceptual powers, when he can think of God without the help of perceptual images. At the conceptual stage, the perceptual image of God is stripped of all particularities and is crystallized into the universal idea. This, through meditation, finally leads to immediate, yet supra-sensuous, realization of God.

Universal religion takes into account the psychology of the finite mind and directs every element of it to the divine. Even the lower propensities are not excluded. These are, on the other hand, canalized and made instrumental to the divine consummation. It is the unitive consciousness or realization of the individual's self-identity with God or the absolute so universal in its sweep that it embraces not only mankind but all sentient creatures as well, nay the whole universe. Universal religion harnesses most effectively the totality of man's nature in its diverse dimensions to the task of self-fulfilment or communion with God through every channel that fits in with it. Love, hatred, jealousy, fear, anger, relations of all possible shades like filial, fraternal, friendly, and

conjugal can be the channel of divine realization. For example, the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana communed with God through love. Kaṁsa, Hiraṇyakaśipu, and Śiśupāla worshipped Him being actuated by fear, violence, and jealousy, respectively. The contact centre is everywhere. God can be realized at every point of contact with Him. Vasudeva, Devakī, Nanda, and Yaśodā realized Him as their son. Śrīdāma, Bhīma, and Arjuna behaved with Him as a friend. Uddhava, Vidura, Dhruva, and Prahlāda served Him as their Master. Śrī Rādhā adored Him as her husband.

The Fourfold Path of Spiritual Discipline

The fourfold path of spiritual discipline (*yogas*) have been prescribed, for the benefit of individuals of different tastes and temperaments, as a means to maintaining this unitive consciousness in life and action. For example, Karma-yoga (the way of action with non-attachment grounded on the realization of the universal Self or God in every sentient creature) suits individuals of the conative type, Bhakti-yoga (the way of devotion to and feeling of the immanence of the Universal Self or God through prayer and worship) the emotional type, Jñāna-yoga (the way of metaphysical knowledge or understanding of this unity of the individual self with the Universal Self or God) the cognitive type, and lastly Rāja-yoga (the way of elevated contemplation for direct and intuitive apprehension of this unity of the individual self with the Universal Self or God) suits individuals of the mystic or intuitive frame of mind. Knowledge proceeds in *yoga* also from the simple to the complex. For example, *savitarka*, *nirvitarka*, *savicāra*, and *nirvicāra* are graduated stages of *samādhi* or communion of which each immediately succeeding stage is higher than its immediately preceding one. The first two centre round gross physical objects known confusedly, then clearly and distinctly. The last two, on the other hand, deals with subtle objects known in similar ways. *Savitarka samādhi* is a higher stage of communion in which the object cognized, the cognition of the object and the word denoting the object appear as intermingled or fused together. Secondly, *nirvitarka samādhi* is a higher stage of communion in which the fusion of word, cognition, and object gives way so that the object appears in its own nature, i.e. here the mind understands the nature of objects in a direct fashion without the help of word and cognition. In the third instance, *savicāra samādhi* is a still higher stage of communion in which the *yogin* acquires the power of knowing subtle elements like atmos as forming part of gross objects characterized by notions of time, space, and cause. Lastly, *nirvicāra samādhi* is the stage in which even the consciousness of communion is lost and becomes, as it were, the subtle object itself. The above are the four principal types of *samprajñāta samādhi* which means communion with and complete knowledge of objects, which may vary from gross things to subtle. They vary in a gradual subtleness of the object concentrated upon. These stages finally culminate into *asamprajñāta samādhi*, the stage of communion in which the object is reduced to mere disposition, *saṁskāra* and therefore knowledge involving the duality of subject and object has ceased. In *asamprajñāta samādhi* the *draṣṭā* or the *yogin*, who is the subject, dwells on his own intrinsic nature. Universal religion provides for the lowest forms of meditation as preparatory to the highest. It stoops down from its dizzy heights to the needs of the human soul even the lowest stage and raises it by degrees to an appreciation of the highest truth.

Image Worship

Universal religion, therefore, prescribes image-worship for those who would be benefited through it. Through such worship alone is the ordinary individual led to the realization of God by all the dimensions of his being. An idol or image is one of the infinite focal points of God. Idol worship as prescribed by universal religion is no idolatry. It is, on the other hand, the invocation of the highest, unspeakable, and unthinkable reality meditated through symbols. It is the presentiment of, preparation for, and yet surcharged with the highest monotheism.

Image-worship is an elaborate process comprising a number of necessary steps each of which stands the test of reason. An analysis of a few of these steps would suffice for the purpose in view. For example, *ācamana*, i.e. the sipping of water from the palm of the hand is the starting point of every religious function. It is not merely a purificatory measure, but already an exercise in practising the presence of God. The supreme seat of Viṣṇu, which is the covetable object of all worship, is constantly seen by the gods as His gaze spread over the cosmos. Thus, the very beginning of worship, suited as it is to the perceptual level of mind, is yet infused with the monotheistic objective. *Āsanaśuddhi* or purification of the seat before religious ceremonies, again, a very simple process on the surface, is pregnant with profoundly scientific and spiritual meaning of the universe as a whole in relation to the worshipper, who is an integral part of it. The earth, which supports the *āsana* or the seat is invoked to support the worshipper and purify the *āsana*. The universe is conceived here as a unity and the worshipper as a tiny speak on the earth which is kept in its position by Sūrya or Sun. Universal religion, therefore, conceives and applies the heliocentric hypothesis long before Copernicus framed and proved it.

Without a lengthy elaboration of each of the stages of worship, only one more may be explained and commented upon. For example, *ghaṭa-sthāpanā*, or the ceremonial installation of the pitcher or the pot before religious ceremonies, is an essential part in the process of worship. A *ghaṭa* or pot is placed in front of the worshipper. It makes up for the absence of the images of gods and goddesses, who are also to be worshipped along with the principal deity whose image may be there. Even the principal deity again, may be represented by the *ghaṭa* when he or she is not also worshipped with an image. The *ākāśa*, i.e. the open space or vacuum in the *ghaṭa* or pot symbolizes the heart of the worshipper and the water within it is his *bhāva* or feeling of devotion. Again, each of the objects placed in, upon, and below or around the *ghaṭa* has a deep spiritual significance. A fruit, preferably a bladed cocoanut, which is placed on the *ghaṭa*, stands for the head of the *sādhaka* or the worshipper with a tuft of hair symbolizing the flame of knowledge crowning it. *Pañca-ratna*, or the five kinds of gems, placed within it, meant the five cognitive senses or the *pañca-jñānendriyas*. *Pañca-pallava*, or the five green blades growing from the same stem of a plant, placed in it and protruding itself outside it, represent the five motor senses or the *pañca-karmendriyas*. *Pañca-śasyas*, or the five kinds of cereal, wheat, corn, paddy, etc. strewn around and below the *ghaṭa*, symbolize the five subtle essences of the five gross elements or the *pañca-tanmātras*. Lastly, the body of the *ghaṭa* may be taken to mean the body of the worshipper consisting of the five gross elements or the *pañca-mahābhūtas*, i.e. *prithivī* or earth, *ap* or water, *tejas* or fire, *vāyu* or air, and *ākāśa* or open space.

So in *ghaṭa-sthāpanā* the finite individual has to project himself in his totality into the *ghaṭa*. The spirit working through this mechanism is the self-assurance that this body is the living temple of God and this finite frame is the meeting-place of the infinite. Thus does the finite individual raise himself to the plane where alone he may be a rightful and competent worshipper. Śiva should be worshipped by the worshipper turned into Śiva himself. *Cakṣudāna*, i.e. the ceremony of anointing the eyes of an image at the time of consecration, *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā*, i.e. the life-giving ceremony of an image at the time of consecration, *bhūta-śuddhi* or self-purification or purification of the elements of which the body is composed, *bhūtāpasāraṇa* or expulsion of the evil spirits, who may foil worship, for its smooth performance, the different *nyāsas*, i.e. mental appropriation or assignment of various parts of the body to different deities with prayers and corresponding gesticulations, and *mudrās* or ritualistic gestures made with various positions of the fingers practised in religious worship, among other steps of *upāsanā* (meditation or worship), are all symbolic of deep spiritual meaning. *Visarjana* or immersion ceremony of an image after worship, again, gives the finishing touch to the whole process which is too profound to be introduced in this short and cursory treatment of a difficult subject. All these steps involved in worship are calculated to befit the common man of the sensory, preceptual, and imaginal levels and to lift him above their limitations to the conceptual and intuitive ones, where these together with image-worship may be outreached and dispensed with.

Conclusion

The above art thrown open to all men unfettered by geographical or zonal limits requiring no allegiance to any person, however exalted he might be. Universal religion is centred round no individual, for it is impersonal or *apauruṣeya*. It cannot be traced back to any year or date, for it is eternal. It is bound up with human nature as such irrespective of nationality and age. It is the eternal essence permeating everything that is temporal. It is one religion yet it inheres in all particular religions. Being the highest in depth and vastness, it embraces even the lowest in its fold. From the pedestal of Vedāntic absolutism, it ministers to the lowest form of animism with all other grades of religion ranged between them. It hates none, but transmutes every one into pure gold by light and love.

Religion remains open, loose, and incomplete with a one-way traffic towards God. The logic of universal religion demands that the inward movement of the soul towards itself be alternated with the outward movement of the same towards the world or the deductive movement of reason be reciprocated with its inductive phase. The man who is united with God, perceives everything as divine or realizes himself in all objects and all objects in himself. It does not suffice to know merely that God is all, but, at the same time, all must also be known as God Himself. This twofold movement of the soul from God to the world and from the world to God completes the circuit of the spiritual path and organizes it into a systematic whole or pattern or a *gestalt*. From each particle of dust to the vast heavens, from the microcosm to the macrocosm, everything is God and none else. Such a realization is no mere speculative construction but an experimentally verified (by seers and saints from time to time) truth inviting everybody to have it verified and established over again.

Thus universal religion, which Sanātana Dharma alone is, stands on very satisfactory

grounds, indeed. The solidity of its structure has withstood endless onslaughts of hostile forces. Its vitality has defied the vicissitudes and ravages of time. It has survived not by the chance combination of circumstances but by its intrinsic value and worth.

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. Thus we see various forms of religion in the world. It is a bewildering study, but it is not, as many of us think, a vain speculation. Amidst this chaos there is harmony, throughout these discordant sounds there is a note of concord, and he who is prepared to listen to it will catch the tone.

The great question of all questions at the present time is this: Taking for granted that the known and the knowable are bounded on both sides by the unknowable and the infinitely unknown, why struggle for that infinite unknown? Why shall we not be content with the known? Why shall we not rest satisfied with eating, drinking, and doing a little good to society? This idea is in the air. From the most learned professor to the prattling baby, we are told to do good to the world, that is all of religion, and that it is useless to trouble ourselves about questions of the beyond. So much is this the case that it has become a truism.

But fortunately we *must* inquire into the beyond. This present, this expressed, is only one part of that unexpressed. The sense universe is, as it were, only one portion, one bit of that infinite spiritual universe projected into the plane of sense consciousness. How can this little bit of projection be explained, be understood, without knowing that which is beyond? It is said of Socrates that one day while lecturing at Athens, he met a Brāhmaṇa who had travelled into Greece, and Socrates told the Brāhmaṇa that the greatest study for mankind is man. The Brāhmaṇa sharply retorted: 'How can you know man until you know God?' This God, this eternally Unknowable, or Absolute, or Infinite, or without name—you may call Him by what name you like—is the rationale, the only explanation, the *raison d'être* of that which is known and knowable, this present life.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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MODERN BENGALI AESTHETICS

S. K. Nandi, M.A., LL.B., D.Phil.

A keen student of Philosophy and Aesthetics and author of several books in English and Bengali, Dr. S. K. Nandi is at present Assistant Professor at the Hooghly Post-Graduate Teachers' Training College, West Bengal. He was formerly Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Presidency College, Calcutta, and Senior Research Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla. Dr. Nandi gave this lecture at the Institute on 16 July 1969.

AESTHETIC problems as formulated and discussed here in India during this century have been amply reflected in the systems of Rabindranath, Brajendranath, Aurobindo, and Abanindranath and they are all Bengalees. Their impact on the thinking and formulation of contemporary aesthetic ideas are too pronounced. They had their own distinct outlook to view and judge the problems involved.

Aesthetic Problems

Rabindranath and Abanindranath had intuitive apprehension of the problems and their respective points of view were an amalgam of 'intuition' and 'synthesizing ratiocinative process'. Their artistic intuition often gave them glimpses of the aesthetic process and their ideas were formulated in a language replete with imageries and analogies. The style has been feeling-oriented, somewhat romantic in character. No logical structure was consciously sought to be built up. But Aurobindo and Brajendranath adhered to metaphysical type of writing, terse, logical, and conclusive.

Aurobindo appeared as the tough champion of the ancient Indian aesthetics, in so far as the spiritually-oriented idea of art was concerned. His precise and pointed polemics knew their objective and they have been ably used to defend the old aesthetic values as enshrined in our epics in such ultimate spiritual significance of art found the ultimate value of art in its spiritual significance. Beauty was the gateway to Godhead. This idea was not new with the Tagores. They also believed in such ultimate spiritual significance of art.

But Brajendranath was trained in the Hegelian aesthetics and the Greek and Roman traditions on art and architecture influenced him immensely. He travelled widely in the realms of English literature and European art. His training as a philosopher gave him the critical acumen not to be found in any of the other three excepting Aurobindo. Brajendranath moved on traditional lines of criticism as found in the western aesthetics. Hegel was his dominant influence and as such some affinity in the approaches of Rabindranath and Brajendranath could be discovered. What Brajendranath thought as a Hegelian, Rabindranath thought as a disciple of the Upaniṣads. But we must not overlook the traditional ideas of the Indian aesthetics working on Brajendranath, although Hegel influenced his earlier thinking. Rabindranath (also compared to Hegel for his Upaniṣadic ideas, as understood by him) came close to Hegel and the idea of 'self-

realization' through the 'other' could be read in their systems.

Strictly speaking, this self-realization through the 'other' is a realization of the self through itself, if we care to remember the Upaniṣadic teachings of a pantheistic nature. If everything is spiritual, this self-alienation of the spirit and the ultimate self-realization through the 'other' becomes meaningless in this all-spirit context. 'Beautiful' as the sensuous representation of the Absolute, as understood by Hegel paralleled the spiritually-oriented idea of Parama Sundara, as reflected in the beautiful in art and nature (as understood both by Rabindranath and Abanindranath).

In the same vein we might suggest an affinity in conceptualizing the ultimate significance of art between Aurobindo, on the one hand and Rabindranath, Abanindranath, and Brajendranath on the other. The ultimate spiritual significance of art has been unequivocally poised by Aurobindo and deviations therefrom are hardly noticeable in his entire system of aesthetics. Rigours of his logic, both in creative and critical writings, did not allow him to deviate from this pole-star even for a moment.

But Rabindranath and Abanindranath had occasions to refer to the 'object of art' as contained within the domain of aesthetics. Purpose of art was contained within the four walls of art as such. Art for them, for a while did not look beyond the bounds of art itself and its significance was sometimes sought there and there alone. Tagore's (Rabindranath) thought of a theory which might parallel the westerners' pet idea of 'art for art's sake'. This idea in itself seems to be divorced from reality as it considered art and aesthetic activity as completely divorced from the totality of life. That is why the appeal of this idea lacked finality and its advocates often showed a tendency to covercome and go beyond this idea.

Tagore told us that the poet sang out of unbounded and unmotivated joy. He never cared to invest his song with any other significance. The poet's business was only to delight his audience. If there were any purpose, it had its roots in delight and it ended in delight which was communicable and shareable. But this delight or *ānanda* was supra-significant as purpose of art. At times both Abanindranath and Rabindranath spoke of this 'purposiveness without a purpose' and invested art with this *ānanda* from which everything sprang up and to which everything returned. Again they spoke of the spiritual significance of art, as embodying the Parama Sundara. The empirical utility of art, its didactic character, its educative value, they have been completely repudiated by the Tagores.

But Aurobindo spoke of the aesthetic, the educative, and the spiritual value of art. Though art had its ultimate significance in its spiritual value, still it educated people and gave them unbounded joy. In this sense Aurobindo was an eclectic in so far as he accommodated all the possible views on the purposiveness of art. Brajendranath sought to discover the 'harmony' in art; this harmony was beauty and the 'Absolute' was the absolute harmony. His modification of the traditional classification of art into classical and romantic, etc. is a pointer to this direction. Brajendranath's characterization of *rasa*, the aesthetic satisfaction as 'momentary infinitum' betrays the influence of the Upaniṣads on his ideas of art and aesthetics. He invests the momentary aesthetic experience with 'an infinite value' and in this regard, he comes very close to Rabindranath, Abanindranath, and Aurobindo.

Aesthetic Joy

This aesthetic joy consists in the successful desubjectification or subjective feelings

by the artist and this has been branded as 'expression'. The concept of 'expression' has different bearing with different thinkers and it has been differently conceived. The poetic intuition is just coined into so many beautiful words and it has been termed 'expression'. Herein the problem involved is: Whether this expression and the intuition which it expresses are identical or not? Rabindranath, unlike Benedetto Croce, told us that expression was the primary aesthetic fact; but there is suggestion in his writings that expression was not only the primary but the 'ultimate' aesthetic fact. To Abanindranath and Brajendranath, this problem was one of synthesis and harmony. Expression and intuition would be harmonized and blended without leaving a remainder, to make art what it is. The subtle considerations involved in this intuition-expression relation bothered Rabindranath. He considered in detail whether 'expression' could be termed 'expression' with a remainder unexpressed. His considered opinion on whether a 'mute poet' could be called 'poet' as such deserves careful consideration by the student of aesthetics.

Benedetto Croce, the noted Italian philosopher, discussed this problem threadbare and his conclusion was that expression and intuition were indentical. Abanindranath or Brajendranath like Rabindranath, did not consider intuition to be identical with expression. For them it was important to see how much was expressed through the artistic form. So expression meant for them a successful desubjectification of the intuited image through a proper use of appropriate technique. This cognizance of the importance of technique is discernible in Rabindranath as well. But both Rabindranath and Abanindranath concluded that technique had its limited utility and importance in their scheme of aesthetics. Both of them thought that for a real artist the importance of technique was nil. They concluded that the technique was there in the world of art but it was not the determinant of aesthetic excellence, in any sense of the term. This mystic identity of intuition-expression invests technique with an indeterminate character and it becomes metaphysically unrecognizable.

This *a priori* identity, if postulated negates the importance of technique and both Rabindranath and Abanindranath, by their non-recognition of the ultimate significance of technique, virtually veered round Croce, when he postulated this non-duality in his idea of the 'technique of externalization'. Aurobindo's idea of intuition is metaphysical in character in the sense that it was supra-logical. It gave a synthetic vision of the whole. This aesthetic sense has been a powerful vehicle for the realization of pure aesthetic joy. Aurobindo tells us that at certain stage of human development aesthetic sense was of infinite value. The sense of good and bad, beautiful and unbeautiful, which afflicts our understanding and our senses, must be replaced by *akhaṇḍa rasa*, undifferentiated and unabridged delight. This aesthetic sense should be fully used before 'highest' could be reached. Aurobindo told us that the free self was the 'delight self' and this was a matter of intuition of which our ancient traditions repeatedly spoke. Rabindranath also spoke in the same vein. Both Rabindranath and Aurobindo had their inspiration from the Upaniṣads and our ancient Indian texts and that is why their fundamental agreement on major issues has been striking.

Aesthetic Experience

The yogic detachment could be achieved in aesthetic experience, if intuition is so viewed. This detachment makes possible the 'harmony' that is found in life and art. And when a person is able to achieve

the poetic status, to contemplate and to recreate aesthetically all forms of life and experience, he is strongly filled with and adjusted to the law and harmony. Then is he truly *rasena tṛptaḥ*, 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'.

This aesthetic detachment as involved in the aesthetic intuition gave all the world of delight that poetry and art were capable of. And that is how poetry was not merely didactic or utilitarian. Because aesthetic intuition was invested with a type of detachment so very peculiar to art and art alone, Rabindranath, Abanindranath, and Brajendranath unequivocally told us that art had no such final purpose as could be considered 'extraneous' to the nature of art qua art. Any such 'extraneous' consideration determining the 'purpose' and as such the 'purposive nature' of art would make art 'subservient' and not a 'free activity'.

This idea of art as 'free activity' negated at the outset the copy theory and that is how 'copy theory' did not find favour with any one of the four great Indian thinkers on art and aesthetics, whose views we have discussed at length in the foregoing pages. We have branded both the Tagores as 'realists', though their realism greatly differed from the British academic type of realism. Their 'realism' was the realism of 'form', the 'form' that could hardly be distinguished from the 'content' as such.

The Form-content Relation

The form-content relation and the *a priori* distinction *inter se*—possibly led to a synthetic approach. But Rabindranath's poignant declaration of '*Rupér truth*' as the ultimate meaning and reality of art (empirically speaking) led us to believe that Tagore's distinction of 'form' and 'content' was more apparent than real.

The logical culmination of the acceptance of the *a priori* distinction of form and content is a synthetic approach, a postulation of organic relation between the form and content in art. That is how the 'undifferentiated unity' of form and content has been stressed. Moreover, the unitary character of the poetic intuition does not leave room for driving a wedge between the form and the content of art. If art-work is a total configuration, a *gestalt*, it will not allow a hard-and-fast distinction of 'form' and 'content' as understood in scholastic aesthetics. That is how Brajendranath along with the Tagores spoke of a fusion of form and content, and organic relation that makes the two blend into one.

Aurobindo's insistence on the spiritual significance of art and on 'harmony' as the essence of all aesthetic activity, point to the self-same direction of non-duality of 'form' and 'content' in art. They could be distinguished ideationally, i.e. a post-mortem examination of an art-work might reveal this duality, although no definite and rounded contour for them could be fixed up as boundaries. On this point, the Tagores, Brajendranath, and Aurobindo, all agree. Because, without this 'seamless fusion' (if there are form and content in art), no art could possibly be a 'unique whole'. This idea of 'unique whole' again tends to the direction of non-duality of form and content.

Abanindranath spoke in unambiguous terms (in fact he illustrated the idea) how 'content was made in the artist's imagination and how the so-called facts of life were presented in art with completely different meaning, connotation, and significance. When Aurobindo reads spiritual significance in art, the art-content drawn from ordinary experience gets completely metamorphosed and its meaning and

significance become arbitrary and exclusive. So the dividing line between the 'form' and the 'content' in art, in such a situation, loses all fixity. Both the form and the content become indeterminate.

Brajendranath's acceptance of the ideas of 'neo-classic' and 'neo-romantic' unmistakably points to the fluid meaning of both the form and the content in art. So it will not be incorrect to observe that the dominant trend in modern Indian aesthetic thought is to cognize the non-duality of form and content. This non-duality makes the problem of communication more complicated than it is usually understood. As a logical corollary to this position of non-duality, we come to postulate the uniqueness of appeal in art. This aesthetic appeal is different from man to man and hence its uniqueness. This was accepted by the Tagores, Aurobindo, and Brajendranath as well.

This position spells for Rabindranath an apparent difficulty when he wanted us to believe that the content of art, i.e. what an art-work sought to express was the 'higher nature' in man. This specification of art-content went contrary to our earlier observation on the non-duality of form and content. But Tagore's (Rabindranath) intuited sense of oneness of 'form' and 'content' virtually took him to the position that anything and everything could be the content of art, when illumined by the artist's imagination. Moreover, if art-activity is spiritual in character or in other words, if art were the handi-work of spirit, the distinction between form and content in art becomes more apparent than real. (This move has been repeatedly sought to be made out.) If everything is spiritual in character, all art-content is spiritual.

This position negates at the outset the arbitrary distinctions of higher or lower in art-content. That is why Aurobindo called poetry, 'the poetry of the soul'. Rabindranath and Aurobindo, both believed in this spiritual goal. Abanindranath and Brajendranath did not lag behind although their kinship in this regard, was not too pronounced. They all wrote of the 'sky' and the 'nest' being beautiful. Aurobindo quite readily accepts Rabindranath as a fellow-traveller. Let us quote from one of the letters of Aurobindo, he wrote after Tagore had passed away:

'Tagore has been a wayfarer towards the same goal as ours in his own way. That is the main thing, the exact stage of advance and putting of the steps are minor matter.' Because of this spiritual goal in art, Aurobindo tells us, both Bankimchandra and Rabindranath could mould the contemporary minds of men and women so effectively. Let us quote him over again when he wrote:

'Young Bengal gets its ideas, feelings and culture, not from schools and colleges but from Bankim's novels and Rabindranath Tagore's poems; so true is it that the language is the life of a nation.' Sister Nivedita saw 'this life of the nation' in the language of the brush as used by Abanindranath.

Aesthetic Freedom

Now, this spiritual ideal is not inconsistent with aesthetic freedom and it does not circumscribe art in any way. Kant perhaps had some such idea in his mind when he called the purpose in art to the 'purposiveness without a purpose'.

This spiritual aim of art is not foisted from without and the evolution in art is an approximation to this ideal inherent in all forms of art-activity. This spiritual ideal has sometimes been identified with '*ānanda*' and in this '*ānanda*' all art-activity found their culmination and ultimate significance. This is evident in the systems we have been discussing herein. Tagores and Aurobindo were quite emphatic

and Brajendranath was rather pronounced on this issue.

Adhikari-bheda in Art

Aurobindo's ideas on art being 'spiritually-oriented', his poetry tended towards epic grandeur. He displayed 'grand passion' in his poetry and that is how the 'depth' of his poetry is immense and unfathomable. He heard the 'sounds of the awakening world' when he was a boy of fifteen and that sound-rhythm got eloquent in his entire gamut of writings as years advanced. Rabindranath's 'awakening of the falls' gave us similar glimpses of a spiritual awakening which pervaded his entire world of artistic creations, both in colours and in words. Their appeal lay with the initiated.

The uninitiated had no access to this grandeur and eloquence of art. Our ancient concept of *adhikāri-bheda* in art has been taken up in right earnest both by Abanindranath and Aurobindo. The concept of *sahṛdaya* appealed to both of them and Rabindranath and Brajendranath also shared the same view. It would be quite interesting to note how Aurobindo spelt out his position in this regard. To quote him: 'If I had to write for the general reader, I could not have written *Sabitri* at all. It is in fact for myself that I have written it and for those who can lend themselves to subject matter, images, and technique of mystic poetry'. So in a way, Aurobindo, Rabindranath, Abanindranath, and Brajendranath, all four agreed that art was not the common *rendezvous* for all men.

The traditional Indian concept of *sāhitya* also points to the same direction. People of similar training and temperament could go along the path of poetry to reach identical goals. Abanindranath, we remember, emphasized the necessity of training and of creating a temperament suited to art-appreciation proper. He told us that a mere book-learning of the alphabets does not entitle one to read and appreciate Shakespeare. That needs emotional integration with Shakespeare himself. The truth and the ideal, that Shakespeare visualized must be visualized by the reader of Shakespeare.

According to Aurobindo, poetry to be the vehicle of this 'great truth' would aspire to be '*mantra*'. That is how he came to define poetry as a rhythmic speech which rises at once from the heart of the seer and the distant house of truth. This idea of 'art as *mantra*' implies the communicability of art only to the initiated. He alone can know the truth and see the vision of the artist, if he is a *sahṛdaya*. If not, he fails to get into the world of art as created by the artist. The appeal of art falls flat on the uninitiated and as such our ancient *ālaṁkārikas*, like the moderners, refused to appeal to the *arasikesu*.

Aesthetic Principle

According to Aurobindo, the greatest poets are those who had a large and powerful interpretative and intuitive vision and whose poetry arose out of the revelatory utterance of it. For him, intuition was interpretative, it makes patent the meaning and significance of the 'intuited image'. It chooses its own vehicle and the vehicle to be appropriate to the content expressed, tends to be 'classical'. May be, Brajendranath thought of the 'neo-classical' to stress this very point.

Hegel's idea of the sublime compares favourably with this Indian concept of the failure of form to grapple with the grandiose content. This pre-supposes the traditional idea of form-content duality. The realism of poetry chooses its own vehicle. That is how Abanindranath has explained the transformation of real content into aesthetic content in the most mysterious fashion that human imagination

could conceive of.

We have discussed earlier the type and nature of realism as we found in both the Tagores. Brajendranath as a poet gave us symbols (real in their appearance) representing some spiritual values. Their apparent referents were real in the ordinary sense of the term; but in essence they enjoyed a type of supra-reality which belonged to the mystic plane. Aurobindo as a poet had a great affinity with Brajendranath in this regard. He was a poet of the earth as well. But this 'earthiness' was transformed into 'life divine' through the alchemy of the mystic intuition. Brajendranath's noted poem, 'The Quest Eternal', may be ranked as 'poetry of the soul' so evident in both Rabindranath's and Aurobindo's poetic creations. All the three poets went through the traditional phase of poetry as understood by the ancient Indian aesthetics —the moral, the intellectual, and the empirically real phases—and they reached beyond these phases. Herein they followed the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, and they were in the happy company of Aśvaghoṣa and Śaṅkarācārya. Ultimate poetry for them was 'sign language' and this 'sign language' embodied the vision of the poet, which was characteristic power of the poet as such.

Poet's 'own vision' gave them their own 'aesthetic principles' and these aesthetic principles as found in Rabindranath, Aurobindo, Brajendranath, and Abanindranath had a close resemblance as they had a common social and spiritual ethos to live in. Their uniqueness did not rule out resemblances as they breathed the same spiritual air in similar social ethos. But this 'common legacy' and 'common feeders' did not blur their distinctiveness in ideas. All these great aesthetic thinkers had their own aesthetic ideas distinct in their difference and in their agreement as well. Their distinctive aesthetic ideas only proved the veracity of Aurobindo's poignant observation:

'It has been the rule that great poets should look for their own aesthetic principles and that they should become to this extent philosophers and borrowers of philosophy.' Thus the philosophy of art and beauty as found in the Tagores, Brajendranath, and Aurobindo were very allied in their fundamentals as they borrowed from the same storehouse of Indian civilization and culture, which were essentially spiritual in outlook and approach. When it was said that man was not a moral Melchizedek and that he must live, move, and have his being in a society, we nodded in approbation and readily accepted the idea that moral behaviour presupposed communication. This communication was equally vital for aesthetic ideas and this was responsible for the close affinity in the ideas of Rabindranath, Abanindranath, Aurobindo, and Brajendranath when enunciated their philosophy of art and beauty.

We may note here in passing that none of them disregarded and overlooked the importance of the 'empirical' in art although their outlook was spiritually oriented. 'A blade of grass', 'a scrap of paper', and thousand other trifles of life were important for them for they bore the hall-mark of spirit. This was an end imbedded in the thing in itself and as such not external and extraneous to itself. It was also in keeping with the traditional Upaniṣadic legacy. Rabindranath, like Aurobindo, was unequivocal in his profession of the Upaniṣadic ideal of the spirit which gave modern Indian aesthetics its 'spiritualistic bias', thereby leaving nothing behind and beyond the scope of art as everything was considered 'spiritual' on ultimate analysis. Rabindranath's address to the world, on the occasion of his

eightieth birthday unequivocally spelt out his thesis of '*paśya devasya kāvyam*' wherein he discussed the fullness of nature through intuition.

This 'fullness' did not pertain to matter; but it was essentially spiritual in character. This note recurred in Abanindranath and in Brajendranath as well. Brajendranath's formulation of the differentia of *ānanda* as differentiating art from craft is a pointer to this type of spiritual demarcation, close to our traditional Upaniṣadic thinking. Brajendranath told us that *rasa* or the 'aesthetic enjoyment' was fundamental for all forms of aesthetic activity. All types of art were marked by this *ānanda* as their essence; the media as employed and used in different arts only help to give the arts their different labels. His idea of the 'final art', i.e. poetry spells its supremacy over other forms of plastic and vocal arts by its superior capability of exciting *rasa* with the help of 'other forms' of fine arts.

Conclusion

This spiritual reorientation focussed a common faith in the efficacy of art as a moral force, though art had no distinct and professed purpose to reform society morally; of course, Aurobindo invested art with such a purpose to be subsumed under a greater purpose that is spiritual in essence. But the Tagores and Brajendranath, all three believed in a moral ethos intimately related to the total personality of the artist, which was expressed in art.

Thus art, being the desubjectification of the subjective world-view of the artist (this includes both feeling and intellection aspects) reflects this moral ethos and makes art moral. That is how the noted Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce came to agree with the view that art was moral, though it was not 'conscious purpose' of art; herein the 'neo-idealist' Corce came very near the dominant trend in modern Bengali aesthetics, as found in Aurobindo, Rabindranath Brajendranath, and Abanindranath. Herein these Bengalee thinkers line up with the most ardent logical minds of the West who ever thought and wrote on aesthetic problems in recent times.

MAN IN SEARCH OF IMMORTALITY. Testimonials from the Hindu Scriptures. Swami Nikhilananda. Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, New York.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* we find the following universal prayer—'from the unreal lead us to the Real, from darkness lead us to Light, from death lead us to Immortality'.

Man is not merely a biological entity, he does not live by bread alone; he is a self-determining, self-regulating, free, spiritual being. He is the master-piece of creation, as he is made in the image of God, to quote the language of the Bible. Man is the only animal who aspires after solving the riddle of the universe, realizing the nature of his self and attaining immortality even in this very life when 'this muddy vesture of decay doth grossly close around him'. In the article on 'Immortality' the author truly says: 'Belief in the immortality of the soul, denial of it, and indifference or agnosticism seem to be as old as human thinking. But belief in immortality or survival of life after death is widespread among people of different religious sects. The Hindus do not believe in the theory of eternal heaven and eternal hell, they hold that God cannot condemn the sinners to eternal damnation. They rather advocate the theory of rebirth which gives every living being an opportunity of attaining perfection, nay, to the Hindu seers and sages the immortality of the soul and its rebirth is a matter of direct perception or realization. The law of Karma or the law of conservation of moral values which is one of the common characteristics almost of all the systems of Indian philosophy, both orthodox and heterodox, ring a message of hope affirming that every man is the builder of his own destiny. So we are to attain immortality by strenuous self-effort, by self-control and detachment from worldly objects. Immortality is a state of desirelessness and therefore, freedom from pain.

The learned author deals with the problem of immortality and other allied problems from the standpoint of the non-dualistic Vedānta which holds that, from the transcendental standpoint, Jīva and Brahman are identical. From his standpoint we are not to attain immortality, we are to realize that we (meaning our so-called individual souls) are immortal, being identical with the Universal Soul.

In the article 'Is Death the End?' the learned Swamiji not only tells us the story of Yama and Naciketas but thoroughly analyses the significance of Yama's teachings. Thus he throws a flood of light on the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. He says, 'The purpose of spiritual discipline is to enable the individual soul to transcend the limitations created by ignorance and realize its oneness with the supreme soul'.

In the chapter on 'Three States of the Soul' Swamiji analyses the three states of waking consciousness, dream consciousness, and the state of deep sleep caused by the gross, subtle, and causal body summarizing briefly the story given in the seventh book of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. He describes the fourth state (*turīya*) according to the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* in which one realizes the true nature of the self. 'Realization of turīya', says the learned Swamiji 'is the true immortality of the soul'.

In the essay 'That thou Art' Swamiji explains the significance of the *Mahāvākya* '*Tattvamasi*' according to Advaita Vedānta. He says, 'The Vedānta emphatically states that the self or Ātman is consciousness which is by nature pure, eternal, and blissful and which is the witness and Illuminer of all illusory entities'. He also translates

several verses, from Śaṅkarācārya's famous work *Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi* in which 'the teacher exhorts the aspirant to meditate on the real nature of the soul'.

In the last essay 'What is Man?' the author studies man from the standpoints of physical sciences, Biology, Sociology, etc. mentioning also the views of Freud and Karl Marx. Then he shows how the Vedānta analyses non-self in its doctrine of *pañca-kośa* or five sheaths. According to the Vedānta a man must negate the five sheaths so that he may realize his oneness with Brahman. Swamiji says, 'When the five sheaths are negated, the different reflections of ignorance in them are also negated. And when these illusory outer objects disappear, there shines the real Ātman, eternal, omniscient, and all-powerful, realising which within himself a man becomes free from taint of sin, fear, grief, and death and realizes that he is the embodiment of Bliss'.

The book is written in a lucid and charming style. The author acquaints us, within a small compass, with the teachings of the main Upaniṣads and of the Advaita Vedānta avoiding philosophical technicalities as far as possible. So we recommend this illuminating book to all lovers of Indian culture in the East and the West.

In conclusion we may add that the problems of the true nature of man, his origin and his ultimate destiny have also been thoroughly discussed in the different Purāṇas and the Tantras as well as in the different schools of the Vedānta. So we expect from the learned Swamiji another volume of the book dealing with the testimonials from the Tāntrika and Paurāṇic scriptures including also the dualistic schools of the Vedānta.

TRIPURA SANKAR SEN

MAN'S INVINCIBLE SURMISE. By Gerald M. Spring. Published by Philosophical Library, New York. P. 109.

The book is 'a personal interpretation of Bovarysm as an approach to sociology in our time'. But unfortunately to many it is not known what is Bovarysm, excepting that it is the Philosophy of Jules de Gaultier. And in the form of a discussion the book tries to present before us a conspectus of different problems of civilization and government, society, and the individual, heredity and race, all mixed up in a cauldron of thought—all in outline only. Naturally such a mixture is likely to prove it a random harvest having no coherence at all or structure of its own to claim any distinction.

But inspite of all these obfuscations, here and there the book successfully describes some of the important human situations of the present day world, specially in the American social and political background. The book just provokes certain ideas, although it does not have the right analysis. With little more elaboration and depth the book would have attained some success, there is no doubt about it. Yet, we welcome the author for the attempt and the enthusiasm shown in this book.

MUKTI CHAITANYA

INSTITUTE NEWS

Extension Lectures : Sister Nivedita Lectures (1968)

The Institute, in collaboration with the Uuniversity of Calcutta, organized a series of three lectures entitled 'Sister Nivedita Lectures (1968)'. Professor Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A., gave these lectures under the general title 'Sister Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Culture'.

The inaugural lecture of the series on 'Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Culture' was delivered on Monday, 21 April 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D., presided

The remaining lectures were held under the following schedule.

Lecture No. II : Monday, 28 April 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Subject : 'Nivedita's Conception of Dharma'. President : Swami Budhananda.

Lecture No. III : Monday, 2 June 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Subject : 'Nivedita's Contribution to Indian Philosophy'. President : Professor J. C. Banerjee, M.A.

Film Shows

The following films were screened for the public in the Vivekananda Hall of the Institute on the dates noted below :

(i) 15 July : 'Pather Panchali' in Bengali.

(ii) 29 July : 'Aparajita' in Bengali.

(iii) 5 August : 'Viplavi Khudiram' in Bengali.

(iv) 2 September : 'Bhagini Nivedita' in Bengali.

(v) 23 September : 'Bhakta Prahlad' in Hindi.

Seminar on Contemporary American Literature

A two-day seminar on 'Contemporary American Literature' was held at the Institute on Wednesday, 28 May 1969 and Thursday, 29 May 1969.

The seminar was organized by the United States Information Service, Calcutta, in collaboration with the Institute.

After a brief inaugural function in the Institute's 'Conference Room' followed by a talk on 'Philosophical Trends and Patterns in Twentieth Century American Literature' by Dr. B. Gresham Riley, the participants in the seminar broke up into groups for panel discussion as per following schedule :

I. Panel Discussion : 'Existentialism and the Literature of the 20's.'
Cowley, *Exiles Return*
Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*
Crane, *The Bridge*, poetry from Lewis, *Babbit*
Fitzerlad, *The Great Gatsby*

II. Panel Discussion : 'Ideological Trends in Depression Literature'.
Dos Passos, *The Big Money*
Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*
MacLeish, *America was Promises*, excerpts
Hughes, *Mulatto*

III. Panel Discussion : 'Literary Expression in Early Post World War II Era'.
Salinger, *Catcher in the Rye*
Heller, *Catch 22*
Stevens, *Collected Poems*
Williams, *Patterson*
Miller, *The Crucible*

IV. Panel Discussion : 'Identity and Alienation in Contemporary American Writing'.
Jones, *The Slave*
Hansberry, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*
Malamud, *The Fixer*
Ginsberg, *Kaddish*
Ferlinghetti, *Coney Island of the Mind*

The seminar was attended by about fifty scholars, Indian and foreign.

Symposium on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in the Eyes of the Youth

A Symposium on 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in the Eyes of the Youth' was held at the Institute on Monday, 26 May 1969, at 6.30 p.m.

Sri Shyamal Datta Gupta initiated the discussion with a short speech on 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in my View'. This was followed by further discussion on the life and mission of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Miss Maitreyee Ganguly spoke on 'Philosophy of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose'; Sri P. Bhattacharyya spoke on 'Netaji's Contribution to the Freedom Struggle'; Miss Devalina Gupa spoke on 'Netaji's Message to the Indian Youth'; and Sri Subroto Das spoke on 'Netaji—the Man and his Mission in Life'.

Sri Amiya Nath Bose, M.A., Barrister-at-Law, presided over the symposium.

Seminar on Mahatma Gandhi

On Wednesday, 17 September 1969, at 6.30 p.m., a seminar on 'Mahatma Gandhi' was held at the Institute in its School of Humanistic Studies lecture theatre. The seminar was organized by the University Women's Association of Calcutta, in collaboration with the Institute.

The seminar, which was attended by about fifty scholars mostly women teachers of the universities of Calcutta and Jadavpur and also teachers of Calcutta colleges, discussed the following papers:

Paper—I: 'Gandhian Ideas Regarding Training in Democracy through Basic Education'. By: Srimati Nalini Das, Principal, Bethune College, Calcutta.

Paper—II: 'Relation of School and Community in Basic Education'. By: Srimati Santi Datta, Inspectress of Women's Education, Government of West Bengal.

Paper—III: 'The Influence of Educational Thoughts of Gandhiji on Modern Education'. By: Srimati Kalyani Pramanik, Principal, Teachers' Training College, Hastings House, Calcutta.

Professor Himangshu Bimal Mazumdar, Deputy Director of Public Instruction, West-Bengal, presided.

Special Lectures

On Saturday, 10 May 1969, at 6.30 p.m., a special meeting was held at the Institute to celebrate the Buddha Jayanti. Professor J. C. Banerjee, M.A., spoke on 'Life and Teachings of Gautama Buddha'. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D., presided. The talk was followed by a film show on the life of the Buddha.

Professor Asokbijay Raha, Rabindra Adhyapaka and Adhyaksha, Rabindra Bhavan, Visva-Bharati University, gave a special lecture on 'Rabindra Pratibhar Swarup' (in Bengali) at the Institute on Monday, 12 May 1969, at 6.30 p.m. The meeting was organized by the Institute to celebrate the Birth Anniversary of the poet.

The meeting came to a close with a programme of devotional songs presented by Surasagar Dhiren Basu.

'Sri Aurobindo: Five Dreams of His Life' was the theme of a special lecture given by Sri Anil Baran Roy, Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, at the Institute on Monday, 18 August 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Swami Akunthananda presided.

On Monday, 15 September 1969, at 6.30 p.m., Mrs. P. M. Wylam gave a special lecture on 'Guru Nanak and His Message'. Sri Kulraj Singh, M.A., presided.

Sri Sankar Chakrabarty, President, Amateur Astronomers' Association, Calcutta,

gave a special illustrated lecture on 'Landing on the Moon' at the Institute on Wednesday, 24 September 1969, at 6.30 p.m. Dr. Mrinal Kumar Das Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., presided.

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, 1969:

Main Library

	April	May	June
Total number of books	58,122	58,252	58,494
Number of books added	82	130	242
Number of books purchased	82	121	108
Number of books received as Gift	—	9	119
Number of Periodicals accessioned	—	-	15
Number of books issued for home study	3,063	3,052	3,358
Number of books issued for reference	7,650	7,040	8,170

Reading Room

Number of periodicals in the reading room	368	368	369
Average daily attendance	442	404	461

Junior Library

Total number of books	505	1,608	1,609
Number of books added	—	3	1
Number of books issued for home study	161	191	213
Average daily attendance	11	10	10

Children's Library

Total number of books	4,397	4,401	4,411
Number of books added	8	4	10
Number of books issued for home study	789	864	757
Average daily attendance	34	32	32

Guests

Among those who stayed at the Institute's International House between April and June 1969 were the following :

April 1969

Mr. Nestianu Titus, Geophysicist, from Romania ;

Mrs. Milena Hubschmannova, Sociologist, from Prague, Czechoslovakia ;

Dr. and Mrs. Sigbert Lazar, from U.S.A. ;
Mr. Sorotchan, Scientist, from U.S.S.R. ;
Mr. Baravsmov, Scientist, from U.S.S.R. ;
Mr. L. Lambert, Student, from Canada ;

Professor N. P. Klepikov, D.Sc., UNESCO Expert, from U.S.S.R. ;

Professor Robert E. Brown, Ph.D., Music Professor, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. Andrew F. Toth, Music student, from U.S.A. ;

Mrs. Formajiu, from Budapest ;
Dr. L. Sommer, from Brno, Czechoslovakia.

May 1969

Professor James E. Scroggs, from U.S.A. ;
Professor R. S. Engelbrecht, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. David C. Taylor, Assistant Director, S.M.P., from U.K. ;

Mr. D. T. E. Marjoram, H.M.I., from U.K. ;

Professor William R. Orton, from U.S.A.;

Professor Leslie M. Bates with his wife and 2 daughters, from U.S.A. ;

Dr. S. Dryl, Scientist, from Warsaw, Poland ;

Mr. David C. Choate, Consultant, Suummer Institute, from U.S.A. ;

Professor German Gurfinkel, Professor of Eng. Univ. of Illinois, U.S.A.

June 1969

Dr. and Mrs. H. K. Sen and their daughter, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. Harry A. Temmer, Teacher, from U.S.A. ;

Mr. F. J. Brown, Teacher, from U.S.A. ;
Professor John R. Howard, from U.S.A. ;
Professor Rolf Schassberger, from West Germany ;

Mrs. Ursula Schassberger, Programmer, from West Germany ;

Dr. J. B. Burch, University Professor, from U.S.A. ;

Miss C. M. Patterson, Zoologist, from U.S.A. ;

Professor R. Park, from Canada ;
Mr. S. A. Mazari, from Kabul, Afghanistan.

A group of 9 members, participated in the Seminar on Contemporary American Literature, which was held at the Institute from 28 May 1969 to 29 May 1969. They all stayed at the Institute Guest House.

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE CHANDOGYA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

13th, 20th, and 27th November

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

14th, 21st, and 28th November

THE SVETASVATARA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

15th, 22nd, and 29th November

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(Children below six years are not allowed)

Indo-German Music Festival

in collaboration with

Max Muller Bhavan

Programme:

The Consortium Classicum, an eminent German Chamber Music Ensemble which has many international concerts to its credit, will perform two different programmes on the following days with works by classical and contemporary German composers (L.v.Beethoven, W.A.Mozart, Franz Schubert, P. Hindemith, Hans Pfitzner, and P.v.Winter).

Participants:

Günther GUGEL	..	1st violin	Werner Neuhaus	..	2nd violin
Jurgen Kussmaul	..	viola	Alwin Dauer	..	violoncello
Walter Meuter	..	double base	Jörn Maatz	..	bassoon
Dieter Klöcker	..	clarinet	Erich Penzel	..	French horn
Nikolaus Grüger	..	2nd horn	Werner Genuit	..	Piano

Sunday, 16 November, at 6.30 p.m. :

Monday, 17 November, at 6.30 p.m. :

Admission by ticket only .. 50 paise for each day

Tuesday, 18 November, at 6.30 p.m. :

Admission by ticket only .. Re. 1.00

GITI-ALEKHYA

Sri Sri Ramakrishna Lila

by

Rasaranga

Tuesday, 25 November, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSION FOR NOVEMBER 1969

Nivedita Galpa Asar

Saturday, 29 November, at 4.45 p.m. (for 6-16 age-group)

Programme:

Songs, Recitations, Story-telling, and Magic Show

LECTURES

On Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m. in English

UNITED NATIONS DAY CELEBRATION

November 12 **United Nations in the Service of Peace**

Speaker: Basanti Mitra, M.A.

President: Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., LL.B.

* The lecture will be preceded by an Exhibition of United Nations Publications and followed by a film show on the United Nations Activities.

November 19 **Sri Ramakrishna in the Eyes of his Contemporaries**

Speaker: Swami Lokeswarananda

President: Swami Chidatmananda

November 26 **Indian Renaissance: A Review**

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

President: Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA FOR NOVEMBER 1969

A Five-day Seminar

on

Swami Vivekananda

in collaboration with

Akhil Bharatiya Nivedita Vrati Sangha

Monday, 24 November, at 6 p.m.

Inaugural Session

Public Meeting

Programme:

Vedic Chanting	:	
Opening Song	:	Aparna Chakravarti
Welcome Address	:	Swami Akunthananda
Inauguration	:	Satyendra Nath Sen, M.A., Ph.D. *Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta*
Address of the Chief Guest	:	Pravrajika Muktiprana *General Secretary* *Ramakrishna Sarada Mission*

Presidential Address : Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil.
Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, and President, Nivedita Vrati Sangha

Vote of Thanks : Kamala Roy, M.A.
Head of the Department of History, Bethune College, and
Treasurer, Nivedita Vrati Sangha

Closing Song : Aparna Chakravarti

Tuesday, 25 November at 4.30 p.m.

First Session

Vivekananda's Philosophy of Life

President : Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

Programme:

Vedic Chanting :

Papers : (i) Bandita Bhattacharya, M.A., D.Phil.
Lecturer, Lady Brabourne College

(ii) Manju Roy

Main Speakers : (i) Aruna Mazumdar, M.A.
Senior Lecturer, Rammohan College

(ii) Pranab Ranjan Ghosh, M.A.
Lecturer, University of Calcutta

(iii) Dhiren Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.
Head of the Department of Bengali St. Xavier's College

Wednesday, 26 November, at 4.30 p.m.

Second Session

The Social Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda

President : Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, M.A., LL.B.

Programme:

Papers : (i) Subrata Sen Gupta, M.A.
Lecturer, Lady Brabourne College

(ii) Sahini Basu

Main Speakers : (i) Sisir Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D.
Head of the Department of English
Jadavpur University

(ii) Santilal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.
Lecturer, Ananda Mohan College

(iii) Satin Chakravarti, M.A.
Head of the Department of Philosophy,
City College

Thursday, 27 November at 4.30 p.m.

Third Session

Swami Vivekananda and the Problems of Modern India

President : Pravrajika Vedaprana
Principal, Ramakrishna Sarada Mission
Vivekananda Vidyabhavan

Programme:

Vedic Chanting :

Paper : Khsetraprasad Sen Sharma, M.A., Ph.D.
Lecturer, Jadavpur University

Main Speakers : (i) Shankari Prasad Basu, M.A.
Lecturer, University of Calcutta

(ii) Nirmalendu Das Gupta, M.A.
Assistant Professor, Goenka College of Commerce

(iii) Nabaniharan Mukherjee
Secretary, Vivekananda Yuva Mahamandal

(iv) Nirodbaran Chakravarty, M.A., D.Phil.
Assistant Professor, Presidency College

(v) Amita Chakravarty, M.A.
Lecturer, Sri Sikhsayatan College

Friday, 28 November, at 4 p.m.

Final Session

Swami Vivekananda and the Youth Problem

President : Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.
Principal, Barasat Government College

Programme:

Vedic Chanting : Vivekananda Yuva Mahamandal

Paper : Tushar Bose

Main Speakers : (i) Nirodbaran Chakravarty, M.A., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Presidency College

(ii) Bharati Dutta, M.A.
Lecturer, Krishnagar Women's College

(iii) Sourin De, M.A.
Lecturer, Women's College

(iv) Sanat Sarkar, M.B.B.S.
President, Vivekananda Yuva Mahamandal South Calcutta

Friday, 28 November, at 6 p.m.

Public Meeting

President : Swami Gambhirananda
General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission

Chief Guest : Shankari Prasad Basu, M.A.

Speakers : (i) Pravrajika Atmaprana
Secretary, Sister Nivedita Girls' School

(ii) Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A.
Principal, Barasat Government College

(iii) Belarani De, M.A.
Head of the Department of Political Science, Sri Sikhsayatan College and Director of the Seminar

Vote of Thanks : Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil.
Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, and President, Nivedita Vrati Sangha

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SAMADHI: A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY

H. K. DE CHAUDHURI, M.A., DR.PHIL.

An ardent student and writer in English, Bengali, and Sanskrit on philosophical subjects, Dr. H. K. De Chaudhuri is the author of many books, among his books Amṛter Sandhān *in Bengali, and* Tattvajijñāsā—*a treatise on Epistemology in Sanskrit, deserve special mention. The lecture reproduced below was given by Dr. De Chaudhuri at the Institute in June 1969.*

WE intend to discuss here the nature of *samādhi* and to analyze the constituent elements of *samādhi* mainly from a psychological point of view. In other words the subject-matter under discussion is: What is the nature of praeternatural (supernatural) experiences of mystics and *yogins*? What does precisely constitute a mystical experience? What are the characteristic marks of persons who are acquainted with the so-called mystic ways and who have experienced some form of *samādhi*? The problem is rendered difficult inasmuch as there are different types of mystics and *yogins* who experience *samādhi* which, again is not identical or uniform, there being different types of *samādhi*. It is, therefore, necessary to elucidate the concepts of *samādhi* and mysticism and to indicate the nature of a mystic; and for this purpose the subject should be tackled from various approaches, viz. those of philosophy, metaphysics, theology, anthropology, and finally psychology. There are different types of mystics and ascetics who are distinguishable as against the other types of religious devotees (*dhārmikas*) not used to mystic ways; the religious consciousness of devotees and the experience of saints known as mystics have unique and peculiar features of their own which need to be distinguished. Ancient India presents the picture of different types of

saintly persons, devotees and mystics, *bhaktas* and *yogins*; and the tradition has continued down the ages. Generally speaking, the mystics were ascetics; they practised asceticism in order to integrate their spiritual life by curbing whatever was sensuous and militated against the spiritual mode of living. Asceticism is, however, a way of life, *via purgativa*, a means and never an end in itself; it is essential in all mystical disciplines by way of renunciation (*sannyāsa*), *via negativa*. Here we refer to mystics and *yogins* separately because there are certain types of *yogins* who do not fall under any well-defined category of the mystics.

Main Questions: Nature of Mysticism and Mystics

The main questions which are of profound interest from the standpoint of psychology of mystic, praeternatural experience may be said to resolve into two: (1) what is the nature of the mental state or states constituting *samādhi* and (2) what is the nature of the object of experience during *samādhi* whether accompanied by ecstatic trance or otherwise. These questions are not quite susceptible of ready treatment. Here we would discuss these questions with reference to the different types of mystics and *yogins* and different phases of experience characteristic of these people, whether it pertains to beatitude, beatific vision, orison of unity, deification (*aiśvarya*), *sat-cit-ānanda* (unique feeling of Being, Intelligence, and Bliss), *dharma-kāya* of the Buddha, etc. The nature of Indian mysticism is different in many respects from Christian mysticism or the types of mysticism characteristic of other religions, although they bear certain common marks of affinity. Generally speaking, two distinct and seemingly opposed types of mysticism are traceable in the Indian religion, viz. monistic and theistic, when regarded from a metaphysical point of view, or intellectual (Jñāna-yogin) and contemplative (Rāja-yogin) and emotional (Bhakti-yogin), when viewed generally and aetiologically. The Christian mystical tradition is, on the whole, opposed to monism (cf., W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, London, 2nd edition. 1921). The common features which are generally traceable in mystics of various types are found to be as follows: Ineffability, noetic quality, transiency, and passivity (cf., William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Oxford. 1903). The feature of ineffability implies that a mystic state is directly experienced and such states are more like states of feeling than those of intellect. The noetic quality of mystic states is that they appear to be states of illumination or revelation, although they appear, mostly or primarily, to be states of feeling. The other features mean that they cannot be sustained for long except in very rare instances and they arise spontaneously and appear to be irresistible.

It may be pointed out in this connection that this description of the essential features of mysticism ever since William James classified them is not strictly valid, especially in the case of Indian mysticism. The matter needs some elucidation. True mysticism is active and practical, not passive and theoretical. Its aims are wholly transcendental and spiritual. The mystic is on the quest for the Transcendent One and this One is a living and personal object of love, the goal of his spiritual adventure and pilgrimage, his Divine Home. Living union within this One is a definite state or form of enhanced, higher life which implies a definite psychological experience. Although the characteristic marks of Christian mysticism generally hold good in the case of the Bhakti mysticism, there are certain essential points

of difference which should be stressed before we proceed further. The main type of *yoga* is not a mysticism of union (*unio mystica*) with or absorption in the Divine. It is a mysticism of will aiming at the equalization or realization of the true nature of Ātman *per se*, i.e. *kaivalya*. Certain forms of *yoga* aim at deification. The other types of Indian mysticism correspond, more or less, to contemplative, intellectual, and voluntary types of mysticism. We have coupled together mystics and ascetics but there are certain essential differences between these two, although there is no rigid line of demarcation between them. In the former there is stress on activity, while in the latter it is passivity. Like mystics there are different types of ascetics as well.

What, then, are the minimum characteristics of mysticism? It is characterized by a penetrating insight into the depths of Reality, i.e. a state of esoteric knowledge and revelation accompanied by some kind of feeling of joy and transport. The mystic tendency is rather an abnormal faculty for piercing phenomena seemingly inexplicable by physical and psychological sciences. Visions and voices are often found to be frequent accompaniments of the mystic life. The descriptions of supersensual experience by mistics cannot be dismissed as mere 'hallucinations of the senses' or pathological instances; they belong to a higher spiritual plane of experience. The mental states and phenomena which may be induced by voluntary efforts (e.g. Haṭha-yoga) or by the administration of drugs and which may appear, at surface, to be somewhat identical with the mystic states and phenomena are not qualitatively comparable. Praeternatural experience or mystical experience and somewhat similar experience under the influence of drugs (e.g. mescalin, hashish, Indian hemp, etc.) are basically quite different. (Aldous Huxley sought to prove that they are basically identical or similar. *The Doors of Perception*, London. 1954). For an answer to this question see R. C. Zæhner, *Mysticism: Sacred and Profane*, Oxford. 1961). In this connection it may be pointed out that the experience of our *haṭhayogins* which is artificially inducible by Haṭha-yoga is not comparable with the genuine mystic experience. Visions and voices which the mystics claim apparently stand in the same relation to them as pictures, poems, and musical compositions stand to the great painter, poet, and musician. They are, like the artistic expressions, creative results of thought intuition and direct apprehension. They cannot be said to be suggestions emanating from the Unconscious as certain psychologists may seem to think but they are the manifestations derived from the sources of inspiration, i.e. revelatory. Similarly, rapture and ecstasy characteristic of the mystic trance differ from contemplation proper in being wholly involuntary states which are abrupt and irresistible. They exhibit three distinct aspects: (a) the physical, (b) the psychological, and (c) the mystical. During trance, breathing and blood circulation are depressed. The body is, more or less, cold and rigid, remaining in the position which it occupied at the oncoming of ecstasy. Sometimes the entrancement is so deep that there is complete anaesthesia (cf., the life of St. Catherine of Siena in the field of Christian mysticism and that of Śrī Caitanya in the field of Bhakti mysticism). The trance includes, according to the testimony of ecstatics, two distinct phases: (a) the short period of lucidity, and (b) a longer period of complete unconsciousness which may even resemble a death-like catalepsy lasting for hours (cf., experiences of St. Theresa and Śrī Caitanya). The true state of

ecstasy lies in its entrancement and feeling of exaltation.

Psychologically considered, this height of ecstasy is the state technically called 'complete mono-ideism', i.e. withdrawal of consciousness from the circumference to the centre and intense concentration on one fundamental point, *point d'appui*, leading to its logical conclusion, maximum attention to this one point being marked by inattention to all other things and the doors of perception allowing new light being wide open to their utmost limits. There are two kinds of trance, healthy and psychopathic, which are clearly distinguishable; in the case of the former there remain vivid symptoms of having been transported with intense joy. The mystical aspect is best summed up by phenomena known as mystic union, *unio mystica*, orison of quiet, beatitude, etc. The mystical consciousness leading to *samādhi* follows the process of recollection (voluntary concentration), quiet and contemplation corresponding to the three stages of *yoga*, viz. *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*, each one shading off into the next stage; and they answer cumulatively to the order in which the mystic's powers unfold. As recollection becomes deeper, the self slides into deeper consciousness, orison of quiet and loses itself into the depths of pure contemplation; finally there is merging of self into the Supra-mundane, Transcendent or, according to the terms of *yoga*, '*kaivalya*', the self-in-itself.

Essence of Indian Mysticism and Types of Indian Mystics

With this preliminary observation we now proceed to examine in some details the essence of Indian mysticism and the nature of Indian mystics, from the different standpoints, with a view to elucidating the meanings of *samādhi*, the goal of mystic activity in India. There have been different types of Indian mystics, viz. *ṛṣis*, *munis*, *brahmacārins*, *yogins*, *tapasvins*, etc. A few words about each type are stated below.

The picture of mystics that is presented in the earliest Indian literature, viz. the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, and the Upaniṣads, is that of *ṛṣis*, men of mystical insight (*intuitus mysticus*) into and spiritual vision of the profound secrets concerning the Supreme Reality (*paramaṁ guhyam*). The term '*ṛṣi*' implies literally a seer (*ṛṣir darśanāt*, *Nirukta*, II. 12), i.e. seers of supersensuous phenomena. They represent a type of ecstatics given to musing, who used to see beatific visions, hear divine voices, and pour forth their spiritual experience, their divine revelations in melodious, rhythmic utterances. These utterances are held as sacred and regarded as *mantras*, instruments for regulation of thought (*mantro mananāt*, *Nirukta*). In later times there were seven types of *ṛṣis*, viz. (1) *maharṣis* (great sages like Vyāsa), (2) *paramarṣis* (great saints like Vela), (3) *devarṣis* (divine sages like Kaṇva), (4) *brahmarṣis* (Brāhmaṇical sages like Vasiṣṭha), (5) *śrutarṣis* (renowned sages like Suśruta), (6) *rājarṣis* (royal sages like Ṛtuparṇa), and (7) *kāṇḍarṣis* (connoisseur seers like Jaimini). 'The sages behold ever the supreme step of Viṣṇu, the wide-spread eyes, as it were, in heaven' (*tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ, sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ; divīva cakṣurātātam*, *Ṛg-Veda*, 1.22.20). They are said to behold the loftier light above this region of darkness; they have attained to Sūrya, the deity of the deities, the light that is superb (*jyotiruttamam*, *Ṛg-Veda*, I.150.10). They proclaim in majestic verse: 'We traverse the abode of *ṛta* (cosmic order). The Supreme Divinity of the *devas* is One'.

Ṛtasya sadma vicarāmi devān mahad devānāmasuratvamekam

(*Ṛg-Veda*, III.54.14)

Another Vedic seer heralds in a similar strain: 'I know the Supreme Person who is of the form of Āditya beyond darkness. By knowing Him one overcomes death; there is no other way'.

Vedāhametaṁ puruṣaṁ mahāntaṁ
ādityavarṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt;
Tameva viditvā'timṛtyumeti
nānyaḥ panthā vidyateayanāya—

(*Yajur-Veda, Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*, XXXI. 18) 'I roam about with the Rudras, Vasus, and all-deities' (*ahaṁ rudrebhir vasubhiścaramyuta viśvadevaih, Ṛg-Veda*, X. 125.1). A royal seer (*rājarṣi*) says: 'Mine is this profound empire, viz. earth and heaven; mine are the immortals as Lord of all. The *devas* obey Varuṇa's will and I rule over people of the lofty frame' (*Ṛg-Veda*, IV.42.1). We need not multiply instances. These show that a feeling of deep exaltation and deification pervades the spirit of Vedic mysticism.

The *muni* represents an early type of contemplative-ascetic (*munir mananāt, Nirukta*, VII.12). The picture of a *muni* in a state of ecstatic trance is depicted in a hymn of the *Ṛg-Veda* (X.136). The *munis*, scions of Vātarasanā, proclaim: 'Enraptured by the state of *muni* (*unmaditā maunayena*) we abide in the winds, O mortals, you see only our bodily forms'. A seer of the *Atharva-Veda* realizes his identity with the Divine and proclaims: 'May all the *devas* and Savitā (lit. the stimulator) grant me free scope. I have discovered the earth and the heaven. ... I have generated the earth and the heaven, I have generated the seasons, I have generated the seven rivers, I represent all speech, the real (*ṛta*) and the non-real (*anṛta*). I who enjoyed Agni, Soma as companions' (VI.61-1-3). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* (II.54-70) describes the *muni* as one firm in wisdom and well established in *samādhi* (vide *sthitaprajña*). The state of a *muni* is thus described in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VIII.5.2): 'What people call the state of *muni* ('*mauna*') is '*brahmacarya*' (i.e. the state of one who moves, lives, and has his being in Brahman, the Absolute (Divine). The *brahmacārin* moves above and pervades the shining deities, he (sees) the limit of the *devas* (*Ṛg-Veda*, X.109.5). It may be observed in this connection that the term '*mauna*' came to signify later the quiescent attitude of the contemplative *muni*. Similarly the term '*brahmacarya*' acquired the secondary meaning of the stage of celibacy and continence prescribed for acquisition of knowledge and cultivation of essential virtues.

The *vena* ($\sqrt{ven}$) is described as one who knows the immortal (*amṛtasya vidvān*). He is the yearning/shining one who witnesses what is supreme in the mysterious where the universe assumes one single form (... *yatra viśvaṁ bhavatyekanīḍam, Atharva-Veda*, II.1.1.4). The seer who has unveiled the Brahman which had, of late, first come into existence from the well-shining boundary; he has revealed its fundamental (and) highest places, the womb of the existence and the non-existent (i.e. the borderland between the phenomenal and the noumenal, the immanent and the transcendent, *Yajur-Veda*, XIII.3; *Atharva-Veda*, V.6.1). The *vrātya* represents another type of the mystic who was originally outside the confines of Vedic sacrificialism but glorified in the *Atharva-Veda* as the exalted one assuming the role of a great *deva* (*Atharva-Veda*, XV.1.4-6). (Sāyaṇas introductory commentary to the XV *Kāṇḍa* of the *Atharva-Veda* which extols the *vrātya* seems interesting on this point.) Apparently the *vrātya*, the ascetic mystic unused to the Vedic ritualism was subsequently accorded the place of honour at the time of the compilation of the *Atharva-Veda*. 'The *vrātya* exerted, he felt inspired like Prajāpati, the Lord of creatures. ... The *vrātya* grew, became great, developed into

a great deity (felt deified). He crossed the rule of the *devas*, he became the ruler (*Atharva-Veda*, XV.2.1-5). The late *Praśna Upaniṣad* (II.11) glorifies the role of the *vrātya* (ever pure by nature, according to Śaṅkara's interpretation) 'O Life, the One Seer, the "eater" (i.e. dissolver of the universe), the real Lord of all' (*vrātya-stvaṁ prāṇaika ṛṣirattā viśvasya satpātiḥ*). In this connection an instance of sacrificial mysticism is cited. Brahmā, the most important among the principal priests (*ṛtvij*) proclaims in a state of ecstatic trance: 'I know the nave of the universe, I know the heaven and the earth and the atmosphere. I know the great sun and the moon' (*Yajur-Veda, Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*, XXIII. 60). This *mantra* is used in connection with the performance of the *aśvamedha* sacrifice.

The *vipra* is an inspired sage of the *Ṛg-Veda*, who seeks to penetrate into the depths of Reality. 'I, Kakṣivān, am a seer and an inspired sage (*vipra*). I have been Manu Sūrya ...' (*Ṛg-Veda*, IV.26.1-2). The seer's spiritual realization can thus be summed up: 'Knowing the abode of *ṛta* (cosmic order) I wander about. The godhead of the deities is One (*mahad devānāmasuratvamekam*, *Ṛg-Veda*, III. 15.14). The term '*vipra*' derived from √*vip* (to quiver) may have originally denoted an inspired, ecstatic, and enthusiastic seer as pronouncer of emotional and vibrating metrical sacred words (cf., I. Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Seers*, The Hague. 1963). The *vipra* is said to represent the office of the inspired sage (*vipraḥ padavī kavīnām*, *Ṛg-Veda*, III.5.1) certain deities, viz. Gaṇapati, Agni, etc. are also referred to as the *vipras*. Sāyaṇa interprets the *vipra* as the wise eulogizer (*medhāvī stotā*). 'The ever wakeful, eulogizing *vipras* enkindle that which represents the ultimate step of Viṣṇu (*Ṛg-Veda*, I.23.21).

Mystic Experience

The mystics fall under the different categories because the experience which they claim to feel is of a diverse nature. A study of Indian mysticism shows that mysticism can exist without any definite conception of God (see *Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.2-3, III.3, IV.34). This question will be discussed at some length while dealing with the Yoga system. The Christian mystic who is generally a theist describes his experience as one of 'unison with God'. The Indian mystic who is very often a pantheist states that his is a unique experience of identification with the Divine, viz. the Supreme Self immanent everywhere. The Buddhist mystic who does not assign himself to God or the Supreme Self speaks, however, of beatitude and immortality [*amatapadam* (Pāli); *amṛtapadam* (Sanskrit)], if he is a Hīnayānin, or of dissolution in the *śūnya* (lit. the Void conveying somewhat the sense of featureless Absolute (*nirguṇa* Brahma), if he is a Mahāyānin. According to the early Buddhism, *nibbāna* is conceived as an indefinable state of beatitude comparable to the fire whose fuel has been consumed. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, *Aggivacchagotta-Sutta*: Cf., similar conception in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, I.13, VI.19; the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, II.72, V.24, 26). According to the Mādhyamika school, *nirvāṇa* implies the Absolute as cessation of world-appearance, *prapañcopaśama*, which is devoid of all attributes. (Vide Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyamika-kārikā*, especially XXV.24 and Candrakīrti's commentary, *Prasannapada*). These aspects of the question will be discussed while dealing with the concept of *samādhi* as freedom, i.e. freedom while alive (*jīvanmukti*) and freedom on release from the body (*videhamukti*). It may, however, be mentioned in this connection that *yoga* signifies a kind of *samādhi* when the self (Ātman or Puruṣa according to the *yoga* terminology) abides in its own essential

nature ('*yogaḥ samādhi*', Vyāsa, on *Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.1; *tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe avasthānam*, *Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.3).

The experience of the mystic, according to the concepts of western mysticism, is that of immanence of the Divine and of unification, i.e. unity in essence with the Divine, in contrast to this Divine as the Transcendent. Apparently this conception does not cover certain types of mysticism, especially mystic experience of *yogins*. Primarily, yogic mysticism is not an act of union, *unio mystica*. Regarded from another point of view, there are extrovert mystics as against introvert mystics. The former are people who are prone to seeing visions and hearing voices; and their experience is replete with imagery, whereas the experience of the latter is one of identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self, or of realization of the real nature of the self, i.e. self-in-itself, '*kaivalya*'. Generally speaking, the *yogins* belong to the latter category. Then there are the intellectual mystics whose personality is quite distinct from that of emotional mystics. Intellectual mystics, both according to the western and Indian conceptions, seem to differ widely from one another. (cf., Rudolf Otto, *West-Œstliche Mystik*, Kloz. 1926). The typical nature of the Bhakti mysticism in medieval India or that of Śrī Caitanya (A.D. 1485-1533) shows the yearning of the individual soul for the Divine as symbolized in the love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rādhā. We would revert to this topic later while dealing with the concept of *samādhi* according to the Bhakti school. The above concept is somewhat identical with that of mystic marriage or spiritual marriage prevalent among the circle of Catholic mystics where the devotee considers himself as the spiritual bride (For details, see Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, London, reprinted several times). The Tāntric mysticism or Śakti mysticism is another type of mysticism in which the devotee claims in his movements of ecstasy and trance to have contact with the Divine Mother, the supreme repository of all energy.

Vision and Voices

We would now discuss the much talked of question of mystic visions and voices. An example of the most sublime vision of God is that of Arjuna as described in majestic verse in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* which stands unique in the mystic literature. The tenor of this vision seems, in certain manner, generally identical with that of certain common types of mystics, Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan, who confirm that the ecstatic vision is not quite susceptible of description that may be intelligible to non-mystics. Arjuna says: 'I behold in Thy divine body *devas* (shining deities), creatures of earth and heaven, the creator Brahmā seated on his (divine) lotus throne ... I see Thy infinite form with myriads of arms, abdomens, faces, eyes, etc. O Omnipresent Lord of the Universe, without any beginning, middle or end, Thy resplendent form which cannot be beheld or known and which has the lustre of inflamed fire and sun on all sides. Thou art the imperishable One, to be known as the Supreme One; Thou art the ultimate refuge of the universe; Thou art the Immutable One, defender of eternal faith (*dharma*), the Eternal Person as I conceived'.

Paśyāmi devāṁs tava deva dehe
sarvāṁs tathā bhūtaviśeṣasaṁghān;
Brahmāṇam īśaṁ kamalāsanastham
ṛṣīṁś ca sarvān uragāṁś ca divyān—
Tvam akṣaraṁ paramaṁ veditavyaṁ
tvam asya viśvasya paraṁ nidhānam;
Tvam avyayaḥ śāsvatadharmagoptā
sanātanas tvaṁ puruṣo mato me—

(*Bhagavad-Gītā*, XI.15-18; see also *ibid.*, XI.19-31).

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* explains how some mystics behold the Ātman (individual self) within the Ātman (Supreme Self) by contemplation (*dhyāna*), others by means of knowledge (*sāṁkhya*, i.e. *jñāna*), some others by *yoga* and yet others by Karma-yoga (XIII.24). Here it refers, in a nutshell, to the various types of mystics, viz. devotee mystics (Bhakti-yogins), intellectual mystics (Jñāna-yogins), contemplative mystics (Karma-yogins), and the various methods of attaining to the depths of Reality and realizing the nature of Ātman by union with the Divine or otherwise.

The Bhagavad-Gita on Samadhi

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* raises this important question. What are the characteristic marks of the person who is firm in wisdom (*sthitaprajña*) and well-established in *samādhi* (*samādhistha*) and how does he fare? Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives the following answer to this question. 'One is said to be firm in wisdom when one abjures all desires and is content by one's own self and in one's own self. Such a person who is free from anxiety in the face of grief, devoid of desire in the midst of happiness, immune from passion, fear and anger, is a *muni* (sage). He who is free from attachment, who feels neither attraction towards anything pleasant nor any repulsion towards anything unpleasant for him, is firm in wisdom, when he withdraws at all into himself his organs as does the tortoise its external limbs into its own shell, i.e. when a person withdraws his senses from their objects, he is said to be free in wisdom. ... Having brought all (the senses) under control, he should practise self-concentration and be devoted to Me. ... He whose senses are under control, his wisdom is fully founded. ... Such a person finds peace and tranquillity like the sea which is ever full and steady and remains unruffled by the onrush of waters of the rivers falling into the sea. (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, II.54-70).

Essence of Yoga

It has been indicated that according to the Yoga system of thought ascribed to Patañjali, *yoga* implies the state in which the Self abides in Its nature, i.e. Self-in-itself (*Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.3). This highest state of *samādhi* is called *kaivalya* when the real nature of Self reveals Itself and it is realized and established as such (*Yoga-Sūtra*, IV. 34). The devotion to God is viewed as an alternative method of attaining the state of *samādhi* (*Īśvarapraṇidhānad vā*, *Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.23). According to the other view referred to in the early Upaniṣads and clearly elucidated in the later Yoga Upaniṣads, '*Yoga*' means unison or identification of the individual self with the Supreme Self (*aikyaṁ jīvātmanaḥ*). We would here clarify the concept of *yoga* according to the Pātañjala system of Yoga. Now, *yoga* implies *samādhi* which is the stage of quiescence when the flow of all the states of the mind (*cittavṛtti*) is arrested (*yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*, *Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.2) and the Self abides in Itself, i.e. Self-in-itself (*tadā draṣṭuḥ svarupe'-avasthānaṁ*, *Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.3). This stage is called *samprajñāta samādhi* analogous to the concept of *savikalpa samādhi* of the Vedānta and certain other schools, when the object of contemplation is fully known. The mental states are of five kinds, viz. apprehension or positive knowledge (*pramāṇa* acquired by means of some proof), misapprehension (*viparyaya*), imagination (*vikalpa*), dream (*nidrā*), and memory (*smṛti*). At the time of *samādhi*, *citta* becomes quiescent and the object of contemplation occupies the entire focus of attention, the mind being inattentive to all else. There are various stages of unifying concentration leading to this goal of

samādhi, one stage shading off into the next higher one, viz. (1) *samādhi* which is with or without reflection (*savitarka, nirvitarka*), with or without judgement (*savicāra, nirvicāra*), *samādhi* accompanied by a feeling of joy (*sānanda*), and finally *samādhi* with ego functioning only (*sāsmita*). Then ensues the ultimate stage of *samādhi* called *asamprajñāta* or *nirodha samādhi* when the *citta* functions in its state of quiescence by itself and in itself, i.e. without any reference to the object of concentration (*vitarka-vicārānandāsmitā-rūpānugamāt samprajñātaḥ, Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.17). This *samādhi* is attained through the cultivation of the eight-fold technique of *yoga* (*Yoga-Sūtra*, II.29), viz. *yama* (self-control) which signifies absolute non-injury to living beings (*ahiṁsā*), absolute truthfulness (*satya*), absolute non-appropriation (*asteya*), absolute continence (*brahmacarya*), and non-acceptance (*aparigraha*) (*Yoga-Sūtra*, II.30); *niyama* (observances) such as external and internal cleanliness (*śauca*), appeasement (*santoṣa*), austerity (*tapas*), sacred study (*svādyāya*), and meditation on God (*Īśvarapraṇidhāna*) (*Yoga-Sūtra*, II.32). One should cultivate placidity by practising the following: Meditation on the reverse to ward off any adverse effect (*pratipakṣabhāvanā*), friendly feeling towards all (*maitrī*), kindly feeling for sufferers (*karuṇā*), feeling of pleasure (*muditā*) for the good of others, feeling of equanimity and indifference for demerit on the part of others (*upekṣā*) (*Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.33). These constitute purificatory practices (*parikarma*). The *yoga* meditation consists of *āsana* (proper and steady posture), *prāṇāyāma* (regulation of breath), *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of senses from their objects by means of concentration on the goal), *dhāraṇā* (recollection fixing of *citta* on the object of pursuit), *dhyāna* (steady, uninterrupted concentration comprising the harmonious flow of uniform states), and finally *samādhi* (ceaseless contemplation, total absorption of *citta* in the object of contemplation) leading to the ultimate goal of *samādhi*. Here, *samādhi* is used in two senses, viz. the former in the sense of ceaseless contemplation as the technique of attaining *samādhi* and the latter in the sense of the goal of *samādhi*. At this stage the *citta* is so deeply engrossed in the object that it loses itself as it were and manifests the object as it is. These three steps constitute *saṁyama* (self-discipline) or internal means of realization, *antaraṅga sādhana* (*Yoga-Sūtra*, III.1-3,4); *deśabandhaścittasya dhāraṇā* (III.1), *tatra pratyaikatānatā dhyānam* (II.2), *tadevārthamātranirbhāsaṁ svarūpaśūnyamiva samādhiḥ*, (III.3). This *samādhi* leads via *asamprajñāta samādhi* on to *kaivalya*, Self-in-itself.

Asceticism: Sannyasa

Those who seek to acquire spiritual power by practice of *tapas* are ascetics. Etymologically, the term '*tapas*' ($\sqrt{tap}$) signifies heat, then ascetic order, ardour or fervour, religious austerity, finally self-mortification. The original practice was to expose oneself in certain postures, at times with the head downwards or upraised in the presence of five fires, i.e. fire in the four directions and the sun overhead and to indulge in certain forms of religious austerity by way of self-mortification with a view to storing up psychic energy. Such a devotee is called *pañcatapā* (lit. one used to five forms of heat). The term '*tapas*' occurs frequently in the *Ṛg-Veda* and *Atharva-Veda*. Besides its usual meaning of 'heat', it signifies ascetic energy, vital power, creative energy, etc. (*ojas, mahas, sahas, tejas*, etc.). 'People win the world by means of *tapas*' (*Tapasā vai lokaṁ jayati, Śat. Br.*, III. 4.4.27). *Ṛṣis* are described as men of *tapas* (*tapasvān, tapasvin, Ṛg-Veda*, X.154.5, *Atharva-Veda*,

V.2.28, XIII.2.25, XVIII.2.15, 18 etc.). In the Brāhmaṇas, Prajāpati, the Lord of creatures is described as having created the world by *tapas*. Bhṛgu is said to have realized step by step the nature of Brahman by practising *tapas* (*Tai. U.*, III.2-6). It was believed that the supernatural power could be acquired by practising *tapas* and various practices were resorted to with a view to stimulating internal heat and inducing ecstasy and trance. The Purāṇas describe *pañcāgni-tapas* and various kinds of austerities including certain practices which *munis* used to indulge in (*mauna*). It seems highly probable that the actual cult of Tapas entailed non-Vedic practices (cf., *Padma Purāṇa*, Bhūmi-khaṇḍa, chapters, 36-40.). The Purāṇas describe that *pañcāgni-tapas* used to be practised by *daityas* and *dānavas* who were inimical to the *devas*. *Tapas* does not necessarily involve practice of physical austerities but may indicate certain forms of mental discipline as well. The *Bhagavad-Gītā*, (XVII.14-16) distinguishes between the three kinds of *tapas*, viz. physical (*śārīra*), verbal (*vācika*), and mental (*mānasa*). From another point of view *tapas* is said to be *sāttvika* (pure and bright), *rājasa* (active and energetic), and *tāmasa* (dull and dark) (*ibid.*, XVII.14-19). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* works out the golden mean between Bhakti and Yoga and between ritualism and asceticism. *Tapas* may have some purificatory effect on the mind of a thoughtful person (*manīṣin*). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* clearly stresses that sacrifice, Vedic study, ritualism, offerings or intense *tapas* do not conduce to such vision of God as Arjuna had (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, VI.46, XI.48).

Sannyāsins are those types of ascetics who completely renounce all earthly concerns and devote themselves to contemplation on Self (Ātman) or realization of God. In the Upaniṣadic Age the *sannyāsa* stage was considered to be the highest (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, II.23.1). The later Sannyāsa Upaniṣads (c. first century B.C. and later) contain much description about conduct and duties (*dharma*) of *sannyāsins*. There were six types of *sannyāsins*, viz. Kuṭīcaka, Bahūdaka, Haṁsa, Paramahaṁsa, Turīya, and Avadhūta. The former two types, i.e. Kuṭīcakas (those having fixed habitats) and Bahūdakas (those begging at bathing places) were not treated as full-fledged *sannyāsins*. Another classification is that of (1) *sannyāsins* who are detached from the world (Vairāgya-sannyāsins), (2) *sannyāsins* devoted to the pursuit of knowledge (Jñāna-sannyāsins), i.e. intellectual ascetics, (3) *sannyāsins* who are detached from the world and such knowledge (Jñāna-vairāgya-sannyāsins), and (4) *sannyāsins* who are devoted to active pursuits (Karma-sannyāsins). A Haṁsa is one who is not bound by the ties of the world and moves about freely like a free swan; and a Paramahaṁsa is one of higher order. A Turīya is one who has overcome earthly ties. An Avadhūta is one who has shaken off completely the ties of the world and lives by himself all alone. (Cf., Sannyāsa Upaniṣads, especially *Nārada-parivrājaka*, *Jābāla*, *Avadhūta*, *Sannyāsa*, *Paramahaṁsa*, etc.). These Upaniṣads extol the life of *sannyāsins*. 'It is by renunciation only that some could attain to immortality and neither by *karma*, nor by offspring, nor by wealth' (*na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena, tyagenaike'amṛtatvamānaśuḥ*, *Kaivalya*, 1.3). According to the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (XVIII.2) the true meaning of *sannyāsa* is abjuration of desires. There have been various orders of *sannyāsins* from time to time. Śaṅkarācārya (A.D. 812) is said to have reorganized the order of *sannyāsins* and he is the founder of the ten orders of the Advaita Sannyāsins, viz. Tīrtha, Āśrama, Vana, Araṇya, Giri, Parvata, Sāgara, Sarasvatī, Bhāratī, and Puri. We would revert to the subject of

mystical experience of *sannyāsins* along with *yogins*, while dealing with that topic.

Sacrifice (Yajna)

Now a few words may be said about the nature of sacrifice (*yajña*) and worship (*pūjā*) as these were also found to induce ecstatic *samādhi* of sacrificers and worshippers. Both sacrifice and worship contain mystical elements, and they are but techniques of *samādhi*. It appears that the nature of *yajña* has been greatly misunderstood by several writers on the subject (cf., Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie*; Sylvain Levi, *La Doctrine du Sacrifice*, Paris. 1898; A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, 2 vols., Cambridge Mass. 1905). The *yajña* implies the act of worship and surrender (*utsarga*) on the part of the sacrificer (*yajamāna*). It is called *yajña* because the *yajamāna* who begs becomes moistened (*unna*), i.e. purified and elevated by the *yajña* (*Nirukta*, III.19). 'The essence of the *yajña* consists in its esoteric meaning' (*Tasya vā etasya yajñasya rasa eva upaniṣad*, *Śat. Br.*, X. 3.5.12). 'They harness the mind and they harness the thought' (*yuñjati mana uta yuñjati dhiya iti*, *Yajur-Veda*, *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*, V.14). 'Mind and Speech when yoked together convey the sacrifice to the *devas*' (*Śat Br.*, 1.4.4.1, also II.5.3.11). The sacrificer experiences a feeling of communion with the Divinity (cf., *Ṛg-Veda*, X.125.1). The *yajña* signifies consecration, passage from the profane to the sacred which transforms the character of the sacrificer and which is believed to sanctify the offering (cf., Hubert et Maus, *Essai sur la Nature et la Fonction du Sacrifice*). The following *mantra* stresses the esoteric meaning of the *yajña*. 'By means of the sacrifice, the *devas* (i.e. sacrificing priests who felt inspired and deified) offered sacrifice (to the Law of Sacrifice); these were the first ordinances.

Yajñena yajñamayajanta devā
stāni dharmāṇi prathamānyāsan—
(*Yajur-Veda*, *Vāj. Saṁ.*, XXX 1.16)
(It also occurs in the *Ṛg-Veda*, *Taitt. Saṁ.*, and *Atharva-Veda*). Verily, the *yajña* represents Viṣṇu (*yajño vai Viṣṇuḥ*, *Śat. Br.*, 1.1.2.13, 1.3.2.1). The Brāhmaṇa literature is replete with the symbolic interpretation of *yajña*, apart from the mass of details concerning the sacrifices. Although the *yajña* contains elements of magic and spell, etc. it goes beyond them and aims at establishing some kind of mystic bond (*bandhutā*), communion between the human and the Divine. The *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā* (XXXIV.4.5) gives a vivid description of the ultimate aims of *yajña*. 'Let my mind be of auspicious resolve, the mind by which everything past, present, and future is grasped and by which the sacrifice is spread out and of which there are seven members and in which *ṛk* (sacred hymn), *sāman* (sacred song), and *yajus* (sacred formula, *mantra*) are established like spokes in the nave of the wheel and where all thinking is consigned. Let my mind be of auspicious resolve'. The Upaniṣads illustrate the symbolic and mystical significance of the *yajña*. A man's life may be viewed as '*yajña*' and *dakṣiṇā* (fee) of the *jīvana-yajña* (life sacrifice) consists of *tapas* (austerity), charity, sincerity, non-injury (to creatures), and truthfulness (*Chā. U.*, III. 16, 17, *Bṛ. U.*, III. 9.21-23). The *Bhagavad-Gītā* explains fully the symbolic significance of the *yajña*. *Jñāna-yajña* is the best form of all *yajñas*, viz. *dravya-yajña*, *tapo-yajña*, *yoga-yajña*. (IC.28-33, XVII.11-13, XVII. 11-13). *Yajña*, charity consecration and *tapas* are purificatory acts (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, XVIII.5).

Worship (Puja)

The ancient modes of worship (*pūjā*) characteristic of the main types of the Indian religion, both orthodox and hetero-

dox, contain certain elements of mysticism, viz. *dhyāna* concentration on the meaning of image, etc. which tends to induce ecstasy and trance of the devotee. They contain a blend of certain elements of pre-Aryan and/or non-Vedic features and of the Vedic sacrifice such as *homa* (oblation), etc. in the case of the orthodox systems and, *mutatis mutandis*, the similar blend with certain characteristic features of the Buddhist and Jaina worship, etc. in the case of the heterodox systems. The *pūjā*, later called Tāntrikī-pūjā, is a popular form of non-Vedic worship with or without the administration of Vedic rites. Ritual, symbol, sacrament, and sacrifice are subtle expressions of the spirit of worship. The technique of worship tends to induce concentration on self (*yoga*) through the medium of the image of the deity in the case of the orthodox cults and of the Buddha and Jaina in the case of these cults. *Prāṇāyāma*, the control of breath is also an important feature of every form of *pūjā*. The worshipper should feel himself deified by concentrating on the image; one should worship the deity by identifying himself with the deity (*devo bhūtvā devaṁ arcayet*). Ramakr'shna Paramahamsa, the great saint of the nineteenth century, used to have ecstatic visions and fall into trance mainly through the medium of worship of the Mother Kālī. That the Tāntric form of worship induces *samādhi*, if performed properly and rigorously, cannot be denied; there are innumerable evidences in support of the statement.

Mystic Consciousness and Experience: Illustrations

In our present discussion we have already referred to the various types of *samādhi* and also to the various kinds of people attaining *samādhi* and the nature of their experience during *samādhi*. We have also briefly alluded to the various techniques of *samādhi*. Now we would speak, in some detail, about the mystic vision and consciousness. Such phenomena which are human as clairvoyance, clairaudition, telepathy, thought-reading, levitation, and the rest which are sometimes wrongly associated with mysticism have been excluded from the discussion, although a discussion on all aspects of *yoga* would entail them. However, that is another study. The Upaniṣads contain much description about the visionary experience of *ṛṣis* (seers) who sought to penetrate beyond the vale of this earthly existence and to gain an insight into Reality and the true nature of Ātman. It is the mystic union that transmutes the nature of the mystic seer in his quest for truth and immortality. What the mystic seers felt can be best described in their own words. 'Ātman though hidden (immanent) in all things does not shine forth but He is seen by those subtle seers with their foremost, subtle intelligence' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 1.3.12). 'Those who behold Him as abiding in Ātman enjoy eternal peace (beatitude) and none else' (*ibid.*, II.2.12, 13). 'One who is free from desire and activity (in fulfilment of such desires) beholds Him and is relieved of grief. He realizes the greatness of Ātman through the grace of the Creator or through tranquillity of the mind' (*ibid.*, 1.2.20). 'He who sees all beings in his own self and the Self in all beings, does not feel any disgust' (*Īśa Upaniṣad*). 'When one's nature is purified by the light of knowledge or through the divine grace, then alone he beholds Him who is without parts by (divine) contemplation' (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III.1.8). The mystic seers had experienced the vision of God as reported by many of them. 'They behold the Divine Power by means of contemplation (*dhyāna-yoga*)' (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, 1.3). Another seer pro-

claims: 'I have known this Great Person who is, as it were, of the complexion of Āditya and who is beyond the vale of darkness' (*ibid.*, III.8). We need not multiply instances.

In the above discussion we have referred to the traditional accounts of ancient seers and sages of India who belonged to the different categories of mystics and *yogins*. Now in order to illustrate our findings we would refer to certain prominent mystics of India who may be said to be typical of the religious orders with which they had been connected. Śaṅkara was a mystic of the intellectual-contemplative type and it appears from the accounts left to posterity regarding his personality, his mystic experience must have been the type of *nirvikalpa samādhi* as conceived by the Advaita Vedānta and referred to as *asamprajñāta samādhi*, i.e. experience of Brahman as the Absolute devoid of qualities (*nirguṇa*). As against Śaṅkara, the monist, the case of Rāmānuja, the great saintly teacher of the Viśiṣṭādvaita school of the Vedānta is a striking one. As a theist his was a case of *savikalpa samādhi* impregnated with joy. The case of Śrī Caitanya (A.D. 1485-1533), the God-intoxicated saint of Bengal, presents a vivid contrast to that of the monist type or *yogin* type. The excellent and unique biography of Śrī Caitanya described as the Great Master, *Mahāprabhu* by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja who was, himself, a great devotee, presents the picture of the great master drunk in the fountain of divine love. The external manifestations of the symptoms of divine love used to be clearly visible in his body. He manifested in his person the physical conditions and symptoms said to be characteristic of the attitude of Śrī Rādhā towards her divine lover, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (cf., the concept of spiritual marriage held by Catholic saints). The external ten symptoms (*daśa daśā*) which his biographers have recorded about him are the following: Acute anxiety, vigil (keeping awake during the time usually given to sleep), trembling, bodily emaciation, pallor, lamentation, ailment, mania (seeming derangement marked by phenomena akin to hallucination, etc.), swoon involving loss of sensibility. His was a case of acute divine inebriation far from the pathological and he spent the last twelve years in this stage culminating in his mysterious disappearance. He used to be haunted by visions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Divine Beloved playing the flute on the bank of the Yamunā or engaged in sportive dance with *gopīs* at Vṛndāvana. He had to be brought back to consciousness by loud recital of the name of the Lord before his very ears and when consciousness was revived he used to lament for the visions that had passed by and the transports of joy which he experienced. (For details see chapters 14, 15, 16, 18 of *Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Antyalīlā*). Generally speaking, his normal and supra-normal experience was of the following types: *Antardaśā* (internal condition) during *samādhi*, *bāhyadaśā* (external condition) during normal, wakeful hours, and *ardhabāhyadaśā* (half-external condition) of pre-*samādhi* stage. In this connection we would also mention the case of Sri Ramakrishna, the saint of Dakshineswar. In this case one striking point is that he used to experience different types of *samādhi*, although normally of the Bhakti type. At times he used to exhibit the symptoms characteristic of Śrī Caitanya, although his attitude was that of the child in relation to the Divine Mother (*vide Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita*).

Before we conclude we would refer to the concepts of *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukti*. We have already pointed out that the yogic concept of *samādhi* is that of freedom; it is *jīvanmukti* while alive, to be followed by *videhamukti*, i.e. freedom of

the disembodied person. In the case of other systems the latter concept implies release from bondage and dissolution in God, the nature of dissolution being variously conceived. Principally, dissolution signifies the state of merger in God or the state of unity with the Divine. The later Yoga Upaniṣads dealing with this aspect of *samādhi* are replete with various kinds of discussion on the subject. A very brief resume is given below. Although the Yoga Upaniṣads were compiled at a much later age, they indicate various strata of thought pertaining to the constituent elements of *yoga* and the nature of *yoga* itself. Presumably these views had prevailed before the *Yoga-Sūtra* of Patañjali was compiled. Certain Yoga Upaniṣads speak about the six elements of *yoga*, viz. '*pratyāhāra*' (withdrawal of the senses from their objects, i.e. sense-data), *dhyāna* (meditation on the subject of *samādhi*), '*prāṇāyāma*' (control of vital breath), '*dhāraṇā*' (re-collection, sustenance), '*tarka*' (abstract reasoning), and finally '*samādhi*' (ceaseless contemplation leading to the goal of contemplation) (cf., *Amṛtabindu*, V.1, XV.II.24). Another classification is as follows: *āsana* (correct posture for meditation), *prāṇasaṁrodha* (i.e. *prāṇāyāma*), *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi* (cf., *Dhyānabindu*). The *Tejobindu Upaniṣad* describes fifteen elements of *yoga*, viz. *yama* (self-control), *niyama* (observance), *tyāga* (renunciation), *deśa* (resorting to a secluded place), *kāla* [meditation on (eternal) Time], *āsana* (correct posture), *mūlabandha* (arresting of basic mental states), *dehasāmya* (correct physical balance), *dṛksthiti* (stability of vision), *prāṇasaṁyama* (i.e. *prāṇāyāma*), *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *ātmadhyāna* (concentration on self) and finally *samādhi*. The usual classification is that of the classical eightfold *yoga*. The Yoga Upaniṣads contain a mass of details regarding the various types of these elements of *yoga* (see the *Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad*). The sources may be referred to for full particulars.

Generally speaking, the Yoga Upaniṣads speak of the four-fold classification of *yoga* already referred to, viz. *mantrayoga*, *layayoga*, *haṭhayoga* and *rājayoga* (e.g. *Yogatattva Upaniṣad*; *Yogaśikha Upaniṣad*) *samādhi* implies the state of mental equilibrium (*cittasāmya*). The *Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad* defines *samādhi* as the state of union of the individual self (Jīvātman) with the Supreme Self (Paramātman), which is one of identity, absolute bliss, and pure consciousness (*Jīvātmaparamātmaikyāvasthā ... paramānandasvarūpa śuddhacaitanyātmikā, Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad*, 1.72). *Mokṣa* (lit. the final release, *videhamukti* referred to above) implies dissolution (*laya*) or merger of the disembodied individual self (Jīvātman) in the Supreme Self. Just as space inside a jar dissolves into Space itself when the jar is destroyed, the individual self (Jīva) is, likewise, the same as the Supreme Self; but it appears to be different as long as it is circumscribed by *upādhi* (i.e. limitations of body, etc.)

Ghaṭasaṁvṛtamākāśaṁ nīyamāneghaṭe yathā;
Ghaṭo nīyeta nākāśaḥ tadvajjīvo nabhopamaḥ—

(*Brahmabindu*, 12-13; *Tripurātapinī*, V. 12-13)

WESTERN INFLUENCE IN TAGORE'S THOUGHT

BHABATOSH DATTA, M.A., D.LITT.

Dr. Bhabatosh Datta is Assistant Professor of Bengali at the Presidency College, Calcutta. Among his books, Cintānāyak Bankimchandra *deserves special mention. He has also edited* 'Iswar Chandra Gupta Racita Kavijīvanī'. *Following is the text of a lecture Dr. Datta gave at the Institute on 19 February 1969.*

RABINDRANATH Tagore is generally known as the great exponent of Indian culture. He embodies in himself all that is best in our culture. Apart from the inspiration he received from the Upaniṣads in moulding his own basic ideas, his innumerable poems and plays directly reveal the extent of his understanding of the spirit of this ancient civilization. From the Vedic Age down to the modern, the different periods of Indian history have found expression in his writings. We all know the influence of Kālidāsa's idea of love and beauty on Tagore. It was Rabindranath who interpreted Kālidāsa as the poet of selfless love, love that is above bodily attraction. Rabindranath's deep reverence for the Buddha is too well known to be repeated. What appealed to Tagore was Buddha's ethical principle of religious practice, which made his preaching very much acceptable to the humanity in general. Similarly the medieval saints like Kabīr strengthened Tagore's belief in the futility of the ritualistic practices and enriched his conviction in the oneness of humanity.

But above all these, the Upaniṣadic training he had from his father, Devendranath Tagore in his early years certainly formed the basis on which all the later influences worked. From the Upaniṣads Rabindranath learnt the existence of absolute Reality that surpasses all the barriers of caste, creed, religion, and nationality. Thus humanity, he said, was one and indivisible. It is needless to go into details of his devotional poems which are surcharged with the Upaniṣadic and Vaiṣṇavic ideas. One cannot overlook the fact that his universalism had a distinct characteristic of its own. It was neither a scientific abstraction nor a sociological concept of modern political philosophers. It was on the other hand, a concept which had its origin in the deep spiritual realization of the ancient seers. The fact that he often quotes from the Upaniṣads clearly prove his source of inspiration.

All this is quite well known. But, in order to avoid over emphasis on a particular aspect of Rabindranath's debt to the western thinkers, I have to mention this. Tagore has always been described as the great inheritor of Indian tradition. And yet how can we forget that Rabindranath appeared at a time when western ideas were penetrating deep into the Bengali mind. Rabindranath's period was the period of great historical significance. This was the period of industrial revolution, progress of scientific and technological achievements, the gradual disintegration of colonial rule, development of nationalistic feeling, rise of the prolitariat and Russian Revolution and two great world wars. No sensitive thinker can remain unaffected by the impact of these historical events. His philosophy of life and sense of values are formed out of it. He in turn helps his

people to think and work. Tagore, as every reader of his life must have noted, responded at these contemporary events but his response did come from a deeper meaning of life. This was shaped by the Upaniṣadic training and also by the philosophical quest made by the western thinkers. For, in spite of predominance of Indian intellectual tradition he assimilated the current western ideas and synthesized the two. In the present paper, it will be unnecessary to go into every detail of historical influences he received. We shall confine ourselves to some basic western influences on Rabindranath Tagore's mind only.

It so happened, Bengal before Rabindranath's significant appearance passed through an intellectual crisis—a crisis of value. The crisis was due primarily to the change that took place in the political administration and chiefly to the cultural impact that the foreign rulers brought in with them. The social set-up gradually underwent a change; a new class of educated people emerged; necessity of revaluation of old values naturally became imperative. The story of this all-round shake up need not detain us here. What I want to point out is that though the brilliant band of Hindu College boys known as Young Bengal made their appearance in the thirties of the nineteenth century, two great social reformers Rammohun Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar dominated the stage till about 1860. None of them was actually inspired by the western school of thinkers directly.

Rammohun was a self-educated man. English though he learnt and learnt well, no regular training in English literature and philosophy was expected prior to the establishment of the Hindu College. In his famous letter to Lord Amherst on the introduction of English education Rammohun shows his acquaintance with Bacon But his own polemics were strewn with quotations from the Śruti and the Smṛti. Similarly Vidyasagar born and brought up in an orthodox family, and educated in the Sanskrit College was no less modern in his outlook. He even suggested that the study of Vedānta should be replaced by the study of *Novum Organum*. And yet his own writings regarding social reforms do not show any specific mention of English thinkers.

Excepting Devendranath Tagore who was influenced by the Cartesian rationalists as noted by his biographers and Akshay Kumar Datta who was influenced by the positivist philosophers of Europe none show any specific influence of any particular school of philosophers before the second half of the nineteenth century. Thus after Rammohun and Vidyasagar the influence of English philosophers gradually increased. The later half of the nineteenth century is particularly remarkable for assimilating western thoughts. The period that preceded had been the period of question; the period that followed endeavoured to put forward answers. What was the doubt about? It was all with regard to the definition of man. What is the duty of a man? What is his relation with his society? What comprises the nature of man? What should be his aim of life? These are some of the common questions that engaged the intellectual leaders of the century.

Now in order to find out a suitable solution and to supply a firm basis to it authorities were often taken recourse to. The Vedas, and the *Gītā* were cited but to make them convincing to the modern mind, modern scientific method was applied. Thus the English philosophers of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century England and France came to help us. The most important of these thinkers were Bentham, Comte, and Mill. We all know, Comte's positivism and Mill's utilitarianism

became very common creeds with the English-educated class of Bengal. The theory of harmonious development of all our faculties was accepted equally by the Brāhmo and the Hindu thinkers. This was propounded originally by John Stuart Mill.

The remarkable feature of the nineteenth century thinking was its positivistic outlook derived largely from the reading of Auguste Comte. Keshab Chandra Sen once got impatient with the rapid expansion of positivistic ideas among the young men of his days. But there was no help. Positivism at least brought clarity and precision in our thinking. The remarkable thinkers like Akshay Kumar Datta and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee dispensed with the mystical interpretation of life. Man is the child of nature and nature shows the operation of certain laws behind. Thus Darwin discovered some biological laws; Herbert Spencer also explained the moral nature of man by the principle of evolution; and Comte had the same theory of evolution with regard to human society. Jaina's famous history of English literature was nothing but the application of some natural laws in the field of literature. 'In the eighteen fifties' writes Will Durant, 'evolution was in the air'. Spencer expressed this idea long before Darwin in an essay on the 'Development of Hypothesis' (1852) and in his *Principles of Psychology* (1855). In 1858 Darwin and Wallace read their famous papers before the Linnaean Society and in 1859 the old world as the good bishops thought crashed to pieces with the publication of *Origin of Species*. What lifted Spencer to the crest of this wave of thought was the clarity of mind which suggested the application of the evolutionary idea to every field of study and the range of mind which brought almost all knowledge to pay tribute to this theory.

These are some of the notable features of the nineteenth century thought-current in the West. Curiously enough the thought-current of Bengal received sustenance from it and had similar characteristics. This was how the Bengali intellectuals like Bankim Chandra and others were giving shape to the newly found ideas, when Rabindranath entered the scene.

Incidentally reference should be made to Rabindranath's travel in the West and his personal contact with the leading western thinkers. He visited England twice before 1900, once in 1878 and then in 1890, the second time only for a couple of months. His boyhood impression about England he recorded in *Europe Pravāsīr Patra*. It shows his lack of favourable interest in English life. He visited England for the third time in 1912. This time his impression was entirely opposite. He showed balanced and mature judgement. He met some of the most important men of letters and had occasion to exchange views. Thus Rabindranath came to appreciate the inherent greatness of the western culture. So long we have branded the western culture as materialistic—too much concerned with the material comfort at the cost of spiritual upliftment. But, as Rabindranath reminds us, we have so long overlooked and underestimated their spirit of sacrifice and moral strength behind all their endeavour. In this sense they are more spiritual than we are. We, on the other hand, have become static and inert.

Till then Rabindranath received western influence through the reading of books. After he had been awarded the Nobel Prize in 1913, his contact with the front-ranking thinkers of the world became frequent. He travelled extensively throughout the continents. His philosophy of life took final shape in two most remarkable books *Sādhanā* and the *Religion of Man*. Rabindranath became universal in his outlook and thus came nearer to western

mind in spite of his Upaniṣadic bent. He made wonderful synthesis of the Vedāntic ideas and the scientific and moral laws. About the latter he said, 'The contact with the West has brought before us the universality of the law of causality on the one hand and the universality of the standard of conduct on the other. This is neither impeded by the authority of the sectarian scripture nor by time-worn conventional practices nor by injunction of any particular class of men.' These two fundamental contributions of western civilization made a deep impression in Tagore's mind. A poet of fine sensibilities, Tagore's creative imagination always stood on a strong base of scientific truth. His prophetic utterances were never meant for any particular geographical area. Thus his poetic vision was never retarded by immediate present; on the other hand it penetrated into the deeper mysteries of life and nature.

It will, therefore, sound very strange that Rabindranath should have anything to do with positivism and utilitarianism. He is an idealist. He transforms this world of matter into a paradise of beauty. This world of sorrow and evil always opens up before him an immense possibility of a better world. In matters of politics and social reforms also he has always maintained his idealistic stand. [This is proved from what he observed during our national movements in the first and the third decade of this century. He always calls upon his countrymen to shun the method of solving immediate problems by patchwork. We must look into ourselves and try to build up our moral character first, which alone will be the lasting solution. Otherwise we shall gain in the present but shall lose in the future.] Tagore's literary and aesthetic ideas also differ largely from the utilitarian ideas. He never judged literature from the utility point of view. Of course initially for sometime Tagore believed in didactive purpose of literature. In this matter he was influenced no doubt by the current ideas. In his early essays he expressed the view that art should have a social purpose but it must be commensurate with the purpose of creating beauty. But at the same time in his own artistic creation and other literary essays Tagore shows marked influence of English Pre-Raphaelite poets and critics such as Oscar Wilde, Ruskin, and Swinburne. That he used to read Gautier, Maupin, and other French authors is also known. He had such friends as Lokendranath Palit, Ashutosh Choudhuri, and Priyanath Sen not to speak of his own illustrious brother Jyotirindranath Tagore who must have initiated Rabindranath in these literatures.

Tagore had similarity of views with the utlitarians at least in one vital thing. He was a relentless preacher of Bengali as the medium of instruction since his early days. He quotes his own experience regarding the system of the vernacular education in the nineteenth century Bengal and tries to impress upon the present generation of its effectiveness. James Mill in his education dispatch of 1824 wrote that 'the only truly scientific criterion for judging the content and medium of instruction was that of utility'. We cannot expect the ordinary people to respond unless education is imparted to them through their mother tongue.

And there ends the utilitarian influence. Of course, that does not mean that positivism lost its entire hold upon him. He did not minimise the value of our existence as human beings, as a conventional Indian mind would have done. It was Tagore who boldly declared that salvation or *mukti* he did not want. He wanted to live and enjoy the endless beauty this life offered. It is indeed unnecessary to repeat how often Tagore

expressed in his poems the joy of this earthly existence, his longing to come back again and again to renew the pleasure of acquaintance with this life. This is far from the monastic ideal of Christian spiritualists or the *vairāgya* of the Hindu philosophy. Even an orthodox Viśiṣṭādvaitavādin would not identify himself with such an attitude. Because after all excepting the Bārhaspatyas or the materialists no system of Hindu or Buddhist philosophy glorified our earthly existence in such a manner. It sounds like hedonism indeed, but really it is somewhat different. Rabindranath makes distinction between pleasure or *sukha* and joy or *ānanda*. *Sukha* relates to the sense-life. We frequently come across this word in writers of the nineteenth century but Tagore introduced the term *ānanda* from the Upaniṣads to indicate that joy of life is something different from pure enjoyment of sensuous life.

In 1916 Tagore's famous novel *Caturaṅga* appeared serially in the *Sabujpatra*. We come across here a very bold and upright character—Jagamohan whose personality dominates the whole novel. He is a professed positivist, a non-believer, but has infinite compassion for the distressed. Tagore's deep regard for the idealism Jagamohan represents is quite clear. The European professor, Mr. Wilkins in this story is probably depicted in the model of Derozio, the Hindu College teacher of the early nineteenth century. Wilkins preaches positivism and teaches his student to think and argue freely. It is significant, after about a hundred years of introduction of positivism in Bengal and at a time when it was supposed to be the philosophy of the past Tagore revived the spirit of positivism. It is its humanistic approach that attracts Tagore. Yet we cannot deny that to Rabindranath that life is something positively real. It has its defects. Evil there is but we can at least try to make it a better place for living. So says Rabindranath :

Duḥkhere dekhechi nitya, pāpere
dekhechi nānā chale
Aśāntir ghūrṇī dekhi jībaner srote
palc pale;
Mṛtyu kare lukācuri
Samasta pṛthibī juḍi.

'Sorrows and pains I have seen, evils I have come across occasionally, also the whirlpool of conflicts and strife in the flowing stream of life. Death plays hide and seek everywhere.'

And yet 'to the man who lives for an idea' says Rabindranath in his essay 'The Problem of Evil', 'for his country, for the good of humanity, life has an extensive meaning and to that extent pain becomes less important to him'. One of these extended views undoubtedly was the concept of nationalism. The spirit of nationalism which had been somewhat unknown before grew out of the desire to give full attention to the surrounding we live in. This was a product no doubt of the positivist interest of the nineteenth century Bengal. We find Rabindranath also to be very much engaged in defining this concept. He quotes from Seeley, Renan, and Guizot. We had no nation before, Rabindranath points out, but we had the concept of *samāj* or community. We should try to work through this *samāj* which sustains the individual. There is some similarity of views between Comte and Tagore so far as they attached importance to the function of community or *samāj*.

Rabindranath outgrew this conception no doubt. He turned out to be a universalist out-and-out. Tagore's universalism has been the subject of discussion often. It is interesting to follow how he arrived at this concept. We have already referred to his deep admiration for the

achievement of man in the West. Narrow nationalism gradually lost its meaning to him. He realized the glory of humanity as a whole. The geographical and other division disappear before him. He travelled extensively to come in contact with that surging humanity. Thus he attains the cosmopolitan outlook which with years grew deeper and wider. And so he did not hesitate to express his difference from Mahatma Gandhi, although his respect for Gandhi was almost boundless. Yet he did not want that there should be any bifurcation among the peoples of the world. That is why he did not like the idea of Non-co-operation. Thus the absolute truth before Rabindranath was not the truth of God but of humanity. 'Some religions', observes Tagore, 'which deal without relationship with God assure us of reward if that relationship be kept true. This reward has an objective value. It gives us some reason outside ourselves for pursuing the prescribed path. We have such religions also in India. But those that have attained a greater height aspire for their fulfilment in the union with Nārāyaṇa, the supreme Reality of Man which is divine.' (*Religion of Man*, Chap. IV, p. 67)

This is his religion—the Religion of Man. Rabindranath uses terms of the Upaniṣads often to explain his point but to a careful reader it will be apparent that Tagore's religion is not the religion of the Upaniṣads —the Brahmavāda. He clearly states his difference thus:

'According to some interpretations of the Vedānta doctrine Brahman is the absolute Truth, the impersonal It, in which there can be no distinction of this and that, the good and the evil, the beautiful and its opposite, having no other quality except its ineffable blissfulness in the eternal solitude of its consciousness utterly devoid of all things and all thoughts. But as our religion can only have its significance in this phenomenal world comprehended by our human self, this absolute conception of Brahman is outside the subject of my discussion. What I have tried to bring out in this book is the fact that whatever name may have been given to the divine Reality it has found its highest place in the history of our religion owing to its human character, giving meaning to the idea of sin and sanctity and offering an eternal background to all the ideals of perfection which have their harmony with man's own nature.' (*Religion of Man*, Chap. XV)

Rabindranath of course equates his conception of Man with that of the Bāuls of Bengal. Without entering into detailed comparison Tagore's conception can hardly be said to contain religious mysticism of the Bāuls of Bengal. His conception, on the contrary, as he himself affirms, has a rational and solid basis in the practical nature of man. To a question put to him by Albert Einstein Rabindranath answered:

'The infinite personality of Man comprehends the universe. There cannot be anything that cannot be subsumed by the human personality and this proves that the truth of the universe is human truth.'

His religion of man, we do not doubt, must have been a natural development of his positivist attitude towards the reality which has always formed a rational basis of his poetic ideas. No two concepts are absolutely identical. Rabindranath's philosophy is largely modified to the extent that it appears completely different from Comte's conception of Humanity. But both Comte and Tagore dreamt of that stage of perfection in evolutionary process where Humanity assumes the form of supreme Reality.

So we come to another most significant thought—the idea of cosmic evolution that played a most vital role in shaping Tagore's

thought. This philosophy is particularly of western origin, because in Indian tradition philosophy of evolutionary progress appears to be incompatible with our attitude towards life. To a spiritual individualist the world is what he creates: A believer in soul, therefore, cannot have faith in the objective criteria of progress. Progress is unreal or at least relative. It cannot claim to be absolute in nature. The soul has no development. You can believe in the absolute character of the objective universe only when you believe it to be real. Perfection is already existent in our self. We have only to remove the veil of ignorance and realize it.

Now this philosophy is just the reverse of the philosophy of progress and evolution. According to this view man is progressively advancing towards an ideal. Through the process of development man is evolving himself, making himself better and better. The theory holds that 'there is a continuous development going on throughout the species of animal existence, the main significance of this development will lie in the evolution of life that approach more and more nearly to standard or ideal type' (Mackenzi). We have already noted that in the West this process of development has been conceived in three different spheres—biological, moral, and social. In each of these the process is from imperfect state to an improved state. According to his view there cannot be a stop to the process of development, because the ideal is always in the future and is shifting. This is the teleological view of evolution. The names of Hegel, Bergson, and Alexander are associated with this view while Spencer and Darwin have explained the process of evolution by 'tracing it back to its origin in the needs of savages or even in the struggle of the lower animal' (Mackenzi).

To an attentive and searching reader of Tagore one of the most notable ideas appears to be the principle of constant change. Rabindranath had always been a poet of moving life—motion in every sphere, physical, intellectual, and social. Since when he composed his famous poem *Nirjharer Svapnabhaṅga* his poetic vision assumes a comprehensive world-view and unveils the grand panorama of life moving from the plant-life to the most aesthetically developed human being. The theory of biological evolution has found wonderful expression in his *Chinnapatra* where he says:

Āmi beś mane karte pāri bahuyug pūrve jakhan taruṇī pṛthibī samudrasanān theke sabe māthā tule uṭhe takhankār nabīn sūryake bandanā karchen takhan āmi eai pṛthibīr naram māṭite kothā theke ek prātham jībanochvāse gāch haye uṭhechilum. Ekṭā mūḍha ānande āmār phul phuṭta ebaṁ naba pallab udgata hata. Jakhan ghanaghaṭā kare barṣār megh uṭhta takhan tār ghanaśyāmchāyā āmār samasta pallabke ekṭi paricita karataler mata sparśa karta. Tār pare-o naba naba yuge eai pṛthibīr māṭite āmi janmechi. Āmarā dujane ekla mukhomukhi kare basle-i āmāder sei bahukāler paricay alpe alpe mane paḍe.

'I can remember well, ages ago when after the sea-bath the young earth raised her head to greet the new sun, I vegetated with the first flush of life on this tender earth. With a foolish joy I flowered up and my foliage bloomed. In the rainy season the dark gathering cloud cast its shadow on my verdure like a familiar hand touching the dear one. Since then I have been born again and again on this earth. Gently those old memories return whenever we two sit together face to face.'

I cannot resist the temptation to quote certain lines expressing similar ideas from *Balākā*:

Nāhi jāne keu—
Rakte tor nāce āji samudrer dheu,

Kānpe āji araṇyer byākulatā;
Mane āji paḍe sei kathā—
Yuge yuge esechi caliyā
Skhaliyā Skhaliyā
Cupe cupe
Rūp hate rūpe
Prāṇ hate prāṇe.

'Hardly they are aware that in my vein the billows of the primeval sea still dance, and the dark forest of the primitive earth still yearns. I have passed through ages leaving behind innumerable forms and the stages of lives.'

In the speech of Raghupati in the drama *Visarjan* Tagore undoubtedly was thinking of Darwin's theory of the 'survival of the fittest':

E jagat mahāhatyāśālā. Jāno nāki
Pratyek palakpāte lakṣakoṭi prāṇī
Cira ānkhi muditeche. Se kāhār khelā
Hatyāy khacita eai dharaṇīr dhūli.

'This world is a great slaughter-house. Do you not know that with the twinkling of the eye millions and millions of animals die? Whose play is this—this dusty world strewn with annihilation and death.'

But then with the transformation of Raghupati the change becomes a moral one. Unlike Spencer and Darwin Rabindranath becomes an idealist and believes in an ideal standard to be attained by the ever-expanding soul-consciousness.

I believe, from the *Balākā*-period (i.e. 1916) Rabindranath's inclination for the idealistic interpretation of evolution has become pronounced. Before that, his idea about the constant flux had been more or less realistic—giving us the objective view of the universe in an emotional way. But now, this universal flux turns out to him to be a creative one, offering to create forms in life and in death, purifying our existence every moment. The evolution has become creative reminding us of the theory of the French philosopher Henri Bergson. Tagore's *Balākā*, in which a number of poems gives us the glimpse of the cosmic evolution, is too well known to be taken up in details. I would rather refer my readers to three books, *Sādhanā* (1913), *Personality* (1917), and *Creative Unity*, in which Tagore explains his own conviction. He interpretes the moral nature of man in these three books. What he calls here 'Self' in the true Upaniṣadic fashion is really the *elan vital* or the creative urge conceived by Bergson. With the gradual expansion through the different stages of evolution, this Self aspires to reach the ideal state.

We would, incidentally, point it out that Rabindranath Tagore must have known Bergson's philosophy before he proceeded to Europe in 1912. Pramatha Choudhuri, the renowned essayist and a sound scholar in French, a brilliant student of philosophy of the University of Calcutta was a very intimate friend of Tagore. Pramatha Choudhuri described himself once as the disciple of Bergson. Bergson's *Creative Evolution* in the original was published in 1907 and the English translation appeared in 1911. The result is: Rabindranath's serialized essay 'Pather Sañcaya' contains such observation as indicative of the new theory of universal flux which, of course, after about twenty years of deep and concentrated thinking reached maturity in his *Religion of Man* (1933).

'We must know', declares Tagore emphatically, 'that the evolution process of the world has made its progress towards the revelation of its *truth*—that is to say, some inner value which is not in the extension in space and duration in time. When life came out it did not bring with it any new materials into existence. If elements are the same which are the materials for the rocks and minerals. Only it evolved a value in them which cannot be measured and analysed. The same thing is true with regard to mind and the

consciousness of self; they are revelations of a great meaning, the self-expression of truth.' (*Religion of Man*, The Creative Spirit)

In the meantime something very significant happened in physics—something that brought revolution in the world of scientific thought. Scientific method had so long an unshakable foundation on the theory that every effect must have a cause. But it must be admitted that the law reduces the universe into a machine only. The theory of indeterminacy that developed in the beginning of this century weakened this position. The uniformity of nature is almost reduced to a myth. The complete precision with regard to a natural phenomenon can only be attained if both the subjective mind and the object are properly taken into account. This position has lent support to Tagore's theory of Personality. And to Rabindranath truth becomes relative. It varies from person to person. And so he says:

'Forms of things and their changes have no absolute reality at all. Their truth dwells in our personality, and only there is it real and not abstract. A mountain and a waterfall would become something else, or nothing at all to us, if our movement of mind changed in time and space.'

'We have also seen', Tagore further adds, 'that this relational world of ours is not arbitrary. It is individual, yet it is universal. My world is mine, its element is my mind, yet it is not wholly unlike your world. Therefore it is not in my own individual personality that this reality is contained, but in an infinite personality.'

This merging of individual personality into the universal personality is indeed the central theme of his philosophical discourse, the *Religion of Man*.

SOME CONCEPTS OF INDIAN CULTURE. By N. A. Nikam. Published by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla. Rs. 10.00.

Plato told us that writing is shallow in its effects because reading books may give us a spacious sense of knowledge which in reality can only be attained by question and answer. Knowledge goes deep only when it is written in the soul of the learner. Taking his cue from the Platonic position as quoted above Professor Nikam tells us that as *parā vidyā* is written in the soul of the teacher, he can put it in the soul of the learner. But this is presupposed by inquiry. The oral tradition and dialogue and question and answer are there because there is inquiry. We cannot be without inquiry. There is the Inquiry: 'By knowing what is all this known?' This inquiry reveals a fundamental ignorance and a fundamental knowledge; for, although it is not known what it is by knowing which everything else is known, yet, how do we know that there is *that* by knowing which everything else is known? Otherwise how could this question be asked? The philosophy of Indian culture has to take risk of this Inquiry to make its dialogue a continuing pragmatic possibility.

The author in his inquiry gives us a philosophical interpretation of such concepts of Indian culture as *yajña*, *satya*, and *dharma*, the law of Karma, *ahiṁsā*, *māyā*, and *līlā*, *avatāra*, *puruṣārtha*, Ātman, and Karma-yoga. The concepts expounded in the book under review do not imply that they are operative in a specific social order to the exclusion of others but refer to the making of the individual and appear to give him a religion, the 'Religion of Man'. Although they do not imply a specific social order yet they may be aptly described as the 'postulates' of a cultural tradition. It is logically possible that there are postulates of a similar nature behind other cultural traditions. Comparative philosophy may therefore be defined in this sense as the study of the philosophical postulates behind cultural traditions. But as a postulate is not (in the words of W. E. Johnson) what is hypothetically entertained but what is categorically affirmed, the postulates of a cultural tradition have, by definition, the same logical status as the postulates of science. Modern existentialism has discarbed the possibility that there may be 'subjective untruth' amidst 'objective certainty' and amidst 'objective uncertainty', 'subjective truth'.

Thus the author in his attempt to categorically affirm the meaning of the hypothetically entertained postulates of Indian culture gave us the logical foundations of those concepts of Indian philosophy and culture in a lucid style. All the concepts, as discussed in the book under review, could be grouped under four heads, Nature and History, Man and Action. Behind all of these the author discovered the Idea of the Imperishable, *akṣara*. While the Idea of the Imperishable is not limited to any one cultural tradition, the philosophy of Indian culture appears to be 'intoxicated' by and has a 'passion' for it. That is how Professor Nikam sees it. The Imperishable is the object of its dialectic as well as its myths. The myth that creation is a sacrifice of the Primordial Being contains a paradox about the Imperishable: There is no death unless there is a witness to what dies who does not die. The Imperishable is both reality and value. It is the source of existence and goal of action. The Imperishable is in Man and in the quest of the Imperishable that which he chooses is his. In the Indian

cultural tradition, the Idea of the Imperishable is there because there is *parā vidyā*, considered as the *summum bonum* of all human endeavour.

We are thankful to Professor Nikam for giving us a very lucid explanation of some of the fundamental concepts of Indian culture, philosophically oriented. The book is nicely printed and tastefully got up. We commend the author and recommend the book to all serious students of Indian philosophy and culture.

S. K. NANDI

NON-VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION—A STUDY OF GANDHI'S MORAL EQUIVALENT OF WARS. By H. J. N. Horsburgh. Oxford University Press, London. 1968. Pp. ix + 207. Rs. 27.50.

Senior Lecturer, Moral Philosophy, Glasgow University, Dr. Horsburgh explores Gandhi's *satyāgraha* with philosophical analysis for his tool and, at the end of his odyssey, he discovers that, by any computation, non-violence scores over violence; more so, as a system of defence. *En route* Horsburgh stops at a critique of armed force, the ethico-religious foundations of *satyāgraha*, and its practice, the 'central' issues of the purposes of defence and the reduction of the risks of aggression by certain ways of life and methods of defence, and an assessment of Gandhi's moral equivalent for war. At his journey's end the author discusses—*a la sociologiste*—the prospects of nuclear deterrence as a basis of defence and its opportunities as well as implications. He has every right and equipment to draw the world's attention to 'the prospects of non-violence in a world that appears to be committed to reliance upon armed force', specially when experts have already begun to underrate 'war' as an instrument of policy in this nuclear age.

In this book, dedicated to Megan Horsburgh (the author's wife), three distinct interests interplay: Interest in Gandhi (dating back to the author's childhood), interest in the problem of war ('of only slightly shorter duration'), and an interest in sociology (not acknowledged but manifest). While it is for those who are in the possession of the know-how to say if the 'documentation' in Chapter 7 ('Prospects and Opportunities') has been factually fool-proof—the author has made ample use of Lansbury and Sybil Morrison —, the avowed life-long interest in Gandhi and *Gandhiānā* has to be taken *cum grano salis*, I am afraid. An Index-*cum*-Bibliography in a book crying for inclusion in the Gandhian lore is off-putting, indeed, without any reference to the inevitable works of either N. K. Bose or D. G. Tendulkar! When Horsburgh becomes 'philosophical' he is, of course, on native ground. The non-technical 'fringe references' to Gandhism, war strategy, and sociology, however, make the book what it is—interesting reading.

Though the author, in our judgement, has *not* been able to say so in clear-cut terms, we believe he drives at a diagnosis which is something like this. The contemporary social order must collapse if rational social control and the individual's mastery over his own impulses do not keep pace with technological development. If militarily advanced nations continue to have the primitive mentality (in spite of technological 'advancements') of hurling destructive missiles on militarily underdeveloped countries, the deluge is not far off. Thus Mannheim, in *Man and Society* (Kegan Paul), 'The ... phenomenon is that of a disproportionate development of human faculties. Individuals as well as historical and social groups may, under certain circumstances, suffer from the danger of disintegration because their

capacities fail to develop equally and harmoniously. We know very well in the field of child psychology that a child may develop intellectually with extreme rapidity while his moral judgement and his temperament remain on an infantile level, and the same is equally possible in the life of social groups' (p. 41). What Mannheim had held in 1940 still holds good. Modern man is, intellectually, highly developed, but emotionally too immature.—Aye, there's the rub !

M. K. SEN

BARUCH SPINOZA: Letters to Friend and Foe. Edited by Dagobert D. Runes. Philosophical Library, New York. $ 3.75.

Great men who are born before their time have often been misunderstood, nay, they have often fallen victims to tortures and persecutions. Though Spinoza is now recognized as one of the greatest philosophers of the world, he was unjustly condemned by many, in his own days, as an atheist or a naturalist and his conception of Religion and Ethics was regarded as antagonistic to that of the Bible. To the Indian mind Spinoza is an western Vedāntist who has made the nearest approach to Advaita Vedānta as preached by the great Śaṅkarācārya and hence the illustrious Swami Vivekananda had a very great admiration for this Jewish philosopher.

The letters that appear in this volume throw a flood of light on Spinoza's philosophy.

Spinoza, the seventeenth century philosopher of Amsterdam, was expelled from the Jewish synagogue. His teachings were also condemned as dangerous and immoral by the so-called Christians who could not enter into the spirit of the Bible. Like all lovers and seekers of truth, Spinoza was an outspoken man. The Dutch authorities would have prosecuted him if Spinoza had not such friends as Jan de Witt, the Dutch statesman and Simon de Vries, the influential merchant. It is unfortunate that a small fraction of Spinoza's letters have been saved for posterity.

Spinoza was a rebellious thinker. It is rightly said in the preface to the letters that Spinoza preached the gospel of Religion without ritualism, of faith without Providence, of a Universe without a Personal God (*Saguṇa* Brahma).

In his letters Spinoza explains what he means by the terms Substance, Attributes, and Modes. To him 'Substance (God) is a being consisting of infinite attributes, whereof each one is infinite or supremely perfect after its kind'. 'Men are not created,' says he, 'but born and their bodies already exist before birth, though under different forms' (Letter to Oldenburg, p. 16). He believes in a Religion founded not an superstition, but on knowledge. He also believes in a 'fatal necessity presiding over all things and and actions'. He gives an allegorical interpretation of the Resurrection of Christ. To him sin indicates nothing but imperfection: So we find that Spinoza could not see eye to eye with Christians of his time.

'Spinoza's Absolute', says Hegel, 'is the lion's den to which all tracks lead and from which none return'. It is curious to note that even such a great philosopher as Hegel could not do justice to Spinoza's doctrine of Substances.

In one of his letters written to Blyenbergh Spinoza boldly declares—'Sublime speculations have, in my opinion, no learning on Scripture. As far as I am concerned, I have never learned or been able to learn any of God's eternal attributes from Holy Scripture'. (p. 56) But he had the highest admiration for the personality of Christ which is at once divine and human.

Spinoza does not deny the efficacy of prayer. He says—'Nor do I deny that prayer is extremely useful to us. For my understanding is too small to determine all the means whereby God leads men to the love of himself, that is, to salvation'. (p. 54)

Spinoza does not call a man virtuous who desists from wrong-doing from fear of punishment. He says—'Assuredly he, who is only kept from vice by the fear of punishment is in no wise acted on by love and by no means embraces virtue'.

Spinoza is undoubtedly one of the greatest philosophers of the world whose doctrines may well be compared to those of Śaṅkara. We welcome this volume of Spinoza's letters written to his friends and foes alike, and hope that every student of philosophy will be amply benefited and be able to enter into the spirit of Spinoza's philosophy by going through them. Even a layman will feel, as he goes through these letters, that Spinoza was an outspoken man of dynamic personality.

TRIPURA SANKER SEN

THE BHAGAVAD GITA. Translated, with introduction and critical essays by Eliot Dentsch. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York.

The *Bhagavad-Gītā's* popularity throughout the world is still undiminished as is evident from this latest translation of it. Many good English translations of it, both in India and abroad, by eminent scholars, philosophers, and mystics have been brought out since the book came to be known to the West. Various interpretations in English from different points of view have also been proposed and elaborated during the last century but still there is scope for fresher explorations into the text in the hope of finding out its actual meaning and content. Such is the *sanātana* nature of this wonderful book, whose depth still remains unplumbed.

But this edition of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* has a special purpose. According to the author, as 'a text of the poem designed specifically for Western students of philosophy and religion by a Western philosopher or teacher of philosophy is not available', he has brought forth this present edition to fill the gap. He has therefore provided with an adequate background through a very useful introduction, which though brief, deals with the date and authorship and the philosophical-religious position of the *Gītā* and makes an admirable explication of some technical terms, such as *dharma*, *yoga*, Puruṣa, Prakṛti, Brahman, *māyā*, etc. At the end of the book some notes have also been appended to explain some Sanskrit terms of the text. There are four brief but illuminating essays on the nature of Karma-yoga, the meta-theological structure, the value of ceremonial religion, and freedom and determinism. The author shows a remarkable insight into the synthetic spirit of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* when he states that 'the Karma-yoga is the central teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*' and that 'it is a complex discipline which necessarily involves *bhakti* (devotion) and *jñāna* (knowledge); that it involves, in fact, a combined Karma-Bhakti-yoga which is preliminary to a combined Karma-Jñāna-yoga, with the latter allegedly issuing in a pure *bhakti*, which in turn gives rise to a perfect *jñāna*'. *Yajña* is also rightly interpreted as 'self-surrender for the sake of self-realization'. The discussion about the concept of Puruṣottama is also highly interesting. The author also discusses in the light of the *Gītā* the value of ceremonial religion as well as the knotty problem of freedom and determinism. The author rightly concludes that the teaching of the *Gītā* has meaning and value for all times and places and we have no doubt that the

present edition will go a long way in helping earnest students of philosophy and seekers of truth to find that meaning and value.

The translation is lucid and faithful. The get-up and the printing are excellent.

GOVINDA GOPAL MUKHERJEE

VEDA-SAMIKSA. Edited by Dr. E. R. Sreekrishna Sarma. Published by Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. Rs. 6.00.

The Venkateswara University has done a valuable work in publishing this collection of research papers in both Sanskrit and English on various aspects of Vedic studies by eminent scholars of South India, which were presented to a Vedic Seminar held under its auspices in 1964. In the first section there are nine papers in Sanskrit which cover a wide range and in the second there are as many as eighteen research papers in English which in their variety of topics will attract all who are interested in the Vedas. We expect more such volumes from this University, which has developed into a great centre of Sanskrit learning.

GOVINDA GOPAL MUKHERJEE

THE YOGA UPANISADS. With the commentary of Śrī Upaniṣad Brahma Yogin. Edited by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri, B.A. Published by the Adyar Library and Research Centre.

The Adyar Library has rendered a great service in publishing the minor Upaniṣads arranged according to the topics they deal with, such as Yoga, Tantra (*Śakti*) etc. We welcome this reprint of the Yoga Upaniṣads which were originally published as far back as 1920. The book was not available lately and will be welcomed by all lovers of Sanskrit as well as earnest students of Yoga. The present volume contains as many as twenty minor Upaniṣads dealing with different aspects of Yoga. The commentary of Upaniṣad Brahma Yogin though very brief is simple and helpful in understanding the texts, which are sometimes highly technical.

GOVINDA GOPAL MUKHERJEE

THE VARIVASYA RAHASYA. With its commentary *Prakāśa* by Sri Bhaskara Raya Makhin. Edited with English translation by Pandit S. Subrahmanya Sastri. Published by the Adyar Library and Research Centre.

The *Varivasyā Rahasya* is a very important text of the Śākta Āgama, which came out of the pen of the great Bhaskara Raya, whose favourite subject was *Śrī-vidyā* and who made a very valuable contribution to Śākta philosophy by writing this work as well as the *Setubandha* and also a commentary on *Lalitā-sahasranāma*. It mainly deals with the secret of the supreme *mantra* Gāyatrī, which takes the form of *Śrī-vidyā* in its higher esoteric sense. In conclusion, Bhaskara Raya tries to prove that the purpose of the *Śrī-vidyā* is to establish the identity between the individual and the transcendent self and asserts that this knowledge can only be attained through the grace of the *guru*.

The popularity of the book will be evident from the fact that it has now run into its third edition. The English translation is very helpful and a chart of the Tāntric technical terms showing their mutual connection and position in the scheme of Śākta philosophy is of great value. All who are interested in Tāntric studies will welcome this reprint of the valuable text.

GOVINDA GOPAL MUKHERJEE

INSTITUTE NEWS

DECEMBER CALENDAR

(All Functions Open to the Public)

(Children below 12 years are not allowed)

SCRIPTURE CLASSES

THE BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISAD:

Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

On Thursdays at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

4th, 11th, and 18th December

SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM:

Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil.

On Fridays, at 6.30 p.m. in Bengali

5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th December

THE SVETASVATARA UPANISAD:

Swami Bhuteshananda

On Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m. in English

6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th December

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

(Children below six are not allowed)

FILM SHOW

'Chattagram Astragar Lunthan' (in Bengali)

Tuesday, 9 December, at 6 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S DANCE DRAMA

Sonar Harin

by

Malay Gita Bithi

Tuesday, 16 December, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

Nazrul-Giti-Bichitra

by

Sangit Chakra

Participants: Dhiren Bose and Kazi Sabyasachi

Tuesday, 30 December, at 6.30 p.m.

Admission by ticket only .. .. Re. 1.00

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR SESSIONS FOR DECEMBER 1969

Sri Ma Sarada Devi Galpa Asar

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

Jishu Khrista Galpa Asar

Last Saturday, 27 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 3 **A Key to the Theory and Practice of Yoga**

Speaker: Debi Prosad Sen, M.A.

President: Pares Nath Bhattacharyya, M.A.

December 10 **The Beginning of Sanskrit Studies in Europe**

Speaker: Rosane Rocher

President: Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.

December 17 **Sri Ramakrishna in the Eyes of his Contemporaries (Lecture No. 2)**

Speaker: Swami Lokeswarananda

President: Swami Chidatmananda

Wednesday, 24 December, at 6.30 p.m.

SPECIAL LECTURES, SEMINARS, AND SYMPOSIA FOR DECEMBER 1969

Brahmananda Keshab Chandra Sen Lectures (1969)

in collaboration with

The University of Calcutta

Monday, 1 December, at 6.30 p.m.

Sri Aurobindo's Savitri—I (in Bengali)

Speaker: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

President: Satyendra Nath Sen, M.A., Ph.D.
Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University

Monday, 8 December, at 6.30 p.m.

Sri Aurobindo's Savitri—II (in Bengali)

Speaker: Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee, M.A., LL.B.

President: Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil.
Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University

Tuesday, 2 December, at 6.30 p.m.

CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE I. L. O.

India's Role as a Member of the I. L. O.

Speaker: N. N. Chatterjee

President: P. M. Menon
Director, I.L.O. Branch Office, India

Monday, 15 December, at 6.30 p.m.

Subject: **Bhagavata Dharma (in Bengali)**

Speaker: Iswari Prosad Goenka

President: Tripurari Chakravarti, M.A.

Monday, 29 December, at 6.30 p.m.

Life and Works of Professor Benoy Sarker

Speaker: Bela Dutta Gupta, M.A.

President: Manomohan Ghosh, M.A., Ph.D.

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Swami Vivekananda Centenary Endowment

(Hemnalini De Memorial Prizes)

All-India Annual Elocution Competition for Students

on

Swami Vivekananda

Monday, 22 and Tuesday, 23 December 1969

CHRISTMAS EVE CELEBRATION

Programme:

Christmas Carol
by

Catholic Students' Union

Readings from the Bible

Talk on

Jesus, the Life-Giver

by

Rev. A. Bruylants

Giti Alekhya

The Birth of Christ

Music: Sunil Datta and others

Commentary: Nimai Kumar Mukherjee

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