

*Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those  
who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!*

# The Mountain Path

Vol. IV

JULY 1967

No. 3

SRI RAMANASRAMAM, TIRUVANNAMALAI

"Who can ever find  
Thee? The Eye of the eye  
art Thou, and without eyes  
Thou seest, Oh Aruna-  
chala!"

—*The Marital Garland of  
Letters*, verse 15.

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# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

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meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!"

—*The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 1.

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**The Mountain Path**

(A QUARTERLY)

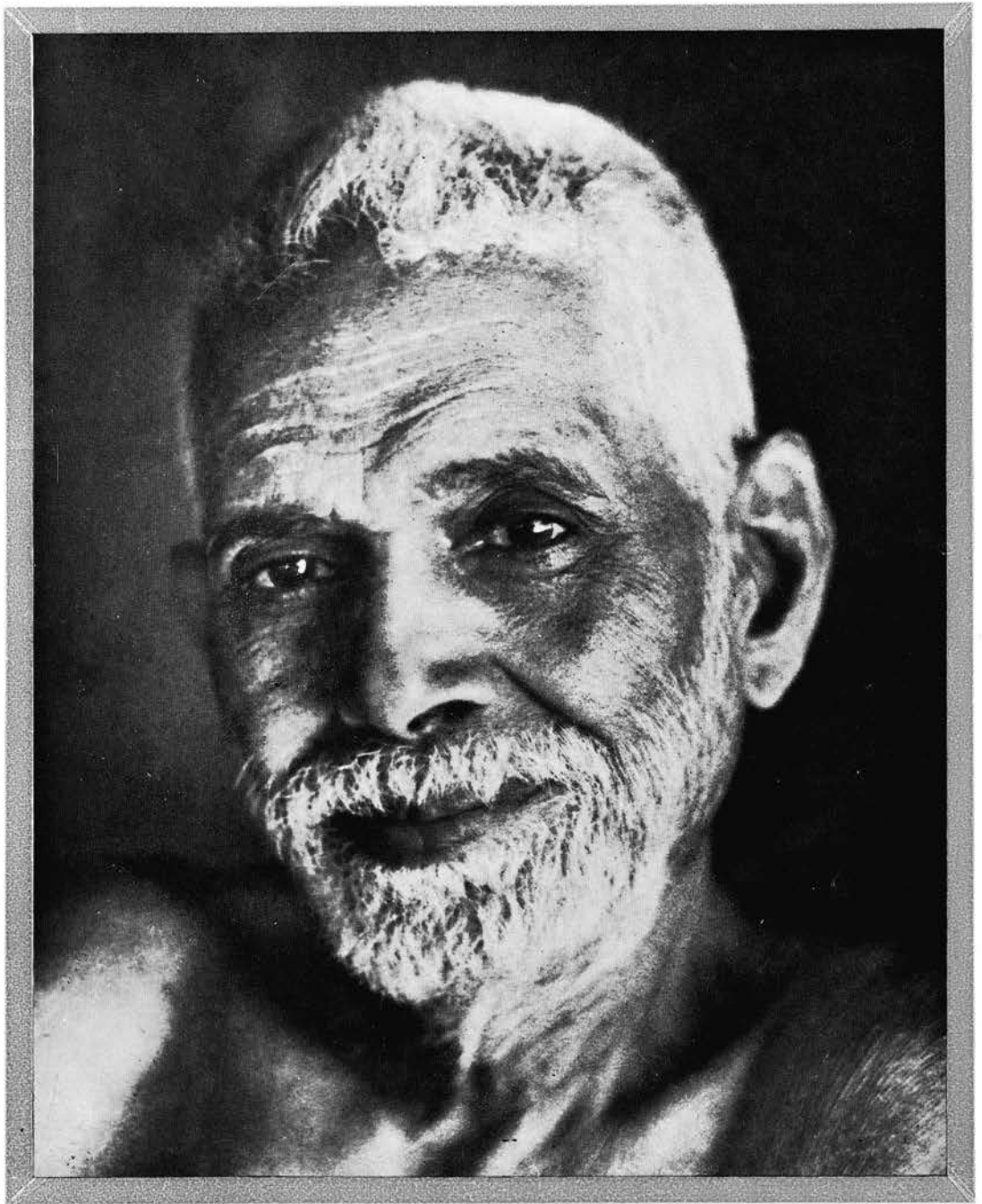
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# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(QUARTERLY)

Editor : ARTHUR OSBORNE

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Vol. IV

JULY, 1967

No. 3

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## TOTAL THERAPY

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### Editorial

**M**AN as we know him in the world to-day is in an imperfect state which Christianity refers to as 'fallen'. That is to say that he is deprived of the sublime awareness and resplendent powers which are his birthright. It is not the fault of any individual man that he grows up so, but it is the fault of mankind as a whole, since it is only through neglect and misuse that powers are lost. Therefore Christianity calls it 'sin' but 'original sin', the sin or fault lying on mankind as a whole and causing its 'fallen' state. Although an individual did not bring this unworthy state upon himself, he can, with right guidance and persistent effort, rectify it and recover his lost birthright. According to Christian teaching, he can be redeemed from it by the Christ born in his heart. I quoted in a previous editorial that very profound saying of Angelus Silesius: "Christ may be born a thousand times in Bethelhem, but if he be not born anew in your own heart you remain eternally forlorn." The scriptures of

the various religions are an exhortation to break free from this fallen state and an indication of what this implies and how it can be done. To wait for death in the hope that it will be done for you is a pusillanimous attitude. This life is the opportunity for doing it.

There are many ways of setting about it ; but they can be grouped broadly into the positive and the negative.

The negative path is exemplified by Christ's saying that he who lays down his life for Christ's sake shall find it ; it is the path of self-inquiry, seeking out the imposter ego ; the path based on anatta, denying the very existence of an ego ; the Mediaeval Christian path of 'self-naughting' which aims at extinguishing the pseudo-self. To say that it is negative does not mean that it is weak or effortless. Laying down one's life is not an easy thing to do. It means total abnegation of the individual pseudo-self who has lost his divine birth-

right. When the usurper vacates the throne the true heir, the Christ-Self, is free to occupy it.

Positive methods are methods of total therapy, of building up one's spiritual, mental and physical nature into its true likeness and thereby attaining to the state known technically as 'primordial man', that is man 'before' or unaffected by the 'Fall'. Such methods include yogic and tantric disciplines in India, Hermetism in Mediaeval Christendom, Islam and China, and techniques practised in post-Han Taoism.

It might be said that on a negative path a man attains first the Kingdom of Heaven, as Christ bade him, and all else is added to him. The word 'attain' sounds positive, but in fact it is a way of attainment by renunciation, possession by dispossession.

In one sense the positive methods could be considered more complete, since the 'all else' which is added to a man on the negative path does not necessarily include the full physical health and supernatural powers developed by the positive way. On the other hand, the negative way brings him to a state where these have no value for him and he does not care whether he has them or not. On the positive way various powers usually considered supernatural may be deliberately developed, as described by Patanjali in his Yoga-Sutras. It is possible that powers may also manifest in the spiritual man who has eliminated the ego which cares whether they manifest or not, but they will not be deliberately acquired or valued if they appear.

From another viewpoint it is the positive way which is less complete. Some traditions have taught a twofold path, the lesser and greater mysteries. The former are what man can achieve by his own disciplined effort and culminate in the resplendent state known as 'Primordial Man', that is, according to Christian teaching, the Edenic state of Adam before the Fall. Resplendent as this state is, it is not the state of Realized Identity: it is still human, though in a sublime sense of the term. As I said in my edi-

torial of January 1965, karmamarga (and all positive paths are forms of karmamarga) does not alone lead to the ultimate goal.

Nevertheless, it is impossible in spiritual matters to go too much by forms and regulations. It is the Spirit that is being harnessed and directed by these various disciplines, and the Spirit can break through to the ultimate Goal beyond all disciplines. For instance, the Tibetan Buddhist poet Milarepa followed a Tantric path, and yet, reading his life and poems, it is impossible to doubt that he was established at the Source beyond all paths and states.

Mentioning the characteristics of each type of path does not mean deprecating either. Each aspirant will be drawn by his own nature and destiny to whichever is suitable to him.

Yoga is probably the most widely known and easily accessible of the 'positive' types of path in the world to-day. Unfortunately, however, it is regarded by many not as total but only as physical therapy. This is a degradation of a spiritual science and a grave curtailment of its efficacy. That does not mean that one cannot use yogic exercise for physical therapy. One can and, with right guidance, they can be very effective and need not be dangerous; but by doing so one is not practising yoga. Yoga is an integral science which covers far more than these exercises.

Many may find it surprising that what appears to be a mainly physical discipline should have spiritual repercussions at all. The same persons may also find it surprising that the prerequisite for a mainly physical discipline should be purity of mind, detachment, equanimity and celibacy. The two conditions explain each other. Purity and equanimity are necessary because the discipline is in fact far more than physical; and because the discipline is in fact far more than physical, spiritual effects can flow from it.

The word 'yoga' is, of course, variously used. Etymologically akin to the English

word 'yoke', its basic meaning is 'union'. In the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali it is used to mean a path to union, and in the Bhagavad Gita also it is usually given this meaning. The word is generally used to-day to mean either hatha-yoga, that is the science of physical postures, or raja-yoga, the eightfold path of yoga of which hatha-yoga is one of the steps.

The first two of these steps, yama and niyama, consist of self-restraint and discipline of mind and character. Yama is more the actual discipline of life, involving truth, ahimsa or injury to none, celibacy and neither stealing nor even accepting gifts. Niyama is concerned more with the state of mind, stipulating purity, equanimity and contentment in this disciplined life. Thus the inner friction and outer grasping which consume the energy of the worldly man, leading him to frustration and exhaustion, are checked and a reservoir of energy is built up which can be directed to the great enterprise. Only then, as the third step, are yogic asanas or postures prescribed. These are followed, as the fourth step by pranayama or regulation of breathing.

This does not mean that there is no overlapping of the steps. They may indeed be undertaken simultaneously and the effort in one strengthen that in another; but they are envisaged as a whole process, and the easier, that is the physical, subserve the more difficult which concern the training of mind and character.

After control over the body (asanas) and the breathing (pranayama), the next step is control over the mind (pratyahara) although, as I have just said, 'next' does not mean that they are never allowed to overlap. "The in-drawing of the senses is accomplished by relinquishing their objects so that they take the form of mind. This (pratyahara) results in perfect control over the senses." (Yoga Sutras, II, 54-55)

Pranayama and pratyahara combined are apt to result in experiences and powers which might well be called supernatural. The practicant has to ignore these and set

no store by them. If he allows himself to be captivated by them he will get stuck there and never progress to the last three stages. And indeed, many sadhus who exhibit powers may be failures who have thus got stuck at a wayside station and lost the incentive and initiative to push on: people rather to be pitied than admired.

It is only the last three which Patanjali describes as the 'inner limbs' of yoga, all the five described up to now being ranked as 'outer'. These three are: dharana or concentration, dhyana or meditation, and samadhi or effortless absorption. In the words of the Sutras: "Dharana is fixing the mind on a particular point" (III-1). "Dhyana is an unbroken flow of knowledge at that point." (III-2). "When this is absorbed in Reality, unaware of itself, it is samadhi." (III-3). These three inner stages are grouped together under the joint name of Samyama. "These three in one sequence constitute samyama."

As can be seen from the above quotations, the Yoga Sutras are in an extremely terse and condensed style, requiring a commentary for every verse. It may be added in parenthesis that speculations as to the date at which Patanjali composed them are of no importance for estimating the origin of yoga, much as scholars love such pastimes; for it is not supposed that he invented the science. He simply recorded in brief, cryptic fashion a science which was already ancient in his time. Indeed, it is now known that traces of the practice of yoga have been found in the pre-Aryan civilization of Mohenjodaro in the Indus Valley.

It will be seen, then, that raja yoga is a science, but a science in which one is not only the experimenter but also the laboratory that the experiment is conducted in. As with any other science, the materials must be properly prepared and the experiment properly carried out according to the instructions of somebody who knows how. If not they may be ineffective. Unfortunately they may also be destructive. One is handling dangerous material and an explosion may wreck the laboratory.

## BHAGAVAN ON YOGA

THE source of breath is the same as that of the mind ; therefore the subsidence of either of them leads effortlessly to that of the other. The practice of stilling the mind through breath-control is called yoga.

Fixing their minds on the chakras or psychic centres, yogis remain for any length of time without awareness of their bodies. As long as this state continues they appear to be immersed in some kind of joy. But when the mind which has been stilled becomes active again it resumes its worldly thoughts. It is therefore necessary to train it with practices like dhyana (meditation) whenever it becomes externalised. It will then attain a state in which there is neither subsidence nor emergence.

\* \* \*

Yoga means union and therefore implies prior division and subsequent reunion of one with another. But who is to be united with whom ? You are the seeker and you seek union with something. So this something must be separate from you. But your Self is intimate to you. Seek it and be it. Then it will expand into the Infinite, and there will be no question of union. First find out who it is that has viyoga (separation) before you talk about yoga (union).

\* \* \*

Yoga means 'union' and is only possible when there is prior viyoga (separation). A person is now under the delusion of viyoga and this must be removed. Whatever method of removing it is used can be called yoga.

Question : Which is the best method ?

Bhagavan : That depends on the temperament of the aspirant. Each person is born with the samskaras from his past lives. One person will find one method easy and one another. Nothing definite can be said for all.

\* \* \*

Yoga aims at union of the individual with the universal, that is the Reality. This Rea-

lity cannot be new. It must exist already ; and it does exist. Therefore the Path of Knowledge tries to find out how viyoga (separation) came about. It is only separation from the Reality ; that means illusion. What you have to do is to find out who has the illusion ; then it will vanish. Generally people want to know about illusion without asking who it is that has the illusion. That is foolish. Illusion (maya) is outside you and unknown, whereas the seeker is within and known, so find out first what is integral to you before trying to find out what is foreign to you and unknown.

K. M. Jivarajani : I sometimes concentrate on the brain centre and sometimes on the heart — not always on the same centre. Is that wrong ?

Bhagavan : Wherever you concentrate and on whatever centre, there must be a **you** to concentrate, and that is what you must concentrate on. Different people concentrate on different centres, not only the brain and the heart but also the space between the eyebrows, the tip of the nose, the tip of the tongue, the lowermost chakra and even external objects. Such concentration may lead to a sort of laya in which you feel a certain bliss, but care must be taken not to lose the thought 'I AM' in all this. You never cease to exist in all these experiences.

K.M.J. : That is to say that I must be a witness ?

Bhagavan : Talking of the 'witness' should not lead to the idea that there is a witness and something else apart from him that he is witnessing. The 'Witness' really means the light that illumines the seer, the seen and the process of seeing. Before, during and after the triads of seer, seen and seeing, the illumination exists. It alone exists always.

\* \* \*

Desai : How can one direct the prana or life-current into the sushumna nadi



(central channel) so that, as prescribed in the 'Ramana Gita' one can achieve the severance of the chit-jada granthi (knot between body and consciousness) ?

Bhagavan : By asking 'Who am I?', the yogi may be definitely aiming at rousing the kundalini and sending it up the sushumna, and the jnani may not have this as his object; but both alike achieve the same result of sending the life-force up the sushumna and severing the chit-jada granthi. Kundalini is only another name for atma or Self or shakti (force). We speak of its being inside the body because we conceive of ourselves as limited by this body; but it is really both inside and outside, being no other than the Self or the Shakti (Force) of the Self.

Desai : How can one churn up the nadis (subtle channels) so that the kundalini may go up the sushumna (central nadi) ?

Bhagavan : Though the yogi may have his methods of breath-control, postures, etc., the jnani's method is only that of Self-enquiry. When the mind is merged in the Self by this method, the Self or its Shakti or kundalini rises automatically.

\* \* \*

Kundalini is one name given by the yogic people to what may be called the atmic shakti inside the body. The followers of vichara (Self-enquiry) call the same power jnana (Knowledge). The Bhakta (devotee) calls it love or bhakti.

## What are We Waiting for? \*

By

Douglas Harding

Let us take the Maharshi seriously and stop pretending that we can't be who we are right now. What did he say about it? Listen :

The Self is within each one's experience every moment.

No aids are needed to know it.

There is nothing so simple as being the Self.

We think there is something hiding our Reality and that it must be destroyed before Reality is gained. That is ridiculous.

A great game of pretending.

What are you waiting for? The thought 'I have not seen', the expectation of seeing and the desire to get something are all workings of the ego.....Be yourself and nothing more.

This idea of difficulty is the chief obstacle. (Talks, pp: 99, 104, 116, 153, 177, 236.)

If we want to know the truth, if we are interested to find out whether we are really the body or not, we have only to look, without any further delay whatever, at the spot we occupy. If we are secretly afraid of the truth and do not wish to see Who we are, we shall find excellent reasons for continuing to overlook the Looker. We may even persuade ourselves that we are all the better devotees for ignoring the Master's clear instructions!

The fact is not that we cannot see, but that we are determined not to see, the Obvious. We are frightened of disappearing. Once admit this and we are at least half way towards overcoming our fear. And really, of course, there is nothing to fear. In the very same instant that one sees one is nothing, one sees that one is All.

\* From the *Ramana Pictorial Souvenir*.

## WHAT YOGA IS NOT

By  
Dr. SAMPURNANAND

A teacher by profession, Dr. Sampurnanand was drawn into the freedom struggle in the late twenties and made his mark in politics. He was Minister for Education and later Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh before he became Governor of Rajasthan, which position he held until his retirement this April. A scholar of profound understanding, well versed in Vedic lore and Yoga, Sampurnanand has written many books and articles, mainly in Sanskrit and Hindi, on philosophy, yoga, astrology as well as education and politics. He is a robust and trenchant exponent of Hindu dharma.

SOMETIME ago, the Editor asked me to contribute an article to this journal on some aspects of Yoga. I am not sure if the present article is an adequate and proper response to his request. And yet, it seems to me that there is some justification for what I am attempting. There is so much misunderstanding, at least some of which seems to have been deliberately created, that it has become very difficult to describe Yoga as the term was understood and used by the Masters who first introduced it as current coin in the language of spiritual discipline.

Some part of the misunderstanding is perhaps inseparable from the very nature of the subject. Whatever Yoga may be, it seeks to delve into the mysteries of life and death and the secret regions of the hereafter, to reconcile the apparent duality between spirit and matter. In all these spheres, statements have to be made which are not amenable to such evidence as is available to the ordinary man or verifiable by the methods of physical sciences. And the difficulty is enhanced by the frank admission that whatever experience is gained here transcends both intellect and speech.

It is well known that certain techniques serve to develop some of man's dormant powers; hypnotism and E.S.P., for example. These techniques bear an affinity to some yogic exercises. The powers made manifest in this way can be used for either beneficent or maleficent purposes and earn for yoga a bad reputation as a near relation to

magic. Again, no one has definitely enumerated the levels at which life functions. There are forms of life not normally accessible to human experience, elemental foci of consciousness and energy, which can be harnessed, by suitable means, for service and disservice of man. Those who dabble in such matters are responsible for creating around yoga that atmosphere of fear and suspicion which blurs the distinction between yoga and black magic.

These are some of the factors which, understandably, create a great deal of misunderstanding about yoga. Some confusion has also been caused by the elaboration introduced by well meaning religious leaders. While formerly one simple word yoga proved sufficient, the subject has now proliferated into Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, Hatha Yoga and Bhakti Yoga and, on the analogy of the Vidyas enumerated in some of the Upanishads, even some of the yogic techniques have been dignified as independent branches of yoga. It is in this way what we hear about Laya Yoga and Nada Yoga. Giving something a separate name invites the creation about it of a mass of literature which may or may not be really helpful to fruitful study. In their anxiety to maintain the separate identity of their subject matter, there is a natural tendency on the part of writers to exaggerate minutiae and build up walls where none formerly existed.

In a way, these are perhaps natural, though unfortunate, outgrowths, but what is

really alarming is the coming into existence of certain recent developments which I consider to be of a very serious nature. Yoga has become tremendously popular and its popularity seems to be directly proportional to general ignorance about it. The thing started when the discovery was made that certain yogic practices, some asanas and mudras and a moderate exercise in breath control, have beneficent results from the point of view of health. They are preventive and, to some extent, curative in certain types of psychosomatic disorders.

The greatest pioneer in this field was the late Swami Kavalayananda. His attitude was a thoroughly scientific one and he never made exaggerated claims for the techniques he employed in trying to restore people to normal health and, what is more important, he never, to my knowledge, claimed that what he was teaching was in any sense the essence of yoga. In fact, he had the genuine scientist's fear that what he taught his numerous pupils might be misused and lead to harmful consequences. In some correspondence which I had with him some years ago, I suggested that yogic exercises wherever used in a number of institutions as a part of physical training are essentially what might be called of a static nature and their use as a part of the system of dynamic P.T., might prove harmful specially in the case of girl students. If I remember aright, he agreed with me that without adequate experimentation it might be dangerous to adopt yogic exercises as a part of a general scheme of Physical Training. In his writings he dealt, as was quite proper, with the higher aspects of yoga. But so far as I can see, what he wrote could lead to confusion and misunderstanding about what is yoga proper.

But to-day yoga, as I have said earlier, is becoming tremendously popular and it is paying the penalty of popularity. A large number of teachers of yoga have come into the field and institutions have been set up for propagation of this science. The lives of many of these Professors of Yoga are open books to many of us in India. They generally take care to leave the Indian scene

severely alone and confine themselves to European audiences whose naivete can be easily exploited. Many people in the West are victims of the belief that it is possible to find in India a large number of people possessing deep spiritual knowledge through the practice of yoga, but the yellow robe covers a multitude of sins. It is people of this kind who are deliberately creating, it seems to me, the impression that yoga is something simple and easy, demanding hardly any sacrifice or self-restraint. As an example, I should like to refer to a book which has recently been published by a School of Yoga, whose representative, a young lady, recently toured the West with the mission of propagating yoga in those countries. I had an occasion once to point out mildly that perhaps it would be better to begin this great mission in India itself but, for obvious reasons, my protests did not meet with a favourable reception. I should like to quote a few sentences from this book whose name is "Dynamics of Yoga." "You can continue enjoying the good things of life and still be a yogi; nor indeed is it necessary to give up world ambitions or material aspirations to take to the yogic way of life (p. 2)". "In the snares and pitfalls of life, one cannot allow oneself to be divorced from reality. Patanjali's Yamas (moral abstinences) and Niyamas (observances of conduct or character) as popularly interpreted, were for an age that is gone and done with, and the simple adamant fact is that they have no place, if professed according to these interpretations, in the world of today." (P. 4)

I think, I need not give any more excerpts. Yoga according to this publication has no need for Vairagya or non-attachment. It gives the initiate a free hand to entertain his worldly desires and ambitions and does not ask him to make any changes in his normal ways of living. As a matter of fact, it is specifically stated: "for attaining this you need not give up any of your normal ways of living (Page 1)."

Every one who has been accepted as a Master has insisted on the necessity of Vairagya. Patanjali says:

“Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah”  
(That control is by practice and non-attachment).

and Sri Krishna says in equally clear language :

“Abhyasena tu Kaunteya vairagya cha grihyate” [It (the control of mind) is achieved by practice and non-attachment].

Patanjali has clearly stated that the Yamas are a Sarvabhauma Mahavrata which admits of no exceptions on any grounds whatsoever. This book points out that these basic canons namely, truth, non-violence, non-possession and continence need not be followed too literally. I know that there is a sentence or two here and there like this : “One need not, however, become a slave of one’s desires (Page 2)” In the first place, it is difficult to say what becoming a slave to one’s desires means and in the second place, no one will admit even to himself that he is such a slave. This piece of advice is a pious wish which can have no restraining influence on any one. I have no particular desire to cry down this particular School of Yoga but the statements made in this authoritative publication give a very good example of how yoga is being deliberately prostituted for the purpose of propaganda. Teaching like this will not elevate anyone spiritually, but it will certainly bring down the

good name of yoga. Those who become yogis in the sense contemplated here will remain on the low spiritual levels where they always have been but they will deceive themselves into believing that they have become yogis. Some of the practices advocated in the book in the absence of those moral qualifications which are the sine-qua-non of yoga may induce conditions like auto-suggestion and self-hypnosis but these things are very far indeed from the real experiences of the true yogi. The increase in the number of self-styled yogis brought about through such propaganda would be unfortunate. Yoga is not something cheap. It entails great sacrifice of the lower self. As Kabir, one of our greatest mediaeval saints, has said :

“Says Kabir, if one loosens the reins even a little, the mind crashes down from the heavens to the earth”.

It seems to me that many sincere western seekers after truth have had on the whole a better idea of what yoga is and what its practice implies than many of those who go out to the West to bring the message of spirituality to the benighted people of Europe and America. The genuine seeker feels that the practice of yoga is like trying to ascend a Mountain Path. It is not a morning walk in a pleasure garden.

## Seeking

By

L. P. Yandell

To seek ‘God’ or ‘Truth’ is to make  
a ‘that’ out of ‘This’.

A further grasping by the ‘me’,  
As if really “A jug of wine, a loaf of bread  
and Thou”

Could be the how.

## RAJA YOGA — THE ROYAL PATH

By  
Prof. EKNATH EASWARAN

**R**AJA YOGA is a system of meditation which, while having something in common with Buddhist techniques, is entirely Hindu in origin and development. It is not a creed, but a method, which may be used by all those who seek to know, experientially, the nature of the Ultimate Reality called God in the various religions of the world. Those who have practised it in India are the aristocracy, not of birth, but of enterprise and energy.

The Sanskrit word yoga comes from the same root as the English word yoke. In arithmetic yoga means addition; but in philosophy it has the double connotation of uniting and bringing under discipline. The scriptures give more than one definition of yoga. According to the 'Katha Upanishad', "When all the senses are stilled, when the mind is at rest, when the intellect wavers not, then, say the wise, is reached the highest state. This calm of the senses and the mind has been defined as yoga."<sup>4</sup> The Bhagavad Gita implies that yoga can carry us beyond suffering when it says, "It is the breaking of contact with pain."<sup>5</sup> In the words of the Bible, "Be still and know that I am God",<sup>6</sup> may be said to indicate both the method and the goal.

There is still a wide-spread impression in the West that yoga is a cross between physical contortions and professional hypnotism, an impression that has gradually developed through what is put out by the popular press as occult literature. It is true that the yogi may develop what should be called supernormal, not supernatural, powers such as the ability to bring the automatic nervous system under conscious control; just as we would call supernormal, not supernatural, the consummate skill of a tennis champion or a trapeze artiste. Moreover, these supernormal powers have very little to do with

the aim of Raja Yoga which is to help man raise himself to the highest level of consciousness possible for him.

From the point of view of their final significance, all the Hindu Scriptures may be called treatises on yoga. The Hindus of Ancient India sought Ultimate Reality not as an intellectual concept, nor even as an ethical activity, but as a creative principle of life to guide them to a higher state of consciousness. The Bhagavad Gita describes four paths for this great endeavour to suit four different kinds of humanity. They are Karma Yoga or the path of action, Jnana Yoga or the path of knowledge, Bhakti Yoga or the path of devotion and, last but not least, Raja Yoga or the Royal Path through a strange experiment performed by the mind on the mind with the mind. The last one, Raja Yoga, is for the scientific man who insists on facts and their experimental verification.

"There is no knowledge like Sankhya, no power like Yoga," runs an ancient saying in India. These two together form one system, Sankhya providing a theoretical exposition of the human predicament, and Yoga dealing with the practical steps to be taken to achieve liberation from it. Those who try to separate theory and practice, Sankhya and Yoga, are called childish in the Bhagavad Gita.

Kapila is believed to be the father of Sankhya, and might have lived, judging from the influence he exercised on the Buddha, about the sixth century B.C. According to him, the phenomenal world is founded upon the two fundamental and autonomous categories of Purusha and Prakriti, spirit and matter.

<sup>4</sup> 'Katha Upanishad' II, III, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Bhagavad Gita, VI, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Psalms XLVI, 10.

The spirit is eternally free, ever serene, self-sentient, while matter as the primordial source of the phenomenal world is ever-changing. Perhaps a parallel to this ceaseless process of change may be seen in the theory of flux to which Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher, referred when he said that we could never plunge into the same river twice. This is true not only of the physical world, but also of the mental world or the stream of consciousness in which images flow ceaselessly from moment to moment.

It may be pointed out in this connection that Sankhya regards the physical and the psychical as nothing more than two different modifications of primordial matter, there being no difference of an ontological order between them. That this view is not opposed to the discoveries of modern science may be seen from the considered opinion of such a distinguished scientist as Sir Arthur Eddington. "The external world of physics has thus become a world of shadows. In removing our illusions we removed the substance, for indeed we have seen that substance is one of the greatest of our illusions."<sup>7</sup> Says Professor Karl Pearson in 'The Grammar of Science': "There is no better exercise for the mind than the endeavour to reduce the perceptions we have of 'external things' to the simple sense impressions by which we know them. The arbitrary distinction between outside and inside ourselves is then clearly seen to be one merely of everyday practical convenience."<sup>8</sup>

Sankhya is dualistic in contrast to the monistic outlook of the Upanishads, and accepts as real both the world of Becoming and Being, both matter and Spirit. The sages of Ancient India turned, in their quest for Ultimate Reality to the world within, and claimed to have found it not in the objects of sense perception and intellectual cognition, not in Prakriti, but in that which guarantees the reality of these objects, the cognitive self or Purusha.

According to Kapila, all experience is based on the duality of the Spirit as the

knowing subject and matter as the known object. While the Spirit is ever-serene Being, matter is described as a state of tension of the three cosmic constituents of law, energy, and inertia (sattwa, rajas, and tamas). These three are said to be in a state of equilibrium in primordial matter until it begins to differentiate itself into the tremendous process of cosmic evolution.

The Sankhya theory may be briefly stated thus. The first product is the intellect which stands nearest to the spirit, and reflects the consciousness of the Spirit in such a way that it appears to become conscious itself. From the intellect comes the ego-sense which is the principle of individuation. It gives rise to the feeling of I, me, and mine, and leads the self to look upon itself as the agent of all action. Third comes the mind which is the co-ordinating centre between the five cognitive senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, and the five conative organs of speech, prehension, movement, excretion, and reproduction.

When Patanjali defines Yoga as restraining the modifications of the Thinking Principle, the definition has to be understood in the light of the theory of knowledge put forward by Sankhya. The term Thinking Principle is a comprehensive one for the whole psychic apparatus which includes the intellect, ego-sense, and mind-knowledge or perception. It is because the Thinking Principle assumes all the forms presented to it by the senses, imagination, emotion or memory that they tend to leave behind them impressions that may be permanent. These impressions or latencies, called 'samskaras' in Sanskrit, which continue in the subconscious until they are revived under proper excitation, are of paramount importance in Yoga psychology because our life is looked upon as a continuous activation of these dynamic latencies. The Herculean task of Raja Yoga is to 'burn out' these latencies by restraining the modifications of the Thinking Principle.

<sup>7</sup>Eddington, Arthur S., 'The Nature of the Physical World', p. XVI, Ann Arbor Paperbacks.  
<sup>8</sup>Pearson, Karl, 'The Grammar of Science', p. 65, the Meridian Library, New York, 1957.

Thus long before psychoanalysis made its appearance in the West, Sankhya psychology had brought out in unmistakable fashion the dominant role played by the subconscious in shaping human destiny. While most Western psychologists are reluctant to believe that the subconscious can be consciously controlled, Patanjali maintains that it is possible for us to enter into the dark region of the subconscious and bring it under complete conscious control. When the vast continent of the subconscious is brought up to the conscious level, claims Raja Yoga, man passes, here and now, "from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality."<sup>9</sup>

Patanjali divides his book into four parts. The first deals with the nature and purpose of Raja Yoga, the modifications of the Thinking Principle, and the eight limbs or steps of the system. The second is devoted to the means of attaining Illumination, the mental states which stand in the way, and the four-fold theme of suffering, its causes, cessation, and the means thereof. The third part deals with Siddhis or supernormal powers such as telepathy and clairvoyance which may develop through the practice of Raja Yoga, though we are warned over and over again by the ancient seers not to attach any importance to their acquisition, but to put ethical improvement and spiritual progress before them. The explanation given by Raja Yoga is very simple. Each mind is a separate unit in one sense, and part of a collective mind in another. Through one-pointed meditation the Yogi passes from the individual mind to the cosmic mind or consciousness which is not bound by the laws of time and space.

It was the Buddha who said of the mind that there is nothing more rebellious when it is undisciplined, and nothing more obedient when disciplined. Raja Yoga disciplines the mind by first separating consciousness from physical sensations and then from the thoughts in the mind. It is a scientific system with eight limbs, the first two being ethical, the next three physical, and the last three psychological.

The first two limbs or the ethical part deal with Abstentions and Observances, don'ts and do's, for achieving purification of the mind.

Through the three physical limbs, Postures, Breath Control, and Withdrawal of the Senses, the yogi works through the body to the mind to make it, in the words of the Gita, "like the light of a lamp which does not flicker in a windless place."<sup>10</sup> The main purpose of the postures or physical exercises developed by the sages of Ancient India is to promote bodily health and to prepare the mind for rapid progress in meditation.

Raja Yoga regards the rhythm of breathing in the light of the theory that there exists a close connection between respiration and the states of mind. These breathing exercises are said to lead to prolonged suspension of breathing which in turn results in an increase in concentration of carbon dioxide in the blood; and this chemical change seems to help bring about a change in the quality of consciousness, thus facilitating the control of the mind.

The next step is the withdrawal of thought from the tyranny of the nerves in what is known as Abstraction in Christian mysticism and aims at gathering together the out-going powers of the mind.

The above five are called external limbs of Raja Yoga, and the remaining three, which form the internal and the fundamental, may be described as deepening stages of meditation—Dharana or concentration, Dhyana or contemplation, and Samadhi or identification.

According to Sankhya, the origin of human suffering lies in confusing Purusha with Prakriti, changeless Spirit with changing matter. By suffering here is meant, much more than physical or mental pain, the consciousness of being limited, bound, conditioned, which is inseparable from this human existence. It is in this sense that Patanjali uses the word.

<sup>9</sup> *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, I, III, 27.

<sup>10</sup> *Bhagavad Gita*, VI, 19.

This suffering is not destructive and does not justify the charge of pessimism that has been brought against Hindu philosophy in the West. On the contrary, suffering is said to be an ontological necessity and provides, paradoxically enough, the means for putting an end to all suffering. It is by being thrown over and over again on the furnace of life that man comes to long for emancipation so that the cosmos may be said to have an ambivalent function—to fling man into suffering, temporarily, on the one hand, and to help him escape, permanently, on the other, from the Wheel of Becoming.

How then is man to achieve liberation from the human predicament, the central law of which seems to be suffering? To the Buddha the cause of suffering is the craving for sense experience; to Kapila and Patanjali it is nescience or ignorance of the nature of Reality. Says Patanjali: "To regard the noneternal as eternal, the impure as pure, the painful as pleasant and the non-Atman as the Atman—this is ignorance."<sup>11</sup> This primeval ignorance, which is held responsible for all our suffering, may be compared to the Fall in the Hebrew-Christian tradition.

There is but one way to terminate this primeval confusion, and that is to have direct knowledge of the Ultimate Reality. He who knows the Spirit crosses over the sea of Becoming, declare the Upanishads. Ignorance means bondage; knowledge means liberation. With the direct perception of Reality, man is said to achieve his liberation at once, and the Spirit regains its original freedom or sees its own native form, as Patanjali puts it with striking simplicity. In the language of psychoanalysis, the dissipation of the repressing factor immediately results in automatic self-recollection.

This may be illustrated with the traditional story of the King's son who was banished to the forest as a child, and brought up there as a forester. He came, of course, to believe that he was really a forester. On learning who the young man was, a Minister from the Court tells him:

"Thou art not a forester, thou art a king's son." Immediately the image of the forester is erased from the young man's mind, and he becomes the king's son again. It is to enable the self-deluded forester to regain his royal status that primordial matter goes through the long drawn-out drama on the stage of the phenomenal world. Purusha's (Spirit's) purpose is the cause of Prakriti's (Matter's) evolution.

Liberation means the experiential recognition of the Self as the same as the Reality which is beyond the laws of time, space and causality, which is in no way involved in the ceaseless flux of the phenomenal world and which, therefore, is ever free and immortal. This is the Moksha of the Hindus, the Nirvana of the Buddhists.

There has been no greater discovery in the whole history of mankind than that contained in the three simple Sanskrit words Tat Twam Asi—That Thou Art—which embody the highest teaching of the Upanishads 'That' stands for *Brahman*, the Ultimate Reality, from whom all words recoil, as Shankara puts it with stark grandeur. 'Thou' stands for *Atman*, the individual Self, the Being behind every human being.

This direct perception of Ultimate Reality does not produce anything new, and is a simple awakening in the sense in which the Buddha uses it in his answer to the puzzled disciples.

"Are you a god?" they ask.

"No," says the Buddha.

"Are you an angel?" they ask.

"No," says the Buddha.

"Are you a saint?" they ask.

"No," says the Buddha.

"Then what are you?" they ask at last.

"I am awake," says the Buddha, giving the literal meaning of the word *Buddha*.

<sup>11</sup> 'How to know God', 'The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali', translated by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, p. 112, Harper & Bros., New York.



This kind of awakening cannot come, according to Raja Yoga, through the agency of the intellect which is itself only a highly developed form of matter. Plato takes up a similar position when he claims that noesis is the highest kind of knowledge, which is immediate and supra-intellectual.

Such direct perception of Reality is beyond the senses and the intellect and can be obtained only through a transcendental experience in which there is complete identity between the subject and the object, between the knower and the known. The Upanishads do not dismiss the intellect as a useless guide. It is very useful for dealing with finite things in the phenomenal world of subject and object duality, but it has to give place to another mode of knowing for the perception of infinite Reality. This view finds corroboration in the philosophy of Kant that the very organization of our intellect, which is bound forever to its innate forms of perception, space, time and causality, excludes us from a knowledge of the spaceless, timeless Reality that is the Ding-an-sich or the 'thing-in-itself.'

This experiential knowledge of the Ultimate Reality is said to be self-established, self-evidencing, self-luminous. Nothing can ever be the same after. With this identification comes to an end for the illumined man the ceaseless tension between the Spirit and matter that goes on throughout the cosmic process.

To attain liberation from the human predicament is not to run away from the duties and responsibilities of life. The liberated man works in the world process no longer as a helpless ego, but as a living center of the Supreme Spirit. It is these illumined men, living on the highest pinnacle of consciousness, who dedicate their lives to the mighty task of elevating mankind.

Patanjali takes over the cosmology and the psychology of Kapila almost in its entirety, but he makes an important addition by

bringing the concept of the personal God into the system of Raja Yoga, holding that devotion to a personal God can be a very valuable aid in practising Raja Yoga. If you believe in a personal God, says Patanjali, it will be very helpful. If you don't, the task will be very much harder. Patanjali does not waste any words on the nature of Ultimate Reality because the only way one can know it is by realising it for oneself in the Yoga climax called Samadhi.

Through this identification or illumination the yogi passes permanently beyond the human condition of being limited and bound. It is impossible to describe the nature of this experience except in the way the Upanishads try to do it—*neti, neti*, not this, not this! As Meister Eckhart puts it, "Everything stands for God and you see only God in all the world. It is just as when one looks straight at the sun for a while; afterwards, everything he looks at has the image of the sun in it."<sup>12</sup>

All human experience is to lead man, according to Yoga, to this final consummation towards which all creation moves in travail. As the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad sings ecstatically, "Pure like crystal water is that Self, the only seer, the One without a second. He is the kingdom of Brahman—man's highest goal, supreme treasure, greatest bliss."<sup>13</sup>

The illumined man or the perfected man has gone deep into his own ground and learnt to know himself at the root of his own being. He has found at last what he was searching for—personal proof of his identity with the Supreme Self whom the Upanishads call *Sat Chit Ananda*—Absolute Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. *Tat Twam Asi*—That Thou Art.

<sup>12</sup> Meister Eckhart, p. 123, Harper & Bros., New York.

<sup>13</sup> *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV, III, 32.

The quotations from the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads* are from the translation of Swami Prabhavananda.

## YAMA AND NIYAMA

By  
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THE Yoga system, like other ancient Hindu systems of philosophy, accepts the Realisation of Being as the goal of life. According to Patanjali, its chief exponent and the author of its scripture, the Yoga Sutras, Kaivalya or Heaven is the state where man enjoys the supreme bliss of aloneness, completely immune to the play of Prakriti; and indeed, the very word 'Kaivalya' is from the root meaning 'alone'. In order to attain this goal it is necessary to withdraw one's mind from all distracting thoughts and tendencies. The definition of Yoga given by Patanjali himself at the very beginning of his great work is 'restraint of mental activities'.<sup>1</sup>

The yogic path has eight steps (literally 'limbs'),<sup>2</sup> culminating in *asamprajnata samadhi* or perfect Self-realization. The first two of these are yama and niyama; to be followed by physical postures (asanas), breath-control (pranayama) and sense-withdrawal (pratyahara). These five are grouped together as the 'outer aspects'. They are followed by concentration (dharana) meditation (dhyana) and absorption (samadhi), which alone are termed the 'inner aspects'.

Of late there has been a wide vogue of what is called 'Yoga' outside India. It will be seen from the above that this consists only of parts of the third and fourth steps of the eightfold path and, what is most serious, completely ignores the goal of the path. The last four steps are probably beyond the practicers, while the first two they conveniently ignore.

Patanjali lists, as the beginning of the yogic path, five yamas and five niyamas. The five yamas (from the Sanskrit root 'yam', to restrain) are forms of self-restraint or abstention. They are: non-violence, truthfulness, honesty, continence and abstemi-

ousness. When the mind flows unrestrained it indulges in thoughts the opposite of these and leads the aspirant astray from Yoga. The yamas are therefore primarily negative virtues in which restraint is predominant, but they have positive content too. They remove the obstacles on the path of yoga, thus enabling the aspirant to set foot on the path. Incidentally, it will be noted that the fourth of them, brahmacharya, meaning continence or celibacy, indicates that Yoga is one of those spiritual paths which is accessible only to celibates.

Let us consider briefly the implications of the five yamas.

1. *Ahimsa* (Non-violence). This means not causing injury in thought, word or deed. First one has to keep the mind quite free from animosity, resentment and malicious thoughts. If any such do arise they are to be immediately counteracted by contrary thoughts and feelings of love and well-wishing.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, one has to abstain from uttering (or, of course, writing) words which will insult others or wound their feelings. Whenever such an impulse arises one must control one's speech and say whatever has to be said in a friendly way, with benevolence and goodwill. Thirdly, no physical violence should be perpetrated on another.

Non-violence consists, says the commentator Vyasa, in bearing ill-will towards none. He further adds that it is a very great virtue and that all the other yamas and niyamas are based on it. When this virtue is firmly established in a yogi his very presence suffices to remove animosity.<sup>4</sup>

The positive side of this virtue is to love all creatures and strive for their well-being in a selfless way.

<sup>1</sup> *Yoga Sutras*, I, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 33.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 35.

2. *Satya (Truthfulness)*. This consists in refraining from anything that is untruthful in thought, word or deed. One must avoid the temptation either to exaggerate or to make a false impression on others. One's thoughts must be based on truth. One's words must not only not be lies but also not be deceptive or misleading. One's actions should be sincere and conducive to the well-being of all creatures, and truthfulness in speech must be accompanied by gentleness in action.<sup>5</sup>

When a person is firmly established in this virtue, whatever he says comes true.

3. *Asteya (Honesty, non-stealing)*. This prohibits stealing both in its gross and subtle form. The subtle form of stealing consists in possessing and enjoying things which do not really belong to us or even possessing our own in a quantity exceeding our real needs. It also consists in enjoying things privately without sharing them with others or surrendering them to God. The Bhagavad Gita calls one who does this a thief<sup>6</sup> and the Ishopanishad exhorts us to enjoy what comes our way in a spirit of surrender.<sup>7</sup>

Non-stealing is also interpreted to mean not accepting from others things not sanctioned in the scriptures and also not entertaining desires for things.

Wealth is said to come spontaneously to one who is established in this virtue.<sup>8</sup>

4. *Brahmacharya (continence, celibacy, spiritual-mindedness)*. This, fully and properly understood means the quest for Brahman and delight in Brahman. Therefore to seek any other consummation or find delight in anything else is lack of Brahmacharya. Therefore it implies full control not only of the senses but even of the desires. In its restricted sense it means sexual control, but in thought and word as well as in deed. This is a cardinal virtue and is very important for yoga. An aspirant has to be keenly vigilant about it and to keep body and mind completely pure and free from unhealthy thoughts and feelings.

When a person is established firmly in this virtue, Patanjali says, he is full of vigour

and capable of imparting spiritual and yogic instruction.<sup>9</sup>

5. *Aparigraha (abstemiousness, freedom from greed)*. This consists in not coveting things or accumulating more than is necessary for the present day. It also implies not accepting gifts, as doing so gives rise to thoughts of earning, saving and attachment.

When a yogi is firmly established in this yama he obtains the ability to see his past and future lives.<sup>10</sup>

It is apparent from the fourth and fifth of these yamas that Yoga is a path for the renunciate, not for the family man.

The chief common factor of all five yamas is restraint or self-control. They are called the *Mahavratas* or 'great vows' and are declared by Patanjali to be completely obligatory on any one undertaking the yogic path.

Not so the niyamas. These are declared to be desirable but not absolutely obligatory, and therefore they are termed simply 'vratas' or vows. It is not to be deduced from this so much that they are less important as that they are less easy, less dependent on one's own will power. They are rather positive achievements, that is abidance in the right, while the yamas are rather negative, that is renunciation of the wrong. Therefore, while a man can decide upon the yamas, he has rather to strive for the niyamas. For instance, a man can decide not to harm (ahimsa); but to be in a state of contentment (santosha) is something he has to aspire after rather than decide upon.

Let us consider briefly the five niyamas.

1. *Shaucha (purity, cleanliness)*. Purity is both external and internal. Externally it implies keeping one's body, clothing, surroundings and food pure and clean. Internal purity means keeping the mind free from passion, inertia or any other form of egoism. From external purity arises detachment from one's own body and the bodies of others;<sup>11</sup> from internal purity arises concentration, self-control and ripeness for the vision of

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 36.

<sup>6</sup> 111, 12.

<sup>7</sup> 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Yoga Sutr*s. II, 37.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 38.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 39.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 40-41.

the Self. It is like a clear unflickering lamp in a glass case.

2. *Santosha (contentment)*. This is the opposite of craving. It means satisfaction with what one has and therefore implies equanimity under all conditions and at all times. Outwardly it implies accepting life as it is, but inwardly it is that experience of everything being as it should be which comes when the ego subsides. It is said that when this *niyama* is fully mastered the highest form of pleasure ensues, and indeed it is itself beyond anything called 'pleasure'. "Whatever delight one gets in having one's desires fulfilled, whatever delight one gets even in heaven, such delight is negligible compared with that which comes from contentment," says the *Mahabharata*. When 'contentment' is understood in the living, ego-free way just mentioned, this is no hyperbole but is literally true.

3. *Tapas (austerity)*. This means remaining indifferent to the opposites such as heat and cold, likes and dislikes, victory and defeat, success and failure. There are also specific forms of *tapas* like those implied by the vows of *krichchra* and *chandrayana*. It is threefold, concerning body, speech and mind. The first implies control of the body and senses, the second the control and right use of speech and the third the taming and calming of the mind. From *tapas* and the decline of impurity comes various powers of the body and senses.

4. *Swadhyaya (Study of the scriptures and incantation of mantras and the Divine Name)*. This includes both the ancient scriptural texts and the sayings of the saints. "Do not fail to study the scriptures" is an *upanishadic* precept. The *Shatapath Brahmana* says that "Study of the scriptures is the highest undertaking a man can engage in." It also includes the repetition of the sacred mono-syllable OM or of any Divine Name.

5. *Ishwara Pranidhana (Surrender or submission to God)*. The inclusion of this as the final and perhaps the culminating *niyama* is remarkable, since on the whole Yoga is a

self-help type of path not making use of the concept of a Personal God. It has even been regarded by some authors as a non-theistic type of path. And yet *Ishwara Pranidhana* means surrendering all one's actions to God who is the Supreme Guru. This is real worship, not dependent on any forms or ritual, and can be carried on while one is walking along the road or working in an office or whatever one may be doing. It implies habituating the mind to feel the omnipresence of the Divine Being and practising the Presence of God everywhere and always. One who practises this attains *samadhi*.

While *yama* and *niyama* are the initial steps of the Eightfold Yogic path, certain flexibility has to be observed. It is not necessary, for instance, that one step should be completely mastered before the next can be started. If it were, few would ever reach the third step at all. Also it is to be noted that *yama* and *niyama* can very well constitute a path in themselves, even apart from the remaining yogic steps. For instance, the last three *niyamas*, called by Patanjali '*Kriya-yoga*' or 'the yoga of action', have an affinity with what is called 'the path of yoga' in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Then again, the *yamas* and *niyamas* together add up to what the *Bhagavad Gita* calls *Daivi Sampad*, that is 'Divine Nature'.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, non-violence, purity, self-control, contentment, and submission to God come under the *Gita* definition of *Jnana*, that is 'Knowledge' or 'Wisdom'.<sup>13</sup>

It is noteworthy that the five *vratas* or vows of Jainism are the same as the five *yamas*, while the *panchasila* or five rules of conduct in Buddhism run parallel and include most of them. They are certainly not exclusive to the yogic path, or indeed to any one religion, but for those who do aspire to take this path, Patanjali, the supreme authority for it, lays down that the *yamas* are obligatory and the *niyamas* conditions to be steadily aimed at.

<sup>12</sup> *Bhagavad Gita*, XVI. 1-3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII. 7-10.

## SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT YOGA

By  
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IN this article I would like to remove some misconceptions about Yoga which are prevalent and which are generally the result of over-simplification of its problems. When the human mind has not enough knowledge about any subject and the discriminative faculty is not sufficiently developed it always tends to over-simplify the problems connected with it. That is why a sound theoretical background of knowledge is necessary before we enter the practical field pertaining to that knowledge. In the absence of such knowledge we see all the problems connected with that field of endeavour out of perspective, are liable to enter blind alleys, adopt wrong methods, get stuck in non-essential activities, and in other ways waste time and run risks of various kinds. We may discuss here a few illustrations of the over-simplification of the problems of Yoga to show not only how it creates all kinds of misconceptions about this sacred science but also makes people adopt methods which cannot by their very nature lead to the desired result.

A great deal of interest has been aroused in the West about Yoga during the last two or three decades. As a result of this many books have been written about Yoga and many people, especially Indians, have set themselves up as Yogis and teachers of the Yogic Science. It is all a question of demand and supply. Whenever there is a demand for anything there will be people who will supply it whether the article supplied is genuine or spurious. A large number of books are being published these days on various aspects of Yoga and from these books one can get some idea of the kind of knowledge which is being generally palmed off as Yoga in the West by people who either do not themselves know what Yoga is or pass on these trivial practices under the high-sounding title of Yoga to exploit the public. It is not that this kind of stuff deal-

ing mostly with Asanas and breathing exercises does not help people to lead a more sane and healthy life, but it is not Yoga and it vulgarizes the ideals and realities of the yogic life. Asana and Pranayama are parts of Raja Yoga but they are used merely for clearing the ground for tackling the mind where Yoga really begins.

Another kind of gross over-simplification which we find with regard to the technique of Yoga is that which equates yogic techniques with the techniques of psycho-analysis. This is very common and some authors have gone to the length of practically basing the technique of yoga on psycho-analysis. Let us go into this problem and see where the fallacy lies. This psycho-analysis technique of Yoga is based upon the idea that the object of Yoga is attained by bringing about quiescence or a state of perfect stillness of the mind by letting the thoughts which lie suppressed in the sub-conscious mind come out gradually until the store is exhausted and the mind becomes empty. And in this emptiness or vacuum produced in the mind the Reality is supposed to be revealed. This idea is obviously erroneous and based on a misconception of the nature of the sub-conscious mind. It is true that when the mind is sought to be emptied at the time of meditation, suppressed thoughts and desires of the sub-conscious mind do tend to rush into the comparatively empty mind and this accounts for the wandering and filling of the mind with all kinds of irrelevant ideas. It is also true that the release of such thoughts reduces the pressure on the mind. But this by itself cannot bring about *Chitta-vritti-nirodha* or the complete inhibition of the modifications of the mind which is required in Yoga. This is so because the sub-conscious mind is a vast storehouse of unfathomable depths containing the impressions or *samskaras* of all our previous evolutionary stages. And

so if this process of merely emptying it is encouraged and continued it will go on interminably and then start bringing up atavistic tendencies and instinctive tendencies of our savage and animal stages. These tendencies or impressions lie deeply buried in our sub-conscious mind and are sometimes brought up to the surface when in a state of frenzy or uncontrollable excitement we start indulging in inhuman acts or show other tendencies of the animal stage. All these things of the remote past have passed into the deepest levels of the sub-conscious mind and are not meant to be brought up again. They belong to our past evolution.

The real field and purpose of the psycho-analytic technique is to remove the distortions and abnormalities which are related to our advanced human stage. It is these distortions and complexes which cause various kinds of pressures in our psyche that have to be eliminated in order to restore its healthy condition. This is done in psycho-analysis by its well-known technique which is of a positive character. In this the abnormalities are resolved naturally and the psyche becomes free from them; but since there is a positive state of mind to replace the negative it does not lead to the production of a vacuum which can be filled up only by the thoughts and desires derived from increasingly lower levels of the sub-conscious mind. It is this fallacy which is responsible for reducing the yogic technique to the level of psycho-analysis and has made some writers in the West confuse yoga with psycho-analysis. But the resemblance between yoga and psycho-analysis is only superficial and there is really nothing in common between the two.

As this subject is important I would like to go a little deeper into it. If we take this simile of producing a mental vacuum and examine it a little further we shall see that there can be no vacuum produced in the mind as long as it is open at the lower end towards the sub-conscious levels. You cannot produce an ordinary vacuum in any vessel which is in communication with an inexhaustible source of gas or atmosphere. So the idea that by letting the sub-conscious mind empty itself into the conscious mind

in a relaxed condition it is possible to arrive at a stage when the mind becomes empty, free of modifications, is untenable; it is also contrary to experiences obtained in the practice of Yoga. The mind cannot by its very nature reach a state of vacuum in this manner. In order to produce a vacuum in a vessel all sources of communication with the vessel must be closed tight and then only is it possible to get air from any source or direction we want by opening the corresponding valve or door. This is why in yogic meditation all sources of communication with the mind are cut off before Samadhi can be practised successfully. But you cannot cut off the sub-conscious mind from the conscious as you do in the case of a physical vessel by plugging a hole. The mind is not made that way and it cannot be divided into water-tight compartments by mental plugs. The only way in which the mind can be cut off from all kinds of sources is by concentration. When we concentrate intensely on anything we cut off the mind from everything else. There is no other way of producing the metaphorical vacuum referred to above. When the mind is concentrated successfully on any object it is closed completely on all sides except one and that is its own centre, the Centre of Consciousness. But a valve, as it were, closes this Centre and cuts off the super-conscious levels of the mind which lie beyond the Centre on the other side. What blocks this Centre? Of course, the object held in the mind on which the mind is concentrated. If this object which is called the seed of *samprajnata samadhi* is dropped, two things happen simultaneously: (1) A real mental vacuum is produced in the mind, for it now really contains nothing at all, as the only object on which it was concentrated has also disappeared; (2) the passage to the super-conscious now becomes open, for it was the object of *pratyaya* which was closing this passage. So consciousness slips through this point, or centre connecting the conscious and the super-conscious levels of the mind and emerges into the next higher plane or level; or one can say the super-conscious enters the mind through the centre. This is the technique of *asamprajnata samadhi*.

Now, why cannot *asamprajnata samadhi*

be practised without first practising *sampraj-nata samadhi*? Or to put it in non-technical terms, why is it not possible to drop the last object or image held in the mind at the time of meditation in an ordinary manner and produce the mental vacuum referred to? The answer has been given above. Because there is not in ordinary meditation that degree of concentration which is required to close the mind tight against all entrances except its own centre. It is only in *sampraj-nata samadhi* that this degree of concentration can be achieved. A state of mind in which it is allowed to remain in a relaxed condition so that the sub-conscious thoughts and desires can emerge and discharge themselves into it is the very opposite of this concentrated condition and should by its very nature fail to produce that vacuum of utter stillness which is needed for the hidden reality to reveal itself. That is why yogic technique is not a technique of relaxation but a technique of the utmost concentration based on will power.

But the student should not get the idea from what has been said above that Samadhi is a state of struggle and tension, in which the will tries to force concentration of the mind and the mind tries to resist this imposition of the will. That would give an entirely wrong impression about the nature of Samadhi. We should know that real exertion of spiritual will power is not a process involving tension or struggle at all. It is quiet, confident, utterly in peace, without struggle. People who have real power of spiritual will are not the people who are struggling with their mind or emotions. In fact, this state shows not the presence of spiritual will power but its absence. When the Atma, the Inner Ruler who is the source of spiritual will, is in command everything in us falls into line and submits to His will just as when a King commands everyone obeys implicitly and immediately. So the state of concentration produced in Samadhi being the result of true will power is quite free from tensions and struggles, pressures and resistances. All these pressures have already been eliminated in the practice of the previous techniques of yoga, *yama*, *niyama* etc.

Another kind of over-simplification is found in the technique in which we start with becoming aware of our mind in order to discover what is hidden behind the mind. This ignores important factors which are actually involved in the problem and which prevent the aspirant from achieving his object. The technique appears quite attractive because it gives the impression that one can attain the highest prize of human achievement by his own efforts in a very simple manner without any external aid.

This technique starts with and is based on developing the awareness of our mind, its activities, its tendencies, its prejudices, predilections, and biases which are due to previous conditioning. It is claimed that when we become *really aware* of these, they begin to dissolve gradually, one after another, and ultimately the mind becomes free from all the tendencies which condition it, assumes the state which is quite free from any kind of modifications and which may be called pure Consciousness or Reality. The awareness which brings about this remarkable result is, of course, not ordinary awareness which we exercise when we do ordinary introspection. It is a special kind of awareness in which the mind is free from the pressures and biases generated by past conditioning. It is this particular type of awareness alone which is supposed to have the solvent property of dissolving all the encumbrances which load the mind and bringing about awareness of Reality.

The first question we may ask is: who becomes aware? Or to put it more clearly, to what does this faculty of being aware belong? Is it the mind? Does the mind become aware of itself? Here is the first gap in the line of reasoning on which the method is based. The mind has no capacity in itself to become aware. It shines with the light of Buddhi and it is the illumination of Buddhi which enables it to perceive anything or become aware of anything. Obviously, therefore, Buddhi is an indispensable factor in the process. And if the process depends upon Buddhi, the condition in which Buddhi is functioning will determine the result of this trying to become aware of our mind, and its tendencies, activities, etc.

Now, we know that Buddhi or intuition is extremely sensitive to the condition of the medium through which it works, namely, the mind. The mind can carry out its ordinary operations even in an impure, disharmonised and disturbed condition but when it comes to the question of seeing the significance of things, of seeing its own faults, its biases, its distortions and the illusions of life in which it is involved, it is helpless unless the pure light of Buddhi, coming through a pure and harmonised vehicle, is able to filter down into the mind. We know very well how people whose minds have become debased with evil tendencies and activities are utterly incapable of seeing anything wrong in their own life and actions although these aberrations are of a gross character and others can see these things clearly.

What does this show? That, even for starting this process of observing our mind we need a reasonably controlled, pure and harmonized mind through which at least some Buddhist illumination can come. Is the mind of the ordinary man in such a condition? If not, how can he then even begin this work, to say nothing of completing it successfully? He must have a reasonably pure, harmonized, tranquil and controlled mind before the process can be begun. If this is inescapable then how can this kind of mind be acquired? 'By becoming aware of the mind's tendencies' reply the staunch supporters of this philosophy and technique. Don't we see that this is arguing in a circle? Illumination from Buddhi can come only when the mind is pure, harmonized and tranquil, and the mind can be made pure, harmonized and tranquil only when it is illuminated by the light of pure Buddhi.

So how are we to bring about this minimum purity, etc., which is required even for initiating the process of becoming aware of our mind's aberrations? This our new philosophy does not care to answer. But every one can see that this minimum purity, tranquillity, etc., can be achieved by a simple process of disciplining the mind. Thousands of people have done it and any one can do it now if he makes the effort in earnest. This preliminary discipline does not require

being aware of our mind's condition but simply carrying out certain instructions which regulate the activities of the mind, emotions and desires and of course actions. And so every one can begin this work and carry it out to a successful end whenever he wants and wherever he stands. And when the mind has been purified and tranquillized in this manner and the light of pure Buddhi has begun to shine through it, it acquires the capacity to observe its own aberrations. It is only then that the technique of awareness can be utilized as it is utilized in all systems of spiritual culture and yoga. This technique of becoming aware of our mind is not an exclusive feature of this new philosophy. It is an essential feature of every system of spiritual culture which has been practised since times immemorial. How otherwise can people who start as ordinary human beings with all human weaknesses transform themselves into saints? The mind of a real saint is so alert, so discriminative, so sensitive that the slightest ripple of an undesirable tendency in it is noticed immediately and eliminated completely and instantaneously. And this sensitiveness and alertness is developed by constant and prolonged self-discipline. So we see that what is wrong with this philosophy is not the inclusion of 'awareness' in its technique of Self-discipline, without which the technique of awareness cannot be practised. As to the fear of self-discipline conditioning the mind, it is for the aspirant to judge whether the right kind of self-discipline conditions an unconditioned mind or deconditions a mind conditioned by all kinds of undesirable tendencies which we generally find in human beings. What has been said above is enough to answer that question also.

Those who seriously try to use these apparently easy and simple methods soon discover that they involve really the whole technique of yoga. If one is trying to climb a mountain in order to reach its summit and takes a short cut, according to science he will have to spend the same amount of energy. If he wants to gain in time he must spend energy at a faster rate. Nature does not give anything for nothing.



## YOGA AS MEDITATION

By  
Prof. EKNATH EASWARAN

“MAYBE my ‘block’ is not being able to imagine,” writes a friend from America, “a life without welcoming what the senses bring, which seems to be all knowledge, all pleasure, all joy. Even my concept of what the Professor wrote came through the sense of sight. If I listen to him and learn, the sense of sound and other senses, too subtle to name, will convey instant knowledge, fragmentary though it may seem. When my mind and senses are stilled, I’m a perfect blank!”

Perhaps the best way in which I can answer this question is by trying to explain what actually happens in meditation. I am here using the term *meditation* as a working equivalent for *yoga*, which is derived from the Sanskrit root *yuj* (to unite) from which comes the English word *yoke* also. Thus meditation is neither cult nor dogma, but a practical method, a dynamic process, for uniting the finite with the infinite, the human with the divine.

I would like to call meditation the supreme scientific experiment we can all perform in the laboratory of our own mind for attaining this perfect union. As in every scientific experiment, we start with a hypothesis which is to be verified under carefully controlled conditions in this laboratory. It is this personal verification that Jesus refers to when he declares: “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Let me here try to dispel two common misconceptions in the modern world on the subject of meditation. There are some who believe that meditation means making the mind a blank—a condition which could be much more easily achieved by falling sound asleep. What really happens in deep meditation is that we are able to rise above physical consciousness by disidentifying our-

selves with the body, senses and mind *with out losing our awareness or consciousness.*

The second misconception, though not as drastic as the first, may be said to be more wide-spread in the West even among people genuinely interested in the spiritual life. For them meditation is a succession of thoughts or an association of ideas about a central theme, while the mind continues to be “many-pointed”. Patanjali, the great teacher of yoga in ancient India, would say that the purpose of meditation is to make the mind “one-pointed” so that we may be able to harness all our vital forces and direct them in one single direction.

Now for the hypothesis for verifying which we are undertaking this supreme scientific experiment! It is: “Tat Twam Asi” or “That Thou Art.” In the memorable words of Meister Eckhart. “The seed of God is in us. Given an intelligent and hard-working farmer, it will thrive and grow up to God, whose seed it is, and accordingly its fruit will be God-nature. Pear seeds grow into pear trees, nut seeds into nut trees, and God seed into God.”

According to the Upanishads—India’s pure spring of the Perennial Philosophy—this seed of God, called *Atman* in Sanskrit, is encased in a number of sheaths or coats: physical, vital, mental, intellectual and causal. The outermost of these is the physical coat or the body, and almost all of us spend our life in the honest belief that we are this body. But there are rare moments when, for example under the inspiring impact of great literature or music or art or Nature’s loveliness, we are able to shed the outer coats for the time being and identify ourselves with the mind and intellect. The mystic sheds his mental and intellectual coats also in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven within by identifying himself with the *Atman*.

When we are told in yoga psychology that one coat is interior to another, it means that the former is more subtle and pervasive than the latter. The classic example given is of ice, water and steam. A piece of ice, when it melts, occupies more space as water which, when it boils, occupies much more space as steam. Thus water is said to be more subtle than ice, and steam much more subtle than water. When we learn to doff one coat after another through the practice of meditation, we experience a gradual expansion of consciousness, because the mind can travel far beyond the reach of the physical body, and the intellect can travel far beyond the reach of the mind. The supreme climax comes when we shed all these coats and attain Cosmic Consciousness by identifying ourselves with the Atman.

This higher state of consciousness may be described as a super-conscious mode of knowing in which the knower and the known become one. In this infinite mode of knowing, knowledge is received direct without the use of the senses, the mind and the intellect. The Buddha says, "It is by means of tranquillity of mind that you are able to transmute this false mind of death and rebirth into the clear intuitive mind and, by so doing, to realize the primal and enlightening Essence of Mind."

Now let us see what the world looks like to one who has become aware of the Atman, the Christ within. "You never enjoy the world aright," says Thomas Traherne, "till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens and crowned with the stars; and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and kings in sceptres, you can never enjoy the world."

This is how the world will appear to you and me when the doors of our perception have been cleansed, to use William Blake's expressive phrase. The stilling of the senses, mind and intellect in meditation is a process of sanctifying and not of stultifying the

senses. Listen to the beautiful invocation from the Upanishads of the sages of ancient India :

"May quietness descend upon my limbs,  
My speech, my breath, my eyes, my  
ears;  
May all my senses wax clear and strong.  
May Brahman show himself unto me."

In the Bhagavad Gita Krishna warns us that we have three mortal enemies in our own minds: lust, fear and anger. By lust is meant the craving for selfish satisfaction, at the expense of everyone else, if necessary, which is called *tanha* or thirst by the Buddha. It is these terrible three—lust, fear and anger—which are responsible for defiling the doors of our perception by misrepresenting us to ourselves as separate fragments in a world of innumerable separate fragments.

We cannot escape this distorted view of Reality as long as we are driven by the craving for personal pleasure, personal profit, personal prestige or personal power. We cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time, or, as Sri Ramakrishna would put it, Rama and Kama cannot live together. If we can eliminate this selfish craving we can simultaneously eliminate fear and anger also.

I am what my deep driving desire is, point out the ancient sages. As my deep driving desire is, so is my will. As my will is, so is my deed. As my deed is, so is my destiny.

It is this deep driving desire that forms our capital of vital energy in life, which, when invested, may be called love. If we try to use this capital in going after personal pleasures or personal profit, personal prestige or personal power, it will lead us, sooner or later, to increasing frustration instead of fulfilment. As soon as we make this discovery for ourselves, this feverish pursuit of the finite has served its purpose by making us understand, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that our deep driving need is for God, for God only, and nothing but God. As St. Augustine eloquently says, "Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee."

Through the practice of meditation we can develop the precious capacity to recall our vital capital—the capacity to love—from the numerous destructive enterprises in which it has been recklessly scattered, to recollect and reinvest it in the most creative, most challenging and most inspiring adventure of realizing God in the depths of our consciousness. In the words of the Bhagavad Gita.

“So, with his heart serene and fearless,  
Firm in the vow of renunciation,  
Holding the mind from its restless  
roaming,  
Now let him struggle to reach my  
oneness,  
Ever-absorbed, his eyes on Me always.  
His prize, his purpose.”

It is this most intense and ceaseless longing for God that cleanses the doors of our perception and raises us into a higher state of consciousness, above the senses, above the mind, above the intellect and above the ego. Without this unification of our capacity to desire, of our limitless capacity to love, we cannot even dream of knowing God. As *The Cloud Of Unknowing* says, in words of sweet simplicity, “By love may He be gotten and holden, but by thought never.”

The great mystics of all religions are agreed that God cannot help revealing Himself to us in the depths of our consciousness if we learn to love Him “with all our heart and all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind.” St. John of the Cross tells us, “We shall observe that the principal characteristic of contemplation, on account of which it is here called a ladder, is that it is the science of love. This, as we have said, is an infused and loving knowledge of God, which enlightens the soul and at the same time enkindles it with love, until it is raised up step by step, even unto God its Creator. For it is love alone that unites and joins the soul with God.”

Through the practice of meditation we can transform ourselves from the petty state of loving this or loving that to the perfect state of being love itself, in which the lover and the beloved are one, and sing with the Sufi Saint Ansari of Herat :

“A beggar, Lord, I ask of Thee  
More than a thousand kings could ask.  
Each one wants something, which he  
asks of Thee.  
I come to ask Thee to give me Thyself.”

May He move us to ask Him for Himself, and may He give Himself to us to fulfil our hearts' longing.

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“Meditation is your true nature. You call it meditation now, because there are other thoughts distracting you. When these thoughts are dispelled, you remain alone—that is, in the state of meditation free from thoughts; and that is your real nature, which you are now trying to gain by keeping away other thoughts. Such keeping away of other thoughts is now called meditation. But when the practice becomes firm, the real nature shows itself as true meditation.” — SRI RAMANA.

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## THE MEANING OF YOGA IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA

By  
Prof. G. V. KULKARNI

THE Sanskrit word *yoga* is derived from the root *yuj* meaning to unite or join. It is etymologically related to the English word 'yoke'. Yoga should, therefore, mean the state of realised Union with the Divine. It is indeed used in this sense in a number of places in the Gita, for instance in Chapter VI, verse 4: "When a man is attached neither to sense objects nor to actions but has renounced all *sankalpa* (mental pre-occupation) he is said to have attained Yoga."

It is also used to mean religion or right doctrine as an approach to Union, a sense in which it comes very near to the meaning of dharma. For instance, in the first three verses of Chapter IV, Sri Krishna speaks of it as that imperishable secret which he had proclaimed to the ancient royal Sages, which had been lost "through long lapse of time" and which he was now expounding anew to Arjuna.

A third meaning is a path to Union, not any one specific path but any path, much as the word *marga* is used to-day. For instance, in the colophon to each chapter the Gita is referred to as a *Yoga Shastra*, that is a text-book of yoga, while that particular chapter is referred to as some specific yoga or approach to Union. Even the first chapter, describing the dejection of Arjuna, is referred to as a yoga, since an emotional upheaval and questioning of one's dharma, such as Arjuna underwent, can also be a means of approach to God.

However, 'yoga' is also used in the Gita to denote a specific type of path, and this is the fourth use of the word that we have to note. In the first five chapters it is used to denote the path of action, what to-day would be called 'karma marga'. In Chap-

ter II, having instructed Arjuna in pure advaitic doctrine which he calls 'the wisdom of Sankhya', Krishna continues: "Hear now the wisdom of Yoga,"<sup>1</sup> and proceeds to describe the path of dispassionate activity. At the beginning of Chapter III Arjuna asks which is better, the path of Knowledge (Sankhya) or the path of Action; and again at the beginning of Chapter V, he asks the same question about the path of renunciation and that of action. In both cases 'yoga' is used to mean 'action' or 'a path of dispassionate activity'; and in both chapters Arjuna (who, it must be remembered, is a Kshatriya and a married man) is exhorted to follow the path of action by fighting a battle which, if victorious will make him joint ruler of a kingdom, but to fight it dispassionately as a duty, without craving for victory or dread of defeat.

It comes rather as a surprise, then, to see the term *yoga* used in Chapter VI, verse 10 and following, much as it would be to-day, for a path in which a man under a vow of celibacy sits in an asana in a solitary place, concentrating his mind in meditation. Later in the chapter, Krishna speaks rather of the achievement of the yogi than of the means used in achieving it, but enough has been said in these few verses to show that what he is describing is not the path of dispassionate activity to which he has hitherto been urging Arjuna.

Thus, it will be seen that the term 'yoga' is used in various senses in the Gita. However, there is one quality which seems to run through all uses of it. That is *samatva* which can be rendered 'equanimity' or 'equal-mindedness' or 'seeing all things with an equal eye', whether friend or enemy, suc-

<sup>1</sup> II. 39.

cess or failure. In Chapter II samatva is actually defined as being yoga.<sup>2</sup> Yoga is elsewhere defined as the wisdom which, if rightly grasped, will free one from the bondage of action.<sup>3</sup>

One of the most surprising definitions is when yoga is spoken of as 'skill in action'.<sup>4</sup> This obviously means more than mere physical dexterity. It means the sort of dispassionate, harmonious action which meets the needs of the occasion while creating no attachment and therefore no sin and no new vasana, leaving the actor unstained. In the same chapter an ideal yogi (*Sthithaprajna*) is described, and his main characteristic is equanimity. In other chapters also the ideal yogi is described, notably in Chapters V, VI, XII, XVII and XVIII, and in every case emphasis is laid on this quality of equal-mindedness. In Chapter VI Arjuna refers to Krishna's teaching as 'This yoga of equanimity.'<sup>5</sup>

This equal-mindedness involves accepting alike whatever life may bring; pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat.<sup>6</sup> It involves being free from craving. It involves equal consideration for all, for one's friend and enemy, for a learned Brahmin, an outcaste and a dog.<sup>7</sup> This does not mean treating them all alike, giving meat to a cow and grass to a dog, waiting on a servant or giving commands to a superior, entrusting valuables to a thief or suspecting a friend. It does not involve stultifying oneself by abjuring one's critical faculty. What it implies is regarding each one alike as a manifestation of the One Self, entitled as such to like consideration.<sup>8</sup> The profound basis for it is seeing the whole world in one's Self and one's Self in the whole world.<sup>9</sup> Therefore it implies abiding always in one's Self and being immersed in the bliss of it.<sup>10</sup> In other words, it means transcending phenomenal existence and being established in Brahman. That is to say that samatva, as taught in the Gita, goes far beyond the realm of outer action and involves making one's life a conscious expression of the One Self.

All the yogas mentioned in the Gita are variants of this fundamental quality. When the term 'yoga' is applied to action, that is to dispassionate performance of one's duty without consideration of success or failure and without regarding oneself as the doer, the quality of samatva refers rather to the will. With the path of Knowledge it refers rather to understanding; with the yoga of Divine Love to the emotions; with the method of concentration, to which the term 'yoga' is most often applied nowadays, to the mind. These are various approaches suited to people of different temperaments,<sup>11</sup> but they are not mutually exclusive. The Gita, through its varied uses of the term 'yoga' aims at harmonisation of will, intellect and emotion in a completely integrated personality.

The Gita is not a dry exposition of philosophy; it is animated by the warmth of Divine Love. Its setting is not only one of war but also of this all-pervading, all-penetrating Love. It is essentially a song, a *gita* and again and again it reiterates the supreme value of love. It reiterates that yoga must be animated by intense, single-minded love and devotion to God.

"Even among yogis, he who devoutly worships Me with his mind fixed on Me is regarded by Me as the best."<sup>12</sup>

The final message of the Gita is thus the message of equal-mindedness towards the world based on complete Love and total surrender to God.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>2</sup> II, 48.

<sup>3</sup> II, 39.

<sup>4</sup> II, 50.

<sup>5</sup> VI, 33.

<sup>6</sup> II, 38; II, 56-57; VI, 7.

<sup>7</sup> V, 18; VI, 9.

<sup>8</sup> There is an article explaining this by P. C. Goyal in *The Mountain Path* of January 1965, (Editor).

<sup>9</sup> V, 35; VI, 29.

<sup>10</sup> V, 21; 11, 55; V, 24.

<sup>11</sup> VI, 47.

<sup>12</sup> XVIII, 66.

## IN QUEST OF YOGA

By  
SWAMI SHARADANANDA

THE scriptures say that yama and niyama, the control of behaviour and character, are the foundation on which the edifice of yoga is to be built. I decided to start with ahimsa, satya and brahmacharya, harmlessness, truth and continence. My beloved guru, Sri Swami Sivananda, has written in his books that sirshasana and siddhasana are the best for continence. One who can sit in siddhasana for three hours attains *asana jaya*, while one who can do sirshasana for three hours awakens his kundalini shakti, so that his *virya* (sexual virility) is converted into *ojas* (spiritual force).

I immediately started practising. Day and night I dreamed of nothing but converting virya into ojas and of the joy of awakening kundalini. My talk and reading was of nothing but how to convert virya into ojas, how to awaken kundalini, how to become *dwandwatheetha* (indifferent to heat and cold, good and bad, pain and pleasure). I was living in a strange world of my own, fully convinced that such practices alone could make a yogi and a *jivanmukta* of me. I imagined that mere physical attainment on these lines would automatically produce the spiritual results. The mere thought thrilled me. The desire to master the senses was so strong that I practised continually. I felt that there was nothing in the three worlds that could tempt or distract me from my practice.

The mere suggestion that anything was helpful or harmful to Sadhana was enough to make me adopt or renounce it. I had no very bad habits, but on hearing that they were, to a greater or less extent, obstacles to sadhana, I gave up tea, coffee, sugar, salt, chillies and sour food without a moment's hesitation. I do not say all this out of boastfulness but to show with what strong determination I started and yet how quickly it cooled down, so as to warn the reader to

take stock of himself very carefully before embarking on yogic practices.

*The author here continues with a detailed description of the very rigorous austerities that he practised and of the very slight results that accrued, and that too of a psychic, not a spiritual nature. Incidentally, his practices included the head-stand, which can cause irreparable physical and mental damage owing to the excessive pressure of blood on the brain. He then continues:*

At this stage I wrote to my Guruji and asked him why my Kundalini had not arisen although I was doing three hours sirshasana daily. My Guru wrote back calling me a fool and advising me not to do sirshasana for more than five minutes and to change my sadhana to introspection. I was very disappointed and wondered, if that was yoga, why people wrote differently in books about it.

So much for sirshasana. Now let me come to siddhasana. I had learnt to hold this for six hours continuously, but it had neither brought mind control nor enabled me to withstand heat and cold. Nevertheless, all this practice had developed my will power and dispassion and thereby prepared me to face real spiritual sadhana, that is the effort to eliminate all desires and become humble and ego-free. Obviously, such an ego-free state means either identifying oneself with the Universal Self or seeing the whole universe within oneself. I was now in quest of real spirituality, not mere psychic powers. A sadhaka can advance spiritually only in so far as his *vairagya* or equal-mindedness grows and he becomes more humble. For this, all desires must be destroyed, and even the ego itself. I turned towards this kind of sadhana by means of *vichara*, that is Self-enquiry.

I settled down in Gangotri and stayed there four years doing Sadhana. Apart from

Self-enquiry, I also used to meditate on the various virtues and try to acquire them. Another of my disciplines was to try to see God in all. At first I found this very difficult, but I thought out a method that proved very helpful. There was a certain relative for whom I had great love and admiration in my earlier days, before taking up sadhana, for whom I would have done anything and whom I would have forgiven anything. So I used to visualise him in each person I had to deal with. If I was irritated by any one I used to consider that it was he who was vexing me in this form. And if I felt reluctant to serve any one I used to see him as the person requiring service. To a large extent it helped.

Another obstacle was the desire for tasty things to eat. In order to overcome that I decided never to eat alone; instead I used to prepare enough food for the other sadhus who were living together with me to share. Although there were only seven of us, this meant a good deal more work and expense for me and prevented me eating elaborate or expensive things. Then too there were the comments made by my sadhu-friends to restrain me. They used to say that I was unfit to live in this solitude if I was so fond of eating; and this sort of remark uprooted the desire for tasty food from my heart.

The scriptures say that fearlessness is a sign of egolessness, so to test myself for this I went to live at a place called Cheedvasa which is quite uninhabited. It is approached by a mountain path; the nearest village is about twenty miles away; and during winter it is inaccessible, the path being buried in five or six feet of snow. The first few weeks were terrible. The mind was urging me to leave and all sorts of ideas and fears used to present themselves before me in mental pictures. But I was adamant. This sort of solitude is quite different from shutting yourself up in a room in your house. It is variety that the mind craves; and in your house you know that it can have variety if

you choose to go out; but here in winter even if you go out there is nothing new to see, only the same desolate snow. That is why in ancient times, spiritual aspirants retired to desert places, like the Christian 'Desert Fathers' in the Egyptian and Syrian deserts. There comes a time when you have no more desire to see, no hope that anything new will turn up for you to see; so your sight turns inwards in its search for something new to see. It is the same also with your senses of touch, smell, taste and hearing; they too turn inwards for want of any new outer stimulant. This, I believe, is the real pratyahara state which books on yoga describe. Once it starts it can go on for months, until winter ends and a new stirring in nature begins with the spring, or until some one arrives to interrupt your state.

One has to be well prepared and well trained before attempting such solitude. Some one who could not stand the strain might well go mad or commit suicide. All the vasanas rise up from the heart and give you a terrible shaking at first, making your stay there very difficult. But if you do not give in to them they quieten down and you are pervaded with universal love for all beings. One evening I was standing outside my hut when I suddenly saw a huge black panther strolling leisurely towards me, about twenty-five feet away. I saw it before it noticed me; then we stood and gazed at each other for about a minute, after which it coolly turned and went back the way it had come, while I went into my hut. I felt absolutely no fear. Actually I had an impulse to fetch some chapaties from my hut to offer it, but it had already gone. This was the first time I had even seen a wild animal in its natural surroundings and it was a fine test of my fearlessness.

For any who can stand the strain of it, such solitude is an excellent training for seeing what is God and what is ego, what hidden desires there are in them and how to identify themselves with the Universal Self.

## THE KNOW-HOW OF YOGIC BREATHING

By  
Prof. K. S. JOSHI

Professor Joshi, Head of the Department of Yogic Studies, Saugor University, has taught yogic breathing for many years and assures us that there is no danger in it if practised as here prescribed, but the prescription should not be exceeded and especially the pause or kumbhaka should not be extended further.

WE shall, for the purpose of this article, use the phrase "yogic breathing" as an equivalent of the Sanskrit word "*pranayama*", which seems to have come to enjoy a very important place in yoga literature. The word "*prana*" is perhaps as old as the word "yoga" itself, but the elaborate technique concerning its control, which forms a part of the eight-fold system of yoga, seems to be of a later origin. Yogic breathing has often been very highly talked about and the marvellous phenomena which are supposed to take place as a result of its intense and prolonged practice, have been acknowledged at several places in the yoga texts.

The word *pranayama* is composed of two parts, namely *prana* and *ayama*. The latter is a noun form derived from the root *yama* meaning 'to make silent'. Yogic breathing thus means a process by which *prana* is made silent. The word *prana* seems to have been in use in the Sanskrit language to mean two different things, namely : (i) the life force or the principle of life and, (ii) the air (*vayu*) which flows in the body. Perhaps there is no fundamental difference between these two meanings, because the various forms of air, called the *vayus* are themselves looked upon, sometimes, as being basic to any life activity. So far as yogic breathing is concerned, the word 'prana' must be taken to mean the air that we inhale and exhale, so that yogic breathing can be defined, for all practical purposes, as a process of making the breath silent.

It would be important to note the idea underlying the notion of silencing the breath. As our ancients would rightly have

us believe, breathing has an intimate relation with the working of the mind, that is to say, if we succeed in making the breath silent, the mind becomes silent too. It is indeed an experience of those who practice yogic breathing for a sufficiently long time, that the mind becomes silent and passive thereby.

Patanjali, the well-known author of the *Yoga Sutras* has defined yogic breathing in terms of the cessation or stoppage of the acts of inhalation and exhalation.

Patanjali's definition of yogic breathing seems to imply, as shown by his commentator Vyasa, that yogic breathing is not only deep breathing, but also is an act in which the movement of breath is stopped completely, at least temporarily. In fact, our normal breathing always includes a state of pause, although just for a fraction of a second. Normally, we respire about fifteen times every minute. This means that each normal respiration is completed in nearly four seconds, including inhalation, exhalation and a state of rest.

These three acts are also included in yogic breathing, for all practical purposes. But the emphasis there is not on inhalation or exhalation but rather on the state of pause, which is characterized by a stoppage of the movement of air to or from the lungs. The state of pause can be achieved in two different ways, first by making a deep inhalation and then not allowing an exhalation to happen immediately, by holding the air inside the lungs. Secondly, the state of pause may be produced by holding the breath out after making a deep exhalation, and not allowing the air to enter the lungs immediately.



The state of pause is called *kumbhaka* in yoga terminology. This word indicates the fact that during that state, the air does not move either in or out, so far as the lungs are concerned.

Both the varieties of yogic breathing mentioned above are accompanied by the acts of inhalation and exhalation. The only difference between the two is with regard to the order in which these stages of breathing are arranged. For example, in the first variety described above, the state of pause is preceded by inhalation and is followed by exhalation. In the second variety, this order of events is reversed and the state of pause is made to follow an act of exhalation. There is a third kind of yogic breathing which is irrespective of inhalation or exhalation. This is called *Kevala-Kumbhaka*, in which the state of pause just happens at any moment without any regard to inhalation or exhalation. The first two varieties of yogic breathing are to be practised till the third kind comes into being. It is this third variety that really and truly constitutes the meaning of the term 'yogic breathing'. It is a state in which the process of breathing comes to a standstill, together with the process of thought and desire. It is indeed a state of complete merger of the breath and the mind, which is characterized by deep silence and passivity.

A steady sitting posture is required to be assumed before one actually starts practising yogic breathing. *Swastikasana* is found by many to be a suitable posture for this purpose.

The procedure involved is fairly simple. One of the legs, say the left, is folded at the knee and its heel is set at the base of the right thigh, beyond the external genitals. The right leg is then similarly folded and its heel is set (from above the left one) at the base of the left thigh. The toes of both the feet are thrust in between the opposite thigh and calf. The ankles should not come one over the other. Both the knees are placed well on the ground. The head, neck and the back are held erect. There is another posture which is much favoured by

the advanced students of yoga and is called, on that account *siddhasana*. In it, the left heel is set against the soft portion between the anus and the genitals, and the right heel is placed above the left one and is set against the pubic bone, the genital organs being kept well adjusted between the two heels (if it is a male who is attempting the posture). The toes are held in between the opposite thigh and calf. This posture is believed to have a special significance. *Padmasana* is another suitable posture in which the two heels are kept near each other on the opposite thighs.

Yogic breathing is an art which must be developed with care and caution. It is advisable to practise only deep inhalations and exhalations, (without holding the breath) for some months before an individual makes himself ready to start yogic breathing proper. For this, one should first of all see, sitting in a suitable posture, how long it takes him to make a deep exhalation comfortably, after making the lungs full. The time taken by each one of five successive deep exhalations should be noted. Supposing that this is ten seconds, one should start with the practice of what we may call deep breathing in the following manner. Each inhalation should take exactly half the time that is required for each exhalation. This means that an inhalation should take five seconds if the exhalation takes ten seconds. One respiration here is completed in fifteen seconds. This is called one round. Four such rounds should be made on the first day, and that is all. Inhalation and exhalation in each round should take five and ten seconds respectively, making four rounds in a minute.

Five rounds may be made on the second day, six on the third day, and so on, up to ten rounds. When a dose of ten rounds is reached, say after one week, one should observe the following points very carefully. (1) Each inhalation and exhalation must be completed exactly within the specified time (e.g. five and ten seconds respectively). It may happen sometimes that the lungs are either filled or emptied a little before the completion of the required time limit, or it

may even happen that the required act remains unfinished even when the time limit is over. Both these situations must be strictly excluded by adjusting the time for inhalation and exhalation properly, according to one's capacity. There should be no hurry at all to prolong the breaths beyond comfortable limits. (2) In each inhalation, the lungs must become full and in each exhalation they must be emptied to the maximum limit. The acts should not remain incomplete. (3) At no stage should there be any feeling of suffocation or any need to inhale or exhale forcefully to hurry up with the process. (4) A feeling of comfort and control should be experienced all along. (5) The movement of air inward as well as outward must be smooth and uniform. (6) The abdominal muscles should be slightly contracted toward the end of each inhalation, so that the belly is not allowed to be protruded. This causes an increase in the amount of inhaled air as well as in the intra-thoracic pressure. (7) The last round should be performed with equal ease and comfort as the first few rounds.

A deep inhalation performed in the above manner is technically called a *puraka*. *Rechaka* is a yogic term for a corresponding deep exhalation. After achieving equal ease, comfort and completeness over ten successive rounds of *puraka* and *rechaka*, one can safely assume that one has made a good start toward the preparation for yogic breathing. One should then start breathing through alternate nostrils.

For keeping only one nostril open at a time, the other one is required to be closed. This is done with the right hand. The middle finger and the one between it and the thumb, are both folded together on the palm. Now the right nostril can be closed by placing the thumb slightly pressing on it and placing the index finger and the one adjacent to it, together on the bridge of the nose. The left nostril can be closed by pressing it with these two fingers while the thumb is kept on the bridge of the nose. Both the nostrils should be closed while restraining or holding the breath. This should not be accompanied by unnecessary contraction of the facial muscles.

The first *puraka* should be done through the left nostril. This should be followed by a *rechaka* through the right nostril. The next *puraka* should be done through the right nostril, followed by a *rechaka* through the left nostril. The rule here is that the nostril is to be changed for every *rechaka* i.e., after every *puraka*. Each *puraka* (excepting the very first one) should be made through the same nostril that had been used for the preceding *rechaka*. One round will here include two *purakas* and two *rechakas* through alternate nostrils.

When a dose of ten rounds is achieved and practised for over four weeks, one can think of increasing the duration of each round. The ratio of the time taken by *puraka* and *rechaka* would however remain the same, i.e. 1:2. In place of a round of thirty seconds, a round of thirty-six seconds may now be introduced. On the first day, nine out of the ten rounds may be made as before, i.e. taking thirty seconds each. The tenth round (which would include two *purakas* and two *rechakas* like every other round) would take six seconds for *puraka* and twelve seconds for *rechaka* taking in all thirty-six seconds (instead of thirty seconds) for that round. After two days, the last two rounds out of the ten rounds may be made to cover thirty-six seconds each. If there is no feeling of discomfort, the number of rounds of the longer duration may be increased progressively until at last, within a period of three weeks or more, all the ten rounds should be of thirty-six seconds each. This dose should be maintained steady for a few more weeks, and then a next higher duration, say forty-two seconds, for each round may be introduced in the same fashion. This would take about three weeks. The process may be continued until a duration of one minute for each round is achieved. This may take about six months from the start.

It is not always necessary that everybody must start with a duration of thirty seconds per round as stated above. Some persons may be able to take up a round of one minute in the very beginning. One should judge his capacity for deep breathing properly, and should select a suitable duration

for each round accordingly. There should be no haste and no strain. Patience and practice should be the watchwords of an individual who wants to draw the benefits of yogic breathing. Preparation for yogic breathing proper, may be said to be complete when one can very comfortably practise ten rounds of breathing through alternate nostrils, taking one minute for each round. Each respiration would here be completed in thirty seconds, (ten seconds for each inhalation and twenty seconds for each exhalation), making twenty consecutive respirations in ten minutes in all.

After practising this for a couple of months, one can introduce retention of breath (*kumbhaka*) after inhalation. On the first day, *kumbhaka* should be done only in the last round, allowing ten seconds for it. This means that only two *kumbhakas* of ten seconds each should be practised on the first day. In about three weeks time, all the ten rounds would be containing two *kumbhakas* each of ten seconds. This means a total time of a little over thirteen minutes for ten rounds. This may be practised for a couple of months and then the duration of each *kumbhaka* may be raised from ten seconds to fifteen seconds. In about three weeks, all the ten rounds would be containing *kumbhakas* of fifteen seconds duration. This would take a total time of fifteen minutes. This dose is quite sufficient for the purpose of maintaining the health of the body in a prime condition.

Bodily fitness is, however a secondary benefit which accrues from yogic breathing. The main purpose of yogic breathing is the coming into being of what is called *kevala-kumbhaka* which brings with it silence and peace par excellence. For achieving that objective one is required to practise yogic breathing four times every day — once in the

morning and evening, at midnight and at noon. Eighty *kumbhakas* must be practised in each sitting, making a total of three hundred and twenty *kumbhakas* every day. Each *kumbhaka* should be of forty-eight seconds duration. Such a heavy dose is required to be practised over several months or even years.

In yogic breathing, the lungs get filled completely in each inhalation, so that the walls of all the alveoli or the air sacks are stretched fully. Usually the lungs do not expand or contract fully in normal respirations. Yogic breathing thus provides good exercise to the lung tissue itself. During inhalation, the pressure in the thoracic cavity remains at less than atmospheric pressure, whereas during exhalations, this pressure becomes more than atmospheric pressure. In yogic breathing, these situations are made to continue for longer durations. These pressure changes promote blood circulation and render a sort of massage to the heart and to the viscera contained in the abdominal cavity. This effect is much enhanced by the slight contraction of the muscles of the abdominal wall during *puraka*. Yogic breathing can be of immense importance in the prevention of diseases like asthma, and affections of the lungs or the heart. For the normally healthy individual, yogic breathing can be of great help in the maintenance of health.

We shall now consider the utility of yogic breathing from the point of view of yoga. As pointed out earlier, yogis are interested in pranayama mainly for the arousal of *kevala-kumbhaka*. A notion which is often mentioned in this connection is the rising of the *Kundalini*. This is supposed to be a representative of the divine power stored up in human beings.

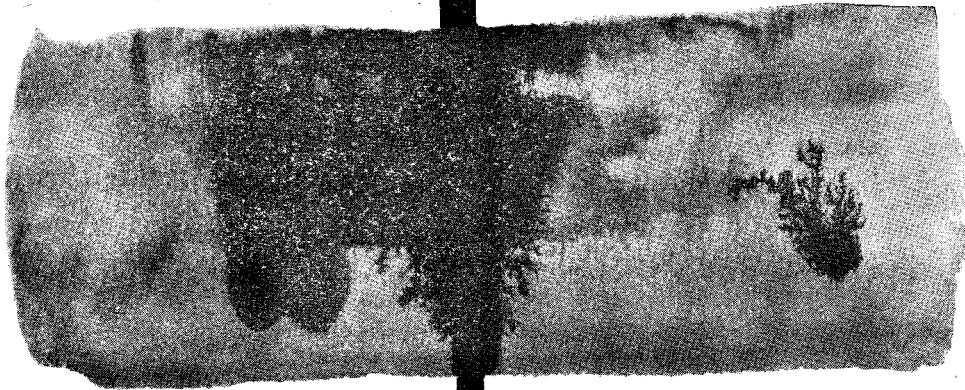
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“There is only one consciousness. If you talk of individual consciousness, you have to concede a Cosmic Consciousness. In your dream you recognised a kingdom and a king and a rule of law to which you bowed. It is the same with what is called Cosmic Consciousness.”

— SRI BHAGAVAN.

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SKYING



A sprout sprouting?  
Why don't you just you?  
Stop making trouble.  
Can we learn from a sprout?  
Just be what we are?

*This is reps repsing.*

rooting

## PATANJALI'S INTERPRETATION OF YOGA

By

Dr. G. C. PANDE

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**Y**OGA is the universal method of spiritual life and the *Yoga-sastra* attempts its self-conscious and systematic delineation. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras contain a classic though particular version of *Yoga-sastra*.<sup>1</sup> The usage of the word Yoga oscillates between its basic general meaning of spiritual method such as in the expressions Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, etc., and the narrower meaning of Patanjala Yoga. It will be argued here that while Patanjali must be given the credit for creating the first extant *scientific* system of Yoga or spiritual practice as such, he erred in parts owing to his peculiar philosophical predilections. Taking for granted a rich variety of spiritual practices, Patanjali defines their universal essence and classifies the practices in an ascending order of subtlety and inwardness. He thus succeeds in adumbrating a truly universal science of spiritual culture. At its highest point, however, where the realm of nature is completely transcended, Patanjali's exposition tends to wobble on account of its Sankhyan orientation.

There are some who believe that spiritual life is, in its nature, a negation of science and system. If the spirit is free and transcendent, how can it be made the object of logical thought? Is not the effectiveness of spiritual means purely subjective and individual, a matter of psychic suggestion dependent on personal associations and socio-cultural symbolism? Or, as an alternative, is not spiritual life simply the unpredictable expression of divine grace? One may even think of spiritual life as simply human value-seeking considered as such, or as any kind of idealistic aspiration and effort.<sup>2</sup> Gene-

rally speaking, considered in the context of much Western or Semitic moral and mystical speculation, the very possibility of yoga as a unique and universal science appears doubtful since such a science presupposes a certain theory of the relation of Mind to Nature and Spirit.

The fact is that if we give unpredictable freedom to man as well as to God no science of any kind, and no philosophy either, would be possible. The very concept of method presupposes the determinateness of events. If man or God could act arbitrarily i.e. wholly unpredictably, it would be futile to expect any order in human life and all human endeavour would be in perpetual jeopardy. Without going further into the philosophical paradox of freedom and order, it may be stated here that ultimately the opposition of spontaneity and determinateness must be resolved in terms of self-determination. Man, God and the natural world must ultimately be united as a single self-determining organism which in its temporal aspect appears as a multiplex causal sequence. On any other supposition, insuperable philosophical difficulties are bound to emerge. What appears at first as a purely physical order indifferent to human aspirations and purpose — so much so that man's moral nature is provoked to revolt

<sup>1</sup>The earliest extant adumbrations of Yoga Sastra are found in the Upanishads (*Katha*, *Mundaka* and *Svetasvatara*) but I have argued elsewhere that these do not represent the *beginning* of yogic science — see my 'Studies in the Origins of Buddhism' (Allahabad, 1957).

<sup>2</sup>It may be recalled how the great modern Indian philosopher, K. C. Bhattacharya declared yoga without *yoga vibhuti* merely idealistic sentiment.

against it and stake a claim for freedom, apparently spurious since it cannot be validated in the court of natural reason — must appear ultimately as a spiritual order arising out of the very nature of the Spirit. This is implicitly recognized in the *Sankhya Karikas* as well as the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali because both of them concede the inevitability of the spiritual goal and make it the destiny of man. Nature and God work so that the human spirit may be liberated.<sup>3</sup> Spiritual life and natural life are both the functionings of the same psyche though in different directions. We must not think that while natural science explains natural events, spiritual life merely transcends science and intelligibility. Spiritual life uses and develops natural science differently. It needs the science of subtle physical, psychic and parapsychic phenomena. Yoga begins with the control of physical behaviour and culminates in self-knowledge. Throughout it requires the application of the will in the light of a systematic theory. Being genuinely scientific its true theory is open-ended and progressive. At a certain point in his development the Yogi necessarily becomes an experimentalist who cannot be adequately guided by existing theory and has to amend it by fresh discovery. That is why despite the amazing achievement of Patanjali it is now possible to see his limitations in the light of later and continuing developments in Yoga.

Patanjali discovers the essence of Yoga in psychic inhibition<sup>4</sup> which includes concentration. Normally the mind constantly functions in response to external and internal stimuli. A stream of consciousness is thus set in motion where a thousand different thoughts flash past in unending array. Certain empirical as well as transcendental conditions underly this course of experience. On the empirical level we have the contacts with physical objects mediated through the senses, the cumulative force of past experiences manifesting itself in predispositions and memories, and the reactive force of past actions. These forces are all empirical in the sense that they are all the products of experience, have a definite origin in time and have an objective status. On the other hand, the

non-discrimination of the self and the non-self is a transcendental illusion and is neither an object nor an effect. It is, however, the necessary ground of natural experience and can be removed only by self-knowledge. In seeking to attain to true freedom, man merely seeks to become aware of his innate and inalienable supernatural status. As a way to freedom, Yoga is thus essentially a way to self-knowledge. This self-knowledge, being innate or eternal is not really produced but merely attained in the temporal order through a manifestation at the psychic level. Since in its priority the psyche or mind is all-reflecting this manifestation is spontaneous as soon as the obscuring factors are removed. The obscuring factors are the distracting empirical forces mentioned above. Normally man's self-consciousness is obscured by his object-consciousness. This produces a restless extrovert stream of awareness. Yoga thus involves a series of inhibitory processes which lead to the abstraction, introversion and concentration of consciousness. From the standpoint of objective forces and its own normal reactions, the mind may thus be said to have been inhibited. It has, however, to be saved from lapsing into inconscience. Only then can supernal wisdom of *Prajna* dawn. The process of Yoga requires the withdrawal of the senses from the objects and their subordination to the mind, the withdrawal of the mind from the senses and its subordination to the individual self and finally the withdrawal of the individual self from its beginningless companion, the mind, and its merger in the universal self.<sup>5</sup> Throughout this process, consciousness becomes increasingly concentrated and spiritually transfigured.

What is the causal process underlying this spiritual transfiguration of the mind? The

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Vyasa and Yoga Sutras* 1.25. ,

<sup>4</sup> *Chitta-Vritti-nirodha*. Some degree of concentration or focus is everpresent in the mind. Yoga arises when a habitually recollected mind (*ekagra-bhumika-chitta*) engages in deep concentration. On the role of cortical inhibition in ordinary psychic and parapsychic phenomena cf. Vasiliev, LL., *Mysterious Phenomena of the Human Psyche*. (Tr. S. Volochova, New York, 1965).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kaviraj, C. N., *Aspects of Indian Thought* (Burdwan, 1966) pp. 115ff.

mind mediates between Nature and Spirit. It has apparently no nature of its own except limitless plasticity and transparency. Just as light, itself remaining invisible, renders objects visible, so mind, instead of presenting itself, presents the objects by assuming their forms. It is through Mind that Nature evolves out of its utter inchoateness into an ordered world but in the process the mind becomes extrovert and the Spirit finds its very means of self-realization obscured and as a result sinks into natural bondage. The senses are channels through which the mind becomes externalized while the discursive agitation and dull incoherence of the mind keep it in a periodic rhythm which helps to produce the sense of a stable and defined world as the proper content of consciousness. In Yoga, the mind must become withdrawn, stilled, pointed and luminous. The senses must become quiescent, the discursive activities of the mind stopped, its sleepy dullness prevented from supervening, and its natural agitative distraction substituted by a one-pointed flow of awareness. All these changes are produced by the inhibiting of the habitual modes of mental functioning by the continued application of the will. This leads the mind to a point where its transparency becomes sufficient to reflect the pure nature of the Spirit. Ignorance and habit 'naturalise' the mind, while counter-habit and illumination spiritualize it.

The will has to operate at various levels — physico-psychic, psycho-physical, psycho-spiritual, spirituo-psychic, and spiritual.<sup>6</sup> The will springs from a certain acceptance and aspiration. This is called *Sraddha*, 'placing the heart on', explained as 'inner lucidity of the mind' (*chetasah samprasadah*). *Sraddha* leads to *virya* or effort. The practice of *yama*, *niyama*, *asanas*, *pranayama*, and *pratyahara*, corresponds to these factors. Aspiration counteracts the force of distracting desire and the resultant effort seeks to inhibit long standing habits, physical and psychic. Moral life arises from spiritual idealism but is in the beginning largely the obedience to certain rules, the cultivation of one set of feelings against another and the resolute effort to abide by them. The

practice of *asanas* is really an effort at effortless poise. Such a poise is a necessary step in acquiring body-unconsciousness. The theory and practice of *pranayama* is a mystery and appears to have undergone a vast development after Patanjali who does not even fully elucidate the nature of *Prana* which is not a distinctive Sankhya category. Patanjali, in fact, thinks of *pranayama* essentially as a preliminary to *dharana* or concentration at some point, although he mentions its illuminative operation (*Prakasavarana Karya*). In its higher development *pranayama* is not so much the willed suspension of breath as an application of *Smriti* or recollection.<sup>7</sup> That is why the Buddhists put it under the practice of *Smriti Prasthanas*.<sup>8</sup> Even the ordinary *pranayama* involving the practice of rhythmic breathing and pause tends to easily induce *pratyahara* or introversion. *Dharana* corresponds to *Smriti* among the 'means' or *Upayas* mentioned by Patanjali while *Dhyana* or contemplation is its continuous flow. At this stage consciousness is no longer distracted. *Samadhi* or absorption arises as the logical discursiveness of consciousness also subsides in stages.

*Samadhi* or Yoga proper is transcendence of the mind (*Asamprajnata*) following its full illumination (*Samprajnata*). Sometimes a deep and long lasting stage of incoherence supervenes and simulates true transcendence. Some beings are born in such a state when in their previous lives they have attained a stage of desirelessness without transcendental wisdom. The seminal force of active life being thus suspended, their minds remain in a state of latency but are not transcended. True transcendence is possible only through knowledge. Such knowledge arises from that state of yogic absorption where the mind is non-discursively concen-

<sup>6</sup> This terminology is due to my Teacher, the great contemporary saint and Siddha Sri Sri Anandamurtiji of Anandanagar, District Parulia (West Bengal).

<sup>7</sup> The full power of *Pranayama* is seen in the story of Kaka Bhushundi in the *Yogavasishta* or the writings of the Siddhas or in *Kundalini Yoga*.

<sup>8</sup> Where, to quote the *Prajnaparamitasutras*, 'the mind becomes non-mind' (*Yatra chittamachittam bhavati*).

trated on an object and even subtle logical constructions are abandoned.<sup>9</sup> Reality is thus revealed in its individuality more freshly and vividly than in sense-perception and more essentially than through logical operations. Intuitive knowledge or *Prajna* combines essentiality with a higher immediacy. At its highest it is the full revelation of universal Reason (*Mahat* or *Sambodhi*). When consciousness acquires a sure footing in it i.e., when the individual acquires an inner and constant union with the universal principle of 'Active Reason', the ego-mind is transcended. This is the beginning of true

and pure spiritual life. For Patanjali, however, the loneliness of the individual Spirit, its freedom from Nature, is itself the final end of the pilgrimage. If that were so, Kapila himself would not have been able to teach Yoga through a psychic body (*Nirmana-chitta*); besides, the spiritual experience of Mahayana, Vedanta and Vaishnavism, lying beyond ordinary emancipation, would not be possible.

<sup>9</sup>Vide *Yoga Sūtras* 1.17, 41-51. The Buddhists also indicate a fourfold classification of contemplative stages which is somewhat similar vide e.g., Buddhaghosa's '*Vishuddhimaggo*'.

## Mouna Diksha

By

R. G. Kulkarni

About twenty years back an urging came to me to have darshan of a Mahatma who was a Jivan-Mukta and I was in search for one when I happened on a small book in Gujerati entitled 'Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi-no-parichaya' written by one Sri Madhavanand of Baroda. I was much delighted on reading it and became convinced that this Swami really was a Jivan-Mukta. I accordingly wrote to the Ashram to ask whether I could have Sri Bhagavan's darshan. After an exchange of correspondence with the Ashram I was fortunate enough to arrive there. I took darshan of Bhagavan and sat before him in the meditation hall. I was very eager to receive from him the inner or silent initiation of which I had read and I wrote out a request for this which I placed on the small table beside his couch. Bhagavan read it and then placed it in one of his books. I was eagerly awaiting his response but he just sat silently, resting his gracious gaze on me and others in the hall.

After a few hours my mind began to be oppressed by harmful thoughts and tenden-

cies from the past, and this puzzled me a good deal. This state of affairs lasted for two days and I was quite worried over it. Had my coming here done more harm than good? Then on the third day these thoughts dissolved and an ever increasing peace swept over my mind. This went on for three days and finally became so strong that I felt obliged to stand up before Bhagavan with folded hands and testify to having received the inner diksha from him and been brought to a state of peace and contentment through his Grace. Bhagavan looked at me and smiled. I knelt before him and he extended his right hand over my head in blessing. Immediately after this an inner voice told me that what I had come for had been accomplished and I could now go back to where I had come from. So I took leave of Bhagavan and left the Ashram.

Since that time there is a constant awareness dimly, at the back of my mind, and experienced directly in the gaps between sankalpas. By the Grace of Bhagavan there is a steady conviction that only Self is, while all else is only the interplay of the gunas.



## SOME ASPECTS OF BUDDHIST YOGA AS PRACTISED IN THE KARGYUDPA SCHOOL OF THE TIBETAN VAJRAYANA

By  
DOROTHY C. DONATH

**M**ILAREPA was one of the greatest Yogis and Saints in Tibetan history, and the Kargyudpa School (sometimes known as the "Whispered Succession") — founded by Milarepa and his Guru, Marpa the Translator, in the 11th Century — developed and carried on the Yogic Tradition of the Tantric Vajrayana as exemplified in the esoteric teachings of the great Indian Buddhist sage, Tilopa, and of his disciple and successor, Naropa, who was Marpa's principal Guru.

In addition to formulating his famous "Doctrine of the Six Yogas" — the basis of the Kargyudpa Yogic Traditions — Naropa held the chair of Professor of Philosophy at the renowned Indian Buddhist University of Nalanda — a power in Buddhism for a thousand years. An enlightening account of this great Master and of his doctrines may be found in R. V. Guenther's 'Life and Teachings of Naropa' (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1959), and an Epitome of the "Six Yogas" in G. C. C. Chang's 'Teachings of Tibetan Yoga' (University Books, New Hyde Park, N.Y., 1962).<sup>1</sup> Here in this brief essay, writing merely as a humble disciple, I can outline a very small part of the Kargyudpa's vast store of yogic knowledge; but I shall try at least to convey some idea of its scope and of the philosophical, mystical, and psychological insights underlying it.

In Buddhist Tantric Yoga, the unfoldment of the Buddha-Mind, of Realization of Ultimate Enlightenment, may be approached by two major Paths, or methods, best explained in the following passages quoted from G. C. C. Chang's "Commentary" in Vol. II of his translation of that great Tibetan Buddhist classic, 'The Hundred Thousand

Songs of Milarepa' (University Books, 1962) :

"Tibetan Tantrism (Buddhist Tantric Yoga) is a form of practical Buddhism abounding in methods and techniques for carrying out the practice of all the Mahayana teachings. In contrast to the 'theoretical' forms of Buddhism, such as Madhyamika, Yogacara, Hwa Yen (Jap.: Kegon), Tien Tai, etc., Buddhist Tantrism lays most of its stress on *practice* and Realization, rather than on philosophical speculations. Its central principles and practices may be summarised as follows :

" (1) That all existence and manifestation can be found in one's experience, that this experience is within one's own mind, and that Mind is the source and creator of all things.

" (2) That mind is an infinitely vast, unfathomably deep complex of marvels, its immensity and depth being inaccessible to the uninitiated.

" (3) That he who has come to a thorough realization and perfect mastership of his own mind is a Buddha, and that those who have not done so are unenlightened sentient beings.

" (4) That sentient beings and Buddhas are, in essence, identical. Buddhas are enlightened sentient beings, and sentient beings unenlightened Buddhas.

" (5) That this infinite, all-embracing Buddha-Mind is beyond comprehension and attributes. The best and closest definition might be :

*'Buddha-Mind is a Great Illuminating-Void Awareness'*

(This, of course, can be only an intellectual approximation, as Professor Chang has emphasized throughout his Commentary, to *That*

<sup>1</sup>For a further, and more detailed account of the "Six Yogas," and the *Mahamudra* practice to be discussed later, see W. Y. Evans-Wentz, 'Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines' (2nd Edition, Oxford University Press, N.Y., 1958).

which, in the final analysis, must be *experienced* to be known).

"(6) That all Buddhist teachings are merely exaltations, preparations, and directions leading one toward the unfoldment of this Great Illuminating-Void Awareness. (As a Zenist would say, "Fingers pointing to the moon.")

"(7) That infinite compassion, merit and marvels will spontaneously come forth when this Buddha-Mind is fully unfolded.

"(8) That to unfold this Buddha-Mind, two major approaches, or Paths, are provided for differently disposed individuals; the Path of Means (Energy Yoga) and the Path of Liberation (Mind Yoga). The former stresses an approach to Buddhahood through the practice of taming the Prana (vital energy) and the latter an approach through the practice of taming the mind. Both approaches, however, are based on the truism of the *Identity of Mind and Prana*, . . . which is the fundamental theorem of Tantrism.

"The principle of the Identity of Mind and Prana may be briefly stated thus: The world encompasses and is made up of various contrasting forces in an 'antithetical' form of relationship — positive and negative, noumenon and phenomenon, potentiality and manifestation, vitality and voidness, mind and Prana, and the like. Each of these dualities, though apparently antithetical, is an inseparable unity. The dual forces that we see about us are, in fact, one 'entity' manifesting in two different forms or stages. Hence, if one's consciousness or mind is disciplined, tamed, . . . illuminated, and sublimated, so will be his Pranas, and vice versa. The practice that stresses taming the Prana is called the 'Yoga with Form', or the 'Path of Means'; the practice that stresses taming the mind is called the 'Yoga without Form', or the 'Path of Liberation.' The former is an exertive type of Yoga practice, and the latter is a natural and effortless one known as *Mahamudra*."

These two Paths exist as separate practices only in the early stages, however. Most of the great Kargyudpa Yogis practised both in order to hasten their spiritual progress — either simultaneously or by using one to supplement the other, as did Milarepa.

#### THE YOGA WITH FORM

Examples of the Yoga with Form, all employing some form of effort, and known

collectively as "The Arising and Perfecting Yogas," may be found in rigorous and complex bodily and Prana exercises, combined with advanced breathing techniques, deep concentration, visualization (an important part of this method), mantra (invocation), and other thought processes and psychophysical practices revealed orally by Guru to disciple, step by step, according to the chela's capabilities and level of readiness; in the use of the *Mala*, or prayer beads for repetitive mantric invocation; and in the *Tummo*, or Heat Yoga practice — in the form developed and systematized by Naropa. *Tummo* is the mystical fire, or heat, produced in the Navel Centre during Buddhist Yoga practice, is basic to all other formal practices, and is one of the factors that make it possible for Yogis such as Mila to live happily in the bitter cold of the high Himalayas clad only in a single cotton garment. *Repa* means 'cotton-clad' and was the distinguishing mark of Milarepa and his disciples.

In order to clarify the unique place of *Tummo* in the Buddhist Vajrayana, it is necessary to review certain principles which radically differentiate it from the perhaps better-known "Serpent Fire" personified by the Goddess Kundalini of the Hindu Tantrics. The distinction between the two lies mainly, though not entirely, in emphasis. Briefly (I quote in part Lama Anagarika Govinda's 'Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism' — Rider & Co., London, 1939), this emphasis, in the Buddhist system "is not on the *Power* aspect, the Shakti, but on the *Knowledge* aspect, the Prajna (in its 'intuitive, spontaneous form')." Hence the Shakti Kundalini "is not even mentioned in the Buddhist system — still less is she made the subject of meditation." In the "Six Yogas of Naropa", the seat of the Kundalini (in the Muladhara Chakra — the psychic nerve centre at the root of the spine, associated with the element Earth), is not included in the path of visualization, and the disciple meditates solely on the four upper Chakras or planes of consciousness — the navel, heart, throat, and Crown Centres. Here, as Govinda has emphasized, the *opposite* prin-

ciple, i.e., that of the *Dakini* (Tib: *Khadoma*), the female personification of Prajna or Wisdom, is invoked. The Buddhist Tantrics neither deny nor underrate the "importance or the reality of the forces connected with the Kundalini" — their method is simply a different one, and the use made of these forces is different. Hence, in Buddhist Yoga, "concentration is not directed upon the Kundalini or the Root Centre", but on the three principal psychic Channels or Nadis — Ida, Pingala and Sushumna — the main power currents of the body, generally considered to be located in the median duct, and on either side, of the spinal column. These "psychic counterparts of the physical nervous system" respond, as does the physical system, to mental and psychic stimuli. Hence, through advanced yogic techniques toward which the disciple is led step by step, the tension (or 'gravitational force') of the main Channels may be regulated and thus controlled "through a temporary damming-up and modification of the energy-content of the upper Centre".

Thus Prajna — Wisdom — "the inspirational impulse of consciousness" in the form of *Khadoma* (Dakini) or, by extension, through her mantric or seed-syllable equivalents, becomes the leading principle, opening the entrance to the Sushumna (central channel) "by removing the obstructions and by directing the inflowing forces."

Taking the matter to its ultimate conclusion, the *Khadoma* symbolizes nothing less than the *Plenum Void* — THAT from which all form (matter, solidity) and movement (heat, energy) arise and to which all return, although it does not consist of them. In other words, the *Khadoma* represents the reality of *Sunyata*, or Voidness — the origin and matrix of all manifested things. This doctrine of *Sunyata*, that which transcends all dualism, forms the theme and basis of the *Madhyamika* (Middle Path) teaching of Nagarjuna (2nd Century A.D.) as set forth in the *Prajnaparamita* (the Perfection of Wisdom) literature, of which the profound Diamond and Heart Sutras (the "Wisdom which has gone beyond") are the epitome.

*Madhyamika*, together with *Yogacara* (the Mind-only doctrine of Asanga and Vasubandhu, 5th Century, A.D.) are the two great foundation stones of all Mahayana Buddhism.

Since the whole *Tummo* system is closely bound up with the foregoing doctrines, we have not wandered from our original point, that is a consideration of Tibetan Buddhist Heat Yoga within the framework of the Yoga With Form. Govinda, in his scholarly and inspired book already referred to, has said (p. 194) :

"*Khadomas*, like all female embodiments of 'Vidya' or knowledge, have the property of intensifying, concentrating and integrating the forces of which they make use, until they are focused in one incandescent point and ignite the holy flame of inspiration, which leads to perfect Enlightenment. The *Khadomas*, who appear as visions or consciously produced images in the course of meditation, are therefore represented with an aura of flames . . ."

Called up by means of her mantric and integrative seed-syllable, or through the Mantra which belongs to her, the *Khadoma* is revealed as "the embodiment of that 'Inner fire' which surrounds and protects the saint like a 'pure soft mantle,' (and which) in Milarepa's biography has been called 'the warming breath of *Khadomas*'."

In the deepest sense, therefore (to quote Govinda again), *Tummo* signifies "the fire of spiritual integration, which fuses all polarities . . . and kindles the flame of inspiration from which is born the power of renunciation. . . . . This process of perfect integration is represented by the Flame or Flaming Drop (Skt.: *Bindu*: Tib: *Tig Le*)."

Here, in brief, lies the philosophic and mystic basis for Tibetan *Tummo* practice.

As a final comment, I quote from Milarepa's translator :

"The statement that the Divinity of Buddhahood is omnipresent, but the quickest way to realize it is to discover it within one's body-mind complex (that is, within one's own psycho-physical personality), will apply to every technique of Buddhist Tantric Yoga except *Mahamudra*."

## THE YOGA WITHOUT FORM

In the Yoga Without Form, the Path of Liberation — *Mahamudra*, the Great Symbol — is best expressed in the words of Milarepa himself :

“Buddha cannot be found by searching,  
So contemplate your own MIND.”

Professor Chang continues (I quote in part): “This sentence is extremely important as representing the essence of the *Mahamudra* teaching, for Illumination and Voidness are the two immanent characteristics of Mind.” It is the Buddha-Mind within that concerns us here.

“In general Buddhism, one is taught to search for Enlightenment and to attain Buddhahood ; but in *Mahamudra* the Guru, (in giving the Pith Instructions) points out to the disciple that *one's own mind is Buddha Himself*, and therefore to search for anything, even Buddhahood, is a waste of time.

“The main concern in *Mahamudra*, therefore, is the unfoldment of the true *Essence* of one's own mind. To accomplish this, the disciple may meditate alone, following his Guru's instructions, or may be given the ‘pointing-out’ demonstration in an effort by the Guru to open his mind instantaneously. This can be done in different ways — a smile, a blow, a push, a remark, etc. This is strikingly similar to the tradition of Zen, although the style and process may differ.

“Again, most meditation practices are devised for the development of *mental concentration* — to hold on to a single object in the mind's eye — and a mental effort is required in all of them ; but in *Mahamudra*, meditation is spontaneous, effortless, and natural ; in its practice, no object whatsoever is held in the meditator's mind.” Thus, through complete relaxation of mind and body — an utter “letting-go” — *awareness of Awareness itself* unfolds.

And so we see that the microcosmic mind (the mind of sentient beings), as a manifestation, or offspring, of the Macrocosmic Mind (the Infinite Mind of the Universe —

“the sole dynamo of universal life and power”) may, as Evans-Wentz has said, through Yoga “attain ecstatic consciousness of its parental Source and become one with it in essence.”

With the deepest of insights, Milarepa sang :

“The mind is omnipresent like space ;  
It illumines all manifestations as the  
*Dharmakaya* (the body of Truth, the One  
Ultimate Reality) ;  
It knows all and lightens all.  
I see it clearly like a crystal  
In my palm !”

And again :

“In the Mind-Essence, the quintessential  
‘Light,’  
There is no adulteration by distracting  
thoughts.  
In the real nature of beings, the Realm  
of Mind,  
There is no subject-object defilement.  
In the natural state of Mind-Essence  
There is no ground from which habitual-  
thought may rise.  
‘The nature of the mind is *Dharmakaya*  
It is not defiled by forms  
And from attributes is free.”

Those who are familiar with the methods and teachings of Zen will not find these ideas so very foreign or so very strange. The Yoga Without Form has often been referred to as “Tibetan Zen,” and is identical with it in essence, if not in method, because, as an effortless and natural practice, it stresses the cultivation of that innate Buddha-Mind, or Essence, which permeates the universe and every living being in it, including oneself.

Detachment, of course, is implicit in both teachings ; and in *Mahamudra*, as in Zen, *Dhyana* (the pure concentrative state achieved in meditation), in its earlier stages (often mistakenly over-valued by the beginner) is only preliminary to a realization of the Goal. However pleasant or blissful it may be, ecstatic *Dhyana* should never be *clung to*, as liable to plunge one into what is known as the “dead-void”, where all awareness is lost. Milarepa speaks vividly of this matter in the following stanzas :

"When your body is rightly posed, and your mind absorbed in deep meditation, You may feel that thought and mind both disappear;

Yet this is but the surface experience of *Dhyana*.

By constant practice and mindfulness thereon,

One feels radiant Self-awareness shining like a brilliant lamp.

It is pure and bright as a flower,

It is like the feeling of staring

Into the vast and empty sky.

The Awareness of Voidness is limpid and transparent yet vivid.

This Non-thought, this radiant and transparent experience

Is but the feeling of *Dhyana*.

With this good foundation

One should further pray to (direct one's heart to) the three Precious Ones (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha),

And penetrate to Reality by deep thinking and contemplation (on Sunyata, or Voidness).

He thus can tie the non-ego Wisdom

With the beneficial life-rope of deep *Dhyana*.

With the power of kindness and compassion,

And with the altruistic vow of the

Bodhi-Heart,

He can see direct and clear

The truth of the Enlightened Path,

Of which nothing can be seen, yet all is clearly visioned.

He sees how wrong were the fears and hopes of his own mind.

Without arrival, he reaches the place of Buddha;

Without seeing, he visions the Dharmakaya;

Without effort, he does all things naturally."

In seeking to follow such teachings as these, a modern disciple, if at all possible, should train under an enlightened Guru or Teacher; but if such cannot be found (as is so often the case, particularly in the West), the "Ten Suggestions" as given in G. C. C.

Chang's 'The Practice of Zen' (Harper, N.Y. 1959; and Rider, London, 1960) will merit careful attention.

1. Look inwardly at your state of mind before any thought arises.
2. When any thought does arise, cut it off and bring your mind back to the work.
3. Try to look at the mind all the time.
4. Try to remember this "looking sensation" in daily activities.
5. Try to put your mind into a state as though you had just been shocked.
6. Meditate as frequently as possible.
7. In the midst of the most tumultuous activities, stop and look at the mind for a moment.
8. Meditate for brief periods with the eyes wide open.
9. Read and reread as often as possible the *Prajnaparamita Sutras* (particularly the *Diamond* and *Heart Sutras*).

If we are truly dedicated, the Buddha-Mind within will be our Teacher.

This is the message of the Yoga Without Form — of *Mahamudra*, which is *direct awareness* of the Essence of Mind itself.

The Yoga With Form, particularly in its higher aspects, is designed primarily for Yogins, who devote their whole lives to this practice, and should never be attempted, even in its simplest forms without the guidance of a competent Guru or teacher. But the Yoga Without Form (in the aspects outlined above), while highest of all, may be at least *touched in essence* by the humblest disciple who knows and follows the basic Precepts and teachings of the Buddha, and through his very dedication will unfold for him an ever clearer vision of the Goal, and ever greater opportunities for attaining it.

When does a man attain salvation? When his egoism dies.

—SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

## IGNATIAN YOGA

By

I. JESUDASAN, S. J.

Various Christian sects or groups practise what they call 'Yoga' nowadays. However, rather than describe such a hybrid, we have chosen to include an article on an indigenous Christian system of spiritual exercises.

'YOGA' is often used in two senses ; one broad and general, of means to union with God, the other, narrow and specific, of austerities or exercises undertaken for this purpose. I have used the word in both senses in this little article.

The Ignatius who stood silhouetted on the Pampeluna fortress against the on-rushing French troops was far from being a yogi. In the brief snatches of autobiography which he stinted to posterity, he refers to himself as a vain young knight given to worldly pursuits.

His yogin life begins with the cannon ball, providential in the fullest sense, which brought him unconscious to the ground. The first flashes of the yogic ideal shone on his inward eyes and its peal resounded in his inward ear during his reading of the lives of the saints, again providential in the circumstances. He responded to that call. He renounced his worldly career, renounced the Loyola castle, its pomp and power, changed the purple of nobility for the coarse sackcloth of a beggar — **DETACHMENT OR THE SPIRIT OF POVERTY IS THE FIRST CONDITION OF DIVINE UNION** — and wended his way to the cloistered Carthusian monastery at Montserrat. Thence he retired to the secluded cave at Manresa where he fasted and prayed and flogged himself and kept long hours of vigil. Nails and hair grew forbiddingly long and matted. He lived on only one poor meal a day, and that too begged from door to door. Imagine a prince among the Loyolas and the captain of the Pampeluna garrison doing that!

All his thought at this time was of self-purification. He must make amends for his past sins. And in his first fervour to make

reparation he carried his fasts and other austerities so far that his health was thereafter permanently impaired and he became subject to chronic spells of acute pain in the stomach. Three months of excessive penance were also a time of much inner trial and serious temptation to despair and even to suicide.

All this while there was perhaps too great a concentration on self. Too much introspection was no good. So he turned his thoughts from his own misery to God's mercy and to others' suffering. The result was that he who had so far tried to find God in the solitude of the cave, now sought Him in his neighbours — in service to his suffering fellowmen in hospital. He changed his residence from the cave to St. Lucy's Hospital at Manresa. When he prayed and fasted, he had only thought of his own salvation. When he served the sick, he only relieved their physical pain. But what of their eternal salvation? The salvation of the neighbour? A new dimension was added to his spiritual odyssey. A new realisation had dawned on him. He had passed to a new phase in his spiritual development. He sought people, but the people could not as easily approach him because of his too ascetical look. Hence his long hair and nails had to go. He had to be presentable in order that he might effectively present the Kingdom of God. He taught them the basic truths which he had realized. Meanwhile four months of his stay at Manresa were over. He had had the vision on the bank of the Cordoner, made the Spiritual Exercises and written the first draft of them.

The Spiritual Exercises are the Ignatian Yoga *par excellence*, the way he himself had

trod in order to find God's will in his regard and that he recommends to others for the same purpose. We shall deal with it in greater detail in a separate article later on. But here suffice it very briefly to indicate its salient features. To begin with, one does not come to the Spiritual Exercises to find God for the first time, as it were. That is done already at baptism when we are made sharers in the divine life. But amid the stress and hurry of external life we are likely to lose sight of, or cool in, the inner life. The Exercises are a help to keep it alive and growing — to find God's holy will in every circumstance of our life and keep on doing it, and thus grow in the divine life of union. This St. Ignatius does through a continuous process of different methods of prayer, prayerful self-examination and prayerful recollection. Recollection makes us attentive to God and the least manifestation of His will. The self-examination which is not a barren review of one's sins and failings, but a contrite petition for forgiveness and a firm purpose of amendment, removes every obstacle to the vision of God. Prayer obtains light to find His will and strength to carry it out. To do each of these well, there are further helps pointed out. But of these at another time.

Union with God is the end of all Yoga, whatever form it may take. St. Ignatius, and for that matter every good Christian and every Christian Saint, consciously attains this existential union already introduced at baptism, by meditating on Christ, by loving Christ, by living Christ. Bodily austerities and mortifications are either a preparation for this union, or an expression of this love. But Ignatius, who has learnt to recognise and

serve Christ in his neighbour, must preserve his health for the same service. Hence no longer the excesses of bodily austerity. The body is not to be looked upon as just an instrument of sin and the foul prison of the soul. It is the co-principle of our composite being and activity, an instrument of service to Christ, and a temple of the Blessed Trinity. Therefore also he must preserve it, while keeping it in due subjection to the higher principle. A certain amount of austerity, moderate austerity, there must needs be; but as it were to make up for this moderation, the greater stress is laid on internal mortification, on breaking our will (our self-will) and disorderly affections, because they lie at the root of every difficulty and obstacle to our attainment of full union with God. It is for this purpose that St. Ignatius recommends the cheerful bearing of humiliations; for, they unite us to the humble Christ laden with humiliations, and in Him, to God. One may practise the most extraordinary bodily macerations and still be as proud as the Devil. And what can be a greater obstacle to union with God than pride? On the other hand, what is more difficult and repugnant to nature than not only to put up with injuries, but even to rejoice in them for Christ's sake? Here is the highest way of union with God in Christ while here on earth.

This then is the Ignatian yoga; detachment, self-purification, sanctification of the neighbour, suffering with Christ. He arrived at them step by step. But they can co-exist all at once, because one does not exclude the other, and we need all of them at the same time while here below to arrive at perfect union with God.

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Good and evil exist in this world for the man who is not self-controlled and who, through ignorance, sees multiplicity.

— *Bhagavata*

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## HOW I CAME TO THE MAHARSHI

By  
DINKER RAI

I HAD a religious upbringing and was married at the age of fourteen; but soon after marriage I left home and began wandering about in search of some one or something called 'God'. In this first attempt I had some vivid experiences of sadhus. I returned home but the inner quest continued. I fell under the spell of Swami Vivekananda, Rama Tirtha and Prabhuddha Bharati and attended the 'Katha' of Swami Jayendrapuriji of Ahmedabad.

Again I left home and this time I made tapas at a quiet place near Mt. Abu. However not enough food was forthcoming, so I left that place on account of hunger and began travelling from one pilgrim centre to another. I visited almost all the famous places of pilgrimage. However all this produced no result and again I returned home.

Now the 'householder' phase of life began for me. I almost forgot God, thinking that as I had not found peace that way I would try another way of life. Twelve years passed during which I remembered God only when in trouble.

In 1942 I again turned inward, this time under the influence of Swami Madhavatirtha who had written a book called 'Bhagavan Raman Maharshi' (*sic*). He explained everything to my satisfaction and with his blessing I went to see the Maharshi in 1944. I arrived in a powerful mood of anticipation. I had brought the best of flower garlands I could find from Madras. The Maharshi was at breakfast with the devotees in the dining hall when I arrived and I straightaway wanted to garland him, but he motioned me to put the garlands down on the floor. I did not then know that we were not supposed to touch his body, and my ego was hurt. I felt slighted. However I forgot all about this later in the day when I came in contact with him and received his bless-

ings. I felt that he was all in all to us — father, mother, everything. He awakened love and devotion in me.

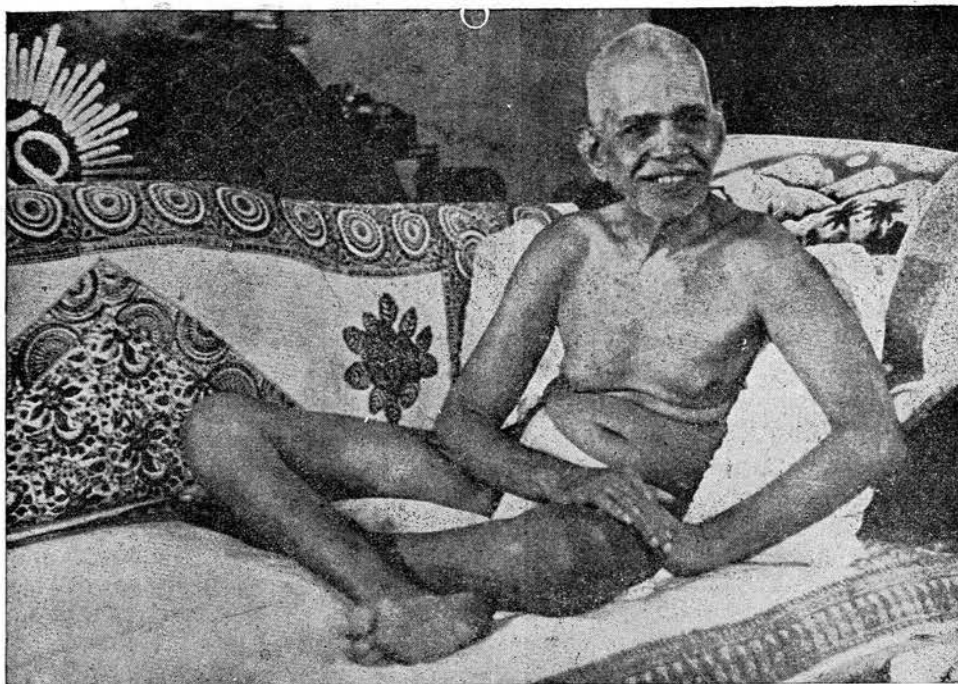
On my next visit I took my wife and two children with me. I knew that the Maharshi was very gracious with children, so whenever we left the hall we sent our children running up to him to touch his feet as he walked out, so that they should bring the touch back to us. After three days the Sarvadhikari called and asked me to stop this, as the Maharshi was very stiff-legged from rheumatism and might easily fall as a result of it. We then realized our folly and stopped the children doing it.

One of my visits was at the time of the Golden Jubilee Celebration or the fiftieth anniversary of the Maharshi's arrival at Tiruvannamalai. That was a sight I shall never forget. He was sitting on a couch decorated with garlands and jewels. The best singers from all India were singing. There were large, colourful crowds full of devotion, such crowds, in fact, that police had to arrange and direct the movements of the people. Thousands of poor people were fed. And through it all the Maharshi looked solemn and serene, as though it did not concern him.

He would sit inscrutable before us. He wanted nothing from us. Once he said to a foreigner who asked him about it: "I am not idle. Every second my heart is active."

At first I used to trouble him by asking questions, and he always answered them. Once I asked him which yoga I should follow: Jnana, Karma, Bhakti or Hatha. He replied: "Yoga is derived from the word 'yuj' meaning 'unite'. How did a Jnani become an agnani, a karmi an akarmi, a bhakta a vibhakta? Discovering that is yoga."





Someone else once asked what is the greatest miracle in the world. The Maharshi answered, "The body. It is lifeless and yet acts as though living."

Gradually I stopped asking questions. I received my elucidations inwardly. And yet, of course, they were bestowed by him.

I could fill a book with incidents and remarks about him. I have seen his grandeur and at the same time his naturalness. I have seen him appear like an enthusiastic youth and at the same time like a bent and aged Rishi. I have seen him friendly and familiar and yet at the same time aloof. I have seen him caring for squirrels, monkeys, parrots, peacocks and the cow Lakshmi. In the last days of Lakshmi, when she was old and ailing, he used to go daily to the cowshed and feed her with his own hands. I saw a great Maharani from my part of India, Smt. Shantadevi of Baroda, at the Ashram, and as soon as she saw the Maharshi she prostrated herself on the dusty ground before him. I have seen in him what I can never forget. The total of my visits to him adds up to 200 days, and yet I never had

enough. Every May or June I used to go to see him, although it is the hottest time of the year, because that was when I could get away from my business. Sometimes I would leave my business specially to visit him.

The last time I visited him was shortly before he left the body. He was very thin and bent and had his arm in a sling. And yet he looked cheerful and impersonal as ever as he sat in the big new hall. Before leaving I went up to him to say good-bye. His eyes were shining as he looked at me, and he nodded very slowly. When I got outside the hall I suddenly burst out sobbing in a way I could not restrain. Even now I do not know why. A crowd of onlookers gathered round. My wife was at first astonished and then she too began weeping. It went on for about a quarter of an hour. Someone asked me what was the matter but I could not say. Afterwards when I received news of his passing away I could not believe it. I still do not. He is still there. Not only there but everywhere. He cannot leave us. He is still in our hearts as before. He is the Heart of our hearts.

## DIALECTIC APPROACH TO INTEGRATION

By  
WEI WU WEI

IT may be said that there is only one thing that need be profoundly understood, without which no understanding could be valid, and from which—if that is completely comprehended—all else must necessarily follow.

That understanding is the total, and final, absence of oneself, that *as such* I have never existed, do not now exist, and never will exist, for I can have no being subject to 'time'.

### II

Phenomena can have only an apparent space-time existence as concepts in mind.

Then who is there "completely to comprehend" this? *Nobody, I do.*

As any sentient-being may say, if he apperceives that—

Objective absence is subjective presence,  
Which is absolute release.

### III

Unless a self-supposed entity can abolish itself it cannot be liberated (since 'liberation' is liberation from the idea of itself), but conversely, since it is self-supposed, unless it is liberated it cannot abolish itself. Such a problem appears to be insoluble; which comes first, the acorn or the oak-tree, the egg or the hen?

This is the answer: subject to the concept of sequential duration there can be no answer to a question posed in the form of a vicious circle, whereas un-subjected to the concept of 'time' there can be no question.

In a time-context there can be no release, and no experienced occurrence of the liberation of a phenomenon can factually take place—since the experiencer has not any but an apparent existence and the imagined

experience could only be a temporal illusion. Outside a time-context, unsubjected to any concept such as a space-time, there can be no entity to be abolished, and nothing that is not liberation to be known.

Therefore the phenomenon does not abolish itself—since what-is is not phenomenal and noumenally can have no 'self' to abolish—and so 'it' cannot be liberated. And conversely, since noumenally there can be no 'self' to be liberated, there cannot be any such event as 'liberation' to occur in intemporality.

The concept itself is at fault, for—as the T'ang-dynasty Masters knew, the said "self-supposed entity" neither exists nor does not exist, never has nor ever will *either* exist or not-exist, so that all that 'it' can be noumenally is the absence of its phenomenal non-existence. Therefore nothing whatsoever can factually occur to what is entirely phenomenal, the noumenality of which is transcendent to all concepts including those of 'space' and 'time' in which phenomena are necessarily extended.

### IV

It may be said that noumenally there is—  
Neither Here nor There,  
Neither Now nor Then,  
Neither This nor That.

These are axiomatic, and inclusive of all phenomenal manifestation.

The first abolishes opposing positions in Space, the second abolishes opposing positions in Time, the third abolishes opposing positions of Self and Other, and all three abolish opposing positions of the Thinker or Speaker in either space or Time.

But the thinking *entity* as such remains intact. As subject it is removed from all

three dimensions of Space, from Past, Present and Future, and from identification with Subject and Object, but it remains undisturbed as an entity, for it is *affirmed* as not being either of each of these pairs of inter-dependent counterparts.

In abolishing the relative positions of Space, Time, and Thinker, all remain as underlying concepts; and until these remaining objects are negated their subject remains intact.

That, no doubt, is why Shen-hui pointed out the inadequacy of the Masters' habitual formula "neither.....nor.....", and imposed a further negation, which he called the double absence or the double negative, 'the negation of neither ..... nor .....'. In these inclusive examples this will be the negation or abolition of no-Space and of no-Time whereby their subject-entity also is negated as having conceptual being. It should here be evident that as long as any conceptual object remains, the subject thereof can never be released.

The Chinese manner of expressing this 'double negation', by negating the negative element of the initial negation, is apt to be confusing to us; therefore it is preferable here just to apply the word 'absence' to the whole negation. In this case the formula becomes:—

'We are required to apprehend the absence of "neither Here nor There", of "neither Now nor Then", of "neither This nor That", and thereby the absence of Space and of a conceiver of Space, of Time and of a conceiver of Time, of Self and of a conceiver of Self.'

If we shall have apperceived these absences, in depth, we should thereby have apperceived our own objective absence, our total absence of *one*, whereby we may apprehend that we can never know what we are—since we are nothing objective that could be known. Nor can we ever be conscious of what we are—since that is no 'thing', and what is cognising cannot cognise what is cognising, any more than what is being conscious.

## V

This apparent solution of continuity, speaking dialectically, between apparent events in a time-context and their intemporal noumenality should not be taken to imply separation— for there can be none; and the transcendence of the noumenal is surely the immanence of the phenomenal and *vice-versa*, as viewed from the one or the other standpoint.

Integration or re-integration undoubtedly 'occurs', whereby as a result of a very rare equilibrium between normally excessive *positive* and normally deficient *negative* factors in a psyche—rendered possible by intensive negation—adjustments arise in that psyche.

Descriptions involving an access of 'divine love', 'compassion', 'ecstatic happiness' and what-not, all effective manifestations, patently temporal and separated from their inseparable counterparts, are evidently phenomenal. What may be assumed to take place is simply that the phenomenon, suddenly relieved of its egoity, freed thereby from a burden of cares, pseudo-responsibilities, phobia and what-not, rebecomes normal, and by contrast with the worries of the living-dream feels as though gravity were no more, laughs hilariously perhaps, wishes to dance for joy and to embrace all phenomenal creation. And this is interpreted and recorded as 'divine grace', universal benediction, and all the characteristics attributed to a *bodhisattva*.

## VI

Affectively attributed to an 'enlightened' sentient-being is a phenomenal manifestation of what sentience is, with its inevitable and inescapable counterpart, like that attributed to any 'unenlightened' sentient-being, the origin of which is noumenal also. Any direct manifestation of noumenal 'affectivity', if such were conceivable, would necessarily be intemporal and imperceptible as such in the sequence of duration. At most it could, perhaps, be represented by some impalpable 'quality', recognisable in a time-sequence as 'Grace' or 'Serenity'.

Sentience, let us not forget, is not 'something' that 'we' possess or experience, but is an indirect manifestation of what we *are*. If there could be any question of 'possession' it would surely be sentience (what-we-are) that 'possesses' what we think is 'us'; the concept of a 'self' is that of some 'thing' which is sentient, and so 'has' sentience, and such entity is entirely suppositional. This false identification, of course, is 'bondage'.

The apparent effectivity of an 'enlightened' phenomenon is therefore not different from that of an 'unenlightened' phenomenon since both are individualised representations in mind of the same 'sentience'. In a temporal context it must always and inevitably be thus, the 'enlightenment' being

simply the abolition of the inferential entity.

No dualistic emotion is thereby sublimated, for there is nothing in emotional counterparts to sublimate, and split effectivity (such as attraction and repulsion) remains 'whole' in the unsplit mind of the intemporal. Therefore it cannot be supposed to manifest directly in an 'enlightened' phenomenal object in a time-sequence as affectivity which as such as necessarily split. As a 'wholeness' it cannot be phenomenally experienced, since *it is* what is experiencing phenomenally as subject and object. This imminence might conceivably be cognisable psychically in an 'enlightened' phenomenon and be called 'Grace', which should be the common noumenality of perceiver and perceived, and all that ultimately they are.

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## The New Apostles

By

Cornelia Bagarotti

It is far too easy to become a spectator rather than a participator in Spiritual life. Those who chose as did Paul to discover the Christ and to reveal him are those who have become participators and not spectators in Spiritual life. Many do not realise that the Bible has been given to Man as a present source of inspiration and illumination and it is neither a legend, nor a parable, but an EVERLIVING reality which is meant to awaken to apostleship the sleeping hearts of men. To take in the Christ means to be reborn and utterly transformed. The road to Damascus is an inner experience of that revelation and illumination after which one's entire life is changed.

Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of Christ, became St. Paul, the great Apostle of Christ. It is said he was literally blinded by the

light of Christ. When one has lived in the darkness of the material world, bound to one's lower self or ego, the sudden blaze of TRUTH into every corner of one's inner being is not only a shock but a tremendous adjustment. The Disciples had three years preparation for the Pentecost. Each seeker of the Spirit is slowly preparing himself to receive the Christ and must die and be reborn again as Christ told Nicodemus before that illumination can take place.

Not until each word becomes a living reality, and each parable speaks directly to the soul and enters into daily life as the inner ethic and yardstick of all activity does Man become a participator in the Spirit. The slightest knowledge that is LIVED is greater than all the theoretical wisdom of the world. Christ seeks servers and Men who are transformed in His being.

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## THE KNOWN AND THE UNKNOWN

By  
ALONE

**T**O know the 'past' or the 'future' by astrology or by what they call 'the sixth sense', to know the mind of others, to have visions (I include in this seeing 'colours' and hearing 'sounds' about which occultists talk).....

On hearing or reading about such things one may be 'tempted' to have such faculties.

One may have them naturally.....but, if they know their limits [One can grasp by such faculties the 'known' only — they cannot touch 'the Unknown'!] ..... perhaps such faculties may drop off from one, or if they remain one may 'use' them in the most proper and benevolent (to oneself and to others for whom one is 'using' them) way.

If one does such things out of 'compassion' and 'uses' such faculties (— powers —) ..... the 'compassion' is the most important (and is what we need most)!

We will not give any heading to the issue we are 'discussing' — 'going into' — now, ..... because, it may take a 'form' in our minds.

..... but, as we go along ..... we will come directly upon the experiencing of it!!

..... Let us have a 'feeling' of 'thinking' ..... in the following line. [Mind ..... Please! This is not a thought!].....

Shall we be able to 'capture' the 'child' in us? By this is meant go back as far as possible, as far back as possible, to when we were 'child' ..... Not the physical memories of our childhood but our psychological get-up at that time .....

Do we follow?

Do we comprehend?

Let us 'try' this line of 'thinking' ..... sometime .....

..... and let that psychological memory (so to say) ..... the get-up of the psychological composition of that time ..... in short ..... let 'child' (in us) be our constant teacher ——— constant Guru ———

By going to 'child' .....

As it is a far journey, we are not 'inclined' to extol or condemn our then psychological state (so to say) ..... are we?

As we were fresh in the world (at that time) ..... as our mind (at that time) had not so many encrustations on it ..... as it has now .....

By so doing .....

Our conditioning may fall off from the 'past' ..... and a different kind of make-up [Kindly ..... I am lame at using the right words!] may be created — may be there — of our mind ..... which will not take upon it new conditionings as we move along life, ..... which means; there is Action now! [Action is that which has no residues.]

[Please ..... 'catch' what I have put down!]

[Please go over the last paragraph again!]

Further ..... by going to 'child'..... we may go back ..... back ..... back ..... up to 'birth' .....

[Let us do it ..... psychologically ..... it is an experiment .....] ]

We may perhaps remove 'birth' ..... totally ..... from the field [..... I mean from the psychological field] altogether .... It is a strange ——— queer ——— subject .....

[Please ..... try .....] ]

In this way ..... in this way ..... we go back, so far back ..... back to 'birth'

..... and thus 'eradicate' 'birth' .....  
 ..... and automatically eradicate 'death'.

When there is no 'birth' there is no 'death'.

[We have (unnecessarily) associated the word 'fear' with death].

#### JUST A HINT

About : "exploring the 'child' in us" ..  
 .....

It does not require a detailed knowledge of the psychological get-up of that time ....  
 ..... but a gesture — drift — towards such exploration .....

#### YOGA

So also there are faculties for knowing the past and (perhaps) the future ..... there are some people who are born with an aptitude for Yoga [I presume that readers know the range and implications of Yoga] ..... and they may even become advanced in that particular direction.

..... but if, perhaps at the very beginning, they know the proper scope of Yoga, that is the limitations and implications of it ..... then ..... when they come to 'intelligence' they will themselves 'see' ——— and 'understand' all this!

[I think that is all that need be said about this!]

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## A Leaf from Life

By

Derek Southall

Earthbound, one crisp and tingling night  
 Of scurrying clouds and pale starlight,  
 With steps deliberate we walk  
 Across the fresh mown lawns and talk  
 Of Zen Satori, Freedom's Way.  
 He lucid, clear, with piercing darts  
 Of ice-pure wisdom, the core imparts  
 Of visioned truth. I hesitate  
 But try in vain to communicate  
 My understanding of the way :  
 Words obscure, not light the play.

A mood emerged, both calm and strong,  
 Powered by poignant wish, by urge  
 To celebrate the silent song,  
 The holy harmony, the True.  
 Thoughts raced and rippled, frothed and flew,

Insisted, banished sleep,  
 In homage to the Deep.

Within nothingness lives  
 Ever-expanding joy,  
 Exquisite patterns  
 Of unbearable splendour  
 Tenderly suffused,  
 Eternal, stark, aware.

Thus our original home was born,  
 An abstract which endured till morn,  
 When the bright sunlight showed anew  
 In concrete shapes the empty view.

God has no form, but in His sight  
 Stones glow, eyes meet and all is light.  
 Yet still men weep, yet still men sleep.

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## THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF HARI PRASAD SHASTRI

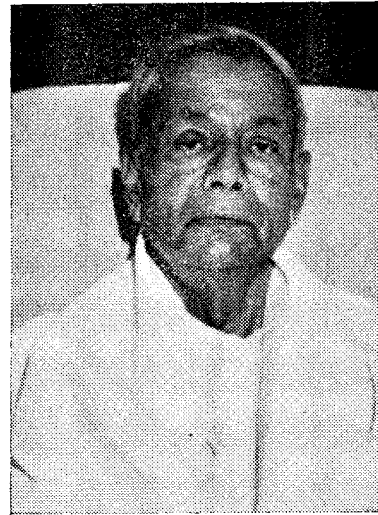
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By  
M. H.

**H**ARI PRASAD SHASTRI was born in a poor Brahmin family in 1882 in the little town of Bareilly in the United Provinces of India. His father, Narayana Prasad, was a householder who worked all his life as a station master on the Indian railways, but he was also a great saint and Mahatma who collected a band of disciples around him in each of the towns to which he was posted and taught the Yoga of the Gita and the Upanishads in the traditional way. He gave allegiance to the school of Advaita of Sri Sankara. He was a pupil of the monk Swami Krishnanandaji who had also numbered Swami Mangalnathji among his pupils.

Hari Prasad Shastri, who was the second of Narayana Prasad's children, was brought up in an atmosphere of great spirituality and was educated as an orthodox Pundit first in the local schools; but later, because of the great brilliance and promise which he showed, he studied Sanskrit philosophy as one of the personal pupils of Pundit Rama Misra Shastri of Benares, who had also taught George Thibaut and was acknowledged throughout the world as an authority in Sanskrit philosophical studies.

When he finished his formal education at the age of twenty-one, Hari Prasad thus had all the qualifications for a brilliant career, either in the academic world or in administration or some branch of the Indian Civil Service. But his soul was already on fire with a desire to know God, and he preferred to leave himself free to follow the spiritual quest and to seek out the Mahatmas dwelling in the holy places of India from whom he could learn more of Vedanta with a view to imparting it to others. He had already begun in earlier days to give public lectures



*Hari Prasad Shastri*

on behalf of the Sanatana Dharma Sabha, the orthodox Hindu Society, and became much in demand as a speaker in many of the towns in Northern India which he visited. He spoke always as an exponent of the Vedanta of Sri Sankara and the yoga of the Gita and the Upanishads, but was also becoming increasingly well-read in the philosophy, poetry and literature of India, Persia and the West.

One of the main principles of Narayana Prasad's teachings was its universality. He regarded all religions as different paths to the same goal and invited Mohammedan Pirs and Christian priests to speak at his Sat-Sanga. He was opposed to the inequalities of the caste system and took a special interest in the welfare of the untouchables, providing medical care and health education and catering for their physical needs. Hari Prasad Shastri followed in the foot-steps of his Guru and father, and his broad-minded and universal outlook brought considerable

opposition from the orthodox Pundits, who were often jealous of the success and popularity of his lectures and were not above spreading false rumours about his heresy and supposed atheism and even hiring ruffians to eject him from some of the public meetings.

To help to support the growing family and to pay for the education of his younger brothers, he took a number of teaching posts in Northern India, but always when the opportunity came he loved to return to the holy places and to frequent the Sat-Sangs of the Mahatmas.

Between 1906 and 1913, he was frequently at the ashrams of Swami Mangalnathji, the greatest of the monks who lived and taught at Rishikesh at that time. An even greater influence on his life was Paramahansa Swami Rama Tirthaji. He visited the Paramahansa when he was living in a hut in the high peaks of the Himalayas, after a long and arduous journey with two companions, in 1906. This was just before the death of Swami Rama Tirtha, and Dr. Shastri has left us an eloquent account of this visit in his *Life of Rama Tirtha*, published under the title "Scientist and Mahatma."

Swami Rama Tirtha, a former Professor of Mathematics at Lahore, with his familiarity with Western literature and science, combined with a God-intoxicated personality, made a deep and life-long impression on Dr. Shastri, and next to his own Guru, Narayana Prasad, affectionately known as Shri Dadaji, he was perhaps the main guiding spirit of his life. When Swami Rama adopted Sanyasa, he left his considerable library to a friend, and Dr. Shastri read its contents with interest.

But it was of course Shri Dadaji himself whose teachings made the first and greatest impression on him. These, devoid of any sophistication and unadorned by great learning in literature or philosophy, appealed to the heart of their hearer simply by their spiritual power and wisdom. The account of Shri Dada's Sangha and of the life and teachings of the Saint has been beautifully embodied by Dr. Shastri in 'The Heart of

the Eastern Mystical Teachings' (Shri Dada Sanghita). The portrait of Shri Dada which is given there is eloquent testimony to his supreme power of spiritual insight which depended on no worldly attainment, but conferred on its holder the ability to see clearly into the hearts of people and to minister to their higher needs with wisdom and compassion.

Following his pilgrimage to Swami Rama Tirthaji in 1906, Hari Prasad became the headmaster of several schools in the district of Hoshiarpur, but continued his lecturing work. It was at this time that His Highness Maharaja Lakshmishwar Singh, President of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, and a great Sanskrit scholar, conferred upon him the title Mahopadeshak (great teacher). He was also offered a post at the Court of the Maharaja of Alwar after the ruler had heard him speaking on the Vedanta of Sankara and on 'Sri Krishna and the Gopis', but he did not wish to remain tied to the Court and refused the offer with thanks.

At one time he thought of becoming a Sadhu and was preparing to take the vow of Sanyasa under Dhaniraj Giri, one of the best known Mahatmas and scholars of that time, who had taught Swami Mangalnathji grammar and philosophy at one time and was now head of a very large ashram, the Kailash Ashram at Rishikesh. But when he came to examine his heart he found that the path of Sankhya was not his path and that he would rather serve the Lord and his teacher through a life in the world.

He became headmaster of a small village school in Chartgarh and during the holidays went on pilgrimage to the famous temple of Durga at Jwalaji in the beautiful Kangra valley where a large flame of fire issued from the rock. He has described this pilgrimage in an article in the quarterly magazine *Self-Knowledge*, Volume II, Nos. 3 and 4.

His father, Narayana Prasad, died on March 9th, 1910, and in order to support the family Hari Prasad got an appointment in the railway at Moradabad. It was very un congenial work and not well paid, although he



was able to augment it by tutoring a number of students for their examinations.

His lecturing activities were severely curtailed by lack of time, but he continued to read voluminously, particularly in English Literature. It was at this time, he said, that he became first acquainted with Ernest Haeckel, Herbert Spenser, Huxley, David Hume, and others.

In April 1913 he had a call to visit the holy places and left on a pilgrimage to Kailash, Badrinath and Kedar, and from there went on to Tibet where he was received by the Tashi Lama and was permitted to bring back a number of valuable manuscripts. He was now thirty-one years old. Many of the impressions gained on that pilgrimage must be incorporated in the story of the pilgrim Prakasha Brahmachari, which he has left in the book *A Tale of Spiritual Unfoldment*. It seems that it was on this pilgrimage that he achieved full self-realization.

In 1916 he was inspired by his Guru to take the holy Truth of Advaita Vedanta to Japan, which was then in the grip of a mounting fever of nationalism and militarism, which threatened to engulf and destroy not only the Japanese people themselves but the whole of Asia. The nation was obsessed by the delusive dream of world conquest on the pattern of Chengiz Khan, and the deep and eternal spiritual truths were being lost sight of. He stayed for two years in Japan, arriving at Kobe on October 9th, 1916, and in that time gave many hundreds of lectures on Vedanta and the spiritual ideals, founded a Yogic Centre, Advaita Guha, and lectured on Indian Philosophy at Waseda University and also at the Imperial University in Tokyo.

While in Japan, Dr. Shastri made a deep study of Zen Buddhism and visited many of the most famous monasteries where he conferred with the monks. The spirit of Japanese Buddhism made a deep impression on him as his many articles on Japan bear testimony. Some of these have been collected in the little volume *Echoes of Japan 1916-1918*.

But the general trend of the people was materialistic at that time, and the spirit of Buddhism was being forgotten in the fever of militaristic nationalism. His outspoken opposition to this Philosophy and his refusal to approve of the Indian agitators like the Bengali revolutionary R. B. Bose and his followers, led to a campaign of vilification of him, both in private and in the press, not stopping short of attempted assassination. The Japanese police followed him everywhere. But the work of bringing the truth of Advaita to the people of Japan was continued, regardless of these difficulties and hardships. He learned Japanese and also read widely on the country and its culture.

It was while in Japan that he first met Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen, who treated him with great respect as a scholar and became a close friend. It was he who invited Dr. Shastri to go to China. He understood his difficulties with the Indian and Japanese nationalists.

He landed in China on April 20th, 1918, Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen being the only person he knew in China. Dr. Sun was of course the founder and first President of the Republic of China. Through a well-known Jewish Scholar, Mr. N. E. B. Ezra, Dr. Shastri was asked to contribute articles to a monthly periodical, the *Israel Messenger*, of which Mr. Ezra was the founder and editor; and also to lecture on Hindu philosophy to the Quest Society, and elsewhere. Mr. Ezra also offered him the Chair of English Literature in Haroon College in Shanghai, which was founded and financed by Mr. S. A. Haroon, a Bombay Jew who was the richest man in China at that time. He became a great personal friend of Mr. Shastri, who loved him on account of his simplicity and democratic outlook. Mr. Haroon was a great philanthropist and completely without any narrowness. Through his generosity, Dr. Shastri was able to bring out, while in China, the Haroon edition of the Buddhist Canonical Scriptures in Chinese with the help of Chinese scholars.

Dr. Shastri also supervised the translation of the Koran into Chinese. Perhaps there

could be no better testimony to Dr. Shastri's universality of outlook than that he, a Brahmin scholar, should influence a Jewish merchant to endow Buddhist temples and to publish Buddhist, Confucian and Islamic classics. He also himself translated the Analects of Confucius into Hindi, and this edition was later published in India by the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda.

Dr. Shastri left China in 1929 and came to England. It had always been the wish of his teacher that the Yoga teachings should be brought to England and that a traditional school should be set up there and it was with this express purpose in mind that he arrived in July 1929 together with his wife, Yachio Shastri, a Japanese lady whom he had married while in China after she had nursed him back to health following a serious illness.

He stayed in England until his death in January 1956. During these 27 years, his time was devoted to lecturing on Vedanta and the teachings of the Yoga of the Gita and the Upanishads, writing original works and translating some of the great spiritual classics into English. The least of his achievements in this field is formidable. Among his first works was a popular and simple translation of the Bhagavad Gita, published under the title, *Teachings from the Bhagavad Gita*. An English translation of the *Avadhut Gita* followed shortly afterwards together with a book of original poems, 'Spring Showers' which had been first published in Shanghai. All these were brought out within a few years of his arrival.

With the help of one of his pupils, Mrs. M. E. Mitchison, O.B.E., a Yogic Centre was founded, called Shanti-Sadan, the Temple of Peace, in 1953. From this time onwards, regular lectures were given two or three times a week and other lectures were also arranged elsewhere, either by invitation or by the Centre.

In the early years, Dr. Shastri used to spend the mornings working in the British Museum among the oriental manuscripts, and it was here that his translation of part of the

Yoga Vasishtha was first written, now published as *The World within the Mind* (1937). A collection of his lectures at the Centre was also published at this time in the book *Wisdom from the East* (1936). The number of pupils was gradually growing, and within Shanti-Sadan the teachings of the Yoga were transmitted in the traditional way. Besides the lectures and the personal teaching, Dr. Shastri instituted a weekly traditional reading of the Ramayana of Tulsidas, which he himself gave throughout his life.

Over the following years, a whole series of books and translations followed, including his monumental translation of the Ramayana of Valmiki, published in 3 volumes, an English translation of Vidyananya's "Panchadashi", the 'Vira Vijaya' by Paramahansa Mangalnathji and the "Astavakra Gita". Translations were also published of the 'Narada Sutras' and the 'Aparokshanubhuti' by Sri Sankara, both with extensive commentaries by the translator.

However, the published works which number many more than have been mentioned, by no means exhaust the mass of translations and original writings which Dr. Shastri has left. He was particularly fond of poetry, and a small selection of his translations from the Urdu and Hindi poets is to be found in the *Indian Mystic Verse*, but by far the greater part is still unpublished.

Many of his articles have found their way into the pages of the quarterly Magazine *Self-Knowledge*, which was started by Shanti-Sadan in 1942 and has continued ever since, but appeared for the first seven years of its existence under the title *Shanti Sevak*, (Messenger of Peace). Shortly before his death he was invited by Foyles to contribute a Handbook on Yoga to their Handbook series, and this he was working on up till the time of his death. It was finished from his notes by his pupils and appeared in 1957.

\* \* \* \*

Three threads seem to run through the fabric of his life. He had a life-long of letters and scholarship and was at home in

the literature and philosophy of both East and West ; then he was also a Mahatma, a God-realized man whose mind and personality were steeped in the spiritual teachings and alight with wisdom and benevolence. He made contact with all those who approached him with an open mind and a sensitive heart, whatever walk of life they may have come from ; thirdly, he had a deep spirit of universality and a belief in the unity of all religions and of all mankind. To him, all barriers of creed, colour and nationalism, were a manifestation of spiritual myopia.

This spirit of universality he had already learnt from his Guru, Shri, in his childhood ; but it was with the authority of one who had met and known intimately the great figures of the Muslim, Hindu, Christian and Buddhist traditions, not only in India but also in China and Japan and the West, that he spoke on this theme. He therefore spoke as one who had known the inner truth of all religions, but was also familiar with the outer form as well. It is such vision that the world needs today perhaps more than anything else.

## To Arunachala

Author unknown : sent by J. J. de Reede

Arunachala !  
Thy silence calls me  
More powerful than a thousand voices  
    Oh Hill of wonder !

The way is so long, it seemed so near  
Whispering shadows, rocks come alive,  
Arunachala, Hill of Peace,  
    Free me of fear !

Sweet flame within my heart  
Spread over the universe,  
What does it mean ?  
Hill of Wisdom !  
Doubts assail me,  
I dare not believe.

Motionless dancing, boundless waves  
Rose within my mind,  
All-engulfing dark waters  
On the surface in letters of flame  
    " I AM "

Like a hawk whose wings  
Darkened the sky  
Thou pouncest on me — a worm in dust —  
And carried me off.  
Into limitless all-knowing radiance.

Lost in Freedom — Resplendence — Bliss  
Hitherto unknown, undreamt of,  
    I found myself  
    .....  
    I lost Myself.

Beloved ! Whither shall I seek Thee ?  
In the abyss of thought,  
    In the Tempest of feeling  
I find Thee not.

Plains, rivers, mountains, caves !  
    Tell me I pray,  
    Do you hide Him ?  
Did He pass your way ?  
    .....

In vain I spent my days,  
In vain I wept at night,  
Cool moon and stars !  
Lend me your light  
To find Him that is hidden  
    In my burning heart. —

Arunachala — Bhagavan !  
    Hill of Water !  
    Hill of Grace !  
    Quench my thirst,  
    Have mercy !

## REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI RAMPRAKASH RAMASNEHI

AS TOLD TO M. D. SAGANE

I first saw a photograph of the Maharshi in the house of M. D. Sagane in July 1948. I immediately felt a thrill of happiness. He attracted me like a magnet. I did not sleep that night. His divine figure shone before my eyes. I was beside myself.

On July 21 I obtained a book about him and read his life. Tears came to my eyes and my whole body quivered. I no longer liked people coming and talking but sought solitude. I felt unattached. I wept much. On the 27th and again on the 30th the Maharshi's luminous form appeared briefly before me.

On Sept. 14 I felt ill and lethargic. I put a photograph of the Maharshi in front of me and prayed to him steadily from seven in the evening till two o'clock in the morning. Then I saw him standing before me and immediately I felt almost normal and fell asleep. After that I was constantly praying that he would take me to his feet. I felt physically immersed in the flood of peace-giving rays of divine light emanating from him. Once I felt entranced and merged in his wonderful power for ten or fifteen minutes. It is impossible to describe that state of ecstasy because it is beyond the mind.

Some time later I was able to spend eleven days at the Maharshi's Ashram. I had never known samadhi before but now whenever I entered his presence I fell into samadhi. I was overwhelmed and lost consciousness. When I was in a state to do so I used to ask the Maharshi questions. The following is the gist of his replies to them.

"For the present remain in the sadhana stage, not always in dhyana-samadhi. Eat and sleep little. Speak little. Keep the mind in the blissful state of Brahmananda. In the Siddhawastha or Sahaja Samadhi state the mind is Brahmakar (absorbed in Infinity), and yet all activities are carried on normally. It is like a river merging in the ocean.

"Continue constantly the practice of Self-enquiry. That will destroy the knot of ahankara (ego-sense). You will then dwell permanently in Brahmananda (pure happiness).

"There is no Maya. Everything is Brahman. There is neither birth nor death, for who is to be born or to die? Who is to be worshipped and who is to perform dhyana? All is Brahman. Bodily ailments, pains and pleasures are only creations of the mind. Once the ego-sense is destroyed only the Pure Principle remains."

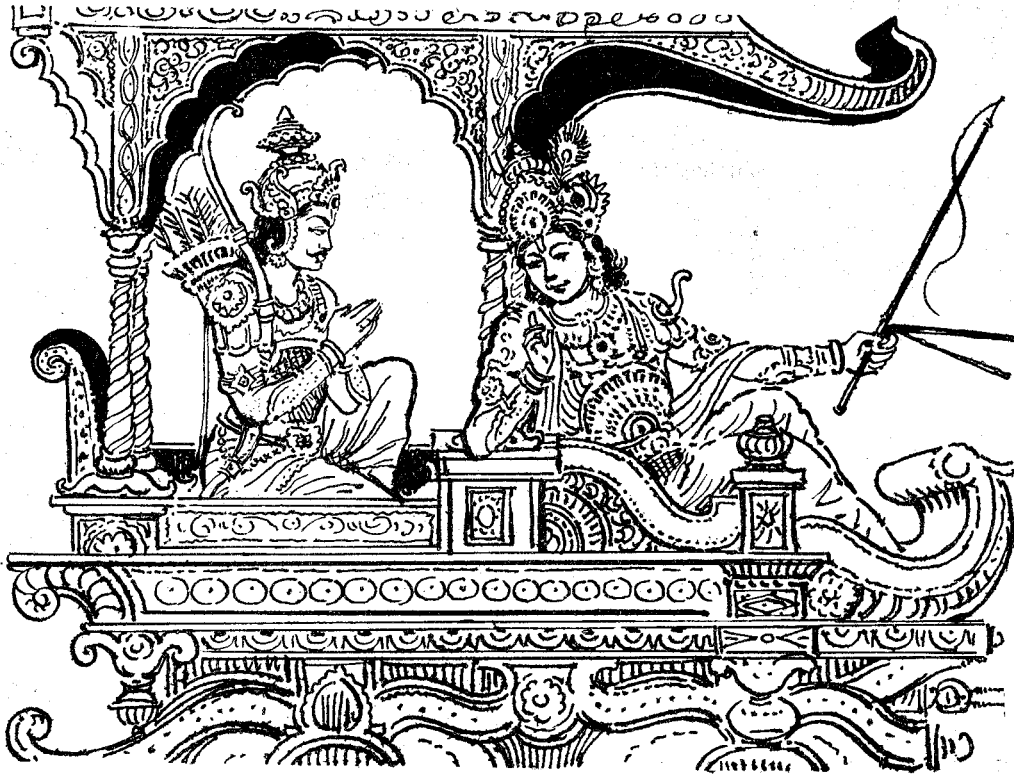
Lead me not into the wheel of birth and rebirth but guide me over  
to the shore of immortality.

— *Yajur Veda.*

\* \* \* \* \*

By the pure in heart is he known. The Self exists in man, within  
the lotus of the heart, and is the master of his life and of his body.  
With mind illumined by the power of meditation, the wise know him,  
the blissful, the immortal.

— *Mundaka Upanishad.*



# The Bhagavad Gita

## CHAPTER NINE

Translated by  
Prof. G. V. KULKARNI and ARTHUR OSBORNE

*(Chapter VIII was published out of sequence in our issue of July 1966, so we continue here with Chapter IX.)*

1

Sri Bhagavan said :

To you who are without envy I will now declare the great secret of knowledge combined with wisdom, by knowing which you will be free from evil.

2

This is the sovereign science, the sovereign mystery, of great sanctity, accessible to direct

experience, consistent with dharma, very easy to practise and imperishable.

3

Those who lack faith in this dharma, O Scourge of the Foe, do not attain to Me but return to the mortal round of samsara.

'Samsara' is the course of mortal life but the word has overtones of suffering, privation and struggle which no English word can render.

4

By Me in My Unmanifest Aspect the entire universe is pervaded. All beings exist in Me, but I am not contained in them.

The Unmanifest pervades all manifestation and contains it but cannot be contained in it.

5

And yet beings do not exist in Me. Behold My Divine Power, My Self, creating and supporting all beings does not abide in them.

And yet beings do not exist in Purusha, the pure Spirit, but in Prakriti, His Nature, while He remains aloof. The word translated here as 'Power' is 'Yoga' the word translated as 'Self' 'Atma'. The Divine Power or Union, not other than God, creates and sustains all that appears to be other.

In this chapter statements are carefully qualified and apparently contradicted to safeguard against partial and therefore faulty understanding. See also, in this connection, verses 8, 9 and 10.

6

Understand that just as the mighty wind, though moving everywhere, dwells in space, so do all beings dwell in Me.

That is, as the wind moves in space without affecting space. 'Akasha' means either 'space' or 'ether'.

7

All beings, O Son of Kunti, return to My Prakriti at the end of a kalpa ; at the beginning of the next kalpa I send them forth again.

This has already been said in Ch. VIII, v. 16, where the possibility of avoiding a return to samsara is also mentioned.

A kalpa is a great cycle containing fourteen manvantaras. A kalpa is 'one day of Brahma' followed by pralaya or dissolution, which is a 'night of Brahma'.

8

Resorting to My Prakriti, I send forth again and again this whole multitude of beings, helpless in her power.

9

Nor do these actions bind Me, O Wealth-Winner ; I remain unattached to them, like one they do not concern.

10

Under My mere regard Prakriti produces all things, both the moving and the unmoving. On this account, O Son of Kunti, the world revolves.

11

The foolish disregard Me clad in human form, not knowing My higher state as Supreme Lord of beings.

12

Of vain hopes, vain actions and vain knowledge, these senseless people are endued with the deceptive nature of rakshasas and asuras.

Rakshasas are equivalent to the ogres of Western mythology ; they are powerful and menacing and attack and devour men but can be killed by them. The asuras, characterised rather by greed and stupidity, are the enemies of the Devas or gods (for which see v. 20) and can best be translated 'demons'.

13

But the great souls, O Son of Pritha, those of divine nature, worship Me with undivided mind as the Imperishable Source of beings.

14

Ever glorifying Me, striving and firm in vows, prostrating before Me with devotion, they worship Me, ever steadfast.

15

Others again, with knowledge as their mode of sacrifice, worship Me in various ways, as the One, as the Other, as the Omnipresent.

This verse has been variously interpreted. It seems to refer to worship of the Lord as the Self, as other than the worshipper and as All-encompassing.

## 16

I am the ritual, I the sacrifice, I the offering to the ancestors, I the herbs, I the mantra, I also the ghee, I the fire and I the offering.

## 17

I am the Father of this world, the Mother, the Provider and the Ancestor; I am That which is to be known, I the Purifier, the chanting of OM, the Rigveda, the Sama and the Yajur.

Only the first three Vedas are mentioned; the fourth, the Atharva, is not regarded as of the same sanctity. See also v. 20.

## 18

I am the Goal, the Supporter, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Foundation, the Treasure-House and the Imperishable Seed.

## 19

I give heat, I withhold and send down rain, I am both immortality and death, both being and non-being, Arjuna.

## 20

The knowers of the three Vedas, drinking soma and purified from sin, worship Me with sacrifice and pray for the attainment of heaven. On coming to the holy world of the Lord of Devas they enjoy in heaven the celestial delights of the devas.

Soma is said to have been the intoxicating or hallucinogenic juice of a plant. Its use in contexts like the present shows that it is also a symbol of divine ecstasy.

It seems better to keep the word 'devas' than to translate it as 'gods'. The Supreme may be approached from one angle or another and referred to by various names — as Brahman or Atma or Bhagavan or Siva or Vishnu — but never as plural. The devas are divine beings who are immortal for the duration of the kalpa — *ad saecula saeculorum* — but, as explained in Chapter VIII, vv. 16-19, at the end of the kalpa they are absorbed in the universal dissolution (pralaya or Night of Brahman), to be manifested forth again at the dawning of the new kalpa.

The Lord of the Devas is Indra.

Those who desire heaven still have an ego that desires; therefore, as explained in the next verse, when the rewards of their merits are exhausted, they must return to strive again, since it is only in this world that spiritual progress can be made and the ego dissolved. This is explained also in Ch. VI, vv. 41-42.

The possibility of going beyond the heavens and avoiding return to samsara by complete surrender of the ego is explained again in the present chapter, as it has been in Chapters II, VI and VIII.

## 21

Having enjoyed the vast realm of heaven, they return, on the exhaustion of their merit, to the world of mortals. Following the dharma of the three Vedas, they entertain desires and are subject to going and returning;

## 22

To those, however, who dwell on Me in single-minded worship I guarantee fulfilment of needs and security.

## 23

Even devotees of other gods who worship them with faith really worship Me, O Son of Kunti, though not in the right way.

One who turns to higher powers turns to the Self, though indirectly. In verses like this and the following it is more evident than elsewhere that the 'I' and 'Me' must be understood as universal.

## 24

For I alone am the Enjoyer and Master of all sacrifices; but they do not rightly know Me, and so they fall.

## 25

Worshippers of the devas go to the devas; of the ancestors to the ancestors, of spirits to the spirits; My worshippers come to Me.

## 26

Whoever offers me a leaf, a flower, or fruit or water with devotion, that I accept when it is offered devoutly by the pure of heart.

27

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give, whatever tapas (austerity) you perform, do it as an offering to Me, O Son of Kunti.

28

Thus will you be set free from the bondage of karma with its good and ill effects and, with mind established in the Yoga of renunciation, will come Liberated to Me.

29

I am alike in all beings. None is hateful to Me and none dear. But those who worship Me with devotion abide in Me and I in them.

As was said in the note on v. 5, difficult or contradictory statements abound in this chapter. They have to be understood. Being is the same in all beings; but by understanding and devotion a being can participate consciously in Being.

30

Even a most vicious person who worships Me whole-heartedly must be accounted righteous, for he has rightly resolved.

31

He soon becomes right-minded and attains eternal peace. Know, O Son of Kunti, that My devotee never perishes.

32

If they take refuge in Me, O Son of Pritha, even those of low birth, women, Vaishyas, even Shudras, attain the Supreme Goal.

Vaishyas and Shudras are the third and fourth respectively of the traditional four varnas or social orders.

33

How much more, then, holy Brahmins and devoted royal Sages. Having come to this transient, sorrowful world, worship Me then.

34

With mind set on Me, be My devotee, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me alone. Thus harmonised in yourself, with Me as your Supreme Goal, to Me alone shall you come.

Here ends the Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, the Yoga of Sovereign Knowledge and Sovereign Mystery.

## Arunachala \*

By

Arthur Osborne

I sought to devour Thee ;  
Come now and devour me,  
Then there will be peace, Arunachala

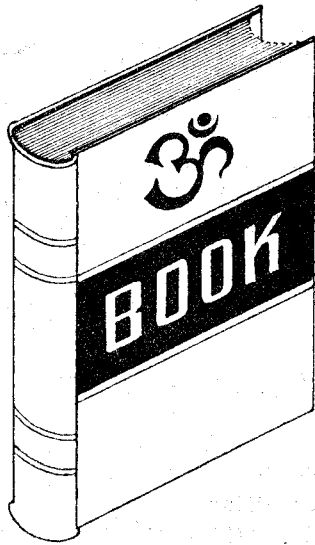
You bade me give all for you —  
Take now the giver too,  
Survive alone, Arunachala !

Let now the deception end.  
There was no lover or friend  
Apart from Thyself, Arunachala !

Now that at last I know  
All this a magic show,  
Let it dissolve in Thee, Arunachala !

\* The third and last syllables are long; the third is accentuated.  
The poem is based on v. 28 of Sri Bhagavan's *Marital Garland of Letters to Sri Arunachala*.





## REVIEWS

**TWENTY CASES SUGGESTIVE OF REINCAR-NATION.** By Dr. Ian Stevenson (American Society for Psychical Research, New York, 1966, pp. 362, price not stated.)

Our issue of July 1966 was devoted to the question of reincarnation and contained two brief empirical accounts of presumed cases as a sort of light relief. We have now received a book describing twenty such cases investigated by Dr. Stevenson of the School of Medicine of Virginia University, U.S.A., the foremost investigator in the field today. The descriptions are monuments of painstaking research and scholarly integrity and the author invites people who have evidence of such cases to write to him about them at the School of Medicine, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, U.S.A. However, 'The Mountain Path' is not much interested in such evidence. What concerns us more is the fact that reincarnation is taught in the Hindu and Buddhist scriptures and by the Ancients such as Pythagoras, Plato and Plotinus in the West and, within the bounds of dualism, is the only intellectually satisfying solution. From the viewpoint of Advaita, there is, of course, no one to be reincarnated.

One condition attendant on reincarnation is that memory does not normally carry over, and therefore cases of remembered former lives still remain phenomena. It is interesting, however, to note that the ability to recall past incarnations is one of the skills which Patanjali lists as obtainable by yogic practice. The early Buddhists also claimed to have a technique by which a man of spiritual concentration could recall a past incar-

nation at will. Why should he will? The Advaitin might ask.

**THE YOGA SYSTEM OF PATANJALI OR THE ANCIENT HINDU DOCTRINE OF CONCENTRATION OF MIND,** Embracing: The Mnemonic Rules, called *Yoga-Sutras*, of Patanjali; The Comment, called *Yoga-Bhashya*, attributed to Veda-Vyasa; the explanation called *Tattva-vaisaradi*, of Vachaspati-Misra, translated from the original Sanskrit by James Haughton Woods, Professor of Philosophy in Harvard University. (Harvard Oriental Series, Volume Seventeen, Authorised Indian Reprint by Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, pp. 381, price Rs. 7.50).

It is at once apparent from a glance at the introduction to the present work that its probe into contingent matters such as date and authorship is thorough. On the other hand, with regard to the meaning of the text, it is enough to read Book II, v. 5, where the concluding word, *avidya* (meaning ignorance) is translated 'undifferentiated consciousness'. The verse runs as follows: "The recognition of the permanent, of the pure, of pleasure, and of a self in what is impermanent, impure, pain and not-self is undifferentiated consciousness." It is not; it is ignorance.

**SQUARE SUN SQUARE MOON:** A Collection of Sweet Sour Essays. By Paul Reps. (Tuttle, Rutland, Vermont, U.S.A. and Tokyo, Japan. \$2.50).

Why should a travel book be reviewed in *The Mountain Path*? The best answer seems to be:

"Because it is by Paul Reps." Whether he is describing a Norwegian wedding or Japanese massage, whether tea-drinking or education, he strikes through the superficial to the essential and says surprising things. In Fiji, for instance, he writes that "some of us might bridge primitive and trivialised existence." Just that one epithet — 'trivialised' instead of 'civilized' — and we are reminded where we stand.

When describing traditional Japanese dance and music that is supposed to "purify the universe" he forestalls a cynical smile with the reminder: "The universe is in us."

Speaking of a woman whose use of japa and whose way of life makes her more dynamic at 74 than most women are at 30, he adds the potent little phrase: "Try it."

He faces us with the question: "Where are we going in our rush for machinery to have living more convenient and to travel around the stars? We are going out and around. May there be another inner travel?" There may be and is and it is good to be reminded of it.

**PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS:** Compiled from the Scriptures of India, being No. 183-184 of *Vedanta and the West*. (Vedanta Press, Hollywood, 1967, pp. 136, yearly subscription \$4.00.)

The editors have gathered into this small book a marvellous wealth of quotations from the Vedic Hymns and the Upanishads. As they rightly say, Vedanta is not exclusive of devotion. Granted that the ego does not exist, it still behaves as though it does and must therefore be faced with the alternative that either it doesn't exist or, insofar as it does, it must submit in devotion to the greater Reality of the Lord. So it is caught either way.

Unfortunately, the later chapters are not so well selected and many of the items are in very regrettable English verse translations that impede reading; but these first two chapters are enough and more than enough to justify the work.

**RAMANA MAHARSHI, THE MYSTIC SAGE OF ARUNACHALA:** By M. D. Sagane (Published by A. M. Sagane, Rukmini Nagar, Amravati, M.P., pp. 196. Price Rs. 4).

A brief life sketch of the Maharshi is followed by the late author's ideas, dreams and visions and various remarkable episodes. He felt the need to spend only a short time in the physical presence of the Maharshi but for the rest of his life experienced a powerful bond between them, with himself as dependant and the Maharshi as pro-

jector. So confident was he of the protection that he called on it, when in need, to change the course of events — for instance in healing a sickness or bringing much needed rain; and things happened as he demanded.

ARTHUR OSBORNE.

**LIGHT ON YOGA:** By B. K. S. Iyengar (George Allen and Unwin, pp. 342. Price 75s.)

In the first part of the book, the author has described what yoga means, mainly on the basis of Patanjali, the well-known author of the Yoga-sutra. The second part deals with the technique and effect of various yogic exercises. The third part, a comparatively brief one, is concerned with yogic breathing. This is followed by two appendices, the former containing a course of asanas spread over a period of three hundred weeks, and the latter giving hints as to some groups of asanas useful in curing various ailments. The book also includes a well drawn up glossary of Sanskrit terms. The most outstanding part of the book is made of six hundred art plates depicting different yogic poses. These pictures do make an impression, and show clearly how an individual properly trained in yoga exercises can obtain flexibility of various muscles of the body, making for a good control of them.

Many people seem to think that yoga consists mainly of bodily postures and breathing exercises. Actually, the asanas were originally looked upon simply as comfortable sitting positions useful for the purpose of prolonged meditation and it was perhaps at the hands of the Hatha Yogis of later times that many intricate and funny-looking postures came to be practised. The utility of many of them for maintaining the body in a healthy condition is no doubt beyond question.

But the science of yoga, as brought out in the Upanishads and texts like the Gita, is really concerned chiefly with the development of human personality in such a way that the rare state of jivan-mukti comes into being. It is for this, in the main, that yoga has come to be held in high esteem by all men of wisdom in India. And this has obviously little to do with the Asanas which seem to form the main topic of Mr. Iyengar's book. The feeling cannot thus be avoided that the title of this book is rather a misnomer. A correct title would have been "Light on Asanas". And this light is also very dim, for unfortunately not much is yet scientifically known about the corrective, restorative or therapeutical value of yogic exercises. In the light of this fact, the prescription offered by the author for curing various ailments appears an over-simplification.

The usefulness of this book for the average reader would have been increased by reducing the number of plates to about a hundred and avoiding excessive modifications of traditional poses.

The author should, however, be congratulated for sincerity in what he writes—a quality not to be found in all writers on yoga in our time.

**PRANAYAMA:** By Swami Kuvalayananda. (Popular Prakashan, Bombay. Pp. 140+43 art plates. Price Rs. 12.50).

The pioneering efforts of Swami Kuvalayananda in the field of scientific yoga are well-known to the educated public. In this book he gives a clear and lucid account of what Pranayama must be taken to mean, its importance from the physiological and spiritual points of view, its technique for various purposes, and the caution that one should exercise in its practice. The book also contains valuable information regarding a useful, graded course in yogic exercise, and a glossary of Sanskrit terms commonly found in yoga literature.

In the first chapter the author has described the mechanism of respiration in all its details. The second chapter deals with the postures appropriate to pranayama. This is followed by general considerations and Patanjali's four types of Pranayama. The subsequent chapters are concerned with the eight varieties of Kumbhaka as found in the Hatha Yoga texts. The chapter on physiological and spiritual values of Pranayama is an original effort.

The description of the processes involved bears the mark of scientific precision, coupled with a thorough grasp of traditional ideas. Yet, it is fairly simple for a common man to understand. The language the author uses is not that of an arrogant master of the yoga tradition but rather of a sincere well grounded teacher. This makes an impression. The diagrams and figures are on the whole clear and wisely designed. It seems, however, that the captions of some of the figures have got jumbled up; those of figures 32 and 34, for example, seem to be interchanged. Figures 28 to 31 appear rather puzzling. When both the nostrils are to be kept open it would be unnecessary to keep the right hand on the face.

The book, however, deserves praise and commendation for its clarity and scientific value.

PROF. K. S. JOSHI.

**KATHA UPANISHAD—Samkhya Point of View:**

By Dr. Anima Sen Gupta (65/64, Moti Mahal, Kanpur, 1967. Pp. 68. Price Rs. 7.50.)

Dr. Anima Sen Gupta has attempted to "resurrect" the Samkhya system by interpreting the

Upanishads from that point of view. In this book, she interprets the *Katha Upanishad*. Her main point is that the Samkhya is not a materialist school, as it does not say Matter is the only reality, or that consciousness is a product of Matter. The Prakriti of the Samkhya is a *Chetanadheena Tattva*, consciousness-dependent principle. While the Samkhya vitalises unconscious material cause by a conscious principle, it does not ascribe even efficient causality to Purusha. This is a significant point. And this is consistent, says the author, with the Upanishadic doctrine of *asangatva* and *aparinamitva* of atman. Now Shankara did the same; he denied all causality to Brahman to affirm *nirgunatva*; Dr. Anima Sen Gupta seizes on this point and says that "this may be viewed as an effect of the influence of the Samkhya philosophy, for the Samkhya is the first among the orthodox schools to say that immutability and causality cannot belong to the same principle; (while "the God that has been admitted by him (Shankara) as the cause of the world is a false ruler of a false world").

Now, what does this interpretation prove? Even if it is true, what it tends to prove is the fact that both the Samkhya and the Vedanta are involved in a common and genuine philosophical difficulty of transcendental reason; *something must be so and so, and yet, it cannot be so and so*. And, since there does not seem to be only one way of solving or expressing the mystery of Being, the Upanishads will continue to interest us, and schools like the Samkhya and the Vedanta arise.

**BARUCH SPINOZA: Letters to Friend and Foe.** (Edited by Dagobert D. Reeves. Philosophical Library, New York. Pp. 109. Price \$3.75.)

The Jews, who were persecuted by the Christians, persecuted Spinoza who was a Jew. He was expelled from the Jewish Synagogues and Christians and Jews regarded him as a "dangerous atheist. And Spinoza declined, for this reason, to accept an appointment to teach in public. "Religious quarrels," he said, "do not arise so much from ardent zeal for religion, as from men's various dispositions and love of contradiction, which causes them habitually to distort and condemn everything, however rightly it may have been said." In these letters, Spinoza carried on a patient and courteous correspondence explaining the principles of his philosophy. He said that correct knowledge was needed on these points; the first cause and origin of all things, the true nature of the human mind, and third, the true cause of error. He said: "I do not presume tha<sup>t</sup>

I have found the best philosophy, I know that I understand the true philosophy". And "truth is the index of itself and of what is false."

**MEANING FOR MAN:** By Rollin Chambliss (Philosophical Library, New York, 1966. Pp. 191. Price: \$4.50.)

The author is Chairman of the Department of Sociology at the University of Hartford, and these are lectures delivered by him on "Basic Issues of Man" at Continuing Centres of Education in America. The book contains interesting sociophilosophical reflections on Man. Although our knowledge of nature has increased, our knowledge of human nature remains very deficient, and what Socrates said long ago, "know thyself" is still pertinent to-day. The dominant influence to-day is western civilization, but the image of Man in western civilization does not give us the whole truth about Man. We have to discover the basic truth about Man through the knowledge that modern communication has brought about of other cultures. While social disorder is increasing, and is nothing new, it now threatens not individuals but nations, and could destroy mankind. The author views the nature of Man from the standpoint of heredity, environment, personality, reason, freedom, morality, love, and he recognises that as he has drawn his ideas wholly from western sources, his book presents an image of western, rather than universal, man. He leaves the task of showing how western man resembles his brothers in other cultures, to others.

PROF. N. A. NIKAM.

**SELF-CULTURE:** By I. K. Taimni (Theosophical Publishing House, Madras-20. Pp. 304. Price not stated. Second Revised Edition, 1967).

Dr. Taimni is a well-known theosophist whose works show a happy integration of the fundamentals of ancient Indian thought with the developments in modern sciences in the domain of physics, biology and psychology. Discussing the necessity of self-culture, the author first poses the problem of man, which cannot be understood, much less solved, in isolation from the Universe of which he is a part and from the Reality of which he is an emanation. Each form in the universe is a spark of the Divine Reality and as such partakes of the character of that Reality in essence. To evolve progressively in consciousness and corresponding form so as to ultimately manifest overtly what it contains within itself is the destiny of each individual unit.

How this evolution of man proceeds in Nature and how it can be speeded up by enlightened

effort is discussed in the second section. The system of man is analysed into its several constituents of planes of consciousness and their vehicles of bodies, physical, astral, mental, buddhic, atmic etc. The process of self-culture proceeds by way of activation, purification and subtilisation of each vehicle (*kosha* as termed in the Vedanta), till all of them respond to the vibrations of the soul within and begin to function in harmony in the growing Light of the Sun of spiritual knowledge.

The third section contains helpful hints from the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Bhakti Sutras of Narada, etc. for the development of human personality in line with the object of the cosmic manifestation of the Supreme Reality.

The book is very informative and useful to every one who seeks self-improvement.

**ASPECTS OF INDIAN THOUGHT:** By Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj. (University of Burdwan, 1966. Pp. 240. Price: Rs. 25.)

Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj was one of those rare savants who have an equal grasp of the principles of the different systems of philosophy and of the techniques employed for translating these truths into practice. He had combined both in his own life to an eminent degree. The present volume is a collection of his papers on some of the different approaches to the Reality in Indian Thought.

The author draws attention, at the outset, to the common feature of all these systems of philosophy; they are not based on ratiocinative intellection but originate in *pratibha*, an intuitive revelation. Reason comes afterwards to clothe the perception in terms of human thought.

The contributions on the tantric philosophies, e.g. Shakta, Pashupata, Virasaiva, System of Chakras according to Gorakshanatha etc. are very scholarly and exhaustive. Papers on subjects like Nirmanakaya, Nyaya-Vaisesika Philosophy, Kaivalya are notable for the fresh light shed on the subjects. In the chapter on *Stages in Yoga*, Dr. Gopinath speaks of three large steps: "In lowest stage of spiritual perfection, Yoga is the withdrawal of the senses from the external world and their convergence on the mind. Ascending a step higher up, one would find it in the suspension of the modalities of the mind itself and its consequent unity, as it were, with the individual self, from which it appears as distinct only through its workings. When the mind ceases to be active its distinctness as an entity vanishes altogether — As soon as the artificial barrier

raised between the higher and the lower self is demolished the Pure Self emerges as a radiant and eternally self-aware existence of Joy in which the two aspects of its being appear as united in an eternal embrace of ineffable sweetness. This is Yoga in the truest sense of the word." (P. 117)

A book for reference and serious study.

M. P. PANDIT.

CHATTAMBI SWAMIGAL — *The Great Scholar-Saint of Kerala*, a short biography: By K. P. K. Menon (published by P. G. Narayana Pillai, Perumbavur, Kerala, pp. 70, price Re. 1/-).

Though brief, this is a most welcome booklet about a Yogi and Guru whose open absolutist ways, marvellous endowments, freedom from conventions, deep mystical and scholastic learning and extraordinary psychic attainments (*siddhis*) were all the more remarkable when we consider the Cimmerian darkness of the Travancore (he was born at Kollur on the outskirts of Trivandrum) of his time (1853-1924).

Like the author, I am inevitably drawn to the parallel case of Narayana Guru (1854-1928), who was not only Chattambi Swami's contemporary, but his close companion and his sishya in the transmission of esoteric wisdom. How two such spiritual giants emerged out of such an environment is baffling without some theory of Grace.

I well remember, on my first visit to Travancore, only thirty-five years ago, how hard it was to get even a glass of water in some parts of this caste-ridden domain. Chattambi Swami ignored it completely, and took food from Ezhavas although this was scandalous in the Nair tribe to which he was affiliated. He and Narayana Guru split open the theocratic prison of south Kerala and let in the light of spirituality by the application of *advaita*. By their efforts and deep scholarship in Sanskrit and Tamil they were able to prove their case for the sameness of human beings. The pretensions of the Brahmins were shattered. Although this had its social results, the cause was definitely the spiritual principles involved.

This booklet breathes the wonder of the absolute. When we read of this great Yogi's intimacy with ants and snakes, his power over mad dogs and tigers and his love for the whole of life, we are transported into the realm of the luminous which Gita extols in II. 29.

Everyone interested in the lives of those who have followed the way of the Absolute will welcome this booklet and hope that Dr. Menon

will write a full-length biography of this loveable, heroic and yet so tantalisingly mysterious Teacher.

JOHN SPIERS.

SHINING HARVEST: By M. P. Pandit (Ganesh and Co., Madras, pp. 289, price Rs. 10/-).

Mr. Pandit is well known to all students of spiritual teaching through his various writings, especially on Yoga and Tantra. He is also a prolific reviewer of books on religion and culture and as such shows extensive learning and sound judgment.

The present book is a collection of his recent reviews divided into three sections, on yoga, philosophy and mysticism. The variety of topics raised makes for interesting reading, and indeed, but for the author's reviews some of the books might have remained comparatively obscure. The reviews on the Tripura Rahasya, the Yoga Vasishta and the Pratyabhijna system are fairly detailed and give the lay reader some fundamental ideas about these works. Those on Tibetan Yoga and the Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism are thought-provoking, and whether the Hindu Tantras were derived from the Buddhist, as Lama Govinda believes, or the other way round, Mr. Pandit succeeds in making us understand in broad outline the characteristics of Tibetan mysticism.

Even a casual reading of this book will take the reader through a variety of systems and beliefs, familiar or obscure. The book is well got up, like all 'Ganesh' publications, and is well worth acquiring.

PROF. S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

ASK A POTATO: By Paul Reps, pp. 16, price \$1.00. (Published by the author at Paanilo, Hawaii 96776.)

reps is ripping,  
style staccato, figures gripping,  
well-boiled, well-oiled,  
spiced and garnished,  
salted to taste,  
nothing to waste,  
to be munched and masticated,  
not swallowed in haste——  
everything we ought to know  
from editor A.O.  
is seen to grow  
on this Potato.

K.S.

## MISREPRESENTATION

(2)

(1)

The April issue of *Mother India* contains a lengthy and appreciative account of the life and teaching of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Unfortunately, however, the writer of it has fallen into the so common mistake of regarding the experience of Self-enquiry that came to him spontaneously when he was a youth of seventeen as the beginning only of his quest. "A moment of eternity had touched him and turned him into a seeker of light beyond life and death." On the contrary, the quest had been consummated in that one experience leaving him no longer a seeker but permanently immersed in the "Light beyond life and death".

Another mistake may be the fault of injudicious cutting by an editor. After describing the death of the Maharshi's mother in 1922, the article continues: "The Maharshi was not yet seventy but looked much more aged." This sentence, taken from *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge*, by Arthur Osborne, refers not to 1922, when his mother left this life, but to 1950, when he died! In 1922 he was in quite robust middle age.

"Sri Ramana Maharshi, it is said, created a spiritual heart, seated on his right side, while the natural one lay to the left." From 'Kriya Yoga' of Yogoda Satsangha (India) by M. S. Ramakrishna, p. 95 of 'The Brahmavadin', April 1967.

*The Maharshi did not create an additional heart for himself; he taught that in everybody the spiritual heart is at the right and is different from the physical heart at the left.*

## MISREPRESENTATION ?

In our issue of July 1966 we reviewed a translation of 'The Surangama Sutra' by Charles Luk. We have since been informed that this is not the real Surangama Sutra but what Etienne Lamotte in his annotated French translation of the latter published at Louvain in 1965 refers to as an apocryphal Chinese work composed in the 8th Century A.D., probably by a Court official of the Empress Wu of the T'ang Dynasty.

Not being competent to verify this, we forwarded the statement to the translator, Charles Luk on January 23rd this year, asking him if he would care to make any comment or rejoinder but our letter remained unanswered.

## "You and I"

By

G. N. Daley

Mind, Body or consciousness —  
Which of these are you ?  
Which of these is the changeless  
God, Self, Guru ?

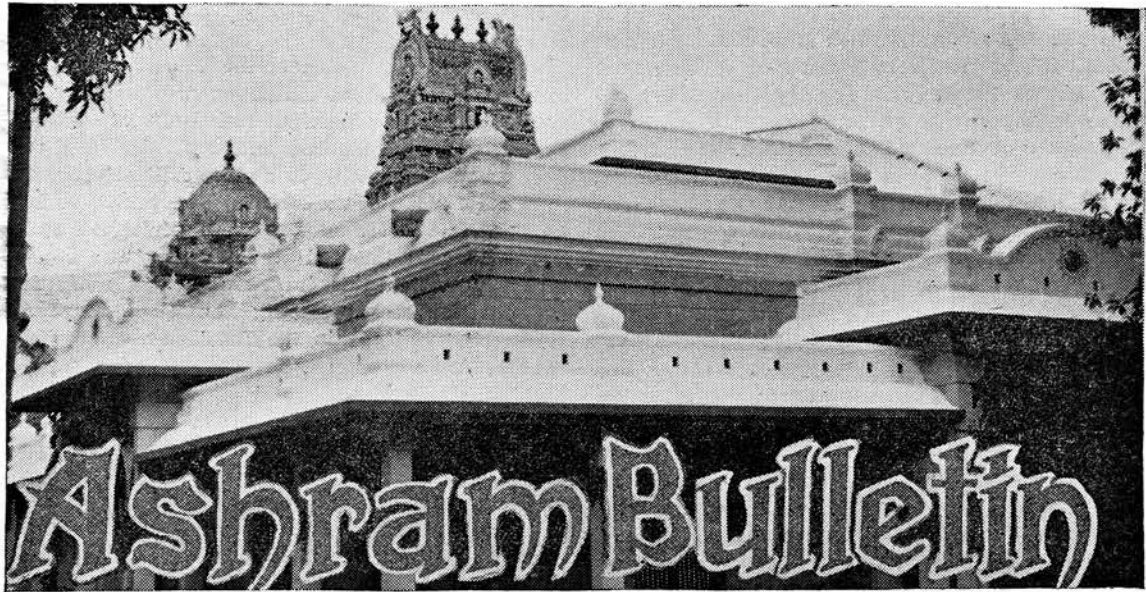
O Changeless One, O Self alone,  
Being, Bliss and Consciousness.

Be the perceiver's Perceiver  
And thus deceive the deceiver.  
How can the One Who is changeless

Change like a body or mind ?  
O, Changeless one, O, Self alone,  
Being, Bliss and Consciousness.

Body mind and consciousness —  
Two are not and one is all !  
O, come sweet Self, Guru, God — no less  
Than 'I' shall be my all.

O ! Changeless one, O, Self alone !  
Being, Bliss and Consciousness.



## KUMBHABHISHEKAM CELEBRATED

### A THRILLING FULFILMENT !

It is traditional for a Spiritual Master to be buried, not cremated. According to the general wish of the devotees, Sri Maharshi was buried south of the Old Hall, between the Old Hall and the Temple. A simple bamboo structure with a palm-leaf matting roof was erected over the grave. The Vedas continued to be chanted there, morning and evening, as they had been in his presence before, followed by Puja. Devotees used to sit around the shrine.

The Ashram had no large or regular income and it was not until 1962 that it was found possible to start work on the permanent shrine. Even then the work slowly, not only because of shortage of funds, but also because the stone-carving is highly skilled work done by master-craftsmen. Despite this, however, the main central structure was ready by July 1964, as may be seen from the photographs in our issue of that date.

There was a minimum of dust and noise, as the stones were shaped and carved at a distance and only brought to the site to be hoisted into place. Nevertheless, it was found advisable to transfer the chanting and pujas temporarily to some other place. Accordingly a special rite was performed deconsecrating the shrine and transferring its influence to a temporary structure, *Balalaya*, in the New Hall. Devotees have been eagerly looking forward to the opening and re-consecration of the actual shrine and the resumption of pujas there. This was at last found possible on June 18th this year.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Sri Ramaneswara Mahalinga Kumbhabhishekam ceremonies celebrated at Sri Ramanasramam started on the 14th June. The Ashram President and his wife acted as the *Yajamanas* (presiding hosts). The ceremonies started with *mangala vadyam* (*nagaswaram*) and with *anujna*, i.e. formal permission was taken from the bhaktas,

brahmins and assembled vidwans, accompanied by mantras, to perform the religious portions of the above ceremonies. After this, puja was done to Ganesha, the Initiator of enterprises, and the Lord of construction, *Vastu Purusha*. The worship included the *Vastu Homam*, i.e. offering of several things through fire to the *Vastu Purusha*. After

the Vastu Pooja comes a major function called the *Rakshokhana Homam*, which is performed to dispel all the asuric forces which may surround the premises of the Ashram and try to create loopholes in the proper performance of the various ceremonies of the Kumbhabhishekam. It is a very peculiar ceremony. A fire-brand is taken all round the premises of the Ashram with a flourish of trumpets, followed by the chanting of mantras and symbolizes the creation of a sort of a cordon of fire all round the Ashram, keeping out all evil forces.

The 15th of June was an off-day, it being an inauspicious day (*masa thyajyam*).

The 16th saw the beginning of the ceremony proper. It started with Ganesha Pooja followed by *Go Pooja*<sup>1</sup> (worship of the cow), *Gaja Pooja* (worship of the elephant), and *Dhana Pooja* (worship of all the materials required for the consecration ceremony).

\* \* \*

In the evening, as a part of the Seminar arranged for in this connection, Sri Krishna Bhikshu spoke in Telugu on 'The Ramana I worship', Sri Viswanathan presiding. The lecturer tried to explain the rationale of the Kumbhabhishekam ceremony.

\* \* \*

After the night meal the purohits went around in a ceremonial manner for *Mrut-Sangrahanam*. It may be explained in this connection that the Divine powers are invoked into the three elements mentioned in the Veda: earth, water and fire. The power of the earth is to produce and sustain all creation, and the creative aspect of energy is worshipped by collecting selected earth in nine parts dedicated to nine *griha-devatas*, in which the seeds of nine *dhanyas* (different grains) are made to sprout. These seedlings are put in water stored in *kumbhas* (pots) which have been worshipped along with mantras, i.e. the creative power of the earth is added to the water stored in the pots. There were five such pots in a row on the pedestals specially erected in the picturesque Yaga Sala, beautifully decorated. Water in each of them is sanctified by the power of the mantras. Before each pedestal there is a *Homa Kunda* (sacrificial pit) where fire is worshipped by offering several articles for the devas. In this ceremony Ramana Maheswara, Mathrubutheswara, Yogambika, Sri Chakra and the *Pariwara Devatas* were worshipped on five different decorated pedestals.

After the *Mrut-sangrahanam* and planting of nine types of seeds, called *Ankurarpanam*, the *Ghatasthapana* (installation of the sacred pots)

was performed after midnight on the 16th/17th, at 1 o'clock.

When the construction of the Vimana over the tomb of Sri Ramana Bhagavan was begun the power in the Ramaneswara Mahalinga was withdrawn by special mantras and was transferred to and located temporarily in a place called *Balalaya*, in the front Hall of the Mathrubutheswara Temple on 6th June, 1962. Poojas were performed and Vedas chanted there all these days. The ceremony by which this transference was made is called *Kalanyasam*. During the *Ghatasthapana* ceremony this linga in the Balalaya was carried over to the Yaga Sala, the powers therein being invoked into the earth, water and fire, worshipped in the Yaga Sala. This is called the *Ghatasthapana*. Sacred waters from various rivers like the Ganga and Yamuna, were poured into the *Ghatas* (decorated brass pots).

Thereafter the performance of Pooja at the Balalaya stopped.

\* \* \*

On the 17th morning the necessary Poojas were performed before all the five pedestals established in the Yaga Sala. In the evening, Sri Krishna Bhikshu presiding, Sri R. K. Viswanatha Iyer, retired Professor of Physics at Annamalai University, addressed the audience on 'Ramana as seen by a Scientist'.

\* \* \*

Afterwards at 5-30 p.m. the Ramaneswara Linga was taken out with due ritual from the Yaga Sala and finally restored to its original place on the tomb of Sri Bhagavan whereon a twin-faced lotus pedestal in white marble had been installed as the support of the sacred Linga. Precious stones of nine varieties were put in the socket of the lotus and were covered by a gold plate on which was engraved the sacred Pranava (OM). On this the Sri Ramaneswara Mahalinga was firmly fixed by a special cement prepared in the traditional way (*ashtabundana marundu*). This Linga will not be removed from here any more and will be worshipped for ever at this place.

The final ceremony took place on June 18th before dawn. The purohits began worship in the Yaga Sala and separately, to the west of the office room, the Sthapathi or architect, Sri S. K. Achary, began his *Sthapatya Homam* before a specially constructed pedestal, on which the *Kalasa* (dome-pinnacle in copper) to be established on the *Vimana* of Sri Ramaneswara Mantapa

<sup>1</sup>It will be seen throughout this account that the word 'worship' has not the meaning it ordinarily bears in English. There is no exact equivalent.

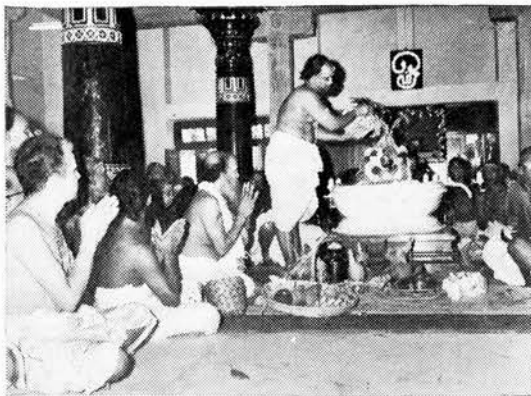


# THE SHRINE OF GRACE AND BLISS

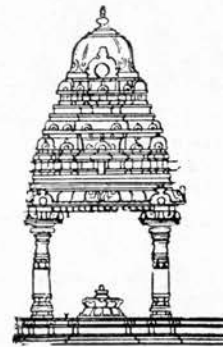
*Reconsecrated*



The Shrine of Peace, SRI RAMANESWARA MAHALINGA, as it is worshipped now at Sri Ramana Mantapa.



The thrilling and ecstatic moment—pouring of the holy waters, worshipped at the Yaga Sala, on Sri Ramaneswara Mahalinga, thus bringing back the shakti of the shrine to its original place.

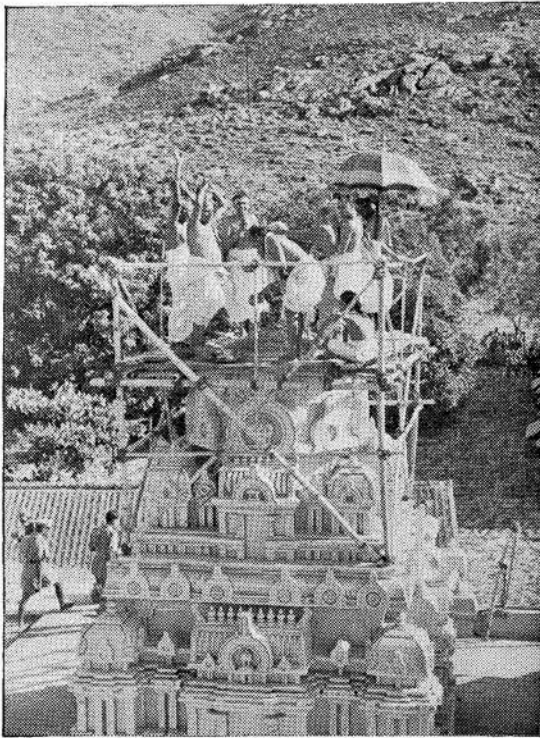


The Holy Waters, into which the spirits of the shrines, have been prayerfully received, taken out in procession to the Yaga Sala.



# KUMBHABHISHEKAM

*A FEAST FOR THE EYES,*



Abhisheka (pouring of holy waters) on the Gopura top.



The President of the Ashram, Sri T. N. Venkataraman, with the *kalasa*, along with the other trustees. The Lt. Governor of Pondicherry, Sri S. L. Silam, with his wife and H. H. Swami Chidanandaji of Sivanandashram, are also seen.

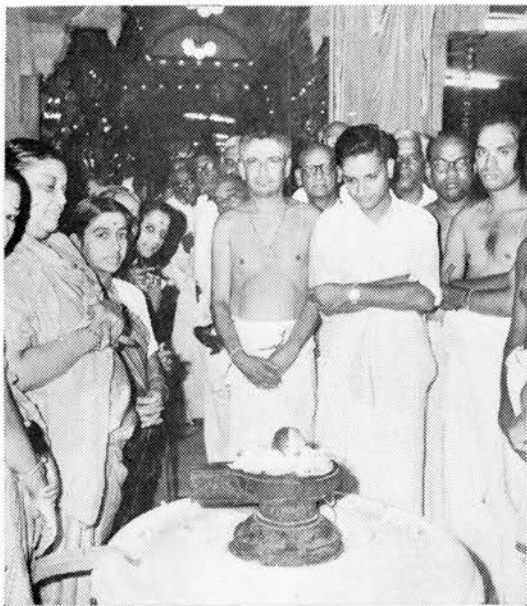


A group photo taken over the Mantap after the *abhisheka* on the Gopura (tower).

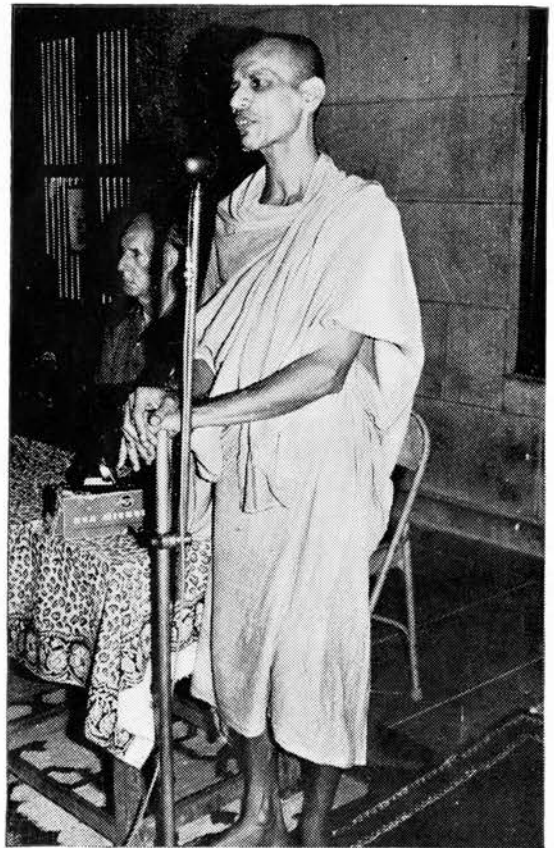


# CEREMONY—

*EARS AND HEARTS!*



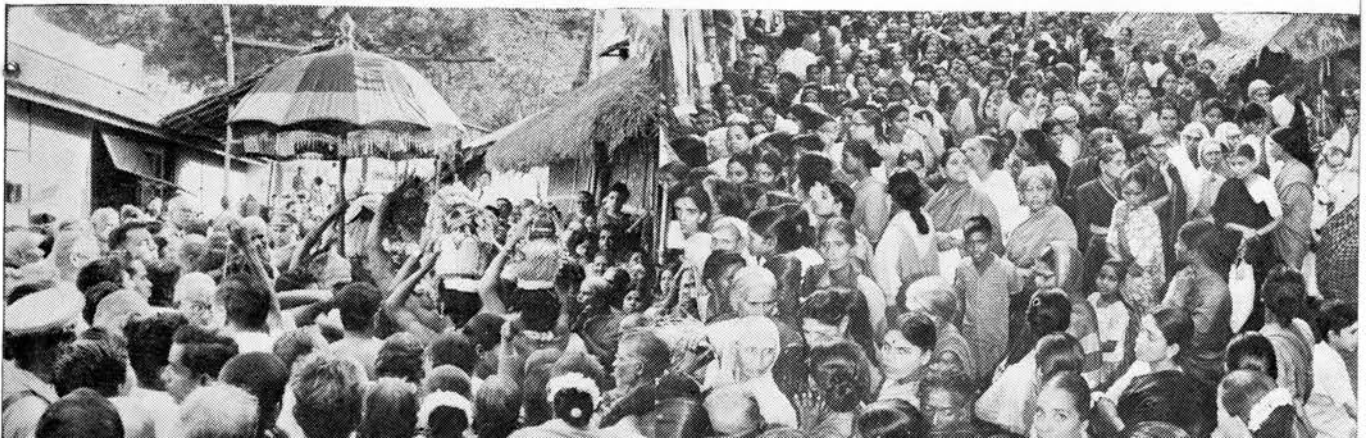
Sri Janaki Matha of Tanjore (extreme left) absorbed in ecstasy. Extreme right: Sri Ramana Sthapathy and next to him is Sri S. K. Achary, the Chief Architect.



H. H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji, President, The Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, addressing the gathering.

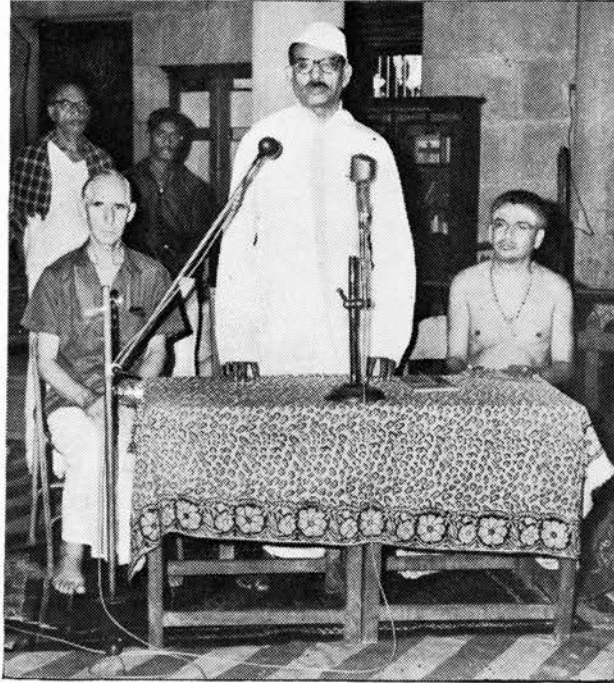


Thousands of devotees felt the presiding Presence of Sri Maharshi during the procession.

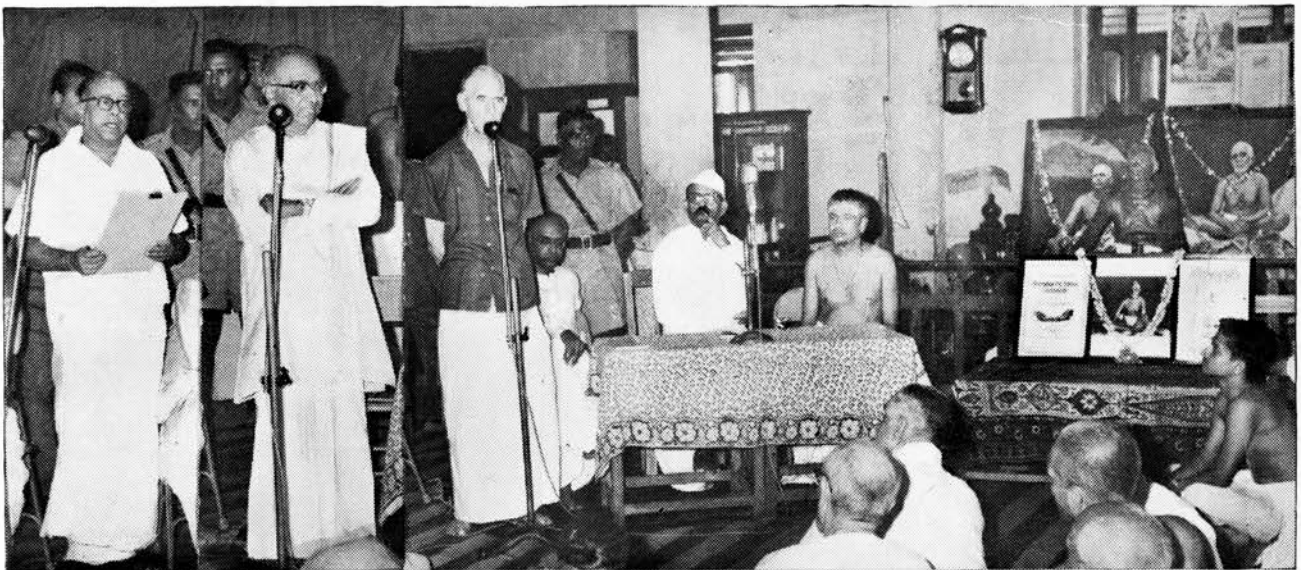


## "RAMANA PICTORIAL SOUVENIR"

*Released*



Lt. Governor of Pondicherry, Sri S. L. Silam, addressed the devotees after releasing the "Ramana Pictorial Souvenir". Mr. Osborne and Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan also spoke. Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami gave a vote of thanks.



(L to R) Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Mr. Osborne, Sri S. L. Silam, Lt. Governor of Pondicherry, and Sri T. N. Venkataraman, President of the Ashram.

was worshipped in the ritualistic way. Kumbhabhishekam literally means pouring the sanctified water on the Linga which is said to be the *Sukshma* (subtle) Linga and on the *Kalasa* established on the *Vimana*, which is said to be *Sthula* (gross) Linga; the *Karana* (causal) Linga being a mere mental conception is worshipped in mind only. These three things are the *pratikas* (icons) into which the Divine Power that was manifested through the sacred body of Sri Bhagavan descends to be worshipped by devotees for their spiritual and other benefits.

After the *Sthapathya Homam* the *Kalasa* was carried in a big procession to the ecstasy of all assembled to the top of the *Vimana* of Ramaneswara Maha Mantapa and finally fixed there. Meanwhile, the sacred waters in the three *Kumbhas* on pedestals set apart for worship in the Yaga Sala for Yogambika, Sri Chakra and *Pariwara Devathas* were carried into the Mathrubutheswara Temple through a consecrated path, cordoned off by ropes, and the *abhishekas* were done for the three entities. The final acts of consecration, pouring the sacred waters on the Sri Ramaneswara Mahalinga, on Mathrubutheswara Linga and on the Kalasas on the *Vimanas* of the two shrines were done between 7-30 and 8-30 a.m. and this finally closed the ceremonies.

At 10 a.m. a meeting was held in the front Hall of the Mathrubutheswara Temple with Sri S. L. Silam, Lt. Governor of Pondicherry presiding. The Lt. Governor was received at the Ashram by the President, Sri T. N. Venkataraman and Trustees, Messrs. T. S. Bhathirajalam Pillai, K. Srinivasachari, K. Padmanabhan, and B. S. Ranganadham, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Padma Shri, addressed the gathering on Advaita Vedanta as expounded by Sri Shankara and Sri Ramana. Sri Osborne then spoke, declaring that the Kumbhabhishekam will be the starting point of a new and glorious epoch in the life of Sri Ramanasramam. Sri Silam, then released the 'RAMANA PICTORIAL SOUVENIR', published by the Ashram in commemoration of the Kumbhabhishekam, containing many rare photos of Sri Bhagavan, and also selected utterances of his and a number of specially written articles. It is priced at Rs. 7.50 (plus postage) or £ 0-15-0/\$ 2.25 (postage free).

In the afternoon Brahma Sri Kumaraswami Dikshitar of Kanjeevaram, a well-known agama pundit, explained the *Ramana-tattwa* in a beautiful Tamil speech. Sri Om Sadhu, a devotee of Sri Bhagavan, then conducted a bhajan. Thereafter a meeting was held at which Sri Osborne

presided while Sri Swami Chidanandaji, President of the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, exhorted the audience in an English speech to constant endeavour on the spiritual path. Afterwards *Ekadasa-rudrabhishekam* was done to the Sri Ramaneswara Mahalinga, which is called the Mahabhishekam. This was followed by Sahasranama Pooja, which lasted upto 10-30 in the night.

On the 15th and 16th, Sri Krishna Bhagavathar of Bangalore, a well-known devotee of Sri Ramana, regaled the audience with a Kalakshepam on 'Tukaram' on the first day and on 'Sri Ramana' on the second. On the 17th, after the lectures, Sri Purisai Murugesu Mudaliar gave a discourse on 'Bhakta Markandeya'.

The elaborate programme chalked out for the four-day celebration of the Kumbhabhishekam was carried out meticulously in every detail, and the whole function came to a very successful conclusion. There was an immense crowd of devotees. A happy and friendly atmosphere prevailed throughout.

For the first time since the lifetime of Sri Bhagavan the crowd was so great that the spacious Ashram dining hall was inadequate and it was necessary to serve meals under a pandal erected over the open space in between the flower-garden and dining hall. The handling of the large crowd for meals was most efficient, more so than on previous occasions, and for this we have to thank among others, two devotees, Hugo Maier and Sai Das. Apart from the regular meals served, there was also large-scale feeding of the poor. This was possible largely owing to the generous contributions of several devotees from Nellore district who sent rice and paddy for the purpose. We should also gratefully mention the following donations in kind by the devotees: silver articles for *Deeparadhana* by Smt. T. R. Kanakamma (Ramana Nagar), Rani of Peddapavani (Madras) and Mrs. T. N. Venkataraman; pooja vessels in brass from K. Subrahmanyam, (Nagapattinam) and oil lamp from N. R. Krishnamoorthy Iyer, (Madurai); and flowers, fruits, honey and various other articles were donated by several devotees, who usually offer such things year after year on special occasions.

The benevolent, presiding Presence of Sri Bhagavan was felt throughout. The beauty of the Ramana Mantap in every detail, from Gopura to polished pillars, created awe and wonder in the thousands of people who assembled for the occasion.

Messages wishing the function a success were received from hundreds of devotees and officials: H. H. Sri Shankaracharya Swamiji of Puri, Mother Rama Devi, Mangalore, Mother Krishna Bai, Anandashram, The President of India, Ex-President of India, Vice President of India, The Prime Minister and Dy. Prime Minister of India, Governors of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Madras and Kerala States; Speaker, Parliament of India, Sri Bishnuram Medhi, ex-Governor of Madras.

Among the distinguished visitors were: H. H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji, President, Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, Lt. Governor, Sri S. L. Silam, Pondicherry, Sri Janaki Matha and her party from Tanjore, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, J. V. Somayajulu and family from Madras; Vishnupant K. Kadav, K. Gopala Rao and K. K. Nambiar from Bombay; Dr. S. Nath with his family, from Banaras; H. R. Chadha from Calcutta; Satyanarayan Tandon and his brother from Kanpur; A. R. Natarajan and family from New Delhi; Dr. W. Radhakrishnayya from Pakala; A. Dwarak-nath Reddi and family from Chittoor; Bangalore Krishna Bhagavathar; Smt. Suri Nagamma from Vijayawada.

\* \* \*

### THE MOST MEMORABLE EVENT

We will end our account of the Kumbhabhishekam by quoting the impression it made on one of the old devotees, that is S. S. COHEN, whom we introduced to our readers in the previous issue.

\* \* \*

*For a number of years I have been staying away from the annual celebrations of Sri Ramanasramam. Advancing age after regular attendance for more than a quarter of a century appeared excuse enough. But the Kumbhabhishekam or consecration of the shrine over the Samadhi of Sri Bhagavan was an obligation and a pleasure. First of all it is for the Samadhi of my Guru; secondly it is an event which sanctifies to eternity one of the holiest places on earth.*

*Sri Ramana Maharshi was not an ordinary teacher, but an embodiment of Absolute Truth, so that it is in the fitness of things that his devotees should perpetuate his Samadhi, the very heart of his Ashram, as a place of pilgrimage for those who follow him.*

*So I attended and was fully rewarded. A number of my old friends and co-disciples I found still alive and happy at our reunion, in remembrance*

*of the good old days, when we gathered round the Master, like planets round the sun, to be illumined by his radiance and enjoy of his presence.*

*Above all, going round the old familiar parts of the Ashram I grew reminiscent of the historic association of every one of them. There is not a spot where he has not set his foot, or left his mark. The place where his sacred body lies buried is in fact the most memorable, at least to me. It was the identical spot where he received me on 3rd February, 1936, when I arrived and first set eyes on him. It was his seat where he used to receive people and also take his meals for a number of years before the present spacious dining hall was built in 1937-38. The present enclosed area of the Samadhi was then a dining room adjoining a small kitchen.*

*Most of the several thousand devotees who attended the Kumbhabhishekam on 18th June, were new faces to me. A large number, it is true, were old devotees who used to visit the Ashram off and on in the life-time of Sri Bhagavan. They came and went without being noticed by the resident disciples, flitting in and out as circumstances permitted.*

*On the whole the celebration was most successful: the organisation was splendid, the crowd orderly and full of devotion, and the vaidiks at their best. The function was high-lighted by the publication of the "RAMANA PICTORIAL SOUVENIR" on that day. This contains more than 80 photographs of the Master in various postures and with varied expressions, most of them previously unpublished. It has also a large number of short articles by devotees in praise and reminiscences of him. Although the negatives were old, the photographs had, with great care, been made clear enough (without sacrificing fidelity) to be meditated on.*

*Although the physical presence is absent I felt the Master's influence the moment I stepped into the Ashram, A POWERFUL, PERVADING PRESENCE.*

*Bhagavan shines no less splendidly in his teaching, for in this age none has been more recordite yet transparently lucid than he. His theme is the theme of life, the theme of the universe, namely EXISTENCE, which he also calls HEART or SELF. Man is Self, God is Self, Time is Self, the Universe is Self — ALL SELF.*

*The Mandukya Upanishad, anticipating Shankara and Bhagavan by two thousand years or more, begins with:*

"AUM is all this. All that is past, present and future is truly AUM.

So is also AUM that which lies beyond the triple concept of time.

All this truly Brahman: this Atman (Self) is Brahman."

*Here we are face to face with the absolute truth: man, God and universe are the one, same and only Reality.*

\* \* \*

#### SEVENTEENTH ARADHANA

The seventeenth anniversary of Sri Maharshi's Maha-Nirvana was celebrated on the 7th May. A large gathering of devotees assembled for the occasion.

The celebrations commenced with the chanting of 'Arunachala Stuti' at 5 a.m., followed by 'Ramana Sadguru Stuti'. The usual Puja with the chanting of Upanishads, Rudra, Chamaka, Purusha Sukta, etc., culminating in the chanting of Sri Maharshi's Sahasranamam (The Thousand Names), and Maha Mangalarathi was performed at 11-30 a.m.

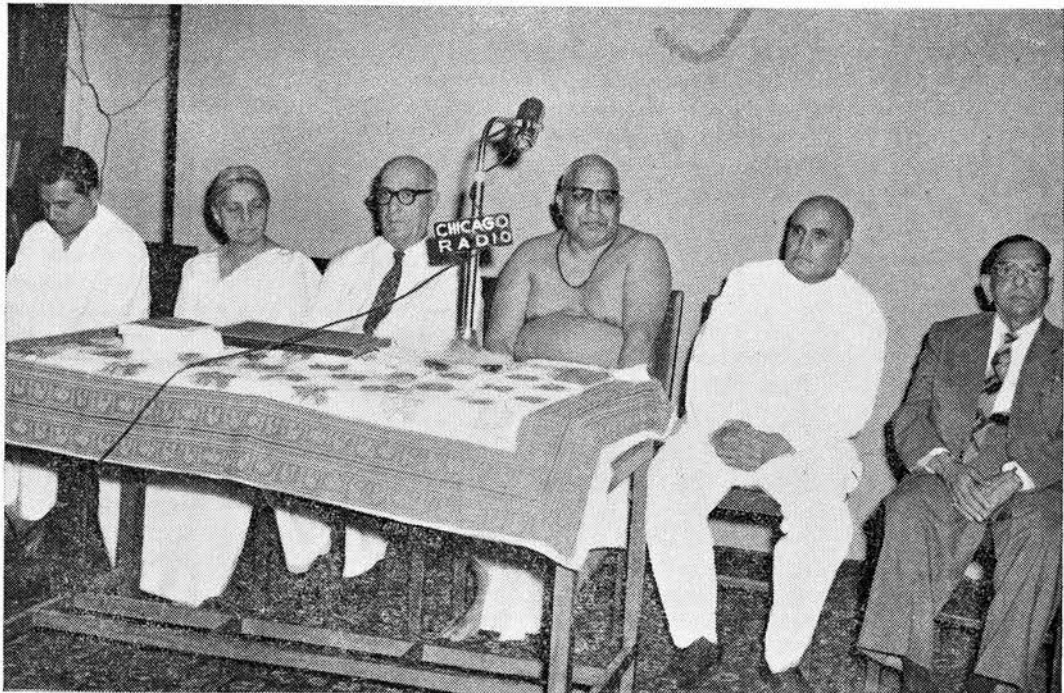
The Lt. Governor of Pondicherry, Sri Sayaji Silam and his wife were the chief guests.

A portrait of Sri Maharshi was positioned in front of the Samadhi Mantapam which was almost complete and, after the religious rituals in 'Balalaya' devotees congregated in front of the Samadhi and paid their silent homage to Bhagavan.

In keeping with the usual tradition, the guests were invited to lunch and poor feeding was conducted on the usual scale. It was the largest Aradhana gathering there has yet been. The large dining hall was packed to capacity. There was a very friendly and cheerful atmosphere.

Among the hundreds who participated in the function were the trustees of the Ashram, Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami (former Trustee) and Tramjee Dorabjee from Madras, Mrs. Brigette, Sundin from France, Sister Diana and Kameswara Rao from Pondicherry, Mrs. Soona Nicolson of Bombay, Messrs K. Ramaswami and T. R. G. Krishnan from Bangalore and Smt. Nagamma (a number of whose 'Letters from Ramanashram' we have published) from Andhra.

#### AT BOMBAY :



*17th Anniversary Celebration of the Mahanirvana of Sri Bhagavan was celebrated by the Bombay Jayanthi Celebration Committee, at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay on 13th May 1967. Sri Swami Akhandananda Saraswati presided and Mr. Justice Gordhandas A. Thakker was the Chief Guest (third and second from right, respectively).*

## AT PALAKOL

On 14th April, the Mahanirvanothsavam of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi was celebrated in the house of Sri Sarrar Narasimharao in the presence of a large gathering of Bhaktas.

At 8 a.m., Rudrabhishekam and Sahasranama Puja to Bhagavan was performed. Later on *Upadesa Saram* of Bhagavan was read and explained to all those present.

Theertha prasadam were distributed to all who attended the function.

## VISITORS

We had a short but interesting visit from Mr. Rudkin, export manager of Hutchinson, the parent firm of Rider & Co., London who are publishers of *The Collected Works of the Maharshi* and also of Arthur Osborne's *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge*. It was a useful as well as a pleasant new contact.

\* \* \*

Terry Nicoll left for England and professional work after spending six months here. We wish him well in his new chapter of life.

\* \* \*

Dr. Mahadeva Iyer has been a frequent visitor here for some years past, with his American wife Cynthia. They have now left for America, where Dr. Iyer is taking up a job at Los Angeles. May Bhagavan's Grace be with them.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Douglas ('Kitty' to the older devotees) and her daughter Aruna were here again on a visit, staying with the Editor.

\* \* \*

Another visitor who has now left us is Ronald Hodges from Nairobi, whose photo appeared in our previous issue.

\* \* \*

Dr. Vaidyanathan is a Tamil doctor with a flourishing practice in Bombay. He was helpful and hospitable to Mr. and Mrs. Osborne when they were there in January. He made a pilgrimage of the holy places of South India by car with his wife and his younger brother, coming first to Sri Ramanashram. Dr. Vaidyanathan came here more than once in the lifetime of Bhagavan and has been a subscriber to *The Mountain Path* from the outset. His brother, who holds a position in Bangkok, became our first subscriber from Thailand.

## SEMINAR

We are planning to hold a seminar on the theme *The Basic Unanimity of the Religions* in December with Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Head of the Philosophy Department of Madras University, presiding. Jayanthi is on December 19th and the seminar will be from the 20th to the 22nd inclusive, so that Jayanthi visitors who are interested can stay over. All participants are invited to stay as Ashram guests. No paper should be longer than eight folio pages typed in double spacing or last longer than half an hour. The papers will be followed by discussions. Invitations will be sent out. Any one else wishing to give a paper should notify the Ashram and send a copy of his paper before the end of November.

## LIFE MEMBERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

It has become our practice to print our ever-growing list of life members of the Ashram and life contributors to *The Mountain Path* only once a year, in our January issue. However, this time we have decided to print a mid-year list also, since the list needs some re-arranging and there have been quite a number of new additions to it.

## THE MOUNTAIN PATH

Our next issue will be devoted to the ETHICAL BASIS OF THE SPIRITUAL QUEST. The first two in 1968 are to be on SACRED POETRY. After that we are changing our system.

## NEW YORK

In our last issue we spoke of the founding of a centre in New York, that is the 'Arunachala Ashrama,' Bhagavan Sri Ramana Center, Inc., 78 St. Mark's Place, New York City, N.Y. 10003. Its chief organiser, Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat, now writes in a spirit of ecstatic faith and devotion of the fervent little group who congregate there and the many visitors who are drawn there and respond, some more, some less, to the Grace and teaching of Bhagavan. He writes:

"We come to the Ashram in the late afternoon and hold the chanting and meditation and reading from 7 p.m. and conclude the meditation by sharing prasadam. The Ashram hall faces north and between the two windows we have enthroned a large picture of Bhagavan and burn incense and offer flowers and fruit.

"In the hall there are two rugs on the floor and we all sit on them with the help of cushions. There are about ten chairs also, placed along the



wall, so that those not used to squatting on the floor can avail themselves of them. We play a gramophone record of the Vedic chants and the songs of Bhagavan that are chanted and sung at the Ashram at Tiruvannamalai. There is no charge for visitors or devotees and we depend entirely on voluntary contributions.

"I find that all along Bhagavan has been widely read in New York City. Now and then he sends us evidence of his Grace. Some one drops in and tells us that he has been following Bhagavan for some time but never before found a centre entirely devoted to him. There are many of his devotees right here in New York City, but we have no means of reaching them. Gradually the news spreads. We are a very small ashram and it will take a good deal of time before wider circles are drawn in. Almost every day Bhagavan shows us in one way or another that what is needed is steadfast faith and devotion to him. Whoever comes here and sits in Bhagavan's spiritual Presence experiences peace and happiness. Many such experiences have been related to us by completely new visitors."

With the Grace of Bhagavan this centre will flourish and expand. We send them our sincere good wishes.

\* \* \*

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

NEW ADDITIONS

- A Study in Kierkegaardian Aesthetics, The First Sphere*, by A. G. George
- Sense, Understanding and Reason, A Digest of Kant's First Critique* by N. A. Nikam.
- A Study of Alexander's Space, Time and Deity* by S. R. Dasgupta
- Five Approaches to Philosophy* by A. Jamal Khwaja
- Ancient Indian Culture Contacts and Migrations* by K. P. Chattopadhyay
- The Yoga-System of Patanjali* by James Houghton Woods
- Patanjali Yoga Sutras* by Swami Vasantananda
- The Yogavasishta and its Philosophy* by B. L. Atreya
- The Religion of the Jainas* by Walter Schaubring, translated from the German by Amulyachandra Sen and T. C. Barke
- The Soul of Omkar* by Swami Omkar
- Cosmic Flashes* by Swami Omkar
- In the Hours of Silence* by Swami Omkar
- Aspects of Indian Thought* by Mahamahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj
- Ramana Maharshi, The Mystic of Arunachala* by M. D. Sagane
- The Mystic World* by M. D. Sagane
- The Fateful Seven* by M. D. Sagane
- Swami Vivekananda, The Man and His Mission* by Sanat Kumar Rai Chaudhury
- Conversations on Spirit Divine, Parts I and II*, by Swami Vishadananda
- Spiritual Science* by Swami Vishadananda
- Square Sun, Square Moon* by Paul Repts
- Sel-Culture* by I. K. Taimni
- India in the Ramayana Age* by S. N. Vyas
- The Status of Women in the Epics* by S. Jayal
- Baruch Spinoza, Letters to Friend and Foe* edited by Dagobert D. Reeves
- Meaning for Man* by Rollin Chambliss
- Katha Upanishad; Samkhya Point of View* by Dr. Anima Sen Gupta
- A Panorama of Indian Philosophy* by R. C. Pandeya
- The Concept of Man, A Study in Comparative Philosophy* compiled by S. Radhakrishnan and P. T. Raju
- The Psychoanalytic Revolution* by Marthe Robert
- Confucianism* by F. C. Hshu
- Gayatri Rahasya* by Shri Prabhu Ashrit Swamiji
- Kalidasa, His Style and his Times* by S. A. Sabnis
- Kalidasa, A People's Poet*, by G. H. Rao
- Mystic Approach to the Veda and the Upanishad* by M. P. Pandit
- Nilakantha Brahmachari Kuladananda* by Brahmachari Gangananda
- A Critical Study of Aurobindo* by L. G. Chincholkar
- Religion in a Changing World* by S. Radhakrishnan
- Shinto, At the Fountain-Head of Japan* by Jean Herbert
- Neo-upanishadic Philosophy* by K. V. Gajendragadkar
- Bhagavad Gita and Modern Life* by K. M. Munshi
- Bhakti Yoga* by Asvini Kumar Datta
- Flaming Faith* by Yogi Raushan Nath
- The Idealist Theory of Value* by Apala Chakravarti
- Logical Positivism as a theory of meaning* by Sachindranath Ganguly
- Ask a Potato* by Paul Repts

## INTRODUCING.....

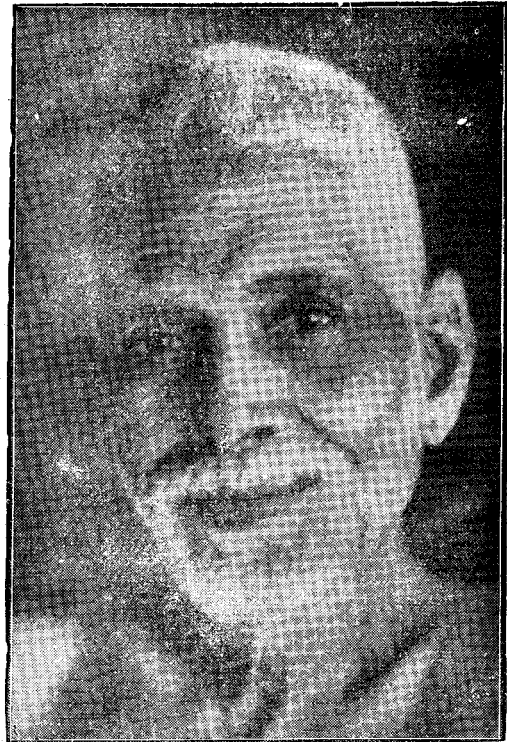
### BHAGAVAN'S ATTENDANTS

Devotees who came to the Ashram for meditation and functionaries who served in the Ashram fell into two distinct categories. A third category were the personal attendants of Bhagavan. He was very particular about cleanliness. They swept the hall several times a day and arranged the couch, daily covering it with a clean cloth. Especially in the later years, when his knees were swollen with rheumatism and it was feared that he might fall, one of them accompanied him wherever he went.

The attendants were all men, mostly unmarried, since such could reside in the Ashram and be more constantly available, and were drawn from all social classes and all the states of South India. Their way of life is well described in the following passage by *Kunju Swami*, one of them whom we introduced to our readers separately in April 1966.

"Bhagavan used to sleep on the sofa in the hall while I and a few other attendants used to sleep on the floor near it. Regularly at half past three in the morning Bhagavan used to get up and go out for his ablutions. As soon as he got up from the sofa one of us would give him the torch which was kept for his use. But not once was it necessary for Bhagavan to call us by name or wake us up and ask for the torch. The moment he got up we also used to wake up without any special effort on our part. Bhagavan's look in our direction produced a sense of brilliant light in us and we used to wake up at once. Bhagavan never ordered his servants about. He preferred to do everything for himself, but the attendants would always anticipate his wishes and do what was necessary."

Bhagavan watched constantly over their Sadhana. Kunju Swami goes on to say, "I once asked Bhagavan's permission to live outside the Ashram and to devote all my time to spiritual practices. I said I was not completely satisfied with doing service. To this he replied that real service was not the washing of his clothes, etc., but that it lay in the cleaning of one's mind. As for spiritual practices, he said that one should practise self-enquiry. When one found it tiring, one should practise dhyana or concentration. When this became difficult one should practise *japa* (repetition of sacred words or names). If



there was distraction even in this, one should recite *stotras* (verse from the scriptures). In this manner one would be engaged continuously in practising one of these four means. I accepted these words as an *upadesa* and have ever since been devoutly practising the above sadhanas."

This long line of attendants begins with *Palaniswami*, who was indeed the first devotee to attach himself permanently to Bhagavan after he came as a youthful Sage to Tiruvannamalai. There was no Ashram, no organisation; Palaniswami simply showed his devotion by performing such services as he could. He was a Malayali and had difficulty in reading Tamil, and it was largely for his sake that Bhagavan became learned in Tamil texts in order to explain to him. He remained with Bhagavan till his (Palaniswami's) death at the end of the Virupaksha Cave period.

Palaniswami was succeeded by *Aiyasami* — ideal Sadhu and devotee, very often remembered and spoken of by Sri Bhagavan. Many a time he

used to bring things from town which the devotees wanted but had forgotten to ask him for when he went. When asked how he happened to bring just those things, he would say "somehow it occurred to me". It was next to a miracle and even Bhagavan used to join in admiration with the others. Aiyasami was in Sri Bhagavan's service for four or five years.

He was succeeded by Kunju Swami (already mentioned) and *Ramakrishna Swami*. Both came at about the same time while Bhagavan was still at Skandashram and continued to serve him in the present Sri Ramanasramam. After some time Kunju Swami began to live outside the Ashram though an inmate for all practical purposes. He brought *Madhava Swami* to serve Bhagavan before he left the Ashram. Ramakrishna Swami was taken by the Sarvadhikari, Niranjananda Swami, to assist him in the management of the Ashram.

Madhava Swami was a very devoted attendant in his service to Sri Bhagavan, but after some

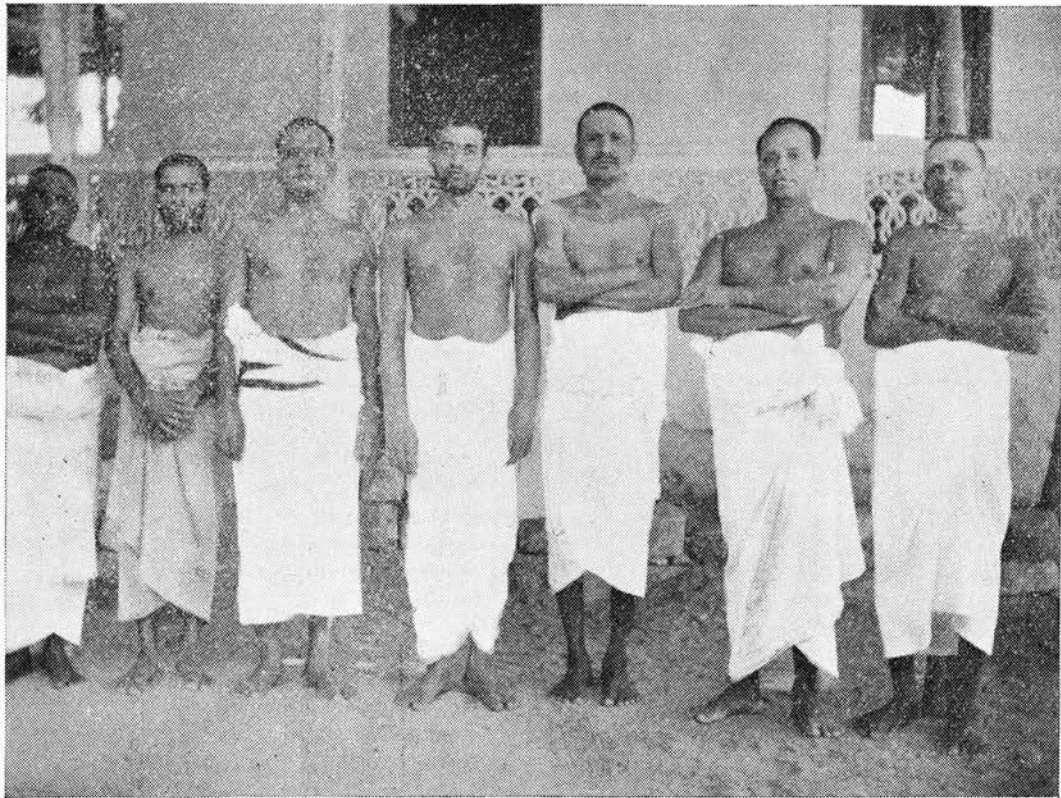
years he died at Kumbakonam while staying with some devotees of Bhagavan.

After him came a group of attendants, *Satyananda*, who was Malayali, *Venkataratnam* who was Telugu, and the following Tamilians: *Krishnaswami*, *Sivanandaswami*, *Vaikuntavasar* and *Annamalaiswami*. For some years, a Tamil married man *Rajagopalan*, used to serve Bhagavan as an attendant, while his family lived in a house outside the Ashram. After some time, finding it difficult to support his family, he decided to leave Tiruvannamalai and take a job.

Annamalai Swami is now in Pelakothu, the small Sadhu's colony just west of the Ashram.

Venkataratnam, an impressive, bearded figure, travels around. He spends a part of each year at the Ashram here.

Satyananda Swami first came to Bhagavan in 1938 in Virupaksha Cave. Both there and, later on in Skandashram he performed service; but it was only in the present Ashram, in 1946, that he



(L to R) *Sadhu Rangaswami*, *Swami Satyananda*, *T. P. Ramachandra Iyer*, *Venkataratnam*, *Ramakrishnaswami*, ———, *Sivanandaswami*.

became a permanent attendant. He has given us the following account of the Mahanirvana.

"After one operation there was profuse bleeding from the body of Bhagavan. There was a big crowd outside the New Hall but none were allowed inside. I was very moved and, shedding tears, told Bhagavan that it was painful to see such suffering. Bhagavan was absolutely unconcerned about his condition and said "What suffering? All is Bliss."

"I was blessed to be near Bhagavan during the Mahanirvana. At 6 that day, we massaged Bhagavan's legs. At 6-30 Bhagavan wished to sit upright so we helped him into that posture. Then started the chanting of *Arunachala Akshara Mana Malai* ("The Marital Garland of Letters") by the devotees outside the Nirvana Room. There were profuse tears from Bhagavan though there was no change in the expression on his face. It was such an immense outflow that Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami asked me to wipe the tears away. I did so, but it would not stop. This continued till 8. I was asked to give a little water and fruit juice to Bhagavan which I did with the aid of a spoon.

"The most thrilling moment was the physical demise of Bhagavan. There was no physical movement of any kind, no visible change, not even a flutter. It was as if the human frame in

which Bhagavan was, turned into a statue instantaneously."

Satyananda Swami is still living here. After the Mahanirvana he was put in charge of the little 'Nirvana Room' where it happened and also of the Ashram Library. For twelve years he observed mouna, but he broke it on a Mahanirvana anniversary and is now speaking again.

Krishnaswami went away for some years after the Mahanirvana but he is now back at the Ashram. He is acting as caretaker at Skandashram.

The other former attendants also, if not permanently resident are often seen here.

There are others also who, though not full-time attendants, often performed personal services for Bhagavan out of love and the joy of serving him. Such are *Sri T. P. Ramachandra Aiyar, Viswanathan, Dr. M. R. Krishnamurthy Iyer, Dr. Srinivasa Rao, Dr. Shankar Rao, and the late Dr. Ananta Narayana Rao*, the first two of whom have been introduced to our readers. Mention should also be made in this connection of his barber, *Natesan* who had the task of shaving the Maharshi's head and beard every full moon day. He completed 25 years of service with his last shave of Sri Bhagavan. He is still residing here and is still the Ashram barber.

## Glance of Grace\*

by Sri Muruganar

Let us meditate on Ramana,  
The Teacher of Reality  
Who dwells within my inmost self  
As I, as I,  
Bringing in full measure  
The joy of silence  
Ending the delusive pride  
Of a divided self's self-love.

In one unbroken silence let us dwell  
On the twin feet of the Guru  
Glorified above all kings  
Because His glance of grace revealed  
The Hill of bright Awareness  
Shining in a world  
Troubled by darkness of desire.

Dear devotees, avid for grace,  
Our Master is an ocean,

Take and hold your fill.  
Approach him freely,  
Minds and hands wide open.  
Drink to your heart's content.

Defeated and frustrated, do not reel  
Beneath Fate's blows.  
Turn your eyes, your thoughts  
Towards those sovereign Feet  
Which can transmute a devotee  
Into Siva radiant.

Like a tree which on a scorching day  
Offers cool shade to every comer  
By nature, not by choice,  
Even so He stands  
Calm, immutable, impartial,  
Liking or disliking none,  
But saving all who reach His Feet.

\* From "Ramana Pictorial Souvenir".



## to the EDITOR

### THE MAHARSHI'S TEACHING

#### (1) TWO FORMS

I should like to know whether the Maharshi recommended other forms of meditation when people found difficulty with concentration on the heart and Self-enquiry. I believe he said: "There are two ways to be followed: either ask yourself, 'Who am I?' or trust in a Guru." I do not understand what he meant when he said, "Trust in a Guru," inasmuch as in my case and many others there is not one present.

JOSE ORTEGA COCO,  
Granada, Spain.

*The Maharshi often said: "There are two ways, ask yourself 'Who am I?' or submit. That means, either dissolve the illusion of an ego or surrender it completely to God or Guru, to Universal Being or to Its conscious manifestation in human form. This can mean basing one's whole life entirely on the dictum: 'They will be done'. If it is interpreted as surrender to a Guru in human form one should be very careful, because there are many claimants to the status of authentic and divinely illuminated Guru, but few valid ones. The Maharshi also said that it is not necessary for the Guru to be in human form. We have abundant evidence that, since shedding that form, he has not ceased to be the Guru and to guide and support those who submit to him.*

EDITOR.

#### (2) WHEN TO BEGIN ?

How does one tell when the soul is ripe to meditate on 'Who am I'?

MRS. C. LAMBERT,  
Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

*Practising Self-enquiry is the best training for practising. It is not discovering anything new or strange outside yourself but only dwelling on the real self of you. Therefore Bhagavan said: "In this method the final question is the only one and is raised from the very beginning." He never prescribed any other introductory methods, nor did he authorise any one else to.*

EDITOR.

#### (3) HOW TO BEGIN ?

For years I have read only about the Maharshi. Nothing else impresses me any longer. But my concentration is very bad and I am afraid of the vichara is not for beginners. It is said in Mouni Sadhu's book on *Concentration* that one must first learn concentration before one can start to use the vichara. That would mean that I should have to spend years learning if I were ever to master this. But is it not possible that the vichara itself may be the way to concentration? Or am I not at all fitted for this path?

MISS OLGA GILGEN,  
Schwarzenburg, Switzerland.

*It is quite incorrect to state that any preliminary exercises in concentration are necessary before starting Self-enquiry. The Maharshi never said so, never prescribed any such exercises and never authorised any one to make such a statement. On the contrary, he definitely stated: "In this method the final question is the only one and is raised from the very beginning." Self-enquiry teaches concentration while at the same time eliminating the ego, whereas other exercises in concentration do not eliminate the ego and may even strengthen it.*

EDITOR.

## (4) THE MAHARSHI AND KRISHNAMURTI

I request you kindly to explain the difference between Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's teaching and that of J. Krishnamurti.

RAMANA DAS,  
Dharwar, Mysore State.

*Why? How will it help you? Not at all unless you regard teaching, in the traditional Hindu way, as a basis for practice. If you do, then try both. Krishnamurti tells you to follow no path and no guru but just be in a state of effortless, choiceless awareness. Well, try that first. If you can do it, well and good. You need nothing else; but I have never yet met any one who could. If not, then the Maharshi tells you either to practise Self-enquiry or to submit to God or Guru; so try that.*

EDITOR.

## (5) 'BE CHANGELESS'

Way back in 1938 I visited Ramanashram for the first and last time. I was there for four days during which time Rajendra Prasad (late President of India) and Sri Jamnalal Bajaj also visited the Ashram.

I was in a depressed and dejected mood. On the last day of my stay in the Ashram I happened to be sitting just opposite Sri Bhagavan at lunch time. I took my courage in both hands and complained: "I have been here for four days but there is no change in me." Sri Bhagavan replied: "Be changeless."

I shall be grateful if you or some one else will write a short commentary on Sri Bhagavan's two words and elucidate the secret implicit in the injunction.

'UNWORTHY',  
Ahmedabad.

*No secret, and no commentary needed on it. The restless ego complained that it saw no change and was told to give up the craving for change and abide in and as the Changeless Self.*

EDITOR.

## (6) JAPA

The April issue of *The Mountain Path* contains some very good articles, but a whole issue devoted to one theme tends to make for monotony and repetition. I look forward to return to the policy of general issues.

There was a letter in April by Mr. Murray on Self-enquiry and Japa. Could we have more information, either from yourself or someone else,

about the significance and importance of japa. I believe that Sri Ramana Maharshi recommended it to those for whom Self-enquiry was unsuitable or uncongenial. Is this so?

WILLIAM GILLESPIE,  
Lanarkshire, Scotland.

*From time to time we will have more articles on Japa. The Maharshi seldom if ever actually recommended it, but when asked he gave permission to use it. Anything that keeps the mind turned calmly and one-pointedly in the right direction is good.*

EDITOR.

## A HINDU JOURNAL?—I

I earnestly looked forward to seeing my article about Naga Baba with the picture of the Sage adorn your page, but instead I find articles by writers like Wei Wu Wei, Sagittarius and Abdulla Qutbuddin. I do not object to their fine articles being published, but I do think that *The Mountain Path* published under the auspices of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, ought to contain more about the teaching of Bhagavan. Indeed, I agree with Sri Satyanarayan Tandon of Kanpur, whose letter to you appeared in April 1967, when he says: "Is not Hinduism expected to predominate in the journal?" Only instead of 'Hinduism' I should say 'Advaita'. However, if the article on Naga Baba and the picture of the Sage can be recovered from the heaps of other papers in your custody awaiting publication, they may kindly be sent back to me.

JAGANNATH CHATTOPADHYAYA,  
Rishra, Hooghly.

*I take this opportunity to apologise not only to the writer of this letter but to other contributors also who have been kept waiting. I like to publish one article about some saint, mystic or guru in each issue and one in the series 'How I came to the Maharshi'; however, I have quite a waiting list and some are kept waiting. On the other hand, I am not going to clear off arrears by suspending other matter and filling one whole issue with them. Indeed, the three writers referred to in this letter are very popular with our readers. I can only ask contributors to have patience.*

EDITOR.

## A HINDU JOURNAL?—II

I read the April issue almost at a sitting, as I found it so deftly constructed and every piece in it so absorbingly interesting.

Father Merton, Dom Griffiths, Wei Wu Wei, Dorothy Donath, 'Alone' — all are here again in full strength and good form. This time Sagittarius and Qutbuddin both come very close to Advaita. Starcke is splendid on Joel. Dr. T. N. K.'s quotation from Bhagavan's deposition is of the utmost human value and incidentally provides an answer to Satyanarayan Tandon's complaint that *The Mountain Path* is not sufficiently Hindu. When one admires a beautiful lotus one doesn't dwell lovingly on the mud in the pond out of which it grew. It was because he rose above and left behind the individual and divisive categories that Ramana became Bhagavan.

However, a correspondence section should contain brickbats as well as bouquets.

K. SWAMINATHAN,  
New Delhi.

### A HINDU JOURNAL?—III

I especially enjoy the articles 'How I came to the Maharshi', 'Arrows from a Christian Bow' and also the 'Letters to the Editor'.

C. GORDON WESTERLUND,  
Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.

### RITUAL—I

Would you please make the following points clear.

1. Is it a fact that Brahmins dine separately from non-Brahmins there and that caste is observed?
2. What about samskaras, individual ashram life, posthumous rites, cremation, jala-samadhi or bhu-samadhi? Can it also be done for those who are not sannyasins?
3. For myself I want the proper discipline observed by the sadhaka. No sraddha kriya of the samartha method is necessary for them, is it?

KHOIMACHE SINGH,  
Radhakund, Muttra Dt.

*It is true that Brahmins and non-Brahmins dine separately here and always did in Bhagavan's lifetime. It was not his mission in life to revolutionise social conditions. He expected each person to live according to the conventions of his family, social and religious background, unless they took Sannyas, which he did not encourage people to do. No general rule is laid down for the rites appropriate to all Sadhakas here —*

*some of them are not even Hindus. It might be best if you were to pay a visit here and see for yourself how things are.*

EDITOR.

### RITUAL—II

Is it necessary to paint faces and foreheads with ashes and sandal paste in order to become a bhakta? If not why do the so-called religious people do it?

D. SHARMA,  
Varanasi.

*No kind of ritual is necessary but many kinds of ritual may be helpful. It would be wrong in the present circumstances for any one who finds ritual helpful to insist that every one should practise it; but it is equally wrong for some one who does not find it helpful to object to others who do practise it. Bhagavan did not approve of either kind of intolerance.*

EDITOR.

### MYSTIC EXPERIENCE

In your January number Dr. R. Fuchberger writes on 'Brief Eternity', giving his experience and describes it as a 'glimpse of Realization'. I am interested in this because I had exactly the same type of experience while walking in Pondicherry a few years ago. When I referred the matter to two Swamis considered to have reached the stage of Self-Realization one said that it was not of much importance except that it showed the ardent desire to reach that ideal, and the other said that it was only a mystic experience and had nothing to do with Realization. I would like to know how Bhagavan would have interpreted it and whether any other of his devotees have had such experiences.

MISS S. BAPAT,  
Poona.

*What do you mean when you speak of Swamis who are considered to have reached the stage of Self-Realization? Self-Realization is not a stage but the final and natural state. Mystic experiences which are pre-glimpses of it, with or without simultaneous outer awareness, are not uncommon. A number of Bhagavan's devotees have had them. They may come to people who are not advanced on the path or have not even set foot on it. The poet Tennyson sometimes had such an experience, which he described in a letter to a friend, and he did not even know that there was a path to*

follow. Bhagavan sometimes quoted it or referred to it as a true experience. Such an experience is very aptly called a 'brief eternity', since it is timeless and therefore eternal while it lasts but of brief duration. It is just its brief duration which distinguishes it from the state of Bhagavan, with whom it was constant and unbroken, whatever he was doing outwardly. That is a very rare thing.

An experience such as Dr. Fuchsberger describes can be said to be not very important insofar as it does not necessarily betoken an advanced state of development, and it may be harmful if it leads a person to think too highly of himself; but in itself it is undoubtedly a true experience. The thing to do is to try to make it constant by removing the traces of ego which obstruct it, by keeping the mind constantly prepared for its arrival. That is the meaning of Christ's injunction to be always alert and expecting him, because he comes like a thief in the night.

EDITOR.

#### PREDESTINATION

There is a quotation from Valmiki Ramayana: "Only cowards and weaklings take shelter under destiny." Is that a fallacy?

SARRAZ NARASIMHARAO,  
Palakol.

If it was a fallacy it would not be in Valmiki Ramayana. As is explained in the editorial of our April issue and also by our contributor A. Qutbuddin on page 130, nobody knows what is destined for him and therefore everybody must take responsibility for his actions and if he fails, cannot lay the blame on destiny. He has no right to say: "How can I succeed if it is my destiny to fail?"; because he does not know that it is his destiny to fail.

EDITOR.

#### JANUARY

The January 1967 issue I found possibly the finest so far. Your editorials continue to be, as is the magazine, something so beautifully planned and compressed that each issue must reach the hearts of those who read it.

CORNELIA BAGAROTTI,  
Tarrytown, N.Y., U.S.A.

#### APRIL

Of all the copies of the quarterly so far, I most enjoyed reading the latest one, April 1967, and I have to read it over and over again — there is so much to reflect upon.

M. RUTNAGAR,  
Bombay.

#### POEMS

Your poem 'The Elixir of Youth' in the January issue is marvellous in poetic beauty as well as in idea. The Garland of Guru's Sayings is worth daily repetition. May we have the full garland in this style. The Bhagavad Gita translation by Prof. Kulkarni and yourself is simple, lucid and to the point. Your book reviews are always good reading and learned.

DR. PREYA SHARAN DAS,  
Mathura.

#### CLARIFICATION

May I request a clarification by the learned author of the article 'Pain and Pleasure'? In line 5 of the last paragraph the word 'until' should be 'as long as', or alternatively the words 'cease to' should be inserted before 'identify ourselves'.

Similarly in the 12th line the word should be 'rapture' instead of 'rupture'.

E. V. MUNIRATHNAM,  
Guntur.

Thank you for pointing out the mistake with 'as long as'. It ought to have been corrected in proof reading. In the second sentence, however, 'rupture' is correct. It means a breach of consciousness, a switch to a different mode of consciousness.

EDITOR.

#### PHOTOGRAPHS

It seems to me very objectionable to touch up Bhagavan's photographs. They are more beautiful in the natural state, as the photograph on the jacket of your book 'Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge'. That is a precious picture.

MISS SALLY MARLIN,  
Sacramento, California.



*We never touch up Bhagavan's photographs in the ordinary sense of the word. I specifically mentioned in my reference to reconditioning on page 76 of the January issue that it refers only to negatives that have got damaged.*

*How do you like the frontispiece of this issue?*  
EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### PRINTING

*The Mountain Path is not a magazine for an hour or so. It is permanent printed matter to be preserved. Every enquirer into Self who sees it once will ask for back numbers. So why not get it printed in greater quantity? Every page of it is a treasure. The number of readers for spiritual matter is increasing daily.*

TIRITHDAS HOTCHAND,  
Hyderabad, West Pakistan.

*We have several times already increased the number of copies printed but the circulation also keeps on increasing.*

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### VALID ACTING AND INVALID REACTING

In discussing Determination and Free-will an essential discrimination should not be overlooked. The apparent universe is a colossal conceptual structure in mind, extended in the basic concepts of 'space' and 'duration'. Consequently all volitional reactions (*yu wei*), so extended, are concepts extraneous to that conceptual structure in mind. It follows, no doubt, that any effect they may appear to have must be conceptual also, but independent and in no sense integrated with what is implied by the concept of 'Determination'.

On the other hand non-volitional 'acting' (*wu wei*)—resulting in apparent actions in space-time which are spontaneous and unconceived — 'act' directly within the conceptual structure in which they inhere, and in which all phenomena appear to exist and all events to occur. Such action, therefore, is valid in relativity and produces a relatively valid effect, whereas the egotic demonstration is superficial and ultimately ineffectual.

NOTE: That, also, is cognate with our freedom to understand what we are, which the Maharshi in particular implied, for apprehension as such is noumenal, and with our inability to express such apprehension except in the relative terms to

which we are apparently in bondage. For 'freedom' correctly understood, is freedom to do as we are required to do — freedom from the imaginary constraint of 'bondage' to volition and its illusory effects.

Of course there is effort, of course it is samarically a struggle, continuous and exhausting, but it is that of a volitional I-concept seeking to maintain its dominion. The conflict is not due to a positive effort to achieve its own extinction — as appears to be currently assumed — but to its pertinacious resistance to that threatened disaster. Only a relative 'ego' can struggle! The ego is King Canute wielding his sword: he is wielding it against the inflowing tide. And only he 'suffers'.

WEI WU WEI.

\* \* \*

### WEI WU WEI

#### 1. AGAINST

I can't see why you allow Wei Wu Wei space in your magazine? Can't you see that man is enmeshed up to his neck in delusion? Reiterating in so many ways all the time at great length that everything is 'I-I' manifesting, he is expressing the transcendental viewpoint when he should realize the relative one is the valid one, especially for him. Everything is the Self from one angle. From another everything is not the Self. Both views are true from their own level and we should use discrimination and choose the one which helps us to realize the Self. His realization that everything is 'I-I' is simply a convenient way for him to believe that everything is achieved and there is nothing to strive for, so why bother? His statement in the Jayanthi number, January 1966, that he has "a very profound regard for Bhagavan, yet he is not a devotee" (and who cares what he is?) and that everything is the Self are evidence of his delusion. Also his statement in a letter you published that he can't see any need for a guru and that the Maharshi's eyes are no different from those of a cat, etc., show he is completely blind to the fact that the inner realization of the Self is very different from what he means when he says 'Enlightenment' is a 'profound realization' that everything is the Self. His 'profound realization' of the ultimate truth is just a means he has of keeping himself in delusion. His 'I-I' manifesting is just a label he tacks on to something to convince himself it is what it plainly is not. His attitude is very tamasic and out of touch with reality. His deluded attitude will only be communicated to his 'fans' (Lord

help them!) and he will get them drowned in the same unrealistic dream world he has created for himself.

JOHN JARRED,  
Surrey Hills, N.S.W., Australia.

## 2. FOR

May I express my appreciation of the articles and extracts appearing in *The Mountain Path* under the name of 'Wei Wu Wei'. They are remarkably clear and precise expositions of the themes found in Buddhism, Advaita Vedanta and Ramana's expositions; and such formulations in modern idiom are rare. From these articles I ventured into his books and I found the experience exhilarating because of the use of words in their unambiguous, etymological meaning to present abstract ideas such as space, time and individuality in terms as lucid and logical as in Euclidean geometry. In the context of Hinduism at the present time, the following extract from Wei Wu Wei seems to be most apt:

"There seems never to have been a time at which sentient beings have not escaped from the dungeon of individuality. In the East Liberation was elaborated into a fine art but it may be doubted whether more people may not have made their escape from solitary confinement outside the organized religions than by means of them."

I would recommend Wei Wu Wei's writings to all earnest seekers and specially to those too much concerned with tradition.

R. VENKATARAMAN,  
New Delhi.

\* \* \*

## HALLUCINOGENIC DRUGS

I recently noticed, in *The Mountain Path* for July 1966 your comments on hallucinogenic drugs and spiritual growth, and your request for information from a medical man who had had experience with them.

I wholly agree with your statement that glimpses of Reality, or of Self-realization, must be maintained by the usual spiritual disciplines. I have been a student of Ramana's way for several years, having started with your books dealing with his teachings. For me, Ramana and Huang Po (I have John Blofeld's translation, *The Zen Teachings Of Huang Po*) seem to point the Way better than most, but each of us must walk that way for himself.

Some 6 years ago, in a medical journal, I read an article by Dr. Humphry Osmond, at that time

medical director of the Saskatchewan Provincial Hospital, in which mention was made of the mystical type of experiences which many persons seemed to have when under the influence of such "psychedelic" (consciousness-expanding) substances as LSD, mescaline and peyote. I became interested for this reason, and since that time we have used one or the other of these with some 200 people, for the purpose of inducing religious insight. Under proper conditions, it would seem that a deep understanding, beyond concepts, is achieved by a large percentage of subjects. As a psychiatrist at UCLA (U of Calif at Los Angeles) says, "To see oneself and the world from a new perspective, even for a short time, can be most helpful." We insist that in order to maintain this new awareness it is necessary to apply the insights in action, to change old habit patterns — for which there is no substitute for the recognised spiritual disciplines. One of our subjects was an atheist. He said "In my first experience I saw God; in my second one, I became God." You, unlike many here, will understand this statement. He has spent the past two years in an Ashram in India (with Amar Jyoti at Poona). When used properly, we have seen no damage from these substances. As one familiar with medicine, I would say that they are less damaging physiologically than aspirin or penicillin. There are, however, psychological hazards when improperly used. Many are not ready to face the loss of the ego which often occurs in this experience. In a sense, the psychedelics may be considered as anaesthetics to the thinking mind (though there is no *inability* to think). One finds himself as THAT of which the thinking mind is only a tool; and to one who has not considered this possibility, it can be frightening, and without understanding and loving support (so often lacking in casual group of self-administration), can result in a psychotic break. In other words, psychedelics, like all other things, are in themselves neither good nor bad. But our experience indicates that there are very important and constructive uses which may be made of them, as well as destructive uses. We hear much of the latter, and little of the former, as a result of the public hysteria which is itself a result of distortion and magnification in the news media of a few spectacular casualties.

DR. JOHN AIKEN,  
Socorro, New Mexico.

*It is better if one can take the Path without such incentives. If one uses them, the sooner one can renounce them the better.*

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

## 'WHO AM I' AND ZEN

Occurring in Philip Kapleau's book 'The Three Pillars of Zen', reviewed in *The Mountain Path* of October 1966, is an episode which is of far more than routine relevance and interest for those doing the sadhana of Atma Vichara as taught by Ramana Maharshi and it seems worth while giving an outline of it for the benefit of those who may not have had a chance to read the book.

It appears in the section on 'Dokusan' (interviews between the Roshi and students), starts on page 136 and concerns the first efforts of a thirty-three year old westerner to practise self-enquiry, her day-by-day reports to the Roshi and his consequent guidance and advice.

The student had been practising Za-Zen for two years previous to her present participation in the sesshin of Yasutani-Roshi, principally on the koan 'Mu', but without any apparent success; in fact she admits to finding it distasteful. The Roshi tells her that concentration on 'Mu' is the same as enquiry into one's essential being but suggests that she might find a slightly different approach more absorbing, such as investigating 'What am I?' or 'Who am I?' She agrees that the last would be more meaningful for her and so embarks upon this 'koan' for the remainder of the Sesshin.

What very quickly becomes apparent to the reader, and rather surprising to one who has himself been enquiring in this way for quite a while, is how extraordinarily difficult, boring and fruitless the student finds the practice, as can be seen from the following quotations picked at random from her reports.

'When I question myself "Who am I?" I say to myself,

"I am bones, I am blood, I am skin". Where do I go from there?'

In other words, she cannot dissociate herself from the body.

'But I don't know who it is that is asking "Who am I?" and not knowing this, or who it is that is being asked, how can I find out who I am?'

'I have come to the conclusion that I am this body, that is these eyes, these legs and so forth. At the same time I realise that these organs do not exist independently.'

But the possibilities of this last statement are dimmed when she goes on to say that her eyes need *objects* to perceive in order to perform the act of seeing and that therefore she must be part of the universe. No hint is given of knowledge of

the Being which makes the very act of seeing possible — attention is centred on eye-ball and external objects.

'Last time you said I was not my mind and not my body, I don't understand. If I am neither of these, nor a combination of them, what am I?'

It is so difficult, that she must address the question to her Master rather than to herself. And then, fear .....

'I have always thought of myself as a mind and a body. It frightens me to think differently.'

Yasutani-Roshi listens with infinite patience and his replies cannot fail to arouse a deep response from devotees of Ramana Maharshi. So similar are they in character to the answers given by Bhagavan when questioned by seekers, that they could easily be mistaken for his own words. A few examples will illustrate this.

'Remember you are neither your body nor your mind. And you are not your mind added to your body. Then what are you? If you would grasp the real You and not merely a figment, you must constantly ask yourself "Who am I?" with absolute devotion.'

'If you persistently question yourself "Who am I?" with devotion and zeal — that is to say, moved by a genuine desire for Self-knowledge — you are bound to realise the nature of Mind.'

'So long as you think of yourself as this small body you will feel restless and discontented. But when through enlightenment you actually experience the universe as identical with yourself, you will attain lasting peace.'

'... man is forever seeking and grasping. Why? He grasps for the world because intuitively he longs to be rejoined with that from which he has been estranged through delusion.'

'The fact is that in their essential nature all sentient beings transcend their body and their mind which are not two but one. The failure of human beings to perceive this fundamental truth is the cause of all their suffering.'

'The question "Who am I?" precipitates you into an awareness of your fundamental solidarity with the universe.'

'The answer can only come out of persistent questioning with an intense yearning to know.'

'The question "Who am I?" brings you to the radiant core of your being.'

But in spite of these wonderfully illumined words of guidance, the account ends as the

Sesshin draws to a close, with the student in the same perplexed and confused state of mind and one is left pondering over why, for some seekers, it is so difficult as to be almost impossible to recognise that, in essence, they are most definitely not a body despite all apparent evidence to the contrary and that if once this can be grasped and actually seen, the keys to the "paradise garden" is theirs for evermore.

SARAH FARRAND,  
London.

been active in spiritual work for more than fifteen years.

Through *The Mountain Path* I learned to know and understand Sri Ramana Maharshi, and this was a turning point in my life. In future I hope to dedicate myself completely to him and his teachings. I have already told many people about him and they were all very impressed by the wonderful photograph of him. Knowing that in serving *The Mountain Path* I serve the Maharshi, it would be a joy for me to help you.

R. P. JASPERS,  
Overveen, The Netherlands.

#### HOLLAND

As far as I know you do not yet have a stockist for the Netherlands. Perhaps you would accept me as a stockist. I have many friends who are interested in spiritual matters and I have

*Gladly. We have known indirectly for some time past that there is great spiritual interest in the Netherlands but have had few direct contacts up to now.*

EDITOR.

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