

# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

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

Vol. 15, No. IV

October 1978

In my unloving self Thou  
didst create a passion for  
Thee, therefore forsake me  
not, Oh Arunachala !

—*The Marital Garland  
of Letters, verse 60*

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# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

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

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

**Vol. 15**

**OCTOBER 1978**

**No. IV**

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— Editor.

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**The Mountain Path**

(A QUARTERLY)

The aim of this journal is to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics, and to clarify the paths available to seekers in the conditions of our modern world.

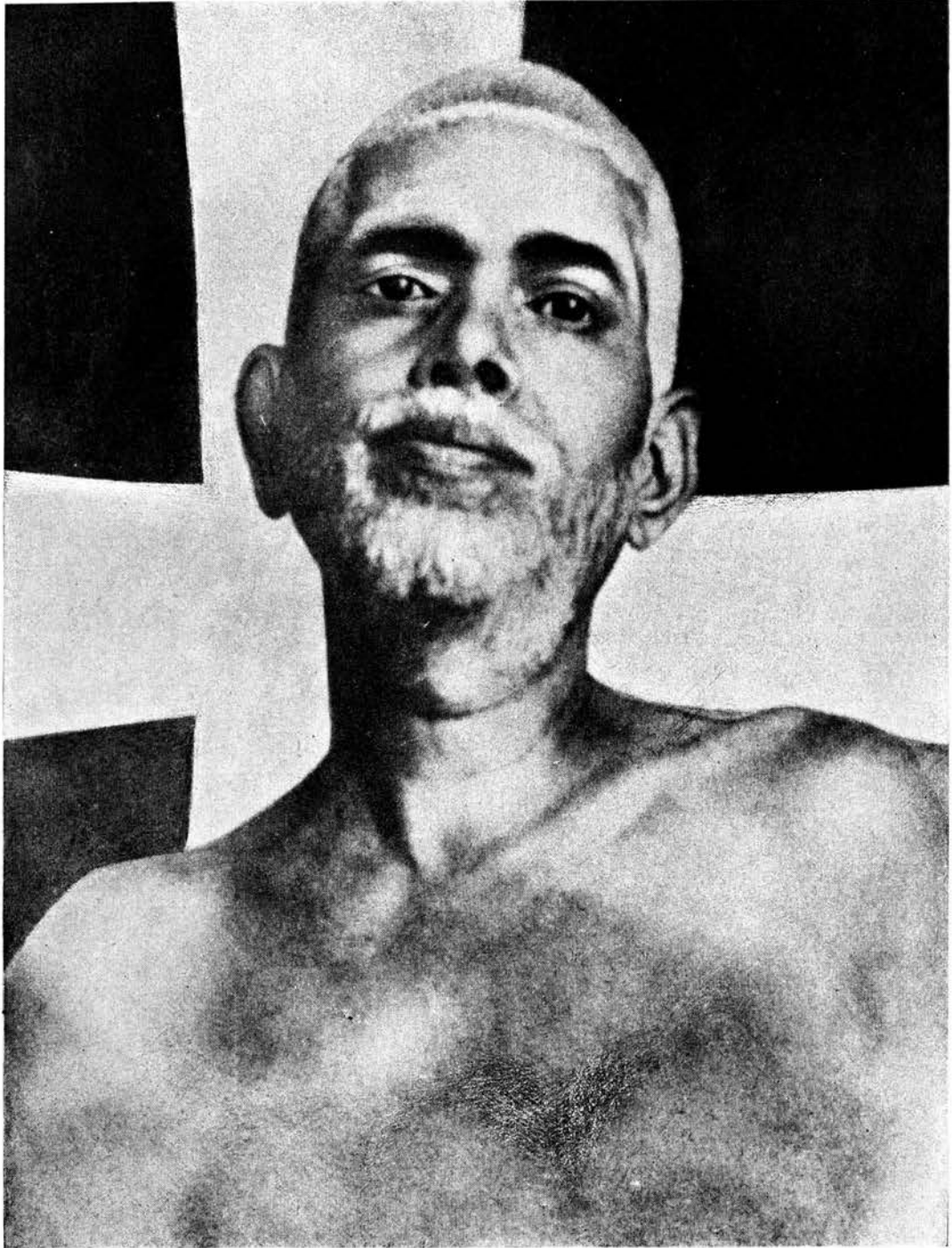
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**THE MOUNTAIN PATH**  
is dedicated to  
**Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi**



## *The Mountain Path*

Vol. 15. No. IV, October 1978

EDITORIAL

# SĀNTI AND SAKTI

.....

SPiritual aspiration is the basic human longing for deep inner peace, the self-oblivion that enables one to forget, if not overcome, the various distractions of life. The recuperation of Sakti through the Santi of sleep is an every-day experience. The need for rest from action is as insistent as the need for food, which we share with animals.

But man's spiritual need, over and above the needs of body and mind, is his "immortal longing" for this same deep inner peace, this freedom from the divided self, not in the dark nescience of sleep, but in the broad daylight of wakeful awareness. The recognition that Santi, like the water in the ocean, is the real content of our being, and that Sakti, the wave or the movement, is a mere modification, this identity with the depth and not the tumult of the soul, is a genuine spiritual discovery. Sri Bhagavan says in answer to a question from Swami Natanananda: "Knowers of Reality perceive the identity of Santi and Sakti, of peace and power. Since Being is Awareness, the peace whose substance and nature is pure Being in the Heart manifests as powers without. In other words, Santi is the normal state of God when He is free from attributes and all his powers are latent, while a special manifestation with powers and attributes is Sakti."

The same idea, put in a couplet by Bhagavan, is expanded by Muruganar thus:

The Truth they know not who assert  
That power and peace are different things.  
What abides as peace within  
Appears to outward sight as power.

Sankara begins his *Sivananda Labari*, a song in praise of beatific bliss, with a simultaneous salutation to Siva as the *prakasa* and Sakti as the *vimarsakala* of the supreme Reality. Siva is pure awareness and Sakti is the awareness from which springs all human knowledge. The spontaneous effulgence (*sphurana*) of the supreme is known as *vimarsa*. It is this *vimarsa* which, being one with Brahman, manifests and sustains the whole universe and in due time withdraws it into itself. The unity of Siva and Sakti is celebrated in the litany of the thousand names of Mother Lalita, especially at the end in the appellation *Siva Saktyaikya rupini*, she whose form is the oneness of Siva and Sakti. Charming and playful, motiveless like a child in all her manifold movements, her very name announces her nature, Lalita.

In the first of the Nine Gems in *Nava-mani-malai*, Sri Bhagavan plays with the mythology which interweaves the mystery of movement and the mystery of Pure Awareness.

He is the ever-unmoving One.  
Yet in the temple-hall (of *Tbillai*)  
His dance of bliss He dances  
Before the Mother moveless there.  
Now that Power withdrawn within  
His Form here moveless, solemn, still,  
As Aruna Hill He soars,

In Chidambaram, Siva, — King of Kings, — dances the cosmic dance which the Mother as a mere witness watches. In Arunachala, Sakti is withdrawn into Santi, the flame of Pure Awareness stands frozen as a moveless mountain, solemn, still and soaring into the sky, but shining once a year as light illumining light, the blazing beacon on its summit challenging the *Kartik* full-moon's brightness. The beautiful blend of Sakti and Santi, the interplay of relative and pure Awareness, is embodied in all the great Masters of wisdom. Every representation of Buddha reveals this combination of serenity and strength, of inner clarity and inner power, which in Tamil is termed *uran*, a quality with whose sole help, in Muruganar's words, Bhagavan "overcome the world". And Kavyakantha sings of "his profound Santi and supreme Sakti, the Santi reigning in his eyes in stillness and the Sakti streaming steady in his gaze."

Chapter 12 of *Ramana Gita* explains at length the inter-relation of Sakti and Santi.

It is only because of the movement of Sakti that the worlds come into being, but the Reality on which the movement is based never moves.

The seeming difference between Santi and Sakti arises from (dualistic) vision. If the vision is withdrawn into the Source, the two become One.

Though the Supreme moves because of his own Supreme Sakti, he is in reality unmoving. Only the Sage can understand this profound mystery.

Without Sakti, Being (*Swarupa*) is not apprehended. Sakti has two names, *Vyapara* (activity) and *Asraya* (Ground).

Creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe is *vyapara* — activity. The Ground is nothing other than Being (*Swarupa*).

Because Being is itself everything, it depends on nothing else. He who understands Sakti as both activity and ground he alone knows.

That sole, Supreme Reality is by some called Sakti, by others Being (*Swarupa*),

by others Brahman and by still others Person (*Purusba*).

Being (*Swarupa*) is said to be the ground and Activity its attribute. By understanding through activity the source of activity, one gets firmly established in the Ground.

Being goes with attributes. And attributes go with Being. The relation between the two is one of identity.

Activity is not other than Being (*Swarupa*) if you see indeed. All this knowledge of difference is but imaginary."

\* \* \*

One charge commonly levelled against *advaita* is that its insistence on inner peace at any price amounts to a denial of the value of *vyavahara* or the empirical world and that the spiritual quest with its lordly indifference to politics and public affairs has proved a hindrance and a stumbling block to the country's progress. It is pointed out that Kavyakantha and Muruganar were both deeply involved in political and social movements before they fell under the spell of Bhagavan. But the critics forget that the later spiritual quest of these scholar-poets was by no means a dereliction from patriotism, but rather a keen, concentrated search for a dynamic ontology and deeper humanism which alone could ensure equality and excellence at once, strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and thus build a better society on the firm foundation of an inviolable inner peace. Muruganar voices not only Gandhism but the essential message of contemporary dharma when he says :

There is no deed too hard  
For soul-force to accomplish ;  
Soul-force is power of love divine.  
To say that numbers or weapons can do  
Something that soul-force cannot  
Is but the folly of trusting blindly  
Maya's play.

The measure in which Gandhiji succeeded (and his followers failed) in keeping his movements predominantly non-violent has been explained by Father Merton's observation that Gandhiji's non-violence was not a political tactic but the product of an inner realization of spiritual unity in himself and that satyagraha

was not a means of achieving unity but "the fruit of inner unity already achieved". The priority of Santi and Sakti is stressed by Sri Bhagavan in Chapter 10, *Ramana Gita*. "Santi is for purifying one's own mind, Sakti for the progress of society". And the progress of society itself is not an endless exercise of Sakti but a means for the establishment of Santi.

Vinoba Bhave in Chapter 4 of his *Talks on the Gita* describes at length the risks to which one exposes one's moral nature by undertaking social service or political work before developing the purity of mind and self-surrender which is "true soul-force". When the right *bhavana* or mental attitude, the inward action of the mind and heart, which should accompany karma and which Vinoba terms *vikarma*, is absent, so-called service may degenerate into rank self-seeking. The equation

$$karma + vikarma = akarma$$

holds only where the concrete outward action (*karma*) is fully balanced and truly inspired by the inward thrust (*vikarma*) of desirelessness and surrender to the Lord. In Herbert's words, "Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws, makes that and the action fine." It is not the outward action but the spirit behind it which makes it sacred or profane. From Vinoba's bold and creative interpretation of Ch. 4, verse 17 of the *Gita*, as from the first three and the last three verses of *Upadesa Sara*, one should learn how, even while engaged in one's worldly activities, one can enjoy inner peace by establishing a harmony between jnana and karma, between being and behaviour, between moksha and dharma. Every person is unique and so is every situation. Hence the right response of inner to outer reality, of *abam* to *idam*, cannot be predicted except in terms of the peace that the encounter engenders. What Dantō in his *Mysticism and Morality* calls the mania for monism is this sattvic tendency to use one's inner happiness or peace as the touchstone on which to test righteousness of action. It is not as if the *jijnasu*, the seeker of knowledge, can quickly get through a brief training course in karma, and then leave action behind

and go on to some more advanced stage of self-enquiry. Since the only true knowing is "becoming", self-enquiry leading to self-discovery is not a verbal or intellectual exercise ending in emptiness, but a sustained heuristic process of probing and exploring the reality within and without, an indefinite series of experiments with truth. As one by one the barriers of the separate self fall away, one's dharma expands, one's capacity for being increases, one's awareness deepens and widens, and one lives out other lives as well as one's own.

The Indian view of the human condition has been well stated by Sri Aurobindo who says: "Man is a transitional being, he is not final", and by Tagore who says, "Man is much more than he seems to be at present; he is more in truth than he is in fact." The human dharma then is a dharma of growth, at once in awareness of being and power of action, in height and girth, in freedom and responsibility. When we accept and rejoice in the fact that other people exist and embody *sat-chit-ananda* not less than ourselves and that their needs are as important as our own, we find that "egoless living", which Sri Bhagavan defines as true *tapas*, is easy enough for daily practice and conducive to inner peace.

For the daily practice of such egoless living, of accepting cheerfully the little martyrdoms that come our way, there is no handier guide-book than the *Bhagavad Gita*. For Krishna, the undying atman, is not the blank, bleak, colourless *kaivalya* of dry philosophy, but the rich, vivacious, sportful, infinite Person, a God who plays on the flute and charms his comrades, takes cows out to graze, rubs horses down and drives the chariot, cleans dishes and mops up floors, a thousand different pictures and the screen on which they are all projected. He is himself "desire undivorced from Dharma" (Chap. VII) and he solemnly assures us (Chap. IX) that the sovereign secret he teaches is easy to understand and easy to practise. The tasks he entrusts to us, the commands of his *prema*, are clear and compelling. Like Jesus, he too brings

a peace that only the sword of discrimination can win. The unchanging dharma changes things and relations. In Thoreau's words, this is the "action from principle, the perception and performance of right, which is essentially revolutionary. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families; aye, it divides the *individual*, separating the diabolical in him from the divine."

To this God who is our *svabhava* as well as *svakala* and *svadesha* and who peremptorily demands the performance of *svadharma*, it is no true surrender to say "I will not fight. I will not act." This God who is the Witness, the Assentor, the Sustainer and the Experimenter (Chap. XIII, *upadrashta*, *anumanta*, *bharta*, *bbokta*) is very human indeed and demands nothing impossible.

As Browning says in *Paracelsus*, Truth dwells within ourselves; there in our inmost centre it abides in all its fulness. To know the Truth then one does not bring in a light supposed to be without, but opens out a way for the imprisoned splendour to escape. For ordinary mortals, self-actualization, the practice of dharma, may well be a stage in the growth towards self-realization. Action itself may be a reminder or expression of our

immortality, a means of preserving our *sat*, *satya*, *sattva*, our wholeness.

In the encounter with Reality, in the moment of Truth, individual death or survival is an irrelevance. Heroic action would then be a natural outcome of this "imprisoned splendour". Serious *mumukshutva* can well go hand in hand with bold heroic action. The call to such action, addressed to Sri Rama by the Sage Vasishtha (*Supplement to the Forty Verses*) is meant really for us. The seeker, as a free person, chooses to follow Sri Rama. Thoreau, who recognizes only one power, the power of freedom, declares, "They only can force me who obey a higher law than I. They force me to become like themselves. . . . If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies; and so a man."

Fleeing from *svadharma*, from one's allotted task, and seeking shelter in some ivory tower of abstract speculation, is a futile attempt to escape the Hound of Heaven. The Krishna who says "Remember me, and fight" is no other than the Self which provides both the power of dharma and the peace of moksha. In the quest for the Self the joy of the search is not less than the joy of discovery. The wisdom of right conduct makes the journey pleasant and the goal certain.

---

## Neti, Neti

---

By Wei Wu Wei

Good morning, Mr. Wu!

*Good morning, Madame!*

Who is *that* whom I am greeting, Mr. Wu?

*This which is doing it, Madame.*

Who is 'this' which is 'greeting', Mr. Wu?

*What is being greeted, Madame.*

Then who is 'this', 'that', 'what' Mr. Wu?

*Madame, I am neither 'this' nor 'that' nor 'what': Being, I AM.*

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# PROPAGATION

By  
S. Sankaranarayanan

**I**F it were not for Vasishtha Ganapati Muni, the world might not have discovered the Sage of the Modern Age. Like the many Siddhas of yore who are reputed to be still in the caves of Arunachala, helping mankind unknown to the world, the Maharshi also as the simple *Brabmana Swami* would have led a life of serene seclusion, somewhere in Arunachala far away from the madding crowd. But this was not to be.

The Maharshi was a spontaneously self-realised soul and he had nothing to do or accomplish *na tasya karyam karanam ca vidyate*. But out of his infinite compassion, he chose to live on normally, a man among men, in the world, after liberation, *jivanmukti*. This is the sacrifice of the Supreme Person, that the Rig Veda speaks about in the famous Purusha Sukta, the Godhead condescending to meet humanity half-way. Ganapati Muni on the strength of his realisation proclaimed the Maharshi as an incarnation of Skanda. But divinity lay lightly on the Maharshi. *Devatāmsam api namra ceṣṭitam* "Though an aspect of the Godhead, how he deports himself with such modesty!", wondered the Muni.

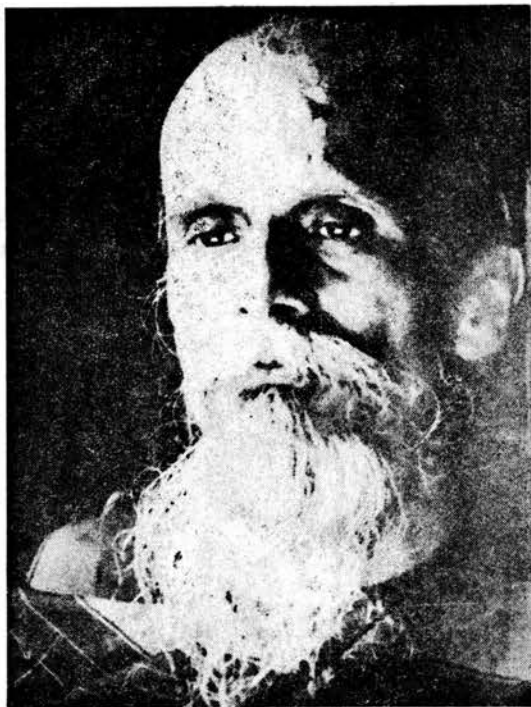
On the other hand, Ganapati Muni had an air of charm and majesty about him. There was grace in his gait, sureness in his speech. When he spoke, perhaps the gods came down from on high and listened. His voice had an unearthly timbre, an ethereal magnificence which beckoned the soul of the listener to feast on the music of the spheres. When the Muni initiated someone into a Mantra, there was no necessity for that person to carry on with the japa, the constant repetition of the Mantra. From the moment the initiation was done, the voice of the Muni that articulated the Mantra



continued to reverberate ever afterwards in the heart of the disciple. And so many disciples gathered under his protecting umbrella, some enthralled by the beauty of his voice and some enchanted by his magnificent personality. So profoundly learned and yet so humble, Nayana was open-hearted like a child and tenderly affectionate towards all his disciples. And all his disciples became automatically the devotees of the Maharshi.

The Maharshi was for most of the time indrawn, steeped in the silence of the Self. He was like a waveless ocean plunged into its own depth. But he acted through the Muni. In fact the Muni derived the Sakti, the force necessary for his activities, from the profound Santi

<sup>1</sup> This is the last and concluding in the series of four articles on Kavyakanta. *Nayana's Centenary* is being celebrated in November.



*Vasishtha Ganapati Muni*

of the Maharshi. In the eyes of the Maharshi which destroyed the ignorance of the devotees, he saw the play of Durga, in his face of a thousand expressions he perceived the presence of Lakshmi and in his voice he realised the unmanifest supreme *para* form of Saraswati.<sup>2</sup>

When Vasishtha Muni was staying in Anandashrama at Sirsi, he was constantly surrounded by disciples, devotees and admirers.

Spiritual experiences began to happen to everybody around, irrespective of their inclination, training or background. Supernatural phenomena occurred and were witnessed in the most casual way. Many who had not even heard of the Maharshi, had his darshan in meditation and in dreams. They also experienced the supremely peaceful presence of the Maharshi.

A letter written by the Muni to the Maharshi on 10-3-1931 from Sirsi throws a flood of light :

“ Lord, Guha incarnate,

Bhagavan would have known how my *tapas* has been progressing from the letters of

Sundara Pandit, Viswanathan and Kapali. For the past three days experiences, especially satisfying, have been happening to all of us and to me in particular. Many have been having the vision of Bhagavan Maharshi in their dreams. All firmly believe that this progress is all due to the gracious look of Bhagavan.

Master, this poise of mine accomplished by the grace of thy look, I understand, is on the gnostic plane. I experience the self in the heart cavern quite clearly separate from the body. Even then the experience as an individual in the world has not gone. Therefore I do not consider that this poise of mine is an integral one. May the Maharshi himself grant this to me by his look of Grace which is capable of functioning even from far away. My previous experience was marked by profound ecstasy accompanied by a stream of force. But my present ecstasy seems to have a lightness about it and a flow of light and vigour. I firmly believe that the Gods moved by the gracious look of Sri Maharshi are purifying and preparing me for the fulfilment of the great task. May Bhagavan be pleased to turn his look of Grace towards me as a reply to this letter.

A servitor of Bhagavan,  
*Vasishtha Ganapati*”.

What is the Great Work mentioned by the Muni here? Firstly, he had an unending spiritual quest. He wanted to find out who he was and why he had taken birth in this hoary land of great sages and seers. And what exactly was his mission? His heart wept at the plight of his countrymen. He first wanted freedom for his motherland from the foreign yoke and then freedom from all social shackles and superstitions. He wanted to remove untouchability, uplift the outcast and work for the emancipation of Indian women. Lastly he

<sup>2</sup> Devi sakti riyam drsoh sritajana  
dhvantaksayadhayini  
Devi sri riyam ambujaksamahisi  
vaktre sahasrachade  
Devi brahmavadhur iyam vijayate  
vyaharagudha para

— *Sri Ramana Catvarimsat*

wanted to propagate and establish in this great land the true Vedic religion, the real heritage of the people of this country. The Muni was convinced that all these could not be accomplished by any human effort or means, however powerful it might be. The sanction of the Divine was required. And it was only through *tapas* one could know the Divine Will in the scheme of things. And the *tapas* could be carried out with success, only by the grace of the Maharshi.

A modern representative of the hoary past, the Muni was famous for his rational approach to matters spiritual and for his scientific bent of mind. A versatile genius, he could straight go to the heart of a subject and have an instantaneous mastery over the whole matter. A born poet, he could compose verses extempore on any subject. No wonder, he gave expression to his seekings and aspirations in the form of spontaneous verses. A stylist of rare elegance and simplicity, he made the ancient Sanskrit language alive and current, a vibrant vehicle of the deepest emotions and the noblest aspirations of modern man. Blazing a new trail in Sanskrit literature and poetry, he was the author of devotional poems containing many thousands of verses like *Uma Sabasram*, and *Indrani Sabasram*. But he did not write for fame or name. He wrote because expression was his very lifebreath. But all his literary compositions came out as a part of his *tapas*. That was how Ganapati Muni propagated his ideas, spread his influence over the length and breadth of the country and made the grace of the Maharshi available to one and all.

As far as the Maharshi was concerned, he did not spell out his mission in such detail. His very presence in the world was his message. In those early days he rarely spoke. Around him there was a deep ocean of silence in which every thing got submerged. But his eyes were ever eloquent as they communed with all beings that came within his purview. To a superficial observer the Maharshi looked indifferent and unconcerned. But what concern he had for his fellow-beings was known only when the Maharshi was moved to speak

out either by an inner impulsion or in response to the earnest entreaties of sincere seekers. Thus came into existence those soul-stirring Tamil poems of deep devotion like *Aksbaramanamalai*, *Arunachalanavamanimalai*, *Ashtakam*, *Padikam* and *Pancharainam* and poems of deep spiritual and philosophical import like *Upadesa Undiyar* and the epoch-making *Ulladu narpadu*.

The Maharshi had no higher education in the formal sense and was no scholar in the accepted sense of the term. But he had attained the knowledge, knowing which all this is known *yasmin vijñate sarvam idam vijñatam*. The writings of the Maharshi are not of the intellect. Like the Mantras in the Vedas and the *Pasurams* of the Alwars and Nayanmars they are *brda tastab*, carved out of the heart, the seat of the real 'I'. Judging from the vast erudition, sweeping scholarship and the profundity of thought displayed in the Tamil verses, one will easily rank the Sage of Arunachala as one of the outstanding poets the Tamil literature has produced. His catechism in trenchant Tamil *Nanar* (Who am I?) is a classic in the spiritual literature of the world.

All these phenomena, one can perhaps explain by saying that after all Tamil was the mother-tongue of the Maharshi. But how to explain the phenomenon of his composing in the Sanskrit language? The Maharshi had no knowledge of Sanskrit and he was not familiar with the intricacies of Sanskrit Poetics. Yet, without his volition, he gave expression to his first verse in Sanskrit "*Hrdaya kubaramadbye*" carrying in a nutshell the essence of his teaching. In the same way he uttered *Arunachala Pancharatnam*, the Five Gems on Arunachala, in the beautiful Sanskrit metre called *Arva Giti*. After some time he rendered the essence of the Teaching *Upadesa Saram* succinctly in Sanskrit in the lilting *Supratistha* metre. All these verses in Sanskrit composed by the Maharshi were elegant, flawless, perfect in all respects, conforming to the canons of Sanskrit poetry. They evoked the admiration of the great Kavyakantha himself.

Only when he felt it was necessary, the Maharshi spoke or wrote. When stupid or

irrelevant questions were asked, the Maharshi did not choose to reply. When simple innocent folk asked questions, the Maharshi understood their sincerity and gave replies suited to their level of understanding. But when earnest, serious seekers asked questions to clear their doubts, the Maharshi responded graciously, explaining the profundities and subtleties patiently. But many found that, the moment they were in the Maharshi's presence, they got the answers to the questions they had intended to ask. All the doubts were dispelled and the mind became clear.

But man is primarily a mental being, 'full of mind, leader of the vital body', *mano-mayab pranasarira neta*, as the Upanishad says, and he wants conviction first at the mental level. It is our good fortune that there were earnest, spiritual seekers around the Maharshi, in the early days, who could draw him out with serious, meaningful questions. It is still more fortunate that a spiritual person of eminence like Vasishtha Muni was among them, who put the dialogues on record and the result was the work *Sri Ramana Gita*.

Composed by Sri Vasishtha Ganapati Muni, *Sri Ramana Gita* records the instruction of the Maharshi on various subjects of spiritual importance in answer to ardent queries addressed by devotees and disciples. The work consists of 300 verses in elegant flowing Sanskrit, divided into eighteen Chapters, each mentioning the occasion and the background. The questions are often intricate, relating as they do to the deepest experience in Yoga, and involve very subtle perception and analysis. The Muni gave to the work the appellation 'Gita' as like the *Bhagavad Gita*, it deals with no particular religion, but with the eternal quest of man, his doubts and aspirations and the ways open to him to reach the goal. The Avatara of the present age, the Maharshi, is the Teacher in the *Ramana Gita*. The second chapter of the work contains, like a diadem for the whole composition, the Maharshi's spontaneous Sanskrit verse *Hridayakubaramadbhye*, imparting the Master's teaching in a nutshell. Amongst the verses of the last chapter, the verse *Vedadipakadamanojvara*

expounds the Mantra of the Maharshi in symbolic language, which the Muni made explicit later in his commentary *Gurumantra Bhasya*. Happily the whole composition has been commented upon by the Muni's illustrious disciple Sri Kapali Sastriar and the commentary *Ramanagita Prakasa* verily throws a flood of light on the philosophical concepts and spiritual import that are embodied in the grand teachings imparted by the Maharshi.

Vasishtha Muni wrote also a commentary in Sanskrit on Maharshi's *Upadesa Saram*, which the latter had himself composed in Sanskrit. The Muni began and finished the whole commentary during the course of a lunar eclipse on a Sunday evening in Arunachala. The Maharshi's Tamil poem *Ulladu Narpadu* was according to the Muni an epoch-making work. But it was in Tamil and could be appreciated only by those who understood the language. Ganapati Muni undertook to render it in the Sanskrit language so that it might reach a wider audience and find a permanent place in the spiritual literature of India. The result was *Sat darsanam* in mellifluous Sanskrit verses in the beautiful *Upajati* metre which is a faithful rendering of the Tamil text and yet appears almost like an original composition of the Muni.

*Saddarsanam* was composed by Sri Vasishtha Muni during his sojourn in Anandashrama, Sirsi, along with his disciples. As soon as the work was finished by the Muni, it was followed by a commentary by his great disciple, Sri Kapali Sastriar who also was staying with the Muni at that time in Anandashrama, Sirsi. The letters written by the Muni from there to the Maharshi at that time give the proper setting to the whole composition. The letter of 17th March, 1931 reads as under :

" Lord, Master of the Universe,

I had an impulsion from the heart to send to the Maharshi's presence a letter every week.

*Sat darsanam* was completed on Saturday. As far as possible the import of the immaculate verses of Bhagavan was caught in the *Upajatis*

there. If there is anything of quality in my translation, it is the Grace of Bhagavan. From that Saturday onwards my vision has become extraordinary. I seem to see all things as one existence. I pray to Bhagavan that this practice may get firmly established and end up as realisation. I see the changes of form, etc. of the one Truth like bubbles on the surface of water. I shall try to leave them and experience the pure existence.

I am,  
Vasishtha, who craves for Thy grace.

The letter of 7th April, 1931 says :

Lord belonging to the clan of Parasara,

Here all are well by the grace of Bhagavan. Child Kapali has started his *Tika* (Notes) on *Saddarsana*. I have indicated that considering the greatness of the original text, the appellation *Bhasyam* (commentary) only will be appropriate. Says Kapali "The more one studies the more profound appears *Saddarsanam*". I understood its profundity even at the time of its composition (in Tamil). Though small in size the Work is aphoristic containing the secret of great philosophies and of Yoga. Here there is no condemnation of other people's stand. Even then in a strange way all the other people's notions are subordinated. The arguments advanced here touch the hearts of the elite and the commoner alike. By and large, no text of authority has been quoted. Even so the text appears as an epitome of the essence of the Vedas. In order to explain this, the commentator has a lot of things to bring out. A lot of new light has to be thrown. And the work should not become unwieldy. Topics should not be left out, their importance has to be demonstrated. Child Kapali can bear all this burden quite ably provided a ray of the peerless glance of Bhagavan is there".

In his letter of 28th April, 1931 the Muni wrote :

"The commentary on *Saddarsanam* by Kapali is progressing. Deva wrote in his letter that Bhagavan considered my rendering of the verses in *Saddarsanam* was quite in accordance with the import of the original. This gave me

great encouragement. Kapali's commentary written so far is replete with an uncommon beauty. Deva wrote that my quotation of the Tamil verse in the course of explaining the concept of Guha and Ganapati drew a gracious smile from the Maharshi. He had the good fortune of seeing the smile-lit face of the Maharshi. That news itself delighted our hearts".

And in the letter of 1st July, 1931

"The commentary of child Kapali gave me special satisfaction. I trust that it will touch the heart of Bhagavan as well". And at the end of the composition *Saddarsanam*, Vasishtha Muni described his writing as a clear surface receiving and reflecting the bright rays of superhuman words that emanated from the self-luminous Maharshi.<sup>3</sup>

It is no exaggeration to say that those who want to understand the message of the Maharshi in its pristine purity have to drink deep at the fountain sources of the Muni's writings on the Maharshi.

Let us close with this letter of 22nd July, 1931 which portrays the Muni's intense devotion to the Maharshi :

"Lord, dear to the Devotees,

The greatness of Mantra japa has been experienced. The essence of yoga has been perceived. The meaning of Sastras has been gone into thoroughly. Tapas has been performed with one-pointed concentration. The play of Kundalini force has been witnessed. The birth place of 'I' has been examined. The inner evolution has been observed in silence. All notion of difference has been cast away. Attachment to sense-objects has been rooted out. Fickleness has been put down. Stability has been practised. Still I am not satisfied. Now I am desirous of getting satisfaction only through Devotion. For that, there are three

<sup>3</sup> amanusasri ramaniya vani mayukha bhithir munivāg vibhati

— *Saddarsanam* (concluding verse)

objects. The first is Bhagavan Maharshi. The second is Indra, the Lord of the Universe. The third is this Bharata land the Mother divine.

Thy ancient Devotee,  
Ganapati.

Who could believe that the Muni and the Maharshi both were the products of this Twentieth Century civilisation? They came as shining messengers of the eternal values of life, to assure man that he has not been given up, that he is still loved by his creator.

*Jayatu bharataksanikbandam  
visadavivarjitam*

*Jayatu ganapas tasya ksemam  
vidhatumana munib*

*Jayatu Ramanas tasyacaryō  
mabarsi kulacalō*

*Jayatu ca tayōr matā putā  
mabesavilāsini.<sup>4</sup>*

May this sub-continent of Bharata shine forth, free from all affliction! May Ganapati Muni who is solely devoted to her welfare shine forth! May his Master Ramana, the superb Mountain of a Maharshi shine forth! May their Holy Mother the consort of the Lord Supreme shine forth!"

<sup>4</sup> Umasabasram.

## JAI SRI KRISHNA

By

**Dilip Kumar Roy**

Oh, give me refuge at thy feet,  
And take me across the shoreless deep.  
Who but thyself, my Lord, can ever transform  
Life's thorny woods into sweet flower-gardens?

Thy mystic flute-call has, once and for all,  
Weaned my soul from the bondage of the world.  
Why then must thou in this fateful hour of night  
Still turn thy face away,

I know thou art compassionate :  
For time and again have I not thrilled  
To the message of thy flute  
But thou, alas, hast stayed invisible :

I know thou art not cruel, Lord :  
For has not thy cascade of blessing flown  
In ever-new lilt of deep delight for me?  
In my loneliness I hark to thee and appeal :  
Oh, teach me to hail thy bliss.  
And let me havened be  
At thy dawn-rose feet.  
Kindle, oh kindle in my soul  
Thy everlasting Light of lights.  
How else shall I ever learn to love thee  
Unknowing thy unutterable Self  
Of supernal beauty and bliss?

## SELF-ENQUIRY: SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

By

Douglas E. Harding

**Our self-knowledge is our beauty ; in self-ignorance we are ugly. — Plotinus.**

**All Christian religion wholly consists in this, to learn to know ourselves whence we come and what we are. — Boehme.**

**Who is it that repeats the Buddha's name ? We should try to find out where this 'Who' comes from and what it looks like. — Hsu Yun.**

**You know the value of everything—except yourself ! — Rumi.**

**Forgetfulness of the Self is the source of all misery. — Ramana Maharshi.**

**H**OW is it that we need all this prodding, all these warnings and earnest invitation, and promises of immense rewards, to persuade us to take a *really* close look at ourselves ? Why don't all intelligent and serious people make it their chief business in life to find out what they *really* are ?

Thoughtful people, when challenged on this subject, are apt to excuse themselves by raising a number of objections to this inward search : they aren't at all sure it's a good thing. Of course (all agree) we need a working knowledge of our nature in order to make the best of ourselves and get on with others, but the probing can thrust too deep and go on too long. 'Know thyself' is all right up to a point, but shouldn't become an obsession, an end in itself, and certainly not our life's work : such introspection (they say) is likely to do more harm than good. And so, they go on :—

(1) It's a selfish diversion of our energies from the service of others to preoccupation with ourselves.

(2) It's a morbid introversion resulting in self-consciousness (in the bad sense) if not actually in mental illness.

(3) It's time-consuming and unpractical, unfitting us for our jobs and even for family life.

(4) It's depressing and dull, a dreadful bore, a dead end terminating in a mental blank.

(5) It kills spontaneity and all natural, out-going enjoyment.

(6) It's wonderful excuse for idleness and sponging.

(7) It's coldly indifferent to art and to nature, to the beauty and wonder of the universe and the rich variety of the human scene.

(8) It's a stupefying drug which reduces words to gibberish, stops thought, numbs the mind itself, exchanging our most highly-evolved human function for the nonhuman or subhuman Inane.

### *Selfish*

First, take the accusation of selfishness. A typical view is that we're not here to discover ourselves but to forget ourselves, concentrating on others and exchanging our natural self-centredness for the other-centredness of loving service.

But how can we really do very much good to others till we know ourselves profoundly ? How much of our so-called help is in fact working off our guilt-feelings on the world, trying to resolve our unconscious conflicts regardless of the real need ; and how often our short-term help ends in long-term hindrance ! It's notorious that the material and even the psychological aid we give people, in solving one of their problems, is apt to create two more. Only the highest spiritual aid, given by one who really knows himself, and others through himself, can be guaranteed altogether beneficent and free from those un-

fortunate side-effects which go on and on so incalculably ; and then the gift is probably a secret one, unexpressed and inexpressible. The truth is that helping oneself (which means finding oneself) *is* helping others, though the influence may be altogether subterranean. It goes without saying that we must be as actively kind as we can, but until we see clearly Who is being kind, we're working more-or-less in the dark, with the hit-or-miss consequences that might be expected.

One of the troubles with this would-be forgetfulness of self in the service of others is that it's practically impossible : deliberate virtue rarely forgets to pat itself on the back a little. Goodness aimed at directly can scarcely avoid self-congratulation, and then its odour becomes unpleasant. But if, on the other hand, it's a mere by-product, arising naturally out of true knowledge of oneself and concern for others (because one is them), then it's quite indifferent to itself and any incidental merit or demerit, and so continues to smell sweet. Unfortunately, trying to become a saint, or even a Sage, is a self-defeating (or rather, Self-defeating) enterprise likely to end in its opposite — an inflated ego.

#### *Morbid ?*

Can such an enquiry be morbid, nevertheless ?

What is mental illness, in the last resort, but alienation from others and therefore from oneself ? It's the shame and misery of the part trying to be a whole (which it can never be) instead of the Whole (which it always is). We are all insane, more or less, till we find by Self-enquiry our absolute identity with everyone else.

#### *Unpractical ?*

Self-enquiry is also suspected of being, if not actually unhealthy, at least unpractical. Some colour is given to this objection by the fact (painfully evident to anyone who gets mixed up with religious movements) that 'spiritual' people are quite often cranks, misfits, or inclined to be neurotic. Actually, this isn't

surprising. Contented (not to say self-satisfied) people, fairly 'normal' and well adjusted and half-way good at being human, aren't driven to finding out what else they may be. It's those who *need* to find out Who they are, the fortunately desperate ones, who are more likely to take up the enterprise of Self-discovery. A sound instinct tells them where their Cure lies.

So it is that the worldling may appear (and often actually be) a far better man than the spiritually inclined. Looking within doesn't transform the personality overnight. All the same, to the degree that this supreme enterprise succeeds, it 'normalises' a man, fitting him at last for life and correcting awkwardnesses and weaknesses and uglinesses. Now he's truly adjusted : he knows how to live and prosper and be happy. Paradoxically, it's by discovering that he isn't a man at all that he becomes a satisfactory man. Naturally so : once he sees Who he really is, his needs and his demands on others, rapidly dwindle : his ability to concentrate on any chosen task is remarkable ; his detachment provides the cool objectivity necessary for practical wisdom ; for the first time he sees people as they are ; he takes in everything and is not himself taken in. At the start, Self-enquiry may not be the best recipe for making friends and influencing people, but in the end it's the only way to be at home in the world. Nothing else is quite *practical*. Sages are immensely effectual men, not a lot of dreamy incompetents.

#### *Dull ?*

Ah (say those who don't know), but their life is so dull, so monotonous. How is it possible — attending for months and years on end to what is admittedly featureless, without any content whatever, mere Clarity — to avoid a terrible boredom ? Discovering our North Pole may be fine, but do we then have to live there in the icy darkness where nothing ever happens ?

Now the extraordinary truth is that, contrary to all expectations, this seemingly bleak and dreary Centre of our being is in fact end-



lessly satisfying, absolutely fascinating : there's not a dull moment here. It's our periphery, the world where things happen, which in the end bores and depresses. Why should the colourless, shapeless, unchanging, empty, nameless Source prove (in actual practice, not in theory) so astonishingly interesting, while all its products, in spite of their inexhaustible richness, prove a great weariness eventually? Well, this curious fact just has to be accepted — thankfully. It can hardly be a matter of serious complaint that everything lets us down till we find out Who's being let down. If we would only allow them, all things push us Selfwards.

#### *Unnatural ?*

Everything naturally directs us back to its Source. In fact, the whole business of Self-discovery is our normal function, our natural development, failing which we remain stunted, if not perverse or freakish. Again, this is a surprising discovery. One would have imagined that any protracted inward gaze would have made a man rather less human, probably giving him a withdrawn look, an odd, self-occupied, and maybe forbidding manner. Actually, the reverse is true : the Self-seeing man has the grace and charm of one who is free. *To find the Source is to tap it.* Take the case of the man who starts off being morbidly self-conscious : there are two things he can do about it, the one a mere amelioration (if that), the other a true cure. The false cure for his shyness is to lose himself by moving out towards the world ; the true cure is to find himself by moving in towards himself till one day his self-consciousness becomes Self-consciousness and therefore at ease everywhere. It's true that nobody can, by any technique of self-forgetting, regain the naturalness, the simple spontaneity of the small child or the animal ; but by the opposite process of Self-recollection he can gain something like that blessed state, though at a higher level. Then he will know, as if by superior instinct, what to do and how to do it ; and, rather more often, what not to do. Short of this goal, we are all to some degree awkward and artificial.

#### *Idle ?*

Is this an easy way out — out of the Hell of responsibility and involvement and danger — into a safe and unstrenuous Heaven? To look at some enquirers you might think so, but you couldn't be more mistaken. In a sense, admittedly, it's the easiest thing in the world to see what nobody else can see, namely what it's like to be oneself, what it's like *here* at no distance from oneself : the Light is blazingly obvious, the Clarity transparent and unmistakable. But in another sense, alas, it's the most difficult thing in the world to see and go on seeing this Spot from this Spot : this mysterious Place one occupies, where one supposed there was some solid thing, a body or a brain, and where in fact is only the Seer Himself, is *too* wide open to inspection, *too* plain to catch our attention. All our arrows of attention point outwards ; and they might be made of steel, so seemingly hard it is to bend them round to point in to the Centre, and still harder to prevent them springing back again immediately. Of all ambitions this is the most far-reaching, and no other adventure is anything like so daring or so 'difficult' — till we see how the difficulty was of our own making.

#### *World-Rejecting ?*

Is the result worth the trouble? Is there nothing of value out there, nothing worthy of our attention and love? Turning our backs on a universe so magnificent and so teeming, on all the treasures of art and of thought, and above all on our fellow beings, is surely a huge loss. The Sage — so it's reported — isn't interested in these matters : the world consists of things he doesn't wish to know : for him, knowledge of particular things is only ignorance. Oddly enough, it's the man who attends only to the outer scene, ignoring what lies at its Centre, who's more or less blind to that outer scene. For the world is a curious phenomenon that, like a faint star, can be clearly observed only when it isn't *directly* looked at. It's an object that will not fully reveal itself till we look in the opposite direction, catching sight of it in the mirror of the Self. For example, though the world is occa-

sionally beautiful when *directly* viewed as quite real and self-supporting, it's consistently beautiful when *indirectly* viewed as a product or accident of the Self. When you see Who's really *here* you see what's really *there*, as a sort of bonus. And this bonus is a delightful surprise: the universe is transformed. Colours almost sing, so brilliant and glowing they are; shapes and planes and textures arrange themselves into charming compositions; nothing's repulsive or despicable or out of place. Every random patterning of objects — treetops and cloud-banks, leaves and stones on the ground, human figures and cars reflected in shop windows, stains and tattered posters on old walls, litter of all kinds — each is seen to be inevitable and perfect in its own unique way. And this is the very opposite of human imagination: it's divine realism, the clearing of that imaginative, wordy smoke-screen which increasingly hides the world from us as we grow older and more knowing.

#### *Uncreative ?*

Indeed the path of Self-enquiry is no escape route: it's the shortest way in to the universe, our highboard to the keenest enjoyment of the world. Yet, they say, it's incompatible with any other serious creative endeavour, whether artistic or intellectual or practical. If so, this is surely a considerable drawback.

It's true that Self-enquiry will never succeed till we put our whole heart into it, and consequently the dedicated artist or philosopher or scientist seems to be an unpromising subject. Actually this is not because he's too devoted to his calling, but because he's not yet devoted enough, not yet absolutely serious about it: he needs to deepen and widen his field till it includes both himself and the whole world. For the only consistent genius, the only complete Artist-Philosopher-Scientist, is the Sage, who is fully conscious of being the Painter of the entire World-picture, the Thinker of all thought, the Universe-inventor, Knowledge itself. This doesn't mean, of course, that he has all the details at his fingertips, but he does see what they all amount to in their innermost essence and outermost sum, namely his true Self. And whenever a question of detail does

arise, his response is the correct one. His mindlessness is the indispensable basis of a smoothly functioning mind; his Self-information includes all the other information he needs from moment to moment. In short, he's sage, which means wise: not clever and learned and with a head full of ideas, but simple and — literally — clear-headed.

Even in ordinary life we find hints of this vital connection between Self-awareness and creativity. Don't our very best moments always include a heightened consciousness of ourselves, so that we aren't really 'lost' in inspiration or creative fervour or love, but newly found? At its finest, doesn't the opaque object over there point unmistakably back to the transparent subject here? It may even happen that the transparency comes first: we attend, our idiotic inner chatter dies down, we consciously become nothing but this alert, expectant Void — and presently the required tune or picture, the key notion, the true answer, arrives ready-made in that Void, from that Void.

The result of observing only the universe is — anxiety. Only observing the Observer of the universe will put a stop to a man's worrying and fussing and scheming. When his interest is diverted inwards he naturally relaxes his hold — his stranglehold — on the outer world. Having withdrawn his capital and paid it in to his own Central Bank (where it immediately appreciates to infinity) he has nothing to lose out there and no reason for interfering. He knows how to let things be, and work out in their own time. He's in no hurry. Knowing the Self, he can hardly fail to trust its products: whatever occurs is fundamentally agreeable to him, and even if it weren't it could never touch his real Being. In Christian terms, he has no will but God's; what he wants is what happens, and what happens is what he wants. Paradoxically, his obedience to the nature of things is his rule over them; his weakness is all-powerful. And the secret of his power is that he isn't concerned with events at all. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Seek ye first these things, and even they shall be taken away.

This perfect obedience isn't just lining oneself up with God's will, or imitating it, or even becoming part of it : it's that very will itself in full operation. If we wish to find out exactly what it's like to make the world, we have only to desire nothing and pay attention. But total acceptance is very hard. It's precisely the opposite of the lazy indifference that merely lets things slide. It springs from inner strength, not weakness, and is the result of concentration, not slackness. Why is the world so troublesome, so frightful ? Is it like that by nature, or because we take the easy way of fighting it instead of the difficult way of fitting in with it ? We have to find out for ourselves the truth of the Sage's demonstration that even in the smallest things the way of non-interference, of giving up all self-will, of 'disappearing', is astonishingly practical, the wisdom that works. Not only in the long run, but from moment to moment, *consciously* getting out of the Light, giving place to whatever things present themselves in it, instantly puts them right. We do too much and therefore remain ineffectual ; we talk far too much and therefore say nothing ; we think far, far too much and therefore prevent the facts from speaking for themselves — so say those who know the power of Emptiness. It's for us to make our own tests, not — repeat, *not* — by the direct method of trying to be quiet and mindless (it just won't work) but by the indirect method of seeing Who was trying to be like that. No man becomes Godlike except by seeing he isn't a man anyway.

His experience of deification has no content whatever, no details : it's not merely indescribable, but non-mental or non-psychological, and in the truest sense non-human. Thinking or talking about it destroys it, by complicating what is Simplicity and Obviousness itself. It's rather like tasting sugar or seeing green : the more you reflect on it the further you get from

the actuality. But there the resemblance ends. Seeing green is an ineffable experience because it's a prehuman or infrahuman one ; seeing the Seer of green is an ineffable experience because it's posthuman or suprahuman one. The Sage's rejection of the concept-ridden, word-clouded mind is poles apart from the sensualist's. Self-enquiry isn't retrogression, but the next evolutionary step beyond man, or rather the whole path from him to the Goal. And though the Goal is beyond thought, pure limpidity, void even of voidness, it's also nothing but the Honest Truth at last. For only the Self can be *known* : everything else is partly guesswork, partly false. Only Self-awareness is wide-awakened and fully observant : all other awareness is mind-wandering. Total alertness *is* the Self.

And so, in conclusion, every fault we could find with Self-enquiry has turned out to be only a merit. Certainly there are kinds of introspection which are harmful, but they're concerned with the ego or empirical self and the very opposite of the true enquiry, which is healthy and sane, creative, natural, life-enhancing, practical, and altruistic. Though some of us may start this true enquiry terribly late, it's what we're here for. To neglect it is in every sense a shame.

It would still be a shameful neglect, unworthy of our energy and intelligence, even if Self-enquiry promised no pay-off at all. And in any case its benefits are purely coincidental : the only way to have them is to care nothing for them, but only for the unvarnished Truth about ourselves, no matter how unedifying it might prove. *If all we want is to see Who we are, nothing can stop our doing so this very instant.* But if our plan is merely to use that vision to buy human happiness or any other goods, we might as well abandon the very idea of Self-enquiry.

## Symbolism of the Quest in the Odyssey

By

Arthur Osborne<sup>1</sup>

WHY did the ancient Greeks regard the Homeric poems as a religious authority? They were religious in the sense that they recorded norms of conduct, even though they lacked the high ethical standards and preoccupations with *dharma* of the Hindu epics. They were religious too in the sense that they comprised allegories of the quest.

The question how many of the ancients saw the allegories would be as pointless as the question how many moderns see the allegory of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. It was certainly there to see, and some must have seen it or the epics would not have been regarded with such reverence.

The Odyssey, it will be remembered, starts near the end and then proceeds with a throw-back. Let us follow Homer in this. The final episode shows Penelope, the faithful wife of Odysseus, still ruling his rocky homeland of Ithaca after his years of enforced wandering through perilous adventures. But she is beset by his unruly nobles who pester her to marry one of them and proclaim him ruler, giving Odysseus up as lost and disinheriting their adolescent son Telemachus.

Penelope can be understood as the human state. Telemachus is the new man which is arising out of it. The suitors are the still unsubdued individual tendencies which try to capture it and turn it to their own use and enjoyment. Finally they set a term for Penelope — they will wait only till she finishes weaving the tapestry she is engaged in, but no longer. But she circumvents them; each night she unravels what she wove the previous day. The tapestry is Maya — woven during the daytime of activity, unravelled during the night of meditation. Then Odysseus arrives, representing here the descent of the Spirit, the

bridegroom. He appears disguised as a destitute wanderer. She recognises him but the suitors do not. Precautions have to be taken lest they slay him — as the rebellious generations slay the prophets, as the unbelievers slay Christ, until he is manoeuvred into a position where he can overcome them.

That is the essence of the story, but there are many wayside adventures, just as there are in the life of the wayfarer. Also there are changes of symbolism, one aspect or another being depicted as required. Only a few salient features are explained here. The story of Helen and Paris and the Trojan war would be the subject of another and no less symbolical story. Indeed, the *Iliad* is more of the nature of one tremendous panoramic story, while the Odyssey, in symbolism as in outer form, is rather a string of episodes.

There is one, it will be recalled, where the syrens, treacherous nymphs singing with superhuman beauty, try to have Odysseus and his men on to the rocks where their ship will be dashed to pieces and they drowned; Odysseus foils their scheme by making his men plug their ears with wax before reaching their haunt. Only he himself kept his ears open but took the precaution of getting lashed to a mast and forbidding his men to release him, till he was past the danger zone. The songs of the syrens obviously represent the lures of the subtle world which have led so many spiritual wayfarers to perdition.

Then there is the story of Circe. Some of the men go ashore on a beautiful island to replenish their water supply and there they encounter an enchantress who offers them food and wine. They partake of it and their

<sup>1</sup> From among Arthur Osborne's unpublished papers.

doing so gives her power over them which she uses by dashing a cup of wine in their faces and turning them into swine. She represents Maya, and those who have succumbed to her allurements have become like swine.

A strange parallel is to be found in a story of Vishnu. He becomes infatuated with his own daughter — Divine Power with the beauty of creation. To make love to her would be incest, so he transforms both of them into swine, for whom there is no such law. Thus transformed he wallows in filth until reminded of his true nature.

And how does Odysseus escape the peril? While he is on way to Circe's house Hermes, a youth always represented as the messenger of the gods, comes especially to warn him and gives him an elixir which will turn the tables on Circe, giving him power over her. The messenger of the gods is divine intuition. Forewarned, the hero of mythology averts the snares of Maya, not only retaining his manhood but subjecting her to his will. As with the syrens he is able to experience the allurements of the subtle world without becoming enslaved to them.

The story of Polyphemus is less obvious. The one-eyed giant who captures Odysseus and his men; shuts them up in his cave, and begins to devour them, two a day, at first sight suggests the single eye of Siva, destructive of duality. But actually it must be only a dark simulacrum of this, such as must come from one-pointed concentration of a harmful, not a sublime nature, for Polyphemus is a danger to survival and it is Odysseus who triumphs and lives by putting out his eye. It is Odysseus too, it will be remembered, who attains symbolically the Nameless state by telling Polyphemus when asked his name, that it is No-man, so that when the blinded giant's companions ask who has done this to him he answers: "No man has done it", thus enabling Odysseus to escape.

These symbolical stories are indeed a sort of code, a reminder to those who have the key to them. There is a wealth of them in ancient Greek, as in Hindu, mythology — the Labours of Hercules, the Golden Fleece, myths that have lasted through the ages, that served once as a reminder and still can if read aright.

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## THE BALL

.....

By

'Garuda'

Like a ball  
 thrown by a child  
 it flies down  
 in sleep,  
 strikes the ground,  
 and rebounds  
 to the hand  
 bright and billowing.

O child, intently watch  
 the ball as it flies  
 up to you  
 freely spinning!

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## Shakespeare and the Vision of Wholeness

By

Sir George Trevelyan

THE Vision of Wholeness colours the whole of Shakespeare's writing. It is the key to the hidden allegory which runs through all his plays and new light is thrown upon their interpretation once we begin to look upon them in this way. The concept was still current in the world-view of Shakespeare's day. It was assumed that in the beginning was the vast unity of divine imagination. This then began to divide itself into great polarities, balanced opposites in a harmony of antagonistic action. Among the primary polarities were the "voluntas" and "noluntas", the opposition of male and female running through all life. Gravity and its opposite known as "levity" till the seventeenth century, is another example. The incredible diversification in nature is the picture of this ever increasing partition into subtler polarities. It is the process which Teilhard de Chardin called "complexification", and it created that complex environment which makes it now possible for the human organism to survive.

This division means that all parts are an image of the whole and the whole is contained in every part. Man is thus the microcosm and the image of the macrocosm. Modern radionics rediscovers this truth. The bloodspot is found to radiate on the same wave-length as the whole body and thus diagnosis and healing can be achieved at a distance through restoring the imbalance in radiation pattern.

The opposing view sees the world as the aggregate of separate parts integrated in growth. The distinction is fundamental. Our scientific age is largely founded on the second view. It is clearly accepted in the Marxist doctrine that all the achievements of art and religion are but a superstructure of human thinking built upon the one reality — matter.

The current views of evolution make the tacit assumption that species have grown 'by chance' through natural selection. Man is thus essentially an accident in a realm of nature indifferent to him and his presence. The planet on which we tread is seen as a tiny speck of dust in a vast dead mechanism of the cosmos and life a puff of light to be extinguished in the vast and slow death of a solar system. No wonder that man, finding himself an unimportant accident in a world of death, feels himself at liberty to exploit and 'mine' the planet 'ad lib' for his personal gain and pleasure.

Into this thinking now impinge disturbing thoughts. Perhaps this is not the true picture. Perhaps our assumption of unimportance has led to a vast arrogance. At least we awaken to the fact that it is not the only picture. Perhaps after all we must take more literally the phrases that we say so lightly.

'In the beginning was the Word  
and the Word was with God and the  
Word was God.

By him were all things made.

As Pope had it :

"All are but parts of one stupendous  
whole

Whose body nature is and God  
the soul"

We must recognise that until recently the 'vision of wholeness' was the basic tenet of the thinking mind. It still coloured all thought in Shakespeare's day. Indeed we must admit that ours is the only culture since the world began which has not in some way held that life began in a great unity and that life on our earth plane is held by a great and living organism of spiritual being. Our arrogant age has

abandoned this world-view, writing off the earlier thinkers as victims of superstition. Now it begins to reawaken. Stammeringly and with a new humility we begin to recognise that the older thinkers may have been right. Man may after all prove to be the centre of a living organism of being; the planet instead of a speck of dead dust, may prove to be a living seed, holding in the crown of its evolution a spiritual future of enormous importance. Certainly man as a free and conscious kingdom seems to have been the concern of God or the Gods.

“What is man, that Thou art mindful of him —

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels.”

In the new understanding we can see the human kingdom as that field in which nature becomes conscious of herself. The living organism of the planet looks out through human consciousness into a cosmos shot through with living thought and being. Man is indeed responsible to God for the life on the planet. The divine world has handed over to him the task of tending and developing life upon the planet. We are the channels for the inflow of the spirit and of light but in our greed, with its offspring fear, we turn it all to confusion and darkness. In a new humility we must take up our task of stewards of God and of ambassadors for the divine.

All mythology, all fairy stories, tell in terms of symbolism and allegory of that truth which it is so essential for modern man to rediscover if he is to keep his sanity. The inner core of man is eternal spiritual being belonging to a timeless world of light. This descends into the world of matter to undertake an allegorical journey, through dark forest or dangerous seas, until it can find and unite with its own higher or spiritual self. When this mystical marriage has been achieved, return to the eternal realms becomes possible. A thousand variants on this timeless theme are found by all who know how to read in legend and drama. The hero in all mythology is one who journeys into the timeless realms to bring back

the elixir of life, be it golden fleece, Holy Grail, talisman or jewel, with life-enhancing power.

Shakespeare's plays constitute, in this sense, a great body of mythology. Once we have seen the 'vision of wholeness' and the truth of the eternal being of man we can re-read the plays on a different level. They strengthen the soul in the truths they reveal.

The theme of unity runs through them all. First comes the primal unity diversified into polarities thrown into confusion by human error, the task of the hero being to restore the harmony through uniting with his higher self as symbolised by the heroine. A cosmic process is portrayed on the level of human relations.

“The Comedy of Errors” is one of the clearest examples of this. Here a condition of Elysian unity is first described, then division into pairs, paired yet again, like cells dividing. The uttermost confusion comes about through human error and frailty, until finally the right pairs find each other and the original harmony is restored. A comedy indeed, some would say a brilliant youthful farce. Yet at the same time in this early play Shakespeare gives us his whole thesis and follows it through in all the other comedies. The greatest error is to think that this play is simply a comedy. It is a great allegory, but as with all Shakespeare, no moral is forced upon us. We have no need to bother about the hidden allegory. We may take the plays at their face value. The very title “As you like it” shows this. “As you like it” turns out to be the most complete morality play, with not one character or even name that has not its significance in the pattern. Space does not allow analysis here and only the hint can be given to urge the reader to explore further. “Feed yourselves by questioning”, is Hymen's final injunction. Orlando, representing the awaking powers of affection, revolts against the dominant Will (Oliver, his brother), finds his higher self (Rosalind), is separated from her to go through soul trials until he can truly come back to her again, worthy of the mystical marriage. Exiled to the forest, an eternal symbol of the journey through time, he finds her in disguise and is trained by her in

love. When Will and heart and thinking are in harmony through the integration of the personality, a composite marriage is celebrated.

"Now is there joy in heaven  
When earthly things made even  
Atone together".

In allegorical interpretation all characters must be seen as aspects of the personality. This is well known in the psychology of dreams. The unbelievable genius of Shakespeare is that he is able to keep this psychological unity while giving us outward stories of adventure and conflict which even have political patterns as well.

"The Merchant of Venice" compares remarkably with "As you like it". In both plays we have the clear indication of the need to attain to a higher level of consciousness (City, Forest and Court; Venice, the rich City, and Belmont the fair mountain where lives the rich princess). The hero Bassanio wins his higher self, Portia, through a wonderful fairy-story lottery, but in that instant has to be separated from her to return to Venice to watch what is virtually the ritual murder of his friend by the Jew. The task of man on this plane is to find unity with his spiritual self. The higher worlds waste no time. Once the two, hero and heroine, have recognised and loved each other they are allowed no time for enjoyment. They are separated by an apparently cruel fate and made to endure more ordeals and trials until they prove themselves worthy of the final union. How often does this pattern show itself in our actual lives, suggesting that we are all engaged in an allegorical journey working out a web of destiny with a goal set in a higher plane of consciousness. Portia, the higher love and wisdom, comes to the rescue in disguise, the only one who knows the overall picture and can see how the citizens of the worldly Venice have lost their way in their search for earthly gain. "Tarry a moment, there is something else" she calls as Shylock's knife comes up to take the pound of flesh from the merchant. This line sounds like a clarion call to our materialistic culture, an eleventh hour warning that there is a whole set of values and vision of the world which

we have missed. The story ends again with the uniting in composite marriages in the Elysian world of Belmont, the true unity of personality and spirit now established.

So also with that great mystery play "The Tempest". Again the hero Ferdinand sees and loves Miranda. "They have changed eyes". Once the inner unity is secure the initiating priest, Prospero, separates them with apparent cruelty until after fitting trials — "thou hast strangely stood the test" — Ferdinand is allowed to marry his higher soul of love and is shown in pageant form the great vision of the spiritual meaning of the world. The whole play is the picture of an initiation. On the magic island two more parties undergo ordeals fitting for their nature. The court party is drawn to repentance and the characters representing sensual man (Stephano and Trinculo) meet the tempter Caliban and re-experience the Fall.

An important clue in the imagery of "The Tempest" is that all characters are shown as moving up and down through the symbolical elements from the mists of confusion into clear air, from air up to celestial light or down into the literal mires and bogs of sensuality.

So we can tackle play after play and they will break down into allegory. The strangest and most improbable situations, such as no modern dramatist would dare to present, take their place with an inevitable rightness when looked at in this way. For instance, the almost absurd 'happy ending' of "The Merchant of Venice", when Portia gives back his lost ships to Antonio, is seen as the only possible finish for the picture of the integrated soul. "That which thy child's mistake fancied as lost I have kept for thee in Heaven. Rise, take my hand and come". (Hound of Heaven).

It seems that Shakespeare uses the Comedies to present his picture of the transmutation of the soul by lifting it to other levels of consciousness. All these plays have profound cosmic meaning, but this never intrudes itself. There is no constraint or obligation to bother about it, and never is there a sense that Shakespeare is imposing teaching upon us. This



is understandable in that in his age the esoteric knowledge could not be outwardly spoken. To write mystery or morality plays was unacceptable to reformation thought. The inner significance of the plays is in line with the stream of hidden wisdom which has been passed down from the mystery temples of the ancients. "Shakespeare", whoever he was, is certainly an example of cosmic consciousness. To quote from Arnold's sonnet :

"Others abide our question. Thou art free.

We ask and ask : Thou smilest and art still,

Out-topping knowledge . . . ."

The wholeness of life, the interpenetration of matter and spirit, was all included in his tremendous vision and if we could know the whole cycle of plays we should have revealed to us the whole mystery of life.

Each generation is called upon to re-interpret Shakespeare in its own way. Perhaps the allegorical and imaginative interpretation is fitting for our times. Those who are not drawn to the world view of spiritual wholeness will assuredly challenge this as a forcing of the plays into a pattern which suits the interpreter. Be this as it may. It will seem so if the basic view is not held. But there are many in our time for whom the "vision of wholeness" throws a new flood of light on the whole meaning of life, restoring lost values and giving to man a new significance.

We are rediscovering that ours is the only culture in the whole of history that has not held in some way that man is spiritual in nature and has a great task to perform and much to learn while on his "erring pilgrimage" through life on the physical planes. When we feel this and direct our attention to the works of human genius we find that a new light of understanding floods into them. The Odyssey becomes an allegory directly relevant to modern consciousness. Every fairy tale speaks eternal truths which man must rediscover for himself today. Old sculpture begins to speak and the secret meaning of ritual drama begins to reveal itself.

A symbol, after all, can have manifold meanings. Its purpose is to enhance the significance of life. If it does this for you, how can we say it is not true? In the balanced polarities of life truth often exists in the very contradictions. Thus we must learn with Shakespeare that several interpretations can be valid at the same moment and if my 'truth' is not quite the same as that which you have seen, we do not need to be disturbed. Both may hold good.

Almost all the heroes are princes and aristocratic figures. This shows us that the tales are about the inner royalty of the human ego in its struggle for integration. "The great tragedies show the hero faced by a deadly flaw in his own soul-nature which draws upon him the corresponding ordeal and temptation in form of a person or event (Iago, Lady Macbeth, Hamlet's ghost). If he falls, he is thrown into mental confusion, is struck by a second temptation, falls again and plunges down into the horror of "accidental death and confused events", with the stage littered with corpses. Only when the act of creative mercy comes in is redemption possible. This is most clearly shown in the comparison of "Hamlet" and "Measure for Measure".

Hamlet can be read (among the many interpretations) as a study of the disintegration of a great soul. "Measure for Measure" is a textbook example of a psychological experiment in the effects of creative mercy. Transmutation of the soul is the eternal theme. (Read John Vyvyan's brilliant study *The Shakespearean Ethic*).

Always, in beginning to explore the plays in this way, we must remember that all characters and even situations are to be seen as aspects of the entire personality (your soul and mine, not merely an Elizabethan or Roman gentleman).

To take one example at risk of being accused of the facility of lifting a quotation out of its place. Macbeth comes out of the supper where King Duncan has been feasted and in the darkness of the Castle Hall says "If tw'ere done when t'is done, then t'were well it were

done quickly". We so easily slip over this opening to the soliloquy. But pause and see what other great saying it reflects. "That which thou hast to do, do quickly". It hits you between the eyes. Would not Judas, leaving that other Supper, have said the same after his Master's injunction? Duncan is seen to represent the Christ in us, Macbeth the Judas. When for ambition we have killed the light within us, is it not inevitable that we shall "sleep no more". We are deliberately "pulling down the blanket of the dark". The tragedy is lifted from twelfth century Scotland into our contemporary psychological situation.

The enigmatic final words of Prospero, Shakespeare's Epilogue in his final play, are not merely his farewell to the stage. They gain a subtle meaning and make more sense if we

can see them as an exhortation to interpretation. Study them again with this in mind. We can each of us begin the-exploration of the plays to discover the life-enhancing secrets hidden beneath the surface story.

..... Let me not, dwell  
 In this bare island by your spell,  
 But release me from my bands  
 With the help of your good  
 hands ;  
 Gentle breath of yours my  
 sails  
 Must fill, or else my project  
 fails .....  
 And my ending is despair  
 Unless I be relieved by prayer.  
 As you from crimes would  
 pardoned be,  
 Let your indulgence set me  
 free.

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## SUCHNESS

.....

By

Wei Wu Wei

What are you doing, Mr. Wu ?

*No thing, Madame, just Being.*

Being what, Mr. Wu ?

*Being I, Madame.*

What else could you be, Mr. Wu ?

*No thing can Be, Madame, only I AM.*

But cannot I Be also, Mr. Wu ?

*Madame, I have just told you : I AM.*

Yes, Mr. Wu, but me ?

*Alas, Madame, no 'me' can Be.*

But 'you' can Be, Mr. Wu !

*No 'you' either, Madame.*

But how so, Mr. Wu ?

*Only 'I', Madame, can Be, whoever  
 is Such.*

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# ON ASCETICISM

By

Wolter A. Keers<sup>1</sup>

*Visitor* : You said that we should give up everything, but there are things which are impossible to give up.

*Editor* : I have never said that you should do this or that. I have tried to point out that ownership is merely an idea, but that there is nothing that you can possess. Practically speaking, even your life is not in your own hands. But quite apart from that : who would be the owner ? You as a person. But you as a person are nothing but an image which surges up ten or twenty times every day. How long does such an image last ? Two seconds ? Then how can something that lives two seconds be the owner of something ?

*Visitor* : I agree metaphysically. But it takes time before one has completely understood that so many things called 'I' are mere images. In daily life I find that I am prepared to give up many things, and I have indeed discovered that things that at first look very attractive do not bring me happiness for more than a few moments — but this is not always true. There are things that you do not want to give up under any circumstances.

*Editor* : Such as . . . ?

*Visitor* : My wife and I are very happy. I would not want to give up my wife for anything in the world.

*Editor* : If it is true as you say — and I have not the slightest reason to doubt it — that you love your wife so much, then is it not true also that you want to give yourself completely to her ?

*Visitor* : Yes, certainly.

*Editor* : When you have given yourself completely, what remains of you ?

*Visitor* : . . . (remains silent)

*Editor* : Love is never an object that you may give or receive. Love is the deep recognition of yourself in another. In other words, when you say that you love somebody, you see yourself, as love, behind the eyes of the other, and vice versa. In other words, the other is no longer another. You can never maintain seriously that A loves B and B loves A. In love, both disappear, A disappears and B disappears, and what remains is only love itself.

In other words, you as a lover, you as a husband, you disappear ; and that is how you want it to be.

And when the husband has disappeared from the relationship, where is the wife ? The wife is no more a wife. She also has dissolved into love itself. That is what actually happens in your case, and I repeat : that is how you want it to be, both of you.

Maybe I can give you an image, to help you understand. You know the analogy of waves and water. First you take yourself to be a wave, living amongst other waves. You think that you, as a wave, are dealing with other waves all around you. Until you start to discover that in reality you are nothing but water. This discovery induces you to pay more and more attention to the water-aspect in you, and less to the forms you assume at different times : sometimes when there is a hard wind, you may appear to be a big and dangerous wave ; sometimes when the weather is calm, you may feel that you are a peaceful and innocent ripple ; but all the time you are water.

If I continue the analogy, we can imagine that water finally receives so much attention

<sup>1</sup> based on a recorded talk by the author who is the editor of the Dutch magazine *Yoga Advaita*, Amsterdam.

that your awareness sinks deeper and deeper into it. Let us suppose that, at a certain moment, you find yourself a hundred feet below the surface : you experience that all is water — there is not an inch of you that is not water, and all you see is water ; you realise that even when you thought that you were something different, you were water, conscious presence, all along.

Now the moment comes when you look up, at the waves, a hundred feet above you. What do you see ? That waves "talk" with each other only apparently. In truth, it is water, talking to itself all the time, creating waves to talk or play with itself.

That is what you discover when you love : you can never talk about 'my' love or 'her' love. From the bhakti point of view you might say that the one, universal love — by whatever name you may call it — has created you and her and every other phenomenon that has name and form, to talk and play with itself.

The moment you say "I love", it is this universal love that has swept away all you ever projected onto it : for the time being (although you are then timeless) you as a person have disappeared, and love looks at itself.

But since love is what you really are, behind the projected person, it is perfectly true to say that you are looking at yourself, talking with yourself, laughing and weeping with yourself, living and dying as a mere wave in the ocean of love. But the wave-part is unreal : it cannot exist for even one second without the support of the water that you are fundamentally. The wave-part is abstracted from the water. The water is the only concrete thing you can ever experience. All the rest is derived, abstract. That is why it is said that consciousness, atma, is the only Reality.

And "to experience what you are" is yet another dangerous expression. You can of course never make yourself object of your own experience — this would require more than one self. So, if it is said that you yourself are the only thing you ever experience, it might perhaps be formulated more clearly by saying

that you are the one, uninterrupted Experience, from your birth till this very moment, and that it is this experience which assumes all kinds of forms. The moment a form arises, you are its witness and its content, in the same sense that water is the content of the wave, air the content of a breeze. Or if you prefer to put it still differently : the one Experience that you are, is the in-ground, simultaneously, of the seer, the seeing and the seen. These three come and go simultaneously, but you as uninterrupted, timeless Experience, are ever there. You as Experience are the only concrete element in creation — and you are still there when creation has vanished in deep sleep. How could a new dream or a new waking event occur if you were not present before its appearance ? It needs you, if it is to appear at all !

*Visitor :* But if I am all and everything, what could I abandon or give up ?

*Editor :* The idea that you are not everything, obviously. It is this idea that creates all the havoc. You think that you are a small chap in a big world, and so you have to defend yourself, which implies fear and greed and grief. From the ultimate point of view, there is indeed nothing to be given up. But from the standpoint of a human being in search of freedom, love, liberation, you have to give up all that you think you are — or, if it is formulated from the standpoint of an ignorant man : you have to give up all that you are.

To me, the story of the young Ramana who goes to the temple, throws off all his clothes and prays to Shiva to devour him, is the most moving story I have ever heard. He had seen what Life is all about, and far from making a theory out of it and speculating that there was nothing to be abandoned, he threw away everything and stood there, naked. Is there anyone of us who has got the courage ? And don't forget that this young Hindu must have had the fullest conviction that Shiva could indeed reduce him to ashes in half a second's time !

But to this story also, there is a dangerous side. For some people have outwardly done the same thing in one way or the other, and

have not found freedom. Then, what is the difference ?

There is a true and a false asceticism.

The false asceticism is a discipline, based on distrust of the world and oneself. If you see the world as an evil place and yourself as a bag full of bones and dirt, you are at that moment very far from the truth. Those who shun the world on account of this kind of argument, look very superficially. They have never examined the world properly, and they think that it constitutes a dangerous reality. That way they defeat their own purpose, for if the world is real, I am a microscopic part of it, and I can never win the battle.

But those who have examined themselves and the world, have discovered that all we call the world is a series of appearances in consciousness — in the one Experience that I AM. So what we call the world is not a real and dangerous phenomenon outside of me, but a mere series of vibrations or movements within me. Everyone of us is the essence, the substance, the in-ground of the sense-impressions that we call the world. No one has ever experienced a world outside of the Experience he is. And if no living being has ever experienced such a thing, there is no reason to believe that it exists.

The enemy therefore is not the world, but my belief in it ; my belief that giving up worldly objects will make me happy is just as superstitious as the ignorant man's belief that the acquisition of worldly goods will make him happy. Nothing can make you happy : you are happy. Nothing can make water wet.

Happiness, freedom, consists of the living insight that you are not a somebody that is happy on Mondays and unhappy on Tuesdays.

Once you have seen that you are not a body, not the functioning of five sense-organs, not thought or feeling or memory, but the ever-present Experience that is their substance, it begins to dawn that no object can make you happy because you yourself are the happiness you seek.

Only then will you want to give up things. But not as a discipline : you give up, because you see that holding on to things is not only useless, but senseless ; for nowhere in you is there place for an owner, for a proprietor of anything whatsoever. You cannot even retain one single thought for ten seconds, no 'I-thought', no proprietor.

So true asceticism is the automatic fruit of insight. I will bet anything that the boy Ramana did not hate his body or the world. He loved the Light that He was and is, and the one thing He wanted, was to be consumed by that Light.

If you want this, with your whole being, you will get it in no time. For if we see ourselves as not-realised, it is only so because part of us does not wish to be devoured, consumed by Light.

Here of course you can put the same question : If all is Light, what is there to be consumed by Light ?

The answer is the same : the idea that there is Light and darkness is to be abandoned in some way or the other.

*Visitor* : But is not the idea that there is bondage also Light ?

*Editor* : Of course it is. There is only Light. So the moment you really see the truth of what you just said, not as a mere speculation or a logical deduction, but as living experience, that moment you are free ! When you really see with your entire being that bondage is nothing but Light, there is nothing more to be done. But don't be satisfied with a mere logical conclusion. Freedom is what you are, and not a way of thinking.

*Visitor* : As long as I am here and I hear you talking, it all sounds so very simple . . . but . . . !

*Editor* : But nothing. It is so simple that no word can express it. Your problem is not that it is complicated, but that you refuse to look, the moment you return to your daily activities,

This evening you see very clearly that there cannot be such a person as a proprietor of that body or a proprietor of thoughts. The so-called proprietor is nothing but a thought, shortlived as any thought. But to-morrow you find that the value of your shares has dropped some points on the stock-exchange, and in one-tenth of a second you create the image of a worried proprietor, and, what is worse, you believe in this image. It is not the image in itself that binds you, but your belief in it.

The only way to get rid of this belief, is to look, again and again, and to see that you are not anyone of the images that appear in you.

As this belief in images is very deep-rooted, the greatest help you can find whilst looking at what you are not, is love.

Surrendering yourself completely and unconditionally to the "object" of your love, is the true asceticism.

That is why to the very vast majority of us, a guru is needed if we are to come to complete understanding. The guru is the one who wants nothing from you — he does not even want you to change. To him, you are perfection itself.

When you discover that there is somebody who knows you completely, including the parts you yourself consider bad and dirty, and who

loves you completely all the same, without wishing you to change, you cannot but melt away. The tears that you shed at this discovery are your strength : they are the deepest expression of the love that you are, and that comes to light in the presence of the guru.

This melting away — this dissolving into the love of Love itself, — is true asceticism. It comes without an effort. It changes the 'you' and the entire world you projected, and reveals that, even when the conviction was there that you were a man or a woman full of problems, you were in reality the love that now sweeps away every idea and feeling of bondage.

That is why an authentic Master will not tell you what you should do in order to become free — he points out to you that already at this very moment you are freedom itself. The only thing to be done, is to examine the idea that you are something else, find that it is false, and allow it to disappear. The authentic Master does not ask you to contemplate the question : "What do I wish to become?" but : "Who Am I".

To this question, there is no verbal and no emotional answer.

The answer is the surging up of the Unknowable — of that love, Sir, that you recognise as yourself when you say that you love your wife.

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**AND...**

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By

**Ramesh V. Phadnis**

I went in search of Him  
and found Him not.  
I gave up all search  
and . . .  
there He was.

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## Jnana Sadhana of Gorakhnath

By

Dr. M. Sadashiva Rao

EIGHT centuries ago, a great Yogi and *Siddha* known as Gorakhnath travelled over a good part of India with his band of disciples teaching Yoga. His campaign for spreading the knowledge of Yoga marks an important chapter in the spiritual renaissance that occurred in medieval India. The school of Yogis that he created is known as the *Nath* school. It has come down to our time through *Guru-sisbya* lineage. It contains at the present time both *Hatha* Yogis and *Jnana* Yogis, indicating that he taught both forms of Yoga. The *Hatha* Yogis are to be found in the monastic centre he had founded in the North. The *Jnana* Yogis, or *Jnanis* as they are better known, are to be found spread out in Maharashtra. Their numbers have been large over the centuries that have elapsed and their contribution to the spiritual advancement of the people of this region considerable. The first to be initiated into the *Nath* school in Maharashtra was Nivrittinath in the thirteenth century who in turn initiated his young brother Jnaneshwar, the Great Saint of Maharashtra. The spiritual history of this region records the names of many Saints in the succeeding centuries who were *Jnanis* of the *Nath* school. Many of them also taught the *Bhakti* path, following in the footsteps of Jnaneshwar. There are at the present time a good number of them in Maharashtra leading humble lives and engaged in the spiritual uplift of the people.

Gorakhnath's teachings on *Jnana* Yoga have evoked great interest on account of their remarkable impact extending over eight centuries on the spiritual advancement of the people of Maharashtra. However, they remained a close secret until the present century. It was known that he had left records of his teachings in the form of hand-written manuscripts in his main monastic centre. These were not accessible to

the public for almost eight-hundred years. About fifty years ago, scholars gained access to a few of them, and these were copied, printed and published by private agencies. More recently, the present authorities of Gorakhnath's chief monastic centre at Gorakhpur have published a book in English on Gorakhnath's philosophy.<sup>1</sup> This is a commentary on Gorakhnath's most important manuscript writing and his *magnum opus*, giving his thoughts on the fundamentals of Yoga, entitled *Siddha-Siddhanta-Paddhati* (The System of Thought of the *Siddhas*). In this book, the original Sanskrit verses from this and other unpublished manuscripts have been freely reproduced. They include his verses on *Jnana Sadhana*. A study of these verses show that the *Sadhana* described very briefly by him is essentially the same as that taught by Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. It is of interest to those who follow Bhagavan's teachings, because of Gorakhnath's precise directions on the practice of *Samadhi*, the most difficult part of *Jnana Sadhana*. For this reason, this brief article, it is hoped, will be useful to present-day *sadhakas*.

### *Sobam Sadhana*

According to Gorakhnath, every time one breathes out, air is expelled from the lungs with the sound *Ham*. Similarly, every time one breathes in, air is drawn into the lungs with the sound *Sab*. An individual utters the *mantra* "Ham-Sab" with every breath of his life. It means "I am He" or "I am the Self". Gorakhnath calls the *mantra* "Ajapa Gayatri" (Silent Gayatri). He says that it is the most potent *mantra* for Liberation.

<sup>1</sup> A. K. Banerjea : "The Philosophy of Gorakhnath with *Goraksha-Vacana-Sangraha*" (1962) Published by Mahant Dig Vijay Nath Trust, Gorakhnath Temple, Gorakhpur, (U.P.) India.

For the conscious practice of this *mantra*, the *sadbaka* has to sit still watching his normal breathing and recite the *mantra* "Ham-Sab" to synchronise with his breathing out and in. With repetition, it becomes "So-Ham". The meaning remains the same. When recited silently with deep introspection and feeling for its meaning the *mantra* gets reduced to "Ham" or "Abam" meaning "I" or "I am".

This practice is called *Sobam Sadhana* by the *Jnanis* of the *Nath* school and is taught to the disciples during initiation. In its ultimate form, it is identical with Self-enquiry. This identity is brought out by one of the *Jnanis* of this school who teaches direct concentration on "I" or "I am", stating that it was the only 'mantra' given to him by his Guru for his Self-realisation.<sup>2</sup>

Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi has explained how deep concentration on "I", standing for one's ego, with an intuned mind takes one deep within to sink into the Heart or the Self. Gorakhnath explains the same in regard to the concentration on "So-Ham" in different words by stating that the mind dissolves in the Self to give *manonasa* or extinction of the mind. In his brief verses, he does not refer to the Heart or explain the part of the *sadbana* between the dissolving of the mind in the Self and the practice of *Samadhi*. Bhagavan has explained it clearly with the Heart as the focus of attention. The sinking of the mind in the Heart marks the culmination of Self-enquiry. The sinking can be clearly felt by the *sadbaka* so that he can locate the Heart for *sadbana* which is to follow. The practice of holding the mind in the Heart destroys the *vasanas* or the *samskaras* which are the 'impurities' of the mind functioning as a barrier for realising the Self. After most of the 'impurities' are destroyed, it becomes possible to practice *Samadhi* which is the Expansion from the Heart of Pure Consciousness. Finally, through the practice of *Samadhi* comes Self-realisation. *The seat of realisation is the Heart.*<sup>3</sup> For the *sadbaka*, the most difficult part of the *sadbana* is the practice of *Samadhi*. It involves considerable time and efforts, because *vasanas*

still remain or the exact approach has to be explored through trial and error procedures.

Gorakhnath has given precise instructions in regard to the practice of *Samadhi*. He explains the method of achieving *manonasa*, or extinction of the mind, to reach the Self in *Samadhi*.

#### *Kevala Kumbhaka* and *Manolaya*

*Pranayama*, or control of breath for control of mind, has different forms. In the more common form, it involves taking a deep inhalation of air into the lungs called *puraka*, to be followed by retention of breath in the lungs called *kumbhaka*, to be followed again by a strong exhalation of air from the lungs called *rechaka*. For achieving *manolaya* for the purpose of going into *Samadhi*, Gorakhnath recommends another form called *kevala kumbhaka*. This has to be achieved, he says, without *puraka* and *rechaka*, that is, without deep breathing. In practice, it can be achieved through normal breathing by slowing down of breathing movements until they are hardly perceptible in the chest movements. There is no complete stoppage of breath, the residual air in the lungs being renewed through minute movements of the chest. (Modern physiological investigations show that the rate of absorption of oxygen is higher than in normal breathing.) Gorakhnath says: "If *kevala kumbhaka* is achieved without *puraka* and *rechaka*, there is nothing that cannot be achieved in the three worlds!" According to him, it promotes *manolaya* and also rouses up *kundalini*.

For obtaining *manonasa*, or reaching the Self through extinction of the mind, through *kevala kumbhaka*, Gorakhnath has given precise direction as follows:

"If the mind is steady (i.e. without thoughts), the *vayu* (i.e. the breath) is also steady. The *manolaya* of the Yogi is successfully achieved when there is no breathing in and out (i.e. no normal or deep breathing but only *kevala kumbhaka*), the holding of mate-

<sup>2</sup> Nisargadatta Maharaj: "I Am That" (Talks). Pub: Chetna, Bombay, (1973).

<sup>3</sup> Talks, p. 119.



rial things (*visbaya*) in the mind is lost (i.e. *visbaya vasanās* are not being held in the mind through the practice of meditation and or *vairagya*), there are no cares whatever, there are no thoughts of anything, there are no actions (of the body or limbs) whatever and there is no *vikara* (i.e. uneasy movements such as fidgeting). All thoughts being abandoned and all action totally gone, there occurs *Laya* or going into the Self which cannot be described in words. When the mind goes into *Laya*, only *Kaivalya* (the Self as Pure Consciousness) remains.”

#### *Shambhavi Mudra*

In order to maintain awareness of the Self obtained through *manolaya* over a long period, which is called *Samadhi*, there is a necessity for a favourable body position. Such a body position, which confers fortitude (*sthirata*), is called a *mudra* in Yoga. Gorakhnath lays special importance on what is called *Shambhavi mudra* which, he says, “is hidden in the *Vedashastras* and is obtained by the Grace of the Guru.” It is so called as it takes one to Shambhu (Shiva or the Self) or, in other words, to *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*. For assuming this body position, he gives these directions :

The *sadbaka* sits in the *sukhasana* pose with his back straight ;  
His mind is directed inwards ;  
His eyes are kept open and directed straight ahead without seeing anything ;

His body is kept perfectly still without any fidgeting ;  
His mind is kept free of all thought including that of the Self ; and,  
His breathing is reduced to *kevala kumbhaka*.

In addition, he should have fulfilled all other conditions for promoting *manolaya* given in the previous practice.

Some pertinent comments are necessary for clarification :

*Samadhi* is the intensely alert and wakeful state beyond thought in which one's mind remains merged with the Self or the Infinite Expanse of Pure Consciousness or Supreme Awareness. It is possible only when the mind is held firmly in the Heart. Gorakhnath has described the other conditions necessary for going into *Samadhi*. The inner urge to enter *Samadhi* must come from the *sadbaka*. Keeping the eyes open “without seeing anything” is a necessary measure of *vairagya*, or mental detachment from the phenomenal world. *Nirvikalpa samadhi* demands that the world must be blanked out of the consciousness. In the intermediate state of *Savikalpa samadhi*, one is aware of the Self and also the world. The rigid requirements of the *mudra* or body position are necessary only during practice. Later, most of them are not required except keeping the body still and the mind thought-free and assuming *kevala kumbhaka* which comes automatically.

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### “..... BEFORE A FALL”

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By

Wei We Wei

How humble you are, Mr. Wu !  
*Who is there to be proud, Madame ?*

How proud you might be, Mr. Wu !  
*Who would there be to be humble,  
Madame ?*

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## Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

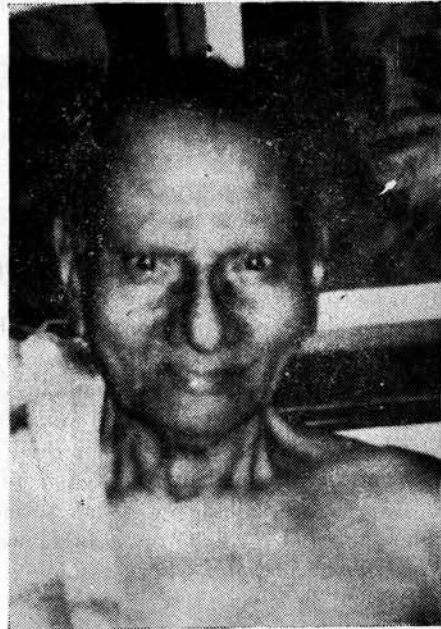
By  
Jean Dunn

**I**N the city of Bombay, on a noisy, busy, commercial by-lane, there lives an enlightened sage, Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj. He is a member of the spiritual lineage of the Navanathas. Born in Bombay, on the auspicious day of Hanuman's Jayanti, in March, 1897, he was named Maruti. His father Shivrampant Kampli and mother Parvatibai were both very religious. Brought up on a farm in Kandalgaon, a village south of Bombay, he had an alert, inquisitive mind and was deeply interested in religious and philosophical matters. Maruti moved to Bombay in 1918, and in 1924 married Sumatibai, who gave him a son and three daughters.

He began life in Bombay as an office clerk, but his energetic and independent nature soon made him take to petty trading. He opened a small 'bidi' shop, making and selling country cigarettes. In a few years he had several small shops. However there was a growing hunger for truth in him. He approached the great saint, Sri Siddharameshwar Maharaj and was initiated by him. In less than a year he was ripe for holding meetings for religious discourses.

After the death of his preceptor in 1936, the urge for self-realization reached its zenith and in 1937 he abandoned his family and business and took to the life of a wandering monk. On his way to the Himalayas, where he meant to spend the rest of his life, he met a brother-disciple who convinced him that a life of dispassion in action would be more spiritually fruitful.

Returning to Bombay, he found only one small shop remaining of his business ventures. For the sake of his family he conducted the business and devoted all his energy to spiritual sadhana. He built himself a mezzanine floor as a place for meditation.



*Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj*

In his own words : "When I met my Guru he told me, "You are not what you take yourself to be. Find out what you are. Watch the sense 'I am', find your real self . . ." I did as he told me. All my spare time I would spend looking at myself in silence. And what a difference it made, and how soon ! It took me only three years to realize my true nature."

Soon, attracted by his wisdom and eloquence, people began gathering in the street near his shop and he talked with them whenever free. Later, when his son took charge of the business, the meetings moved into the house. Many foreigners, as well as Hindus, found their way to his humble abode and Maurice Frydman, a Polish devotee, often acted as translator. The questions and answers were so interesting that tape recordings were made. Maurice Frydman

translated many of these enlightening conversations into English and in 1973 these were published under the title '*I Am That*'.<sup>1</sup> As a result, readers from many different countries now come to Bombay, seeking the spiritual guidance of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj. The present room is now wholly inadequate to accommodate the increasing flow of visitors and plans are underway to acquire a larger place.

The small upper room at 10th Khetwadi Lane, built so many years ago for meditation is daily crowded for the question and answer periods. The walls of the room are lined with portraits of great saints of different religions. There is a friendly, relaxed atmosphere. The noisy street outside is forgotten. Maharaj's slight figure is the focus of attention. In appearance he is short, perhaps five feet tall, going bald, with twinkling, piercing eyes and an infectious smile. Someone once remarked on his big nose and ears and his smiling reply: "Perhaps I am descended from Ganesha (the elephant god)", illustrates his quick wit and unconcern with appearances. He seems to be a simple, ordinary person, much the same as you and I — for a very short while. Soon one understands, that, incredible as it seems, here is a living example that **IT CAN BE DONE — IT HAS BEEN DONE!** Courage is renewed, the mind quietened, and there is a sense of well-being, of happiness.

He jokes, laughs, frowns, shakes his finger, pounds his fist to emphasise a point. Different expressions play on his face like sunlight on water. He is beautiful! One feels his vibrant energy, the pure joy of being, flowing from him. He answers all questions simply, clearly and concisely, with no quoting of scriptures or propounding of doctrines. He is kind and gracious as he knocks the props right out from under you. Cherished concepts are seen for what they are — mere words. Now one understands the value of '*Sat-Sangh*'.

His message is simple and direct: "You ARE the Self *here* and *now*. Stop imagining yourself to be 'this' or 'that'. Let go your attachment to the unreal." The best examples

of his teachings are to be found in '*I Am That*'.<sup>1</sup> A few excerpts are given below:

#### Volume I

Chpt. 1: Don't you see that all your problems are your body's problems — food, clothing, shelter, family, friends, fame, name, security, survival — all these lose their meaning the moment you realize that you may not be a mere body . . .

When the mind stays in the 'I am' without moving, you enter a state which cannot be verbalized but can be experienced. All you need to do is to try and try again,

You observe the heart feeling, the mind thinking, the body acting: The very act of observing shows that you are not what you perceive!

Chpt. 3: It is only when the mind refuses to flow with life and gets stuck at the banks that it becomes a problem. By flowing with life I mean acceptance — letting one what comes and letting go what goes. Desire not, fear not, observe the actual as and when it happens . . .

Chpt. 15: The person is a very small thing. Actually it is a composite, it cannot be said to exist by itself. Unperceived, it is just not there. It is but the shadow of the mind, the sum total of memories. Pure being is reflected in the mirror of the mind as knowing. What is known takes the shape of a person, based on memory and habit. It is but the shadow or a projection of the knower onto the screen of the mind.

Chpt. 17: What is wrong with being, knowing and acting effortlessly and happily? Why consider it so unusual as to expect the immediate destruction of the body? What is wrong with the body that it should die? Correct your attitude to your body and leave it alone. Don't pamper, don't torture. Just keep it going, most of the time below the threshold of conscious attention.

Meditation will help you to find your bonds, loosen them, untie them and cast your moor-

<sup>1</sup> *I AM THAT*: Pub.: Chetana Ltd., 34, Ram-par Row, Bombay-400 001, India.

ings. When you are no longer attached to anything, you have done your share. The rest will be done for you. — By whom? — By the same power that brought you so far, that prompted your heart to desire truth and your mind to seek it. It is the same Power that keeps you alive. You may call it Life or the Supreme.

Chpt. 19 : Remember that language is an instrument of the mind, it is made by the mind for the mind.

Chpt. 20 : Seeking out causes is a pastime of the mind. There is no duality of cause and effect. Everything is its own cause.

When you realize that you are not the person but the pure and calm witness, and that fearless awareness is your very being, you are the being.

Desires are just waves in the mind. You know a wave when you see one. A desire is just a thing among many. Feel no urge to satisfy it, no action need be taken on it. Freedom from desire means this : the compulsion to satisfy is absent.

Chpt. 21 : Nothing can set you free because you ARE free.

Chpt. 29 : Just as a deficiency disease is cured through the supply of the missing factor, so are the diseases of living cured by a good dose of intelligent detachment.

There is no need for a way out ! Don't you see that a way out is also a part of the dream ? All you have to do is to see the dream as a dream.

The very idea of going beyond the dream is illusory. Why go anywhere ? Just realize that you are dreaming a dream you call the world and stop looking for ways out.

Chpt. 30 : Which theory of creation is true ? — All are true, all are false. You can pick whichever you like best . . . Experiment with any theory you like — if you are but earnest and honest, the attainment of reality will be yours. As a living being you are caught in an untenable and painful situation and you are seeking a way out. You are being offered

several plans of your prison, none quite true. But they all are of some value only if you are in dead earnest. It is the earnestness that liberates, not the theory.

Chpt. 42 : All you can do is to grasp the central point, that reality is not an event and does not happen and whatever happens, whatever comes and goes, is not reality. See the event as event only, the transient as transient, experience as mere experience and you have done all you can. Then you are vulnerable to reality, no longer armoured against it as you were when you gave reality to events and experiences.

#### Volume II

Chpt. 63 : Life itself is desireless. But the false self wants to continue — pleasantly. Therefore it is always engaged in ensuring one's continuity. Life is unafraid and free. As long as you have the idea of influencing events, liberation is not for you : the very notion of doership, of being a cause, is bondage.

Chpt. 67 : It is the mind that tells you that the mind is there. Don't be deceived. All the endless arguments about the mind are produced by the mind itself, for its protection, continuation and expansion. It is the bland refusal to consider the convolutions and convulsions of the mind that can take you beyond it.

Chpt. 71 : You are looking for the causes of being what you are not ! It is a futile search. There are no causes but your ignorance of your real being, which is perfect and beyond all causation.

When you fight you invite a fight. But when you do not resist, you meet with no resistance. When you refuse to play the game you are out of it.

Nothing stops you from being a Jnani *here* and *now*, except fear. You are afraid of being impersonal, of impersonal being. It is all quite simple. Turn away from your desires and fears and from the thoughts they create and you are at once in your Natural state.

Chpt. 73 : Freedom means letting go. People just do not care to let go everything. They

do not know that the finite is the price of the infinite, as death is the price of immortality. Spiritual maturity lies in the readiness to let go everything. The giving up is the first step. But the real giving up is in realizing that there is nothing to give up, for nothing is your own. It is like deep sleep — you do not give up your bed when you fall asleep, you just forget it.

Chpt. 78 : Nobody can say 'I am the witness'. The 'I am' is also the witnessed. The state of detached awareness is the witness-consciousness, the 'mirror-mind'. It rises and sets with its object and thus is not quite the real. Whatever its object it remains the same, hence it is also the real. It partakes of both the real and the unreal and is therefore a bridge between the two.

Chpt. 95 : Keep quiet, undisturbed, and the wisdom and the power will come on their own. You need not hanker. Wait in silence of the heart and mind. It is very easy to be quiet, but willingness is rare. You people want to become supermen overnight. Stay without ambition, without the least desire, exposed, vulnerable, unprotected, uncertain and alone, completely open to and welcoming life as it happens, without the selfish conviction that all must yield to your pleasure or profit, material or so-called spiritual.

Chpt. 97 : The world appears to you so overwhelmingly real because you think of it all the time ; cease thinking of it and it will dissolve into thin mist. You need not forget ;

when desire and fear end, bondage also ends. It is the emotional involvement, the pattern of likes and dislikes which we call character and temperament, that create the bondage.

Do not be afraid of freedom from desire and fear. It enables you to live a life so different from all that you know, so much more intense and interesting, that, truly, by losing all you gain all.

Chpt. 99 : To find reality you must be real in the smallest daily action ; there can be no deceit in the search for truth.

Chpt. 100 : Before you can accept God you must accept yourself, which is even more frightening. The first steps in self-acceptance are not at all pleasant, for what one sees is not a happy sight. One needs all the courage to go further. What helps is silence. Look at yourself in total silence, do not describe yourself. Look at the being you believe yourself to be and remember — you are not what you see. 'This I am not — what am I?' is the movement of self-enquiry. There are no other means to liberation. All means delay. Resolutely reject what you are not, till the real self emerges in its glorious nothingness, its not-a-thing-ness.

Just look at yourself as you are, see yourself as you are, accept yourself as you are and go ever deeper into what you are.

You are free from what you have understood. The outer expressions of freedom may take time to appear, but they are already there.

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“Whether or not the results of meditation are obtained is of no importance. The essential is to arrive at stability ; it is the most precious thing that one can gain. In any case one must trust with confidence in the Divinity and await His grace without impatience. The same rule applies equally to japa : japa pronounced even once is a benefit, whether one is aware of it or not.”

— SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI.

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## WHAT DOES SURRENDER MEAN?

By

Marie B. Byles

**M**AHARSHI was once asked about Mahatma Gandhi, and whether his work was good. Maharshi merely replied, "Mahatma Gandhi has surrendered (to God). That is all that matters."

Maharshi's first admonition was, 'Ask your self who you are'. His second was, 'Surrender'. They are opposite sides of the same coin, the purchase price for learning how to relinquish the dominance of changing finite selves.

I have often been asked how we can distinguish between surrendering ourselves to God, and surrendering ourselves to urges springing from our own desires.

The question is not as easily answered as it might seem. The species, Man, has long since lost the guidance of the instincts of animals which cause all they do to be in harmony with the needs of all creation. Men have learned to be separate individuals with urges and desires that are often opposed to the needs of all creation, let alone the needs of their own social life. It is therefore not always easy to know what is the will of God, the totality of All.

I used to reply airily, "The presence or absence of egoism is the determining criterion". But this answer is too facile. It merely takes us a little further back, for we have now to determine what urges spring from egotistical desires and what from the needs of all creation, for we each have our own individual talents, and no one can judge for another.

Some examples may make the difficulty clearer and may, or may not, give us an acceptable answer.

Some years ago I got the urge to give to the National Trust my tiny cottage and an area of natural bushland. The National Trust will

not accept anything and everything; it must have historical value or especial beauty and it must not be a heavy financial burden on the Trust. I felt the urge so strongly that I offered to move away if the bushland could be better preserved, protected and cared for. Much to my relief the Trust accepted my offer and did not want me to leave. (Some one must care for ever natural bushland in the vicinity of houses to prevent foreign weeds and pests taking possession). And so, I am living here under idyllic conditions without the burden of rates. Had my guidance come from my own desires?

Advancing years, feebleness and a serious accident, began to make the work entailed beyond my strength. I got the further urge to provide the wherewithal to build a large bed-sitting room so that someone else might come and live here, help with the work and after my death take over the management. Was the urge from surrender to the guidance of God, or from my own desires?

The first one who came to live in the new construction appeared to have every qualification. He was also deeply religious and one of his favourite books was called *God Calling*. He took it for granted that he was guided by God when he came. He pursued his ordinary avocation on week days and the larger part of the two-day week ends be spent with his relatives, his brothers and sisters, and the work on the bushlands did not occupy much of his time. After a few months he left to return permanently to his brothers and sisters. Had he been guided by God when he first came and when he finally left? Some of us may have felt that he was hardly humble enough for this, but who were we to judge another? Tending the bush and caring for it may not have been in accord with his talents.

The next person who wanted to occupy the new construction was a woman who had been a Buddhist nun in Thailand. There was no doubt about her sincerity when she said the proposition met her deepest aspirations as well as her love of the bushlands. She stayed one night and then departed saying that this was not the life for her. She must always be ready to 'up bags and go', that is, to travel.

Once again we are up against the conflict between the desire to surrender unreservedly to the will of God and the urge of individual talents and our own desires. It is a conflict that is particularly obvious in the 20th century when occupations are so diverse. Mahatma Gandhi never asked anyone to forsake his chosen avocation to help him in the movement for home-rule in India. Neither did Maharshi ask any disciple to leave his chosen way of life. We have each our own way to tread and who of us should decide for another? The *Dhammapada* says, "None should neglect his own task for the sake of another's however great" (v. 166). The *Gita* says, exactly the same, "One's own duty though devoid of merit is preferable to the duty of another well performed" (Ch. 11, v. 15).

A consideration of these matters does not make any easier the answer to the question as to how to decide what is our own urge springing from our own desires and what is the urge coming from surrender to God, the selfless driving force of the universe.

Let us take some examples from earlier times when life was less complex.

Brother Lawrence of the 17th century felt God was calling him to enter a monastery. He gave up his work and did so. From that time he decided never to do anything except for the love of God. He would not so much as pick up a straw from the ground except for the love of God. He did not like his work in the monastery kitchen, nor his task when sent to negotiate for the purchase of wine, but he did everything for the love of God and all was well. The tiny booklet of his talks and letters has been an inspiration to millions. All will

agree that, like Gandhi, he had surrendered to God and not to his own desires.

And so too, all will agree that Mother Teresa of Calcutta, surrendered to God when she started caring for the sick and miserable in Calcutta for the sake of loving kindness, for an all-embracing love that has made her world-famous.

On the other hand there were the devout Catholic priests who proscribed Galileo, and by threat of torture forced him to deny that the earth went round the sun and not *vice versa*. Who will say that these priests had not surrendered to God, and if they had, why they behaved in a manner which seems to us sadistically evil?

At the furthest end of the scale of horror is the irresistible urge of the young man who rapes a young girl on her way to school. Even if we put him in prison for the safety of society who are we to judge when we ourselves have never known the frightful urge of that young man. "No one wantonly does wrong," says Marcus Aurelius, the saintly Stoic Roman Emperor of the 2nd century A.D. Where do we draw the line between the urge of God and the urge of our own desires?

In between these two extremes there was Peter the Hermit at the time of the Crusades. He said that men had failed to take the Sacred Places from the infidels because grown men were sinful. But little children were pure and innocent, and *they* would be successful. So he travelled over Europe proclaiming 'Deus Vult' (*God Wills*). Little children heard his call and left their homes for Palestine. Most of them were sold into slavery and never returned. Who are we to say Peter the Hermit was not sincere in believing he heard the Voice of God? He certainly was not guided by self-interest.

None of these stories gives a final answer to the question asked. Nor can the answer be found through reason, logic or intellect, for it lies far beyond these.

It also lies outside the external word or thought or act, for its origin is in the mind

before even thought was formulated. Was, or was not, the whole being directed to a sense of 'I', 'mine' and 'me', or was it directed to what is Beyond all individual selfhood? 'The devil himself knows not the mind of a man', says an ancient legal adage.

And so we come back to the first answer given — egoism, being at enmity with some part of the universe. This would seem to be the only criterion by which an individual can judge whether he is being guided by God or by his own desires.

There are, however, various considerations the spiritual leaders have given for our help in making a decision.

Mahatma Gandhi was definite that what is not in accord with truth and love must be discarded.

Facts are part of truth. And truth includes frankness with ourselves and being prepared to admit that we are, or may have been, wrong. Might we perhaps have been pretending that we do not have a darker side to our being?

Love includes the banishment of all thoughts, let alone words and acts, that injure anyone or anything, and not merely kindness to our enemies. Love banishes all complaints, including complaints about the poor old weather or

the rise in the cost of postage! All complaints betoken separateness from the Universal Whole. But this of course does not mean that we do not work to right what we consider wrong. It does, however, mean non-attachment.

The Buddha proclaimed an all-embracing Eightfold Path, which included the need for truth and love. It also started off with the acceptance of suffering, part of the universal law of sacrifice. This does not prevent us from going to the dentist, but it does make us accept suffering gladly and seek to learn from it, and if need be, bear it for the rest of our lives. The Buddha followed with the need for the whole being to be set towards selflessness (in the beginning, humility) and kindness in thought, word and act. He goes on to insist upon constant practice or effort, and on awareness or mindfulness so that we know what we are doing and are not swept away by our own desires, and finally on meditation or mental petitionless prayer, that is, the centering of the whole being to be set towards selflessness pleasures. These needs are found in all religions but not systematically set out.

There is no hard and set rule by which we can know the meaning of surrender. It requires the practice of the good life in its entirety. Then and then only can we be sure of the difference between surrendering to our own urges and desires and surrendering to God.

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## Mutability

.....

By

G. N. Daley

Mutability hath naught to give  
 To those who seek the stream;  
 Nor may they choose to sleep and live  
 An everlasting dream.  
 Though they may muse and ponder how  
 And why and whence they came,  
 They must embrace the Ceaseless Now  
 As upward flies the Flame.

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## Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR  
Translated from Tamil by  
Professor K. Swaminathan

690.

Which is the *asana* steady, perfect,  
Conducive most to good *samadhi*?  
The Knowledge ever strong and firm  
That the whole world rests on the *asana*  
Of the one Self, the firmament  
Supreme of true Awareness.

691.

The ending of all Knowledge gained  
Through the false senses and the stilling  
Of the ego-mind's restless movements  
And the clear presence in the heart  
Of the brightness that no eye can see  
And the music that no ear can hear.

692.

Since it was one's own past effort  
That now has ripened into Fate,  
One can with greater present effort  
Change one's Fate.

693.

No matter what good deeds bring joy  
And what bad deeds bring pain, the might  
Of both you may now overcome  
With mind dissolved in that true Being  
Which is the same as your own being.

694.

Even in worldly life one's labours bear  
No fruit without abundant faith.  
And till one merges in the bliss  
Supreme and boundless, one's strong zeal  
In *sadhana* should never slacken.

695.

However grave one's former sins, if one  
Repines not sighing, "A sinner am I"  
But plunges straight into one's own Being,  
One reaches quick the ocean of bliss  
And sports in it.

696.

Those who in this very birth  
And with no effort on their part  
By force of grace divine, attain  
Desire-free Awareness Pure  
May look like passive kittens now.  
But in a former birth they were  
Young monkeys clinging hard to Mother.

[The kitten is carried from one place to another  
by the mother cat. The young monkey clings  
fast to the mother as she jumps from branch  
to branch. These two typify simple surrender  
and strenuous *sadhana*.]

697.

"Fate is not for those heaven-bound,"  
'Tis said. What does this mean?  
Not an iota of the past can touch  
Those who dwell unceasingly  
In the firmament of Self-awareness,  
Vast, unbounded frontierless and full.

698.

Fate which like a whirlwind fierce  
Tosses and twirls the body-bound mind  
Can cause no stir in the clear bright mind  
Merged in the sky of pure Awareness.

699.

Tell me, my heart. To kill and burn  
The evil ego, the sense of doership,  
Which drags one down to the depths of  
the sea

Of action, is there another stratagem  
Than meditation on the Self,  
The bright unbroken wholeness  
Of one's own being ?

700.

The world is made up of Being, Awareness,  
Bliss,

Along with names and forms.

Those who know aver

Exhalation is complete rejection  
Of name and form ; while inhalation  
Is accepting Being, Awareness, Bliss,  
And retention is abidance firm as That.

701.

Exhalation is complete rejection  
Of the thought that the body is oneself.  
Inhalation is questing inward  
Asking "Who am I ?" Retention  
Is abidance firm as That alone,  
This is *pranayama* true.

702.

When the soul now deeming itself the mind  
And wandering lost amid phenomena  
Wakes up from this world's dream-spectacle,  
Re-merges in the Self and stands as much,  
This is the inwardness of yoga true.

(11) Karma, bhakti, yoga and jnana  
Are but inquiring, "Who has karma ?  
Who lacks devotion ? Who stands  
Alienated ? Who is ignorant ?"  
Inquiring thus, the inquiring "I"  
Disappears. Firm abidance  
As the Self is the only Truth.

[BHAGAVAN]

703.

The meaning and essence of karma yoga  
Is true self-knowledge through the quest  
"Who is this 'I', the doer, who starts

Doing karma ?" Unless one seeks  
And so destroys the doer-ego,  
The source of action, one cannot reach  
The end of action, perfect peace.

704.

He who has sought and found the nature  
Of the doer-ego, he alone  
Has once for all worked out entirely  
Every karma ever enjoined.  
Than this supremely blissful peace  
What finer fruit is there to gain  
From daily ritual or penance hard ?

705.

Since perfect, true *advaitic* knowledge  
Stands shining as the ultimate goal  
Of every kind of dharma-practice,  
It is the accomplished jnani who  
Has indeed performed all dharmas.

(12) Those unable to reach the source  
Of the 'I' along the path of jnana  
May reach it by the inward watching  
Of the source of the subtle japa-sound.

[BHAGAVAN]

706.

Those who cannot plunge within  
The silent mind and with keen search  
Discover whence the 'I' arises  
May mentally repeat some japa  
And listen to the subtle sound vibration.

707.

Since you yourself are the japa's vibration  
If you ask who you are and find  
Your own true being, then, behold  
The japa once with effort practised  
Now of its own accord proceeds  
Uninterrupted in the heart.

708.

Till in the seer's awareness objects  
Disappear, till firm and clear  
One knows the truth of Self aright,  
What use is it to mouth in vain  
The words "I am God ! I am God !"

# SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA

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By  
David Frawley

**S**WAMI RAMA TIRTHA (1873-1906), famous for his eloquence, was a Self-realized *jnani*, who taught the same path of Self-inquiry that Ramana Maharshi taught, though in a different personal style. In the western world, which he visited, and America in particular, where he resided for two years, his works are now hardly known and scarcely available and even in his native India they are not as well known as they should be.

Rama was a truly monumental figure. He was not only a realized *jnani* but an ecstatic *bhakta* as well, and a creative and intellectual genius of the highest order. All the world's thought and culture was at his fingertips. He was a poet and orator, a practical philosopher, a dynamic man of action, a personality of rare sweetness, an imperious free spirit, a soul of purest integrity and most exalted spirit of renunciation. In his short life he lived many lives.

Why is he not so well known now, though at a very young age he had attained much repute all over the world? He shunned the fame that so easily came to him. He preferred the company of nature to that of men and often retired for long periods into the solitude of the hills. He thought it as important to talk with mountains and streams as to talk with men. Rama regarded the whole world as his ashram and would not allow organizations to be created in his name, though there were those who wished to establish a mission in his name with branches throughout the world. His pure character and short life combined to make him a beacon light for the future rather than for his own age, for the few rather than for the many. But the spiritual effect of a sage cannot be measured or circumscribed. It is inevitable that Rama's teaching should receive the attention it deserves throughout the world.



Swami Rama Tirtha

Rama blazed like a meteor through the darkness of this world. Or rather the world passed like a speck of darkness in the Infinite Light of Rama! Really it is Rama who endures while the world is a passing illusion.

His life was short but filled with enormous creativity; he has left a great legacy of writings, that still sound as fresh as if they were written today for us. Rama had a gift for making the highest truth clear and direct in modern terms, with delightful stories and apt quotations from both eastern and western sources. Though his knowledge was immense, his talks and writings move on pure inspiration without any kind of artificiality. He said: "Rama guarantees that anybody in this world, who reads or hears Rama's speeches would get

his doubts removed and is sure to come to the conviction of his own divinity!"<sup>1</sup>

Rama never assumed the status of a guru. He did not want to gather followers but to awaken people directly to their own divinity. "There is no better message," he said, "than the message delivered: you kill the messenger."<sup>2</sup> "Trample over this body, eat up this personality, grind, digest and assimilate this Vedanta, then alone do you do justice to Rama."<sup>3</sup> He resolved admirably that whole guru/self-reliance problem that many seem caught in now. He taught that if you seek the Self, if you assert your inherent divinity, all things must see you, all that is needed must come to you. It is to the Self-reliant that help naturally comes. He who sees others as himself naturally finds help everywhere. You must rely on your Self, but rely on that Self in all, be open to that Self in all. Do not confine that Self-reliance to your little body. Self-reliance, both inward and outward, naturally brings into action the guru power in a way that will be made evident to you, though not according to egoistic expectations. That is the law. But whatever personality you cling to, however great, will be taken from you. That is also the law. There is no need for ever becoming desperate, for ever feeling ourselves dependent on the external personality of another. "Our hearts break when we are in the seeking attitude," he said, "be a giver of peace to mankind and not an expectant seeker."<sup>4</sup>

For Rama Vedanta meant simply truth. It was not a particular religion or philosophy. And that truth was no one's property and in no way limited. It mattered little by what name it was called. He accepted all religions. Everywhere he went people regarded him as their own. He accepted even the teachings of atheists, who insofar as they were real individualists, had more of God or the Self, than the timid followers of ordinary orthodoxies. He taught that just as the air of the whole world is yours to breathe, so is all truth and religion yours to use. You do not belong to any religion, rather the religion, all religion, belongs only to you, comes only from you. "Sell not

your liberty to Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed or Krishna,"<sup>5</sup> he often said. Sages and teachings are meant only as aids to Self-realization, to freedom absolute. Shun bondage to personalities, ideas and institutions. The age of religious sectarianism is over. Rama said: "Oh you wavering, fickle, dubious minds, no more of lukewarm orthodoxy or heterodoxy, all doxies are your creation!"<sup>6</sup>

The essence of this Vedanta is that the real individual divested of all external influences and social conditionings is inherently divine. The individual as the real center of consciousness is the only real fact of being, the only living being. Race, creed, nationality are only abstract and transient superimpositions on that real individual. The real individual, who is one only, alone endures. Society, the world, is just the projection of the individual, like a phantom in the dark. No matter how monstrous that world-idea may be, it is still rooted in consciousness and not *vice versa*. Rama said: "Assert your individuality against all society, all nations and everything. That is the true meaning of Vedantic renunciation."<sup>7</sup>

Rama taught a path of fearless individuality and Self-reliance with formulation quite suitable for the broader intellectual and more individualistic temperament of today. Though remaining responsive to the present times and bound by no tradition, he nevertheless preserved the innocent, luminous, creative spirit of ancient times, unspoiled by the degeneracies of modern civilization.

Rama's teaching was the cry of revolt of the real individual against the illusory world. His was the victory of the real individual over all worlds, all times. We are the losers if we do not see Rama's complete success and total victory. Rama raised high the banner of Vedantic revolt in the modern age. Yet a revolt of love and joy, of youth and five as in

<sup>1</sup> *In Woods of God Realization*, Vol. I, Title Page.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume II, page 293.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume III, page iii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume III, page 322.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume I, page 125.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume III, page 306.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume II, page 133.

olden days, not one of bitterness and frustration.

To put it very simply : Rama's teaching is that we should first realize the God within us and then everything else will take care of itself. All that is required is that we allow nothing that compromises our own inherent divine dignity. Remove those compromises, those desires, and you are always God.

When asked who he was Rama said : " I and God and so are you." <sup>8</sup> He said further :

" It is a sin not to say ' I am God.' It is falsehood and atheism to say ' I am a man ' or ' I am a woman ' or to identify yourself with a poor crawling creature." <sup>9</sup> " The world is simply your own idea and you are the real Power whose mere shadow this whole world is ! " <sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume II, page 293.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume II, page 64.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Volume II, page 128.

## Jnana Minakshi

By

S. Mohan Raman

SWEET and serene She smiles and watches  
The steps Her children make towards Her,  
One, two, three, four.  
She lets them sometimes stumble and fall  
But guards them from all real harm ;  
Not too kind and yet not heartless,  
Is Mother Minakshi, mother of all.  
They must learn to walk, each at his pace ;  
Some, swift and sudden, fly to Her breast.  
And some, of slower gait, linger behind.  
Or they play hide-and-peek with her  
And getting lost in a maze self-woven,  
Or busy with toys, for a moment forget her.  
The Mother watches over them all  
For all are Hers. She lets them play  
In the field of life — ever ready to help  
If but a cry of distress is heard.

Mother of all She is — and gives  
Freedom, the greatest of gifts to her children.  
Kind and strong, she will not press  
Even nectar down unwilling throats.  
She waits in patience, watching them  
Grow towards joy-light watered with tears.  
Mother mine, tarry not long ;  
With the brightness of your eyes  
And your honey-sweet whispers, ripen  
My being into purest bliss  
That I may cease to be myself  
And live for ever as this Bliss,  
Shining brightly through your eyes,  
Whispering sweetly as your voice,

## How I Came to Bhagavan

By

Gurudat Nadkarni

**I**T was sometime in July 1949 that I heard that Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi had been operated upon, for the third or fourth time, for the removal of a malignant tumour on his left arm. I was then in Bombay. Though I had heard about him as early as in 1937, I had not felt any particular urge to go to Tiruvannamalai. Now I could postpone it no longer and yet there were difficulties in the way. Being helpless, I wrote a letter to Bhagavan praying that I might be enabled by his grace to go to Tiruvannamalai. Then one day a friend unexpectedly sent for me and told me that he wished to visit Tiruvannamalai, and being unfamiliar with the South and its language, he would welcome my accompanying him. We left for Tiruvannamalai on the same day, 1st October, 1949. We had no time even to arrange for our train reservation. We arrived in Tiruvannamalai on the 3rd October, early in the morning. We had darshan of Bhagavan, visited Sri Arunachaleswara temple, went up the Hill, and completed the routine which one goes through on a first visit to the place.

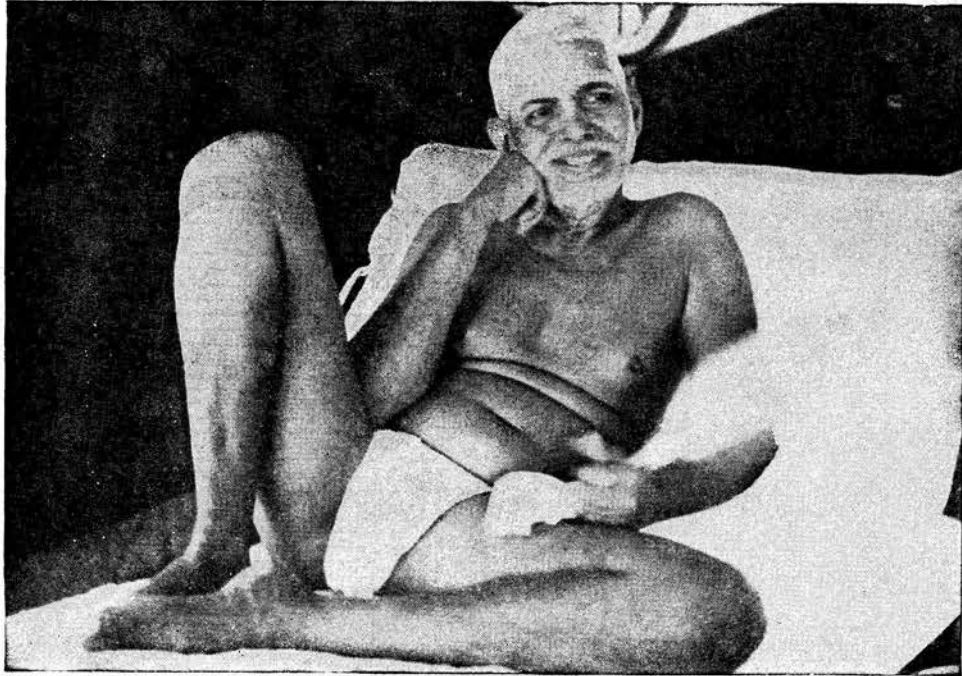
In those days, on medical advice, Bhagavan used to come out for public darshan only for two hours, one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening. My friend left for Tirupati the next day and I stayed on in Tiruvannamalai. After three days, it was time for me to return to Bombay, visiting Bangalore on the way. I had to catch the evening train to Bangalore *via* Katpadi. Until then I had not experienced anything extraordinary except the feeling that by the grace of Bhagavan I had the opportunity to be in Sri Ramanasramam for almost four days and see Bhagavan face to face twice daily.

There was one exception to the stipulated timings for his darshan ; devotees about to



*Sri Gurudat Nadkarni*

leave Tiruvannamalai could have darshan without waiting for the hour fixed. It was about 4 p.m. I went into the big hall in which Bhagavan was sitting on a couch, as usual. There were two persons attending on Bhagavan. I placed my fruit offering before him and prostrated myself at his feet. He accepted one fruit and gave the rest of them back to me. Then I felt I should say something to him. I went very near to him and started speaking. I was told not to disturb Bhagavan, but I continued to talk. Bhagavan was looking steadily and intently into my eyes and he was listening. I saw an extraordinary dazzle in Bhagavan's eyes which I felt entered into the very depths of my being. I felt my knees trembling. My speech was incoherent and faltering. The only thing which was clear and complete was my parting sentence, "Bhagavan, I want your blessings", to which his reply was, "Yes", "Yes" fully and consciously given. Since then I have been carry-



ing that "Yes" with me as my greatest treasure.

I had bought some books and photographs from the Ashram book-stall. I read those books. I also read quite a few other books on vedanta and philosophy. And, I was also doing some sadhana though irregularly. And yet I felt no perceptible change or improvement within me for a long time.

Suddenly, sometime in 1971, it dawned upon me, like a revelation, unmistakably and

vividly, that the God or Self which I was seeking for years was within me as a "Living-Presence". This experience was something quite beyond any doubt whatsoever. Since then I have been doing nothing but trying to be in tune with this awareness always. I have not ceased to work for a living. I have my own problems. Yet there is no inner contradiction. This, I am sure, is what Bhagavan meant when he said "Yes", twenty-eight years ago.

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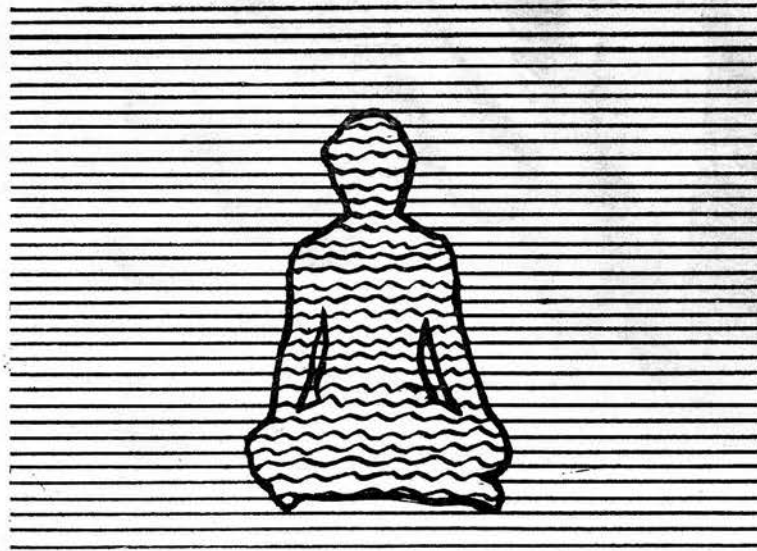
"In life there is equality ; in form there is inequality. In life there is unity, because all life is one ; in the expression of that life, which is form, there must be diversity. Because you pay more attention to form, which is the expression of life, and which cannot be united, than to life itself, there is disunion. You want all people to be alike, all forms to be alike. In the expressions of thought and feeling, you want the whole world to be alike, which can never be."

— J. KRISHNAMURTI

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## How Real is the Physical?

By  
Murdoch Kirby



**I**N the final reckoning our bodies are composed only of atoms of different materials, and these atoms are made up from electrons and protons. These final particles can be examined by the Physicist and, depending on how he looks at them, they appear as particles or they appear as waves, waves of space.

I am going to consider them as waves. In the diagram I have indicated the person as waves and the surrounding area as straight lines. This is not technically accurate because the surrounding area is not empty space: it would be the atmosphere — also composed of electrons and protons all vibrating in wave form: the waves representing the person are also simplified — every electron and proton is vibrating according to its particular pattern in the atom and molecule. But, I have represented all these vibrations as a single wave.

That is just the introduction, now we come to the question: Imagine the person (you?) to be moved into the space indicated by the straight lines above.

Now, do you imagine that you have taken your vibrating lines with you? Have you left an empty space behind you? — no lines; a space without space?

Or do you imagine that in moving into the space above you cause a different part of space to start vibrating, and that you leave a number of straight lines where you were before?

In this case can you say that you have the same body you had before? You will have to admit that somewhere there is a template, a pattern, according to which your body is reproduced, with all its imperfections and blemishes. In what sense then is your body you? Who are you?



# Glory of Arunachala

## *Arunachala Mahatmyam*

(SIVA BHAKTA MAHATMYAM  
of Sri Upamanyu)<sup>1</sup>

Translated from Tamil by  
M. C. Subramanian

DEVI'S AUSTERITIES, THE DEATH OF MAHISHA AT HER HANDS AND HER  
BECOMING ONE HALF OF SIVA

1 — 5

Upamanyu continued :

THE old man said : " Leaving that best of places from which Sambhu spoke to her in the form of a column of effulgence and where the divine hosts who worship him reside, the Goddess installed (an image) of the three-eyed Lord on the Pavala Hill a spur of the Aruna mountain. Goddess Parvati adorned with ornaments and matted tresses wore the bark of a tree. She smeared her white body with sacred ashes and practised austerities as prescribed, and meditated on (Siva) in seclusion. She appointed Satyavati, Vanavaini, Subhaga and Bandhumari to guard her asram on the four sides. She appointed Durga to carry out her commands without any difficulty to guard the entire grove set apart for penance.

Now the Devas who were afraid of Mahishasura (demon in the shape of a he-buffalo) prayed to Parvati and she assured them of her protection, saying " I shall kill him by a stratagem " and continued to practise her austerities steadily. By and by Mahishasura the enemy of the Devas, who had become arrogant on account of a boon obtained by him, came hunting in the company of kings. While wandering about the forest he accidentally came to the wood in which the Goddess was practising austerities. When he tried to enter it, prevented by the Sakti Devas on guard, he stood still for a moment. Being a warrior with no scruples, he stopped his followers on the bank of the river in a dense forest and issued certain instructions to some Asuras (demons) who were adepts in producing illusions. Disguising themselves as ascetics they

entered the wood and after looking at the goddess closely returned to him and said : " You should win her ".

On hearing their words that stalwart (warrior) became enamoured of her and immediately ordered the Asuras armed with numerous weapons to attack the guards. The four Swati Devis attacked them with dazzling weapons and slew all of them in a moment. It was a marvel to see them. Thereupon Mahishasura, overcome with anger and forgetting himself, commanded four of his renowned generals to fight. When these also were killed in the fight with the Sakti Devis, he went on despatching more and more warriors until the fight became exceedingly severe.

Durga<sup>2</sup> then said to herself : " There should be no disturbance inside the Asram " and rose up and entered to fight. With weapons blazing like flames in her sixteen hands she attacked Mahisha who came against her fiercely.

When Mahisha appeared on the battlefield with sword and shield, Durga also armed herself with a sword and shield and a discus. While the world-destroying fight between Durga and Mahisha was going on the Devas prayed to Durga for the welfare of the world. They said : " Devi ! The world is suffering on account of the war Thou art waging for sport. Mother of the world ! Kindly stop this war quickly for the welfare of the world ".

<sup>1</sup> This is an ancient work, like the *Arunachala Mahatmya*, giving an account of Arunachala.

<sup>2</sup> Durga refers not to the goddess appointed to guard the wood but to Parvati one of whose names is Durga.

Thus besought by the Devas, the Goddess Durga trod him down under her divine foot and pierced him with her trident. Being unable to resist it, he emitted a low scream, oppressed by the weight of his big body and trembled in every limb. The slayer of Mahisha severed Mahisha's head with her sharp sword and danced upon it.

The Devas showered flowers upon her and praised her. The loud sound of the Celestial Musical instruments was heard. All the quarters shone brightly.

The Devas then besought her : " Let that head be severed completely. It still appears to possess some life. Let Thy form which is now treading upon it appear before us always. Those who worship this form of Thine will attain liberation ". The goddess agreed and said " So be it ".

Leaving one part (aspect or phase) of her standing in that form, she resumed her pure form (as Parvati) and looked at the demon's throat which had been cut. Seeing a *linga* inside, she took it up. It adhered to her palm and the goddess was unable to free her hand of it. She exclaimed : " Ha ! Ha ! It is a devotee of Siva who has been slain ! " and felt miserable. She went to the Sage Gautama along with her companions and said to him : " I offered my protection to the Devas who sought shelter with me and while trying to keep my promise, I have in my ignorance slain Mahishasura, a devotee of Siva. The Siva *linga* which was in his throat does not leave my hand. How shall I expiate the sin of having killed a devotee of Siva ? "

On hearing this, Gautama said : " O Gowri ! Do not fear. This person is not a devotee. He was a Siddha in his past life. He became a he-buffalo on account of a curse ; being a demon he used to eat human beings. The Siva *linga* worn by one of the devotees eaten by him got stuck in his throat. As he was bearing a *Linga* when he died and as he came into contact with your divine lotus-like feet by virtue of the austerities practised by him in his former life, his curse has certainly been lifted. Whoever bears a Siva *Linga* certainly attains libera-

tion whether he does so with or without devotion. Moreover even heinous sins for which no expiation has been prescribed will certainly be expiated when one merely looks at the Sona Hill." Even though the noble Gautama said this, the Goddess continued to fear that she had slain a devotee of Siva.

At this moment she heard a voice in the sky which addressed her and said : Cleave the earth with your trident. Out of that cleft will spring up the nine rivers viz, the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Sindhu, the Godavari, the Sarasvati, the Sona, the Kaveri and the Narmada, all together. Bathe daily in this Sula tirtha (the spring caused by the trident) for a whole month beginning on the day on which the moon is in the constellation Jyeshtha, repeating the *aghamarshana mantra* (a Mantra uttered before taking a ritualistic bath). If you live near that tirtha the fear that the world would come to an end will not be felt, there will be no drought and a sense of coolness will be produced in me (i.e. I shall be pleased). Leave the *linga* in your hand beside the spring, take a bath in it and worship the *linga* with due offerings. You must with a peaceful mind install that *Linga* on the bank of the tirtha and name it Papanasa, for the welfare of the world. You should perform a sacrifice for the Gods (Devayaga) commencing on the asterism of Uttarâshâda and take the bath signifying its end (avabhritisnanam) on the asterism of Agni (*Krittika*). You should then in the manner prescribed worship me who am in the form of *Arunachala*. O Auspicious One ! I shall then reveal to you my form of effulgence.

Accordingly Gauri cleft the earth with her trident, when the nine tirthas came out in the form of a single spring. The goddess to whose hand the *linga* had continued to stick on bathed in it. The spring at once became blue on account of her lustre. Her mind, which had become violently agitated owing to her separation from her dear Lord became calm. She lived near that spring and made the worlds happy. After the lapse of one month she conducted a festival for the Devas (Devotsavam) in the month of Kartika and worshipped San-

kara (Siva). On the day of Krittika in the evening She meditated upon the form (of Siva) which had been seen by Brahma and Vishnu in ancient times and prayed : " Lord of the Devas ! If I am sinless you must immediately reveal Thy form to me. At once the Effulgence of Siva in the form of the Aruna Hill filled the entire world with its brilliance. And there arose from it a golden blue-throated Person who said : I am pleased with your severe penance. The sin which you incurred by covering my eyes and plunging the universe in darkness has now been expiated by seeing the Effulgence of Arunachala. Since your son instead of sucking your breasts sucked the breasts of the Krittikas you shall be known as Apitakuchamba.<sup>3</sup> O Apitakuchadevi ! Come to me who am an Ocean of Compassion ". Saying this, the Lord disappeared.

The Goddess then circumambulated this (Hill) as advised by Gautama, in the company of Sages and divine Mothers (Deva Mathas). Like a bride circumambulating the fire at her marriage, the daughter of the mountain circumambulated Arunachalesvara in the company of Sarasvati, Lakshmi, Indrani, Arundhati and the wives of sages. She was praying all the way for union with Siva (Sivasayujyam). After completing the circumambulation she prostrated before Isvara, stood with clasped

hands and earnestly prayed to the God of Eight forms (Ashtamurti), the fulfiller of desires. The Supreme Lord (Parameswara), who is adored even by Devas was thereupon pleased to appear before her. As soon as she saw the Destroyer of the Cities (Tripurari) before her, her hairs stood on end with joy. She prostrated before Him and with clasped hands prayed : " We two should never be separated. Thou must always abide here for the welfare of the world and allow Devas, human beings and others who adore Thee to see Thee perpetually. Thou shalt be worshipped with glorious festivals ".

The Lord of Arunagiri acceded to her prayer for the welfare of the world. He also made her one half of his body. He ordered Visvakarma — the celestial builder to build a City. The latter at the command of the Destroyer of the Three Cities, built a City named Arunachala. It is the first and most sacred of all ancient cities. Siva is still being worshipped there in the form of a self-born (i.e. naturally formed linga). One becomes free of all sins the moment one remembers and adores Arunachalesvara, the Lord of Unnamulai. It is certain that those who read or hear or meditate upon this glorious account of Arunachalesvara will attain the immortal abode of Siva.

<sup>3</sup> Apitakucha (Tamil *Unnamulai*) — Of unsucked breasts.

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## THE SHUTTLE

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By  
' Kanji '

The shuttle flies back and forth, back and forth,  
the warp is steady and fine  
no matter how fast the shuttle flies.  
Listen friends, the breath within your breathing  
is always living thread,  
no matter what kind of cloth  
is being woven !

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## WHAT ABOUT I?

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By  
Sunya Baba

WHAT is, to us, the essential message of Sri Ramana Maharshi? The aim is Self-experiencing or God-awareness. You may call it Truth-realisation, but you cannot realise (i.e. make real), that which is ever Real, immanent and omni-present. You, or Christ in you, can awaken integrally, maturely and abidingly into conscious awareness of Being It. There is nothing to achieve — attain, conquer or control —, nothing to be obtained or to be possessed, only this mature and abiding awakening into conscious Selfhood. The method advocated is to be still, be ego-still to inquire: "Who am I"? What is I? What is the mind-ridden, lustful and troublesome ego? Sincerely ask the Silence, the inner Stillness and you will reach the Source, the Self. You need not kill or control ego. It will drop away of its own accord — or you will be consciously free in it, and in all other tools, and experience that bondage is delusive. Nothing will be left but the eternal, blissful Self.

Be Still, but do not try to be Still. Effort, like ego and reason, that also were helpers, become a hindrance to Self awareness and to the ineffable experiencing. Simply Be Still to reflect purely; Being — Awareness — Grace. Ramana Maharshi always stressed the one essential truth that was necessary for the integral awakening, that there is only one Self — and nothing but the Self. As a rustic Bengali youth simply and joyously said: "In the

whole world there is nothing but God" — Mental knowledge must become actual experiencing. To know a thing absolutely, and not just superficially and intellectually, one must be that thing. Be it in Empathy, in unity-awareness, and in a wisdom-light that transcends effort, knowledge, power and learned ignorance.

"We are always, aware, Sunya", Maharshi reminded us. We are always nothing but the Self eternally Is, but associating ourselves with this ignorance of limitation, with an ego — a body and other tools, we ignore or forget the Seer and identify ourselves with the seen. This habit is long-standing, birth after birth has been imagined, century after century has been fabricated by the mind, which has thus involved itself more and more in ignorance, learned ignorance. From babyhood we are conditioned to false values and brain-washed into conformity, into desires, ambitions, blinkers and false identity.

Many examples are given in Ramana Maharshi's talks and answers to questions, to suit all tastes and mentalities. His presence and our reading of his word-symbols automatically drive us inward to the Source. It clarifies our consciousness into conscious, integral Self-awareness and is itself a sufficient *Sadhana*. Do not delude yourself, : You are already That, there is nothing more to be obtained, only false association and false identity to be shed.

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"One in All,  
All in One —  
If only this is realized,  
No more worry about your not being perfect!"

— Seng-ts'an.

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## A Guide during the Falling of Mind

By

Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sassov

1. There are many people who served His blessed Name all their days and toward the end they slid back from His Service. All their service was as nought.

2. However, seven times the righteous fall and yet rise.

3. At times of such a fall, recall the early days in which you were graciously illuminated.

4. You did see eye to eye in real sight the greatness of the Creator and His Exaltedness, and you might ask yourself why you have now changed.

5. Of course the reason is that you have become engrossed in matter and that you have not freed yourself.

6. Or, in order that new understanding be added to you, and that your service become greater than it was at first.

7. However, at such times when the flame is taken from your soul and it seems as if it were extinguished, be very careful that you do not conduct yourself lightheadedly, for this lightheadedness might cause you to trip up.

8. If the feeling of Love and Awe has become obliterated in you, you can arouse them through things of this world until the

desire will have caught on and then you will bring it in to the service of the Holy.

9. Holy men I know said to me, "I bethought my way in things of this world and brought my feet back to your commandments through this."

10. The 'fall' in the Tzaddik does not result from being engrossed in matter, G-d forbid, but rather from the lack of joy. It is due to this lack of joy that the feeling of love and Awe are taken from him.

11. However, this applied only to Tzaddikim like David and not to a lower person, who by rousing himself to things of this world might remain just there, G-d forbid.

12. And thus for ourselves, we can fully decide that the cause of our being removed from His Holy Name and from His Service is due to our becoming engrossed in matter which has prevailed over the intellectual soul and confused it in its passions and sensualities.

13. If only you will begin to enter His Holy Service you will find that the gates of light will open themselves like the gates of Heaven.

14. I have heard from a holy Person, "It takes just a small taste, like a man who tastes his food, and then you will see how much good is before you."

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"Many in the Christian fold do not progress because they stick on to penances and particular exercises and neglect the love of God, which is the end."

— BROTHER LAWRENCE,

## Significance of Guru Purnima

By

Mani Sahukar

EVERY year as the auspicious full moon of the month of *ashad* (June-July) draws closer, the devotee's heart throbs with excitement and anticipation, for, it is on this full-moon day that it is re-dedicated to the worship of the spiritual preceptor. On this sacred day the bhakta's devotion reaches its zenith in complete surrender at the guru's lotus feet.

Emotion gathers momentum when one gains the opportunity and waits for one's turn to prostrate oneself at the feet of the Revered One. As is the case with some delicate instruments, *darshan* on this day gives to the *sadbhak* a true balance and poise, for, in his inner being the devotee has already recreated the image of the perfect Master whom he now worships with supreme surrender.

The Vedas proclaim — *Āchārya devō bhava*. The guru is no other than God. The holy Guru Purnima is an appropriate occasion to renew loyalty and devotion to the Sad-Guru.

In India, as perhaps also in some other parts of the world, Guru Purnima, is celebrated with zest, particularly in ashrams. On this day the devotee pauses, as it were, to reassess his efforts and progress and is restored, in the words of Plato, 'to youth and beauty'.

The teachings of saints give great importance to the traditional concept of the Guru and the relationship he bears to his chosen disciples. The guru is necessarily the perfect spiritual preceptor. Since the human mind cannot conceive of or love an abstract principle, the scriptures advise us to venerate those persons who reveal God to us and to love and accept these spiritual presences as the Divine manifesting itself in human form. Guru is manifested God — this is the most appropriate and succinct definition of the word, Guru. The Almighty and His medium of manifestation are identical. Christ's emphatic assurance: "I and my Father are one" confirms the Divine origin of the seemingly human Guru. In reply

to a devotee who asked: "Is not the Master's Grace the result of God's Grace?" Sri Maharshi replied: "Why distinguish between the two? The Master is the same as God and not different from Him." (*Talks*, p. 34)

The relationship between the Guru and his disciples is replete with reciprocal tenderness. The subtle nuances of give-and-take reach their fulfilment in this association of the master and the *chela*. In fact, it was this faith in the manifestations of Divine Glory as incarnate persons that is the precious contribution of the *Puranic* period. Possibly the doctrine of Brahman manifesting as *Ishtwara*, who is the Saguna aspect of God, gave rise in time to a staunch belief in the incarnations of God.

As a matter of fact, in recent times, when Sri Sai Baba, the Saint of Shirdi, brought about powerful revival of the *bhakti marga*, the master also reinstated the Guru as the supreme image of the Divine. Sri Upasani Baba and Sati Godavari Mataji, who followed this illustrious Master, have also continued the tradition of glorifying the Guru. It is Godavari Mataji's firm conviction that not only the path of devotion, but in other paths also the hidden Guru functions imperceptibly to bring about a perfect awakening of the spirit.

Sri Ramana Maharshi, the apostle of the path of self-enquiry, with his radiant and compassionate personality evoked deep devotion in those who followed him. It is no wonder He fulfilled the mission of a Guru without calling himself one. Sri Ramana recognised the importance of such a contact for the struggling *sadbhaks* (aspirants).

Indeed we may rejoice exceedingly that the soil of India still has the purity and power to revive in millions of human hearts the eternal and radiant *Avatars* of the Supreme by the observance of *Guru Purnima*, the holiest of all holy festivals.

## STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTHA—XVIII

## STORY OF SIKHIDHVAJA AND CHUDALA—(Contd.)

Translated from Sanskrit by  
M. C. Subramanian

**S**IKHIDHVAJA asked : What makes the body active ? What is the cause of birth and action ? Renouncing what makes one's renunciation complete ?

Kumbha replied : O Sadhu ! The mind which is called jiva appears as everything. It is neither sentient nor insentient. It is this world of multiplicity. It is one's bondage. If one could renounce it one's renunciation would be complete. The mind is the seed (cause) of birth and action. Just as a tree is shaken by the wind, so also the body is activated by the mind. Renunciation of the mind alone is total renunciation, say those who know. When the mind is renounced there is neither duality nor non-duality. What remains is the one pure, calm and perfect Self Supreme. Total renunciation is supreme bliss, everything else is full of strain and sorrow. Rely on OM and do what you like. O King ! Renounce everything. You will become calm and serene like the sky. You will be what you truly are.

Sikhidhvaja said : Bhagavan ! First of all, please tell me what is the original form of the mind. Next, explain what is meant by renunciation of the mind.

Kumbha said : O King ! Know that mind means latent impressions (*vasanas*.) Mind is only another name for latent impressions. The ego is the seed of the tree of the mind which bears all kinds of fruits in the form of troubles. From it sprouts the intellect (*buddhi*). The latter has no form of its own. It can, however, be experienced. Its nature is to judge (or discriminate). When the sprout which is the intellect grows through imagination it is called the mind (*chittab* or *chetab* or *manas*). You should lop off constantly the

branches of this tree of evil and eradicate its roots (i.e. the ego). Removing its roots is known as (true) renunciation. Latent impressions are the several branches which bear fruits of various kinds. They are got rid of by ignoring them and being aware of the Self. He who is silent and not argumentative, who is free from attachment and does the work which comes to him is a man who has lopped off the branches of the tree of his mind. But the lopping off branches is not so important. Therefore try earnestly to cut off the roots of the tree of the mind. Burn thoroughly its thorny roots. The mind will then cease to be.

Sikhidhvaja asked : O Sage ! What is the fire which will burn the ego, this seed of the tree of the mind ?

Kumbha replied : Self-enquiry in the form of 'Who am I' ? is the fire which can burn away the ego, the seed of the evil tree of the mind.

Sikhidhvaja said : I have already thought about it. I am not the body or the world. I am not the aggregate of flesh, bones, and so on. Nor am I the organs of action and knowledge. I am neither this mind, the intellect nor the ego, since these are all insentient. The concept of 'I' is like a bracelet made of gold (a mere appearance).

Kumbha said : O King ! You are a very intelligent man. If you are not any of the insentient objects, tell me who you are ?

Sikhidhvaja said : I am the pure, unborn (eternal) awareness which causes these objects to appear and determines what they are. The evil seed of the tree of the mind, the I-concept, rises somehow in the heart of this aware-

ness. I am not able to get rid of it. Every time I drive it away, it reappears. That is why I am so unhappy.

Kumbha said : Every effect must have a cause. What is the cause of the I-concept ? Think carefully and tell me.

Sikhidhvaja said : I see that the perception (or awareness) of the objective world is the cause of the I-concept. Please tell me how to stop this perception and get rid of misery.

Kumbha : You have understood the law of cause (and effect) very well. Now tell me what produces this perception (of the objective world). I shall then tell you what is the cause of what and what is not.

Sikhidhvaja said : (This faculty of) perception arises in the form of the body and so on, which though unreal, appear to be real, just as a current of air produces a stir near it. The conviction that all objects are unreal will put an end to this perception and the I-concept, but I do not have that conviction.

Kumbha : If the body, and so on, really exist you can perceive them, but they do not, so how can you perceive them ?

Sikhidhvaja : How can we say that the body which possesses hands and feet, performs action and enjoys its fruit is unreal ?

Kumbha : An effect which has no cause cannot be said to be real. If it appears to be real it is an illusion. Know that all this does not really exist. It is an illusion. That which has no cause is unreal like a serpent that one sees instead of a rope.

Sikhidhvaja : This world was created by the primal Father (the four-faced Brahma). Can he not be regarded as the cause (of the world) ?

Kumbha : At the beginning of creation there was only Brahma (the Absolute). There was nothing else. So God Brahma cannot be the cause.

Sikhidhvaja : Cannot Brahma be regarded as his cause ? I cannot imagine how the God can be uncaused.

Kumbha : The primal Consciousness is unborn and infinite. Its existence is beyond doubt.

It is imperishable, tranquil and undecaying. It cannot be known but it can be experienced. It is one without a second and has no beginning or end. It is benign and knows no diminution. How, when and by whom can it be forced to become a doer or enjoyer ? So this world has not been created by anybody. It does not therefore truly exist. God Brahma is only imagination, he is merely consciousness (thought). Creation (i.e. the world) is consciousness. It continues to appear because of consciousness. You must realize that you are neither a doer nor an enjoyer and that everything is the unborn tranquil and benign (Brahman). Get rid of your ignorance gradually. Unless one gets rid of one's ignorance one cannot realize the truth. That which diminishes gradually will cease to exist completely in course of time. Finally there will be only tranquillity (or peace). The Lord of Lords (Brahman) causes this world to appear by His mere imagination. He himself is God Brahma. Everything is the tranquil Brahma.

Sikhidhvaja : Bhagavan ! You have enlightened me by your words which are logical. Since there is no doer (creator) there is no world and since there is no world there is no one who sees it. That being so I have now become fully enlightened. I am Siva (the benign Brahma). I have realized that there is no (objective world). I salute myself, the Supreme Consciousness. It is perception of the world which makes one think that it is real. I have had enough (of his world). I am going to remain calm like the sky. This world of multiplicity, time, space and movement will at sometime come to an end. Only Brahma which knows no diminution remains.

Vasishtha continued : When Sikhidhvaja was enlightened thus by Kumbha he became completely disillusioned. By pondering over his words he soon attained Self-realization. He shut the eyes of his mind and became silent. He looked like a statue carved out of rock. After sometime Kumbha spoke to him.

Kumbha : Have you found happy repose in the clean, big, soft and spotless bed of the conceptless state. Have you become dis-illu-



sioned? Have you known what should be known and seen what should be seen?

Sikhidhvaja : O Bhagavan ! I have, by your Grace, reached the great and transcendental state which is simply glorious. Ah ! the company of great souls who have known what should be known is like nectar and is supremely beneficial. I have, by coming into contact with you, obtained the valuable nectar which I could not get during all my lives. How is it that I could not obtain till now this ancient and inexhaustible nectar ?

Kumbha : When one's mind is tranquil and one has given up all desires for sense-enjoyments and all the senses have become propitious, the wise words of the Guru make an indelible impression on the mind just as the red juice of the kusumbha flower on a pure white cloth. The bad habits and impressions fall away from the body (and mind) in course of time, just as ripe fruits fall from a tree. Notions of duality and non-duality constitute ignorance. Absence of such notions is wisdom. That is the Supreme Goal. You are now an enlightened man. You are entirely free. You have renounced your mind. Remain in your true state, a supremely fortunate, taintless and silent sage.

Sikhidhvaja asked : What is the mind of an enlightened man like? How do they live who are liberated even while alive (*jivan-mukta*) ?

Kumbha replied : Strong impressions which lead to re-birth are known as the mind. The enlightened man has no such mind. The impressions which enable him to live are pure (*sattvik*) ; they do not lead to re-birth. The ignorant mind alone should be called the mind. The enlightened mind is known as *sattva*

(purity). Those who have minds are un-enlightened ; the great souls who have *sattva* alone are enlightened. You have given up all acts which will lead to re-birth. You have no thoughts of what has to be accepted and what has to be rejected. Ignore the objective world. Make your mind still. One whose mind is still is not affected by *samsara*. The miseries of the three worlds are all caused by the restlessness of the mind. You must transcend the stillness of the mind as well as its restlessness and achieve unity.

Sikhidhvaja : Lord ! How can stillness and restlessness be united ?

Kumbha : The entire world is only Consciousness, just as the Ocean is only water. It is agitated by the intellect, just as the Ocean is agitated by the waves. Brahman which is described as Truth and so on appears to the ignorant as the world. Creation (of the world) is only movement (or vibration) of Consciousness. It will not be seen when the Self is realized, just as the serpent disappears when one sees the rope. When, by studying the scriptures, associating with the wise and constant practice, the mind becomes pure, illumination (knowledge) rises spontaneously and the world is realized to be merely an appearance, just as, when the sun rises (one sees everything clearly). See, think and understand how everything comes into existence and disappears. Be free, a self-realized sage. I am now going back to *svarga*. Narada would be coming there from the world of Brahma to attend a meeting of the *devas*. If he does not see me there he would become angry. A true disciple should do nothing which will annoy his Guru. Always be free from thoughts and desires. This is the sacred path.

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“ If you asked me which form of God you should meditate upon, I should say : Fix your attention on that form which appeals to you most ; but know for certain that all forms are the forms of one God alone. . . . *Siva, Kali* and *Hari* are but different forms of that One. He is blessed indeed who has known all as one.”

— SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA.

# ARUNACHALA UNVISITED<sup>1</sup>

By

David Richardson

THE sky is pale blue and clear, but for a sprinkling of clouds mostly above the western horizon. Though visible still, the sun will soon disappear behind a distant ridge and when it does, it will bathe those clouds in gorgeous colors — yellow and gold, rose, pink and purple — before leaving them blue-gray and suspended in a fading sky.

We scuff along a narrow cemetery road toward a grove of evergreen trees. A small car tears past and the dust stings the eyes and nose. But in the air, when the dust settles down, is the aroma of freshly cut grass and the perfume of some late blossom — an indescribable piquancy.

Resting briefly on the gravestone of Murray McNair, dead since July 26, 1963, one closes one's eyes and breathes deeply. The mind kicks up at first, then subsides.

Now there are only the sounds of the summer evening; gusts of wind, far off at first, then rushing nearer as if seeking us out, through pine, spruce and holly trees and delicate young maples; through tall weeds and wild grasses. It breathes louder now around ancient, pock-marked tombstones which stick out of the ground at various angles as though dropped in place from an airplane — Mr. Derry, 1901 to 1974 and his wife; the Johnsons and their son, 37, who was killed in the war and all the beloved mothers and fathers whose children, now old in their turn, move with subdued despair toward their own moment of truth.

And above the sunken graves, small birds with nothing to their names but their breathe, trill and whistle to the glorious closing of a day. Crows, whose throats must get sore, squawk endlessly at everything that moves below.

From a distance, muffled and thickened by the wind, come the shouts and laughter of children and the barking of dogs and beyond

that, the interminable swish and hum of traffic. Along the highway leading into the city, cars race dizzily against the clock, pushed on by an omnipresent, but vague sense of urgency. In that race, which can never be won, are all the commercial enterprises and corporate entities, the ambitions and hard-earned promotions, the self-assured successes and sullen failures, the adultery and adult movies and all the pleasure, pain and panic that ever were.

In that parade too are the past glories and future wars, the meek and the merciless; the inanities, insanities and sanctimonious banalities of worldly endeavor.

A Douglas Fir, perhaps 300 years old, its gray, twisted bark catching the last rays of the sun, stands in mute communion with the living and the dead. He has seen as many people arrive at their graves as he has sunsets. He has watched their coffins being lowered into the earth at his feet, while behind him, the world's traffic streams on. And he knows, as intimately as he knows his own expansive growth, the silence of the Sage of Arunachala.

Years ago and on the other side of the earth, the gentle yogi lived as quiet as a hill and he too observed the passing sights and sounds. Unruffled by wars and social struggles, the Gandhis and the Hitlers, he flourished in the eternity of God. His body, stiff and wrinkled as a tree, was no encumbrance. It was his house, but he was never home. Always he dwelt in silence with the fir tree and the dead — perfectly present in death as in life. And he dwells there still for anyone who finds the strength to let go his grip on me and mine.

The Sage Ramana sings in his silence:

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

<sup>1</sup>The writer has not so far visited Arunachala.

## Cure in Tiruvannamalai<sup>1</sup>

THE Physicist and Philosopher Carl Friedrich von Weizsaecker records in his new book, *The Renewal of Europe by Eastern Wisdom*.

"When I had removed my shoes and stood in the Ashram in front of the Samadhi of the Maharshi, I knew in a flash of lightning: 'Yes, this is in.'" Thus Professor Baron Carl Friedrich von Weizsaecker, 65 is describing in his book (*Der Garten der Menschlichkeit*) the zenith of a meditation-experience that he had in India 8 years back. Already in the first years after 1950 v. Weizsaecker had known the importance of Indian wisdom; in those years he was still teaching Physics in the University of Gottingen. However only in 1969 he found the opportunity for a journey to and in India. During this stay he visited in Tiruvannamalai near Madras, the Samadhi of Sri Ramana Maharshi, who had left his body in 1950. There Prof. v. Weizsaecker had that experience, following a meditation. It seems to have happened in two phases. First phase: An expansion of consciousness as in a flash of lightning. This is obviously enlightenment. Second phase: A blessed levitation. v. Weizsaecker describes the first phase as a quick transition from still present perceptions of surroundings (Light on stones, mosquitos) into a higher state of ecstasy: "But in flying were pierced the layers, the 'peels of onion', which can only be indicated by words like 'You' — 'I' — Yes!' Tears of bliss. Bliss without tears."

In the second phase v. Weizsaecker had experiences of different kinds. One of them

was the sense of levitation, the end of which the author describes as a soft sliding down: "Very cautiously experience led me back to earth." In the other case he saw himself "as a metal-ball, falling on a shining metal surface, and, after a moment's touch, jumping back to where it came from."

The experience of levitation and enlightenment of Tiruvannamalai has been an important and healing event for Weizsaecker. He himself reports, that the experience has delivered him from depressions of years' duration.

He writes: "Without them I might not have been able to stand the suffocating events of those years."

Meditation can change the character of man (in the direction of a greater peaceableness) and thus also cause a change in society, believes v. Weizsaecker.

In fact Weizsaecker's proposition, that Europe should make the Eastern experiences of meditation her own, is not only to be understood religiously, but also politically. Ultimately he has in his mind a culturally revolutionary change of Europe and the European man. The meeting between the 'reflecting' Europe and the 'meditating' Asia he takes for an "event of universal history", which might deliver Europe from the traditions of her aggressive-analytical science-culture.

<sup>1</sup>A book review by George Wolff in the German Magazine *Der Spiegel*.

"The *Tao* that can be expressed is not the eternal *Tao* ;  
The name that can be named is not the unchanging Name."

— "Tao Te Ching"

## Mr. WU! IS....

By  
Wei Wu Wei

Mr. Wu!

*I have no name, Madame, but Here  
I Am.*

Yes indeed, Mr. Wu, and it is always a  
pleasure to see you!

*Thank you, Madame, it is indeed I  
Who am Looking.*

But, Mr. Wu, I can see as well as you can!

*All 'you's can see, Madame, but only  
I can Look.*

At least I can hear your words, Mr. Wu, and  
that makes me happy.

*All 'you's can "bear", Madame, but  
only I can Listen.*

But I can do it also, Mr. Wu!

*All 'you's can 'do', Madame, but  
only I can Act.*

Could you mean, Mr. Wu, that only objects  
suffer?

*Subject Acts, Madame, only the  
objectified experiences.*

But when I understand, Mr. Wu, my  
experience is happy.

*Yes, indeed, Madame, I am what  
'Being' IS.*

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## MIND STUFF

By  
Joseph M. Heikoff

Neither you nor I  
are real  
Except as thought waves  
in the mind.  
How, then, distinguish  
friend from enemy,  
Or them from you?  
Ego, body, and world arise  
as modifications of mind.  
Still the thought waves,  
and attain true silence,

Then all vanish  
as the unreality they are,  
Only the Self remains,  
which IS and ever was.  
(The mind understands;  
The body sits in contemplation,  
but dreams away;  
Habits of mind persist  
And ignorance prevails.)

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## INTRODUCING....

**Sri K. Natesan and  
Smt. Jnanambal Natesan**

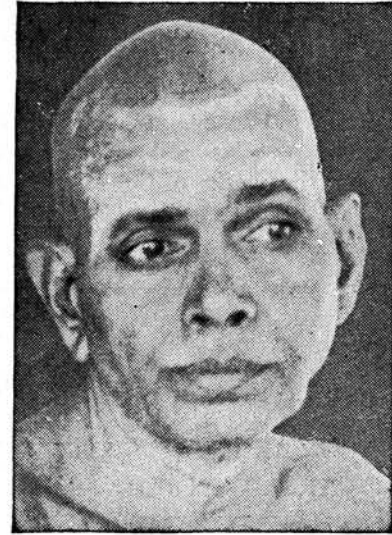
**D**EVOTEES who attached themselves to Sri Bhagavan in the early days hailed from different walks of life and their approach to the Master was each in its own way unique. A special feature of Sri Bhagavan is that He absorbed into the spiritual fold any sincere seeker, irrespective of his stage in life, without making him a sannyasin or sadhu.

in front of Him almost daily. After getting a diploma in Engineering (in Madras) he was constantly at the Ashram between 1935 and 1945. Though he was employed off and on in various places, he would resign his job and return to the Ashram. His attachment to Bhagavan was such that he could not remain in employment continuously, until Sri K. K.



*Smt. Jnanambal & Sri K. Natesan*

*Sri K. Natesan*, an ardent devotee of Bhagavan and a native of Tiruvannamalai, comes of a very orthodox Brahmin family. His father, Brahmasri Krishna Ghanapatigal, was a great Vedic scholar and was teaching *Yajur Veda* in the local *Veda Patbasala* for 30 years. Natesan first had darshan of Bhagavan at Skandashram in 1921, when he was 8 years old. Sri Vasudeva Sastri, one of the earliest devotees, who was then teaching him Sanskrit, took him to Bhagavan. Later when Bhagavan came down to the present Sri Ramanasramam, even though Natesan was studying in the school, he used to visit the Ashram and sit



Nambiar, in 1945, got him absorbed into the Corporation of Madras, where he stuck on till his retirement in 1969. He assisted Sri Vaidyanatha Sthapati, who built the temple of Bhagavan's mother at the Ashram, when the construction was going on.

Natesan has been deeply interested in the works of Sri Bhagavan, both in Tamil and Sanskrit. In fact, he was prominently present during the daily Tamil *parayana* which was taking place every evening in the presence of Sri Bhagavan. Bhagavan has several times given him the work of copying verses submit-

ted to Him in the Ashram Bound Notebook. He would also ask him to copy out verses and supply them to devotees at the latter's request.

In 1942, Natesan got married to *Jnanambal*, who is also deeply devoted to Sri Bhagavan, having had his darsan as a girl of eight years. Major Chadwick, who was a close friend of Sri Natesan, congratulated him on the marriage and the appropriateness of the bride's name, saying, "jnana you wanted and jnana you have gained." During their stay in Madras both of them took keen part in the activities of *Ramana Bhakta Sabha* in the house of Professor Swaminathan.

Natesan is deeply interested in the works of Sri Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni and has with him the manuscript copies of almost all the works of the Muni. He has had the privilege of moving with Sri Ganapati Muni and being initiated by him. Sri T. K. Sundaresa Iyer, one of the oldest devotees of Sri Bhagavan, helped him to understand the teachings of Bhagavan and the works of the Muni. Bhagavan

used to remark that they (Sri T. K. S. and Natesan) would always be found together.

After retirement from service, he has come back to the Ashram to serve the devotees. He is very useful to the new devotees since he could function both as a receptionist and an instructor. His cordiality is appreciated by guests and visitors. The Ashram President, Sri T. N. Venkatraman, being a close friend of his, has entrusted him with the accounts of *The Mountain Path* too. Genial in temperament, Sri Natesan is also very helpful to the old devotees who have had the privilege of living with Bhagavan and who now live at the Ashram.

The entire family of Sri Natesan is devoted to the Maharshi. Smt. Jnanambal Natesan looks after the family in Madras and thereby enables her husband to continue his *sadbhava* and service at the Master's abode.

We wish this dedicated couple length of years and all that is best in life.

### FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

NAVARATHRI FESTIVAL (commencing on)	Monday	2-10-1978
SARASWATI PUJA	Tuesday	10-10-1978
VIJAYADASAMI	Wednesday	11-10-1978
DEEPAVALI	Monday	30-10-1978
SKANDA SASHTI	Monday	6-11-1978
KARTIKAI DEEPAM	Tuesday	12-12-1978
SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTHI	Saturday	13-1-1979
PONGAL	Sunday	14-1-1979
CHINNASWAMY ARADHANA	Sunday	11-2-1979
MAHA SIVARATHRI	Sunday	25-2-1979
SRI VIDYA HAVAN	Friday	16-3-1979
TELUGU NEW YEAR (Lunar)	Thursday	29-3-1979
TAMIL NEW YEAR (Solar)	Saturday	14-4-1979

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE HUNDRED THOUSAND SONGS OF MILAREPA: Translated by *Garma C. C. Chang*. Boulder and London: Shambhala, 1977. 2 volumes, 730 pages. \$6.50 per vol.

*The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa* is the first complete translation into English of this work that has been treasured in Tibet for eight centuries. Called traditionally the *Mila Grubum*, this is a collection of sixty-one groups of wonderful songs of instruction attributed to the famous Tibetan yogi Milarepa (c. A.D. 1052-A.D. 1135). To quote the translator, Garmā C. C. Chang, this book "has been read as the biography of a saint, a guidebook for devotion, a manual of Buddhist Yoga, a volume of songs and poems, and even a collection of Tibetan folklore and fairy tales." In the foreword it is claimed, "Beyond doubt it is one of the greatest religious classics, ranking with the *Mahabharata*, the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, the Old and the New Testaments and the like. But at the same time it is far more — a different kind of book in its own right. . . ."

Mr. Chang lived and studied in Tibet for several years, becoming quite qualified to do the work. Even so, he humbly writes, "My greatest desire is to see that this pioneer translation, imperfect as it may be, rouses a wider interest in the work itself, and thus serves as a prelude to more and better translations of the *Mila Grubum* to follow."

Reading *The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa* one notices immediately that the writing combines two marked styles of expression. There is as a formal background the well-developed doctrinal language of Tibetan Tantrism which is combined with a simple and joyous singing out of the application of these Buddhist ways in the lives of Milarepa and his disciples. This latter element of joy is dominant throughout and will certainly provide the introductory bridge for those who may find the technical side of the work a little difficult to jump into. For this very suitable mode of expression we are indebted to the wisdom of the original author-compilers, one of whom wrote, after relating a story of Milarepa:

I have not added to this story  
For fear of losing and forgetting it;  
But for the benefit of disciples in the future  
I have written this tale  
In my Guru's words,

Together with joy, the simplicity of the Way is well-transmitted in these stories. This quality, Mr. Chang notes, is reminiscent of Hui Neng's *Ch'an Buddhism* in China. This stress on simplicity can be taken as Milarepa's expression of the Mahamudra Path (*the Path of Liberation* in Tibetan Tantrism) of which the primary concern is effortlessness — "to instruct the yogi on how to relax his mind and thus induce in him the unfolding of his Primordial Mind." The more formalized invocations and the many references to techniques for "taming the *Prana*" are taken from the *Path of Means* which compliments the above-mentioned *Path of Liberation* in forming the basic teaching of Tibetan Tantrism.

As examples of the work, hundreds of pieces could be cited, telling fascinating tales of miraculous encounters, giving beautiful descriptions of the setting of a story, or conveying profound Tantric teachings. The following passage, wherein the Guru speaks to his foremost disciple in a beautifully unadorned manner, may serve as an introduction to the clear-hearted world of Milarepa:

I am well and happy  
Without 'gab' and 'babble',  
For I do not want proud talk.  
I am well and happy  
Without plans or schemes,  
For my mind is free from fraud.  
I am well and happy, for I never  
Involve myself in slanderous gossip  
And I desire no fame or glory.  
Where'er I stay, what'er I wear  
Or eat, I feel truly happy.  
At all times I am happy and well.

The joy that this book inspires, the ardour for the Path, reveal it as a masterful work indeed. It will surely be a blessing for all who have a chance to read it.

JOHN HARPER.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: MEDITATION AND ITS METHODS: Edited by Swami Chetananda. Pub.: Vedanta Press, Hollywood, Calif., USA. P. 127. Price: \$3.50.

"Do you see a light when you are falling asleep?"

"Yes, I do. Doesn't everyone?"

That was Sri Ramakrishna asking and boy Vivekananda answering. Later he was to explain: "From the earliest times that I can remember I used to see a marvellous point of light between my eyebrows as soon as I shut my eyes to go to sleep, and I used to watch its various changes with great attention. That marvellous point of light would change colours and get bigger until it took the form of a ball; finally it would burst and cover my body from head to foot with white liquid light. As soon as that happened, I would lose outer consciousness and fall asleep. I used to believe that that was the way everybody went to sleep. Then, when I grew older and began to practise meditation, that point of light would appear to me as soon as I closed my eyes, and I would concentrate upon that."

This is one of the reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda narrated by the editor of this compilation on Meditation and meditative experiences. He has arranged the extracts in two sections, the practice and the philosophy of Meditation. He explains, in the words of Swamiji, that meditation is meant to stop the waves in the lake of the mind so that the placid waters may reflect the full orb of the luminous Self.

The *environment* must be carefully chosen, sanctified and maintained in its purity, physical and psychological. The best timings are 'when night passes into day, and day into night', when Nature is calm and helpful. When one sits for meditation, the thoughts should be allowed to run on, but without participation; slowly they decrease. A helpful hint is given: 'Think of space in your heart and in the midst of that space think that a flame is burning. Think of that flame as your own soul and inside the flame is another effulgent light, and that is the Soul of your soul, God. Meditate upon that in the heart.' One must cultivate cheerfulness for that is conducive to the expression of the innate nature of the Self, the uncaused bliss. On this point, Swamiji reminisces: "I have been asked many times, 'Why do you laugh so much and make so many jokes?' I become serious sometimes — when I have stomach-ache! The Lord is all blissfulness . . . the nearer you are to Him, the less you will have occasions to cry or weep."

Among the several precautionary hints and warnings that are given are:

When the Kundalini traces back its course, it rouses violent lust in the individual.

Don't leave out a single day. If you have too much pressing work, go through the spiritual exercises for at least a quarter of an hour.

Have patience: at first there will be wonderful manifestations, but they will all cease. This is the hardest period, but hold fast; in the end the gain is sure if you have patience.

Do not spend your energy in talking. Accumulate power in silence.

The Guru is indeed important. But the disciple has first to fulfil his conditions. Among the more important are: 'Intense desire to know the Truth, to want only God. Restraining the mind from going outward, restraining the senses, turning the mind inward, suffering everything without murmuring, fastening the mind to one idea, thinking constantly of your real nature.'

A most useful handbook for every seeker.

#### THE WISDOM OF THE EARLY BUDDHISTS:

By Geoffrey Parrinder. Sheldon Press. P. 87.  
Price: £ 1.50.

The Gospels came to be written some three decades after Christ. The Buddhist canon took about five centuries to form. Nobody knows what exactly was the Teaching of the Great One. Naturally there are traditions and traditions, and controversies over such fundamental questions as the existence of the soul, the precise content of the term Nirvana, and so on. Dr. Parrinder makes a representative selection from the various texts to bring out the salient features of the Message and the life of the Enlightened One.

In his introduction, he quotes with approval the observation of Prof. Edward Conze, 'Buddhism bases itself first of all on the revelation of the Truth by an omniscient being . . . and secondly on the spiritual intuition of saintly beings.' It is not a man-made system for self-salvation but a revelation of Truth. And what is this Truth? There are four basic Noble truths: 'The universal fact of suffering; the cause in craving; its cessation by the stopping of craving; and the way to achieve this by the Noble Eightfold Path. The Path is in eight terms of Right: right views, motive, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and contemplation.' The Buddha, it is pointed out, never taught that the self is not but only that it cannot be apprehended.

The Buddha taught methods of meditation which means here the four-fold setting up of Mindfulness: to detach oneself from the body and remain self-possessed and mindful; to detach oneself from feelings, thoughts and ideas; to hold the body erect and make the mindfulness alert; to breathe in and out consciously.

Austerity of self-mortification is deprecated. "Such an ascetic becomes complacent, exalting



himself and despising others, he attracts gifts and fame; . . . he becomes greedy and selective of foods."

The passing of the Buddha is described in moving terms:

"The dying Buddha said to Ananda: it may be that some of you will think that the word of the Master is ended and you have a Teacher no longer. But you should not look on it in this way. The Truth, and the rules of the Order, which I have set out and laid down for you, shall be your Teacher after I have gone. . . ."

All composite things are decaying.

Work out your salvation with diligence. . . ."

There arose a dispute over the relics. The Elders divided them into eight portions and distributed them among different places. "Gods and kings and men bowed with clasped hands, for it is hard indeed to meet with a Buddha and only once in centuries does it happen."

A book that ennobles.

M. P. PANDIT.

**MONASTICISM: CHRISTIAN AND HINDU-BUDDHIST:** By Anthony Elenjmittan. Pub.: Aquinas Publications, Mount Mary, Bandra, Bombay-50. Price: Rs. 4.00.

The author is well known not only for his several books which evince a keen interest in inter-religious understanding, but also for his philanthropic activities. He runs the Welfare Society for destitute children in Bombay and has earned high appreciation from eminent persons including Pope John XXIII. The present work is claimed by the author as a bridge between fellow tramps in Hinduism, Buddhism and Catholicism. It has 19 chapters and deals clearly with such topics as initiation, novitiate, ordination, meditation, monastic and religious vows and lastly the monastic goal. Father Elenjmittan discusses the monastic life as it should be and not in its degenerate aspects, though occasionally he contrasts the ideal aspect of monasticism with what it is in actual life. He stresses in particular the importance of meditation in all these three orders and displays a very good knowledge of the Hindu-yoga meditation. Chastity, obedience and poverty as monastic virtues are discussed at great length. The first is the monastic vow while the other two are religious vows. He describes also their inner significance in detail. He correctly states that the obligation to study the scriptures, theology, philosophy and culture of the respective religions is the common essential. The last chapters examine

the monastic goal of Buddhist Nirvana, Hindu Mukti and Christian Salvation.

The author's presentation of the subject is scholarly and characterised by a painstaking effort to objectively clarify the fundamentals of these three faiths. The comparative study at the end of the work is very good especially when he points out that the present barriers between these faiths should be removed in the monasteries so that humanity may feel one family though belonging to different faiths. Written in an easily intelligible style the book is bound to enlarge the intellectual horizon of readers of these three faiths.

**PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS IN MODERN MAHARASTRA:** By M. R. Lederle. Popular Prakshan, Bombay-400 034.

Dr. Lederle is a member of the Jesuit order and is living in India, since 1951. He is an Indian citizen from 1956 and is now the Director of Snehadasan, a centre of inter-religious dialogue in Pune. In the work under review, he gives an account of the modern Maharastrian philosophy dating from 1818. But the exposition covers also social and individual philosophy. In the eleven chapters covering his theme, he starts from the history of the state and gives in succession the several phases of its philosophy. B. G. Jambhekar "the pioneer of Renaissance in Western India" and the first social reformer in Maharashtra was the most conspicuous person who was followed by R. G. Bhandarkar and M. G. Ranade. The *Prarthana Samaja* was established in Bombay in 1867 which taught that God is one and without form and that idolatry is an aberration and an insult to God. Ranade who was the life breath of the reform movement in Western India along with Bhandarkar organised it as a very vital force. Ranade was a typical Hindu who had the capacity to identify the most important characteristic of our religion and in one of the lectures said, "*Change for the better by slow absorption* — this has been the characteristic feature of our religion." Though N. N. Goreh, a Brahmin convert to Christianity, attacked Hinduism on many grounds, there was little impact. In chapter IV the author discusses the growth of liberalism which owed a great debt to G. K. Gokhale, "the prince of Indian liberalism." This was the period when such giants as K. T. Telang, Jotiba Phule, G. G. Agarkar, B. G. Tilak, Vitthal Sinde and B. R. Ambedkar flourished. Ambedkar who joined Buddhism in his late years, the author tells us reinterpreted Buddhism in the direction of utilitarianism and man's welfare. Dr. Lederle says that he subordinated religion to social

progress and quotes from his book *The Buddha and His Dharma*, "It is necessary for you to change your religion for your spiritual (meaning here mental and human) and also for your temporal profit" (page 177 f.n.). But M. S. Gole wanted to review orthodox Hinduism on a rational basis and the Arya Samajists headed by Swami Dayananda reacted against idolatry and the Bhagavata Purana but accepted the infallibility of the Vedas and the Samhitas rejecting the Upanisads and the Puranas. The Theosophical movement now made its appearance and greatly stimulated Hinduism since it deliberately incorporated Hindu religious elements in its system of thought.

Very soon the influence of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda reached Maharashtra. B. G. Tilak was one of the great sons of Maharashtra whose monumental labour in religion, philosophy and social reform made him a land-mark in the state. He was not only an ardent nationalist and a great patriot but also a great scholar devoted to Vedic research, an Indologist and a philosopher. V. D. Sarvarkar became the leader of revolutionary activities against the British rule and later became the President of the Hindu Mahasabha. The author describes at great length the work of Mahatma Gandhi including Ranade and Vinobhaji. The last chapter is devoted to discuss the spirit of modern Maharashtra.

The author has taken considerable trouble in noting the details of all these eminent sons of Maharashtra who have played a great part in the resurgence of the modern Maharashtra and his account of each of these personalities is fair and fairly comprehensive. The style is easy and natural and not cramped. The author deserves our warm appreciation for his analytical treatment of these several movements of social reconstruction and religious reinterpretation. Maharashtra is but a part of India and the intellectual, social and religious changes reflect the changes in the rest of India.

**PORTRAIT OF GURU :** By Swami Isvarananda Giri. Pub. : Swami Sadhanayana Santa Sarovar, Mount Abu (Rajasthan), India, 1975. Pp. 138. Price : Rs. 6.50.

The book consists of the six talks on the *Manisa Pancakam* of Sri Sankara delivered by Swami Isvarananda Giri at Ahmedabad. The talks emphasise the Samvit Marga, which somewhat resembles the school of Zen Buddhism and also extols the importance of the Guru in spiritual realisation. This famous work of Sri Sankara was composed when God Siva in the form of a chandala encountered

the Sage and was told by him to "get away" and then asked him in return whether the body or the awareness was to get away. In each of these five verses, it is declared that one who has realised that he is none but Brahman is the real Guru whether he belongs to the lowest class or the highest. Swami Isvarananda Giri exhaustively analyses the implications of the verses.

The talks, though discursive, are highly learned without being pedantic and abstruse.

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF VIJNANA BIKSHU :**  
By Jadunath Sinha. Pub. : Sinha Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 39, S. R. Das Road, Calcutta 26. Price : Rs. 12.

Dr. Jadunath Sinha is a very prolific writer on Indian philosophy. In the present work the philosophy of Vijnana Bikshu is presented in five chapters, dealing respectively with Brahman, the individual self, bondage and release the world and a general critique of the philosophy. Vijnana Bikshu probably belonged to the sixteenth century and his philosophy has a definitely theistic character. Like his more famous predecessor, Vacaspati Misra, he has commented on the Samkhyapravacanasastra, the Yogabhāṣya and the Vedānta Sūtras. He is also the author of two more works Samkhyasara and Yogasara. That Brahman is an object or knowledge, that the creation of the world by Brahman is real, that the created world also is real, that Brahman is non-different from the modifications of prakṛti and from souls, that the individual soul is a part of Brahman and hence both different and non-different from It, that karma and jnana combined will effect release, are some of the conclusions of Vijnana Bikshu. Dr. Sinha promises a second volume on Vijnana Bikshu's treatment of Samkhya philosophy.

PROF. S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

**THE WORLD OF GURUS :** By Vishal Mangalwadi. Pub. : Vikas Publishing House Private Ltd., 5, Ansari Road, New Delhi-110002. Pp. 267. Price : Rs. 40.

How and why did the institution of the Guru arise in India and become acceptable in the West? How can we know which guru is true? Is Sathya Sai Baba an avatar of Shiva and Shakti and a reincarnation of Sai Baba of Shirdi? What is TM? Has science proven its effectiveness? Why does Bhagawan Rajneesh believe that one can realize God through sex? How does Swami Muktananda arouse the Kundalini Power? What is the secret knowledge through which Divine Light Mission and Radhasoami

Satsang help one to 'see' the Divine Light and 'hear' the Divine Sound? What is Krishna Consciousness? Why does it not appeal as much to Indians as it does to Americans? What is the Truth? How can we know it?

*The World of Gurus* answers such questions. It is a deep and thought-provoking study which examines "guruism" from the socio-historical, cultural, philosophical and religious perspectives. The author proposes a criterion of Truth and applies it vigorously to the teachings of individual gurus.

The author, however, is not satisfied with the principles and procedures of the traditional schools of Indian religion or the teachings of the new Gurus, with or without miracles, who have now come on the Indian scene. He has raised several doubts but has not found any solution for them. For instance, he complains that in advaita there is no experiential proof in support of the philosophy. He feels that the expression Sat-Chit-Ananda is a contradiction of absolute monism. He is also worried about the problem of harmonising belief in Karma and transmigration with the Advaitic system. He argues that if individuality is false, and there is one consciousness in the universe which has come under the spell of maya, then when one realises truth the whole consciousness should be able to realise it.

These doubts have all been examined and explained by Sankara and his successors in several places. The two concepts of empirical and transcendental truth are not fully appreciated by such critics. The world is an illusion only after all duality has vanished. It is not correct to say that Advaita has no experiential base. On the contrary, advaita is based more on personal experience, anubhava, than on any tenets. Sri Ramana Maharshi taught no doctrines, but spread peace and bliss by his silent presence.

About the other Gurus and sects which claim to have discovered the essential truth about the universe and God, we can only say that in Hinduism there is ample room for differences of doctrine and even of experience. To the jaded westerners, tired of material possessions, many of these Gurus promise a release which is satisfying for the moment.

The difficulty experienced by the author is mainly due to his pre-occupation with quick results, the longing for salvation in this very life and without a long and arduous discipline.

S. Y. KRISHNASWAMY.

THE UPANISHADS — Isa, Katha, Mundaka, Mandukya : By Anthony Elenjittan. Pub. : Aquinas Publications, Mount Mary, Bandra, Bombay. Pp. 237. Price : Rs. 8.

This book contains new translations of four of the ten well-known Upanishads, with separate commentaries on all the verses. The translator is a whole-hearted admirer of the philosophy of the Upanishads and the scheme of liberation propounded by them. But, in his anxiety to avoid literalism, he has made his translation a little too free. This was hardly necessary and his commentaries are full and explain in detail his interpretation of every passage. There are many references to parallel passages in the Christian scriptures.

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM : By Swami Sivananda. Pub. : The Divine Life Society, P.O. Sivanandanagar — Dt. Tehri Garwal, U.P. Pp. 374. Price : Rs. 12.

GURU TATTVA : By the same author and publishers — Pp. 104. Price : Rs. 3.

WHAT BECOMES OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH? By the same author and publishers — Pp. 271. Price : Rs. 7.50.

ETHICAL TEACHINGS : By the same author and publishers — Pp. 196. Price : Rs. 8.00.

These are all new editions of Swami Sivananda's works which were first published several years ago. The general reader will find in them a good deal of interesting information which is not easily accessible elsewhere.

M. C. S.

THE FOURTH ESTATE : Pressures and Privileges : By "Argus". Pub. : The Indian Institute of World Culture, Post Box No. 402, Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560 004. Pp. 30. Price : Re. 1.

This is the J. Srinivasan Memorial Lecture delivered at the Indian Institute of World Culture, Bangalore by 'Argus' (S. Sundara Rajan) in May, '78. A journalist long connected with various publicity media, he speaks knowledgeably.

He pleads for an independent press, free from Government control.

L. P. K.



## Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary

The Birth Centenary of Sri Bhagavan coming off in January, 1980 is to be celebrated in a fitting manner.

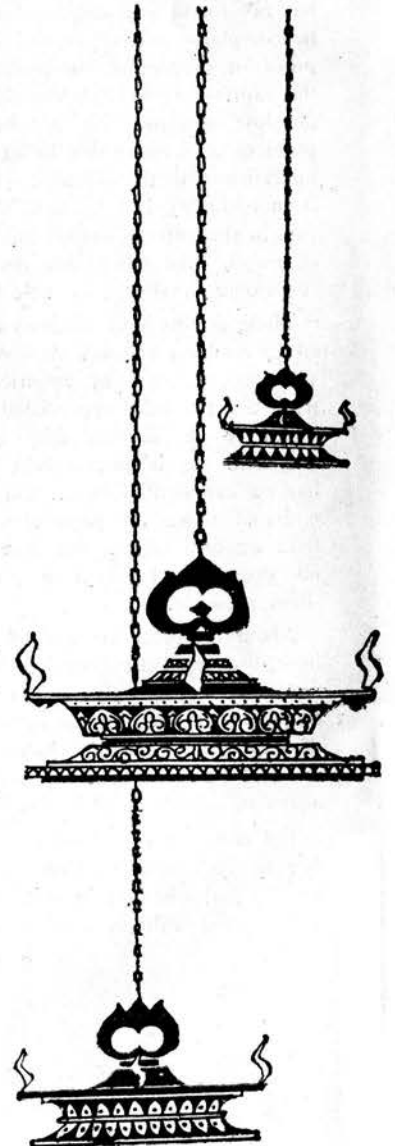
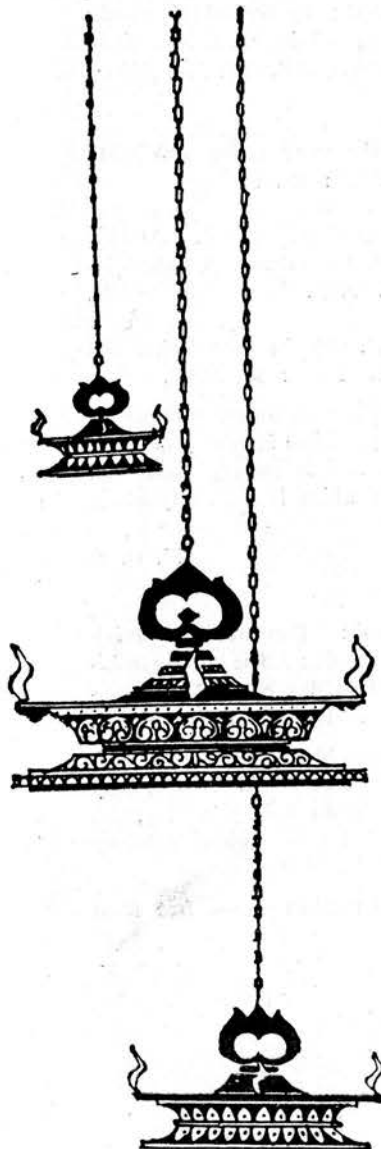
The event is to be commemorated by something concrete apart from publishing a Souvenir, which is also contemplated as one project. Any other project such as new publications, reprints, or fresh translations of works on and by Sri Bhagavan or even any charitable activity, will be appropriate to the occasion.

Devotees are requested to send suggestions so that a consensus can be arrived at and activities planned in time.

We are also planning to form a Committee to be entrusted with this laudable work.

*Suggestions may please be sent to :*

**Sri T. N. Venkataraman,**  
President, Board of Trustees,  
Sri Ramanasramam,  
Tiruvannamalai-606 603, South India





## ASHRAM BULLETIN

### *SRI MURUGANAR'S BOOK OF POEMS RELEASED*

Of the profuse poetic output of Sri Muruganar a considerable portion still remains unpublished. The *Ramana Kendra*, Delhi, has taken upon itself the laudable task of bringing out these Tamil poems (about 14,000 lines), in a number of volumes.

*The whole series arranged by Sri Sadhu Om, will go under the name 'SRI RAMANA JNANA BODHAM'. The first volume entitled 'Mei Thava Vilakkam' (The Elucidation of Real Tapas) has been published by the Kendra and was released in front of Sri Bhagavan's shrine on September 3, by Sri Sadhu Natananandar who formally presented a volume to the President of the Ashram.*

Sri Sadhu Natananandar, who has contributed introductory verses to the Volume, extolled in his speech the vastness and variety of Muruganar's poems, which in a million lovely words convey the message of the *One Word*.

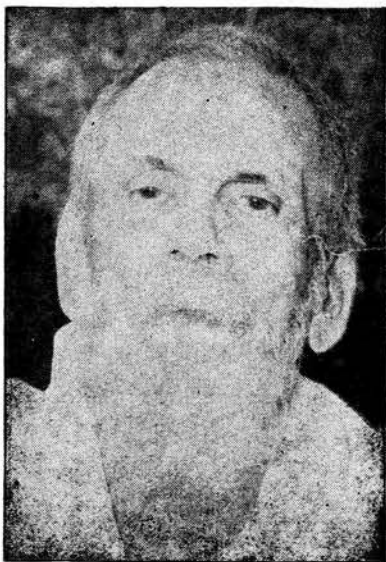
He complimented Sri Sadhu Om on his scholarly services in preserving carefully, classifying properly and presenting accurately the poet's hitherto unpublished works.

### In Madras

At a special function held in the Madras Kendra on September 3 the Volume *Mei Thava Vilakkam* was released by Sri K. V. Jagannathan, Editor, *Kalaimagal*, an old friend and admirer of Muruganar and the editor and publisher of the very early collection, *Sri Ramana Deva Malai*. Sri Jagannathan commended the project of bringing out all the works of Sri Muruganar in seven or eight volumes.

### In Delhi

On *Muruganar Day* on 3 September, Sri Dandapani Oduvar thrilled the audience by rendering a few songs of Poet Muruganar. Mr. Justice P. S. Kailasam, of the Supreme Court, who presided over the function, released the book entitled *Mei Thava Vilakkam*<sup>1</sup> and congratulated the Kendra and Professor K. Swaminathan on this noble endeavour. Dr. K. Arumugham, of Delhi University, and Mrs. Soundaram Kailasam paid glowing tributes to Muruganar as a devotional and philosophical poet and to his mastery of a Tamil style at once beautiful, chaste and moving.



*Sri Muruganar*

### SRI MURUGANAR'S ANNIVERSARY

The annual function commemorating Sri Muruganar's attainment of samadhi in 1973 was held on September 2, 1978. The *abhishekam* and connected rituals were performed by Sri Thiagarajan of the Ashram Book Depot, while Sri Kunju Swami

and Sri K. Natesan chanted *Siva Puranam* (from Sri Manickavachakar's *Tiruvachakam*) and Arunachala *Aksharamanamalai*. The function came to a close after *Aarati* and distribution of prasadam, at ten in the morning.

### RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

*Ramana Kendra*, Delhi, celebrated *Vidyodaya Day* on July 23. Appropriately on the occasion, a number of poor school-going children were presented notebooks, fountain pens and tiffin boxes.

\* \* \*

Brahmachari Sri Yagna Chaitanya of Chinmaya Mission gave an illuminating series of eleven lectures in English on "*Sat Darsan*" in July/August 1978. With his deep erudition in Sanskrit, the speaker provided massive traditional support and apt illustrations for Sri Bhagavan's teachings. The lectures were listened to with great pleasure and profit.

\* \* \*

At meetings held on August 25 and September 16, the Governing Body of the Kendra considered steps to be taken in connection with the celebration of Bhagavan's Birth Centenary in 1980.

\* \* \*

The Kendra has launched a scheme for financing weekly meetings and recurrent special functions by accepting donations of Rs. 500/- each from devotees, and investing them in fixed deposit in a nationalized bank.

### ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA, CANADA

As reported in our July 1978 issue (p. 202), a devotee-member of *Arunachala Ashrama*, Sri Jim Grant, is at the Ashram going through the old manuscripts preserved from the days of Sri Bhagavan. His assistance is highly appreciated.

\* \* \*

Miss Darlene Delisi, an active member of the Canada Ashrama, spent six weeks at the Ashram in quiet meditation. She was often seen gazing at the Arunachala Hill even at noon and if asked why she was not taking rest she would exclaim that she was having only six weeks and she wanted to devour Arunachala! She was associating with old devotees, particularly Sri Kunju Swami, and was immensely happy when they started telling her their reminiscences of the Master. She went round the Hill several times and also visited every place up and around the Hill where the Master had stayed. Be-

<sup>1</sup> Copies available for sale at Sri Ramanasramam Book Depot., Tiruvannamalai and Ramana Kendra, Lodi Road, New Delhi-3. Price : Rs. 5.

fore leaving, she expressed her intense gratitude to the President and other members of the Ashram for making her stay comfortable and fruitful.

*Dr. J. S. S. Lakshminarayana*, another enthusiastic member of the Canada Ashrama, visited the Ashram with his wife and mother.

He writes: "It was only in 1973 that my heart and soul were caught up in the grip of peace and love of Sri Arunachala Ramana. The chanting of *Arunachala Siva*, *Arunachala Siva* at Annapolis Valley of peace and love, Nova Scotia, Canada, made me dedicate myself to His Lotus Feet. My whole family was drawn into the fold of Sri Bhagavan. His immense grace enabled us to visit Sri Ramanasramam. The Ashram President and the inmates of the Ashram gave us accommodation, and attended to all our daily needs. I and my wife, *Sita Devi*, shall be grateful to them for ever."

\* \* \*

*Sri Yashwant Rai* and his wife, enthusiastic supporters of Canada Ashrama, visited the abode of Sri Bhagavan. Though their visit was short, they felt blessed by the Master's Grace.

#### SEPTEMBER 1 — HOLY DAY

We have received a letter from *Sri Dennis Hartel* from Arunachala Ashrama, Canada, which reads:

"With the Grace of our Master Ramana, we celebrated the Advent Day of Sri Bhagavan at Arunachala from September 1 to 3. The devotees here and those who travelled from New York to attend, took this opportunity to intensify their aspiration and express their devotion to Sri Bhagavan.

"On Friday (Sept. 1), most of the day was spent inside *Sri Arunachala Ramana Mandiram*, reciting prayers, conducting pujas and silent meditation. *Dr. J. S. S. Lakshminarayana* was the priest who with intense devotion performed pujas which lasted for nearly five hours. On Sunday (Sept. 3) about 60 visitors arrived to attend the two hour programme. *Dr. Lakshminarayana*, *Sri Yashwant Rai* and *Darlene Delisi* who recently visited Sri Ramanasramam, gave their impressions of their visits.

"*Sri S. B. Potdar* of Nagpur, who is here since the end of April, sang some devotional bhajanas during the Sunday celebration, and throughout the whole function as well. These songs sung with his mastery were much appreciated by all.

"The celebration concluded with *arati* and was followed with distribution of *prasad* (food), offered to Sri Bhagavan."

## CENTENARY

## CELEBRATIONS

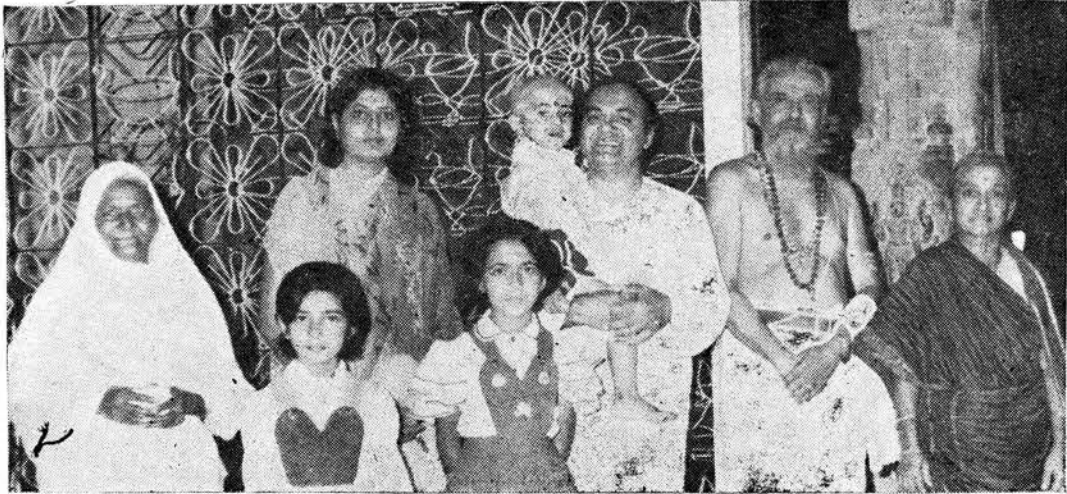


#### TO START WITH ....

As directed by the Board of Trustees of Sri Ramanasramam, *Sri V. Ganesan*, our Managing Editor, made a tour in northern India, meeting devotees at Bombay, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Kanpur and Delhi, enlisting their support and discussing various suggestions regarding the celebrations of Sri Bhagavan's Centenary in 1979-80. Before going on this tour, with the help of *Sri K. Padmanabhan* and *Sri A. R. Natarajan*, he had drawn up a list of suggestions already received from readers of the *Mountain Path* and others.

Wherever he went, devotees expressed their eagerness to co-operate with local committees and the All India Committee to be set up for the Centenary Celebrations.

We are thankful to all who gave help, support and suggestions to Sri Ganesan. In particular, we express our gratitude to: *Sri N. D. Sahukar* and *Sri P. V. Somasundaram* of Bombay; *Sri K. Sivaraaj*, *Smt. Sarojini Hathee Singh* and *Sri Suresh Khanna* of Ahmedabad; *Sri H. C. Khanna*, *Sri Satyanarayana Tandon*, *Sri N. Sinha*, *Sri Kokker* and *Sri K. C. Kapur* of Kanpur; and *Sri Kailash Khanna*, *Professor K. Swaminathan* and other members of Ramana Kendra, New Delhi.



KHANNA FAMILY : (l to r) Maid-servant, Lakshmi, Nmruta, Smt. Premi, Dr. Kishan Khanna, with Gautam (after *mundan*), Sri T. N. Venkataraman, Smt. Nagalakshmi Venkataraman.

### A MUNDAN CEREMONY

The members of the Khanna family, scattered at various places, flock to the Ashram on every available opportunity.



Dr. Kishan Khanna, a Dental Surgeon, arrived at the Ashram from Kanpur, in the third week of August, with his wife Premi, daughters Nmruta and Lakshmi, and son Gautam. This time it was for the *mundan* (tonsure) ceremony of Gautam. Sri H. C. Khanna, the head of the family, has initiated custom of having the *mundan* ceremony of his grandchildren performed at the Ashram.

'Baby' Gautam devotedly seated in front of Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi.

Dr. Kishan and Premi are very proud that their son could have this function in front of Sri Bhagavan's samadhi.

Two other grandsons of Sri H. C. Khanna will soon follow suit!

### CORRIGENDA

While introducing Smt. Mani Sahukar and Sri Sahukar (pp. 187-88 of our July '78 issue), we wrongly mentioned Sri Sahukar's occupation as 'General Manager of the Godrej Group of Companies' which should be read as 'Sri N. D. Sahukar, now the Manager (Corporate Services) of Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Pvt. Ltd.'

\* \* \*

On p. 200 of Ashram Bulletin of our July '78 issue, in the caption of the photo-block under Bombay Ramana Jayanti, the third from left (after H. H. Nisargadatta Maharaj) should be read as SRI JAMNADAS K. LADIWALA, instead of Sri Harilal B. Dresswalla.

\* \* \*

We regret these errors.

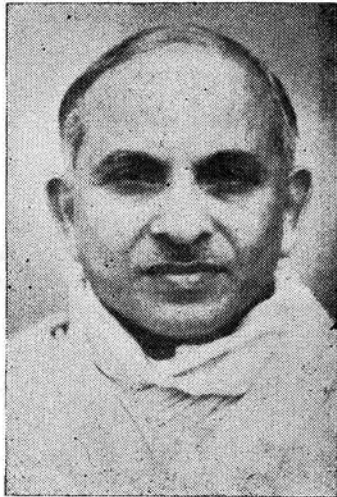


### AN ANNOUNCEMENT

For the CENTENARY YEARS of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, it is proposed that practically all the articles in *The Mountain Path* during the years 1979 and 1980 will be on or about Sri Bhagavan. We request devotees to contribute articles in 1500 to 2000 words or less on Sri Bhagavan and His Teachings and their reminiscences of the Master.

### OBITUARY

SRI S. P. PANDIT



*Sri S. P. Pandit*

We record the passing away of *Sri S. P. Pandit*, Sirsi (Karnataka) on July 1 after a long illness. He was one of the first disciples of Bhagavan from West Coast. He came into touch with Bhagavan through Vasistha Ganapati Muni and Sri Kapali Sastriar in 1931 and turned to spiritual life despite his keen interests as a prominent lawyer, co-operator and public man. He rendered service to the Ashram in several silent ways and cherished the Grace of Bhagavan throughout his exemplary life.

May he rest at the Holy Feet of the Lord.

\* \* \*

SRI H. R. CHADHA

It is with deep sorrow that we record the passing away of *Sri H. R. Chadha*, one of the staunch devotees of Sri Bhagavan. A successful businessman of Calcutta, Sri Chadha was the Vice-President of the *Ramana Kendra* from its inception. In him Calcutta Kendra has lost a stalwart and the devotees of Bhagavan a devout brother-pilgrim.



*Sri H. R. Chadha*

May his soul rest in Eternal Peace at the Lotus Feet of Ramana Bhagavan.

\* \* \*

SRI T. R. G. KRISHNAN

*Sri T. R. G. Krishnan* of Bangalore, a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan, passed away after prolonged illness. He was working with the Binny's as an Engineer. He was equally devoted to the Shankaracharya. The entire family of Sri Krishnan are devoted to Sri Maharshi.

We offer our condolences to the family.

May he rest in Peace at the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan!

### SRI RAMANASRAMAM FREE DISPENSARY

**Donations in kind and in cash are invited from philanthropists and devotees for running the Ashram Dispensary.**

**Cash Donations are exempt from Income Tax. Please send them to :**

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## Letters to the Editor

### THE LIGHT AND THE SHADOW

I am writing this to you with two purposes. The first is to tell you what happened to me about a month ago. My mind was completely confused. I had a terrible headache and I did not know how to solve the many problems which surrounded me. I sat down and asked for Sri Bhagavan's help. When doing this a miracle happened. I saw Him standing and His arms, which were multiplied in hundreds, were moving in all directions and this relieved me of my headache. Next I felt little by little that the stress, the tension I was involved in, was disappearing too. At last, I felt an enormous peace inside me. I have been always seeing Sri Bhagavan beside me. I see Him in front of me on my right side, leaning on a shepherd's staff, as if to guide me.

Secondly, sometime ago I felt the necessity of doing some more charity, and then I joined a group which was practising the spiritism, which is very much in vogue here in Brazil. I would like to ask you and the old devotees who had had the holy contact with the Maharshi to explain if anything is wrong with spiritism. Please advise me whether I should continue my interest in spiritism or should I continue to include all human beings in my prayers.

DAGMAR DE CARVALHO,  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

*We feel glad that you have been relieved of your bad head-ache and other troubles by the Grace of Sri Bhagavan and that you are feeling His Presence. It is a very auspicious augury.*

*Feel your unity with Sri Bhagavan and all creation and try to be of help to those who are in need of it. Charity helps both, giver and receiver. But do not have anything to do with the world of spirits. That will disturb and mislead you. Try to understand Sri Bhagavan and follow His teachings. Devotion to All-pervading Pure Awareness, the common Reality of all and goodwill towards all — that is enough. Do not give room for disturbing thoughts or contacts.*

\* \* \*

### CONCENTRATION AND JNANA YOGA

Though I am practising the path of concentration as taught in Jnana Yoga, I do not see any advance-

ment in my life. For that I turn to you for help. Please write to me how I am to continue without a guru in this path. Is it necessary to practise Hatha Yoga? Please tell me if it is possible to make progress in Jnana Yoga in the materialist world without a guru?

JOHN DOBRIK, Zilina, Czechoslovakia.

*It is not easy to advise you without further details about your intentions and about the way in which you tried to proceed, about what kind of exercises for concentration you attempted and what progress you expected.*

*The only purpose of the practice of concentration is to quieten the restless mind, so that the ceaseless stream of thoughts cease to disturb the natural clarity of consciousness. This clarity is necessary to recognise our own wrong attitude towards ourselves, our neighbours and our circumstances. JNANA means 'right knowledge' as opposed to 'wrong knowledge' or ignorance. And all spiritual practice is meant only to change our wrong attitude — likes and dislikes, desires and fears of the individual ego. For this purpose you need not practise Hatha Yoga. And you need not worry about a Guru. If you are serious and patient in your practice, this effort itself will bring the Guru to you, if you need a human Guru. Meanwhile every body and every thing can become a Guru to you in your everyday life.*

*Study and practise the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi which are available in your mother-tongue. All that you need to clear your inner confusion is to be found in the Maharshi's Search for the Self and in His conversations with earnest aspirants. But, a thorough change of attitude requires time and perseverance. Trust your Inner Guru, who has brought you to the Path; he will guide you further, may be in some unexpected way.*

\* \* \*

### YOGI AND JNANI

I am a novice on the spiritual path and I want you to clear my doubt which arose when I read *Maha Yoga*, an Ashram Publication (Ch. 4 — 'Authority' — Pp. 38-39):

"The evidence of the Yogis is unreliable, because they have not transcended the realm of ignorance. This is seen in the fact that they

differ among themselves." "The experience of the Yogis are highly complex and therefore their descriptions have an irresistible fascination for us. But the fact is, they are not even conscious of the empire that the ignorance has over them. Their goal is *not* the ending of the ignorance, but the attainment, *within* the realm of the ignorance, of a glorious status that seems to them worthy of being striven for."

But in the *Gita* there is a passage in which Krishna asks Arjuna to be a Yogi. The following is the passage :

"The Yogi is greater than body-disciplining ascetics, greater even than the followers of the path of Jnana, or of the path of Karma; be then, O disciple Arjuna, a Yogi."

Does the author of *Maha Yoga* mean that all Yogis are not men of realisation?

R. RAMACHANDRAN, Calicut.

*In the BHAGAVAD GITA verse referred to by you — that the Yogis is greater than Jnanis — the term 'JNANIS' stands for those who have only book-learning about JNANA. The term Yogi refers to one practising Yoga. The confusion is due to the various senses in which the terms JNANI and YOGI are used. The author of MAHA YOGA means by Yogi aspirants for powers, etc. There is no difference between a real YOGI and a real JNANI. They both are firmly established in the one all-pervading Self of all.*

\* \* \*

#### A REMEDY

I have been studying the Maharshi's teachings and many of the things so studied have gradually begun to happen. Now even more drastic changes are occurring. I seek your advice. No matter where I am or what I am doing, sleep overpowers me. It stands in the way of my carrying out my responsibilities. This does not appear to be a medical problem. There comes also much dizziness and a drastic loss of physical energy as though something in the centre of the head was closed. Does this make any sense? Has the Maharshi ever commented on these things?

INA ZELL, Brookings, U.S.A.

*We are rather worried over these symptoms of disturbed health which you ascribe to your SADHANA*

*or even to your close inner connection with Bhagavan Ramana. Sri Maharshi has never commented on such experiences. They may be due to not understanding the teachings properly or to overstrain. It is better you check up your physical condition as well. Self-enquiry, when properly pursued improves one's health and mental peace. It may take time to gain perfect clarity and tranquility. All spiritual practice begins with being RELAXED in body and mind. We advise you, before you proceed with your chosen SADHANA, to sit quietly in a comfortable posture and observe simply the process of relaxation, until it becomes a habit. After all spiritual life is the most natural life, which demands for patience rather than strenuous effort. If the symptoms mentioned in your letter persist, have a medical check-up and follow medical advice.*

\* \* \*

#### A TRIBUTE

'Bhante' Kassappa and I have just returned to Sri Lanka, after an extended tour of Beloved India. As Buddhist monks we were so happy to be so graciously received by all the various spiritual institutions in India, especially the Advaita Ashrams. We felt so welcome. Good. This is as it should be. Even in these often apathetic times, Indian people still offer warm hospitality to proper sadhus, to those in pursuit of Truth.

*Sri Ramanasramam* in particular unfolded its radiance to us during our ten-day visit with generosity and acceptance and accommodation. We both would like to thank you for your careful consideration of our needs as yogis. From time to time we would like to send to you some of our earnest pupils so that they might experience Bhagavan's Grace as they continue their practice of '*Vipassana*' meditation (which means '*insight and inquiry*'). Many Buddhists believe Bhagavan Ramana to have been a full '*Arhant*' and '*Bodhi Sattva*', along with our own saints. Sri Ramana was a fully perfected, a Living Buddha. You are all so fortunate to have been in His presence and Grace. Please continue to send us *Mountain Path* as it means much to our practice.

AKASA BHIKKHU,  
Rockhill.

Hermitage at Wegirikanda,  
Hondiyadeniya, Sri Lanka.



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