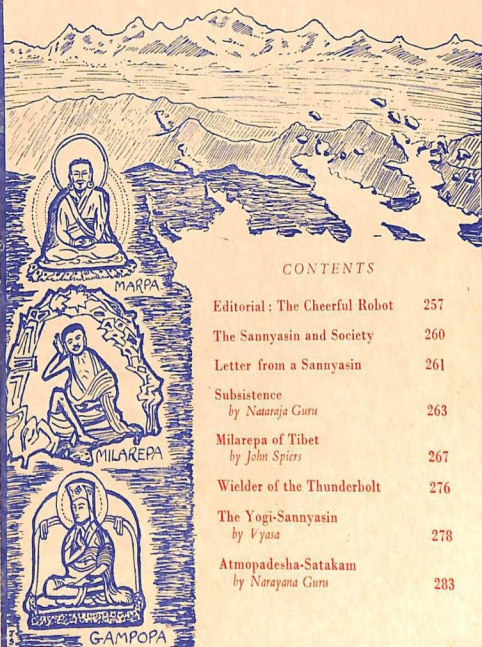


VALUES



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*VALUES is devoted to integrating human understanding unitively,
impartially and globally in the interests of the general good.*

NEXT MONTH
VALUE DYNAMISM

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Editorial : THE CHEERFUL ROBOT

OUR last Editorial evoked a reply from a *sannyasin* which you will find in this number with our comments. It pin-points with some relevant facts what we had suspected was happening in India.

In the general sense, for many years, with increasing tempo, the whole world is facing a crisis of values, as it comes more and more under the pressures and domination of one or other of the two super-societies of the USA and the USSR (which of course for all practical purposes, at the moment includes China).

In both of these societies the motivation is technological and rationalistic. This doesn't mean the same thing as being really scientific or reasonable. Technological development of power in each case is in the hands of small groups. The results are anti-human and destructive of the personal values which lie at the basis of human freedom. In the USA politics is dominated by a few hundred corporations, led by businessmen in league with generals. In the USSR and China a party dictatorship is also wedded to a similar technological power development and an economy based on militarism. In both cases history-making decisions affecting the whole world are monopolized by a power-elite whose motivations are supposed to be rational, supposed to have the interests of humanity at heart. But actually humanity is in a chronic state of fear, while these leaders—the elite—have little qualification to speak at all in the name of humanity.

The Overdeveloped Nation: Our interest, therefore,

WE much regret a few days delay in publication this week, due to an overload of work at our printers. We forgive them and hope you will!

in the fate of contemplatives in this set-up, looks with equal suspicion at both these giant states and their elite ruling castes. And in case readers imagine we are anti-communist or something, let us just quote from a broadcast by an American, Mr. C. Wright Mills, who is Professor of Sociology at Columbia University.

"In the overdeveloped nation," he is reported to have said in *The Listener* of March 12, "the standard of living dominates the style of life; its inhabitants are possessed, as it were, by its industrial and commercial apparatus: collectively by the maintenance of conspicuous production; individually, by the frenzied pursuit and maintenance of commodities. Around these fetishes, life, labour and leisure are increasingly organized. Focussed upon these, the struggle for status supplements the struggle for survival; a panic for status replaces the proddings of poverty... Society in brief, has become a great sales-room — and a network of rackets: the gimmick of success becomes the yearly change of model, as in the mass-society fashion becomes universal. The marketing apparatus transforms the human being into the ultimately saturated man — the cheerful robot — and makes 'anxious obsolescence' the American way of life."

For further proof of this, look at the baited advertisements in any American periodical, intended to get the reader to buy, out of panic, the newest models of everything. This policy of producing for destruction, to buy and destroy and buy, to keep business going, is a national policy. Again, let us quote in case you think we are prejudiced. "We turn in our cars before they are worn out and our nation would go broke if we didn't," said Dr. Louis J. Ridenour, Asst. General Manager of the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation Missile System Division, at a scientific conference at Pasadena, California, recently. He said the US missile programme was following America's "traditional economy of waste. Our missile programme fits into the system very well. We send up missiles that never come back and so we have to make more missiles."

Controlled Rationalism: Obviously, if people were not happy little robots, they would do something about all this. Vast propaganda systems, whether run by politicians, by the state or by private advertising interests, actually constitute a conditioning system of thought control, desire control, buying control and every other sort of control, so that people think they are being rational when they are just robot slaves of some hidden group of Big Brothers. The notion that there are "underdeveloped" countries is just one of the myths which is considered "rational." It is "rational" perhaps, to turn a country like India into another overdeveloped nation (US, USSR,—take your choice, since in this they are all the same).

Which brings us to the point that *so far* neither India nor Tibet have yet come to this, and their peoples are not, so far, "cheerful robots."

What seems never to be considered at all by the Robot Nations is that the insulting names of "pagan," "backward," "unprogressive,"

"medieval," "under-developed" "superstitious," "idolatrous," and what not, bestowed on populations not yet robot-conditioned, have not the same connotations at all that they might have to the dogmatists who call themselves "civilized," "Christian," "Marxists," "Rationalists," "Scientists" and so forth.

If human beings like to be sannayasins or begging Buddhist bhikkhus, if they like to have a way of life which fits their pattern of behaviour as spiritual seekers, apart from the mechanized and socialized world, if they like to live in monasteries under Lamas or in hermitages under Gurus, why shouldn't they? That was all we had to say last month, only now we put it more bluntly in a slightly more aggressive way perhaps which may suit the modern taste!

But the monstrous modern states won't leave people alone. They want to justify *their* mode of life, *their* politics and *their* business. They want to put across *their* dogmas, *their* ideologies, they want to sell *their* juke boxes, washing machines, cars and gimmicks. But they are not going to have an easy time making cheerful robots of Asia's or Africa's millions. We can safely tell them that.

[END]

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The Sannyasin and Society

WE publish below a *Letter from a Sannyasin* which follows from our Editorial last month.

The Bharat Sadhu Samaj, a government-sponsored body recently held its annual session in New Delhi. Presumably to give it weight, the President and Vice-President and the Prime Minister of India all spoke at one or other of its meetings. Sadhus and sannyasins who are supposed to be contemplatives were asked to "accelerate the pace of nation-building" and "to co-operate in community development work," while Mr. Nehru announced that Government would be appointing an inquiry into what it considered to be the proper utilization of funds belonging to Hindu religious institutions and matts.

The silence of the actual Gurus and Heads of ashramas was very noticeable in the news reports. Indeed it is most doubtful if those of any standing were there.

It is a case of relativistic interference in an absolutist domain, and also of a confusion of values. We have the fullest respect for the values of society, even for five-year plans; but we have also a full and even deeper respect for the spiritual values and the wisdom principles which the sannyasins and Gurus represent. These two levels of values cannot and must never be confused as they obviously are in the minds of politicians.

This talking down to sannyasins by politicians is in principle wrong. The true sannyasin can listen only to his Guru and to none else. By becoming a sannyasin a man renounces society and suffers what is called legally "civic death." He has severed all connection with the closed world of family, relations, tribe, community, caste and nation. He enters into a new life which is universalist and global in attitude, in which he views all humans alike without such differentiation. He serves humanity that way and by the consent primarily of his Guru. A sannyasin without a Guru is like a politician without leadership and principles. If a sannyasin listens to politicians he has switched his loyalty and has ceased to be a sannyasin even though he may wear the ochre dress.

These are all elementary notions in the context of Indian spirituality but apparently unknown or ignored by journalists and others in India. No sannyasin can be embroiled in the social programmes of a nation. It is like asking the judge to be the hangman. The Guru does not go to the crowds, the person seeking wisdom must approach the Guru properly. No Guru of recent times ever went about the country doing social reforms, neither Sri Ramakrishnan, Ramana Maharshi nor Narayana Guru. Can any of them be imagined "co-operating in community development work"? Recently we saw a newsreel of the unveiling of a statue of Narayana Guru by the Vice-President Radhakrishnan in which the Guru was called a "social reformer." This is a false journalistic estimate. There was no mention of the Guru as a Guru. Narayana Guru certainly spoke of "One Humanity" and thereby abolished the notion of caste, but in the name of wisdom, not for the sake of social reform.

Again there is this question of money and property of spiritual Heads. The English Trust Laws which India seems to have adopted simply cannot

apply, for the Guru or Head of spiritual Hindu institutions is a beneficiary as well as a trustee, and also it is for the sannyasins alone who are affiliated to the institutions to say if necessary whether they approve or not of the way the general funds of such institutions are used. The idea of *dakshina* or outright gift with no strings attached is always understood in regard to such funds. There is absolute trust in the discretion of the Guru. If that trust is not there the Guru will never accept the gift.

Before entering into the spiritual domain and making such outright criticisms, it would be well to ask, if there is such concern about the spiritual and ethical affairs of India, whether the spending of a large portion of India's income on armaments is spiritual, or whether the passport system which creates barriers between man and man is spiritual, or whether noisy political meetings are spiritual, or whether propaganda of any kind is spiritual.

We fully endorse the idea of having a protective body or assembly for all sannyasins. It seems badly needed at this moment. India must not lose her spiritual traditions in the name of any politics. It is the life of wisdom which has made India illustrious.

— EDITOR

*

*

Letter from a Sannyasin

DEAR EDITOR :

Your serious *Warning Signal* came when hundreds of Sannyasins and Sadhus in India were looking for some such guidance. Having enjoyed the privilege, love and confidence of the enlightened spiritual Heads of the most important Ashramas or Akhadas of Rishikesh, Hardwar, Panchavati, Ayodhya, Kasi, Ahmedabad, Bombay, Mysore and Kerala, I had occasion to discuss with most of them the imminent danger we are facing both from inside and outside India. They are eager to rally round the great cause of saving India's most precious spiritual tradition. They all feel very strongly that Sannyasa will have to be revalued and re-established on a proper footing in order to withstand all the blasts of the time.

Some two years ago they put their faith in the Bharat Sadhu Samaj¹, an organization which found its way from official Delhi circles. But the kindred relation of this Samaj with a purely social and non-contemplative (and therefore as you might say, horizontal) organization like the Bharat Seva Samaj², sponsored and financed by the ruling party, has destroyed the faith in it of many learned Sannyasins. Even those who were more compromising also now find it most embarrassing to pull together because of the obvious wire-pulling done by politicians who only want to exploit the sacred robe of the Sannyasins to win the next election. But though thus deceived and defeated by this experience, the brave Sannyasin followers of the Absolute, though temporarily (and perhaps to some extent agreeably) in the wilderness, as it were, yet do not want to give up their cause for proper unity and protection.

We have therefore decided to put our house in order, so to say. At

¹ Organization of Spiritual Seekers of India

² Organization of Service-workers of India

this moment we are greatly in need of your staunch support and guidance for the formation of a properly based organization of all the contemplatives of India, with Hardwar and Kasi as our Headquarters. But this time, in defining the norms and principles of Sannyasa we refuse to be counselled by the experts of the Government of India's Planning Commission. For proper counsel and light we get more than enough from the wisdom literature of India, found in such works as the Narada Parivrajakopaniṣad, Jabalopaniṣad, Brihadaranyaka Upaniṣad, the Bhagavad Gita, Avadhuta Gita, Suta Gita, as well as in the writings of eminent Gurus, such as the Yatipanchakam of Sankara, the Sannyasi Gita of Vivekananda, and the Municharya Panchakam of Narayana Guru.

Our intention is to be faithful to the wisdom tradition of India, and whether it pleases the prophets of action who are shaping the destiny of India or not, we Sannyasins have solemnly resolved to stand firm on our *svadharma*³ of continuing as teachers of wisdom. We do not want to mix up the action that belongs to society with the dedicated action that belongs naturally to us.

India's greatest asset (whether viewed socially or not) is the Guru-sishya-parampara by which wisdom has come down from teacher to teacher through discipleship, right from the most ancient times, even away back into prehistory. Public interference coming from any quarter in the matters of spiritual succession and the utilization of properties owned absolutely by the spiritual Heads of Sannyasins cannot be tolerated. Incidentally I might mention here that the spiritual tradition of a great wisdom teacher in Bombay is at the moment facing such a crisis, but I am glad to report that the Sannyasins affiliated to this teacher only a few weeks ago resolved to stand by their rights. If there are defects in Indian law due to "educated" legislators being entirely out of touch and entirely ignorant of India's traditions, then such laws must be revised for Sannyasa and these traditions cannot be accommodated to fit the trust laws of Queen Elizabeth the First who for purely political motives took over the English monastic establishments of the Roman Catholics in England, and just because such trust laws seem to be the only laws that most Indian judges understand, with the notable exception of a few like Judge Bijan Kumar Mukherjee of Calcutta.

Yes, we have profited by the unhappy fate of the Dalai-Lama. That is why we feel the need now in India just at this hour of saving the spiritual tradition still alive and of protecting wisdom and its teachers. It is of primary importance. Through these columns I am exhorting by brother Sannyasins and all their disciples and sympathisers to stand as one body. We must guard the sacred torch of wisdom we have inherited from the grand rishis of the past. Even adversity has its sweet uses, and if we are true to the great Principle of the Absolute its firm and gentle power will see us safely through this present critical time for decisions.

SANNYASIN

[END]

³ One's own proper way of life

Subsistence

by NATARAJA GURU

It is the author's intention here to solve the age-long enigma of the apparent clash between the actual and the perceptual, between the existent and the essential, and to do so by relating both to the common Self whose value-consciousness is able to correlate each to the vertical axis of the Absolute, thus leading to an understanding of reality in terms of human Selfhood. Once again the classical philosophers of both Europe and Asia are brought into alignment by apt illustration.

THE visible world of positive or objective experience is the world of *existence* which we have covered in the article which appeared in the issue of VALUES of May 1959. Now we have to pass on to the next level of reality as we envisage it more subjectively through our minds or in terms of our consciousness.

Physical reality demands our attention when we are active and want to move about among the things or interests with which we are surrounded. But philosophy implies a more settled attitude. If in our everyday life we should fail to recognize the fact that things exist subject to the laws of mutual exclusion of contradiction, when viewed horizontally, we would be exposed to the danger of knocking against things and hurting ourselves. However, by treating things one after another in a certain intelligent order in time, we are able to circumvent this conflict of the rival claims of things at one and the same time. "*One after another*" in interests avoids conflict while multiplicity of interests at the same time would confuse us. A well ordered life of interests is one which can harmonize the vertical and horizontal values in life in a graded succession.

At the end of our last article we arrived at a point in critical philosophizing, such as that of a Wittgenstein where clear notions of things or ideas become impossible from the pragmatic angle. When we think of the meaning of such words as "game" or even of "a patch of colour," analytical and synthetical tendencies operate through our minds which make strict, cut and dried classifications or definitions impossible. Analysis has to be arrested at a certain point and synthesis established by the mind, for any useful, meaningful value to result from our attitude to even objective realities. Quality has

to neutralize quantity. Human intelligence is ever selecting from a multiplicity of possible alternative interests. We balance between opposing factors. The order of interests in things depends on the unravelling of our instinctive dispositions from one stage of life to another.

Whether we picture this process as consisting of seven stages, as Shakespeare did, or into three with Sankara (in his verses on Renunciation "Bhaja Govindan"), meaningful life is an organic process of the matching of outer and inner interests into unitive values prevailing with each person at a given period of his life-span. From the choice of instruments to help our hands to work, to the choice of abstract philosophical values, is the range of this organic process of the harmonious unravelling of human interests. If science or philosophy is not to lose its way in the ramifications of by-paths of possible interests, and if it is to be natural, meaningful or intelligent, then a series of vertical unitive values must be kept in mind, for the sake of methodical thinking within utilitarian as well as in purer idealistic philosophizing. True philosophy must keep an open mind and not limit itself in advance to the confines of any "ism," however laudable or legitimate such might be in itself.

The Change-over from Existence to Subsistence : As we have seen, existence as understood in the context of the modern philosophy of Existentialism is not concerned with mere things, but is treated as a rival notion to *essence*. It thus already encroached somewhat into the domain of rational or *subsistent* entities.

An actual chair or table enters into our consciousness by necessary forces of circumstances. The passive contemplative or philosophical mind, which is not committed to pragmatism or to mere utilitarianism, seeks truth for its own sake in a spirit of idealism. When a mild form of subjectivism is implied in such a philosophical attitude, we usually name it rationalism, as against vitalism where activity, and not thought, is the starting point. As more and more of the mind is admitted into philosophy, we get various grades of idealism as represented in Europe between Descartes and Hegel through Spinoza and Leibniz. The modern tendency is to discredit the rationalists and question the very starting point of methodic philosophizing as understood in Descartes. His *cogito ergo sum* has been subjected to various adverse comments in recent times. Some of the critics are in favour of greater idealism, while others want to take away the "will" implied, in favour of necessary factors of a work-a-day life. The German idealists after Kant stressed the primacy of the will in various degrees, from the basis of a mere "presentiment" through the "will to live" to the "will to power." William James and other pragmatists brought it lower down in the scale of human values as a "will to believe" down to the notions applicable to the generality of working and striving human beings. By doing they have brought true philosophizing to a blind alley. When closely examined Wittgenstein represents the *cul-de-sac* to which philosophizing is heading at the present moment, as we have noticed at the end of our last article.

To set healthy philosophizing on its course again, supported by common human wisdom, we have to put some order into the methodology and epistemology implied. It is here that existence is to be understood as passing correctly into subsistence. The former notion has been located by us as belonging to the base of the vertical axis of our scheme. As thought is not anything that stays put and stagnant within the mind of the philosophical investigator in his search for certitude about reality, it would be interesting to watch within ourselves the dynamism of the thought process which changes over from the levels of necessary existence, rising to the higher stage of subsistence, without any break in the continuity of the transition, as it takes place within us. Thought rises and circulates within consciousness itself and there is rhythm and an alternation implied here which, if we should miss it, would lead us into that characteristic puzzlement in philosophical thought to which we have already alluded.

Alternation: If we imagine ourselves pressing our hands on a table, there are two ways in which this event could be regarded. We feel the resistance of the solidity of the table on our hand, and conversely we are ourselves exerting a pressure of which we are also conscious. The tendency among philosophers like Berkeley and Hume has been to give primacy to one or the other of these aspects. Dialectical methodology however, demands that we show no partiality at all and treat both these aspects of sensation which belong to the afferent and efferent impulses in the nervous system, as meeting and neutralizing themselves as a central experience. Berkeley's idealism and Hume's scepticism could thus be reconciled as sides of the same coin of the central absolute reality.

The rationalist tradition of European philosophy of which Descartes may be said to be one of the greatest of founders, was a bold attempt to put body and mind together into a unitive whole, through the linking bridge of interaction between bodily and mental aspects through the famous idea of "occasionalism." This occasionalism was in the hands of a deity who matched inner and outer events. This bridge or link between the two aspects, mental and material, later became the "substance" as understood in the philosophy of Spinoza. In his notion of the "thinking substance" we arrive at something which is neither material nor mental but which links both unitively. How Leibniz carried this idea further into his Monadology is a story which might lead us into an unnecessary digression here. God was the Monad of monads. In Kant's "Free Will" and the "Will as Presentiment," the "Will to Live" and the "Will to Power" we have further stages of later German idealism which attained full maturity with Hegel's full-fledged absolutism.

If we concede that existence or *sat* as understood in Vedanta marks the lowest point in a vertical axis of reality, subsistence may be said to mark the next higher level in the scale of vertical realities which come normally within the scope of a contemplative philosophy. When the last vestiges of the cartesian duality have been effaced from pure idealistic philosophy, we can see the dynamism implied in the transition of existence in terms of subsistence reflected in Hegel, whose principle of negation

(*Negativitat*) is explained as follows :

"*Negativitat* is a principle both of destruction and of production. That which *Negativitat* produces on the positive and objective side of its work, is first precisely the world that at the outset the philosopher empirically finds as the realm of immediacy, the whole universe of experience . . . *Negativitat* finally as the 'negation of the negation' appears in a new constructive task, as the process whereby the rational unity of thought and the things of immediacy and mediation, of experience and reason, comes to light in the positive system of the philosopher."—(p. 458, Baldwin, *Dict. of Phil.*)

Double Negation in Hegel and Sankara: The mechanism implied in Hegel's notion of the principle of the *Negativitat* bears a family resemblance to the principle of becoming which is implied as between the *sat* (existent) and the *chit* (subsistent) aspects of the Absolute as understood in the context of Vedanta. Prof. Lacombe explains for us the method employed by the Vedantic teacher in dealing with the pupil who is initially only able to see the existent or empirical aspect of reality. The process of double negation, implied here as in Hegel above, belongs, as we can easily recognize, to the context of dialectical methodology :

"The Vedantic doctor is not yet in the Absolute, or rather, if he philosophizes, it is for someone who is not yet in the Absolute; his whole task is to make it come, in relativistic terms of existence and of nature, so that in the end, one gets oriented towards it and finally discovers it. For the disciple there is but one reality: that of the empirical world; he has but the similar error of according to it that dignity which is too great, for the world is effectively, and in a certain sense, a complex of being and non-being; in any case it is from here that he should necessarily start. The second time will be from negation, negation of the negative of the things that are empirical, not of their positive . . ." (p. 58 *L'Absolu selon le Vedanta*, translated.)

The professor goes further to direct our attention more minutely into the implications of the transition of *sat* into *chit* when he writes again *a propos* the philosophical position of Sankara as follows :

"There is without doubt, in the empirical universe, duality of the subject and the object with a marked primacy, though not unconditioned, of the subject. But if the subject emerges from a depth which is indivisibly being and intellectual light—*sat* and *chit*—behind the object also, although the degradation may be more pronounced there are again the aspects of being and of light which do not separate themselves from each other. In such a way it is that the profound identity of the subject and

[Continued on page 279]

Milarepa of Tibet

by JOHN SPIERS

HIMALAYA! "Measuring Rod for the Earth Itself!" That is how India's great poet of antiquity, Kalidasa of the fifth century, has described the Abode of the Snows. Even in the dullest of necessity-bound human beings, some stirrings of the wonder of the Absolute can be felt in the presence of grand natural phenomena. As the Bhagavad Gita says, in describing these manifestations of symbols of the Absolute, in its tenth chapter, among the immovable or fixed existing things (*sthavarah*) the Himalaya takes first place.

It is true. Through the ages the presence of the Himalaya has been a potent agent drawing the humanity of Southern Asia towards the pursuit of the final understanding of life. We should remember this amid the marvels of the universe continually being presented to our eyes by the adventure, factual or imaginative, of science today.

Lands of the Thunderbolt: For the Himalaya is still there, and the privileged traveller may still stand atop Observatory Hill, Darjeeling, and gaze fascinated at one hundred miles of its length of over two thousand miles, in silent

OUR COVER

MILAREPA was one of the greatest Gurus and Yogis of all time. Our cover depicts him sitting in one of his caves singing a meditative song. The chief value of his life is for disciples of wisdom. Above him is pictured his Guru Marpa. Below Milarepa is his disciple and successor Guru Gampopa who is dressed as a Lama of the Kargyut-pa Brotherhood. The whole line of Gurus should be imagined, for behind the Guru Marpa, there were the Indian Gurus Naropa and his Guru Tilopa and many others, while below Gampopa many successive Gurus followed right to this day, for the line is still extant. For the material used in this study we are indebted to the book edited by Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa* (Oxford University Press) which contains a translation of Milarepa's biography from the Tibetan. We recommend this wonderful book with its touching history and its profound insight into Guru-Sishya life, to all students of wisdom.

awe. The inward gasping at this solid *mysterium tremendum* is the "ah!" which as the *Kena Upanishad* says, represents the Absolute. And from Observatory Hill add the embellishments which give living touches to the effect; the furious shrilling of life (as Aldous Huxley described the *Cicadas*) living in the bamboos, and the wind too that whistles through their trembling leaves; add the mists like witches' scarves that weave in and out through the bearded lichen hanging from the twisted oaks and rhododendron trees; add the giddiness of the steaming jungle depths, one mile below, where the glacier-fed Teesta and Rangyit rivers run like silver threads; paint the rest of the scene in range upon range of jungle-clad hills and mountains, range behind range, rising higher and higher for fifty miles beyond—the Land of the Thunderbolt, as Lord Ronaldshay called Sikkim—and far above them all, only out-topped by the nearby prayer-flags on their long bamboo stems wind-fluttered, there stands like a many crested white wave clasping the blue heavens, frozen, immobile, five-miles high, the Himalaya, glistening white and ever-pure, and ripping to shreds the littlenesses of human greed and desire.

One must feel this background to sink into the history of Milarepa, for that icy world with its alpine valleys was his, and its magic too, as well as its power to evoke the call to wisdom discovery.

Tantrik Buddhism: Man ever turns the duality of otherness in nature into the neutral unity which is his own and also the spirit of the whole. The wonder of actuality is but the reflection of the deep spirit of the mind and heart of man. The methodology of animism of ancient Asia through many ages was revalued into a religion with its own psychic wisdom known as the Tantra. Iconography and symbolism was its language. The language of stones and trees and running brooks, of strange jungle growths like the banyan tree, and of sublime icy peaks, in terms of religion and of psychism closely related to the ponderings of the humanity who dwelt in tropical jungle and amid the wilderness of gneiss and snow alike, is akin to that of lovers and poets, as well as of artists and of natural born mystics and saints. Yoga arose and was forever revalued by various streams of thought and approaches, animistic, hylozoic, theistic, by rationalism and logic, by Jain and Buddhist and Vedantin. But the yogi remained the central figure, and Milarepa was a yogi in a world which knew what this meant.

It was natural for the Tantra to arise from Bengal's thick forests, as it was for the Bon religion of elementalism to arise from the harsh storm riven region of Tibet. Strange insights into nature both external and internal to the physical body of man emerge, with their corollary of psychic attainments or powers (*siddhis*) known to psycho-physical yoga. In this setting Gurus arose whose basis was that same Absolute, but speaking the common language of such a religion. Emphasis was laid too on the tragic aspect of nature, embodied on the one side by the luxurious life of the jungle, where life's very profusion killed itself in multiplicity of productivity, and on the other side by the supernal heights where life itself was sacrificed through elemental storms to the essential purity of air, rock and snow. To such philosophies, each valid within their own domain and having much in common, the esotericism of Tantra and the crude violence of Bon

nature-worship, there came at the beginning of the Christian era, the word of the Buddha, and again a revaluation took place, later to transform the entire region of the Himalaya into the Lands of the Lamas.

The Northern Schools of Buddhism : This is a perfect setting for the contemplative to flourish, as they did and as they still do, in centres public and private, throughout the entire region of over two thousand miles in extent and two hundred miles or more in depth.

And among the many who belong to Tibet none is more renowned than Milarepa.

The fusion of these three contemplative Schools of religious philosophic self-discipline in Tibet was a long-term process, reflected in the variety of extant Schools, but each with their Gurus, their distinct methodology and philosophic approaches, suited to the type and temperament of the disciple. Lamahood or Guruhood may be said to be the central feature common to all. Three chief Schools may be mentioned. First there is the School of the Ge-lug-pas or Yellow Caps, whose philosophy of the neutral Void stems from the South Indian Buddhist teacher Nagarjuna. This was founded in Tibet in the 15th century A.D. by the great revaluator Tsong-khapa. It is now the "established Church" of Northern Buddhism, with its spiritual-temporal Head, the Dalai-Lama. Secondly there is the School of the Kargyut-pas, whose philosophy is that of the Mahamudra (the Great Symbolic Gesture of the Crossed Thunderbolt, the *vajra* in Sanskrit or *dorje* in Tibetan). This School was also due to Indian Guru-founders, arising from about 1000 A.D. with Milarepa as its greatest figure. Thirdly, there is the School of the Nging-ma-pas, or Red Caps, adherents of the Adi-Yoga (foundation or first yoga) philosophy, founded by the Indian Guru Padma Sambhava in 749 A.D.

Guruhood : Three things are essential to notice throughout. First there is the importance of the principle of *guru-sishya-paramparya*—the spiritual teacher-disciple succession principle, with the descent of the wisdom teaching thuswise from Guru to Sishya. Second, there is the acceptance of the spiritual authority of the Guru and the mutual adoption by Guru and Sishya together in a father-son bond along lines of absolutist spiritual trust, the one with the other, with total obedience to the word of the Guru. Thirdly, there is the inseparable conformity of the way of life step by step with the opening out of the principles of the teaching. In other words, the alignment of mode of life in harmony with the philosophy. The philosophy thus becomes more than an academic understanding. It is real in actual attainment of its principles as one's own.

In regard to the first of these points, Milarepa sought out his Guru and his Guru was quick to see in Milarepa the true disciple to inherit the mantle of Guruhood when he should depart from life. In regard to the second, Milarepa's Guru had to test the new disciple most severely, Milarepa was a man of enormous wilfulness, and therefore the discipline was equally hard, and the result equally great. But Milarepa succeeded eventually in receiving his Guru's total blessing. Indeed it was there throughout by the very rigour of the discipline, a straining to the utmost. In regard to the third, the philosophic life itself, it is here that Milarepa's life exemplified itself to

the utmost glory, like the rarest of Alpine blossoms miraculously flowering amid the snows, giving out a perfume which persists to this day, and whose fragrance must be felt by anyone of the least sensitivity who reads the account in Dr. Evans-Wentz' book.

When we read of the utmost limits of human endurance that Milarepa underwent during his discipleship, and later during his period of contemplation, how even his own sister could not recognize in so wretched a being her own brother, and how she wept with pity mingled with shame at his naked condition amid the blasts, and yet at the same time when we read of Milarepa's beautiful, gentle philosophic response, we strike the pure divinity of a man who has reached the heights of perfection and wisdom.

Women Disciples: There are many more things of interest. We notice that Milarepa's own Guru, Marpa, was a married man who was able to cope with the loving but emotional-disposed wife Damena who was also his disciple. She assisted in his religious and symbolic ceremonies. We notice also that amongst Milarepa's disciples there were a number of women. This abolishes the notion that sex is a barrier to the common human Self in search of enlightenment and wisdom.

Another point of importance connected with the life of Milarepa is that while the main stream of Buddhist life in the Himalayan region flows along an ecclesiasticism which wields political as well as spiritual power through the Dalai-Lama, and which is also highly organized, that stream to which Milarepa belongs, the Kargyut-pa, is detached from temporal relationships. It is therefore much more akin to the traditional Indian notion of the pure society-free Gurukula (Guru-family of disciples).

Jetsun Milarepa's biography is written in Tibetan by his disciple Rechung. Milarepa's ancestors were of noble nomad stock, and considered very wealthy. His father died when he was seven. He had one sister, Feta. The property was left in the care of an uncle and aunt. But they misappropriated it, leaving the widow and her two children in the utmost destitution. Milarepa's mother, having failed in every way to get any justice done, sent Milarepa to a teacher of the black art, which Milarepa mastered, and thereby caused the destruction of thirty-five of the wicked uncle and aunt's relatives, besides destroying a rich barley harvest by an invoked hail-storm. But after he had done all this, for his mother's revenge, Milarepa felt the deepest remorse. For although it was potent black magic he had learnt, his Gurus were also affiliated to Buddhism and knew that using these strange powers, even for ends of human justice, was far from the way of light.

Marpa's Severe Tests: Hence Milarepa began his search for a true Guru and in this way at last heard of Marpa the Translator (of Indian texts) and found him. Marpa on his part, having had a premonitory dream in which his own Guru appeared, and his wife also having had a dream different but of the same order, was ready to welcome, though not openly, but in his heart, the new disciple.

Marpa at once began the training and testing of Milarepa, ordering him to build houses with stones, mud and mortar. But as soon as one was nearly completed, he would have Milarepa break it up and start on

another elsewhere. Milarepa carried on with this crazy task in obedience to his Guru, while Damena, Marpa's wife, felt motherly pity for the lad. There were several crises of a sishya order, but finally, Marpa's testing period was over and after another dream in which Milarepa was involved, he gave him the final teachings. Marpa had also prior to this, consulted his Guru, the Yogi Naropa on one of his visits to India for Tantrik textbooks, and received confirmation on his choice of Milarepa. Dreams and omens, natural to people with a tradition of understanding the signs of nature in which the physical and psychic mingle, being of this detached order, need not be dismissed as fanciful in the special free context of spirituality belonging, as we have said, to several antique sources. For the observant eye, the Absolute when attentively followed, can signify its presence by little signs, as a friend in a crowd may, imperceptibly to others, appear to nod his head in recognition.

Vow of Renunciation: At the final stage of his discipleship, after long periods of walled-in meditation, a monastic practice coming probably from prehistoric times when the presence of savage animals perhaps made lengthy meditation dangerous—during which times the Guru or his wife fed him through a small aperture—Milarepa had a sudden dream of his mother and sister and the overwhelming last desire of seeing them. The Guru Marpa knew this wave of attachment to family was temporary and also that he would be no more when Milarepa returned, but let him go, with final admonitions, instructions and blessings.

Milarepa set off with a load of precious books. He reached his former home, only to find a heap of rags and rubble where his family house used to be. There he found a heap of bones which he instinctively knew to be those of his mother. His sister had vanished. Meditating here for a week, with his mother's bones for a pillow, Milarepa resolved to follow the advice of his Guru and become a hermit. In one of his earliest songs, he concludes :

Native land, and home, and all possessions,
I know you all to be but empty things ;
Any thoughtless one may have you.
As for me, the devotee, I go to win the Truth Eternal.
O Gracious Father, Marpa the Translator,
May I succeed in meditation in the solitude.

Milarepa retired to a cave, where he lived for years, entirely on water and nettles. His very body turned blue-green, and he even had green hairs. His rare visitors thought him to be an animal spirit, but his lovely singing voice remained. Even robbers pitied him. His sister Peta heard of him and visited him, but felt ashamed at his being naked, for his clothes after some years, had entirely rotted away. Here is his *Song on Shame* which he composed for her :

To all the lineal Gurus I bow down !
Grant me the knowledge of what is really shameful.
O Peta dear, held fast with prudish shame,
Give ear awhile unto thy brother's song :
Thy shame is born of ignorant conventionalities ;
Shame thou feelest where for shame there is no cause.

To me, the devotee, who knoweth what shame truly is,
In showing in its natural shape my threefold personality¹
What shame can be attached thereby?

When 'tis known that human beings are born, each of a certain sex,
'Tis known, too, that each possesseth certain organs.

The most wordly of folk heed not

Those acts which truly are either mean or shameful;

The Daughter of Shame is bought with wealth;

The Child of Shame is dandled on the lap;

Covetous and harmful thoughts, begot of unbelief,

Evil deeds, vile frauds, thefts, and robberies,

Deceiving friends and kindred who confide in one—

These indeed, are acts filled full of shame and meanness; yet few
refrain from them.

Those hermits who have given up the worldly life

And taken to the practice of the Spiritual Truths,

Found in the Sacred Teachings of the Mystic Path,

They who have vowed to pass their life in meditation,

See not the need to hold to codes of shame conventional.

Therefore, do not, O Peta, seek to add unto thy present miseries,

But let thine understanding flow within its natural channels.

Milarepa continued his meditations in various "castles" as he called the caves, some in well known, others in hidden places. Some were in Nepal, and, it is said, in the vicinity of Mount Everest. At last as recorded in his biography in his own words, "the object of meditation, the act of meditation and the meditator were so interwoven with each other that now I do not know how to meditate." As one who had achieved Buddhahood Milarepa began to be famed and had many disciples, among whom were his biographer, Rechung, a Tantric Buddhist who had visited India.

When some wily pandits tried to trip him up with book quotations, Milarepa replied that he had never valued the mere sophistry of word-knowledge:

Accustomed long to meditating on the Whispered Chosen Truths

I have forgot all that is said in written and in printed books.

Accustomed, as I've been, to the study of the Common Science,

Knowledge of erring Ignorance I've lost.

Accustomed long to application of each new experience to mine own
growth spiritual,

I have forgot all creeds and dogmas.

Accustomed long to meditating on all visible phenomena as the
Dharma-Kaya (body of what is right)

I have forgot all mind-made meditations.

Accustomed long to know the meaning of the Wordless,

I have forgot the way to trace the roots of verbs and source of words
and phrases;

May thou, O learned one, trace out these things in standard books.

But the pandit was angered and had Milarepa poisoned through a bowl of curds given by one of his concubines. Milarepa knew of this but

¹ i.e., body, speech and mind.

as he felt his term of life was over, consented to take the poisoned curds.

As the time of his passing grew near, Milarepa issued instructions not to have any elaborate funeral rites. The best ritual, he told his followers, was to put away relativistic pursuits and to be faithful to the commands of an eminent Guru. Nor would he have any *stupa* erected, no Tibetan *ch'orten*. Instead, he pleaded for cultivating understanding of the way of the Buddha and his Dharma, and to set up the Victorious Banner of Devotion. He sang :

Unless one's Guru be of an unbroken (apostolic) line,
What gain is it to take Initiation ?
Unless the Dharma be with one's own nature blended,
What gain is it to know by rote the Tantras ?
Without renunciation of all worldly aims,
What gain is it to meditate on the Chosen Teachings ?
Unless the beings of the Lokas Six be known to be one's parents,
What gain is it to fill a certain seat hierarchical ?
Unless the Guru's every word e'er be regarded (and obeyed) as being
reasonable,
What gain is it to have a multitude of sishyas ?
All actions which bring naught of benefit,
Do naught but harm ; so leave them quietly aside.
To the Yogi who hath carried out his mission,
No need is there to undertake fresh duties.

Such was his chant. Before his departure, the pandit who had poisoned him begged forgiveness and even became a devotee. Milarepa told his disciples " To me there is no reality either in illness or death. I have manifested here the phenomena of illness ; I will manifest the phenomena of death at Chubar." Also he said : " In whatever place ye pray with sincerity and earnestness, there will I be in front of each of you, and I will fulfil your wishes." He then gave instructions about the disposal of his effects, leaving to Rechung his staff and cotton raiment, " which ye all see with me as my sole possessions."

About engaging in worldly affairs, for the benefit of others, Milarepa replied : " If there be not the least self-interest attached to such duties, it is permissible. But such (detachment) is indeed rare ; and works performed for the good of others seldom succeed if not wholly freed from self-interest. Even without seeking to benefit others, it is with difficulty that works done even in one's own interest (or selfishly) succeed. It is as if a man helplessly drowning were to try to save another man in the same predicament. One should not be over-anxious and hasty in setting out to serve others before one hath oneself realized Truth in its fullness ; to be so, would be like the blind leading the blind. As long as the sky endureth, so long will there be no end of sentient beings for one to serve ; and to everyone cometh the opportunity for such service. Till the opportunity come, I exhort each of you to have but one resolve, namely, to attain Buddhahood for the good of all living things. Be lowly and meek. Clothe yourself in rags. Be resigned to hardships with respect to food and dress. Renounce all thought of acquiring worldly renown. Endure bodily penance and mental burdens. Thus gain knowledge from experience.

That your study and penance be directed towards the right path, it is necessary to hold these injunctions in your hearts."

And so Milarepa passed into deep samadhi. He was 84 and the date was A.D. 1135. But the legend relates that the funeral pyre would not light until Rechung (who was absent) arrived. It is also said that from the fire there came this last song with which we conclude this brief account of Tibet's greatest Yogi.

O Rechung, my son, as dear to me as mine own heart,
Hear thou this hymn, my final testament of precepts :

In the Sangsaric Ocean, of the Lokas Three,
The great culprit is the impermanent physical body ;
Busy in its craving search for food and dress,
From worldly works it findeth ne'er relief :
Renounce, O Rechung, every worldly thing.

Amid the City of Impermanent Physical Forms,
The great culprit is the unreal mind ;
Submissive to the form of flesh and blood,
It findeth ne'er the time to realize the nature of Reality.
Discern, O Rechung, the true nature of the Mind.

Upon the frontier of the Intellect and Matter,
The great culprit is the self-born (or created) knowledge ;
E'er on its guard 'gainst accidental (or destructive) mishaps (to
itself),
It findeth ne'er the time to realize the true nature of the Unborn
Knowledge (or Truth) :
Keep, O Rechung, within the safe stronghold of the Unborn (or
Uncreated).

Upon the frontier of this and of the future life,
The great culprit is the (self-born or created) consciousness ;
It seeketh e'er a form it hath not,
And findeth ne'er the time to realize the Truth :
Find, O Rechung, the nature of the Truth Eternal.

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Amid the City of Illusoriness of the Lokas Six,
The chief factor is the sin and obscuration born of evil karma ;
Therein the being followeth dictates of likes and dislikes,
And findeth ne'er the time to know Equality (or Non-duality) :
Avoid, O Rechung, likes and dislikes.

Within a certain unseen region of the Heavens,
The Perfect Buddha, expert in subtle argument,
Hath propounded many subtle and profound Apparent Truths ;
And there one findeth ne'er the time to know the Real Truths :
Avoid, O Rechung, subtle argument.

Gurus, Devas, Dakinis—
Combine these in a single whole, and worship that ;
The goal of aspiration, the meditation and the practice—
Combine these in a single whole, and gain Experimental Knowledge ;
This life, the next life, and the life between (in Bar-Do)—
Regard these all as one, and make thyself accustomed to them (thus
as one).

This is the last of my Selected Precepts,
And of my Testament the end ;
Than that, no more of Truth is there, O Rechung ;
Acquire from it Practical Knowledge, O my son.

[END]

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Some Notes on the Dalai Lamas



BUDDHISM became widespread in its Sivaite Mahayana form in Tibet during the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo in the middle of the 7th century. In 747 AD the Indian Guru Padma Sambhava (meaning Lotus Born) also known as Guru Rimpoche (Precious Teacher) was invited to Tibet. He and his disciples laid the foundations of what is known as the Red Hat school.

The Yellow Hats (the *Gelugpa*) of which major school the Dalai Lama is the Head, had their foundation in Tsong Kapa (meaning "Man from the Land of Onions," north-eastern Tibet). He was born in 1358 and he made the revaluation which differentiates the two "churches." He prohibited both marriage and wine-drinking for lamas, and founded the large lamasery at Ganden, 12 miles from Lhasa. His successor was Ganden Truppa who founded the monastery of Tashi-lhunpo which, in the 17th century became the residence of the Tashi Lama, the second Grand Lama of the Yellow Brotherhood.

The notion of reincarnation, popular in the religion of India, travelled to Tibet with the early Indian teachers, and after the death of Ganden Truppa in 1474, he was said to have reincarnated in an infant born two years later. From Charles Bell we learn that there are nowadays from 500 to 1000 incarnate Lamas of greater or lesser merit distributed over the different sects of Tibetan Buddhism.

The third incarnate in succession from Tsong Kapa was Sonam Gyatso who received the title of Dalai (All-embracing) Lama (Superior One) Vajradhara (Thunderbolt-Wielder) from the Mongol chieftain Altan Khna. The *vajra* (*dorji* in Tibetan, hence Dorji-ling, " Place of the Thunderbolt ") came from India too, being the celestial lightning-making weapon of deities such as Indra of the Vedas and Siva of the indigenous religion.

The Great Fifth : This weapon like a four-pronged double trident with the sharp ends closed-in, may be seen (two *vajras* crossed) on the picture given here of the Dalai Lama known as " the Great Fifth " in Tibetan history. His name was Lob-Sang Gyatso. He was the son of a poor man. He was the first Dalai Lama to represent both secular and spiritual authority. Because of his consolidation and power over the Red Hats who acknowledged his rule, he was given the title of Great Fifth. It was he who announced that the Grand Lama of Tashi-lhunpo was the incarnation of Amitabha, " the Boundless Light " while the Dalai Lama himself was regarded as the incarnation of Avalokitesvara (the Actually Seen Lord) also called Chenrezi in Tibet.

The Great Fifth built the famous Potala at Lhasa. He visited Peking and the Chinese Emperor acknowledged his sovereignty and spiritual superiority by coming down from his throne to meet him. It was during his time also that the first Europeans visited Lhasa. Two were Jesuits, the Portuguese Father Antonio de Andrada about 1626, and the Austrian Father Johann Grueber. The other was a Belgian, Albert d'Orville. The last two came together from Peking in 1661. The Great Fifth Dalai Lama died in 1680. In the picture here drawn by a Tibetan artist he is seen in a teacher's pose, holding the Wheel of the Buddhist Law, for another of the Dalai Lama's titles in Sanskrit is *Dharma-chakra-pravartana-rajā*, the Law-Wheel-Turning-King. He is wearing the typical pointed Yellow Hat and two disciples stand below holding up offerings.

The Great Thirteenth : The next famous Dalai Lama was Ngwang Lotsang Tupten Gyatso, the predecessor of the present Dalai Lama. He was a benevolent and selfless ruler, and he too had to go into exile to India from the Chinese, but in 1911 succeeded in regaining independence and also kept both the Russians and the British at bay. He died in 1933 and became known as " the Great Thirteenth.

The present Dalai Lama, Jetsung Ngwang Lobsang Tenzin Gyatso was born on June 6, 1935 and ceremonially enthroned on February 2, 1940.

There is no doubt that the five millions population of Tibet (which is a land as large as India) are satisfied with the mysterious theocracy and the institution of Lamas. Between those who see in it perhaps more than is necessary in mystery and occultism, and those who in the name of progress and rationalism are unable to see the spiritual values which are as dear as life to the masses of Tibet, we should try to take a middle view. People must have their right to their own kind of life and government.

[END]

The Yogi-Sannyasin

by VYASA

When the devotee (bhakta) aspires to wisdom, that is, when he adopts the unitive discipline outlined in the Bhagavad Gita, he becomes a yogi and a true sannyasin. His pattern of life and general attitude is described in the following verses from the twelfth chapter of the Gita. The personal pronoun "Me" used here represents the Absolute in the form of the Guru Krishna who is addressing his disciple Arjuna.

He who has no hatred to all creatures, who is also friendly and compassionate, who is free from possessiveness (my-ness) and egoism, who is equalized in pain and pleasure, and forgiving.

Such a yogi (unitively disciplined one) who is always contented, self-controlled, firmly resolved, whose mind and reason are dedicated to Me (Guru and Absolute Principle), he, My devotee, is dear to Me.

He who does not disturb (the peace of) the world and (whose own peace) is not disturbed by the world, and who is free from the exaggerations of joy, haste and fear, he too is dear to Me.

He who expects no favours, who is clean, expert, who sits unconcerned, carefree, who has relinquished all undertakings, he My devotee, is dear to Me.

He who neither rejoices nor hates, nor grieves nor desires, and who has relinquished (both) the beneficial and the harmful, such a one endowed with devotion is dear to Me.

He who is the same to foe and friend, and also in honour and dishonour, who is the same in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, and who is free from attachment,

To whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent (in manner), content with whatever happens to come, having no fixed abode, mentally constant such a man of devotion is dear to Me.

—Bhagavad Gita, XII, verses 13-19.
(translation by Nataraja Guru)

Subsistence

(Continued from page 266)

the object which is reality Absolute, translates itself into relativity by an osmosis and in the form of an exchange of substance as between the two orders, between the two 'attributes' to speak in the manner of Spinoza." (*ibid.* p. 58, fn.)

Hypostatic and Hierophantic Substances: The notions of existence and essence have a central coupling notion in the word substance as understood in Spinoza in the West and as *chit* in Vedanta. The word substance is derived from the Latin *sub-stare* "to stand under," which has its corresponding term in Greek *hypo-stasis* which has the same significance. From both words it is clear how the classical mind thought of substance as something that remained as the ontological basis of reality in the axis which admitted of the higher and the lower.

The notion of substance or *chit* supplied a neutral point where ascending and descending dialectical processes in thought met and neutralized each other. Although ascending dialectical thought is what is at first sight implied in the notion of substance, in the light of the dialectical methodology that we have developed elsewhere in the pages of VALUES, it would be permissible for us, especially after the scrutiny of the mechanism of thought implied in the paragraphs quoted from Hegel and from the Vedanta, to add that both hypostatic as well as hierophantic entities or realities are to be treated as blending into the central notion of the 'substance' as it is to be understood here. As the process of double negation becomes asserted, substance begins to represent a positive value. When the notion of substance is understood without its positive or negative attributes, on neither of which it depends, we have the notion of substance corresponding to the notion of the Absolute itself which Vedantins describe as *chin-matra*, i.e., consisting purely of mind-stuff. Spinoza's definition of substance brings the notion as near to the Vedantic Absolute as the mind-stuff as could be imagined. Spinoza writes:

"By substance I understand that which is in itself and is conceived through itself; in other words, that the conception of which does not need the conception of another thing from which it must be formed." (*Ethics*, I, Definition III).

Elsewhere he makes it clear that God alone is substance, and continues:

"Everything in which there resides immediately, as in a subject or by means of which there exists anything that we perceive, i.e., any property, quality or attribute, of which we have a real idea, is called a *substance*."

If existence refers to a factor that is not essence but could be placed at the bottom of a vertical scale, while essence itself could occupy the top of the same scale, subsistence is undoubtedly a factor that, according to the best of rationalists like Spinoza, occupies the central position between the

two extremes. Identified with the notion of God and as a factor sufficient unto itself, it could be no other than the Absolute itself understood realistically.

Ascent into the Specific Essence: When the contemplative has been able to think of substance as the pure mind-stuff intermediate between its attributes of existence on the negative side and of essence on the positive side, the ascending dialectics that becomes implied thereby must carry him to interests and values understood both objectively and subjectively. The human personality is where unitive or integral values of import reside.

Starting as we did objectively with existence and rising dialectically into the domain of subsistence we could speak of the world of unique specific or positive essences belonging to the world of the intelligibles of Plato. These essences have nothing objective or substantial about them, but resemble pure ideas such as that of Beauty. Heavenly or celestial values consist of these essences. In the idea of God when monistically conceived, we have the unitive meeting point of all essences fused into one.

The Beautiful, the Good and the True are attributes of essence, together with omnipotence, etc. The luminaries of the sky, in so far as they represent light, which is dialectically nothing other than the faculty of sight or even intelligence, is the domain where essences reside. In Western philosophy the transition between existence and essence is not clearly understood as a continuous correlating factor that runs through the gamut of all legitimately human values. In the context of the Vedanta, however, there is a subtle vertical link between such notions as the sapidity of the waters and the specific attributes of manhood in human nature. The two aspects of reality, the one which belongs to the order of being and the one which belongs to the order of the intelligibles, which in classical Western philosophy tend to be treated as an ambivalent pair of concepts, with a marked primacy in favour of the intelligible, tend to have a more unitive status conferred on them in the Vedanta. Existence and essence meet and merge their duality in a central notion of *chit* which is to be identified with *atman* (the Self) as also with the notion of the Absolute. We shall content ourselves with quoting one abstract from the pages devoted to this subject by Prof. Lacombe to bring out the nature of the vertical line of correlation that links, in a subtle implicit-explicit ambivalence, the two aspects of existence and essence in the context of non-dual Absolutism (*advaita*) as implied in Sankara:

"The Indian conception of *essence* (the gamut of terms *svarupa*, *svabhava*, *bhava*, *sara* indicates this by itself) seeks to keep the two aspects together, by giving a philosophical value to the second, and for this, let us state it at once, it accords to the implicitness of being (and not surely to the sensible as such, it is not a question here of remaining in the empirical plane) a certain primacy over the explicit." (p. 51, *L'Absolu selon le Vedanta*)

The vertical line that passes through existent, subsistent and essential values, all with a unitive status, can be gathered from the verse of the Bhagavad Gita where the two ambivalent polarities of the factors are refer-

red to, together with the intermediate linking factors in the following manner. Krishna, who is the representative of the Absolute understood in cosmological and psychological terms at once, describes himself to Arjuna his disciple in the following striking words :

“I am the savour of the waters, I am the light that shines in the moon and the sun ; I am the mystic syllable AUM in all the Vedas ; I am the (intelligible) sound in space and what constitutes (specific) human nature in mankind.” (*Gita*, VII, 8)

Explicit and implicit human value-factors are thus treated without duality and with no primacy to one or the other in the epistemology and methodology of the *Advaita*.

Values are more than mere Concepts: In existence, substance and essence we have three grades of concepts lying in the vertical axis of pure or absolute being or becoming. However, we have to remember that they are still only philosophical concepts sometimes understood subjectively and at other times objectively. They could also be understood semantically as a meaning common to subject and object. Even when understood in any one of these three possible ways, it does not become a living personal Value which would induce the unitive state of consciousness in its fullest sense. Existence, substance and essence have to fuse into a whole as a central Value that knows no distinction of subjective or objective. Like the kingdom of God which is within and as a pearl of great price and the leaven that leavens the whole lump, this central experience has further to be felt and known as within oneself in the form of a consciousness that is neither within nor without, as a global core of both being and becoming at once.

The realities of Aristotle and Plato have to fuse non-dualistically into a global and central core of personal life with which alone one can establish the most intimate of relations. Thus it is that by a long philosophical detour we arrive at the study of man, which is, as Pope put it, “the proper study of mankind.” “Know thyself” as the ultimate term of all philosophizing was also well known as a dictum marking the term of Socratic philosophizing. *Atma-jnana* (knowledge of the Self) and *atma-labha* (gaining the Self) and finally *atma-arama* (finding joy in the contemplation of the Self) are also equally familiar notions of the Vedantic context. The cosmological Absolute and the psychological Absolute may be said to be transparent to each other. When the two transparent pictures or schemes are brought one over the other, as it were, under a normative notion of the Absolute common to both cosmology and psychology, we cancel the tribasic prejudice of *t:iputi* (subject-meaning-object.)

Such a notion then attains to the status of the highest of human values. The analysis of this notion of Absolute Value and the dynamism implied in it, we shall reserve for a future discussion.

The point we have arrived at in the present discussion can be summed up as follows :

Existence starting in the mind of ordinary men who are not given to philosophy or contemplation, refers to a multiplicity of empirical entities

given *a posteriori* to consciousness. They are there by necessity and imply mutual exclusiveness and they are subject to the principle of contradiction and conflict that goes with plurality of things or interests. Rival interests of men also complicate the situation from the psychological approach. The philosopher begins by negating multiplicity and tries to see existence in the form of a global guiding interest in life. To be able to do this he has to see reality divested of its multiplicity and diversity. The savour of water is the subjective and conceptual version of the actual empirical entity. It is in the form of taste that water can find a place in our own subtler being or consciousness. This unitive hylozoic principle called taste in the water has its corresponding factors in the five elements (earth, air, etc.) when looked upon as conceptual principles lying in a vertical unitive scale of values linking the hierophanies of earth, air, and ether etc. till it comes out of the limits of existence and, by the process of an osmosis to which we have referred earlier, gets fused into the notion of subsistence or substance as more realistically understood. Substance itself, as we have seen, has its hypostatic attribute in the idea of essence. Essence as a *rasa* (prime taste or essence) or *bhava* (state of being, existence) in Vedanta is treated non-differently as implicit in substance. Substance thus attains to a neutral and central position like a pearl of great price and emerges as a precious human value. Value itself has to be understood without actual or perceptual prejudices and with a dynamism all its own. To the consideration of Value itself we shall devote another article.

[END]



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Atmopadesha-Satakam

One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction

by NARAYANA GURU

**Translated from the original Malayalam
with a Commentary, by Nataraja Guru**

(Comments on verses 1 to 6 have already appeared in *VALUES* and may be obtained at cost plus postage.)

7.*

To wake never more, ever sleepless to remain, as awareness;
If for this today you are not fit, then in the service
Of those silent ones who ever dwell awake to AUM
Absolved from birth, steadily fix the form.

This is the third verse in sequence which refers to the alternating states of sleeping and waking in consciousness. The analysis of states of consciousness in a vertical series referring to deeper and deeper seats of consciousness is familiar to us in the context of the methodology of the Vedanta. Especially is this so with Sankara who conceived the Absolute as the witness of the three states of waking, sleeping, and deep sleep, with the "fourth" called *turiya* which touches the deepest stratum of Absolute awareness. But before coming to the deepest seats of pure consciousness, it is necessary in the initial stages of developing the subject of Self-knowledge, to distinguish between the vertical and horizontal.

The necessary aspects of everyday biological rounds of activity have been referred to in verses 5 and 6. We were brought to the threshold of a central spiritual value which persists at the core of even our everyday life, in and through our ordinary activities. It was referred to as a guiding light in verse 5, and as a changeless factor to which we should become awake in verse 6. The poles of the vertical axis of spiritual progress or Self-instruction have thus been worked out for us in verse 5. These poles were brought together more unitively in verse 6, as a way or an axis referring to unitive values in life. Instead of the cosmological setting with a source of light apart from the seeker, guiding as it were from beyond, the metaphor refers to lasting or changeless values which are under the category of the Eternal.

The present verse goes one step further in the same direction. Sleeping and waking are not treated here in verse 7 as alternative states falling outside of the vertical axis of pure consciousness. In the form of a central,

* A slightly different rendering from what appeared the issue of *VALUES* dated May 1959.

neutral awareness independent of both the alternating states lying on one side or the other of the vertical axis, there is here a function postulated in which pure knowledge thrives and triumphs.

This state of equilibrium between alternating states or tendencies is the secret of the contemplative or the yogi. The verse assumes the existence of silent men who live in this kind of unitive awareness in which the mean or middle ground between the alternating asymmetrical states in consciousness is merged into a central stream. Here it is hard to distinguish whether the subject is in a state called sleep or whether he is fully awake. Participating in both from either side as it were, sleep is to be understood in terms of waking and waking in terms of sleep.

Active temperaments tuned to the horizontal world of action, and caught in the love of particular objects of interest cannot steady themselves in the pure contemplation of absolute Value. There are, however, rare individuals among human beings who may be said to have tuned themselves to this kind of higher consciousness, which belongs to a category by itself.

If an aspirant to wisdom feels that he has not understood the content or the intellectual and emotional implications of such an attitude as recommended here, there is a time-honoured alternative method known to many wisdom texts, especially in India, of establishing bipolar relations with a master who has already attained to the awareness or attitude implied. As the understanding of the attitude is not possible by the usual didactic methods of learning and teaching which are mostly based on an *a posteriori*, pragmatic, empirical or logical approach, the only way to get it is through a global intuition which has its favourable conditions. By means of a subtle rapport and a mutual bipolar personal adoption between the seeker and the teacher, a sort of osmosis is established. The personality thus better adjusted to the absolutist way will be able to absorb something of the master's attitude to the seeker when all the conditions required for the transmission of the teaching are present together.

The reference to service of such a wise man is meant to induce that degree of mutual adoption necessary for the osmotic transfer of the wisdom state from teacher to seeker. Mistrust and disadoption between the two concerned in such a bipolar wisdom situation would tend to make the experiment a failure. Sankara's *Viveka-Chudamani* (verses 37 to 43) refers to the relation between the teacher and the disciple in detail, and the *Bhagavad Gita*, after entering into the subject in chapter IV. 34, goes into greater and greater secrets to the extent that the teacher there who is Krishna the Guru, feels confident that there is no disadoption between himself and Arjuna the pupil, and himself refers to this kind of disadoption by the name *asuya* (a carping attitude).

In the Upanishads we have several instances, such as a Nachiketas, a Satyakama or a Svetaketu, of adolescent seekers of wisdom who are taught only after the bipolarity of relations is securely established between teacher and pupil. The wavering mind, caught between rival interests, has to be steadied. This can be accomplished only by a body and soul affiliated to the context of wisdom. The wholeheartedness of the affiliation requires that the whole man, which does not exclude the physical, is made to bend, as it were, to listen to the word of wisdom represented by the

personality and attitude of the Guru.*

According to popularly accepted dicta on the Indian soil, no wisdom which has not received the sanction of a Guru can be valid.

"As awareness": The deeper one sinks into consciousness the more independent does it become of the alternating states of sleeping and waking. In verse 9 the two poles of the vertical axis are more explicitly alluded to, the two states of sleeping and waking attaining to an alternating asymmetrical expression. After establishing bipolarity with a supreme notion as representing the Absolute, the aspirant is to develop, here and now, a corresponding attitude of neutrality and steadfastness of a whole-hearted character so that interests can be secured at both ends and kept on the right path of spiritual progress.

Wisdom can result only when the conditions are fulfilled correctly. The two poles implied and the axis involved have first to be visualized or postulated correctly before instruction in the Self can go on unhindered. Neither the waking life of overt action nor the dreaming life of innate mental representations can give the correct orientation prerequisite for Self-realization.

"Silent ones.": The word *muni* is given here. It brings to mind the picture of a recluse living in a forest or far from the "madding crowd's ignoble strife." *Mouna* means silence and contemplatives of the type called *munis* in India, are those who are generally sparing in speech. They have invariably a pronounced inner life which lives in constant awareness of a high human value represented by the Absolute Self that they themselves represent. The two attributes that follow in the same verse giving two of the limiting characteristics by which such persons have to be distinguished are also referred to as follows:

"Awake to AUM": The analysis of self-consciousness with reference to the mystic syllable AUM has been masterfully accomplished in the *Mandukya Upanishad* which, with its commentaries by master minds such as Gaudapada and Sankara should make what is implied here quite complete and as thorough-going as can be expected. The letters A, U and M, represent three grades of open, half-open and closed states of consciousness, with a fourth stratum that pervades all the others. The vertical axis may be said to pass through all of them. Activity and passivity, waking overtness and dreaming innateness, are all levels to be marked on one and the same vertical axis in which consciousness can live and move towards action at one stage or to pure inaction at the other.

"Absolved from birth": The phenomenal existence of a living being, when biologically understood as active, is one in which horizontal factors enter to a greater or lesser degree. When pure movements of contemplative thought are established, as it were, along the vertical axis of awareness, the alternation as between birth and death, sleeping and waking, which have their being only on the horizontal plane, cease to operate. Even if they do operate, they have to be considered as

* Further psychological and educational implications of this relationship have been worked out in a thesis submitted to the University of Paris by the present writer, entitled *The Personal Factor in the Educative Process* (Vrin, Paris, 1933).

null and void, belonging to the world of secondary values which can be dismissed as mere epi-phenomena.

We might here perhaps pause to ask relevantly whether or not the well-known doctrine or theory of reincarnation is not implied here. This doctrine or theory belongs to the general background of Indian thought. It has never been put forward as a doctrine or an article of faith. Various versions of the same theory are found in different grades of literature, beginning from the Puranas (legendary mythological lore) up to the highly philosophically conceived works such as the *Yoga Vasishtha*. Popular belief has its own story to tell of an ancestor whose soul might be in a crow that pecks first at a ball of cooked rice ritualistically offered by way of propitiating the *pitris* (ancestors).

But reincarnation in the proper context of wisdom has to be understood divested of all the mythological or allegorical prejudices or accretions round the idea of the past living in the future, which is perhaps all that the doctrine in its purest form wants to suggest. The vertical axis of time or pure duration has its retrospective aspects changing into prospective ones through what might be called the eternal present or the dialectical moment.

The silent ones who have awakened to the high value called the Absolute Self live an undisturbed life of peace and understanding which is free from the taint of the alternation of states whether between sleep and wakefulness, memory or prospective vision, life and death. Established in wholehearted interest in Self-realization, such an alternation of opposites does not affect them. They may be said to be established in a form of pure becoming where alternation of successively opposing states does not arise.

"Steadily fix the form": The word in the text here is *murti*. An idol in wood or metal is sometimes referred to as a *murti*. Each individual has an aspect which is finite with a particular form. The impersonal Absolute at best is an abstraction which is formless and infinite. To establish a correct bipolarity between the two aspects involved here it is important to recognize that the outer aspects of the personality come into relation with the inner. The two poles of the two magnets have to be juxtaposed with the understanding of the technique which will give double mutual gain rather than double loss. It is not the spiritual side of the disciple which is first to be surrendered, but rather the gross materially inert side over which he has actual control through his own will. Steadfastness results only from proper cross-affiliation.

8.

Eating of the five fruits such as light and so on,
Perched on a shot-gun foul-smelling, ever in wily changeful
sport,
Such, the birds five, in shreds, what can bring down,
Wielding such a lucid form, let the inner self brilliant become.

The way of absolutist contemplation is not to be mixed up with mere religious piety. There is a radical note struck in this verse. It aims

at giving the would-be contemplative an indication of the drastic, uncompromising attitude involved in getting started in the path of real contemplative life. It is more than mere prayerful meekness. There is something positive in the attitude required. The *Bhagavad Gita* refers to the inwardness involved by comparing the aspirant to a tortoise which withdraws all its limbs into its shell (II.58). There is also a reference to the flame that remains motionless in a windless place, steadily adjusted vertically (VI.19). These analogies are meant to indicate in advance the personal attitude or psycho-physical adjustment involved in the initiation of the contemplative's progress.

In this verse we have to imagine a hunter trying to shoot down birds on a branch. They are evasively changing from one twig to another before he can take proper aim. Interests are ever shifting ground in consciousness. As soon as one is displaced another appeal to the senses comes along, initiating another chain of associations. Thus the chain of cyclic associations never comes to a standstill. Meditation thus recedes further and further away from reach. The hunter has to take a firm one-pointed aim. The metaphor is meant to dispose of many psychological and other questions summarily by a composite confection of the allegorical and parabolic style adopted here, so that many factors may be understood as covered in a suggestive rather than in a discursive manner. The reader is left to guess freely and to fill in the gaps where they are purposely left to be implied. This concentrated cryptic way was already pointed out in the beginning of the work itself when, in the first verse we were told that this composition was meant to be a chant rather than a discourse. This is reminiscent of the suggestive style of the Upanishads.

The reference to the foul-smelling shot-gun on which the birds are seated at one end, at the other end of which we have to put the hunter who is about to pull the trigger, suggests a vertical axis between the two polarities or factors of the same self. The birds with the fruits which they peck represent the sensuous interests based on each of the five senses opening to the world of horizontal values. The aspirant cannot afford to be enticed by these frivolous interests if he is to be seriously established in contemplative life. The hunter has to take his aim in such a way as to shoot down all five of them at one shot.

This means that he has to aim at the focal meeting-point of all sensuous interests and associative processes in the mind. He has further to be uncompromising. If he appears to be a kill-joy in this respect, we have to concede that he is only so in the name of a greater gain of inner contemplative brilliance of the whole spirit within him. The smaller items of pleasure are inclusively transcended in this inner lucidity which he gains. The body being a differential factor between the two poles, is here referred to as something to be despised. When we think of the gross aspect of the body, consisting of tissue, etc. it is really something to be despised. Pampering the body or cultivating the body-sense obstructs the contemplative way. When the gun is fired there is a flash of light which would fill the whole of consciousness without the duality of the mind or the body. Both are abolished in a full absolutist state of intense light within. The suddenness of the event suggests further that contemplation is not to be thought of as a slow process of evolution through

laborious intermediate stages as it is commonly thought of in the context of what usually passes for the practice of meditation or yoga. Even Patanjali yoga as Vasishtha points out to Rama in the *Yoga Vasishtha*, is tainted by the idea of graded steps in contemplation, to be gradually ascended. This attitude, tainted by Samkhya (rationalist philosophy) dualism has been revalued, not only in the *Yoga Vasishtha*, but is implied even in the *Bhagavad Gita* in Chapter II, in referring to self-discipline. The absolutist way of *advaita* is thus slightly different from the ascent involved in the dualistic approach of the *hatha* and *raja* yoga. A revalued yoga restated is implied here. The way whereby contemplation becomes actually established may be a slow one, but the attitude of the aspirant has to be wholehearted and drastic.

When the verse is paraphrased and expanded to smooth out all the subtle mixed metaphoric implications, the unitively revalued psychophysical plan or functional structure of the Self with its two polarities to be reduced into absolute unity of pure content will become sufficiently evident without going into further analysis of the expressions used.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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