

VALUES



TODA

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EDITORIAL : The Salt of Life

ALL of us humans are in danger of losing what the first and last Christian, addressing a crowd on a hilltop, called the saltiness of humanity. It is possible, he said, for the human salt to "lose its savour."

Today the salt of life is being washed out by the process of civilization. scientific progress and modern refinements. Sprinkle your life with this savourless substitute and you become a completely dehumanized square personality, a robot unit of drill-conditioned thought and behaviour.

Our smart neo-brahmin sales-sergeants and the vast pyramidal hierarchy of organization personnel regard with contempt any humans who hold on to their original saltiness; well-flavoured salty humans such as the Todas, the Coolies, the Red Indians and the Beat Generation. The civilized Establishment hunts them out and calls them backward, crude, primitive, vulgar, dirty, delinquents, mad, bad, hobos, blots, pariahs, anti-social misfits, and so forth, just because they haven't got the social package, or reject it, refusing to be steamrollered, unwilling to take the de-salting washing-out treatment called social assimilation.

Already we have been charged with favouring non-brahmins. And now in this issue, the Todas, or the Beats! Really you know! Why? Our answer is that, although the Todas are a microscopic drop in the ocean of humanity who, in *quantity* might half-fill a small cinema-hall, they possess a *quality* of universally necessary human saltiness, with an unmistakable absolutist flavour which most of us have lost, and which for our very life as humans we must either recover or perish.

This salt of genuine human values is an absolutist element. It can be washed out only in favour of utterly unworthy trashy life killing substitutes. So far the Todas have not been affected by the well-advertised soap. They do not yet shout friend or foe as the broadcast directs. They walk *their* way, as of old, and not in square-drill steps with the "glorious march of civilization .." (H-bombs and all). Todas, Coolies, Red Indians and many more quality groups have not been totally "assimilated." The Beats have become aware: at least that! That's why they are all interesting. They are not dead like the rest. They refuse to be pattern-tailored. In their spiritual protest they are following the advice of that distinguished salty wise man who told us what to do with savourless salt. "Throw it away" he said, "Trample it under your feet".

[END]

Dance-Lament of the Last Todas

Though the way of our fathers of old is dead

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh)

Though gone is our skill in the ways of the wild

Like the fire-making sticks that we knew as a child,

We shall croon about how that life has fled ;

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-oh

Clap ! Dance ! Clap around-oh !).

Anthropologists came with calliper-tools

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh)

They gazed with great statistic eyes,

Hard as the sun in the summer skies,

And cold as the Kundah's winter pools.

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh

Clap ! Dance ! Clap around-oh !)

The tourists came, both white and brown,

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh)

They paid for fingering cloth and hair,

Paid well for their sex and camera stare ;

We took their coins, they turned to town ;

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh

Clap ! Dance ! Clap around-oh !).

But the ones who destroyed our age-old peace

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh)

Were the righteously busy, out to kill

Our mode of life on every hill,

For the sake of work that will never cease ;

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh

Clap ! Dance ! Clap around-oh !).

So penned in official cement and glass

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh)

No more shall we sit and croon at dawn,

Nevermore commune with the forest fawn,

Or with buffaloes roam over miles of grass ;

(Ecaa-ccaa-oh—ccaa-ccaa-oh

Clap ! Clap...for days that are gone.) JS.

The Todas and Their Way of Life

BY NATARAJA GURU

THE CHARM of a life in a hill station such as Ootacamund in the Nilgiris presents another side during the months of June and July. The wings of the south-west monsoon are miles wide, and blow, blow, blow is the rule that prevails for weeks on end. The peak of Doddabetta hides its head in shame and the sun himself, the lord of day, peeps through the racing clouds only now and then. The tall eucalyptus trees with their graceful



forms silhouetted against the heavy laden skies, with their leaves like pencil-drawn commas against the haze, present sometimes the aspect of a Chinese landscape, while the mist sometimes wipes off all except the nearest objects. The Tao mystery overcomes the onlooker and the visible and the invisible vie with each other for primacy.

Exposed to the south-east and the north-west monsoons only, alternately every year, one would have expected that the tall trees would have presented an asymmetry in their growth, but the round trunks and the evenly distributed branches seem to say that life is independent of the mechanistic forces. Partial stimulus and total reaction seem to hold good as a law of neurology as well as the way of growth of vegetation. The tree remains vertical and herein is its virtue. Its leaves face and spread themselves in all directions like the thousand-petalled lotus-flower motive which haunts all Eastern art and thought, both Hindu and Buddhist. The generosity of nature faces every direction and calls for an equality and justice in the sharing of its abundance. Looked at in this way a simple tree has a soothing effect on the restless human mind. Its verticality is its virtue while its shape spells an all-round generosity.

Nature and the Mind: The rainy months in India are meant for *samnyasins* or contemplatives to retire for their *chatur-masya*, the four months of rest and retirement. The fraternity seeks refuge under roofs at this time of the year and cease from their wanderings for some time. The rest of the land too is waiting for the harvest that comes at the end of the monsoon and all life is subdued and still. This is like the hibernation of winter in colder climes and has its charms. In the Nilgiris and especially at Ootacamund which has been called the Queen of Hill-stations in India, there is a charm that alternates with disgust at the continued wind and mud. One suffers from cold feet and the fireside and warm beds become more and more enjoyable. After many bad days on end, a beautiful calm day dawns with incubator heat and ultra-violet charged and ozonized bracing atmosphere that, with its coquetry and charms can make one forgive and forget the bad days for ever; to fall in love with dear old Ooty again for the hundredth time.

The alternating aspects of nature have their counterparts in alternating states of mind, sometimes steeped in static and closed attitudes and sometimes open and dynamic. Mid-August to mid-September, like the Indian Summer in the U.S.A., is the "second season" here, when the greenery with its long-drawn shadows make of the Nilgiris a kind of paradise. Well fed cows can be seen grazing calmly on the meadows with a characteristic autumnal feeling. The older aristocracy think of the hunt races and the hounds come out with the John Peels, both Indian and English on horseback as in old England. This picture, however, is fast fading out into the background of the dim past.

Land of the Todas: I have now lived in the Nilgiris for nearly four decades with breaks of five, three and one year respectively, with occasional absences of weeks or months in the plains especially on the West Coast of South India. The Guru

Narayana was alive for five years after I had fixed my residence here, and once in my absence had blessed me with a visit near to the grounds that were then only the site of the present Gurukula building.

How I came to this particular spot has its interesting circumstance. One day in the year 1924 sitting in an open car waiting for two friends who had gone visiting a friend on their leaving me behind I gazed from the opposite hill from where the Gurukula is at present located, at a forested area with an open space of something like a Toda land where the rays of the setting sun spot-lit a particular patch of ground. I gazed in its direction for a long time before I ever knew that that particular patch was to be where I was destined to spend the best part of my life. Coming events extend backwards their subtle premonitions, and I can now recollect the vague sensation in which I was lured and attracted to the spot. It seemed to be beckoning me from afar. I little knew that this spot was typical Toda country until I later spotted at least three Toda Munds (or clusters of houses) round the earthly paradise that seemed to charm me with its graces.

Todas Not a Primitive or Backward Tribe: Textbooks of Indian history written especially by outside scholars or sociologists devote a chapter to the Todas of the Nilgiris as being the remnants of a most aboriginal, primitive and backward people reminiscent of the dawn of the known epochs of the history of India. Sightseers and curiosity-hunters have made a fuss about them and a body of literature has grown round these people. They are listed among the tribals and their dwindling population can be numbered within the range of three or four digits.

Besides historians, anthropologists and missionaries who saw in them the prototypes of the simple biblical people near the Sea of Galilee, there were theosophists like Madame Blavatsky who took them as having to do with Mahatmas, Prince Peter of Greece who took to them with great fervour and thought that their society had some affinities with the Akkadian or Babylonian or some such other of the Mediterranean region. Whatever may be the theories, there is no doubt that this group of humans inhabiting the topmost grazing lands on the highest points of the Nilgiri Hills is very interesting to fellow humans in more ways than one.

Here is a pastoral, peace-loving people untainted by what is called modern civilization. They live in an ideal world of Nature which Rousseau visualized in his writings. Surrounded by wild animals, they have no weapons to defend themselves. They believe in warding off such dangers by spiritual forces and in the potency and power of thought rather than that of iron or steel. They do not plough or till the soil but they look upon

the buffalo as constituting all the wealth they are interested in. This horned beast is so closely bracketted with their lives and their strictly circumscribed abundancist economy, that they together seem to form a self-sufficient pair of dialectical counterparts, inter-dependent and dependent at once. Opulent dreams do not haunt them. They worship no god but the buffalo which gives them the buttermilk, ghee (clarified butter) and milk that they require to make their economy more or less complete.

Perfect Picture of Pastoral Simplicity: The Todas themselves do not touch meat but they kill buffaloes at the funerals of important people, and their status is measured by the number of the animals sacrificed. The dialectic or the logic behind this atavistic behaviour is reminiscent of the rice-balls that are offered by Hindus to keep up the status of those who have passed on to the life beyond. The prehistoric notion that life must support life, just as a lower brick supports a higher brick in a masonry structure, and that some sacrifice of life must give support to the place in which the departed soul is to find solace is an ancient all-too-human notion, whether superstitious or not.

Those who eat here below show their gratitude by offering what they eat to those beyond. This might be a concretization in symbolic and ritualistic behaviour of the filial or relational gratitude of living kith or kin to departed ones. There is nothing particularly primitive in this custom which prevails in one modified form or another with humans all over the world and more especially in China.

The huts of the Todas are the simplest imaginable, being made of wood, bamboos and mats. There are no windows and even the doors are just big enough for a man to crawl through on all fours. There is warmth and impeccable orderliness and neatness in the arrangements inside. Brass vessels resembling those used by certain groups in the West Coast Malabar District and the material and structure of the houses point to some sort of kinship. Toda togas, if we might call them so, are worn as the Romans did, with broad stripes of red and deep blue, and patiently made embroidery gives them a very special distinction.

Apart from the glorification of the buffalo and the ritualistic use of milk and milk products, exaggerated funeral practices, fraternal polyandry whose vestiges still seem to be persisting together with the faint memories of female infanticide which they seem to have practiced for economic and eugenic reasons, the Todas have few peculiarities that would justify their being considered primitive or uncivilized.

(Continued on page 314)

WHAT BEATS ARE TRYING TO DIG

BY JOHN CLELLON HOLMES

The author of these extracts from a longer article, tries to tell Squares something about those amazing new People, the Absolutists of our time, known as Beats. It's about time we gave them a hand. For Indian readers who got the Literature Hand-Out at college, what a relief to remember to forget! In the language Values has used, maybe too much for "good taste", the Beats are having a holy war on all fronts against Relativism. As Henry Miller (himself an unofficial Beat, like Rabelais or Blake) says, "Believe me, there's nothing clean, nothing healthy, nothing promising about this (present) age of wonders—except the telling." And man, as they say, using a grammatical form of speech common to the Dravidians, Man! Can we dig! Beat literature is almost the only stuff worth reading these days, and you can choose between dozens, from Ginsberg with his poem *Howl* to the novels of Jack Kerouac and Norman Mailer. We hope you'll dig them for yourself, Man!

SOME years ago *Time* Magazine called them the Silent Generation, but this may have been because *Time* was not really listening. Others tried out the Waiting Generation, and the Go Generation, but all of these were somehow inadequate. Now, with the word "beat," we may have their sobriquet at last. Everyone who has lived through a war, any sort of war, knows that beat means, not so much weariness, as rawness of the nerves; not so much being "filled up to *here*," as being emptied out. It describes a state of mind from which all unessentials have been stripped, leaving it receptive to everything around it, but impatient with trivial obstructions. To be beat is to be at the bottom of your personality, looking up; to be existential in the Kierkegaard, rather than the Jean-Paul Sartre, sense.

How Are We to Live? Though the Beats rushed back and forth across the country on the slightest pretext, gathering kicks along the way, their real journey was inward; and if they seemed to trespass most boundaries, legal and moral, it was only in the hope of finding a belief on the other side. "The Beat Generation," Kerouac said, is basically a religious generation." And later, in another interview, Kerouac amplified: This includes anyone from fifteen to fifty-five who digs *everything*. We're not Bohemian, remember. Beat means beatitude, not beat up. You *feel* this."

Perhaps all generations feel that they have inherited "the worst of all possible worlds", but the Beat Generation probably has more claim to the feeling than any that have come before it. The historical climate which formed its attitudes was violent, and it did as much violence to ideas as it did to the men who believed in them.

Conventional notions of private and public morality have been steadily atrophied in the last ten or fifteen years by the exposure of treason in government, corruption in labour and business, and scandal among the mighty...The political faiths which sometimes seem to justify slaughter have become steadily less appealing as slaughter has reached proportions that stagger even the mathematical mind. Orthodox religious conceptions of good and evil seem increasingly inadequate to explain a world of science-fiction turned fact, past enemies turned bosom-friends, and honourable-diplomacy turned brink-of-the-war. Older generations may be distressed or cynical or apathetic about this world, or they may have somehow adjusted their conceptions to it. But the Beat Generation is specifically the *product* of this world, and it is the only world its members have ever known.

Nothing seems to satisfy or interest it but extremes, which, if they have included the criminality of narcotics, have also included the sanctity of monasteries. Everywhere the Beat Generation seems occupied with the feverish production of answers, some of them frightening, some of them foolish—to a single question: how are we to live?.....this generation cannot conceive of the question in any but personal terms, and knows that the only answer it can accept will come out of the dark night of the individual soul.

Search for a Way: In San Francisco (which is, in many ways, the Paris of this generation), a whole school of young poets has made a complete break with their elegant, University-imprisoned forebears. Some of them subscribe to Zen Buddhism, which is a highly sophisticated, nonrational psychology of revelation, and wait for satori (wisdom, understanding, reconciliation). Some are Catholic laymen, or even monks, and pray for the redemption of the world. Many of them resemble mendicant friars, or the Goliard balladeers of the Middle Ages, carrying everything they own on their backs, including typewritten copies of their poems to be left, as one of them put it, in art galleries, latrines, "and other places where poets gather."

All of them believe that only that which cries to be said, no matter how "unpoetic" it may seem; only that which is unalterably true to the sayer, and bursts out of him in a flood, finding its own form as it comes, is worth the saying in the first place. Literary attitudes, concern about metre or grammar,

everything self-conscious and artificial that separates literature from life (they say) has got to go.

Everywhere young people are reacting to the growing collectivity of modern life, and the constant threat of collective death, with the same disturbing extremity of individualism. Everywhere they seem to be saying to their elders: "We are different from you, and we can't believe in the things you believe in—if only because *this* is the world you have wrought."

For many of them, the answer may well be jail or madness or death. They may never find the faith that Kerouac believes is at the end of their road. But on one thing they would all agree: the valueless abyss of modern life is unbearable. And if other generations have lamented the fact that theirs was "the worst of all possible worlds," young people today seem to know that it is the only one that they will ever have, and that it is *how* a man lives, not why, that makes all the difference...their growing conviction that only spiritual beliefs have any lasting validity in a world such as ours—should put their often frenzied behaviour in a new light, and will certainly figure large in whatever future they may have.

[END]

EXCLUSIVE TO VALUES

Interview With a Lady of the Todas

NEXT month we are proud to be able to give you an exclusive interview with a lady of the Todas. This will be the first time that a Toda will be addressing the world directly in the English language. It will not be a second-hand report. The Todas are the lords of the Nilgiris of South India. You will read with immediate intimacy, of their way of life, their religion, their ethics in relation to marriage and children, and about their future. Don't miss this feature.

**BRING VALUES INTO YOUR
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On the Day There Was No News

*Birds chirped in waterfalls of little sounds for hours ;
Rainbows, in miniature nuggets, were stored in the dews ;
The sky was one vast moonstone of the tenderest blues,
And the meadows lay carpetted in three heights of flowers :
One morning the world woke up and there was no news.*

—OSCAR WILLIAMS.

Sir Julian's "Fact"

ACCORDING to the dictionaries, a fact is something done, something actual. But ex-chief of UNESCO, Sir Julian Huxley, writing in *The Observer*, London, of July 17, 1960, makes the astonishing claim that the theory of Evolution is no longer a hypothesis, "but has become established as a fact." Further on in his article, he refers to "the final only mystery of the existence of an evolving world-stuff containing the potentialities of mind." Creationists, Vitalists, Emanationists could all make statements based on equally invalid logic. Such fanaticism can only lower high reputations.

Archaeological Uproar

AN Oxford Don, Prof. L. R. Palmer, has produced evidence which has shaken the foundations of archaeologists, by showing that Sir Arthur Evans, the autocratic digger who put Knossos in Crete on the map of history, misrepresented the evidence in dating his finds. The probable date of the arrival of the Aryan Greeks in Crete is now pushed forward from 1900 BC to 1200 BC. This fits in better with the date of the general invasion of the Aryan barbarian war-bands into India, Persia, Sumeria, Asia Minor and Greece itself. A lot of ancient history will have to be rewritten. And eggheads are human.

To Those Who Say They Never Have a Moment

"GOD gives to each man, however beset he may be with the world, a few minutes at least daily, when he is utterly alone. I have read Shelley in a Public Lavatory, and learnt Rupert Brooke's war sonnets by heart while I was doing my morning duty to this body." So writes T. P. Cameron Wilson in *Waste Paper Philosophy*. Well, Luther admitted he was similarly inspired, and we know a friend whose practically only reading is done in the seclusion of the bathroom. We must be glad there are some places left in a frantic world where humans can relax.

Big T-V Money for Whopping Liars

JOHN CROSBY, T-V reporter on the *New York Herald Tribune* writes about the opposite of time-saving, i.e. the time-wasting purposelessness of an incredibly vulgar new quiz show on television, whose aim is to produce the best liars before an audience of 30 million people. Willie Stein, the associate producer of the show, reports "Children are the best liars. The worst liars are men and women between 40 and 50 years of age." In the half hour of the show, two or three people tell lies about who they are to a panel of four people. And, for the record, the title of this sample of degenerate American culture is "To Tell the Truth."

To the Members of the Nuclear Club

EVERYBODY likes to hear about a man laying down his life for his country, but nobody wants to hear about a country giving her shirt for her planet.—ALLEN TATE.

Spy-Plane Postscript

*Diplomacy is to do and say
The nastiest thing in the stupidest way.*

Adlai and the Mass Media Face of America

ADLAI STEVENSON'S refusal to be nominated for US Presidential candidature may mean that he wants to be the conscience of America. He is a man who has no illusions as one may gather from his paean of disgust published in *Life Magazine* of August 1, 1960. Here is some of his "Woe unto you!":

"The face which we present to the world—especially through our mass circulation media—is the face of the individual or the family as a high consumption unit with minimal social responsibilities—father happily drinking his favourite beer, mother dreamily fondling soft garments newly rinsed in a wonderful new detergent, the children gaily calling from the barbecue pit for a famous sauce for their steak ... The contrast between private opulence and public squalor on most of our panorama is now too obvious to be denied. Yet we still spend per capita almost as much on advertising to multiply the private wants of our people as we do on education. With the supermarket as our temple and the singing commercial as our litany, are we likely to fire the world with an irresistible vision of America's exalted purposes and inspiring way of life?" After going on to say that defense is not an aim, and has merely a "limited social significance," he calls for "a reorientation of our ideals." By this, he concludes "We mean cooperation with

other communities of scholars and creative thinkers ... we mean that the pursuit of truth in itself is the highest activity of man. No preordained destiny decrees that America shall have all the breaks and soft options. Neither greatness nor even freedom lies that way. So we must surely return to the reality principle, to the bracing, invigorating, upland climate of truth itself." We wonder what Kennedy and Nixon have to say about this.

" Strategic Autonomy " for Nagas

COMMENTING on the creation of a separate State of Nagaland, the tiniest in the Indian Union, with a population of 350,000 and an annual revenue of Rs. 5 lakhs (\$ 100,000), *The Radical Humanist* (Calcutta) welcomes what it calls this reversal of India's policy of " armed strength " which belied inconsistently the championing of " the patriotic cause of the subject peoples all over the world," and suggests that " the threat of aggression on this North-Eastern border " was the " strategic consideration " which compelled the change of policy. Whatever the cause, the new State is welcome if the Nagas (whose case is like that of the American Indians or the Todas) could be shielded from the menace of civilization, big business, oil interests, and the whole missionary works, religious and secular which corrupt the way of life of good and honest communities.

Memo to Longfellow

*Lives of great men all remind us
As their pages o'er we turn,
That we're apt to leave behind us
Letters that we ought to burn.*

Delinquency Glossary

YOU have heard of " Teddy-boys ", the name given to British youngsters who gang up for car and motorcycle theft, liquor and sex delinquency. The UN recently combed the globe for a glossary of local equivalents. These include Germany's " halbstarke " (the half mature); France's " blousons noir " (the black jackets); Australia's " bodgies " and " widgies " (for boy and girl delinquents); Italy's " vitelloni " (fat calves) and South Africa's white " duck-tails " (a style of back of the neck hairdressing now out of date elsewhere), coloured " skollys " and African " tsotsies. " For the names of the higher forms of global political delinquency, you are referred to the State Department handouts of any big nation.

[END]

GLOBAL APHORISMS

BY EDGAR GEVAERT

(With Comments by N.)

SCIENCE AND THE NATION

IN his third piece of aphoristically answered rhetorical questions M. Gevaert examines the validity of the notion of nationhood in the context of scientific thought :

“ Science, which actually develops at a fantastic rate of progress as they say, demonstrates more than ever before its value infinitely small.”

How is it, he asks with pointed pertinancy, that, inspite of the unbelievable demonstrations of science, it still remains outside the domain of the transcendant visions that inspire humanity ?

Material inventions do not add to the sense of human values. The discoveries of science do not accrue to the credit of the individuals who invent. They are held by considerations of nationhood or of national interest in actual or prison houses.

“Let us praise the inventors and their collaborators, but how can the nation harvest to its credit the praises that are due to the inventors, just because it holds them in its prison ? ”

The subtle contradiction between the unitive interests of humanity as a whole and the interest of a nation which creates its own prison houses within its relativistic set-up, is what is piquantly brought out here.

Further, he adds

“ It is not by additions that one will be able to construct the concept of one human kind ; but by addition of things that have disparity, having an undecipherable complexity, we come to believe in the existence of a life—the nation.”

Then M. Gevaert poses the question :

“ Is the nation inevitable ? ”

He answers himself as follows :

“ We should admit that if we attribute to national unity a value that is superior to that of the human kind, it would follow that what has status only by human speculation, is superior to that which has status in reality by virtue of being

the product of Nature or by divine agency, i.e. by creation. We cannot admit this. The nation is nothing but a lie and all that substitutes itself for truth is certainly avoidable or *evitable*."

About nationalism which is considered a sacred duty, Edgar Gevaert remarks :

"The sacredness which one invokes is nothing but a sacredness which one kills in applying it sacreligiously to a lie. The liberty that one invokes in the national prison is nothing other than the liberty one kills. The crime is the assassination of the unity of the human kind. The crime is the assassination that is necessary for wars which is the aim of wars. The crime is the Power which itself attacks its resemblance. How could it be otherwise, for two Powers or multiple Powers are inconceivable in what is orderly; they can do nothing but inter-destroy in trying to destroy the unity of the human kind.

"In the imitation of an order, a double Power cannot signify anything other than inevitable conflicts or the destruction of all order."

The relativistic set-up wherein multiple rival Powers, each with a capital P are allowed to thrive side by side, is a constant menace to human security. Power conceived in the absolutist context is alone the remedy. Instead of spelling war and disaster for humanity, M. Gevaert contends that:

"Absolutism, expressed thus, shows in contrast, the existence of things that are real: the variety of all life in the cult of its conservation."

At the end of this trenchant examination of the value of nationhood, M. Gevaert soars higher still, higher than what is proper to a political thinker, when he says.

"Under the transcendent vault of absolute Mystery, of absolute Existence, we find nothing else than our life which excludes all falsehood and all death; which, in all its signification gives room only to the Eternal Cult of Happiness."

Here in this last sentence M. Gavaert shows himself capable of mystical exaltation. Happiness as the goal of human aspiration is not unknown to Vedantic and Sufi ways of life. It is not hedonistic happiness that is meant here, but a happiness that has no room for its rival state.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

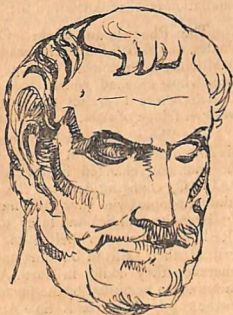
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THALES THE PHOENICIAN

BY JOHN SPIERS

This series is intended to help to restore wisdom to its foremost place in the life of humanity, and particularly to the world-wide society known as Western Civilization. The entire course of European philosophical history needs revaluation and restatement. Our contribution is no more than an introductory study with the limited material at our disposal. The portraits in the series have been made specially for VALUES by Walter de Buck, a visiting Flemish artist.

THE fountains of wisdom in Europe have been out of use for a long time. Not only has wisdom or true philosophy had to play a secondary role in religion and dogma ; what is called philosophy has become little more than a camp-follower of the physical sciences. There is, however, a growing awareness of the inadequacy of this position of what ought to be the crowning pursuit of human life. All this is implied in the search for new values, for a " new dimension ".



To discover this dimension, to restore wisdom to its leading place in the life of humanity, we must return to the perennial source, to the ancient but eternal fountain. Wisdom belongs to the world, to Europe no less than to Asia. Wisdom did not begin with a revered Figure in Palestine born 1960 years ago ; any more than it began with Socrates and Plato four and half centuries earlier.

The Eternal Springs : We open this series dealing with the wise men of the "European" world, therefore, with a study of the pre-Socratic world, long before the notion of an oriental-occidental division, or more properly a pagan-Christian rift occurred. Wisdom - principles, methods of study of a personal character, now only known to Asia, but necessary for the pursuit of wisdom, centred round the figure of a wise man or Guru, were at that time taken for granted in Europe itself.

That these wisdom pre-requisites are today practically unknown is because they were forcibly outlawed by politicians and priests, who replaced the life of wisdom with the life of action, inquiry by dogma and understanding by a creed. Though silted over by the neglect of one and a half millenia, the fountain of wisdom is still there. Its eternal springs are waiting to be drawn up afresh, to meet the thirst of the wisdom seekers of today.

Just as the Russians commemorated their photographic conquest of the other side of the moon by naming its features according to the highest notions of their culture, likewise in ancient India the earliest remembered Gurus, a cluster known as the Seven Seers, the *Sapta-Rishi*¹ were honoured in the public memory by being projected into the constellation known in modern astronomy as Ursa Major, the Great Bear. In the same way the ancient world of Greece had a counterpart group of foundation teachers known as the Seven Sages.²

The Phoenician Link: One of the Seven Sages was Thales, (c.536-546 BC). He was a Phoenician whose home was at Miletus, a Phoenician city at the mouth of the Meander (a river whose crooked course has given a verb to English and French) where it reaches the Aegean Sea on the furthestmost western fringe of Asia.

The Phoenicians, as Herodotus tells us at the beginning of his *Histories*³ came from the shores of the Indian Ocean. When the monsoon changed its direction, probably between 1500 to 2000 B.C., changing Arabia Felix into Arabia Deserta, this red-skinned people (who gave their name to the whole ocean *Maris Erythraea* the Red Sea and later to that inlet known now as the "Red Sea") were compelled to migrate. With their arts of writing, their skills in building and in commerce, they settled wherever they could, in North Africa (near modern Tunis), in Palestine (to be ousted by the invading Israelites) and northwards on the coasts of what is now Anatolia where we have located Thales in the seaport of Miletus.

The point to bear in mind here is what modern historians would call the Asian or Oriental roots of European wisdom and philosophy. Thales was a dark-skinned man, whose ancestors belonged to Southern Asia and whose own father and contemporaries still traded with distant lands. In his hands amber from the Arctic was brought into touch with silk from China (via India), and he is known to have mentioned this in a famous experiment describing electricity.

1. In the *Mahabharata* the names are given as Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya and Vasishtha.
2. The usual list is Solon, Thales, Chilo, Bias, Celobulos, Pittacos and Periander.
3. A source much more trustworthy from a global standpoint, than the works of many historians and archaeologists of today.

Anti-Oriental Conditioning: And here we must make a digression which explains the need for writing about Thales at all, as well as involving the reader in the method adopted here.

In the year 529 A.D. the Byzantine Christian Emperor Justinian backed by his fanatical Queen Theodora, committed a crime against wisdom. He banned not only every religion other than the dogmatic credal Christianity from which modern Churches have descended, but he closed forever throughout the European world, the philosophic Gurukulas, known as the "schools," including the one thousand year old Platonic Academy at Athens.

For the fifteen centuries thereafter to our day, the psyche and the intelligence of European humanity has suffered from a loss of wisdom values. The spectre of outlawry and the inquisition hovers over that mind still in the actual world, and an ancestral fear of eternal hell in the life hereafter, if there is any adoption of "pagan belief." The Renaissance of five hundred years ago in Italy, which ushered in the modern world, released the lesser spirit of the arts and sciences. But the deepest self of Europe is still enclosed by fifty generations of dogmatic conditioning. These fixed religious dogmas still come between European man and his vision of the pre-Justinian world of Rome, Greece, Egypt and all the mighty civilizations of Asia.

The result has been to make those who do revolt into that type of rationalist who holds up the values of Science (quite properly) but who refuses any place to the values of pure Religion, under the mistaken notion that *all* religion must be as dreadful for the spirit of man as that of the Emperor Justinian and the Inquisitor-General Torquemada. European thought is tormented by one form or another of witch-hunting.

Unlike the bigots, the Asian and "Oriental" religionists were tolerant of all beliefs, of all gods, and of all pursuits, inclusive of science. Unlike modern Europeans they did not see science and religion in opposition.

The Modern Prejudice: We must illustrate with one or two examples.

In his officially approved *Greek History* (published in 1929 for Cambridge University) Prof. C.D. Edmonds refers to Thales' home town of Miletus in a tone of disparagement, almost like that of a Justinian, a Calvin or a Dean Inge. "The climate too had its effect," he writes (p.92). "Instead of being dry and bracing (like the Greek Corinth) it had a soft and languid air, and this quality, combined with the unwholesome influences of Oriental religion and civilization, produced an effeminacy, a love of luxury and comfort, and a marked absence of the more virile and noble qualities which were the proper heritage of the Greeks."

And yet he is forced to admit that the most famous of the Greek poets and philosophers from Homer to Thales, from Sappho to Heracleitus came from this horrid region ! Nor does he explain how a people like these Phoenicians, if they were lacking in virility, could be foremost in trade, sail so many ships, supply the "ivory apes and peacocks" to the Israelites, as well as design and build King Solomon's temple through the Phoenician King Hiram of Tyre, as recorded in the holy books of Christianity itself (see II Samuel, v).

The general attitude of all modern writers on Thales and his contemporaries and successors, is to talk down to them from a superior modern point of view, like examiners giving marks to backward children. They love the Greeks and persist in calling Thales a Greek. Prof H. D. F. Kitto in his book *The Greeks* (Pelican, 1951) does so (pp. 178 ff) as well as talking in the condescending know-all tone of a supposedly detached modern. The Warburgs do the same in their chapters in *Before Philosophy* (Pelican 1949).

It is absurd to think of the Greeks as anything like Christian conditioned Europeans. Ancient Greece, and Rome also to a large extent, had an "Asian" or "Oriental" soul and psychological climate. Up to the time of Justinian Europe itself was not "European" but properly an extension of what we would call Oriental civilization. With their religious freedom, their variety of idols, their worship of the phallus or lingam, their lack of spoons and forks, even their dress (almost Indian sari and dhoti) Greek and Roman "Europeans" in thought and manners would be more at home in any part of southern Asia, than in most parts of Europe today !

Hylozoism and A Priori Knowledge: As we write we hear that a thousand voices at the opening of the Olympics in Rome sang a hymn to the sun. Did this pagan chant, we wonder, penetrate to the Vatican, and to the Vatican's deep in the soul of anti-oriental conditioned Europe ? Did Pope John frown ? How the European longs for the lost world of sunshine and religious exaltation and for the wisdom which was its flower !

Moderns are prepared to give laurels to Thales for his ability as an astronomer, for his famous prediction of a total eclipse of the sun on May 28, 585 BC. But concerning his accomplishments on the deeper philosophical subjects coming under the name of wisdom, the same moderns grin derisively.

Thales was a man who understood the unity of life. He saw a single life in all things. He was, like all the philosophers of his time and for hundreds of years to follow, a hylozoist, holding the doctrine that all matter (hyle) is alive (zoon). He

spoke of the "Mind of the Universe." The single essence from which all the universe has come, he said, was the principle of water.

And of course, hearing an a priori statement like that, the know-all of today gasps, flounders, and without giving the matter the serious attention it deserves, comes out with his superior laughter.

Water: On the other hand, the same modern know-all will listen with serious attention to the latest theory of orthodox contemporary physicists. Only fifty years ago the accepted fact was that there were 92 irreducible elements. Now apparently here are hundreds of elements, and they are all reducible to what is called "energy", equated to a common, mysterious material essence.

Water as the name of the original stuff of the universe is well known in the Upanishads of India.⁴ It is indeed on this very subject that a famous argument takes place between the woman Gargi and the Guru Yajnavalkya who leads the questioner on to the final Absolute.⁵ The Tamil Tirukkural after ten verses praising the Supreme, follows this immediately by ten verses of praise of rain, concluding with the words "If water fails, the world is lost."

To equate the universal absolute Stuff with water is as good as equating it with energy-matter as a single principle. The important thing with Thales as with all unitive minded Gurus, is the absence of duality between spirit and matter. One unitive Value, Mind or Intelligence is equated at the existential level with the unitive Stuff from which all material values emerge. The One Intelligence shines throughout the variety of living intelligences which make the world a place abounding through and through with life and value. Stones, trees, rivers, the sky, mountains, forests and seas are all shinningly numinous. It is a living universe to be adored, and the science which meets it, discovering its common unity does not disturb the numinous, any more than the religious aspect disturbs the physical, material facts. Contemplation of the one meets the contemplation of the One at either end.

It was in this sense also that the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* of India united the rationalist approach of the Samkhya view of reality which included among its *tattvas* or established principles, the five great elements (*pancha-mahabhutah*) of space, fire, air, water and earth, with the yoga

4. Brihadaranyaka 5.5; Chandogya 7.10.1

5. Brihadaranyaka 3.6.

discipline based on the union of the aspirant with God. The *Bhagavad Gita* also says that only children and not pandits, speak of the rationalist approach (Samkhya) and the way of unitive discipline (Yoga) as different ; and that the result or goal of the one is the same as that of the other (v, 4-5).

The Guru Tradition and Transmission : When I showed the first draft of this essay to an Indian friend, he asked the obvious question from the Oriental point of view, " Who was the Guru of Thales ? " I had to explain that nobody knew because the very notion of Guruhood itself had become unknown in the context. It is somewhat like those detective stories where the clue to solve the mystery is right there under our nose, but we don't see it because we don't know what we are looking for, and wouldn't see its relevance even if we found it. Looking at Thales and any of the ancient philosophers is just like that. The modern scholars and writers on philosophy do not see the patterns of Guruhood, with traditions of discipleship or the living method. Although Jesus himself was a Guru with disciples, the method got lost and was replaced by that of the priest, a wholly different conception.

If it is to regain its lost Oriental wisdom ; its *own* wisdom, blocked by Justinian and his successors, Europe must rediscover Guruhood.⁶

When Guruhood is heard of it meets with a threefold denial. There is the denial of those who are seeking temporal power, the priest and politician. They see in the Guru a too powerful rival to their ambitions, able to decisively expose their tricks and false claims to wisdom. This is a form of jealousy. Then there is the egotism of the individual who believes he can dispense with all guides, when he is really depending all the time on inferior authorities and on his own precariously established hypotheses. This is a form of conceited self-delusion. Lastly, there is the opposition of those personality worshippers who glorify a human image to the detriment of the principle of wisdom which is the core of Guruhood and the link between Guru and disciple. This is a form of immaturity of intelligence, or feeble-mindedness.

When we examine the meagre information regarding Thales' doctrines, we are irresistibly drawn to its Asian parallels. We can only assume that he found his own Guru during his wanderings abroad as an important merchant scholar of the Phoenicians, whether this was in Egypt, Babylonia, or India.

6. Since this was written, another Indian friend asked ;
" Did they have Gurus in Europe ? "

As regards his successors we are better informed, and their story must be told by itself. Enough to say that the descent of wisdom from Thales can be traced through a Guru-disciple line (or *parampara*) to the time of Hypatia (c. 416 AD), which is quite a long time, as Guru dynasties go, even where records have been kept.

Just to Show He Was No Fool: Even in his own time, for all his learning in the mathematical sciences (besides astronomy he had enough skill to be able to show his sailor friends how to measure the distance between ships at sea), many people in Thales' own time thought him a fool. But he once showed them he was quite as capable as they were in making money if he wanted to. He noticed that the next crop of olives would be a large one, so he quietly bought an option on all the oil-presses of Lesbos. Then, of course, when the large crop came in and everybody wanted to make oil at the same time, they had to go to Thales for a press.

And here, with poetic laughter in his eyes and the wisdom of Eurasia in his breast, we shall take leave of this Phoenician Father-Guru of Europe.

[END]

Disappearing Dollars

While many in India at the top are worried about where all the five-year plan money is going, their problem is small cheese compared with lapses happening on the other side of the world. An AP report from Washington says: "After pouring \$ 18 million into its Atlas-Vega lunar missile project, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration cancelled the programme when it discovered that the Air Force was working on a similar vehicle called Atlas-Agena B. Government accounts said the duplication added up to a total loss of \$ 16 million. The caption just says "Our Moonstruck Planners."

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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.

(Continued from last month)

Narayana Guru (1854-1928) was a Guru of humanity who revalued the spirituality of India. Here in one of his major works, his disciple reveals the depths of his teaching, bringing together the philosophies of Asia and Europe.

38

What appraises manifold variety, the "other"
that is ;

And the "same" is what unitively shines ;

Thus understanding the state aforesaid, into
that state

That yields sameness, melt and mix and erect sit.

HERE the Guru gives very precise definitions of the two fundamental aspects into which he has divided the totality of self-consciousness. The Upanishadic dictum which says that he who sees multiplicity or plurality "wends his way from death to death" is the basic idea here.

Unitive vision of reality, and plurality are twin aspects of reality, between which the philosopher chooses the path of unity as against that which is based on plurality. Some pragmatic philosophers might be justified by insisting that plurality is as much real as the One of the idealists, but it does not follow that such an attitude which accepts the pluralistic manifold of interests or motives gives any peace or happiness to man. Torn between rival interests he would be steeped into the world of conflicts and sufferings. Philosophy should satisfy, not merely the intellectual or academically valid aspiration of man's interest in truth, but must bring him nearer to happiness which is his goal in life.

Multiple interests in the relativistic world of plurality spell troubles, and unitive interest in life in the absolutist sense spells peace. The movement in self-consciousness tending to reveal the underlying unity of realities may be said to be vertical and the other which tends to reveal the multiplicity, the horizontal.

These two axes are to be recognized by what they lead to rather than by any innate characteristic in themselves. In themselves they are just tendencies or movements in contemplative consciousness. As a tree is to be known by its fruit, the distinction is based on the end they serve in the contemplative life of man.

After understanding the nature of the two rivals of conflicting tendencies, the second half of the verse gives precious practical indications pertaining to the actual "practice" of yoga. All that a man actually does in the form of action is the orientation of the spirit or the inner tendencies towards the unitive instead of the world of pluralistic rival values. The whole of yoga, as understood in this verse, consists of sitting erect with one's inner tendencies turned to the appreciation of the unitive and unique value represented by the Absolute. The attitude of "sameness" implies the idea of equality besides that of unity. By analogy with one's inner being (*atmaupamyena*) as the Gita puts it (vi, 32), one is able to see equality of everything with oneself. Unity is attained by a verticalized view and the horizontalized version of reality leads to conflicts, with oneself and in one's relations with the external world.

The reference to sitting erect is reminiscent of the idiom of yogic practices which permeate the whole of meditative literature on the soil of India. A physical attitude of restful but alert contemplation implying harmony, balance or peace has been in the pattern of thought of India and has persisted through its long history of contemplative thought. The Siva yogi seal of Mohenjodaro, the Dhyani Buddhas scattered over the vast areas of South East Asia in the form of images, and the instructions of the Gita (vi, 11) not to speak of the Hatha and the Patanjali Yoga proper, all stress this attitude of relaxation combined with inner adjustment of the spirit tuned to the Absolute. One has to be free from sleep as well as from wakefulness in such an attitude as has already been recommended in the same work earlier (verse 7).

39

Following up further the said powers—a second division :

One of these is an attribute of the "same," while other

Qualifies the "never-to-detachmant-attaining" harshness

Of the "other" : thus making two kinds of these.

THE more detailed analysis of the two primary tendencies in consciousness referred to in the previous verse is undertaken here. "Sameness" and "strangeness" which have been distinguished as the one that spells peace-giving equality, and its

counterpart harsh otherness, are further specifically characterized. Natural attachment to things will be operative in consciousness in respect of values that are horizontal in import. The two primary divisions have each a second division, so that we have to distinguish four in all. How these four limbs, two of them generic in status and two others specific, are integrated together into a whole which makes the global self-consciousness, is a matter that will become clearer only with the next verse. Meanwhile we are here to gain an insight into the structure of the tendencies, both generic and specific, that go to make up the totality of consciousness in a static manner before arriving at a more complete psycho-physical dynamics of the same to be discussed in the next verse.

The static view of psycho-physical truths is that of intellectualized versions of reality which one has to translate into dynamic terms and relate organically with one's own inner experience. This has to be accomplished stage by stage, and this verse lays bare the structure and the frame of reference within whose four walls consciousness, whether objective or subjective, lives, moves and has its being. The Guru really takes us into a domain hardly describable in words of ordinary language. He, however, attains to a great measure of clarity in the analysis of consciousness and, although the language is still elusive when treated intellectually, when one tallies it from the pole of proto-linguistic thinking with the help of the two axes that we have suggested here and elsewhere, the meaning becomes sufficiently simplified and transparent.

The complete picture of the psycho-physical dynamism of self-consciousness is contained in the three verses to follow. Here the generic and the specific aspects of the two main categories of tendencies within consciousness are merely named and marked out psycho-statically. It is true that tendencies in consciousness are not capable of simplified treatment because of the complexity of psychic or mental phenomena. This does not however mean that what we can *know* of them under their main categories pictured in a simple manner as in a map with longitudes and latitudes which are merely aids to understanding, should necessarily be complicated. The outline of a country, in actuality, could be as irregular as it likes, but it is still capable of being referred to by its latitude and longitude. Modern and ancient philosophers, whether Kant or Aristotle, have relied largely on such categories. Philosophy itself, relies, as in mathematics, on abstraction and generalization, and even when we speak of cause and effect as related, we are making a generalization and abstraction on which all reasoning rests, whether in physics or in metaphysics. Here we have a way of analysis which relies on a methodology of its own and on an epistemology of which the Vedanta itself is a superstructure. In reality analytical and synthetical methods go hand in hand here.

On to the "*same*" as on to the "*other*" there
constantly alight

Their respective specific powers ; though not
proportionate

By whirl-emergence as between these two in all,
All predications whatsoever come to be.

INTUITIVE imagination is called for in visualizing the subtle psycho-physical dynamics implied here. The two axes of reference for the tendencies that operate within consciousness, in its psycho-physical content at any given time, have a mode of operation on which the Guru here tries to throw more clear light.

The accentuation of one set of tendencies over the other takes place as man gets interested in one kind or category of subject or another. Sensuous pleasures may dominate the factors where wisdom counts, and thus the process go on alternating between the two kinds with their four possible modalities. The specific of each interest or value gets adjoined, merged or appended to the basic or generic aspect of the same. As two branches of the same tree could grow, one at the expense of the other, there is a subtle or organic reciprocity to be understood, not only as between the two basic tendencies but also as between the specific characteristics of the two taken each separately. There is both interdependence and independence as between the two main sets of tendencies each with its own generic and specific, positive or negative poles which could be accentuated at the expense of its rival set. There is thus a phenomenological circulation of thought or feeling that goes on always and constitutes the content of self-consciousness. Interests and their corresponding objects fuse loosely or closely, intensely or feebly, at different moments in what we call our life. Action gets accentuated at a given moment as against pure thought which might prevail at another. Existential aspects may overpower essential or ideological ones. A complete cosmology and psychology have to be fitted into the scheme in which the dynamism functions in actual experience. The details have to be fitted into the skeleton scheme outlined here by the person who cultivates contemplative self-consciousness. Gaining the totality of experience is what constitutes spiritual progress and not the asymmetrical development of one set of tendencies over the others. The rule of harmony and the golden mean hold good here as in morality and in art. Wisdom is thus part of ethics and aesthetics and could be cultivated side by side with love of beauty or of virtue.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Who Is More Civilized ? A Toda man sometimes employed in recent times as a railway workman to keep the railroad in order, seen in the train as I once did when I was still new to this region, with his striped toga and beard, well built and full-featured, is a picture of manhood, and when he held up his number as a gang-coolie, was not unlike one of the prophets of the Old Testament.

The Toda woman is generally seen with her young, washing, carrying water or arranging her dark shiny tresses near a brook in a kind of Hiawatha-land, and when ceremonially dressed with the trailing embroidered robes that hang artistically down covering her legs (which are never to be exposed by a virtuous Toda woman) resembles a forest spirit of the Oberon-Titania world. They can sing songs full of primary human feelings in varying modes and keys, suitable for joyful or mournful occasions.

The accounts of Toda life written by Thurston, Rivers and others, when scrutinized by any impartial man, reveal nothing about which the Toda should be really ashamed, except perhaps one disparaging reference to the smell of ghee (clarified butter) in the clothes of a Toda which Thurston says has an unmistakable stink. Many such charges could be made against the so-called civilization based on whisky and Coca-Cola which passes muster with modern man. Camembert cheese smells and tastes no better. Female infanticide is not worse than killing future progeny by operation, sometimes mortal to the mother, in the name of civilized birth-control based on a questionable eugenics. Polyandry is not worse than the promiscuity that prevails in modern suburbs and slums. Many respectable-looking towns hide such ugliness that becomes sufficiently evident in the sex squabbles, newspaper reports and jokes. Civilization is not measurable in terms of soap or face creams. The glossy hair and skin of the Toda woman has been the envy of many a made-up and hair-done-up tourist woman of Paris or New York. A modern bathroom with modern plumbing and glazed surface is no guarantee of daily cleanliness in which the Todas might excel. There are bath-brahmins and bathroom-brahmins. Who is more civilized is a question that could still pertinently be put, and the honest man with his hand on his honest heart will have to think twice before he can come out with a ready answer.

Todas' Way of Life Worth Preserving: No patronage, however paternal, on the part of the Government or of the outside world in general, can be so misplaced as when a modern Indian speaks of civilization and refers to Toda backwardness in the same superior sense as a Billy Graham, Sir Julian Huxley or even H. G. Wells. Instead of thatched roofs, insulated with mats or bamboos, the Government makes them live in tiled

houses, which retain moisture overhead, and create incubator conditions when the hot sun shines in summer months. Both these factors are detrimental to natural health.

The civilized Toda has taken to drink by way of his first logical reaction and sign of acceptance of modern civilization. The vegetarianism of the original Todas has given place to meat-eating in the name of Jesus Christ without the "non-killing" commandment interpreted to suit the palate of the missionaries. Sanitary fittings, when there is damage to the main pipe, spreads more squalor and stink around, vitiating the rural atmosphere more than when night soil is allowed to dry or get absorbed into the soil with the help of worms or germs. Water contamination is carefully safeguarded against by the Toda habits. Let no modern man laugh at these simple people and pretend to preach to them from a pedestal. If they could be left alone that would be a service to humanity. With wrong sets of values presented by the Government authorities interested in improving the lot of the Todas in the Nilgiri Hills, with the interference in their pure and simple lives by those who wish to save their souls and the *backsheesh* (coin gifts) by visiting sahibs and curious tourists with camera and cheque-books who would like to see them more outlandish than they really are, the touch of degeneracy is beginning to be discerned on the once noble, dignified and pure, simple pastoral people. They tried to conserve the best in human nature but may be said to have been utterly defeated.

Tribes and Tribalism: The term "tribe" could be applied to people who in the conventional sense pretend to be non-tribal. Nationalism itself, irrespective of its bigness or smallness in the quantitative sense, could strictly come under tribalism. What is called the American Way of Life of the Daughters of the American Revolution refers to a closed and static social formation with its orthodoxies and sets of values. The Uncle Sam Way and the John Bull way refer to patterns of behaviour and to the extent that they conform to non-dynamic and non-open standards of life, they have to be classed under tribalism.

A superior tribalism might hide its closed nature with respectable slogans or catchwords. A chain of gold is no less binding in effect than one of common iron. Thus there is tribalism and tribalism. As there is distinction between a language and a vernacular tongue, there are grades of tribalism to be named and recognized with a correct sociological taxonomy. When Tiruvalluvar, the author of the Tamil "Kural" is referred to as a pariah saint, the tribalistic label will not stick, but when a mere hawker or pedlar claims the high status of brahminhood as some actually tribal units still do in and around big cities like Madras or Salem, with a touchy pride of their own, the label

refuses to adhere correctly either. No one is normally going to let go an advantage spiritual, temporal or social that he can get by pretending.

There are other tribes with other taboos and bans than the Todas who insist on wearing turbans and caste-marks on their foreheads instead of being tatooed on their arms or necks as the Toda women do. If the advantage is denied, these habits are bound to change, but in the meanwhile they thrive somehow in a no-man's world of twilight, and are nourished by claims of holiness or sacredness, neither true nor false.

The One World that all thinking men visualize in their best moments, has no place for tribes or tribalisms. Human standards, irrespective of localized coloration, whether linguistic or sartorial, have to prevail. Judged from such human standards, the Todas stand to gain more marks than many glorified sections of humanity who are only worse tribals pretending to be holy or civilized. Where can one find a group of people in the whole world who will not kill to eat and who will live in the thick of the forest neighbourly to the beast and yet not carry one weapon to hurt their fellow beings? Only Bernard Shaw's standard could come anywhere near theirs.

Closed and Static Tribes as Against Open Dynamic Ones: Closed and static outlook marks out the tribe while the open and dynamic outlook is that of the dignified and intelligent human being, a true representative of the human race.

My acquaintance with the Todas which I cultivated superficially during nearly four decades since the time I came to the Nilgiris, has been supplemented now by much reading of literature and observation. In the month of July 1960 a young Toda lady came to the Gurukula. She is a well paid staff nurse of the Ootacamund Headquarters Hospital and had her training in England and is widely travelled. She has somehow survived the contaminating influences of modernism and remains true to the Toda way of life to the core. With her jeep and medicines with a doctor to go with her, she visits the various tribals in the Nilgiri District. Talks with this remarkable woman, whom I would call a lady, have at once made clear that neither the questionable theories of the facial angle nor those of the IQ hold good for classifying any human being. The prehistoric man was intelligent and human in his own way and those whom we despise non-understandingly as mere tribals, whether with brachia-cephalic or dolicho-cephalic heads, are still essentially human. Given the chance the African can beat hollow the white man in culture or accomplishments.

This Toda lady can hold her own with any so-called civilized woman of like status anywhere in the world, and she had

only the opportunity of a few years in her life to take up the challenge. Intelligence tests applied to some Negro boys of the Bronx in New York are said to have revealed a lower IQ as compared to their white classmates of the same age. That the fault was in the questions put rather than in the skull of the Negro boy would be amply evident to anyone who scanned the questions. I happened to be familiar with one set. One of the questions was about the items of breakfast which could not be readily enumerated by the Negro boy because he often had to come to school without a proper breakfast, while the white boy had the advantage here. The myth of backward peoples, with smaller cranial capacities and less undulating brains for the grey matter there, has long been exploded. Fortunately the Malthusian theory of population has not been applied to the case of the Todas who have increased to a number of four digits from one of three. Let not half-baked ideas help to disturb the peace of those mute yet glorious and peace-loving people.

How to Help the Todas: To help any one closed group statically stuck to tribalisms, taboos or bans, the remedy is to work *in and through* them with the ideal of an open and dynamic humanity in the mind. They must be allowed to follow their own pattern of behaviour and still rise above the limitations of a static and closed outlook. If they could be given some land in the kind of country they love to live in, with a pastoral economy that fits them naturally, instead of being forced indirectly to sacrifice their fully human ways of dignity and nobility, it would be doing service to them without interfering or disturbing them. Rival ways of life, big or small, minority or majority, must thus find a formula of live and let live.

The Todas Deserve to Be Respected: In the Toda ways we have a miniature sociological representation of what is fully dignified and human. Let no civilized man lightly laugh at their ways. Tourists who go to them must remember not to interfere or disrupt them. Journalists and curiosity hunters who might be making a living by publications at the expense of these people must desist from approaching the subject too light-heartedly. At the present rate of change there will be no remnant of true Toda life in another decade at the most. Before the impoverishment of humanity by the elimination of such an interesting group of fellow beings occurs, let us do our best to give them a last chance to live their lives in a way that is truly their own. By helping them to come to their own we shall be indirectly helping to consolidate humanity itself with an outlook which will solve once and for all the relativistic rivalries of people against people, nation against nation, or tribe against tribe. Much future bloodshed could be avoided for humanity thus raised to the unitive or absolutist way of life.

[ANOTHER CAUSERIE NEXT MONTH]

Urgent Call from Garry Davis

WORLD CITIZEN GARRY DAVIS has at last managed to get a Court Case coming up in New York on October 7, involving the status of World Government, over the point of issuance of a World Government License for his motor scooter. In this connection he needs the support of all World Citizens who recognize World Government. He has already several Pledges of Support, but needs as many more as possible to strengthen his case. Will you help here by sending your approval of World Government and personal allegiance to Garry as World Co-ordinator? Send to VALUES, Kaggalipura P. O., Bangalore District, South India, or direct to Garry Davis, 15, Cornelia Street, New York 14, NY, USA. This is VERY urgent.

Special Narayana Guru Issue of Values

WE hope to bring out in October 1960, a special issue of VALUES on Narayana Guru, linking up under the Narayana Gurukula movement, the many organizations who are loyal to the name and teachings of this World Guru. Those wishing to have copies may state the number required (price 50 nP. per copy, post free) in advance.

Narayana Gurukula News

THE 106th Birthday Anniversary of Narayana Guru was celebrated with an afternoon Tea-Party at the Narayana Gurukula World Centre at Kaggalipura, on Sunday Sept. 4, 1960. About forty guests came from Bangalore and there were many from neighbouring places. The youngest present, under one year, little Arun Krishnamurti, made his first public appearance, by raising the saffron flag of wisdom.

The Guru Birthday will also be celebrated at Trichinopoly on September 25. Swami Mangalananda will be present, and arrangements are under the direction of Mr. P. V. Anandan (address: c/o G. M.—[S.T.]—S. Rly).

Programmes are already out for the Birthday Celebration at the Narayana Gurukula, Fernhill, Nilgiris, on Sunday, October 9. With Nataraja Guru there, and many members of the Gurukula, including Swami Mangalananda, Nitya Chaitanya Yati, John Spiers, Swami Arulananda, and others, and presided over by Dr. Paul Gevaert (who returns from a six weeks visit to Singapore, Japan and Far-East-Asia), this promises to be an important function.

We hope to bring out full reports with pictures, of these meetings in our next (and Special) issue. [END]

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