



# values

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of the general good.

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## EDITORIAL:

## SAMA-DARSHINAH

WHEN religious sentiments are mixed with food habits, traditions, law, politics and general unrest, you get a highly explosive mixture. Such is the case with the agitation in India for a ban on the slaughter of cows.

For guidance we turn to the sages. Not one of the great Gurus has ever approved of killing. It is out of their teaching that the principle of non-hurting or non-killing, widely known as *ahimsa*, has been adopted by millions, not only in India but in all the Buddhist countries and even by many in the Western world.

The principle of *ahimsa* arises from the teaching and insight that the whole of life is bound together in unity. It is therefore not only cows, but the whole of life which is sacred. Everything in Nature has its own right way of life, its *svadharma*. Cats kill birds or mice for food. It is their *svadharma* to do so. A monkey would be departing from its *svadharma* if it ate birds or mice.

The position of man here is peculiar because part of his *svadharma* is his power of discrimination. He has choice. He can change his habits and even taking milk from a cow is a habit. The Chinese, who will eat almost anything from birds' nests to marine worms, never take milk. Man is also distinguished by

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the quality of kindness, and by sacrifice of self-interest for the sake of the all-life. This attitude is illustrated in the Jataka story of the Buddha, where it is told that in one of his former lives he willingly gave his body to a tigress whose cubs were starving.

In his five verses on this distinctive quality of kindness (*Jiva-Karunya Panchakam*) Narayana Guru concludes by pointing out that it is the desire for tasty meat which drives men to kill :

There would not be a killer if an eater there was none,  
Although perhaps by killer the whole eating might be done !  
And so it is in eating that the cruder ill abides,  
Because it is in eating that the lust to kill resides.

Not-killing is the virtue which makes a human good ;  
For otherwise an equal of a beast he's understood.  
For him who slaughters life no refuge can be found,  
Although to him all others of the virtues may abound.

We may like to see these principles applied to the whole of life, both wild and domesticated, and this has been the ideal of hundreds of millions in Asia for perhaps three thousand years. Yet one cannot compel. One can only show by one's own example. Again, a limited kindness only results in confusion and blurs the general principle. Notions of particular holiness cannot be permitted to interfere with this all-out or absolutist attitude. The *Gita* (V. 18) has expressed this drastically and unequivocally when it is stated that dogs and even those who cook dogs for food should be regarded with the same attitude of equality alongside refined brabmins or venerated cows or vegetarian elephants.

Goodness cannot be forced. If religious zeal is not balanced by wisdom reasoning, we get fanaticism and hatred is aroused which worsens the disease it sets out to cure. Both the Christian and the Muslim Establishments made this mistake. Even Hinduism's copybook is blotted by superior notions of caste distinctions. These errors, all based on special privileges and preferences are boldly swept away and replaced by the absolutist vision of equality or sameness in attitude to the whole of life. This sameness of outlook is called *sama-darshinah* in the *Gita* passage referred to.

Until such a unitive vision is realized, mere outward legislation cannot solve problems such as cow-slaughter, political corruption, economic injustice, hidden caste motives and all the other troubles confronting humanity in India.

[ END ]

# VAJRASUCHIKA UPANISHAD

attributed to Sankara

(Translated from the Sanskrit by FRED HAAS.)

1

I proclaim the diamond needle (*vajra-suchika*) which is the difference between wisdom and ignorance, counteracting (what is) with wisdom by adoring (*bhushanam*) the wisdom-eye (*jnana-chakshusham*).

2

The hereditary priest, i.e., the brahmin (*brahmana*), warrior (*kshatriya*), farmer-merchant (*vaisya*) and common worker (*sudra*) are the four grades (*varnas*).<sup>1</sup> Of these (relativistic) grades, the brahmin is the chief. This is mentioned in the form of the word of the Vedas (*vedavachanam*) and the traditional obligatory texts (*smriti*). So what is the name brahmin? What is vitality (*jiva*)? What is the body (*deha*)? What is caste (*jati*)? What is wisdom (*jnana*)? What is action (*karma*)? What is social duty (*dharma*)?

3

Then, of the first, the brahmin is vitality. It is not so (*iti-cet-tan-na*). The body passes away, does not come (into permanent being), and is not one. Of one form is vitality. Then of one form is willed action (also): from one body arises all physical bodies.<sup>2</sup> Vitality is of one form and so the brahmin is not vitality.

4

Then the body is the brahmin. It is not so. Beginning with the out-caste (*chandala*) and ending with humanity (*manushayam*), the five elemental principles (*pancha-bhautikatrena*) of the body are of one form (i.e., arise from one source). Viewing with equanimity (*samya-darsana*), the limited or restricted existence (*niyama-bhava*) of old age (*jara*), death (*marana*), social duty (*dharma*) and no social duty (*adharma*), the brahmin of the white grade, the warrior of the red grade, the farmer-merchant of the yellow grade, the common worker of the black grade, and beginning with the burning of the father and sons<sup>3</sup> and including the fault arising from (physically) injuring a brahmin,<sup>4</sup> therefore (it is concluded) the body is not the brahmin.

1 Varna also means colour. Different colours have been traditionally associated with the four castes. Verse four gives a description.

2 i. e., from the principle or idea of the body.

3 Vedic cremation rites.

4 According to *dharma shastras* like *Manu Smriti* this is a great fault.

Then caste is the brahmin. It is not so. There is an inner caste of living beings (*jati-antara-jantushu*). The great sages came forth arising not from one (particular) caste: Rishasringo<sup>5</sup> from a deer, Kausika<sup>6</sup> from kusa grass, Jambuka<sup>7</sup> from a jackal, Valmiki<sup>8</sup> from an ant-hill, Vyasa<sup>9</sup> from a fishermaiden, Gautama<sup>10</sup> from the back of a rabbit, Vasishtha<sup>11</sup> from a celestial nymph, and Agastya<sup>12</sup> from a clay pot. So these births are heard of. Therefore by different (particular) births are conceived the sages who attained wisdom. So, therefore, caste is not the brahmin.

Then wisdom is the brahmin. It is not so. Among warriors and others many came forth having a vision and understanding of the Reality beyond (the relative).<sup>13</sup> So, therefore, wisdom is not the brahmin.

Then action is the brahmin. It is not so. To view action begun and not finished, and observing the approach of good action, no living beings coming forth are impelled by action to do works. So, therefore, action is not the brahmin.

Then social duty is the brahmin. It is not so. Many warriors and others came forth donating gold.<sup>14</sup> So, therefore, social duty is not the brahmin.

5 An ancient Vedic sage.

Said to be the author of the *sutras* of the *Arthashastra Veda*.

7 The name literally means "a low man." In the Vedic context Jam<sup>8</sup> buka originally might have been a non-Vedic sage who later on was turned into an epithet for Varuna. He is also one of the attendents of Skanda the god of war.

8 Author of the *Ramayana*.

9 Author of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

10 Supposedly the "founder" of the Nyaya school of Vedic wisdom.

11 A Vedic sage of antiquity.

12 Another Vedic sage of antiquity who is supposed to have composed some of the hymns of the *Vedas*, and is also supposed to have "civilized" South India.

13 Janaka was a *raja-rishi* or king sage, and many of the authors of the *Upanishads* were also warriors. In the *Chandogya-Upanishad* (v. 3.7) the *raja-rishi* Pravahana Jaivali finally agrees to teach the brahmin Gautama, but first he says "This knowledge has never yet come to brahmanas before you, and therefore in all the worlds has the rule belonged to warriors." In the *Kaushitaki Upanishad* (IV. 19) Ajastatrū the warrior is willing to teach Balaki the brahmin even if it goes "against the grain" of relativistic social custom.

14 The donation of gold to temples and religious and philosophical institutions has always been considered a great virtue in Hinduism.

Then who indeed is the brahmin?

He who is the non-dual Self, without activity, without nature modalities, without caste, without the six human maladies, without the six existences, rid of all faults, (having) truth, wisdom, joy and eternity in the form of the Self, and is himself without mental concepts (*niroikalpam*) and what remains from inferior times. Being the inner controller (*antar-yamin*) of all beings (he is) without any (relativistic) remainder which causes life-movement (*vartamanam*). When inner and outer space<sup>15</sup> are placed together (*anusutam*) (he has) complete joy in his self-nature (*svabhava*). By experience the unmeasurable (*aprameyam*) is known as one perceptually looming forth, like the amalaka fruit in the palm of the hand. From the Witness (*sakshi*) what is done by the perceiver (is done) because of the value of doing without the faults of desire, passion, etc., and having the quality of unitive peaceful contemplation (*samadhi*) what is successfully accomplished is rid of the (feeling of) relative existence, envy, greed, confusion, etc. (He is) the master over hypocrisy and egotism even though connected with life-movement. So the qualities spoken about, what he, the brahmin has, are found in the revealed wisdom texts (*sruti*), the traditional obligatory texts (*smritis*), the legends (*puranas*) and the books of history (*itihasas*). Otherwise, the attainment of (pure) brahminhood does not exist. In pure existence, consciousness and joy (*sat-chit-ananda*) the non-dual Self becomes the Absolute. The Self, the non-dual Absolute becomes. So, (this) Upanishad (declares).

[END]

15 i.e., conceptual and perceptual space.

## THE FOLLY OF CASTE THINKING

To one who knows himself,  
All castes merge into one,  
Like salvation's sixfold path  
Leads but to the same end.

—BASAVA (Kanada mystic, 12th century)

IF one is to describe caste and classify humans at all, then two and two alone are the castes, and no other. They who are just and good and charitable, rendering all possible help to people, to the superior caste belong. The selfish, uncharitable human being to the inferior caste belongs,—according to the wisdom teaching.

—AVAIYAR (Tamil mystic)

Get a plate for all the people of the world;  
Let them all eat together in friendliness;  
Tell them compassionately, caste there is none.

—VEMANA (Telegu mystic)

# PAEANS OF PAGAN JOY (2)

By AVADHOOT MAHENDRANATH

I PRAY, O Lord, with mind so free,  
That though this day I busy be,  
I may not stop to think of Thee;  
But beg, O Lord, that You do see  
The Gods do not forget of me;  
And this my morning prayer to Thee.

To Mother of the world, I sing,  
Thy yoni be my magic ring.  
Enchant away the hours that bore  
And love me as You have before:  
Come Shakti, do this dance with me  
Beneath the spreading banyan tree,  
Where unconcealed the cup and rod,  
Reveal the ecstasy of God.

My God Who knows no narrow creed,  
Will joyful song and dancing lead:  
In magic ring the witches's dance,  
The joy of Pagan life enhance;  
And that is how it came to pass,  
On Nature's green and fertile grass,  
I found the ecstasy supreme  
Was not an idle, passing dream.

O, must I go to the funeral fire  
Without the joy of love's desire?  
The loudest call which Nature made  
This celibate has not obeyed.  
Where is my name in the human race  
If I know not of love's embrace?  
Before this vital spark is gone,  
Pray Lord, that I might pass it on.

O, Mother Dear, don't pry or quiz,  
We have to take life as it is:  
You know, Dear Mother, much too soon,  
I felt the spell of magic moon,  
To listen to my lover's rhyme:  
How can I know the passing time?  
O, Mother, do not scold or rate  
Because your daughter stays out late.

Who knows what luck a spell may bring  
If uttered in a fairy ring ;  
Where even toadstools rock with mirth  
And scatter spores upon the earth ?  
This ring of lush fertility  
And Nature's sweet humility,  
The work of God, of rain or sun  
Is not outshone by any one.

So hear my song of Pagan bliss  
Which Puritans see fit to miss.  
They preach a god of fearful wroth  
And bide beneath the thickest cloth ;  
They hide beneath their netherwear  
Forgetting God is everywhere ;  
They would rob every joy of mine  
And drape in black my Lord Divine.

---

## GURUKULA NEWS

AFTER visits to Malabar at Ezhumalai Island, the Wynad, and Erode, Nataraja Guru is now back at the Gurukula at Fernhill, Nilgiris. He had a minor eye operation at Calicut, but is now fully recovered.

Development work to make the centre at Ezhumalai fully habitable proceeds, with Sannyasini Ramarani in charge.

Nityachaitanya Yati expects to visit Varkala, Kerala and other centres some time this month.

Fred Haas is also touring Kerala this month on behalf of VALUES.

From Belgium we hear that wide press coverage and much interest has been given to the plans of Mr Walter De Buck, the famous sculptor and Mr Jan Brutsaert the architect, for the Brahmavidya Mandiram building at Narayana Giri at Varkala.

## WARNING REPEATED

THE warning we gave last month concerning one Sukumaran, an ex-inmate of the Gurukula at Fernhill, Nilgiris, a Malayali, aged about thirty, tall, slender, with long prominent nose, is still valid. He has been forging cheques (obtained by false pretences) in the name of Nataraja Guru, and may also be trying to collect money in the name of the Guru or the Narayana Gurukula, or the Brahmavidya Mandiram.

# THE TAO TEH KHING

## Treatise on the Absolute and Its Nature

(Based on various translations, with comment by the Editor)

By LAO TZU

### XLII

Tao gave birth to one,  
One to two,  
Two to three,  
And three to all existences.

All existences have the (dark) *yin* behind and the (bright) *yang* in front.

Their unitive character depends on this blending of breaths.

To be orphaned, to be needy, to be ill-provided,  
Is what men most dislike;

And yet kings and dukes style themselves so.

Thus it is that some things are increased by being diminished,

While others are diminished by being added to.

I shall teach the maxim that others teach, namely,  
"The violent man does not come to a good end."

I shall make this the basis of my teaching.

**COMMENTARY:** This chapter follows logically from the last two which dealt with cyclic out-and-in-going. The clue to this chapter lies in the same *a-priori* principle or theory, the concept of the cyclic unity of the basic cosmological opposites, the *yin* and *yang*. Or we can call them the dark and the bright, the negative and positive, the empty and the full, the female and the male, the inactive and the active, the docile and the violent, the contemplative and the wilful.

Behind all existences, called "the ten thousand things" is the Absolute or Tao. Chinese thought here is more analytically comprehensive than that of ancient Europe, where, in Plato it was the puzzle of the One and the Many. Here a one, a two and a three are mentioned. The three here means the three parts of the Chinese cosmos, that of Earth or Nature, that of Man or the Human, and that of Heaven or the Spiritual. Each of these three in origin consist of a "twoness" or double-sided character. We have to regard this from the standpoint of each, as if each was a view or *darshana* as it would be called in India. Their basic nature has its two aspects, a *yin* aspect and a *yang*.

(Continued on page 253)

# THE CASE OF THE STOLEN RELIGION

By JOHN SPIERS

YOU may think it could not be done. But indeed it happened. The entire body of a religion was pilfered, millions of adherents, ritual, liturgy and festivals, bell, book and candle. It was stolen because a group of power-seekers needed a religious organization. It was the most audacious crime in history.

The successors of the first criminals thrive shamelessly, using the same confidence technique today, everywhere, except possibly in the communist countries where they have a well-matched rival.

The original theft took place during the second and third centuries. The stolen religion was the Sun-faith of Mithra. The criminals were the founders of the Christian Church.

The thieves had no interest in the philosophy behind the outward ritual structure. These power-seekers needed a control-organization and the loyalty of the masses on which they could take over the Roman Empire. They conspired and succeeded, retaining first one emperor and then every monarch in the centuries that followed, as their puppets.

This is the story of how the oldest and most tyrannical establishment came into existence. The facts are there, the evidence unassailable.

**Confidence Tricks in India:** You can see how it is done in India today. The freedom of Pagan religious platforms is abused. The Jesuits, trained rigorously for seventeen years in their seminaries, know all the tricks of psychological warfare, wearing the dress of the sannyasin, imitating every Indian ritual, holding their festivals simultaneously, permitting their converts to wear sacred threads (in Mangalore for instance), processions with drum and clarinet and image so like the original Hindu one that it is only when you are close up that you discover it is Mary or Joseph and not Krishna or Ganesha being taken round the town.

Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*: "The great masses of the people will more easily fall victims to a great lie than a small one." The Church brain-washers have known this for at least seventeen centuries.

I would like religion in all its varieties to flourish. In this I include true Christianity. I feel sad to see the name of a great Guru like Jesus so misrepresented by these enemies of his teaching.

Jesus never stood for worldly power. When Satan in the legend offered him the whole world to rule, Jesus rejected it (*Matthew XVI* and *Luke IV*). "Store up no treasures for yourself on earth," "Look at the wild birds; they sow not, they reap not, they gather nothing in granaries and yet your heavenly Father feeds them." (*Matthew VI*) The rich man was told that even if he had all the vittues, yet if he did not part with all his wealth he was not perfect. (*Matthew XIX*). These are all commonplace sayings which everyone has heard. There is not the slightest doubt where Jesus stood in regard to riches, property, power and politics.

By all means hold on to Jesus as a great wisdom teacher, as a grand Guru. But beware of the mind-manipulators, priest and bishop.

To those who understand the importance of Guruhood as the saving grace in life, I say do not be fooled in the way the European masses have been fooled. They allowed Pagan religion—yes, at one time they were the same kind of religious people as the Indians—to slip out of their grasp, to be substituted by a black pseudo-religion—allowed their minds to be taken over, by clever psychologists long before Vance Packard exposed the subliminal tricks of modern advertisers and ideological political propagandists.

It is exceedingly difficult to get at the truth, because the historians and scholars are themselves conditioned. They are all "brought up" to favour the thieves and criminals. They have built-in, pre-established reactions.

**Mitra and Varuna:** But first of all, I must briefly outline the origins of the Mithra religion.

To my Indian readers the word Mithra will be familiar in its Sanskrit form of Mitra. Its root meaning is "friend" or "associate." In the Mithra religion the friend became the saviour of mankind. Mitra was one of the seven Adityas, born from the Mother Aditi. Mitra was the Sun, Varuna the Moon and the other five the planets. Varuna was the close companion of Mitra, and together they were the Lords of Truth or Light, beholding all with unwinking eye. They are referred to in the *Rig-Veda* (I 29.3 : III.59 and VIII.47.9)

In the earlier Vedic period Varuna and not Mitra was the dominant solar deity—the spiritual Sun behind the physical Sun. This earlier version was held by the Aryans of Iran. There the Sanskrit Mitra became Mitra in Old Persian, and Varuna became Ahura.

About four thousand years ago, the religion of Zoroaster or Zarathustra became widespread. It was based on the eternal struggle between Ahura-Mazda representing goodness, fire and light, and Ahriman representing darkness or evil. When this dualistic religion was being revalued, partly by contact with the

Shamash or Sun religion of the Babylonian neighbours, who were astrologers, the original Zoroastrianism lingered on in the provinces, and it was from the province of Fars that the ancestors of the Parsis emigrated to India, bringing with them their Fire religion and its sacred literature, the *Zend-Avesta*.

The dualism of this ancient religion was resolved by the introduction of Mithra, the incarnation of the Invincible, all-one Sun. What was done for Vedism by the authors of the Indian *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita* was thus accomplished for Zoroastrianism through this Mithra religion. A simple symbolic form was provided by the exoteric legends. The deeper philosophical and mystical teaching was given by the Gurus (the *pater* or fathers) to those who qualified by various tests or initiations in what were known in Greek as *Mysteries* and in Latin as the *Sacraments*.

All this took place hundreds of years before the birth of Christ. It is most important to remember this, because when critics pointed out the innumerable similarities between the ritual and legends of the Christians, the Church authorities brazened it out by claiming theirs to be the older and that the followers of Mithra were the thieves !

**Brain-Washed Scholars :** It is beyond all dispute that Mithraism was the oldest. From the period of Alexander the Great, four hundred years before Jesus was born, the Mithra religion was widespread from the borders of India to Asia Minor. The most frequent name for the monarchs of this huge area was Mithradares (Mithra-given).

In spite of all this uncontested historical fact, you will find European scholars making it a matter of lingering doubt. This is entirely due to the Churches getting at them when they are infants. As Wells wrote (p. 119, *Phoenix Secker*, 1942) "Their eyes were put out before they were born. They are obedient and unquestioning because they have never had the slightest chance to be anything else. Their books are chosen for them. They are kept in a social pen. They do not know what questions to ask" This is more or less true of every sort of Christian establishment, and not only of the Roman Church. As instance of this brain-washing, let us take, some of the scholars on the subject of Mithra.

Here is the archaeologist Jacquetta Hawkes. In her otherwise splendid book, *Man and the Sun* (Cresset Press, London, 1962) she remarks on the strange likeness between the rites and legends of Christianity and Mithraism, and goes on : "Some of these similarities came from a sharing of oriental sources, other perhaps from direct borrowing." Why these mild words "sharing," "perhaps" and "borrowing"? Is there any doubt? Later, we shall see what history actually records!

Another scholar, Dr. A. C. Bouquet, in his book *Comparative Religion* (p. 66. Penguin, 1942), exhibits the same reluctance to admit the obvious. He writes that Christianity "to some extent,

perhaps, succeeded by taking over elements from rival systems." Another "perhaps"!

But the great authority on Mithras was the Belgian, Dr. Franz Cumont, whose huge work, *Textes et monuments figures relatifs aux mystères de Mithra*, was published in Brussels at the end of the last century. The shorter work, *The Mysteries of Mithra* came out in 1900 and the English translation by McCormick in 1956 (Dover, New York). (Apart from this, only short essays and occasional articles have appeared from time to time, stimulated by particular finds. Popular interest was aroused in Britain, for example, by the discovery of a complete Mithra temple at Carrawburgh on Hadrian's Wall in 1950 and of the temple in the Walbrook, London, in 1954.)

With all his historical learning, you would expect Cumont, described as the world's greatest authority on aspects of classical religions, to be fair and not carried away by his Christian background.

Alas for such hopes. The evidence he produces contradicts his own statements in his preface. "The progress of the conquering of religion" of Mithra, he says, "was checked when it came in contact with Christianity. The two adversaries discovered with amazement, but with no inkling of their origin, the similarities which united them." Is it scholarly to say too, that "Mithraism was vanquished, as without doubt it should have been"? Why, we may ask. Because it had "retained too much of its Asiatic colouring to be accepted by the Latin spirit without repugnance." and "Never," he concludes, "was Europe in greater danger of being Asiaticized."

**Facts and the Split-Mind:** These glaring prejudices about unknown dangers (they never tell you what they are) of Orientalism and Asiaticism, must be due entirely to subconscious Christian indoctrination. Cumont can be forgiven if we think of him as being as much brain-washed as the dullest unacademic Belgian or French peasant. One can forgive Cumont, but not the monsters who have done the brain washing.

Hadrian's Wall or chain of forts, where the Mithra temple was discovered, was built in 122-126 AD. by the Roman invaders, along the border between Picts and Scots and the Roman England of those days. The popularity of the Mithra religion must have been high when such temples with costly marble carvings were built in such distant fringes of the Roman Empire. The "Latin spirit" certainly took to it. But perhaps, as they would say, perhaps there were two Latin spirits, one known to Cumont's Church and the other to the Pagans.

At the end of his book, Cumont has a distribution-map showing the hundreds of known centres and temples of Mithra. It covers the whole of a vast area from Syria to Scotland, from Numidia in Africa to the shores of the Black Sea, and is thickly concentrated wherever there were important ports and cities.

(Continued on page 246)

## 10. EVENTFUL ESCAPADES ACROSS EUROPE

By NATARAJA GURU

FROM August 22, when I left Labro and the beautiful country of Umbria in Italy, to September 17, when I was once more in the safe hands of the Gevaert family in London, my travels were filled with escapades and interesting events.

I had to rely on a self-propelling kind of retroaction with a feed-back arrangement during this period. Here one's personal savings came into action as in the case of a thermostat. The machine begins to throb again when left to itself. It takes its course along a vertical parameter which is within and outside oneself at once.

The kindly gifts made by various personal friends like Herman and Walter made my personal economy resemble the course of cybernetics whose secret was an alternation of self-reliance and initiative with an element of automatic self-sufficiency.

Back to France Again : Jean Convent decided to remain behind as a painter when he reached Mirabel-aux-Baronnies again, after waving goodbye to the children on the tower top at Labro. Jean must have driven very fast indeed to reach Alessandria and Turin, crossing the French border at dawn, and traversing the rugged canyon area to the more evenly undulating countryside of Southern France.

On the way near Alessandria before we had crossed the French frontier there was an incident which I have already described, referring to the escape from being run over by a car while sleeping on the ground at the forking of a country road, in a sleeping bag with camouflaged waterproof covers over me. I had selected the space between the two roads because it was the only clean area I could discern, and I had even the strange suspicion that some car might make the mistake of running over me, in my state of perfect camouflage which could so much absolve the driver from any blame of homicide.

My fears came true when I woke suddenly after some hours of sleep, and could almost reach out my hands to touch the headlights of a car which had taken the same by-path to disappear for a time into the thickets. The driver, however, changed his mind at the last minute and took the other road of the forking, so as to leave me alive.

The formalities of the frontier were fairly simple, though unexpected rain had complicated and made the driving difficult for Jean. The great sleeping city of Turino was passed in the twilight hours before dawn. We had to get our generous helping of French *cafe au lait* served by a typical comfortable-looking Provencal waitress, and our *p'tit-déjuner* consisted of petit-pain and brioches as usual.

The rains cleared as we went up and down the corniches, with caverns that we passed through here and there to emerge into the beneficial beauty of sunlight again. This is how the orb of the sun is said to represent a high value in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Arriving at Alma's Once More: I was in the company of old friends again and they took charge of me so as to save me from being a self-propelling unit in life, though only for a short period of a couple of days.

Peter Gevaert had also arrived at Mirabel-aux-Baronnies with his whole family, proposing to camp at the end of summer in the Camargue. My big trunk of books was consigned to his care, to be brought to Latem near Ghent after his holidays, and thus I felt lighter and freer in my further adventures through Europe.

I was proposing to pass through Grenoble, Lyon, Strasbourg and Luxembourg and then through Ghent, to cross over from Ostend to Dover in answer to the invitation from my old friend Christopher Leslie, in that beautiful spa of Harrogate in Yorkshire. My purse contained various coins and currencies which could help in propelling me through these places by action and retroaction as they alternately came into play.

The first lap of the journey lay between Mirabel and Grenoble, and thence to Lyon by noon, starting with Alma driving her jeep in the morning. The beauty of the countryside was revealed at its best as we traversed the lonely roads with alternating views of some church or castle lit by the rising sun among the cypress groves or grey stones.

We arrived at Grenoble a full hour before lunchtime and we sat in one of the best restaurants in the centre of the town waiting for Mr Balet to meet us there. It was thus that I said goodbye to the South of France during my 1965 visit, except for having to pass through the same area later in the year to catch my ship to India at Marseilles.

We had to wait a long hour at the restaurant before Mr Balet Alma's husband, could join us at lunch. Through the large glass windows of the restaurant, I could see Indian students who went to the famous university of Grenoble walking up and down the pavement. Grenoble had other academic associations for me, because of my late friend Swami Siddheswarananda, who was popular in his lectures at this university, comparing Ramakrishna with St. John of the Cross.

Valuable Talks at Lyon: The lunch was typically French with salad and chips and a special cheese which I cannot name.

The husband of course had to foot the bill while I looked on innocently and of course he readily took to the steering wheel as we drove off towards Lyon. He had some work in the Embassy and I had planned to meet a lady mathematical genius whom Alma had mentioned to me as her favourite friend, but who was away in Turkey at the time I was living near their house not far from Mirabel.

This lady had married a guitar expert who gave lessons, and both wandered, singing their way like minstrels through Turkey, for their holidays and had just returned to their proper home in Lyon, where the young mathematical lady, Madame Lucile Castet had a leading job in the nuclear physics department.

Alma's favourable description of this slim young lady with absent-minded ways had already predisposed me to look forward eagerly to meet her. I have always had a theory that women and mathematics could not pull together, and if and when they came together in the same person, it could only be as in the case of a Hypatia, a Heloise or a Portia.

The couple lived in a flat in the rue Sebastien Gryffe on the third floor, to which place Alma conducted me. We were to spend the night there, although correct behaviour in Europe required that I should take a room in a hotel. I got round this difficulty by offering to sleep on an improvised bed and to cook an Indian dinner by way of compensation. After the dinner there was to be a coffee party to which Professor and Madame Pierre Janin had also been invited by my good hosts, seeing that I was interested in modern mathematics.

The coffee party lasted till the early hours of the morning, with the young and intelligent wife of the professor, his student once but drawn together in wedlock by their common intellectual interest, adding now and then her valuable highly original remarks.

My arrears of sleep were not going to be paid even the next night, when I was invited to a dinner at the professor's own luxury quarters outside the city—where again we sat up till midnight, comparing notes.

Meanwhile, during the intervening daytime, the professor was so much taken up with my monograph on a language for science, that he took a photostat of it during the time I had lent it to him for a few hours in the afternoon. Professor Janin was under orders of transfer to Beirut at that time, and was kind enough to exchange with me valuable notes and to present me with notes of the latest university courses he had given, bearing especially on the subjects of cybernetics and axiomatic thinking. This contact with a fully modern thinker of Europe was perhaps the most significant event so favourable to my own researches in my efforts to formulate a veritable integrated science of the Absolute with maximum attainable mathematical precision, that such a comprehensive subject could hope for.

I dined with the family, with specially cooked rice and curry for me, for which Madame Janin seemed to have already gained a reputation. The curry was negligently poured over a salver of well-cooked white rice after the manner of a French chef full of creative genius.

By Train to Strasbourg. The train which I had to take started from Lyon station near midnight and I was kindly driven there through the long lighted boulevards of the city by the professor, who saw me seated in my compartment, putting my valise on the top luggage rack to which I could not lift it myself. Carrying baggage across platforms had already made me suspect the beginnings of a lumbago which became quite acute later in England.

As the train passed through the border regions of Alsace and Lorraine, I could see that it brought groups of people returning from holidays from as far as Corsica, all speaking French with a German accent, or vice versa. Gleeful or sombre in their ways, they reflected alternately the Latin and the Teutonic temperament existing within them.

The Germans were effusive and hilarious as they joined their comrades at Mulhouse which we passed on the way to Strasbourg, which we reached at last by about eight in the morning. Except for the address in the rue de l'Université, which I knew was that of Garry Davis, I was a perfect stranger to this once-important city now wearing somewhat an effete look.

As usual, I took refuge in a taxi and pretended to the driver that I knew all about Strasbourg so as not to be cheated as is usual elsewhere. However, he proved to be a taxi-driver of a respectable sort, and not only stopped in front of the address, but went inside the gates of the Renaissance-style aristocratic residences and got the portals opened for me.

Both Garry and his wife Esther fitted into this atmosphere as world citizens. Fortunately, Garry was at home although it was Esther who greeted me first with a sort of neutral recognition, which later changed in the warmth of old memories when I knew her before her marriage. I was not sure whether she considered my influence on Garry a good one or not and, for this reason, there must have been many thoughts that crossed both our minds which did not find ready expression.

**Relational Triangles:** Staying with Garry as his Guru and guide, or even as a mere philosopher-friend one had to be wary of subtle relational complications which often formed dangerous red triangles in the inner world, although everything at the surface seemed perfectly in order. Esther was a woman first and a world citizen or wife only second. She had her own child by a former marriage, in the same way as Garry too had more than one marital alliance in his life.

Both were fired equally with the idea of world government or world citizenship, and had put in many years of zealous work for this noble cause. Common ideals in an overall sense did not,

however spell domestic harmony of relationship. The father-in-law and the mother-in-law factors cut into the plain situation of being the breadwinner or mother of a relational group.

The complexity of the situation seemed to flicker red lights occasionally to me which made me feel like a fly in an ointment or a frog in a chamber during the three or four days that I spent under their roof in the rue de l'Université. There were "my" children and "your" children and "our" children to be considered at once, and naturally "my" guest was not "your" guest, so I could not be sure where I stood, in spite of the most correct of outward behaviour or intentions.

On my part I tried to be as neutral as I could be within the forces of absolute femininity and almost criminal masculinity with which latter I had classified and credited Garry's absolutism for a long time. The tragedy consisted in that both of them were to be placed in a frame of reference in the same vertical axis, but tending, on occasions, to pull with all their might in opposite directions, making or marring their conjugal felicity into a tragic pact of suicide or the absolute type of true love.

All married life could be said to conform to this model, with polarities more pronounced or mild, making of life a comedy, tragedy, or both incessantly. As a brave sailor likes to be tossed in the sea, humans seem to ask for it and get it. In some cases the dose of absolutism has to be very strong indeed to keep life within normal limits at all.

*A Kind of Elopement:* Tolstoi saw this truth in his *Anna Karenina*, and compared it to an eternal toothache. To me as the confirmed bachelor that I have been all my life, except for periods of being a lover as elsewhere described, the goings-on now confronting me, was a familiar story as I watched merely as a witness, trying my best to take any side. I cannot say that in spite of all my efforts I succeeded in keeping neutral.

I was to be implicated the very next day in a sort of elopement or kidnapping bout which Garry was hatching in his mind so as to take me away for a few days outing in his own company. Last last-minute objections to the plan should be raised I was to wait outside on the road near Garry's car so that the elopement could be successfully accomplished, which ruse was discovered only late in the evening by the frustrated wife as she spoke in a shrill voice to Garry as he called her up on the phone before acting out a dramatic come-back. But all went well again when, after the full day's outing, we did come back.

During the day, Garry took me to his various customers and business centres and gave me a general idea of the Strasbourg country-side and stood me a high-class lunch at a wayside hotel, where each cover amounted to twenty-five new francs. This was a measure of the opulent economy to which Strasbourg was geared and in this respect it resembled more the fast recovering economic condition of Germany rather than that of French-speaking France. New York, of course, always set the normalizing standard in opulent economy.

At noon next day I was to depart by a train for Brussels and Ghent. Garry had wired to Marc Gevaert to meet me at Brussels Midi, but I made the mistake of getting out at Centrale, the one station before, at about ten-thirty p. m. The train had passed through the capital of Luxembourg which still remains one of the smallest of monarchies in Europe and reminiscent of the ancient regime. In spite of its size, however, the man who looked at my passport seemed better groomed and better paid than his colleagues belonging to Belgium. I noticed that the formalities were less strict. With plenty of Belgian and French money in my pocket I found no difficulty in buying a ticket from Brussels Centrale to Ghent and in spite of my suspected lumbago carried all my luggage myself through the corridors and ample staircases covered by towering walls that distinguished the architecture of this important station.

Latem Gatherings Continued : While I was waiting to enter the approaching train for Ghent, who should be there but Marc who had evidently had time to change his mind at Midi station on not finding me alight from the right train, to return to the previous station. He asked if a bearded Indian had passed that way and they said "no", but when again Marc asked if a bearded Indian priest had passed, they said "yes," and he spotted me correctly just before I could step into the train. Being a strong man he relieved me of all my luggage and took me to the car where Martine was also waiting.

We covered the auto-strads quickly and were soon under the firs of the Gevaert domain before midnight and I went to sleep in Nicole's house, where she and Paul welcomed me. They had returned from their American tour and welcomed me with a warm room with an open fire, furnished in antique rustic style, but with all press-button conveniences.

The next five days or so which I spent with the Gevaert family before crossing over to Dover from Ostend were eventful only in the sense that I kept up my nightly sittings at the main dining table of the family, as I had done at least a hundred times before, airing my views on almost every subject under the sun with ever bolder self-confidence, as I could not help observing that I was being listened to more and more attentively. I contacted Homere's the eldest of the Gevaerts, who went as far as to state blatantly that all education spoilt a human being. A stump of a tree was superior to an educated human being because it never bothered about anything. I tried hard to agree with him, but succeeded only to the extent that ontology is always nearer the truth than teleology which often got lost in mere verbosity.

Education that made a man more verbose could not therefore be superior to one that made him a better man. A walking stick for which you might be shouting or reaching out for could declare itself without words by contacting your hand, and thus it would need no more words at all. Words are like play but facts are things in themselves, needing no words at all. An

ontologically biased philosophy like Vedanta must thus be considered superior to mere verbose metaphysical "nonsense" as Professor A. J. Ayer might put it.

There was another Gevaert cousin also present as a guest from the Dordogne with a fiancee whom he had brought from that region. Conversation with him revealed that he was a kind of Don Juan, educated in the classics, with highly cultivated taste both in music and in painting. His uncle, the late Edgar Gevaert, was a kind of Guru to him. He happened to be at that time full of rapture and praise for a disc that he kept on playing. It was Mozart's Requiem. He invited me especially to listen to it so as to find out what impression that long-drawn out piece made on one of a strange civilization.

**Reflections on Music:** I had listened on the previous night to a variety recital given by Homere's wife specially for my benefit, although others were also present by request. To my Oriental ears European music remained mostly opaque, although I did see some light through pieces like the Moonlight Sonata of Beethoven, and a few others' Scarlatti and Vivaldi and the fugues of Bach were recognizable among high class musical compositions that still could appeal to my sense of clarity and geometrical structuralism produced through the mere succession of simple notice. The more emotional pieces like that of Beethoven often brought to my mind the picture of a man's heart filled with loneliness and emotion. It was a lover's plaint that I recognized in them. Otherwise Western masterpieces only succeeded in giving me visions of hunting or of conquest, in which a pack of hounds or horses suddenly emerge into the morning light from the depth of a forest glen. Sometimes music only reminded me of the rippling of waves or the twittering of birds and rarely too it was a desert scene with hardly a bush on it that I imagined as the lover, the complaint, of his utter loneliness to his partner in life.

These initial findings of musical criticism had developed in me an interest in trying to analyse more complex compositions, and this composition of Mozart the next day happened to be just that challenge for which I was waiting. Jean Convent said that no other composition made such a deep impression on him than when he heard it in his teens for the first time, and which appreciation, he said, had always been present with him.

I listened with all my critical acumen in action, as far as a dilettante like me could do so. After listening I typed out my impressions and asked the Gevaert cousin also to do the same, so that we could compare our notes. We did so soon after and discovered that we said almost the same thing, although I had added some historical picturesqueness to the feeling content represented by the variegated play of voices and sounds in the composition.

Western music in general is based on movements resembling swells or billows on the ocean, grading down to ripples and sounds of bubbles or liquid drops that the keen ear can enjoy with some attention, when all the big sounds mix melodiously.

This was just the basis of the movement on which Mozart's Requiem seemed, to my ears, to be based. There seemed to be a pyramid of human voices that followed the cadences of the liquid movements cleverly imitated by the composer. Some others dominant were seemingly pleading for pity, while subdued sighs or groans seemed to be implied in the sounds that followed the grand or little movements that were brought into rhythmic interplay.

**Mozart, Music and History:** All music must have some memory or adventure elements suggested by it, and a lonely note of suffering or agony is natural to some of the less gay compositions. Anyone who looks at the features of a Mozart cannot miss discerning a sensitive specimen of a human being, -a product of high refinement drawn up by the mixing of various races of those days in European history in which ships crossed from the dark continent or from Semitic Palestine and the Moorish and more barbarian countries of the West. In those days when piracy and slavery and traffic in women was the order of the day, the holds of ships must have contained displaced persons of all races, and crooks and contraband articles must have been transported, along with unfortunate women whose only fault was their looks which made them into articles of trade. Sidelines on such a picture that remained can be gleaned from *The Decameron* of Boccaccio and from the later vitriolic writing of Voltaire such as his unrivalled indictment of Western civilization in *Candide*.

The memories that Mozart's Requiem revived in me belonged to a background in which a dominating Levantine pirate was steering his ship bearing these miscellaneous commodities towards new and promising land on the opposite side of the dark continent. Jews saying their prayers and seasick children must have been in the holds of such ships consoling themselves as best they could in fair or stormy weather. Mozart's features reveal a delicacy and a strength reflecting this kind of story which must have produced such a personality. The whole composition only suggests the story of the adventures of a whole people who were beginning to belong to the civilization that the beautiful riverside city of Vienna now represents. One follows the movements of the waves throughout the composition and, although all the movements cannot be clearly distinguished, it is not hard to divide the composition into two parts, at least where one could legitimately imagine oneself as between ploughing through the billows of the sea into the more subdued zone of a broad estuary. Instead of supplications and groans, dominated by the pirate's voice, one begins to hear more hopeful notes as the city where Mozart's ancestors settled finally beckoned the group nearer to it. The composition is thus a form of repetition of the history of the race in the living memory of an individual which is a law in biology sufficiently recognized.

Facial memories can persist inclusive of group histories in the form of atavistic or archetypal patterns and lend their character and colour to civilizations. This must be the reason

why the young Jean Convent was so much influenced when the musical notes of Mozart revived them as a whole. He could not help responding to such a rare combination of rhythms and sounds.

By Car to England: The absence of Father Gevaert at the evening reunions must have been deeply felt by everyone present, but none was so undignified as to wear his feelings on his sleeve. Madame Gevaert bore the bereavement bravely and I too, conformed to the general spirit of keeping business going as usual, although all must have missed the erstwhile centre of attraction.

An outing for Madame Gevaert was being planned by her children in order to take her mind away from her loss. My plans to go to England were known to them and it was decided that Celine would take her mother and me to England in her car. Thus at ten p.m. on September 6 we set for out for Ostend, all passports and permits being cleverly got ready in advance by the lifelong helper Celine.

After queuing in the long line of cars waiting to be admitted into the side deck of the ship whose surface was to continue flush to the English soil of Dover by early next morning, we entered the ship named after King Baudouin. Brass-buttoned Belgian officers bowed us through well carpentered and upholstered rooms and passages, and we found our seats after a formal passport examination again near the buffet-restaurant.

Soon I separated from the ladies who had their resting-rooms below decks, and went to my own cabin with other old men like me, while others sat on the deck chairs throughout the night drinking and merry-making. Announcements in harsh-sounding Flemish, French, German and English gave me only less than half an hour to set foot or rather to continue to roll on to this other side of the Channel. Of course we sipped tea and cakes again and Celine readily paid the bill, which I knew quite well was not gallant to allow.

Before the day had dawned the fabled English policeman gave the signal to go and off we went through the cliff area into the rolling countryside. The houses had the same look as they stood in rows in the villages that we passed, and seemed in queer contrast to similar ones on the other side, the bay windows on the second floor being a feature adhered to, perhaps, by some queen of England who started the fashion. Often, however, the carpentry was inferior to the standards on the continent and the garden fences were less mathematically straight. As already noted, the English temperament seemed to accommodate the rumble-tumble and be satisfied with things that were practical and workable and put into some sort of shape. As the sun was rising we had to stop for Madame Gevaert to recover her balance after the Channel crossing by swallowing a peppermint life saver. All was okay again and we were heading towards London by any of the available roads.

*(To be Continued)*

## The Case of the Stolen Religion

(Continued from page 236)

of the Roman Empire. You get the impression that it was as widespread in the time of the Caesars as Christianity is today over much the same area.

In its origins Mithraism was certainly an Oriental religion. But what was Christianity? Jesus was not born in Rome, or Paris or Brussels or London. On page 188 of his book, Dr. Cumont must have forgotten what he said in his preface, for he now declares that Christianity and Mithraism were "Both from the Orient." The poor man has Christian split-mind. Europeans need new eyes, Pagan vision.

We have three sources of information about the Mithra religion. There is the actual evidence of the hundreds of temples, statues, bas-reliefs and other remains. Then there are occasional references by philosophers such as Porphyry (232-304), and particularly the works of the Emperor Julian (331-363). I have already given an account of his life and extracts from his *Oration to King Helios* in VALUES for Nov. and Dec. 1965. Besides these sources, more or less reliable, there are exceedingly biased details given by Church writers such as Jerome (340-420).

**Mithra the Saviour:** As far as can be gathered, the Mithra legend went as follows: Mithra was a beautiful youth created by Ormuzd from a rock under a sacred fig-tree, by the side of a river. This divine birth was witnessed by shepherds who brought him gifts. Clothing himself with fig-leaves, Mithra set out on his all-conquering mission.

His first conquest was the Sun. Mithra and the Sun became friends. Ormuzd next created a bull which Mithra captured and dragged into a cave. The bull escaped. Ormuzd next sent a raven to tell Mithra to kill the bull, which Mithra did, "with a reluctance always poignantly expressed on his face in the sculptures." (Professor Hawkes).

From its blood the entire creation sprang out, including wheat and the vine. (Compare a similar allegory in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* where it is a horse—the Vedic Asvamedha sacrifice).

Ahriman, the spirit of evil, sent a scorpion, an ant and a serpent to eat the genitals of the bull, so as to gain vital power, but they were thwarted by Mithra's faithful dog. The soul of the bull ascended to the realm of the gods, where it became the protector of herds under the name Silenus, identified with Pan, the God of nature.

Ahriman, now much angered, next sent a deluge, but a man and his wife and his cattle escaped in an ark. Then a drought was sent, but Mithra saved the situation by striking a rock with an arrow, and water gushed forth.

Mithra's work was now over, and he celebrated this by a last supper or love-feast before being carried away in the four-horsed fiery chariot of the Sun. Mithra remained the divine friend and mediator of mankind, who conducted the souls of his worshippers to heaven.

The epilogue was the prediction that in the last age Mithra would once more descend with another marvellous bull which would also be killed and that all the dead would be restored to life and made immortal by partaking of the fat of the bull mixed with consecrated wine. Then Ormuzd would bring about a devouring fire from heaven which would annihilate all the demons and thus the defeat of Ahriman would be achieved.

You will see how close this allegory is to the legend of Christianity.

**The Purpose of the Mysteries:** Everyone knew that this legend was not to be taken literally—all, except the Christians. Most of the important religions in the ancient world had such inner teachings for the qualified, purified candidate. The astonishing fact that the Mysteries of Pagan religion were never disclosed could mean that only very few qualified, although for the masses there were exoteric explanations. All the Gurus such as Pythagoras had these two divisions, which he called the *Mathematikoi* or Learned, and the *Akousmatikoi* or Listeners.

Jesus too would appear to have followed this tradition, with the dozen or so of his inner disciples, and the crowds to whom he spoke. He warned his disciples : "Don't give what is holy to the dogs. Don't throw your pearls in front of swine; or they may trample them underfoot, and turn and tear you to pieces." (*Matthew VII*). But this teaching was lost. It did not suit the imperial ambitions of the leaders of the Christian establishment. If this tradition had survived, then we would have had the Christian Mysteries also, and Christianity would have remained a Pagan religion. Those who did penetrate beyond the theology of the Church by contemplation and insight, were called Mystics and had to face the anger of the non-mystical Church. We must ask who, among the popes, ministers and leaders of the Church would qualify as initiates into the heart of what Jesus meant by "pearls"? The division between the holy and the dogs or swine remains.

The religion of Mithra had seven degrees of initiation, and according to Porphyry only a very few went beyond the exoteric first three stages.

The word for initiation was in Latin *sacramentum* "that which binds a person." This was translated in Greek as *μανιέριον*, "a dedication which must be kept secret." The first three degrees of the Mithraic sacrament were the Raven (*korax*), the Hidden (*kruphinos*) and the Soldier (*miles*). They were known as the Servants of the Sun. The next three degrees were known as the Lion (*leo*), the Persian (*Perseus*) and the Courier of the Sun

(*heliodromus*). Lastly there was the seventh degree, the Father (*pater*) or Sacerdos. Very few reached this status, and there was also a Father of Fathers (*pater patrum*).

Of what actually took place we have only unreliable garbled accounts. Candidates for the first degree were blindfolded and reduced to conditions of distress. Honey, perhaps in virtue of its sunlike colour and perfection, was applied to the hands and the tongue. It is also thought that there was a simulated death ceremony when the initiate was given a second birth. But all this is conjectural.

The purpose we do know was perfection, wisdom and illumination. Men of the intelligence of Plato, Pythagoras, Julian and Porphyry would not approve of anything less or give their assent to mere mumbo-jumbo.

**Temples and Festivals:** You will gather that the temples which were usually underground and in out of the way places, very much resembled these of modern Freemasonry. While they were places of worship, they were mainly initiation halls. All were brothers under the common Sun. From the many Mithraeums and sculptures found, it is possible to reconstruct their general appearance.



MARBLE BAS-RELIEF FOUND IN LONDON  
ILLUSTRATING THE MITHRA LEGEND

The most striking features was the great bas-relief depicting the main event of the legend, Mithra slaying the bull. The sketch shown here is based on the bas-relief in marble found in London. Besides the main figure of Mithras there are the scorpion, the serpent and the dog, and two torchbearers (*dadophori*). In one the torch is held upright, in the other it is held down, symbolizing dawn and sunset, or birth and death. Around the

scene is a frieze of the signs of the zodiac. The Persians learnt much astrological learning from their neighbours the Babylonians and Akkadians.

Time or Kronos played a big part in their ritual and philosophy. Each degree of initiation was connected with an astrological body, and besides the Sun (Helios or Sol), the Moon (Artemis or Luna), Mercury (Hermes), Venus (Aphrodite), Mars (Ares), Jupiter (Zeus) and Saturn (Kronos) were represented. Each celebrant, we must presume, had his horoscope studied, and the negative aspects or vices, corresponding to the planetary order above, transformed into positive virtues—pride into kindness, fickleness into service, deceit into intellectual strength, lewdness into brotherly love, anger into courage, conceit into humble generosity, and malice into compassion.

Initiations took place at the time of the spring equinox in March-April, the period of Easter. It was the time of the awakening of life from the apparent death of winter.

The winter solstice was the most important of all the Mithraic festivals, known as *Diri Natalis Solis Invicta*, the Birthday of the Invincible Sun. It came round about the 22nd December, and as the Church took over one feature after another it took over this festival also, calling it Christmas. This was officially done in the fourth century when the 25th December was fixed as Jesus' birthday. The Eastern or Byzantine Church did not accept this and charged the Roman Church with Sun worship. As Violet Alford points out in her *Introduction to English Folklore* (p. 5) "The new Church had a grim struggle also against the license of Saturnalia celebrated earlier in the month and the riotous Kalends of January, a struggle which is not successfully ended yet."

The other features known about the Mithraeums are the existence of two altars, one small and highly decorated, the other big, plain and square. There was a small statue of Mithra being born out of the rock (*petro*). The rock, *petra* or Peter, was the beginning of the Mithra legend. At the entrance there were two pillars, before which were the torchbearers. A lion statue and a font of water were also at the entrance. Along each side there were elevated platforms on which it is thought there were benches, with other statuary here and there. The entrance hall was larger than the actual temple sanctuary. It was square, the temple rectangular.

Cumont, within the familiar climate of Christian thought, does his best to enter the live hylozoic world of the Pagan religion and writes: "Perhaps no other religion offered to its sectaries in a higher degree than Mithraism opportunities for prayer and veneration. When the initiated betook himself in the evening to the sacred grotto concealed in the solitude of the forests, at every step new sensations awakened in his heart some mystical emotion. The stars that shone in the sky, the wind

that whispered in the foliage, the spring or brook that babbled down the mountain-side, even the earth that he trod under his feet, were in his eyes divine, and all surrounding nature provoked in him a worshipful fear for the infinite forces that swayed the universe". (*op. cit.* p. 149).

**Conspirators' Power-Pact:** The victory of the Christians and the overthrow of the Mithra religion was a result of a conspiracy of bishops and religious politicians against both the Roman Emperor and the masses of the people.

As we have noted, the religion of Mithra had spread as the chief religion of the rank and file of the Roman army. The Mithraic teaching was able to accommodate the emperor as the representative of the Sun. The Christians refused to give any divine honours to Caesar. They used martyrdom as a means to securing publicity. They were a baffling nuisance bewildering even to mild and tolerant rulers like Marcus Aurelius. Giving a prominent place to women was also a factor in their favour. They held secret meetings and made converts particularly among the slaves. Every effort of the rulers to come to terms with them failed.

Constantine the Great (306-337) was clever enough to see the danger to the imperial dynasty. In 313 he gave full citizenship rights to the Christians. Many of these freemen went into the army.

The actual turning-point, however was the great Council of Nicaea in 325, over which Constantine presided. In return for the security of the dynasty, he sold himself to the Church leaders. From this time on, the Church became the power behind the throne. The chief bishop of Rome who later became the pope as understood today, took the title assumed by the Roman emperors of Pontifex Maximus or Chief Priest, combining secular and religious power.

At the Council of Nicaea there were quarrels as to which of the Church leaders (for already there were factions and sects) should be on top. The Pagan emperor was only nominally called a Christian and indeed was baptized only on his deathbed for legal reasons. As H. G. Wells relates in his *Outline of History* (p. 547, Cassell, 1932 edition): "Eusebius gives a curious account of this strange gathering." We see Constantine, who knew little Greek, presiding on his golden throne, watching the spectacle of these power-mad fanatics quarrelling with each other. Wells goes on, "When old Arius rose to speak, one, Nicholas of Myra, struck him in the face, and afterwards many ran out thrusting their fingers in their ears in affected horror at the old man's heresies. One is tempted to imagine the great emperor, deeply anxious for the soul of his empire, firmly resolved to end these divisions, bending towards his interpreters to ask them the meaning of the uproar."

The conspiracy of the bishops succeeded. With the support of the throne, the Church could not lose. Boldly, it listed all that it wanted here and there, mainly from the religion of Mithra, discarding the contemplative elements as useless for its ends. Assured of imperial support, it had a double advantage. It could stamp out all opposition as heresy and as disloyalty to the emperor. And this it did, ruthlessly. It was the end of all religious tolerance. Europe entered into its phase of bigotry, murder, arson and strife.

And yet here we have that able historian, Arnold J. Toynbee, in dealing with this period, writing: "Christianity ... captivated, through the power of gentleness, the Hellenic conquerors of the Syriac world." (p.389, *A Study of History*, abridgement, Oxford, 1947).

I search in vain for any captivating gentleness in this bloody tale of the laying of the Church's "sure foundation." It is a brutal history throughout. It is a story of wars and inquisitions, of tortures and burnings, of fraud and killing and an accumulation of power and possessions for the last sixteen or seventeen centuries. Let Cumont give the facts of what happened as soon as the bishops had the emperor Constantine in their power: "Mobs sacked the temples and committed them to the flames, with the complicity of the authorities. The ruins of the Mithraeums bear witness to the violence of their devastating fury." (*op.cit.* p.203). Christian gentleness indeed!

**Stolen Property Listed:** I began this strange crime story by stating that an entire religion was stolen. If you have followed me you will see that the items of stolen property can be listed as follows under four heads:

- I The forced conversion of the millions of Mithraic communists.
- II Beliefs and legends: (1) Virgin birth from a rock (rock-petra - Peter, on whom the Roman Church claimed to be founded); (2) the shepherds and their gifts; (3) Ahura Mazda and Ahriman (God and Satan); (4) the mediator (Mithra, Jesus); (5) the flood and the ark; (6) striking the rock for water (Mithra, Moses); (7) heavenly bull as atoning sacrifice (Jesus crucified); (8) warfare between good and evil and triumph of the good; (9) the immortality of the soul; (10) Mithra (Jesus) as Light of the World (the Son); (11) the last judgment; (12) the resurrection of the body; (13) the fiery chariot; (14) fiery destruction of the universe; (15) astrological imagery (widely used in the New Testament book of Revelation).
- III Design and Furnishing of the Mithraem: (1) the altar; (2) the figure of the Sun-God (Jesus with nimbus); (3) the

stoup of holy water : (4, statues of subsidiary deified figures.

IV The Ritual : (1) baptism and use of holy water ; (2) use of the phrase "dearest brothers" (*fratres carissimos*) ; (3) use of the title "father" ; (4) use of the word of *Sacramentum* ; (5) use of bell, book and candle ; (6) a last supper with consecrated bread and wine ; (7) Sunday as the specially holy day ; (8) 25 Dec. as birthday of Mithra ; (9) celebration of the spring equinox as the day of resurrection and renewal of life (Easter).

As a bit of rather wry humour, it is reported that in 1950, when pious excavators were digging below St. Peter's in Rome, in the hope of finding the tomb of St. Peter, they found instead a very significant mosaic. The mosaic showed a figure of the Sun-God driving a horse chariot, with flying cloak and rayed nimbus behind his head. It is one of the photographic illustrations in Jacquetta Hawkes' book (p. 204). They claimed it to be Christ, but was it ? The Solar Mithra was perhaps having a bitter joke at the thieves.

A religion can be stolen. But robbers cannot steal philosophy. This is not the place to go into details of the Mithra philosophy. You can catch a glimpse of its profound depths in the writings of Julian, the emperor who tried to undo the effect of the Nicaean conspiracy, too late to be more than a spirited protest. It is enough to say that the Mithraic philosophy was in harmony with the best in the Guru institutions of the ancient world.

As in India, the visible Sun was adored because it was the symbol of the invisible Ruler of all. Beyond even this image there was another Sun, utterly ineffable and yet known to the nondual seeker sunk in the depths of contemplation of the Absolute Self.

Narayana Guru in his *Hundred Verses on Self-Instruction* (verse 35) uses solar imagery to express this mystical reality : "Like the dawn altogether of ten thousand Suns, wisdom's function comes ; such, verily is that which tears apart this wisdom-hiding, transient, maya-darkness here, and as the Primal Sun prevails."

Plato said that the human eye could never see the Sun unless it too was Sunlike. Jesus the Guru declared that each of us brings the Light with us into this relativistic world, and that we should let this Light, this inner Sun shine forth.

The Church thieves certainly stole the jewel box, but real treasure could not be stolen. True religion and philosophy is always beyond the reach of the profane.

[ END ]

The earth in its inside nature is yielding, it yields to the sun and the rain and accepts the seeds. That is its *yin* aspect. At the same time the earth is firm, immovable; that is its *yang* aspect. For men their inside or *yin* aspect is contemplative and kindly, a love which does not need expression. The *yang* aspect of the human is pure *dharma*, or right behaviour. As for heaven, it has as *yin* and *yang*, the dark and the light, the unconscious and the conscious, the unconditioned and the conditioned aspects. (For a more detailed study the reader may turn to the 8th "wing" of the *I-Khing*, known as the *Shuo Kua*, found in the *I-Ching or Book of Changes* Wilhelm/Baynes translation, Pantheon Books, New York, 1961.

Thus the three (earthy, human, divine) come from the two, the *yin-yang*. And these must always be regarded together, as a unity, thus they come from the one, and that unity is the visible and invisible manifestation of the wonder that is the Absolute or Tao.

"The blending of breaths" here refers to the same principle which Indian philosophers have also postulated, thinking of the cosmos as a living, breathing organic whole, ever outlasting, alternately breathing in and out, an outgoing manifested "life" myriad-formed, in part and in whole ever again disappearing as "death," an inward retraction, life-death followed by life-death. But we should note that behind this pair of existence-inexistence there is always the Tao which is neither the one nor the other, neither manifested nor unmanifested, existing or non-existing, but just what it is, a potency, wonderful, mysterious, not to be grasped by ratiocination, but understood beyond thought.

We have the saying "what's lost up on the roundabout we pulls up on the swings," and Emerson has a fine essay on "Compensation". The great cyclic wheel of life and death, of nothing and everything, of vacuity and fullness, continually balances itself. Bearing this in mind the rest of the chapter can be understood.

Kings called themselves "orphans" because of their loneliness or their uniqueness. Or we can think of them as we think of the wisdom kings of India, those who transmitted the Upani-shadic teaching; men like Krishna, the Guru of the *Gita*, or Janaka, or even the Buddha of royal descent. Kings seem to have everything, and yet declared, if they were true kings, that they had nothing, because they considered themselves not owners, but guardians of the wealth of the country, and particularly of that greatest richness, the love and support of the people. They were lonely also because only their peers, the ancient rishis and Gurus and sages understood them. They were set apart and not like other people who had friends and parents to consult and approve of them and guide them in their decisions.

"Some things are increased by being diminished." This paradoxical saying can be understood if we think of a pot which is being turned out by the potter. The more he scoops out, the more clay he takes out from the inside, the greater in usefulness will be the finished article. It is the same with a house, for the greater the number of doors and windows, the better the house will usually be. But this means taking away from the walls. Thus too with the man who wants the highest wisdom. The more he diminishes his needs, the more he lets go and empties his mind, continually, the greater his spiritual happiness, and the fuller and more exact will be his spiritual insight. Clutter and spirituality can never go together.

"Some things are diminished by being added to." This is the dialectical counterpart of the first statement. An overcooked meal, an overladen ship, too much investment, all your eggs in one basket, these are all disastrous and in the end lead to failure and unhappiness, because you end up with less than with what you started. Crashes come in life when people do not know where to stop.

But the principle behind both these statements is the self-same *yin-and-yang*.

And thus, beginning with the Tao we come to the violent man who comes a copper, a saying as well known in the China of three thousand years ago as it is in any part of the world today. There is no need to point out the moral behind all this.

(*To be Continued*)

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## THE RUSSIAN ONION

IN his book "The Hill of Devi," E. M. Forster describes a happening at a literary society which he started when he was secretary to the Raja of Dewas:

"I remember," he writes, "a paper of my own where I quoted that story out of Dostoevsky about the wicked woman and the onion. She had been so wicked that in all her life she had only done one good deed—given an onion to a beggar. So she went to hell. As she lay in torment she saw the onion lowered down from heaven by an angel. She caught hold of it. He began to pull her up. The other damned saw what was happening and caught hold of it too. She was indignant and cried, 'Let go—it's my onion,' and as soon as she said 'My onion' the stalk broke and she fell back into the flames. I had always thought this story touching, but I had no idea of the effect it would produce on the Dewas Literary Society. Hitherto they had been polite, bored, straining to follow. Now their faces softened, and they murmured, 'Ah that is good, good. That is *bbakti*.' They had encountered something that they loved and understood. I have often thought of that moment since—that flash of comprehension in the midst of India. Of the many English writers I had quoted not one had touched them. Their hearts were unlocked by a Russian."

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Outside the scope of what is spoken of as existing or non-existing, as unthinkable, ungraspable, minute, not-short, stainless or supreme, immobile, erect, or most exalted,

He seeks to attain that Fourth (Turiya) state (beyond and including waking, dreaming and sleeping), turning away from both this and that, as one who aims properly to reach beyond both being and non-being

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