



# values

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unitively, impartially and globally in the interests  
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## EDITORIAL:

# FIRST DOZEN

WHEN this magazine was started in 1955 at the end of the Narayana Guru centenary year, as a tribute to the wisdom which he represented with such a perfect balance of principle and application, I would have been astonished could I have known it would continue for the twelve years which are completed with this month's issue.

My enthusiasm for presenting Guruhood, with the actual example of a recent Guru and of his successor in Guruhood, the living Nataraja Guru, has been supported by many of VALUES' readers.

The peculiar difficulty in producing VALUES has been to live in close contact with the world of financial commitments without compromising absolutist wisdom. No subscriber to VALUES, whether for a year or for its lifetime, no donor and no advertiser, has any claims upon us and we have never been under any pressure to publish, never had any strings attached to the support we have had. I have never treated money or those who have it, as holy cows. To me the power of the Absolute stands beyond riches, and before it all must submit.

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# Happy Birthday-Values!

HAPPY Birthday, you paper sage  
Now you have reached twelve years of age :  
Wisdom wise from East and West  
As Values always does its best.

Salutations, John and Fred,  
And to the readers who have read  
True values, which we all salute  
As wisdom of the Absolute.

Though Truth has been taught long before,  
We still do need that open door,  
So every reborn soul today  
Is guided in the proper way;  
To see their life so relative  
And know the world just as it is.

No field can proper harvest yield  
Until it has been ploughed and tilled ;  
So preparation of the ground  
Is needed first, and to be sound.  
He who would know this wisdom vast  
Must learn from Gurus of the past;  
To see and understand the way  
We must know what is taught today.

Then Values plays that very role,  
To help each soul to find its goal :  
Just as in the dark of night  
The way is safer with a light :  
He who would sail the ocean wide  
Needs a sure and certain guide.

As hard as everything has been,  
Go forward to the year thirteen,  
To try to teach me to be sound,  
To find the path which you have found,  
And though hard future years are long,  
The work of Values must go on.

PREM AND ASHIRWADS TO VALUES

FROM SHRI AVADHOOT MAHENDRANATH MAHARAJ

## Editorial—(Continued)

The paradox I have always faced is that while VALUES stands for absolutist wisdom, wisdom itself cannot be put into words. The teaching of wisdom is not a matter of beliefs, doctrines, systems and the ten thousand views that are possible, some of which get fixed in the form of the "philosophies" which are taught in the colleges and so conveniently treated by career professors and historians of philosophy. At their best, such verbal formulations have merely the use of the fire-sticks which are rubbed together. But they are only possible instruments, and not the living flame, and they are put away when the kindling begins, which is due to the unified effort undertaken by Guru and disciple.

My aim in VALUES has always been to lead the wisdom seeker towards this terminus. In the course of the years in these pages attention has been drawn to the examples of men of wisdom throughout history from every part of the world in order to illustrate one or another of the aspects of the Guru-disciple situation ; and the various aspects of the Absolute as applied to the problems of life have all been illustrated too.

Guruhood is the very heart of what is loosely called spiritual attainment, and yet very little is known about it, and outside Asia and even in India today, the word Guru is dismissed or derided by "progressive" or "rationalist" or "humanist" or "modern" people who confuse it with dictatorship secular, like Napoleon or Hitler or Stalin, or dictatorship spiritual, like a Pope or Bishop. These wrong notions about Guruhood are due to the fact that so few write about the subject.

But in order to write about it, one must have personal knowledge of the subject, and that is why, in all modesty, I have felt that the place of VALUES filled a need.

Fortunately, for the sake of example and reference, there have been a few periods in the history of mankind, when the importance of Guruhood, as distinct from doctrines, was fairly widely known, as, for example, in the years following the Buddha, and Socrates, and Lao Tzu and in the time of the early Zen Masters. Throughout India, Tibet and the Far East, the principle of Guruhood as the necessary doorway to wisdom attainment has always been present, strongly or weakly, and known to be of greater importance than mere faith in religion. Today, however, the popular spokesmen for philosophy in India speak more of Hinduism and religion than of Guruhood, and emphasize special doctrines such as those of Sankara, Ramanuja or Madhva, rather than pure wisdom or that Science of the Absolute known as Brahmanavidya which is the distinctive mark of a true wisdom.

representative or Guru. This Science of sciences (epistemen epistemon as the Greeks called it) stands above all systems. It is direct seeing of Self and Absolute as the same, and an understanding of that yogic thread of absolutism which binds all systems together, like the flowers of a garland, as Narayana Guru put it.

Seekers of this true wisdom are rare because they lack the intuition to see that the Real cannot be boxed into words, nor by themselves can they break out of their own conditioned mind boxes. It is precisely here that they need the co-operation of a Guru of absolutist attainment, to get them to see just where the obstacles to attainment lie. The two varieties of faith they need are neither religious nor dogmatic; they are faith in the possibility of attainment, and faith in the goodwill of the Guru who has attained.

For such true seekers VALUES must surely be of some inspiration and encouragement.

Over and over again in the history of Guru institutions, Guru-ashrams, Gurukulas or schools, they have fallen apart or degenerated after the death of the Gurus who founded them. This has happened either because there was no true disciple to succeed to Guruhood, or because social forces, political or religious or both took them over by force or by trickery. Such has been the fate of Narayana Guru's ashrams. Whether it will happen in the future with the Narayana Gurukula founded by Nataraja Guru depends upon the same principles. Fortunately Guruhood can thrive without property. But it cannot thrive without correct absolutist succession.

For these and similar reasons therefore, my aim in VALUES continues to be the presentation of Guruhood in all its aspects and to emphasize its importance for all wisdom-seekers. The times are perhaps inauspicious for such a severely minority venture. But there may be that one among many thousands, as the Bhagavad Gita admits (vii,3); and such a one, if there is such a one, will be more than enough to justify these last twelve years of literary labour and whatever labour lies ahead.

[END]

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### The Unardonable by Friedrich Nietzsche

If you forget your friends, if you mock the artist, and pettily, vulgarly interpret the deeper mind, God forgives you, but never, never Disturb the peace of lovers.

# THE TAO TEH KHING

Treatise on the Absolute and Its Nature

By LAO TZU

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

## XLVII

WITHOUT stepping outside his door  
The Absolutist knows everything under Heaven ;  
Without looking out of his window  
He sees the Tao of Heaven.

The further one goes out  
The less one knows ;  
Hence the sage

acquires knowledge without pursuing it ;  
sees without wanting to see  
achieves without purposeful activity.

**COMMENTARY :** This chapter opens a series concerned with distinguishing the two kinds of knowledge, that which is 'given' or which comes from within (the *a-priori*), and that which is pursued outside, which has to be found out by activity (the *a-posteriori*). One is direct or intuitive, the other is found by investigation and experiment. One wells up of itself the other is reached by toil. One is present by virtue of Nature or the Absolute, called here the Tao of Heaven, the other is rational, mental, logical, intellectual, and also artificial, in opposition to Nature. One is at the centre, at home, as in the analogy of a house, with doors and windows. The other is outside, at the circumference. One is here, the other is there. One wells up unasked for, in the stillness of contemplation. The other kind belongs to activity, which is faster and faster and more complex the further from the centre one goes. So at the heart of things, in the "house" of the wise man, there is peaceful inaction ; at the extremity outside, there is explosive energy.

The world's mystical and philosophical literature has always distinguished the two ways, one indicated by the term the *via negativa*, the other as the *via actionis* in latin. In Sanskrit these

are called the *nirvrittī marga* and the *pravrittī marga*. It is part of the common experience of all who follow the contemplative way, that if anything for the furtherance of the way of the Absolute, the Tao here, is absolutely necessary, it will reach the contemplative who may not even know that he needs it. It may be a person, a helper, a piece of information, a message, a book of reference (one of the commonest occurrences to the present writer), the solution of a problem, or even food, medicine,—whatever is to benefit the way of the Absolute comes flooding in as if by magic from the hands of an all-knower—like the filling of a vacuum in nature, which is more or less analogous to what it is. This is the magic of the Tao, which may be called repeated coincidence, luck, chance, providence or whatever name may be given to the fact, or however it may be "explained" within the closed circuits of the ordinary rational mind.

In the same way certain knowledge arises too, a prescience or a clear light about coming events, warning or go-ahead signals, red or green lights, hunches about people and things—all this is the gentle but formidable power and witness of the presence of the Tao. It fulfils itself, unasked, transcending human wilfulness, as a perpetual Wonder.

Modern science which is mainly physics, with its empirical procedure and denial of value to the intuitive, with its vast accumulation of facts, never satisfied, but going steadily outwards, further and further from the still natural centre of absolutist knowledge, whose symbol is not that of a seated sage with eyes half closed, but the opposite, of a space investigating machine, which is covered with television eyes, orbitting at enormous speeds at the furthest possible distance from man, this science not only dominates the awareness of man today, but denies the Tao itself and all analogies such as that given here of the house with windows and doors, which is man himself with his sense-outlets. Hence Lao Tzu says here "The further one goes out, the less one knows." Knows, that is, of the true principles which are the foundation of wisdom as distinguished from facts.

Only that knowledge which provides truth about the Self and about the Absolute is knowledge—all else is ignorance, even if it goes into a million volumes. Clear vision belongs only to that sage who retires within the Self, who leaves the senses with their individual emphasizing and therefore limiting field, and who enters into cosmic or absolutist Knowledge itself. This clear vision, free of any taint of self-interest or personality, has its own absolutist sense-free insights, which constitute real knowledge.

[ TO BE CONTINUED ]

## The Autobiography of an Absolutist

### II. The Magnum Opus and Call of the Island

By NATARAJA GURU

AUTHORSHIP involves an inner agony. Before bringing any serious book to light there are birthpangs and long anterior labours culminating in the event; and during my life I have more than four times experienced this inner tribulation.

One is disgusted with one's own thoughts in whatever way one tries to put them. We sometimes begin with wrong starting statements and try to go backwards or forwards in support of the wrong premises assumed. The pen, when forced, carries on for some time and comes to a standstill like a horse that cannot climb a steep point. One begins all over again, and good pages go into the waste-paper basket for no intrinsic fault of their own.

**The Trials of Authorship:** At last a day comes and the agony is at its peak, when one says to oneself: "Well begun is half done". Even such a feeling could again prove to be a false start and thus by successive efforts the first paragraphs begin to roll with the ease of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Even after this beginning has been made the writer has to avoid following wrong tracks or false scents and be careful that he neither says too much nor too little. Deciding this last question he has to be inwardly aware of the work that he proposes to himself as a whole. What one wants to say must avoid the professional hesitations of head-scratching or verbose vagueness or padding by unnecessary paragraphs, and one must be conscious of the number of times one is allowed to repeat oneself. Sometimes repetition cannot be avoided and at other times it is an unforgivable vice. Sentences should not be too involved and "modernism" is not in favour of cliches. One has to decide also how far one errs on the side of journalese or of a rigidly understood academic style. The difficulty of the subject can be foisted by mistake by many readers as the difficulty of the style adopted by the author.

Thus the trials of a sensitive writer, who is neither a journalist nor a man holding an academic post is a difficult one, as I realized when, with the help of Celine to read the French books, Romarin to refer to the latest volumes gathered round me, Fred to read out passages in Sanskrit, and to finger the brand new typewriter presented to us for the purpose just at that time and Gurukula assistants to read out MalayaJalam texts, we jointly set our hands to the task of launching the ship on its long voyage.

Once launched, the ship went on smoothly as far as writing was concerned, although in the meanwhile a controversial

invitation from the Mahe followers of Narayana Guru wanting me and not wanting me to install a statue at a temple there, disturbed the tranquil progress of the pages that were usually getting finished each day. Bergson's book on Einstein's relativity was a hard nut to crack, and my eyesight being feeble I had not only to make Celine read and re-read it, but re-arrange my translated quotations from it several times before I could see the transparency of Bergson's arguments. The Mahe function went off without the threatened conflict between the rival parties and we spent some summer days of April at our embryonic centre at the far north of Kerala.

Mid-April 1966 found me with Celine and Fred staying at the Cheruvattur Gurukula. We were still intensely occupied with the chapters of the *magnum opus*. Romarin had gone away to England at the beginning of April. Although it was still the hot season, the desire on my part to promote some rice cultivation on the five and a half acres of land at Cheruvattur with planting of useful fruit trees, both for purposes of shade for the ashram grounds just beginning to be laid out as an orchard garden, made me stay there in special sheds put up to receive the party of three by a kind disciple Narayanan, then Labour Welfare Officer in that area. He and Soman, a contractor, knew me as their headmaster in a High School near Varkala about the year 1938, and both of them lent a helping hand. Genuine old contacts are never lost. Nothing is lost that is precious in the life of an absolutist.

**Challenged by strange Crowds:** Fred Haas was busy typing to my dictation each day while sitting inside the improvised new sheds put up in our honour. The midday hours made us take refuge under shady trees or in the recesses of the thatched sheds, but the work of writing, especially the hard one of getting into the spirit of Bergson's criticism of Einstein, took all the energies of three of us who sat together and went from page, paragraph to paragraph, and even line by line. As my eyesight was fading more and more with cataract trouble, Celine Gevaert had to be depended on to a point of sheer fatigue by the drudging work of reading and re-reading for my benefit. We however plodded through this task.

To add to the heat of the day and the hardship of the work we had also strange groups of visitors from the surrounding countryside who came out of curiosity because of some of the publicity that I had recently received in the local papers. Not a few of them were journalists or those who claim to know about Indian spirituality or Vedanta. They were mainly brought up on cheap literature available in journals on such subjects. Swami Vivekananda's turbanned figure when he lectured in Chicago at the end of the last century afforded almost all of the idioms, ideograms or cliches necessary for them to present as their stock-in-trade.

*(Continued on page 401)*

## THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

By JOHN SPIERS

"Cityless, homeless, a man without a country,  
owning not a penny, not a single slave."  
—DIOGENES.

OUR introductory scene opens on a bright morning in the centre of ancient Athens over three hundred years before the Christian era. Prosperous, confident citizens, fresh from the public baths, scented and groomed and wearing their finely woven and richly bordered woollen tunics and cloaks, are sauntering under the marble colonnades surrounding the Agora, or market square. Most are proud and rich with the spoils of shady business, or libertines wasting their inherited wealth.

The large open space of the Agora is partly filled with the stalls of vendors of vegetables, fish, loaves and cakes, and in a corner there are the booths of the bankers, money-changers and money-lenders, their tables loaded with scrolls and tablets, obols and drachmas. Everything is colourful in the sparkling sunny air, and the talkative Athenians fill our ears with the babel of gossip and business.

Suddenly there is a commotion, a brief lull in the chatter, quickly followed by gasps, and then excited voices rise everywhere as fingers point out an obscene sight. The shock centre is an uncouth, long-haired, ragged, middle-aged man with fierce eyes who is squatting in the centre of the square and actually answering the call of nature. It is that dreadful Diogenes, up to his tricks again. The dog! What an affront to the professedly respectable, cultured citizens of the greatest city of the European world. Nakedness never shocked a Greek—but this is disgusting. Diogenes the dog!

Admired by Alexander: Why did they put up with him? Why did he behave in this uncivilized way? Why was he called a dog? As founder with Antisthenes of a wisdom school which lasted for nearly a thousand years, what principles did he teach? What kind of philosopher was this?

Diogenes really was a world famous philosopher—and to the Athenians at least an interesting, if very unconventional showpiece. He took disciples, but his words were usually brief. Mostly he devised his lessons in dramatic form, like the one we have ourselves dramatized above. Critics failed to find a flaw in his position because he lived his philosophy. Sometimes he slept in a wine-cask, like a dog in a kennel; but more often he would retire to the raised pillared porches of the various public buildings. He declared himself grateful to the authorities for providing unconsciously so much nice accommodation.

His austerities filled the pleasure-loving Greeks with awe and bewilderment. They could not help admiring his endurance, while rich and funny stories about him were widely publicized. But while admiring his hard life, his sincerity and his truthfulness, people were at the same time afraid of his lashing exposures of their hypocrisy, their weaknesses, vices and corruptions.

In the last years of his life, Alexander the Greek came to visit him at Corinth. The powerful young king began by saying, "Ask me of any boon you like." Diogenes, who was sunning himself on a rocky ledge, replied, "Stand out of my light."

"Aren't you afraid of me?" said Alexander.

"Why, what are you, a good thing or a bad?"

"A good thing."

"Who then," asked Diogenes, "is afraid of the good?"

Asked where he came from, he answered (and he was the first to use the word), "I'm a cosmopolitan; the universe is my city." Little wonder that Alexander declared, "If I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes."

Socrates you may remember, was told by the Delphic Oracle that he was the wisest man alive. Thereafter he tried to find the truth of this by asking questions, and found that everybody was much more ignorant than himself. Diogenes, likewise, desperate in his search for a true human, went round Athens in daylight, carrying a lighted lamp, saying he was looking for a man, just a plain man, and dismissing abruptly with contempt, after peering at all who had departed from the intentions of nature in producing humans.

Such were the methods of Diogenes in teaching wisdom.

**The Absolute Samnyasin:** His Guru, Antisthenes (446-366 B.C.) was one of the disciples of Socrates. The way of life they taught, refusing to touch money, abandoning the conventional, dissociating themselves from society, living like beggars (rich men who came to them for instruction were told to throw their money in the sea, which some of them did), collecting their food in a bowl, like Buddhist bhikkhus in India or Ceylon; all this, combined with their rigorous discipline, and their "shamelessness" either about exposing the body or fulfilling its natural functions brought on them the name "dogs" or Cynics (from Greek *kunos*, meaning "dog.")

From the most ancient times in India and down to the present, there have been the Digambara (sky-clothed, naked) Jainas, and the Avadhutavesas (those who have "put down" social ways and clothes). The Greeks knew about them and called them the naked philosophers (gymnosophists, from *gumnos*, "naked" and *sophia*, "wisdom"). The Cynics were their European counterparts.

So now let us ask what the Avadhut Diogenes was trying to teach the proud Athenians when he behaved "indecently" on

that sunny morning in the Agora? In a long address to the degenerate Cynics of his time, seven centuries later, the Emperor Julian, last of the Greek Pagan kings, provides the answer:

"Let him (Diogenes)", he wrote, "ridicule those who though they conceal in darkness the necessary functions of our nature—for instance the secretions of what is superfluous—yet in the centre of the market-place and of our cities carry on practices that are most brutal and by no means akin to our nature, for instance robbery of money, false accusations, unjust indictments, and the pursuit of other rascally business. Diogenes was trying to trample on the conceit of these men, and to teach them that their practices were far more sordid and insupportable than his own. For what he did was in accordance with the nature of all of us, but their's accorded with no man's real nature, one may say, but were all due to moral depravity."<sup>1</sup>

The fullest treatment of the life of Diogenes is provided by his namesake, Diogenes Laertios, a historian whose date is thought to be the third century A.D. He gives dozens of anecdotes and sayings of this witty despiser of institutions and establishments.<sup>2</sup>

**The Two Ways, Words and Examples:** For anyone who has not tried to be a philosopher, or who has not had the experience of life as the disciple of a Guru, it is very difficult to get behind the scenes of Pagan Greece. Ordinary college students of western philosophy will miss many a subtlety and are fairly certain to get a distorted picture of the relative importance of Plato or his disciple Aristotle, in the living philosophic sense. The place of Diogenes is bound to be under-estimated, and it is only the absolutist all-out seeker of wisdom who will give the Cynic at least an equal if not a higher place in terms of the actual philosophic life.

There are several reasons for the undue stress on Plato and Aristotle as representing the greatest teaching to emerge from the antique world. For one thing, much more of the writings of these teachers has survived or been saved from the fanatical Christians who went in for regular orgies of destruction of anything Pagan. Another reason is that Plato and Aristotle were felt to be safe because their doctrines to a large extent could be adapted and fitted into the framework of church teaching and dogma. But as for the teaching of other philosophers such as Socrates, Antisthenes and Diogenes, these were obviously dangers to the State, because they aimed at actual individual freedom, and at a life of stark, natural simplicity, bowing to no man, with no respect or very little for traditions, customs, money or property, but interested completely in absolute truth, and deriding any compromise with both relativistic ideas and their supporters.

1 p. 61, Vol. II, *The Works of the Emperor Julian* (Loeb Series, 3 volumes, Heinemann, London, 1959).

2 p. 23-85, Vol. II, *Diogenes Laertius* (Loeb Series 2 volumes Heinemann, London, 1965).

One cannot visualize Plato, who was practically a millionaire throwing his money in the Aegean Sea. Plato stood for an aristocracy, and wanted to reform society. Socrates, was a stone-worker, and his mother a midwife, and his predecessors, as well as many of his disciples, were interested in the freeing of the individual from all desires and attachments, not only social but even religious. He was a danger to the State or to the *status quo*, and he knew it, and that may have been one reason why he submitted to the judgement of the Council of Athens that he should die. While Plato, notoriously talkative, tried to encourage a love of philosophy through words and even through legislation, Antisthenes, Diogenes and their group considered the direct method of personal example with few words, to be the better way.

**Back to Natural Man:** That the way of Nature and not that of civilized cities such as that of Athens was the correct procedure for a philosopher, was even stated by Socrates, as even Plato in the earlier writings was forced to admit. In his *Republic* if you read it carefully, you will find that it is not the various types of civilized society which Socrates is said to have advocated as the best; it is neither democracy, dictatorship, monarchy nor aristocracy (this last being Plato's preference) with philosopher-guides and a philosopher-king, but instead, a simple anarchist (free from all rule) community who live a simple natural life:

"First, then let us consider what will be their way of life. Will they not produce corn, and wine and clothes, and shoes, and build houses for themselves? And when they are housed they will work in summer commonly stripped and barefoot, but in winter substantially clothed and shod. They will feed on barley and wheat and kneading the flour, make noble puddings and loaves; these they will serve up on a mat of reeds or clean leaves, themselves reclining the while upon beds of yew or myrtle boughs. And they and their children will feast, drinking of the wine which they have made, wearing garlands on their heads, and having the praises of the gods on their lips, living in sweet society, and having a care that their families do not exceed their means; for they will have an eye to poverty or war...Of course they will have a relish—salt, and olives, and cheese and onions, and cabbages or other country herbs which are fit for boiling; and we shall give them a dessert of figs, and pulse and beans, and myrtle berries, and beechnuts, which they will roast at the fire, drinking in moderation. And with such a diet, they may be expected to live in peace to a good old age, and bequeath a similar life to their children, after them."<sup>3</sup>

Like nearly all moderns, the Greeks rejected this type of natural society—a type which in fact exists in certain parts of the world in remote South Sea Islands, in the interior of New Guinea,

<sup>3</sup> p. 635, Vol. I, *Dialogues of Plato*, Jowett Trans. (Random House New York, 1937).

(Continued on page 393)

## 2. The Guru Tradition in Pagan Europe

### THE WISDOM WORLD OF ANTIQUITY

By FRED HAAS

Who with the wise consorts will wise become.

—MEANDER, *Monostokos* (ca. 300 B. C.)

GURU-WISDOM is found all over the world. Pagan Europe has its own Guru tradition. It is to the Pagan wise men and their disciples that we must go if we are to appreciate and understand the real spirituality of Europe.

It is a mistake to think that Europe is Christian and has no indigenous Guru-wisdom of its own. Calling Europe Christian is like calling Indian Islamic or China Marxian-Maoist. The real wisdom of Europe is like an undercurrent in a river. While the surface is scummy and full of filth and waste, as many rivers actually are in this age of industrialism, below the surface quietly and secretly flows European spirituality. For over 1,000 years the surface has been portrayed as the spirituality of Europe. We now take a plunge below the surface. Let us see what we find.

**Gurus, Gurukulas, and Paramparas:** A most remarkable find! I'm talking about Diogenes Laertius' *The Lives and Wisdom Teaching of Eminent Philosophers*. He opens his work with this interesting passage :

"There are some who say that the study of philosophy had its beginning among the barbarians. They urge that the Persians have had their Magi, the Babylonians or Assyrians their Chaldaeans, and the Indians their Gymnosophists; and among the Celts and Gauls there are the people called Druids or Holy Ones, for which they cite as authorities the *Magus* of Aristotle and Sotion in the twenty-third book on his *Succession of Philosophers*. Also they say that Mochus was a Phoenician, Zamo-lxis a Thracian, and Atlas a Libyan."<sup>1</sup>

The word barbarian in ancient times only meant a person who belonged to another culture whose mother tongue was not Greek. The Greeks acknowledged the greatness of Egypt, but because the Egyptians spoke a language that was completely foreign to the Greeks, they were called barbarians. Nowadays the word means a person who is savage, uncivilized or uncultured, but this was not the original meaning of the word. In

1. p. 3. *Diogenes Laertius, Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*  
Vol. I, translated by R. D. Hicks, (The Loeb Classical Library,  
Heinemann, London, 1966).

Laertius' opening paragraph he refers to Sotion's book *Succession of Philosophers*. The Greek word for succession is "diadoches," which means "received across," *dia*=across, *doches*=received. This succession is like the Guru-Sishya *parampara* in Indian wisdom, where the Sishya receives from the Guru the wisdom teaching, and in turn becomes a Guru with his own Sishyas. This is how wisdom is preserved.

Gurukulas in ancient Greece and elsewhere were in plenty. Like in India, the Greek Gurus also had their *ashrams* or contemplative retreats away from society. Besides the famous Academy of Plato, there were four Gurukulas founded by other disciples of Socrates. These four are Aristippus who founded the Cyrenic School, Phaedo who had a Gurukula bearing his own name, and Antisthenes who founded the Cynic School and whose foremost disciple was the famous Diogenes of Sinope. Diogenes had a disciple called Crates of Thebes who was the Guru of Zeno of Citium, the founder of the Stoic School of wisdom. Teacher-Disciple succession starting with Antisthenes in the 4th Century B. C. continued for almost one thousand years. Socrates' last disciple to open a Gurukula was Euclides, who founded the Olympian School, which later was called the Pyrrhonic School, named after Pyrrho the most famous of the Olympian succession. Laertius tells us that Pyrrho travelled all over the world visiting the Chaldaeans and Egyptians, the Indian Gymnosophists, and even the Druids whom he lived with for a while. Pyrrho, who lived from 380 to 270 B. C. had an advanced form of scepticism, which he may have acquired, at least in part, from the Jaina philosophers of India.

**The Gurus of the Greek World:** The names of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are always associated with ancient Greek philosophy. Actually there were hundreds of philosophers and successions in the Greek world. Socrates alone had five disciples who founded Gurukulas. In Laertius' *Lives* there are almost two hundred men and women who were philosophers belonging to some kind of succession. Some of them are only mentioned as names because nothing more was known about them. Others were well known. For example, Epicurus (341-270 B. C.) founded a Wisdom Centre of his own and had nine first grade disciples. He used to attend the lectures of Aristotle at the Lyceum and the Platonic discourses of Xenocrates, who was the second head after Plato of the Academy. As many know the Academy lasted for over nine hundred years before it was abruptly destroyed by the Christian bigot, Justinian.

Democritus (460-360 B. C.) is another interesting figure. He was most probably a disciple of Leucippus, who was a disciple of Zeno of Elea, who was a disciple of the great Parmenides, whose own Guru might have been Xenophanes (570-478 B.C.). Democritus is interesting because, like Pyrrho, he, too, was well travelled. He studied astrology and religion under the Magians and Chaldaeans, and also went to Egypt to study. He even

visited Persia, and some say, according to Laertius, that he was acquainted with the philosophers of India. Apparently he was also a keen admirer of Pythagoras and wrote a book on Pythagorean wisdom. He was friendly with Philolaus of Croton who was a disciple of one of Pythagoras' pupils. He was also very good at foretelling events.

Democritus is called an atomist, but this is very misleading. It is true that he said the physical universe is comprised of very fine particles, but his philosophy is more than this. Democritus seems to have been an arranger more than a propounder of a system. He was well-versed in mathematics and medicine, as well as in law, physics, astrology, and poetry. He composed, treatises on the sacred writings of the Babylonians, Chaldaeans, and also composed works on such diverse subjects as diet, hygiene, painting, drama and prognostication. Like Pythagoras he seemed to accept all the arts and sciences, and wished to put them all under the general heading of philosophy. All told he composed about seventy treatises, but strangely enough only the *Ethics* are available to the public. Democritus was a true contemplative because he regarded the end of action to be peace or tranquillity (known in India as *santi*). He says that peace is that "which is not identical with pleasure, as some by a false interpretation have understood, but a state in which the soul continues calm and strong, undisturbed by any fear or superstition or any other emotion."

Diogenes Laertius has given us biographical information on eighty two philosophers. There are almost two hundred names appearing in his book, but about many of them he says nothing except to record the fact that they were disciples of a certain Guru. This is only a handful of philosophers belonging to the Greek world spread over a period of about five hundred years. What about the hundreds, or perhaps even thousands, of philosophers who have completely disappeared from the history of Greek spirituality? As for Europe in general, well, what about the Gurus who were Druids in Northern Europe? Both Pythagoras and Herodotus, among others, thought highly of them, so they must have had a sound philosophy. Today we know practically nothing about the Druids. And what about the Gurus belonging to the Mystery Religions? Nothing much is known about them or their teaching. The Mysteries have remained a secret because the Hierophants and their teachings were kept away from the public. For over 1,000 historical years the initiates into the Mysteries divulged nothing to the public. The Emperor Julian (331-363 A.D.), who was one of the last of the great Pagan philosophers, was also initiated into the Mysteries. He was an admirer of Plato and especially Iamblichus (270-330 A.D.) who seemed to have unified the teachings of Plato, Pythagoras and the Mysteries. Iamblichus wrote a

book on Pythagoras which is extant. Julian referred to him as the divine Iamblichus. He was a disciple of Porphyry, who was a disciple of Plotinus, who was a disciple of Ammonius Sacchus the second century A.D. founder of Neo-Platonism. Iamblichus in turn had many disciples, among them Priscus and Sallust the Gaul, who were intimate companions of the Emperor Julian. Sopater of Syria was Iamblichus' number one disciple in the succession and later on became head of the Wisdom School. Aedisius, Theodore, Eustathius, Euphrasius, Dexipius and Themistius were his other disciples. Iamblichus also influenced Chrysanthius and Maximus the Neo-Pythagorean, who was probably the same Maximus who taught the Emperor Julian the esoteric wisdom of the Mysteries. Another philosopher whom Iamblichus influenced was Proclus (412-485 A.D.), who wrote a large number of treatises on Pagan religion and philosophy. Proclus was a combination *bhakta-jnani* or an intellectual with a numinous approach.

I have deliberately given a bit of history about the philosophical life of Pagan Europe. It is necessary for Europeans to understand their own spiritual traditions. Plato, Socrates and Aristotle are not the only philosophers of Greece. True, they are great figures in their own right, but there have been thousands more. Pagan European spirituality is not limited to a few non-Christian philosophers whom the Church grudgingly approves.

**Where Are the Texts?** Why is it that so little of the writing of the Pagan Gurus are not available? True, the great library at Alexandria was burnt down more than once, but I am sure thousands of philosophical treatises and books were scattered all over the European world. I do not think these writings were destroyed. I think they were stolen by the Church and hidden in the gloomy vaults of the Vatican. They stole the Mithras religion and debased it for their own selfish political purposes, and I strongly suspect they have hidden most of the writings of the Pagan philosophers.

In Laertius' book, thousands of treatises, books, and poems are mentioned. They were written by different philosophers belonging to some succession. Only a handful of these writings are now public knowledge. Where are the texts? Epicurus wrote 71 books and practically nothing of his is public. Chrysippus, one of the great Stoics, wrote over 350 treatises. Where are they? Antisthenes, founder of the Cynic School, wrote 62 treatises comprising 10 volumes, and nothing is available. Cleanthes, the disciple of Zeno the Stoic, wrote 60 treatises and practically nothing is available. His *Hymn To Zeus* is his most famous work available. Democritus wrote over 70 treatises on many subjects. Where are they? It is interesting to note that Plato is supposed to have considered Democritus his enemy and wanted to get rid of all his writing. He was told by some of his disciples that the works of Democritus were found all over Greece

and that it was impossible to suppress them.' Clitomachus, head of the Platonic Academy from 129 B. C. wrote over 400 treatises. Where are they? One could go on and on. How is it possible that all this wisdom literature was in one place only and "destroyed" during the burnings of the Library at Alexandria?

**A Spiritual Plague:** Destroying Pagan Temples and erecting charnel houses full of the bones of monks and martyrs for their worshippers to moan and groan in was bad enough, and the Gods will never forgive the early Christians for doing this, but substituting a demonic Jehovah for the higher Divinities, and stealing and hiding the Pagan wisdom texts are crimes that are unforgivable. I realize all this was done in the name of "spreading the one-and-only true Light," but just look at this Light! — it was and is the blackest darkness that poor Europe has ever had imposed on it!

Still there is a Guru tradition in Pagan Europe. Laertius confirms this again and again. I admit that almost nothing is known about the wisdom of the Druids in Northern Europe. They were like the Rishis of India, living away from society with their own bands of disciples, who in turn became wisdom teachers. We do know that the Druids had a Teacher-Disciple succession, but the details are obscure. In India we only know about the *Upanishads* because long after the Rishis mnemonically composed them to be handed down to the *parampara*, they were finally written down and became more or less public works. We have no such available material where the Druids are concerned.

India never had to contend openly with a spiritual plague like the Church. The Moghuls came and destroyed a great deal of precious Buddhist literature, but the *Upanishads* and much of the wisdom literature from the Vedic tradition survived. To this day Hindus are suspicious of Islam because of its fanatical and intolerant attitude towards other religions. This suspicious attitude is not based on religious intolerance, because the Islamic Sufis are more widely accepted by Hindus than by Moslems. Such suspicion is based solely on experience. It would probably have been a good thing if the murderous Crusaders "marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before," also came to India. Hindus have no actual experience of Church Christianity, with the murderous Church Militant and the fanatical Church Triumphant. Except perhaps for a vague memory of the Inquisition in Goa which murdered thousands, killing Hindu parents and "Christianizing" their children, Hindus make the blunder of associating Church Christianity with the teachings of Jesus.

So when dealing with Europe, Hindus should first of all take into account its horrible and cruel history. Then they will

<sup>3</sup> see p. 449-451, *Diogenes Laertius*, Vol. II.

understand how European man suffered and still suffers from this pseudo-religious tyranny. They will understand that one is not being cruel or uncharitable when one says that the Church as a political institution must go, must be wiped off the face of the earth. When a plague comes we inoculate ourselves, if possible, and try to eradicate it. Well the same is true in the case of a spiritual plague. The war against the Church and its murderous intolerance and outright violation of the teachings of Jesus, is not a religious war. It is a political war, and thousands of the finest and noblest men and women in Europe, whose only crime according to the Church was their love of Truth and spiritual freedom, have had to wage war against this pernicious institution. They did this either openly or secretly, depending on the times and conditions. They may not have succeeded but the fact that they tried speaks for itself.

**Europe Is Pagan:** I can with all confidence assert that not a single important spiritual figure in Europe from the time the Church gained political power, has been a true Church Christian. People may point to a few mystics of the Church, but this handful of spiritual teachers, while they were forced to be in the Church, were not *of* it. What else could they do? Eckhart, who lived in the 13th century, almost lost his life, but somehow he escaped the wrath of his inquisitors and they had to let him off softly.<sup>3</sup> Tauler, who was one of Eckhart's important disciples, continued giving discourses in German and not Church Latin. This in itself almost amounted to heresy as far as the anti-Germanic Church was concerned.

Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) the divinely inspired shoemaker from Gorlitz, and William Law (1686-1761), the non-conformist Protestant Englishman, were probably the finest mystics to come out of Protestantism, which is essentially non-mystical. Boehme was severely persecuted during his time. He was beaten and spat upon because of his innocent mystical writings. William Law said that there should be no priests in the Church, but only spiritual directors to help those who called on them. He was anathema to the Church because he said that all religions can lead man to the Divine. He was truly a follower of Jesus, but hardly a Church Christian. These men and a few others like Dionysius the Aeropagite, Ruysbroeck and St. Francis are certainly mystics, and if they must be given a singular name, I would call them Christian Pagans, like Jesus himself was.

This has been a digression from what I originally intended to say. It is Guru-wisdom and the Guru-sishya succession in Pagan Europe that I want to come back. I am not making this up. It is not wishful thinking on my part, for solid evidence

3. see p. 258-305, Raymond B. Blakney's translation, *Meister Eckhart*, (Harper, New York, 1957) where Eckhart presents his brilliant defence to the Church authorities.

supports my contention that Europe once had great Gurus. If we read the two volumes of Diogenes Laertius we see at first hand the different successions. I have listed them in the appendix given below.

Beginning with Thales and Pythagoras, in the sixth century B. C. Diogenes Laertius gives almost two hundred names. This proves beyond doubt that Pagan Europe had this important Teacher-Disciple succession in philosophy. The list ends with the second century B. C. This does not mean that the succession stopped. Diogenes Laertius ended the Platonic Academy with Clitomachus, the tenth Head after Plato, and functioning from 129 B. C. The Academy continued for another six hundred and fifty years. To fill in the missing links all we need to do is to go to the various available sources.

[ TO BE CONTINUED ]

## Appendix

### GURU-DISCIPLE SUCCESSION AMONG THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS

For the Period 600-100 B. C., Compiled from  
The Lives of Eminent Philosophers by  
Diogenes Laertius

NOTE: In order to simplify, dates, place names and birth-places, and lists of fellow-disciples have been omitted, as well as names of Gurus such as Empedocles and Heracleitus about whose Gurus or disciples we have no information.

Although Diogenes Laertius begins with the two main-stream *adi-Gurus*, Thales and Pythagoras, he admits that they were instructed by other Gurus, either Greek, Egyptian, Chaldean, Babylonian, Persian, Indian or Celtic.

A The Pythagorean Succession: Founded by Pythagoras (6th cent. B. C.), at Crotona in southern Italy, with several hundred disciples, in two grades, inner and outer, met with destructive opposition from local society, and was thereafter a secret, fertilizing, underground Guru-sishya brotherhood. Pythagoras' immediate disciples were his son Telauges, his slave Zamolxis, Phanton, Charondas, Zaleucus, Epicharmus, Alcmæan, Xenophilus, Lysis, Archippus and Ameinias. Diogenes Laertius says that the succession was known to have lasted until the ninth or tenth generation, which would bring it down to the 3rd century B. C. Nearly all the Gurus of Pagan Europe indicate in direct or indirect ways, their indebtedness to Pythagoras.

**A-I. The Eleatic Succession:** (founded at Elea in south Italy) **Ameinias** (6th cent. B. C.)—**Parmenides** (6th cent.)—**Zeno** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Leucippus** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Democritus** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Protagoras**—**Archagoras**.

**B. The Miletus Succession:** (founded at Miletus in Asia Minor)—**Thales** (6th cent. B. C.)—**Anaximander** (6th cent. B. C.)—**Anaximenes** (6th cent. B. C.)—**Anaxagoras** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Archelaus** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Socrates** (5th cent. B. C.)

**B-I. The Platonic Succession (The Academy):** **Socrates** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Plato** (5th cent. B. C.) founder of the Academy—**Speusippus** (4th cent. B. C.)—**Xenocrates** (4th cent. B. C.)—**Polemo** (4th cent. B. C.)—**Crates**—**Arcesilaus**—**Lacydes** (3rd cent. B. C.)—**Telecles** and **Evander** (joint 7th heads of the Academy)—**Hegesinus**—**Carneades** (2nd cent. B. C.) **Clitomachus** (10th Head, 2nd cent. B. C.)

**B-II. The Aristotelian Succession (The Lyceum: Plato (5th cent. B. C.)—**Aristotle** (founder of the Lyceum 4th cent. B. C.)—**Theophrastus** (4th cent. B. C.)—**Strato** (3rd cent. B. C.)—**Lyco** (3rd cent. B. C.)**

**B-III. The Socrates-Phaedo Succession:** (Socrates 5th cent. B. C.)—**Phaedo**—**Plistinus**—**Menedemus**.

**B-IV. The Cynic Succession:** **Socrates** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Antisthenes** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Diogenes** (4th cent. B. C.)—**Crates** (4th cent. B. C.)—**Zeno** (3rd cent. B. C.)

**B-V. The Zeno-Stoic Succession:** **Zeno** (3rd cent. B. C.)—**Cleanthes** (3rd cent. B. C.)—**Chrysippus** (3rd cent. B. C.)—**Sphaerius** (2nd cent. B. C.)

**B-VI. The Zeno-Posidonius Succession:** **Zeno** (3rd cent. B. C.)—**Posidonius**—**Phanius**—**Cleomenes**—**Timarchus**—**Echycles**.

**B-VII. The Zeno-Metrocles Succession:** **Zeno** (3rd cent. B. C.)—**Metrocles**—**Menippus**—**Colotes**—**Menedemus**.

**B-VIII. The Cyrenic Succession:** **Socrates** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Aristippus** (5th cent.)—(two branches) 1. **Arete**—**Theodorus**—**Hegesius**. 2. **Antipater**—**Epitemedas**—**Parabates**—**Annicerris**.

**B-IX. The Olympian Succession:** **Socrates** (5th cent. B. C.)—**Euclides**—**Eubulides**—**Ichythas**—**Stilpo**—**Timon**—**Euphranor**—**Eubulus**—**Ptolemy**—**Heraclides**—**Aenesidemus**—**Zeuxippus**—**Laodicea**—**Menodotus**—**Herodotus**.

**B-X. The Pyrrhonic Succession:** **Stilpo** (see B. IX above)—**Bryson**—**Pyrrho** (3rd cent. D. C.)—**Hecateus**.

## The Hound of Heaven (Continued from page 384)

in forest areas of South America, and among the Todas of South India's Nilgiri hills. So instead, the Greeks went in for the luxuries of city-life, and thus, as Socrates pointed out, awakened jealousy among the have-nots, and this, as he also said, was the direct cause of war.

In their own way, other wise men have also side more or less the same things about the origins of war and the dangers of leaving the path of nature and the simple life for the way of civilization. Back to natural ways is the argument of the majority of the anarchists (those who are against all forms of government) who, in this respect are absolutists, (e. g. Proudhon who said "Property is theft" and Rousseau, that injustice and inequality comes from property and from following man-made rather than natural law.<sup>4</sup> The origin of the troubles of mankind, he declared, began with the permission given by his fellows to the man who first drew a line around a piece of land and said "this is mine".

Lao Tzu, Socrates, contemporary at the other side of the world, was also saying the same thing in the penultimate chapter of the *Tao Teh Khing*:

" Consider a small territory with a small population ;  
Having contrivances known to lessen labour — but not used :  
The people ready to die out rather than migrate ;  
Boats and carriages there, but not used ;  
Weapons of war there, but nobody cares to use them ;  
Having no writing, only knotted strings for remembering ;  
The people are contented with their plain food, pleased with  
their plain clothes, satisfied with their simple dwellings,  
and happy with their rustic task ;  
And though the neighbouring community may be so near  
that they can hear the cocks crowing and the dogs barking — yet from their childhood to their death, the people  
have no desire to go there."

4 see Rousseau's "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" in *The Social Contract*, trans. Cole (Everymans Library, Dent, London, 1950). The French edition (Garnier, Paris, 1954) gives the full title "Quelle est l'origine de l'inégalité parmi les hommes ; et si elle est autorisée par la loi naturelle?" (What is the origin of inequality among men and is it authorized by natural law?). This was the earlier Rousseau ; *The Social Contract* was a compromise.

5 "The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying 'this is mine,' and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars and murders, from how many terrors and misfortunes might not anyone have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows : ' Beware of listening to this imposter ; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody.' (p. 234, op. cit.)

**Reformism v. Absolutism:** The later Plato, with his *Laws* also compromised with society. It would indeed seem that there were two aspects of Plato, the Plato who was the Guru-founder of the Gurukula called the Academy, with its disciples under a Head, living *outside* the city walls, and the Plato who wrote for the public *inside* the city, i.e. for the non-contemplative public. The first Plato was more in line with the way of the Guru Socrates, the other Plato was the individual who made concessions to and compromises with the non-philosophic world.

Plato certainly knew that wisdom could never be transmitted through words alone. "There is no writing of mine," he wrote in a letter, "about these matters, nor will there ever be one. For this knowledge is not something that can be put into words like other sciences; but after long continued intercourse between teacher and pupil, in joint pursuit of the subject, suddenly, like light flashing forth when a fire is kindled, it is born in the soul and straight away nourishes itself."<sup>6</sup>

Commenting on this, the Emperor Julian remarked: "If Plato chose to achieve his aim through words, whereas for Diogenes deeds sufficed, does the latter on that account deserve to be criticized? Consider whether that same method of his (Diogenes) is not in every respect superior, since we see that Plato himself forswore written compositions (on this subject)."<sup>7</sup>

From the writings of biographers such as Diogenes Laertios of the *diadoche*, the "lines of succession" of Gurus, known in India as *parampuryah*, it is quite clear that the philosophers knew the difference between absolute nature (*phusis*) and relativistic human laws (*thesel* or *nomoi*). This is pointed out by Windelband, who refers to Plato's *Protogoras* (f 337) and also to Sophocles tragedy *Antigone* where the heroine follows the law of nature, even at the cost of her life, and breaks the human law made by Creon of Thebes.<sup>8</sup>

Windelband further points out that "when Diogenes called himself a cosmopolitan, there was in this no trace of the ideal thought of a community of all men, but only the denial of his adherence to any civilized community."<sup>9</sup>

**The Hard Way:** Although all this may seem somewhat abstruse it is far from being a side-issue. It is of central importance if we want to enter into the Pagan approach to wisdom and philosophy. It touches the very heart of the subject. The method of "knowing" or reaching the Term of understanding of the Self

<sup>6</sup> p. 237, Epistle VII, *Plato's Epistles*, trans. G. R. Morrow (Library of Liberal Arts, Bobbs-Merrill Co., New York, 1962).

<sup>7</sup> p. 28, Vol. II, *Works* (*op. cit.*)

<sup>8</sup> p. 74, Vol. I, *A History of Philosophy*, by Wilhelm Windelband (Harper, New York, 1958).

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.* p. 85.

or Absolute, is only through the joint co-operation of the two essentials of the process, the Guru and the Sishya or disciple. Books are only signposts. The real *magnūm opus*, the 'great work' is in fact the *Guru-sishya-samvada*, the dialectical dialogue, unique in every instance, but common to all in achievement.

The true samnyasin also in India, the outright renouncer, has given up society and all its ways. He is not a citizen, being a person who accepts what is legally known as "civic death." He owns nothing, although he may use, as a privilege, the Guru property, and even take care of it impersonally, as something shared in common with his fellow disciples. He stands completely outside such things as social reforms and politics, and social forms of religion, and no group, tribe, community, nation, no "family" or relation have henceforth any rights or claims upon him. His entire interest is dedicated to wisdom and liberation from such things as have meaning and value for society. He approaches all matters from the absolutist, natural position, the pure law or *Dharma* beyond human interference.

This was indeed the position of Diogenes. The Greeks instinctively or intuitively recognized this and therefore held him in awe even when his forthrightness upset them and shocked them and focussed the two ways, the way of society and the way of absolute Nature, in such clear outlines.

Diogenes was born in the year 404 B. C. in the Greek city state or colony of Sinope. It is still there as a small town on the southern shores of the Black Sea, and part of Turkey. His father, Hikesios, was a banker for the city. Like many thousands, Diogenes, when he was young, consulted the Oracle of Delphi about his future. "Alter the social currency" was the message from Apollo.

Not grasping that it meant the revaluation of human behaviour, he adulterated the state coinage, and when he was detected, he fled to Athens. It was here that he met Antisthenes who drove him off, as he was always reluctant to take pupils. But Diogenes, to say the least, was, very wilful and persistent. He became such a nuisance to the aged disciple of Socrates, that Antisthenes, in the manner of one of those Zen masters we read about, raised his heavy staff to strike him.

"Go on," said Diogenes, "strike, for you won't find any wood hard enough to keep me away from you, as long as I think you have something to teach." From that time on Diogenes was one of the very rare disciples of Antisthenes.

Hardly anything is known of the teachings of Antisthenes, even although he was labelled 'the universal chatterbox' Diogenes Laertios lists four pages of his writings, which covered ten large volumes, all of them lost, alas! He is said to have learned directly from Socrates how to live a life of austerity, free from feelings. He stressed the importance of *arete*, a word which

includes goodness, virtue, excellence, manliness in man' and reputation for wisdom.

Diogenes took to living in a wine-cask (*pithos*) and would use the porticos and verandahs of public buildings. In summer he hardened himself by rolling on the hot sand, and in winter in the snow. When he saw a boy drinking with cupped hands and eating lentils by making a cavity in his loaf, he threw away his bowl and said, "a child has taught me how to live."

In criticizing his contemporaries he never minced his words. Euclides, one of Socrates' disciples, had set up a school whose aims were apparently based on refuting all propositions by semantic tricks. Diogenes summed it up by the word "bilioius." He said Plato's lectures were a wearying waste of time which could better be spent in application of true principles to the individual's own manner of life.

Once he begged Plato for some dried figs. Plato sent him a whole jar-ful. Said Diogenes, mocking at his love of logic and his talkativeness. "If someone asks you how many two and two are, will you answer twenty? It seems you neither give as you are asked, nor answer as you are questioned."

"A Socrates Gone Mad": He was taken once into a magnificent house and warned not to spit. Diogenes coughed up some phlegm and spat it out in the man's face. "I can't find a meauer receptacle," he commented.

Masturbating in public one day, he told his audience that he wished it were as easy to relieve hunger by rubbing the belly.

Once at a feast some rich diner made fun of him by throwing bones "to the dog." Diogenes responded by urinating on him "I am only fulfilling the role of the dog that you have foisted on me," he told them as he walked off.

Once he was found holding out his bowl for alms before one of those marble statues for which Athens was famous. When asked why he did so, he replied "To get practice in being refused."

To a miserly man who was very slow in responding to his begging, he said, "Listen, my friend, it's for food I am asking, not funeral expenses." And when a notoriously bad-tempered man told him, "Yes, I'll give you something if you can persuade me." "Persuade you, indeed!" roared Diogenes. "If I could have persuaded you, it wouldn't be for alms, it would be for you to go and hang yourself!"

"Why do they call you a dog?" somebody asked. "Because," said Diogenes, "I fawn on those who give anything, I bark at those who refuse, and I set my teeth in rascals"

One can hardly blame Plato, who seems to have had some affection for Diogenes, for calling him a Socrates gone mad. But however outrageous Diogenes may appear to have been, there was a method in his madness. Socrates himself would have called it

a divine madness.<sup>10</sup> When someone praised a rich man for giving Diogenes a gift, Diogenes retorted, "Why don't you praise me who was worthy of receiving the gift?"

**Master and Slave:** Beneath his sense of fun, his bawdy humour, and his genius for the ridiculous, there was always the streak of absolutist wisdom. He once saw a young man studying a book on philosophy. "Bravo, Philosophy," he said, "that you have been able to divert a lover of the body to a lover of the beauty of the soul!" In matters of religion he was always correct. It is said that when he was dining in a temple, and found some loaves being served which were dirty, he took them and threw them away, saying "Nothing unclean ought to enter a temple." When someone protested that he was not suited for the study of wisdom, Diogenes said, "Then what's the use of living if you don't want to know how to live properly?"

Towards the end of his life, Diogenes was captured by pirates and exposed for sale as a slave in Crete. This was a good test for his philosophic wit which came to his aid. His captors, displaying him in the auction place, asked him what he could do. "I can rule men," was his answer. "Go," he told the auctioneer, "go and tell the crier to advertise the fact in case anybody is looking for a master for himself." "Can I sit down," he asked. "No, that is forbidden" he was told. "Oh well, it doesn't matter," said Diogenes, "in whatever position fishes lie always find purchasers."

"Is it not strange," he continued, "that before you buy a jar or dish, you try whether it rings true; but when it is a man you are content merely to look at him."

Pointing to a man wearing a fine purple bordered robe, he told the auctioneer, "Sell me to this man; he needs a master." The man was Xeniaes of Corinth who must have known about Diogenes, for he paid the purchase price and took Diogenes into his household.

"Although I am a slave," Diogenes told him, "you must obey me, just in the same way that you would obey a doctor if he were in slavery." So Diogenes was given charge of the education of the two sons of Xeniaes, and we are told that he took them in hand, hardening them by exercise, making them live on plain fare and learn by heart the sayings of poets, historians and philosophers. The boys loved their strange teacher and Xeniaes was always saying "A good genius has entered my house."

Some friends of Diogenes wanted to ransom him. The old philosopher laughed at them. "You are simpletons," he said. "Lions are not the slaves of those who feed them. It is the

10 referred to in *Phaedrus* and of four kinds, namely, the prophetic, coming from Apollo: Dionysian which purifies; the poetic, from the Muses and that of Aphrodite which leads to love of wisdom.

other way about. It is those who feed them who are at the mercy of the lions. Fear is the mark of the slave; but wild beasts make men afraid of them. I am a wild beast, a wild human animal."

**Irresistible Charm:** All the same, the wild beast, according to his biographer, had a wonderful charm. A man called Onesikretos sent one of his two sons to Athens. This youth, Androsthenes, having become a pupil of Diogenes, stayed on. The father next sent his other and older son Philiskos in search of him—but he too remained as a disciple of Diogenes. Then the father himself came over to get to the bottom of the mystery, but, we are told, "he was just as much attracted to the pursuit of philosophy as his sons, and joined the circle—so magical was the spell the discourses of Diogenes exerted."

On the death of Diogenes when he was well over eighty, there were disputes about where he should be buried. Finally it was settled that it should be beside the gate leading to the Isthmus at Corinth. Over the grave they erected a pillar with a dog carved in Parian marble upon it; but later there were bronze statues of the philosopher with the following inscription in verse:

Time makes even bronze grow old;  
But thy glory, Diogenes, all eternity will never destroy.  
Since thou alone didst point out to mortals  
The lesson of self-sufficiency and the easiest path of life.

**The Hound of Heaven:** Of the line of teachers who continued the Cynic way of life and philosophy, it can briefly be said that fifty years later, the name Cynic had been changed to that of Stoic and under that title the succession reaches down the centuries to the time of Marcus Aurelius the Roman Emperor, and to the Emperor Julian which brings us to the fourth century A.D.

Diogenes was a man who never surrendered his right to free speech and free behaviour. Long after his lifetime, his unexampled courage inspired thousands. Stoicism which derived from him, was by far the most popular type of philosophy five hundred years after his death. In India he would be easily understood. The nude *tapasyin*, from the dawn of recorded history, as witnessed in the famous seal from the Indus Valley, has always been present as one of the established and perhaps the oldest of all the types of spiritual seekers. It can be said that Diogenes did indeed "after the currency" exposing all the corruption and base metal beneath the so-called social virtues, while at the same time showing in his conduct and life the pure gold of humanity as it ought to be as it comes freshly from the great Mint of the Absolute unspoilt "from the hands of the Author of all things," as Rousseau put it in the opening sentence of *Emile*.

Diogenes was a true Hound of Heaven, a true dog and friend of the gods, as he often said, and like friends, sharing all with the gods, and, like them, liberated from being affected by pleasure or suffering. Perhaps Walt Whitman was thinking of Diogenes when he wrote his well known verses :

I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contain'd,

I stand and look at them long and long.

They do not sweat and whine about their condition,

They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,

They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,

Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning things,

Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago,

Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth.

[ END ]

### GURUKULA NEWS

Under the auspices of the Narayana Gurukula, the 113th Birthday Anniversary of Narayana Guru will be held at Madras on Sept. 17, at Trichy on Sept. 24, at Erode on Oct. 1, and at Fernhill Nilgiris on Oct. 8. Details of the meetings will be intimated from each centre.

Nityachaitanya Yati, who was invited to Singapore recently, took ill suddenly with high blood pressure, and in consequence has been in hospital and had to cancel all engagements. He is now back in India, and under medical observation, in Trivandrum.

# GOING TO THE DOGS

By TAGORE

O MAD, superbly drunk;

If you kick open the doors and play the fool in public;  
If you empty your bag in a night and snap your fingers  
at prudence;

If you walk in curious paths and play with useless things;  
Reck not rhyme or reason;

If unfurling your sails before the storm you snap the rudder  
in two;

Then I will follow you, comrade, and be drunken and go  
to the dogs.

I have wasted my days and nights in the company of steady  
wise neighbours.

Much knowing has turned my hair grey, and much watching  
has made my sight dim.

For years I have gathered and heaped up scraps and frag-  
ments of things:

Crush them and dance upon them and scatter them all to  
the winds.

For I know 'tis the height of wisdom to be drunken and  
go to the dogs.

Let all crooked scruples vanish, let me hopelessly lose my way.

Let a gust of wild giddiness come and sweep me away from  
my anchors.

The world is peopled with worthies, and workers, useful  
and clever.

There are men who are easily first, and men who come  
decently after.

Let them be happy and prosper, and let me be foolishly  
futile.

For I know 'tis the end of all work to be drunken and go  
to the dogs.

I swear to surrender this moment all claims to the ranks of  
the decent.

I let go my pride of learning and judgment of right and  
wrong.

I'll shatter memory's vessel, scattering the last drop of tears.

With the foam of the berry-red wine I will bathe and  
brighten my laughter.

The badge of the civil and the staid I'll tear into shreds  
for the nonce.

I'll take the holy vow to be worthless, to be drunken and  
go to the dogs.

— from *The Gardener*.

# The Autobiography of an Absolutist

(Continued from page 380)

Stock phrases and clan reactions were glibly bandied about and there was much of what we could call "putting on a big front" or facade behind which nothing genuinely original could be discovered. Much pretence goes in the name of spirituality in modern India, and most people either play the role of an oracle when they are silent or else blurt out something which, on further questioning, they cannot substantiate. Such empty talk is what they sometimes refer to as biah-blah.

There were some who insisted on telling me that if I were a true Guru I should prove it, not by any teaching, but by some psychic or other miracle. They had often their own favourite models of spirituality up their sleeves and were more keen on opposing me for the reason that they could stand on my shoulders to glorify themselves. I found that I could not deal with them in any gentlemanly fashion, and found myself snubbing them like an old schoolmaster which was a role familiar to me. Somehow I escaped untoward incidents taking place, which could easily have happened, especially as my own admirers, not without a tendency to pugilism, were watching keenly for any opportunity to enter into the fray themselves.

**The Water-buffalo-like Island Beckons Me:** One of the visitors during our stay, whom Soman had brought with him mentioned incidentally that he possessed some land on the island of Ezhumalai which he was not using and was only growing cashew-nuts by government subsidy. I asked him for five acres of land which he said he would give for a nominal price. I have described already how the blue outlines of a distant hill that dominated an island which looked like a water-buffalo lying in the sea, had attracted my attention many times as I passed that region, sometimes visible, sometimes invisible as revealed through mist on the skyline. I had also climbed to the topmost peak where a whole village of ancient monkeys still survived through the centuries, in a sort of discontinuous distribution as in the Galapagos Islands.

My own sympathetic response to the element of the numinous was alone what constituted my guiding interest in this strange island mountain. Soon the hint from the Tao came that seemed to say definitely that I should take the offer of land that seemed to come to me so naturally. There are thin, invisible leading-strings that, like Ariadne's thread, can guide you sometimes through subterranean labyrinthian paths, of which chance elements lie essentially consists. One sometimes almost

hears one's own name called from a distance and some strange hand beckoning from afar, leading one from one kind of probable possibility to another kind of possible probability. Thus wending our way through probabilities and possibilities we could finally arrive at the beautiful glory of Nothingness that the Absolute presents. If the reader now wonders if Nothingness is my philosophy I can quote here with advantage from Keats :

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever :  
Its loveliness increases ; it will never  
Pass into nothingness ; .....

Here we see that Beauty and Nothingness are treated as interchangeable terms.

**On the Island:** By the invitation of the friend who first offered some land free for the Gurukula, we set out in a party to explore the island which till then to most of us was nothing more than a numinous presence. Just as a beautiful girl with a rose in her hand is better in a painting than when she is actually seen walking or talking, or, as in the case of a dove or a peacock which are only beautiful to see at a distance, so in the natural setting the actual island into which we crossed over at a proverbial fording place a mile south of the Payyanur railway station, made a comparatively drab and humdrum impression as we walked in the growing heat of the morning sun on the five-miles road that extended from one end of the island to the other. The idealist picture of finding an island home within the close embraces of the Arabian Sea still added its value from above, as it were, and the sight of small homesteads, narrow alleys and stiles through which we passed, often accosting half clad primitive looking men and women, sweating for bread in the sweltering heat, offered to us the usual picture of any island in the Indian Ocean.

Soon we came in sight of the palm beach with here and there a vista of the blue expanse suddenly opening up to our view, calling for a deeper emotional response to it than what the drab surroundings themselves could offer. As we proceeded further on this same road, past an ancient temple and fig trees that must have been there many centuries, we came across the Valkyrie-like Amazon women collecting firewood from the neglected hills and carrying it on their heads into the town for sale. I stopped one of them to enable Celine Gevaert to understand something of the economic conditions of the place. They could sell the head-load for one or two rupees after a day's labour.

We allayed our thirst with tender coconuts offered to us both at the temple as well as when we were half the way. As I was too tired to continue to explore further after the fourth mile, I let the rest of the party consisting of Fred Hans, Celine Gevaert, Narayanan, Soman, D. K. Narayanan Paduval and another landowner go almost to the end of the road where two peaks rose in sheer height into the sky and the road lay about one hundred feet above the sea beach, offering a breath-taking view of the ocean.

This place reminded me of popular seaside resorts anywhere in the world, and in any so-called progressive part of the "civilized" world would have been filled with sign-boards which said "100 Rooms with 100 Baths." Here it was a neglected corner of a sort of Land's End, fit for mermaids perhaps who could rise from the sea at midnight and sit on the rocks of the beach, as in *The Forsaken Merman* of Matthew Arnold.

Round the corner of the Land's End where there was an ancient fort and harbour on a promontory jutting into the sea, the road led us to a busy fishing village with its dugouts and boats, reminiscent of crooks and gun-runners and contraband traders, not to speak of pirates and other lords of the sea who must have had their adventurous life, the same now as centuries ago. The party was too tired to continue these interesting investigations to any further fruitful finish but with a few more vague promises of land made by both Mr. Kunbi-Kannan and Mr. D. K. Paduval, we decided to beat a retreat. There were no vehicles plying on that day—such availability was more of an exception than proved the rule. We took a taxi and soon reached the Cheruvattur Gurukula leaving part of the company at their own places.

[ TO BE CONTINUED ]

### THIS AWFUL LUCRE BUSINESS

Although we are so intensely spiritual that money means nothing to us, we are constantly dragged into the world of the Post Office who demand money before giving stamps, and the world of the printer who has paper merchants and compositors to pay, and there are lots of others who we regret to say, are exceedingly materialistic.

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### OM

Om stands for the Supreme Reality,  
Om is the short-cut to spirituality;  
Om is the name of All-pervading Brahman,  
Om is the sound, expressing Brahman.

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