

LETTERS WRITTEN BY SRI ANIRVAN translated by various authors

Patralekha Part II, Excerpts from Letter # 7.

Translated by Kalyani Bose

Ecstasy (Ananda) does not follow the rule of cause and effect - that is truth.

And it does not sustain for long - that is pathetic yet a stronger truth. Seeing that ecstasy is short lived, if somebody becomes ecstatic and clasps his hands in joy we will consider him either as a completely nutty being or an incarnation of god.

The basic teachings of Mandukya is to perform sadhana to eternalize this feeling of ecstasy. Now, where is ecstasy? In our nature. What is nature? Whatever is innate. Where or what is innate? Where nothing sprouts.

Gautama Buddha would have been happy to hear this and would have said, 'So, at long last you found out the path to Nothingness?'

Really, unless you go to Nothingness there can be no perpetual happiness. Be absolutely void. Then all the cosmic Pranas will crowd in to fill that void.

This reminds me of a Buddhist monk. After having a fabulous feast at a king's palace, he was basking in the sun and rubbing his stomach with utter fulfillment, exclaiming,, 'Oh! What happiness, what happiness!' Now the king was approaching him with a desire to listen to some spiritual discourses. Seeing that ecstatic state of the monk, he said, 'Such happiness! The feast must have been to your heart's content, eh?' ' Oh, no, no. you are mistaken . I have not eaten at all,' was the reply. 'The pleasure is purely due to absolute emptiness.'

The same thing Yagnavalkya said from a different perspective. 'Tyakten Bhunjitha'- Enjoy by Renouncing. The more you renounce, the more the ecstasy deepens. Eventually Absolute Void=Infinite Happiness.

Translated by Kalyani Bose

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<b>Letter No.6, addressed to Sudha Basu.</b>

From Patram Pusham in Bangla, edited by Smt. Gauri Dharmapal.

How much the **sky** gives us is beyond expression. When we can see the vast expanse of the sky at the same time we find the Virat, seated in serious meditation. Heart is fulfilled with light and ananda. Why men created the cities? Why did the mechanical civilization, dividing us from the nature, dehumanise us?

I do not deny the benefits we derive from the machine but I cannot worship it as the deity. It will give me rest, give me freedom but it will remain my slave. Why should I be crushed under its pressure? Cities seem to me like the cooking utensils. Let the juice from them spread to different parts of the country's body. I have no objection. But I prefer to keep it behind the screen. It should not show itself unabashed. Let be; I am talking uselessly. One day man will return to nature though he will have machines too, I hope.

With respect to your complaint about inertia, it seems that the body is the cause. But each condition of life may be utilized. The way is not struggle against it. The way is to understand it. Has inertia visited you? Let that be; going into its depth you will find Siva is sitting as the **sky**. The moment you see the sky, behold the light of dawn blooming amidst the

darkness. In this way you will be able to find the purity out of any quality of nature. It depends on your mental attitude. Never worry. Remember that whatever comes your way, you have to deal with it naturally with that smiling face of Mahishasurmardini, the subduer of the demon. She deals with the asuric force with a smile. Now up to this; remain well. Blessings.

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The following letters have all been translated from the Original Bengali by Sudipta Munsī

<b>Srimat Anirvan's letter to Srimat Swami Satyananda Satyananda on the non-human origin of the Vedas</b>  
- Pravacana, Vol. 3, Letter no. 65, pp. 214-15

That the Vedas are 'apauruṣeya' – 'non-human' or 'impersonal' means they are not the composition of any puruṣa or ordinary person. This meaning of the word 'puruṣa' is very ancient. Even in the Ṛgveda excepting the Puruṣasūkta (Hymn to Puruṣa), everywhere the word 'puruṣa' has been used in the sense of 'ordinary man'. As the Ṛṣi says, 'yad va āgah puruṣatā karāma' – Ye Gods, being ordinary men if we have committed any mistake to you (7/57/4, 10/15/6) Mīmāṃsā evolves three objections against this puruṣa. It says, when it speaks, there may be error in it, there may be variations or there may be intention of deception. In the Vedic dictums there are no such things. Therefore Vedas are non-human, i.e. not the speech of any ordinary person. The Vedas are eternal; this is the view of the Śābdanīyavādī Mīmāṃsists. The gist of the entire Vedas is the Praṇava. This Praṇava is not a symbol developed by human beings – it is merely the pulsation of the Void (ākāśa). It manifests itself in the heart of the common man, but he is not the creator of it. Praṇava is non-human, therefore the Vedas are also non-human – the thing can be viewed like this also. Transcendental and eternal religions are like that. Those who believe in the power of the Mantras, they would say, that there is an eternal speech for expressing the eternal religion. The Vedas are that speech (vāk). As such they are not personal or human (pauruṣeya) or created.

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<b>Letter from Sri Anirvan to Mr. Ashuranjan Debnath on the concepts of Īśvara and Devatā</b>  
Pather Kathā (2008), Letter no. 87, pp. 80-81  
(Letter to Mr. Ashuranjan Debnath)  
Haimavatī, 9/3, Central Park Calcutta – 32 9/8/69

Received your letter. You have understood the distinction shown in the Gītā between Devatā and Īśvara pretty well. But that Devatā or Īśvara can give us or gives us our object of enjoyment is a wishful thinking. The external object of enjoyment has to be acquired by ourselves only. Belief in devatā or Īśvara brings some hope in our mind – only this much. During the acquirement of the inner treasure this belief is of great help – for we don't know if there is any devatā or Īśvara externally, but that devatva or Īśvaratva is verily the evolution of my consciousness we have to understand this from our own realisation.

The thing is this: the gradual manifestation of consciousness is taking place in the world. Five stages of it are discernible: the consciousness of plants, the consciousness of animals, the consciousness of man, the consciousness of deva and the

consciousness of Īśvara. Human consciousness is just in the middle. Consciousness is enshrouded in plants, affected by tamas, in beasts it is restless and rājasic. The quality of sattva has appeared in some degree in man – by the practice of knowledge (jñāna), love (prema), actions (karmayoga), in character and ideal. But the adulterations of plant consciousness and beast-consciousness are quite present in man – he has stupidity, restlessness, craving for sensual pleasures.

But man intends to get over these. He seeks to become devatā. Devatā has pure essence (śuddhasattva). In Īśvara too it is there. Moreover in Īśvara there is the unending profundity of consciousness, the getting of everyone within himself, etc. Neither in devatā, nor in Īśvara there is the inertness of plants or the restlessness of beasts. Retaining these, the transformation of the society can be done – with the help of that very brutal energy. Marxists are trying to do that abhorring devatā and Īśvara. Transforming is coming up, but it is not a ‘radical’ one. They are not striking at the root. They don’t want to exclude stupidity (as of the mass-mind) brutality (as desire, anger, greed, infatuation, ego, jealousy, cruelty) nothing. Consequently the Marxian transformation is not gaining durability anywhere – only it is becoming devastating by the clash of greed with greed, interest with interest. Only by the cooperation of devavādī or Īśvaravādī transformation with the Marxian transformation, that the radical transformation of the society is possible. Man will then become devatā, Īśvara – but he won’t enjoy only worship being seated in the temples. Like Śrī Kṛṣṇa he will jump into Kurukṣetra – remaining unperturbed. This inner revolution can bring about the true revolution. Otherwise making man the higher version of beasts, endowed with claws and teeth, is not called revolution or transformation.

Affectionate blessings

Anirvan

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<b>Sri Anirvan's letter to Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati on the Ardhanārīśvara principle in Indian spiritual thought</b>

Haimavatī, 6/12/68.

Pravacana, Vol. 4, Letter no. 19, p. 2

The principle of Ardhanārīśvara is very ancient. In the Ṛgveda, there are: the Dyāvapṛthivī – Heaven and Earth couple, the analogy of bull-cow – these are but the seed of that very principle. In the Tantras this has become the ideology of mutual absorption (sāmarasyavāda) of Śiva and Śakti. Śiva and Śakti are non-different. In the Sāṃkhya there is the discrimination between Prakṛti and Puruṣa. But that Prakṛti is aparā prakṛti – the lower nature. With Parā Prakṛti – the Higher Nature, there is the eternal union (nityayoga) – eternal non-discrimination (nitya-aviveka) of Puruṣa. Like that the realisation of the Ardhanārīśvara principle takes place at the final stage of sādhanā – when Prakṛti is my ‘svā prakṛti’ – ‘own nature’, and Māyā my ātmamāyā – own Māyā (Gītā).

In realisation Energy (śakti) and Consciousness (caitanya) are ever-united (nityayukta). Consciousness is there, but there is no energy of it, this is never possible. Be the first verse of Ānandalaharī remembered – ‘Only connected with energy (śakti) is Śiva active.’

In the Upaniṣads and Brahmasūtra this principle has found expression in the couple of Ākāśa (the Void) and Prāṇa (the vital energy). There is the non-difference of Vāk (creative word) and Brahman in the Vedas – ‘yāvat brahma viṣṭhitam tāvatī vāk.’ Vāk is the energy of Brahman – the two are equi-pervaded (samavyāpta). This is also the principle of Ardhanārīśvara. The principle of Yuganaddha of the Tantras is this.

The thing is also discernible in the world of living beings. None of us are absolute man or absolute woman. During the birth of living beings, the semen (bīja) and ovum (śakti) of the father and the mother, only on equal unification create living beings – this is a basic truth of biology.

Hope this would suffice. Bye.

<b>SRI ANIRVAN ON IMMORTALITY</b>

Haimavati 24/1/71

Letter written to Prof. Gita Haldar

Snehāśisa, Vol. 1, Letter no. 55, pp. 67-68

The theme of individual immortality is there in the Christian scriptures. But that is not logical. I don't find any gain in individual immortality. What I am, a repetition of that should take place – this I can't seek rather. If I subsist through change, then a higher transformation of personality is to be taken as inevitable. So long as I'm within the mind, then to be immortal with this mind is useless. As no one, having this fragile frame, can be immortal, similarly how can he be immortal, with this defunct mind? That immortality is rather anguishing.

Above the mind (mana) is Vijñāna. Its very nature (dharma) is Universal Consciousness. Individual consciousness (vyakticaitanya) there expands into Universal Consciousness (viśvacaitanya). This very consciousness (caitanya) is ontologically and meaningfully immortal. And immortal is the Brahman Consciousness (brahmacaitanya). Therefore, if an individual makes spiritual endeavours to gain unity with the world and Brahman, or either with the world or Brahman, then only there is a fecundity of his imagination of immortality. This very immortality is perpetual. Otherwise all other imaginations of immortality are average.

Science rests content only with the external world. Its dealings are with behaviours – only with the waking state of man. But aside from the external world, man has an inner world. There the pace of consciousness is towards regression (nivṛtti). This regression is verily the source of spiritual and religious endeavours (dharmasādhana). This is the liftup of man over bestial life. And the sublimation of consciousness is verily the aim of natural evolution. That sublimation is worked out through introversion. Then the two stages of svapna or dream [dhyāna (contemplation)] and suṣupti or deep sleep [samādhi (concentrative trance)] are discovered at the depth of jāgrat or the state of wakefulness. Those two stages are verily the source of spiritual realisation (adhyātmabodha). If they are left out, life, though externally rich, becomes bankrupt internally. That's why the need for spiritual endeavours (adhyātmasādhana) is never exhaustible.

<b>SRI ANIRVAN ON THE SELF CONSCIOUSNESS OF MAN IS EXPLODING</b>

Haimavati 4/4/71

Letter written to Prof. Gita Haldar

Snehāśisa, Vol. 1, Letter no. 58, p. 71

The self-consciousness (ātmacetanā) of man is exploding – in the words of the Upaniṣads gradually a prospering of Consciousness (prajñāna) is taking place in him. This prosperity (utkarṣa) is awakening in him a feeling (anubhava) of the Vast (bṛhat) as a rule. As a result an excitement of the Vast takes place within him on viewing anything vast in the external world. Rāmakṛṣṇadeva used to call this 'uddīpana', in modern times science calls empathy. The luminous discernment (cinmaya-pratyakṣa) of the Vast in nature is the main theme of Vedic spiritual endeavours (upāsana).

<b>SRI ANIRVAN ON VIŚLEṢAṆA AND SAMŚLEṢAṆA</b>

Haimavatī 13/6/71

Letter written to Prof. Gita Haldar  
Snehāśisa, Vol. 1, Letter no. 61, pp. 74-75

Viśleṣaṇa or analysis is the property (dharma) of Knowledge (jñāna), and if by samśleṣaṇa we understand a bringing of synthesis to everything in our life, then it will be the property of spiritual intuition (bodhi). Analytic knowledge generally avoids emotion (bhāva). This is why the philosopher or the scientist both is analyst (tārkika) – they are not the dealers of emotion (rasa). But in bodhi there is no conflict between bhāvanā (thought) and bhāva (emotion). That's why it gets life in its entirety. Were the knowledge of the philosopher the truth of realisation instead of being the exercise of the brain, then with it would have come an emotional afflatus also. And that would have been a true Religion based upon Philosophy. This India did – therefore the Philosophy of Religion has been possible here only. In the western countries a harmony of the intellect (buddhi) and spiritual intuition (bodhi) has made appearance in Existentialism in modern times; as a result of its origin from an agonistic feeling of life it has become the life-vision. But since it has a fallacious base, the integral vision of Truth is not discernible in it.

The Non-existentialist Buddhist (asadvādī bauddha) does indeed term both beginning (ādi) and end (anta) non-existent (asat), but they do away with the middle state also by calling it non-existent. But the Vedānta of the Upaniṣads doesn't do so, nor did Ṭhākura; as such how can we call him a non-existentialist Buddhist? The Śāṅkara philosophy has also called the manifested middle state (vyaktamadhyā) as 'śadasadbhīyām anirvacanīyam' or 'both existent and non-existent inexplicable'. This is also not the view of Ṭhākura – his view is, even after this accepting this, still something more.

The life of Nigamānanda is the life of an aspirant (sādhaka); in his own words, "Sāadhanā (spiritual endeavour) is his life-partner." Without the empathy of the soul (ātmā) under the afflatus (āveśa) of the Supreme (Parama) spiritual endeavours (sāadhanā) can't go on. Therefore the question of a distinction between the two does not arise here.

<b>SRI ANIRVAN ON VAJRASATTVA</b>

Haimavati 27/6/71

Letter written to Prof. Gita Haldar  
Snehāśisa, Vol. 1, Letter no. 61, pp. 75-76

Diamond is called 'Vajra' or thunderbolt. Diamond is the toughest and most impenetrable substance. In this sense the word 'vajrasamhanana' 'thunderbolt-firmness' is there in the Yogasūtras. The Buddhists say, "śūnyatā vajra ucyaṭe" – "void is called thunderbolt." The feeling of pure existence (viśuddha astitva) that comes when the inner world becomes absolutely void, no firmer realisation can be there than that. There is nothing such as Īśvara imagined with a form, the world or I there – only a negative essence (asatkalpa sattā) is there. This very essence is 'Vajra' or thunderbolt. Where the substance (sattā) of some special thing is possible, that is called 'sattva' (being, essence). As, he whose being is in 'bodha' or 'Knowledge', the aspirant of that Buddha path is called Bodhisattva, likewise he may be called 'Vajrasattva' ('Thunderbolt-essence' or 'Adamantine-being') also. The definition of the five Bodhisattvas in Buddhism is 'Vajrasattva'.

Transcending this gross body the feeling of a subtler body (sūkṣmatara dehabodha) can be excited; as, if the heat that is there in a piece of burning charcoal, gets free, then the circumference of that heat may be termed as the real body of the charcoal. In this state, the body of the charcoal, despite being apparently circumscribed to a narrow boundary, can expand. The unity of the microcosm and macrocosm is also of that kind. Not only in thought (bhāva) is the state of Brahman, but that thought intensifies into the body; the body, on being excited, expands everywhere – and the feeling of 'ākāśa-śarīra' or 'void-body' comes. Then that realisation (anubhava) comes along.

In the Vedas we have, that Dadhīci gained the ‘Madhuvidyā’ or ‘Science of Honey’. Madhuvidyā or the Science of Honey means the Science of Immortality (amṛta vidyā) – which is called Brahmavidyā or the Science of Brahman in Vedānta. This is the realisation of a Pūrṇaprajña or the fully enlightened one. In this realisation there is no covering of Avidyā (ignorance) or ‘Vṛtra’. This matter has been spoken of in the Purāṇas in the form of a legend. The Knowledge (prajñāna) of Dadhīci, becoming the light of immortality (amṛtajyoti) pierced through the covering of Vṛtra. Actually it is verily Indra who did that making Dadhīci an excuse.

<b>SRI ANIRVAN ON THE FIVE DHYĀNĪBUDDHAS OR BODHISATTVAS</b>

Haimavati 11/7/71

Letter to Prof. Gita Haldar

Snehāśisa, Vol. 1, Letter no. 63, pp. 76-77

The five Dhyānībuddhas or Bodhisattvas are the pure form of the five elements. Among them Vajrasattva is space (ākāśa), Amoghasiddhi wind (vāyu), Amitabha heat (teja), Akṣobhya water (ap) and Ratnasambhava earth (pṛthivī). On purification of elements (bhūtaśuddhi) the body can be, becoming full of the fire of Yoga (yogāgnimaya) above decrepitude, diseases and death (jarāvyaḍhimṛtyu) – this is there in the Śvetāśvatara (2/12). This is termed as ‘dhātuprasāda’ or purification of elements. The aim of Bodhisattva contemplation is to sever all distinction between the body and the soul (ātmā) – as transforming the fuel into fire, or the coal into diamond. No need of remembering the names of the Bodhisattvas – the name may even be given as A B C D E. Understand the principle, and contemplate accordingly.

In Buddhist meditation there are eight stages of meditation – four with forms (rūpāvacara), while four others without forms (arūpāvacara). In the rūpāvacara stage (bhūmi) there is a distinction between the object and the subject (viśaya-viśayī) – but in the arūpāvacara stage object is dissolved into the subject. These are rather ‘loka’ meaning empirical. On its other shore is ‘lokottara’ Nirvāṇa – it is non-empirical, for its realisation is inexplicable. The fourth meditative stage (dhyānabhūmi) is the last stage of rūpāvacara. What is known as becoming the Sun (Āditya) in Vedic spiritual practices (sādhanā), to be dissolved into a vast luminosity of Brahman (virāṭ brahmajyoti) – this is verily that. Buddhists call this ābhāsvara brahmaloka or the infinitely resplendent abode of Brahman. Above the Sun (Āditya) is the ākāśa (Sky). Ākāśa is without form (arupāvacara). Even within that are four meditative stages. To become active on descending upon the world a descent from the Sun is needed; it is not possible while staying on Ākāśa. The wisdom (prajñā) and compassion (karuṇā) of the Buddha are active still now. He is a chosen person (ādhikārika puruṣa).

The manifestation of prāṇa is in Vāk (speech). Prāṇa is Consciousness-energy (cit-śakti). Its manifestation takes place in vāk. When we speak (even when we are engaged in soliloquy), then this consciousness-energy radiates externally through vāk. Again when we are reticent on becoming introversive, then the energy of speech (vākśakti) dissolves into the luminous prāṇa (cināmaya prāṇa). This is happening all the time. A thinking of this as the oblation of prāṇa into vāk or vāk into prāṇa is to perform the internal Agnihotra sacrifice (antarāgnihotra).

<b>SRI ANIRVAN ON VIDYĀ AND AVIDYĀ</b>

Letter written to Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Pravacana, Vol. 3, pp. 215-16

That ignorance (avidyā) is a blinding darkness is understood. To become free from that is the practice of Knowledge (Vidyā), the practice of luminosity. The analogy of day and night has been used in the Vedas. Night is Ignorance, Day Knowledge. May the darkness of night be dispelled from me, may the daylight be dawned, is desired by all. Even this is also desired that once the daylight is dawned, may it not be engulfed by darkness again.

This desire is natural and justified. But here, with the aversion to darkness – in the attempt to keep it away forever, there is no comprehensive realisation. If you worship the Sun (āḍitya) only, there won't be the darkness of the night in your realisation. But the rise and set of the Sun is also a perceptive truth. If you rise above the Sun, then you will reach such a place, whence you will discern, that below your feet there is a cyclic rotation of day and night even in the rise and set of the Sun. Then you will be stationed in such a plane, where there is neither light nor darkness, neither day nor night. From that colourless plane, you will be the witness of both light and darkness. Therefore, even though the desire to become the witness of light exclusively is the practice of Knowledge (Vidyā), a touch of ignorance still persists in it. That ignorance is the ignorance of darkness – the ignorance of not knowing the cyclic rotation of light and darkness. This is even a deeper ignorance than the ignorance of light, for, this is the ignorance of the learned one (vidvān), the obsession of which is not done away with till we go across the boundary of Knowledge and Ignorance.

<b>SRI ANIRVAN ON THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION</b>

Letter to Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati  
Pravacana, Vol. 3, Letter no. 48, Pp. 191-92

Religion begins in wonder and fear – this view is one-sided. I say, there is another source of Religion – the Sense of Sublimity. In the primeval society also there were many people, who as a result of invocation of this sense of sublimity felt a union with the supernatural. But ordinary men are everywhere the slaves of fear – still now. Therefore a class of people has always worshipped in fear and they will continue to do so. But as such spiritual inspiration has always come from fear – this view is dishonourable. From a sense of sublimity the awakening of wonder with regard to the Vast is quite natural. 'āścaryavat paśyati kaścidenam' – this is rather an old saying. Therefore I would say, from a Sense of sublimity and wonder has spiritual sense arisen – right from the beginning. Only fear, which merely brings lassitude to consciousness, can never be the sole inspirer in the spiritual matters, for – spiritual feeling is the explosion of consciousness, not its contraction.

According to the Advaita Vedānta view the deities (devatā) are the divine self-multiplication (vibhūti) of Brahman. This is also there in the Upaniṣads. In this respect the entity of the deities depends upon Brahman. If I resort directly to Brahman, then I need not depend upon the deities for fulfillment of my aim (iṣṭasiddhi). But by that the deities are unreal, this is not proved. The belief in deities as the power of Brahman also does not get nullified. In our country everywhere has deism (devavāda) terminated in Brahma-ism (brahmavāda). To the Vaiṣṇava Kṛṣṇa is Brahman, to the Śaiva Śiva is Brahman, to the Śākta Śakti is Brahman, to the Gāṇapatya Gaṇapati is Brahman, to the Saura Āḍitya is Brahman. That is even if the start of sādhanā be made by resorting to any deity the ultimate aim of all is verily to reach Brahman. Even after reaching Brahman the aspirants do not nullify the one, resorting to whom they have reached Brahman. Thus Brahma-ism and deism have been harmonised beautifully in our country.

Our common life is the play doll of the Great Nature (mahāprakṛti). We are there indeed helpless. But where I'm the Puruṣa, separated from the prakṛti, there I'm no more helpless; I'm the sovereign (svarāṭ). But still this sovereignty is the mere conviction of virility, the capacity of his reversing the operation of power (śakti) is limited. The perfected one (siddha) even does not desire so.

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Pravacana (Vol. 1; Letter no. 6; Pp. 13-16)  
[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]  
By Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by Sudipta Muni

Mohanaghat,

2.XI.31

Dear Brother Satya,

I do understand the reason for your cheerlessness, for I've myself suffered similarly. But still you have to struggle even amidst this and from that struggle your vision of Truth will unfold itself. Free the heart (citta) from the domain of narrow thinking – then you will see that whoever is your opponent – even they are rather a part of your great existence (virāṭ-sattā). This much I have seen brother that without letting the mind-stuff (citta) caught up in a certain mood or emotion (bhāva) it is impossible to work. By bhāva I mean – Emotion – which the Upaniṣadic seer (ṛṣi) has called – Prāṇa. In our country the so-called worship of Prāṇa takes place a lot, nor is there any end to imaginative thoughtfulness; but see, neither of these, wanting as it is in firm thought and knowledge (jñāna), endure. We are but the shell of a snail – we get a little, and think everything is done. Great receptacles (ādhāra) are not created in plenty in the world. The few that are created, their whole life is rather a suffering – a conflict. The Great Life (Mahāprāṇa) seeks to engulf the small lives (kṣudraprāṇa). The smaller lives also try to resist to the best of their ability – like this the creation of a conflict takes place. Think and see, this mode of the nourishment of life is present everywhere – in the grosser level, and in the world of thought as well. There are different kinds of plays of small lives – different kinds of clash of interests – from this is the rise of unrighteousness. Verily to synthesise all these sometimes the Great Life Force (Mahāprāṇa Śakti) of God (Bhagavān) makes itself manifest as the Age-Incarnate (yugāvātāra). At that time a conflict ensues across the world. As on one hand this conflict destructs, likewise on the other hand it creates. Don't you see both these in the Gītā? As an advisor Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a great harmoniser, verily his gospel is – the gospel of Peace, gospel of Love, gospel of Harmony. Again that very He makes himself manifest in the eleventh chapter saying, 'kālo'asmi lokakṣayakṛt' or 'I am the world-destroying Time'. Don't you see, that Cosmic Vision (Viśvarūpa) of His is relentlessly chewing and engulfing the small lives, differently directed? But with this certainly is the nourishment of the Great Life (Mahāprāṇa) taking place. And so after the Kurukṣetra War you have been peacefully making so many unprecedented discoveries in the spiritual world for thousands and thousands of year!

Amidst the engulfing of the dispersed small lives by the Great Life, there is but compassion – there is a pain too. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa synthesised in this way the multi-directional dispersed life-forces of India (Bhāratavarṣa), then how much pain he had to suffer – can you understand? You can discern an ultra-modern form of this pain – in the life of Vivekananda. He is another Great Life (Mahāprāṇa) – and he crushed many little things to assimilate them. The greater one is, the greater he has to fight with obstacles, the greater he has to suffer pain. In a way he will be merciless, while in the other, the Self of the selves of all beings (sarvabhūtātmabhūtātmā), just like the Buddha, as it were.

Don't lament because you are hurt, and you are facing opposition. This is but a testimony to the fact that your soul is great. Bring two things to life – Extensity and Intensity. Make the heart munificent and penetrating. Think broadly, again feel deeply. With these two the manifestation of the Life-force (prāṇa-śakti) will take place – your horizon of vision will be widened – then you will see, those who are opposing, even they are helping you – even they have occupied a place amidst the Vast Scheme of yours. And they are resisting, just to submit. When you will be able to silently pickle them, who are opposing, in the sap of the Vast Life of yours, that day you will understand that even that opposition had a utilitarian significance – that is but a form of the contiguity of Life (Prāṇa).

Remember this brother –three parts of yours are immortal. Therefore don't allow more than one-fourth place to the external hurly-burly in your mind. Try to dive into the depth of yourself again and again. There's an express 'samādhīpūrvaka samādhī' in the Pātañjala system. You know, brother, what is its meaning? It means always tending the mind-stuff (citta) upwards – to retain it in the sphere of Concentration (samādhībhūmi) – and sometimes getting



absconded absolutely. As becomes the condition of the body when it is forcefully kept awake even amidst profound drowsiness – 15/16th portion of the tendency centres round sleep – likewise remaining 15/16th portion tended towards inwardisation, work with the remaining 1/16th portion, then you will get satisfaction in the work so performed.

On becoming self-satisfied others can be satisfied too, brother! So long there is dissatisfaction within you, till then you may try to pull others to your side, but you won't be able to bind anyone. Only Life brings life under control. Be the Great Life (Mahāprāṇa) – be filled with great satisfaction (mahātr̥pti) – then you will be able to win control over others' lives. Even if they counter, then that opposition is ephemeral – they must submit to your magnetic attraction. Never mind, you are bound to be victorious! Struggle on! Never seek enjoyment – even the enjoyment of bliss! You are born to fight and you must fight on against all odds!

Brother, as much as you can – as long as you can – meditate. Atleast be with noble thoughts. Let all your brain and heart be on ... & then you will know divine intoxication.

So much I thought of talking about, but there's no more time. Know this much, there is an undying tie among lives. What we are viewing before our eyes, by that we are becoming silent, speechless and motionless. This is the wealth of everyone – this is the wealth of the age. Everybody will become the proprietor of this wealth. A Great Future (Mahābhaviṣya) is forthcoming – each one of us is but individual oblation unto it. Forget avarice, resentment, narrowness - with a liberal and vast vision look and see – the movement of the Vast! Overcoming all obstacles of space and time the soul of the Great Life (Mahāprāṇa) is rushing on with a barmy roar – towards the Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute (Saccidānanda) – I feel it – it is drawing me irresistibly to that mighty abyss. Oh, the sweetness of death! Oh the Glory of sacrifice! Brother, is this the time to darken the heart? The carnival of light is forthcoming! Light up the beacons of millions of lives. Let the flame of the lamp of your life catch fire – then you will see, with millions of such lamps the adoration of the Mother is going on – Thou infinitely-mystical awful Mother of mine! Come rushing to the path of the death harkening to the call of the wayfarer of death – exhaust life with a terrible burn-up – may darkness turn into Light.

May victory be yours friend!

- "The Wayfaring Friend"

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Pravacana (Vol. 1; Letter no. 7; Pp. 16-18)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

By Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by Sudipta Munsī

Umachal 12/32

Dear Brother Satya,

If you are able to realise the undifferentiated ego meant by Patañjali by 'pratyak- cetanādhigama' as the only personality, then you got the view of the Vedāntin. Did you understand the thing? There's an 'aham' or ego in each one of us. This 'aham' is but a middle stage of consciousness. The very origin of self-consciousness (aham-bodha) is the only

differentium between matter and spirit. On one hand there is the great 'Prakṛti' – devoid of the individual ego (vyaṣṭi-aham), but she means torpor; on the other hand there is the great 'Puruṣa', even He is devoid of subliminal impressions (samskāra), and as a matter of that – devoid of the individual ego. Patañjali calls this very ego (aham), devoid of subliminal impressions (samskāra), pratyakcetanā. But his procedure is by negation – i.e., his path is the way of 'neti neti' or 'not this, not this'. He is mastering the pratyak-cetanā by removing the obstacles in the path of purification of the Ego, by removing the 'antarāyas' or impediments. He becomes impersonal – the eradication of Personality is his spiritual goal (sādhanā). In Vedānta also we are reaching the impersonal plane, but not by negation, but by self-evolution – self-development. As Jīva or the individual soul there is a conflict between my ego and yours. Vedānta said, this conflict is but due to an undeveloped ego. If we develop the ego, that is, expand the whole mental horizon- then we reach the only real Personality or Brahman by sacrificing this limited personality of ours.

What is the psychological aspect of it? Probably you know there are three functions of the mind: thinking, feeling & willing. The undeveloped conditions (samskāras) of these three functions constitute our Ego or personality. Now you develop those three. Develop willing though the idea of power (śakti) into Eternal Stability or "sat", i.e., let the Will to power be your spiritual concern (sādhanā), and as a result of that may you become 'unmoved' (aṭala), 'unperturbed' (nirvikāra) and 'immutable' (kūṣastha). This very state of immutability (kūṣastha-bhāva) is the criterion of power (śakti) from the point of the jīva or the individual soul – but the jīva is dissolved as a matter of that; but on the other side of it there is the gushing outburst of the power to create (sṛṣṭiśakti) of Brahman. For this in common life ven, you will see those can create who have the will-power to remain stable. Thus you get the 'sat'.

Develop thinking into 'cit' which means "Eternal wakefulness". As there is difference between the subject and object, there is cleft in knowledge. Forget all difference; let the object be immersed in the subject. You will become luminous (cinmaya): this is the highest development of thought-power. In this way by concentration, by suppression of the mental modes (vṛtti-nirodha) – you attain pure 'Cit'.

Thereafter develop feeling into pure bliss (ānanda) or delight (prīti). Just expand yourself till you feel the whole universe to be your body. You are the throbbing life in all! This realization is the highest development of love or bliss or feeling. Thus you attain 'Ānanda'.

Then you see, 'Saccidānanda' is your ideal and in Vedānta you reach this through the development of your innate psychic powers. This is the Vedāntic way of 'pratyakcetanādhigamaū'.

I am giving another hind. Cultivate the ideas of pure patience (sthairya), luminosity (dīpti) and expansion (vyāpti) – say to yourself:

'kūṣastho'ham – acaḷo'ham' – (Sat)

'I am immutable – unmoved I am' – (Existence)

'aham jyotih – jyotiraham' – (Cit)

'I am the Light – the Light I am' (Consciousness)

'vibhuraḥam – vibhuraḥam' – (Ānanda)

'I am the Big – the Big I am' – (Bliss)

By realising these ideas, you will attain 'pratyak-cetanā' through Vedānta.

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[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

By Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by Sudipta Munsu

I have done a surface reading of Dr. Dasgupta's book. It was not studied in depth. The view of modern Indologists on Umā is but that. I think the Kenopaniṣadic word Umā to be the adjective of 'strī'. In the Ṛgveda the deities have been called 'ūmah' 'omah'. The word is derived from the root Vav – meaning to protect, to foster, to grace etc. The sky (ākāśa) is called 'vyoman' – separating the words we have vi + oman. That verily from this the word 'umā' in the feminine gender has come is my belief. The relation of 'Umā' of the Kenopaniṣad with the sky or ākāśa is to be noticed. It is there in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka also, 'ākāśah striyā pūrṇah'. This 'strī' or wife is none other than the radiance of Sāvitrī (sāvitradyuti) spread across the 'ākāśa' or sky. She is verily Haimavatī or Hiraṇmayī (the golden one). There's even an allusion to mountains in Haimavatī. This idea also is there in the Vedas regarding both Śiva and Viṣṇu. On the shore of the Mediterranean Sea a goddess, riding on the lion, and residing in the mountains is worshipped. There is no impossibility of her shadow being cast on 'Haimavatī' – as we see in the Saptaśatī. But lions are present in Africa and India. The Mediterranean races among which we have the imagination of the Goddess, riding on the lion (simhavāhinī), to them lion seems to be alien. There is one more thing to be considered. Whether the lion of 'simhavāhinī' or 'the Goddess, riding on the lion' denotes the zodiac sign Leo (simharāśi) that is also to be contemplated upon. Leo and Virgo are adjacent zodiac signs. Thinking all these, only for a similarity of name my mind does not move to call Umā non-Indian. The Umā of the Kenopaniṣad or the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka is a simhavāhinī or lion-riding goddess, even this we don't have there.

After the Vedānta comes the Tantra, i.e. enjoyment after liberation – taking in this way a beautiful exegesis takes place. In the Upaniṣads there is 'tyaktena bhuñjīthāh'. We have in the Gītā – 'upadraṣṭā cānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheśvarah'. The stages come one after another. The Ātman is a mere witness (draṣṭā), but neither an enjoyer (bhoktā), nor a doer (kartā) – this idea is of the Sāmkhya. For a practicing aspirant (pravarta sādḥaka) that is but the goal to be achieved (sādḥya). But he, who is a siddha or perfected one, is but simultaneously a witness (draṣṭā), an enjoyer (bhoktā) and a doer (kartā). His enjoyment (bhoga) and deeds (karma) are divine (divya). The crux of divine enjoyment (divya-bhoga) is self-delight (ātmārāmatā) i.e. the 'ātmāsāt' or self-possession of the object of enjoyment (bhogya) in the literal sense.

PS: paramadharmā = bhaktiradhokṣaje (below the sphere of Bhakti). The direction for the clay idol of the goddess (mṛṇmayī pratimā) seems to have been made keeping Bengal in view.

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Pravacana (Vol. 3; Letter no. 20; p. 147)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

By Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by Sudipta Munsu

Question:

What is the significance of the emergence of Madhu and Kaiṭabha from Viṣṇu's ear-wax? Why did Madhu and Kaiṭabha set to kill Brahmā? Brahmā is but the regular of creation (sṛṣṭikartā), then is the destruction of creation the work of the demons?

Answer:

Viṣṇu is expansive consciousness (vyāpticitanya) – just like the space (ākāśavat). The ear is the auditory sense-organ. The quality of space is sound. The sound expresses an idea (bhāva). The space (ākāśa) in reality is like the void; it may be said to be above both being (bhāva) and non-being (abhāva). The tension (kṣobha) occurring in that space which has been called the vibration of Brahman (brahmakṣobha) in the Upaniṣads is verily Vāk or Śabda-brahma. This Vāk is verily the initiator of creation. There is a conflict between the quiescence (praśānti) of space (ākāśa) and this tension (pratāna). But seen from another angle even this tension or vibration is also the power (śakti) of space. This conflict may be termed as dirt or mala [= mara or māra, the power of death (mr̥tyuśakti), inertness opposite to consciousness (caitanya)]. There evolved dirt in Viṣṇu's ears, i.e., in the space-like expansive consciousness (ākāśavat vyāpticitanya) the tension of a conflicting force (viruddhaśakti) made its appearance. This tension will now become the material cause of creation, the instrumental cause being Brahmā – and Viṣṇu, the cause of all causes (sarvakāraṇa-kāraṇa). There's a conflict between the material and the instrument. I want to carve a sculpture out of a block of stone. The block of stone is the material, while my endeavour the instrument. The material is obstructing the instrument from being successful, as it were. The instrument is by the strength of its own power trying to overcome that obstacle. It may be said, that the power of inertness (jadaśakti) is not ready to concede to the power of Consciousness (citśakti). That's why the demon (asura) at first seeks to contest the Vijñānaśakti or the power of Consciousness (Bhāgavata) of Brahmā or Nārāyaṇa. Darkness does not want Light to manifest itself. Light does not want that Darkness should endure. This very conflict is the primordial tension (ādyakṣobha) and from that proceeds creation. The demon is opposed to creation, and he wants to get back to inertness. While overcoming impediments the manifestation of power (śakti) takes place – everywhere, in our life too. In the Caṇḍī, the manifestation of the Goddess (Devī) or the emergence of pure Consciousness-energy (viśuddha citśakti) and the slaying of the demon for the sake of divine works (devakāryārtha), i.e., the manifestation of Consciousness (cit-prakāśa) – this is verily the significance of the whole of Caṇḍī.

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Pravacana (Vol. 3; Letter no. 41; Pp. 180-181)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

By Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Muni

Haimavati, Shillong, 30/9/64

While receiving any kind of knowledge (vidyā) those four are unavoidable. The Praśnopaniṣad questions not only relate to Self-knowledge (ātmavidyā), but also to the riddle of the world (jagatrahasya) – note this.

'Tapah' is the power of light. In fire there is light, there is heat as well. Light is discriminative knowledge (prajñā), while heat is the vital force (prāṇa) – according to the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad. In the sun also there is light, as there is heat too. One thing you may have noticed, while fire burns, it is heat that first appears, while light thereafter. Light is as if the condensed form of heat. Creating this heat within the person (ādhāra) consists of tapasyā or penance. In common life vitality has scattered across, which we term 'pravṛtti' or desire. If through self-restraint it is wound up, heat can be created. This is verily tapasyā or penance. Austerity is merely its external form.

The basic meaning of Brahmacharya is to roam about in Brahman. The Veda is Word-Brahman (śabdabrahma). Again, any knowledge (vidyā) is Veda. In ancient times, there was the provision for observing vows or acting in conformity with the reception of the particular kind of knowledge. To receive knowledge or Veda by approaching the Guru a particular kind of disciple had to be passed through. This is verily Brahmacharya or the discipline suited to the reception of Brahman. Similar things are to be found among the Buddhists also – their's is Bodhicaryā (the culture of the spiritual intuition) or Brahmavihāra (journey in Brahman). The main limb of Brahmacharya is the restraint of sexual desire. But suppressing eros without restraining other sense-organs won't let brahmacharya happen. As such Brahmacharya has been explained in the Yogabhāṣya as 'guptendriyasya upasthasamyamah.' This is according to the thought of the Munis. During the reception of knowledge everyone has to become a Muni or detached (nihsanga), this is there in the Upaniṣads also. But in the line of the Ṛṣis, even a householder could be counted as a Brahmachārin, if his marital life was a perfectly restrained one. In the Praśnopaniṣad itself it has been said 'brahmacharyameva tad yad rātrau ratyā samyujyante'. This has been described in the Ṛksamhitā as 'suyamam dāmpatyam'. At the base of it there are two regulations, not having sex with the wife except during periods and not mating with an unwilling wife (akāmā strī). Naturally the sexual urge in men is immense. Not only for receiving knowledge (vidyāgrahaṇa), but also for that 'suyah dāmpatyā' or 'well-restrained marital life' regulation is needed; hence the arrangement for a stern practice of brahmacharya or celibacy in the abode of the Guru.

As a result of Tapasyā and Brahmacharya the darkness of ignorance (avidyā) is dispelled from the heart, and the light of dawn (ūṣā) manifests. Faith (śraddhā) about the knowledge to be received or the intuition of the existence of the Beyond (āstikyabuddhi) is born. You may call this spiritual awakening (buddhi) Bodhi. In the Upaniṣads it has been called 'Pratibodha'. This is but an awareness of the Ultimate Reality (tattva), or waking up to the light of the Dawn (Ūṣā), as it were.

From Faith or Śraddhā comes Knowledge or Vidyā. In the Yoga system it has been called Prātibha Saàvit. Again, as a result of purification tattva or the Ultimate Reality begins to reflect ('pratibhāta') automatically, just like the reflection of the sunlight in the mirror. In the Chāndogya it has been said that whatever has to be done, should be done 'vidyayā śraddhayā upaniṣadā' or 'with knowledge, faith and with close connection with the Divine'. This is the picture of a gradual unfolding of spiritual consciousness (adhyātmacetanā) from Tapasyā or Penance to Vidyā or Spiritual Knowledge.

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Pravacana (Vol. 3; Letter no. 42; Pp. 180-182)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

By Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by Sudipta Muni

Haimavati, Shillong, 10/10/64

In the Vedas, the principle of Brahman (brahmatattva) has been explained by way of symbols. What we now call Nirguṇa and Saguṇa Brahma or Brahman without attributes and Brahman with attributes (respectively), their symbols are but Ākāśa and Āditya in the Vedas. From the spiritual viewpoint Brahman is 'unbound' vast consciousness (anibādha bṛhat cetanā) – the explosion of consciousness in all places at all times. The vibration of this vast consciousness (bṛhatcetana), which is 'ejana' in the language of the Upaniṣads, is verily Prāṇa. Its symbol is Āditya.

Agni or Fire is the symbol of the individual consciousness (jīvacetanā). The ultimate end of Agni pent-up in individual persons is in becoming Vaiśvānara. That Agni is then ubiquitous. We call this verily in the philosophical language – the explosion of individual consciousness (jīvacetanā) into the consciousness of the Vast or Brahman (brahmacetanā).

This very Agni is our soul or ātmā. To know Agni is to know one's own self. The Āryas are worshippers of light (jyotirupāsaka). In the world at those times light could be discerned only in fire. This fire has heat, it has light as well. Heat is energy (śakti), while light discerning wisdom (prajñā). The heat of our body is but the heat of fire. By technique if this heat is increased then the body becomes full of the fire of Yoga (yogāgnimaya). Then the unfolding of discriminating wisdom (prajñā) takes place. This heat increases, in the language of the Upaniṣads, by the nirmanthana or stirring up of dhyāna or contemplative meditation. Then the deities can be discerned within oneself, who is now encased (guhāhita) in the form of the size of merely a thumb (anguṣṭhamātrarūpa). That very Agni then manifests as Āditya. In the Vedas it was called Mitra. Transcending Mitra is Varuṇa or Ākāśa. Therefore Agni is individual consciousness (jīvacetanā), Mitra or Āditya cosmic consciousness (viśvacetanā), and Varuṇa the consciousness of the Brahman or Vast (brahmacetanā). You may take in this way from the philosophical viewpoint.

Dahara-vidyā is to know Him within oneself. Udgītha-vidyā is the discovery of Omkāra or the vibration of Brahman (brahmaspanda) in the Sāma songs. Madhu-vidyā is to realise Āditya as the source of bliss (ānanda) and immortality (amṛta).

What is Āditya from the phenomenal viewpoint (adhidaivata-drṣṭi) that is verily Prāṇa. Compare 'prāṇah prajānām udayatyēṣah sūryah' in the Praśnopaniṣad (1/8). Ākāśa and Prāṇa constitute a pair (mithuna) in the Brahmasūtra.

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Gītānuvacana(Vol. 1; P. 22)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

by,Srimat Anirvan(1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by:Sudipta Muni

Prasāda is a very ancient technical term. Its meaning is transparence – as is there in the Rāmāyaṇa 'prasannasalilā godāvarī' – 'the Godāvarī River of transparent water'. The realisation of self-glory from dhatuprasāda is there in the Upaniṣads. Dhātu there refers to the body-vital force-mind etc. If they attain clarity, then just like light reflecting through glass, the glow of Self-consciousness also radiates through the body-vital force-mind. This is the symptom of prasāda or the serene mind (prasannacetasa).

Gītānuvacana(Vol. 1; P. 23)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

by,Srimat Anirvan(1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by:Sudipta Muni

Brahmanirvāṇa is what has been said in the Upaniṣads the realisation of the Unreal Brahman (asadbrahma), the realisation of the Great Void (mahāsūnya) or Ākāśa. While going against the current, it seems to be dissolution, but actually it is a state of eternal poise – in the Gītā itself which has been called 'the absorption in Brahman of the knowers of the Self either way, whether living or dead.' Brāhmīsthiti or steadfastness in Brahman is staying resplendent like the

sun in that sky. This is the state of the Jīvanmukta – one who is liberated while living. But that very sun sets with the fall of the body. What remains is only the great void of that sky, but that is not Avidyā – ignorance, but Mahāvidyā – the Great Knowledge – ‘yasya bhāsā sarvamidaà vibhāti’ – through whose lustre all these shine.

Gītānuvacana(Vol. 1; P. 27)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

by,Srimat Anirvan(1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by:Sudipta Munsī

Action has to be performed always and all the time, because without action no one can live even for a moment. The evolution of guṇas is taking place in the Prakṛti and as a result actions are being performed automatically. Therefore giving up of action can't take place. But while performing actions, we are getting bound up with the desire of result – with such an evil desire as such an action may bear such fruit. We have to give up these two – ‘I am the doer’ this sense won't be there, and there won't be exultation at the success of the performed action or a sense of despondency at its failure. Verily by that unattached action can be performed.

Pravacana(Vol. 3; Letter no. 11; Pp. 137-38)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

by,Srimat Anirvan(1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by:Sudipta Munsī

I find no valid reason for calling the Kurukṣetra war unhistorical. In India, history has not been written like that of the western countries, therefore everything of it is a cock-and-bull story – this view of the western scholars even they themselves do not advocate now-a-days strongly. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a historical person, the dating guideline of the Kurukṣetra war is there in the Mahābhārata itself and on that much research has been done. Probably, around 1400 B.C. this war took place. Those who want to bring down the age of the Vedas purposively, they have rather some problems in accepting this dating. But gradually their objections are becoming dead.

The infatuation of Arjuna and its dispelling by Śrī Kṛṣṇa – these two are very natural events. But it is difficult to say if the Gītā in its present shape existed at the beginning. That's why Mr. Otto inquired about The Original Gita. That the content of the Gītā is original, if not the language in which it is written, is known from the proof of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. To consider life as a sacrifice (yajña) and to become non-desirous – these two constitute the main theme of the Gītā. The way in which the syncretisation of Action (karma), Knowledge (Jñāna) and Devotion (bhakti) has been done in the Gītā is, in the history of Indian spiritual practices, exclusively unique. Without the influence of a special personality it can't happen. The description of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's personality that we get in the Itihāsa-Purāṇas, if noticed, will reveal that everywhere in it a basic structure of the philosophy of life has been followed. This much harmony can't be incidental.

Therefore there is no obstruction in Śrī Kṛṣṇa of the Gītā and his teaching being true.

The Gītā was sung before the war, no question of abhorring war crops up there. With a few moments' instruction a great soul will normalise a relative and kindred person – there is no wonder of it.

In this country, there was a specialty of writing history (itihāsa). If any such event happens in the life of a human being, as would be the expresser of universal truth, then the life-story and realisations of that person was brought under the domain of history. Elsewhere, nothing more was done than merely providing a genealogical list. By this Itihāsa-Purāṇa,

being the vehicles of mass education, used to attain the status of the Vedas. I think, here lies the effectiveness of writing history by making history the guide to an ideal life.

Gradually events seem to be an occasion, the philosophical discussions become predominant. Philosophers then seek to bypass it by saying 'ākhyāyikā vidyāstutyarthā'. That is wrong. The burning expression of truth takes place right in the lives of human beings. As on one hand it is an event, on the other hand it is the philosophical principle (tattva) too. Striking a balance between the two if interpretation is done, then the cultivation of Itihāsa-Purāṇa becomes fruitful. Then the human life becomes the illustrative seat of the enunciated philosophical principle (tattva).

Pravacana (Vol. 3; Letter no. 35(b); Pp. 170)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsu

The external seat of the Sahasrāra-consciousness is the brain. If the great vital force reaches there, then individual consciousness bursts out into universal consciousness. In the Vedas, verily this is called the Āditya-consciousness. Āditya verily is the Guru of the whole world (jagadguru). Therefore the seat of the power of Guru is there in the Sahasrāra. Guru is of the nature of consciousness (citsvarūpa). He is never devoid of power. But he is the lord of the guṇas (guṇādhīśa) despite being above the guṇas (nirguṇa). When he is above the guṇas, then power resides potent in him. When he is the lord of the guṇas, then it is active. Remaining potent it becomes active – just as the water of a brimful reservoir remains stable, but under its unnoticeable thrust water flows out through the pipe. But the well remains full all along – 'akṣīyamāṇam utsaā śatadhāram' (Ṛgveda). This is the real nature of the Sahasrāra-consciousness as also the power of Guru (Guruśakti).

Pravacana (Vol. 3; Letter no. 44; P. 185)

[To Srimat Swami Satyananda Saraswati]

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsu

The cornerstone of the Vedas is Perceptive Luminosity (cinmaya-pratyakṣa). Whatever I'm seeing, I'm seeing verily that Supreme Deity (paramadevatā). When I'm seeing the sun, I'm seeing verily Him. Like this viewing everything to be the deity or luminous is Adhidaivata Vision. Again this vision is Cosmic.

What is there in the Cosmos or Macrocosm, an expression of it is verily in the person or microcosm. As the Sun is Cosmic; his luminosity is expressing itself in me as the eyes. Therefore the same light of consciousness (cijjyoti) is the Sun in the world – this is His Cosmic expression, and eyes in me – this is His Adhyātma (psychical) expression. Likewise what is the wind in the world that is the vital force in me. The former is spiritual (adhidaivata), while the latter psychical (adhyātma).

And the common vision is phenomenal (adhibhūta). As thinking the Sun to be a circular mass, the wind to be a gas, etc. In the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads much has not been said about the phenomenal vision, because that vision is very general and banal. From the Yogic standpoint, the spiritual and psychical visions are only there, because with their help individual consciousness can burst out into the universal consciousness.

It has been said in the Gītā, that the phenomenal is a mutable entity; this ever-evolutionary world, which is the subject of our ordinary knowledge, is verily phenomenal. And the Soul or Consciousness, which runs through everything, is verily



spiritual. And the expression of that Consciousness in every person as the distinctive nature or individuality, verily that is psychical.

No difference lies in the two accounts.

Asti and Asmi

(Being the English translation of a letter to Srimat Swami Satyananda Sarasvati)

[Source: Pravacana, Part 3, P. 222]

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Muni

The author of Pañcadaśī has made a distinction between 'Asmi' (I am) and 'Asti' (It is) from a logical standpoint – not a Yogic one. It is true, in ordinary experiences, the strength of Asmi is greater than that of Asti. That's why Brahman exists means 'kathañcid asti' – 'somewhere exists' – this is an indirect knowledge (parokṣa jñāna). But in this indirect knowledge also, there is a somewhat unity of the subject and object – otherwise it wouldn't have been knowledge. This is the decision of the Vedānta. On making the ego capable of realising Brahman by purifying it, 'Brahman exists' (Asti Brahma) appears as 'I am Brahman' (Asmi Brahma). Then this very ego expands. The Pañcadaśī speaks upto this.

What is the fallacy in this thought, I've said to you earlier. In the Yogic viewpoint, Brahman or Ātman is existent (asti) at the beginning. And 'astītyupalabdavyaù' (Kaṭha 2/3/13) my 'existence' (asmi) is a derivation of the existence of that Brahman. Note that Patañjali has asked to transcend the Concentration on the Ego (Asmitā samādhi). The sense of 'Ego' is the culmination of Engrossment (samāpatti) or Taking on the features of the object of meditation (tatstha tadañjanatā). With that, a thorough realisation (samprajñāna) of the meditative principle (upalabdavya tattva) takes place and in it does remain a subtle ego (sūkṣma ahaà). When its dissolution (pralaya) takes place in a certain 'That' (tat), the existence of ego or confoundedness (añjanatā) is revealed automatically without the operation (vyāprijā) of the intellect (Buddhi). In the Upaniṣads, this revelation has been called 'Āviù'. Under the possession of this 'Āviù' that derived ego (janya-asmitā) can be dispelled and with that occurs the success of the worship of the Ego (ahaàagra upāsana). Hope, now the thing has become clear.

Crossing Death through Avidyā

(Being the English translation of a letter to Srimat Swami Satyananda Sarasvati)

[Source: Pravacana, Part 2, P. 111]

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Muni

'Avidyayā mṛtyum tīrtvā' – here 'Avidyā' (Ignorance) is not ordinary (prākṛta) Avidyā, but the Supreme Avidyā. At other places in the Upaniṣads, it has been called 'Asamjñā' or 'Asadbrahma'. This Avidya and the Void (śūnyatā) of the Buddha are but same. In the Īśa too, Avidyā, Asambhūti, Vināśa are used synonymously. The Asamprajñāta of the Yoga is also Avidyā. Therefore, to cross death we have to flow against the current of Asamjñā; after coming downstream with Knowledge (Vidyā), the fullest enjoyment (sambhoga) of immortality through the Manifested (sambhūti). Avidyā is an undistinguished feeling, and Vidyā perfect wisdom. In the Vedic analogy Avidyā is shadow, while Vidyā sunshine. Avidyā is 'Parah kṣṇam tamah' – 'the supreme nebular darkness', while Vidyā 'Śuklam bhāh' – 'the white radiance'. The results of the two are different – though the wise (dhīra) say this, but the harmony of the two is the view of Yājñavalkya.

Kātyāyanī

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsu

In the Upaniṣad literature, Kātyāyanī is unique. At the beginning of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, there is only her name – there is no anecdote or dialogue concerning her. “Yājñavalkya had two wives – Maitreyī and Kātyāyanī. Between them Maitreyī is Brahman-inquirer (brahmavādinī) and Kātyāyanī Female-wisdom (strīprajñā)” – this we get in the next chapter on the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī (Yājñavalkya-Maitreyī saṅvāda). There Śamkara has understood ‘Strīprajñā’ as “striyā yā ucitā sā strīprajñā” – the wisdom that befits women; Kātyāyanī had that very wisdom. This means, Kātyāyanī is a banal girl, as it were. This interpretation of ‘Strīprajñā’ is in vogue.

Mr. Sasankabhusan has boldly discovered a new significance of the word – returning to the original meaning of Prajñā. He wants to say that the wisdom which blooms with the naturalness of the jasmine, as the culminating stage of spiritual perfection, that happened in Kātyāyanī and thus she is ‘Strīprajñā’.

Another name of this natural wisdom (sahaja prajñā) is ‘pratibodha’ in the Upanisads, ‘sambodhi’ in the Buddhist scriptures, ‘prātibha-jñāna’ in the Yoga philosophy. In the Vedas, its practice is ‘hr̥t’ or the heart (hr̥daya) – which is even against the current (ujāna) of the Intellect (mañṣā). On this idea of the sahaja, the Kātyāyanī of Sasankabhusan has bloomed anew with a unique glory. And centering round her has radiated the multi-coloured hues of the spiritual history of that age.

In the mystic’s view, this description of Sasankabhusan is totally agreeable. In spiritual practice, the sahaja view of man comes, in the words of the Gīta, with the ‘mohakalila’ or the disentanglement of the twist of the intellect (buddhi). Then it may be said in the words of Yājñavalkya himself, “During the culminating stage of Knowledge (jñāna) appears a childish state.” – as happened with Rāmakṛṣṇadeva. Modern spiritual psychology also says, the real nature of spiritual consciousness (adhyātmacetanā) is spontaneous in the child and the woman. If the man wants to get it he has to become a child or a woman again.

In the entire Veda Samhitā there is the description of this spontaneous sahaja – as is present in the illiterate Bāṁs of Bengal.

In this respect the definition of the Non-Self (nairātmya) of the Buddhists as ‘Prajñā’ Pāramitā and that she is of the nature of a woman – a deep significance of it is found. Sahaja wisdom (sahaja prajñā) manifests at the end of the practice and attainment of the man in the form of ‘yajñānukāśinī mānavī ilā’. The multi-splendrous Umā Haimavatī, which is of the nature of woman, appearing on the Void (ākāśa), into which disappeared the ineffable (anupākhya) ‘Yakṣa’ of the Kenopaniṣad, is in fact of the nature of spiritual awakening (pratibodharūpā), revealing to the consciousness of Indra (aindrī cetanā).

Brahman-inquirer Maitreyī is the Intellect (mañṣā) of Yājñavalkya and Kātyāyanī, who is of the nature of woman (strīrūpā), her ‘Heart’ (hr̥daya) – an extreme instinct for which ‘heart’ is a notable characteristic of the philosophy of Yājñavalkya. Addressing her Yājñavalkya may say, ‘āvām ardhavṛgalāviva svah, tenāyam ākāśaṁ striyā pūryata eva’ – we are as if two seeds within a shell; by that this space (ākāśa) of mine is really filled with wife. Again he may say, standing on the ultimate shore of negative-realisation (netipratyaya) ‘tad yathā priyayā striyā sampariṣvaktō na bāhyaṁ kiñcana veda nāntaram’ – as when being firmly clasped by the beloved wife one knows not what is either the inner or the outer, likewise this man (puruṣa) being hugged by the enlightened soul (prajñā ātmā) knows neither the inner nor the outer. The appearing of Kātyāyanī to the Indra-consciousness (aindrīcetānā) of Maitreyī in the philosophy of Yājñavalkya is akin to the appearance of the Haimavatī Umā.

In this connection many things are to be said. But it is not possible in this brief introduction.

Revealing the cave-dwelling glory of her, on whom the Upaniṣads are silent, Sasankabhusan added a new chapter to the history of the spiritual practices of India. Hence heartiest congratulations on his achievement.

The Concept of Mother

according to Indian Spiritual Practices

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsī

The spiritual practices of India have discovered the Mother in myriad ways from age to age.

In the Ṛgveda, we find the mention of an original couple (ādi mithuna) in the Dyāvapṛthivī – there the Heaven (dyūloka) is the father, and the Earth (pṛthivī) is the mother. But in the vision of the Seer (Ṛṣi), this Earth is not phenomenal (mṛnmayī), rather spiritual (cinmayī). Atharvā, the seer, has termed her as ‘Aditi’, meaning indivisible unbound eternal consciousness (akhaṇḍitā abandhanā nityacetanā). Says he, She is “hiraṇyavakṣā paramē vyoman” – in the supreme Infinity glitters Her golden bosom. He says, She is our “bhūjīṣyā pātram” – the basis of all enjoyments. Again in the Āprī hymns of the Ṛgveda we find the Mother as “tisro devyau” or a divine triad. There the Mother is Ilā, Sarasvatī and Bhāratī. As Ilā, She is “yajñānukāśinī manukanyā”, i.e., She expresses herself in the rhythm of the sacrificial practices as the flame of the burning aspiration of the aspirant’s mind; as Sarasvatī, She expresses herself in the inner recesses of consciousness as the flowing ocean-uniting (sāgara-saigāmī) stream of divine vitality (divya prāṇa); again, as Bhāratī, She shines as the rays of Sāvitrī on the top of the heaven’s head. Not only this, we find another aspect of the Mother in that very Āprī hymn – our Mother is Uṣasānaktā, meaning, the sparkling glow of Dawn, and the inexplicable darkness of Night. As the paired rhythm (yugalachanda) of the Manifest and the Unmanifest, She pervades everything of this universe. The Mother is ubiquitous (sarvamayī). This is Her cosmic (adhidaivata) aspect. Again, in the Ṛgveda itself, we find Her as Vāk, in Her spiritual (adhyātma) aspect. Then, the Mother is the eternal companion (nitya-sahacāriṇī) of Brahman “yāvat brahma viṣṭhita tāvatī vāk”: to our expanding consciousness (bṛhat cetanā), She is the mantric unfolding of the awakened consciousness-energy (prabuddha cicchakti). But the Vedic Seer has discerned the highest glory of the Mother in her aspect of ‘Aditi’. There, She is an unbound undivided vast consciousness beyond both manifestation and non-manifestation (abandhanā akhaṇḍitā mahācetana); in the supreme Vastness of Existence, Her divine manifold self-becoming (vibhūti) shines as the seven rays of Āditya. Again, this very Mother is the fire-rhythm of Gāyatrī in the poet’s heart, whose pulsation fluttering in the desire of the Bhūloka discovers the “vareṇyā bhargaū” of Sāvitrī in the Dyūloka. As the Mother is the nectar-bearing fair-winged (amṛtahāriṇī suparṇā) Gāyatrī, likewise She is the eternal brilliance (nityadīpti) of the impelling (pracodayitrī) Sāvitrī from person to person; the multi-splendrous Umā Haimavatī (bahuśobhamānā haimavatī umā), appearing on the seashore of infinite mystery (asīma rahasyasāyara kūla), before the astonished consciousness of Indra (Indracetanā).

We saw the supreme identity of the Mother, according to Vedic thought, is present in Her aspect of Mother Aditi. From the spiritual (adhyātma) standpoint, She is the bond-loosing consciousness in us. The seers called this liberated-consciousness as ‘Pracetā Varuṇa’, who is the ‘possessor of Māyā’ (Māyī) in the Vedas and ‘Brahman’ in the Upaniṣads. The Mother is then ‘Māyā’, or ‘Brahmaśakti’. This Māyā is the conscious-self-energy (prajñārūpiṇī svarūpaśakti) of Brahman in the Vedas; She is the regulator of all the worlds (sarvabhuvana niyantrī). Again, according to the Sāākhya view, when from the individual standpoint, we discern Brahman as the Puruṣa, then the Mother is the Prakṛti – as She is the creative evolutionary nature (aparā prakṛti), so also She is the world-pervading supreme nature, the matrix of pure individuality (jagat vidhṛtarūpiṇī jīvabhūtā parā prakṛti). Again, harmonising these two concepts, She transcends them as

the Highest Nature (paramā prakṛti), the power of the Lord, Yogamāyā. In a word, the Mother is Mahāmāyā, She is the supramental conscious great energy (atimānasī cinmayī mahāśakti).

Brahman is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute (Sat-Cit-Ānanda). The Mother-worshipper (mātṛsādhaka) knows the Mother as of the nature of Brahman (brahmarūpiṇī), hence the Mother is Existent (satī), Conscious (cinmayī) and Blissful (ānandamayī). The description of Her Existent aspect (satīrūpa) is found in the Purāṇas, where She, self-multiplying her body through Yoga (yogaviśiṣṭadehā), got every corpuscle of her virgin frame (kaumārī tanu) mixed up with every dust particle of India, as the innate power (śakti) of Existence. Again, Her Conscious aspect (cinmayīrūpa) is discerned as in the Haimavati, which is of the nature of Brahman (brahmamayī) of the Brahminical religion, as also in Tārā, which is of the nature of Non-Self (nairātmyarūpiṇī) of the Buddhists; and Sarasvatī, the epitome of form-imagination (rūpakalpanā) of the Jains. In this way, the Mother, as Wisdom (prajñā), remained and also remains the supremely worshipped (paramārādhyā) of the Six-rationalists or Ṣaṭtarkī. Again, we find Her as the Blissful one in the milk-maids (Gopīs) of the Bhāgavata, and the supreme essence of delightfulness in the Rādhā of the Vaiṣṇavas.

As the Mother is of the nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute (Saccidānandamayī), She is also of the nature of Energy (Śaktirūpiṇī). In the Tantras, we find the particulars of that Energy-aspect (śaktirūpa) of Hers in the triad of Will-Knowledge-Actuation (icchā-jñāna-kriyā), in the exultation of Her concept of world-ideation (bhuvanabhāvanā). A picture of this exultation (ullāsa) is registered in the scheme of the Daśamahāvīdyā. At its very beginning, we find the Existence-Consciousness-Bliss aspect of the Mother in Kālī, Tārā and Ṣoḍaśī and in Bhuvaneśvarī there is a transcending natural expression (tattvātīta sahaja prakāśa) of this Supreme Triad (parātripuṭī). Right after this we find the sublimation (urdhvatana) of the natural forces (prākṛtaśakti) through the paired rhythm of the Higher and the Lower (parāparā) in respect of power-dissipation (śakti-prakṣobha) in Bhairavī and Bagalāmukhī, Chinnamastā and Mātāṅgī and lastly in Dhūmāvātī and Kamalā, and in the Kamalā aspect of the Mother there is the natural fountain-flow (sahaja nirjharāṇa) of her 16-digited amiable glory (ṣoḍaśakala saumya-mahimā).

As in Wisdom (prajñā) and Energy (śakti), likewise we find the revelation of the Mother in the Vital-consciousness (prāṇacetanā) and the Mantra-consciousness (mantracetanā). The Haṭhayogin has the Mother in this earthly person as the coiled-up conscious vital energy (kuṇḍalītā cinmaya prāṇaśakti), in the various centers (cakras) of the nervous system (nāḍītantra) he has felt the surge of Her divine unctons (divya vibhūti). Again, the Mantrayogin has discerned Her as the primary letters (mātṛkā) – he has heard the voiceless humming (niṁsvara guṇjana) of the Unmuttered (ajapā) in the jingle of the fifty letters, emanating from the unstruck chords (anāhata tantrī).

In this way, since the far-off Vedic age till date, we have found the Mother in so many different ways. To this prolonged Mother-worship of India, there is a unique contribution of the Bengalees, of which we shall speak now.

Bengalees have wanted the Mother especially in her Energy-aspect (śaktirūpa) and the Emotional aspect (rasarūpa). Of these, being suitable to the innate nature (svabhāva) of the Bengalees, the latter aspect has received much more emphasis. The Śakti-worshipping Bengalee is the worshipper of Kālī. But the ontological image (tattvamūrti) of Kālī he has transformed into the emotional aspect (bhāvarūpa) with the aid of his inner chemistry. Kālī is his mother. Kālī is his daughter. Standing in front of Her destructive image (pralayaīkarī mūrti), he has said in the mystic language (sandhyābhāṣā), “Mother-Daughter-Wife-Sister – are they different?” He has discerned with his eye of Wisdom (prajñācakṣu) the ontological image (tattvamūrti) of the Mother; he has discerned in a very natural way, with his corporeal eye (māisacakṣu) the emotional aspect (bhāvarūpa) of the Mother – he has discovered the Mother in the earthly woman as the Virgin, the Imparter of the meaning of the Vedas, the seed-letter of Oākāra (kaumārī nigamārthagocarakarī oākārabijākṣarī). In the courtyard, by the wayside, he has seen the Mother’s tissues overflowing with the fullness of the gracious ambrosia (somyasudhā) – he has seen the triune delight (tripuṭita ullāsa) of Nandā-

Bhadra-Jayā-Riktā-Pūrṇā in the fifteen-year old juvenile frame (pañcadaśī). In the sixteen-year old Ambikā he has the immortal digit (nityakalā) of unaging ambrosia (ajara amṛta), and beyond that the supra-mundane mystery (lokottara rahasya) of Great Annihilation (mahānirvāṇa) in the new-moon-digit (amākalā) of the Saptadaśī (the seventeen-year old aspect of the Mother). The Bengalee's Mother is simultaneously both a Goddess (devī) and a woman (mānavī) in the same person. This conscious maternal-concept (cinmaya mātr-bhāvanā) has assumed a special form in this age through the worship of the Motherland. It was Bankimchandra who for the first time inaugurated this unique maternal concept through his "Vande mātaram" hymn. Then Tagore sang in praise of the Mother India (bhāratamāta), the "enchanter of the world-mind" (bhuvanamanamohinī). Sri Aurobindo freely declared, "I know not the country merely as soil and pebbles, I know it as the 'Mother'." The recognition of the country as our Mother is again heard in the clarion proclamation of the Seer Atharvā "mātā bhūmī ... Putro'haḥ pṛthivyaḥ." We listen in the voice of Ambhṛṇa Kanyā the speech illuminating "ahaḥ rāṣṭrī saigamanī vasūnām." Looking at the conscious world (cinmayī pṛthivī) that dream of the Ṛṣi again becomes visible before the mind's eye (manaścakṣu) "tviṣi vale rāṣṭre dadhātūttame" – may this earthly Mother establish us in luminosity, energy and vigour, may She establish us in an unsurpassed state-system (anuttama rāṣṭravayavasthā). Taking recourse to the motherland, the Durgāpūjā of the Bengalees has attained a unique significance in this age as the practice of nationalism.

Again, in most recent times, we have seen the Mother expressing as the power of the Guru (guruśakti) through the woman in the Bengali household or resorting to the prowess of the Bengalees. It seems as if this is the ultimate termination (carama paryavasāna) of his Power-worship (śaktisādhanā) over a long time. Today, the Mother is, in fact, "sarvamaṅgala maṅgalyā śivā sarvārthasādhikā", despite being world-transcending (viśvottīrṇā). She through Her aspects of Bhuvaneśvarī, Annapūrṇā and the Human-Goddess (devamānavī) in the same person, is the living image of the Supermind (atimānasa mūrta pratimā).

The Gita: An Episodic Outline

(Being the English translation of an extract from a letter to Srimat Swami Satyananda Sarasvati)

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsī

In the Gītā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has gradually clarified himself to the consciousness of Arjuna. Hence, during exposition, always the context is to be remembered.

In the Despondency-Episode (viṣādayoga) the individual soul (jīva) is the enquirer. The greatest problem of life has made its appearance – the problem of death. How to cross death, this thought has made a dramatic appearance.

In the second chapter is its full answer – from the standpoint of self-realisation (ātma darśana). Brahmanirvāṇa and Brāhmīsthiti, both have been spoken of there. This very chapter is the essential mystery (marmarahasya) of the Gītā. In other chapters is its amplification.

In the third chapter, as a sequel to the second chapter hints to the discipline of action (karmasādhanā) have been spoken of.

In the fourth chapter is the harmonisation of Knowledge (jñāna) and Action (karma). In course of this has come the principle of Incarnation (avatāra-tattva). This is important. What is said here in hints will be gradually clearer in the ninth chapter.

In the fifth chapter, hints are given to the fact that the culmination of the disciplines of Knowledge (jñānayoga) and Action (karma) is in Devotion (bhakti) or the fixation of the mind on God (bhagavadbuddhi).

In the sixth chapter there is practical instruction on the practice of the Yoga (yogasādhanā). Upto this is the first hexateuch. Its main object of exposition is the knowledge of the Self (ātmajñāna), because without knowing one's own self, it is not possible to become Brahman. In this hexateuch, He has spoken very little of Brahman or God. The main theme is Sāmkhya or the discipline of Knowledge (jñānayoga) – but that too not without action. Many people succeed following this very way. Therefore Arjuna's inquiry could have ended here only.

It has not. He propitiously set out to impart an entire knowledge of Himself in the seventh chapter. Knowing Him after knowing one's own self – the practice (sādhanā) became more intense. To know one's own self is Jñāna, to know Him is Vijñāna. A prelude of it is in the seventh chapter.

To know Him, the mystery of the phenomena (jagatrahasya) must be known. There are seven great mysteries (mahārahasya), and in the eighth chapter there is a description of them. The mystery of death (mṛtyu-rahasya) is to be known in particular. It has been spoken of rather elaborately. Death is not the extinction of the lamp, it is merging into Him. One has to be careful of this.

The ninth chapter is the most important in the Gītā. When all the mysteries of life and death, and the world are known, then we will be able to know who He is, who has assumed a form. What is the real nature (svarupa) of Him who has 'resorted to a human frame' as an incarnate. This knowing is the Supreme Knowing (parama vijñāna). Speaking of that royal mystery (rājaguhya) in this chapter He revealed Himself. From now on, every word of the Gītā is to be understood as a grand revelation by the Lord Incarnate.

To make this realisation clear is the Yoga of Divine Powers (vibhūtiyoga) in the tenth chapter – everywhere there is a hint to visualise Him in a visible form (mūrtarūpa). Its Concrete Realisation is in the vision of the World-Form (viśvarūpadarśana) in the eleventh chapter. But Arjuna discerned the World-Form as destruction (kālarūpa), as death (mṛtyu) – in the context of the Kurukṣetra; Bṛndāvana is here unmentioned.

Devotion (bhakti) is possible only on discerning the World-Form, on realising the Supreme (parama) within this human-form (mānuṣī tanu). This devotion is the culmination (pūrṇatā) of Self-knowledge (ātmajñāna). With the twelfth chapter ended the second hexateuch. Knowing one's own self and knowing Him became complete.

Here the inquiry (jijñāsa) ends as well. But He unasked again imparts the knowledge of the phenomena (jagat-jñāna) propitiously. The basis of this knowledge is the Vision of the Cosmic Form (Viśvarūpadarśana). The aspirant is established in the Cosmic Consciousness. He discerns from that plane – Prakṛti-Puruṣa, the three Guṇas (Guṇatraya), the three faiths (śraddhātraya), the play of Gods and the demons (devāsuralīlā), the myriad world (jagat-vaicitrya) (Ch. XVIII) etc. The pivot of this vision is the principle of the Supreme Soul (puruṣottama-tattva). In short, this is the significance of the episodic division of the Gītā.

The Mystery of Gāyatrī

(Being the English translation of a letter to Srimat Swami Satyananda Sarasvati)

[Source: Pravacana, Part 3, Pp. 188-190]

Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Muni

What we call the Gāyatrī-mantra, infact it is the Sāvitra-hymn written in the Gāyatrī metre. Its presiding deity is 'Savitā'. From midnight to midday the rise of Āditya has been divided into seven stages. In the spiritual (adhyātma) aspect, these stages are the stages of the awakening of our consciousness (cid-unmeṣa). Savitā is the deity of the third stage. After Uṣā is Savitā. Even before that there is a dual-stage (yugma-parva) of the Aśvins. After midnight, the manifestation of light takes place even amidst darkness. Before dawn, the sky becomes greyish. Upto this is the period of the Aśvins – the period of the unnoticed awakening of Knowledge (vidyā) even amidst extreme Ignorance (avidyā). Thereafter with the appearance of Dawn (Uṣā) the sky becomes red. From the spiritual viewpoint (adhyātmadrṣṭi) this has been compared with the dawn of Faith (śraddhā). After this is the period of Savitā. He remains invisible under the horizon, but the glow of his light spreads across the sky above. On the earth there is still darkness. In the spiritual aspect, after the infiltration of Faith, there occurs the experience of the Divine-Lustre (divya-vibhā) in the cerebral consciousness (mūrdhanya cetanā), but the lower portion of the person still remains under the spell of Ignorance (avidyā). There are two meanings of the word 'Savitā' – one who impels, one who conceives. The former meaning is the chief one. The definition of his inspiration (preraṇā) is 'Pracodanā', meaning an impulsion. In the Savitā-hymn there is a clear mention of it.

There are two actions spoke of in the hymn – one of the aspirant (upāsaka) and the other of the deity (devatā). The aspirant is not alone, he is the representative of the world-phenomena. Hence its mention in the plural number. 'Dhīmahī' is the action on the part of the aspirants or the aspirant, representative of all. Meaning – we place it (the meaning as 'we meditate' is secondary). 'Pracodayāt' – the action on the part of the deity, may he impel or lead up our Dhī or meditative-consciousness (dhyāna-cetanā).

Now the hints on practice.

We are, on attracting the 'vareṇya bharga' or the sweet burning sensation (madhura dahana-jvālā) (Cf. 'tapta-ikṣu-carvaṇa') of the luminous Savitā (jyotirmaya Savitā) within us. How? – I'm placing the light of Savitā spread over my head within the heart through the eyebrow-consciousness (bhrūmadhya-cetanā), attracting it via the path of the central pore of the palate (brahmarandhra-patha). In the Aitareya Upaniṣad the cerebral-consciousness (mūrdhanya-cetanā), eyebrow-consciousness (bhrūmadhya-cetanā) and heart-consciousness (hārda-cetanā) are talled the three 'Āvasatha's. Hints are there at many places in the Vedas as to the attraction of the rays of Savitā through the path of the central pore of the palate (brahmarandhra-patha) or the Hitā-nerve (Hitā-nāḍī).

With the rays attracted and placed within the heart (hṛdaya) our individual consciousness (jīvacaitanya) is awakened, the Dhī or meditative-consciousness (dhyānacetanā) unfolds in the heart or the seat of individuality (jīvasthāna) – with the touch of the deity (devatā); then the surrender to the deity – may he lead the meditation placed within the heart (hṛcchaya-dhyāna) in the reverse order through the path of the central pore of the palate to the Āditya-realm (āditya-maṇḍala) in the Great Void (mahāśūnya).

While inhaling think upto 'Dhīmahī', and while exhaling think upto 'Pracodayāt'. In this way Japa and thinking (arthabhāvanā) will continue keeping pace with the rhythm of inhalation-exhalation.

The 'Bestowal of Power' (śaktipāta) occurs while attracting the 'vareṇya bharga' of Savitā, its seed is 'Saù'. Again while detracton (vikarṣana) the consciousness gets merged into Śiva. Its seed is 'Haà'. The former hymn is with visarga – the hymn of creation. The next one is with the bindu (dot) – the hymn of dissolution (pralaya). Uniting the two is 'Haàsa' – the symbol of Individuality (jīvātmā). The Jīva resting in Brahman (brahmībhūta jīva) is the 'Paramahaàsa'. In the 'Haàsavati' hymn of the Ṛk-saàhitā there is a description of it. Haàsa is also the symbol of Āditya.

Gāyatrī is the essence of all hymns, of the nature of Vāk (Speech). Sarasvatī, the goddess of Speech rides on the Haàsa, i.e., from the pure individual consciousness (śuddha jīvacaitanya) appears Vāk, of the nature of the power of Brahman (brahmaśaktirūpā vāk). She is that speech which on being sung saves us, driving away the darkness of the Ignorance (avidyā).

The Haàsa or Āditya or pure individual consciousness (śuddha jīvacaitanya) has also been called 'Suparṇa' (lit. 'golden-winged') in the Vedas. Again this 'Suparṇa' is Śyena or Tārṣya or Garutmān (Garuḍa in the Purāṇas) in the Veda. During afternoon we find the blue eagle flying in the blue sky. It is to be thought, it is verily me who has spread wings across the Supreme Sky (paramavyoma) tearing asunder all worldly bonds, as the vehicle of Viṣṇu or the Expansive Consciousness (vyāpticitanya). This thought is there at many places in the Vedas. This is the mystery of the Garuḍa-vehicle (Garuḍāvāhana-rahasya).

With the sunrise, comes Brahmā, his power (śakti) being the red-complexioned swan-vehicled girl (raktavarṇā haàsavāhanā bālikā). When the sun is in the mid-sky he is Viṣṇu, his power being the Garuḍa-vehicled young Gāyatrī, the complexion is like that of the blue-sky (the 'Nīla-Sarasvatī' of the Tantras is to be remembered, the 'Ākāśānantya' in the Buddhist practice). Then in a natural way the setting of the sun takes place. The sun sets externally, but he remains unset in the consciousness of the Yogin. The deity is then Śiva – who is Death and Immortality in the same person. His power is the bull-vehicled white-complexioned (vṛṣabhavāhanā śubhavarṇā) Jaratī. The white colour is suggestive of the luminous death (vaivasvata mṛtyu) – to die luminously in plain. Indra is generally called Vṛṣabha in the Vedas. The Bull (vṛṣabha) is the symbol of the Supreme Person (paramapuruṣa). No bull-vehicled deity is found in the Vedas. That is a Purāṇic thought. In the South, this Vṛṣabha has been called Nandī. Meaning a luminous bliss-intensified consciousness (śubhra ānandaghana cetanā), on which rests the foundation of Beningnity (śivatva). This in brief, is the history and the mystery of the imagination of Gāyatrī.

PS: The worship of Gāyatrī is infact the worship of Vāk. Śakti is of then nature of Mantra (mantramayī), of the nature of Speech (vāgrūpiṇī) in the Vedas. In this respect there is a similarity between Vedic Śaktism and Tāntric Śaktism, there is a pre-eminence of Mantra in both.

Snehāśisa (Volume 1, Letter no. 51, p. 76)

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsī

The word 'Doṣa' means darkness, which pollutes and contaminates everything. The Sāṃkhya term 'doṣa' has also come from this. In Bengali evening is called 'pradoṣa'. There no sunlight during evening. Though there is no light outside then, a fire burns within. Who lights it up is the fire of consiousness of the nature of my self-light. He 'vas'-es or illumines the darkness of evening (pradoṣa), he brings in light among darkness, that's why he is called 'doṣāvastā'.

Christianity or Islam is based on personal views – that of Christ or Mohammed. The Indian Pīr is not one – many Christs, many Mohammeds have been born, are being born and will be born in this country. Therefore to carry on a religion in the name of a person, one has to be a Marxist or a Maoist. 'Brahman' is the object of worship of everyone of this country – it is not any person, rather an idea (bhāva). In this country, Buddhism was the only personal religion. There also Buddha said, don't worship any person, worship the idea. One who attains Annihilation (nirvāṇa), he is verily a Buddha. An aspirant can become Christ or Mohammed – even the imagination of this is the heresy of a heretic to other religions. How will there be a common religion of them here? Our very instinct is for the Supreme Truth (parama satya) – which is not the worship of a person. Personal worship we do with the Guru – but we don't consider him to be the Guru of whole India. In this respect, the Indian mind is surprisingly liberal. For this the genesis of Universal Science Religion



(Vivekananda) or Religion of Man (Tagore) or Life Divine (Aurobindo) has been possible in this country. Are these not the general religion of all people of the world?

The celebration of the Durgāpūjā is modeled upon the Soma-sacrifice (somyāga). In the Soma-sacrifice a branch of the Ficus Glomearata was planted – sitting down it the priests (ṛtvikas) used to sing the Sāma, touching it. The Ficus Glomearata is the Brahman-tree (brahmavṛkṣa) – we call it sacrificial fig (yajñadumura), as it yields fruit without flowering. The ‘nine-leaves’ (navapatrikā) are the symbol of that Ficus Glomearata. The worship of tree is a very ancient practice – Tagore rejuvenated it in his ‘Vana-Vāṇī’. In the Vedas, Agni is called ‘Vanaspati’. The deity is not merely man – he is the animal, he is the plant. That’s why the lion is the base of Durgā, right beside it is the ‘nine-leaves’ (navapatrikā) – she herself is of the nature of woman. Most of the plants which are used in the ‘nine-leaves’ are medicinal plants, and they multiply very easily. With that, being the symbol of the power of procreation, the advent of the Goddess is found in it.

Haimavati, 25/10/70

Snehāśisa (Vol. 2; Letter no. 20; Pp. 30-31)

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Muni

I think the Akṣasūkta to be a secular hymn. But still it has found a place in the Ṛksamhitā because of the wonderful and varied life-story of its Ṛṣi Kavaṣa. Despite being a hated chicaner he got elevated to the rank of a great seer (maharṣi) – this is his glory. A few more mentions of his life is there in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Excepting his Akṣasūkta other hymns of his are vehicles of profound thought.

Viewed from the standpoint of consciousness the manifestation of Brahman is equal everywhere. But certainly there is difference of this manifestation from the standpoint of power (śakti). The former is the vision of the stationary-Brahman (adhiṣṭhāna-brahma), while the latter is of indwelling-Brahman (antaryāmi-brahma). Flowers are blooming in a tree – some are buds, some half-bloomed, some bloomed, some are shed. As flower, you cannot underrate any of them. But the fruition of the fully bloomed flower is greater than that of the bud – the manifestation of energy (śakti) in it is not the same as in the bud. Likewise Brahman remains equally everywhere in respect of potentiality. But a special manifestation of It can happen in a specific person, or place or time.

Citśakti (kalā), Bindu Nāda these are the technical terms of the Mantrayoga of Tantra. There are various interpretations of the terms. The meaning has to be ascertained according to the context.

Nāda is the continuous jingle of mantra, which is its energy. You may call it Prakṛti. And Bindu is the individual consciousness (jīvacaitanya). You may call it Puruṣa. The mantra that is yours, that has come from your consciousness. Take for example the Brahman-seed (brahmabīja) Om, and Māyā-seed (māyābīja) Hrīḥ. Hrīḥ has evolved out of Om. For, the folding and unfolding of power (śakti) takes place centering round the possessor of power (śaktimāna). Individual-consciousness (jīvacaitanya) is from Brahman-consciousness (brahmacaitanya) therefore from the Brahman-seed has come out the consciousness of any specific mantra. Likewise from that Māyā-seed has come out any specific seed-mantra (bījamantra).

Now your individual consciousness is awakened by the grace of the Brahman-consciousness – you cannot awaken it voluntarily, someone wakes you up. Likewise the power of your mantra also is awakened by the infiltration of the Māyā-seed. That’s why Nāda or the power of Mantra (mantraśakti) is not awakened in you – unless Mahamāyā graces your

individual consciousness. Again until you are able to unite the power of your mantra with your consciousness (bindu), the power of your mantra (nāda) also is unable to discover the Great Power (mahāśakti).

Narendrapur 16/5/69

Snehāśisa (Vol. 3; Letter no. 31; P. 41)

by, Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsī

The real nature of 'I'-ness is the Self (ātmā). All of us are saying 'I' – this is the unripe 'I'. This 'I' distinguishes between me and others – only conflict ensues between 'I'-s. That is called Saāsāra.

But if 'I' attains clarity in Knowledge (jñāna) or Love (prema), if it explodes, then it knows everyone to be its own. It is as if the sky – and everyone glitters like stars on that sky. This void-like realisation is the Self. The self-knowledge sees that, that feeling is rather present in everyone, though they don't know it. Then there is no conflict between anyone or anything. As I loved myself during the stage of unripe 'I', likewise I love my real nature of self present within everyone with the help of this ripe 'I' or Self. The real nature of my ripe 'I' is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. As everyone has body, vital force, mind like me, likewise everyone has the Self – the realisation of the ripe 'I' remains latent within. Then, everyone is the 'I' or Self or Brahman. With whom is the conflict? – This realisation is Universal Love.

The Objective becomes Subjective with love. Whom I love, when he is outside me, then he is the Object – as, to me, his body is the Object. But the emotional waves that rise within on loving him, by that he remains no more outside me, he becomes one with my inner self as the emotional image, and then the Objective turns Subjective.

Haimavati, 22/11/70

Snehāśisa (Vol. 2; Letter no. 58; Pp. 88-90)

By Srimat Anirvan (1896 – 1978),

Translated from the Original Bengali by: Sudipta Munsī

There are three stages of Soma. When Soma is a particular plant or creeper (probably a shrub) then its name is 'andhaù'. The word has come from 'adhaù' (under). In Greek shrub is called anthos, with that it has got a connection.

The roots of the creeper are stationed underground. By crushing to be filtered in a sheep-wool strainer. Then the Soma-juice becomes 'pavamāna' meaning self-purifying. Thereafter that juice on purification through air-contact becomes 'Indu' meaning bright drop (ujjala jyotirbindu). That's why there are three conditions of Soma – 'andhaù' when underground, 'pavamāna' in the atmosphere (antarikṣa) and in the heaven (dyuloka) 'indu'. This 'Indu', from the astronomical viewpoint is the moon – but it is the ambrosial light transcending the solar realm to the mystics. She is Ṣoḍāśī (the sixteen year old girl) in the Tantras – the sixteenth digit, transcending the fifteen waning digits, of the moon. It has been dealt with in the Vedas and Upaniṣads.

This sixteenth digit of Soma is real (dhruvā), eternal (nityā) – bliss is its real nature. In the Tantras it has been called the sixteen-year old Kanyākumārikā. Women are also, in reality, like the Goddess of the Saptaśatī 'more amiable than the Amiable and more beautiful than the Beautiful' (somyā somyatarā sundarīṣvatisundarī) blissful. This is the Soma principle.

From the spiritual (adhyātma) standpoint, this Soma or Bliss principle is latent within our body. In the Yajurveda a sunray has been spoken of, it is called 'Suṣumṇa'. The etymological meaning of 'suṣumṇa' is 'highly blissful' and it is connected

to Soma. In the Ṛgveda we have the 'Suṣomā' river. There it is said that the external river has verily become the nerves in our body. In the Upaniṣads it is found that a single ray of the sun has come down, constructing three houses (āvasatha) in the human body passing through the central pore of the palate (brahmarandhra). This is verily the Suṣumṇā nerve (suṣumṇā nāḍī) of the Tantras, 'a white path passing through the body', being the channel of Soma-juice or spiritual bliss in the Vedas, of which three or four knots are spoken of.

Now compare this with the sacrificial Soma. The 'andha' Soma is present in the mūlādhāra. Piercing the naval center when it surges towards the heart, then it is the 'pavamāna'. Then, by the possession of that bliss the manifestation of the Mantra-consciousness (mantracaitanya) takes place. The gross Vaikharī word on reaching the heart becomes the emotional (bhāvamayī) Madhyamā. The stream flows further upwards in between the eyebrows, then the idea reveals as light. The word is then Paśyantī. Thereafter when the stream, piercing the place in between the eyebrows spreads into the void of the cerebral consciousness, then the word become the supremely powerful (mahāśaktirūpiṇī) original Word (ādi vāk) or Parā. However, the three limbs of the Word are interiorized – it can't be heard or seen. The act of transcending the blissful stream of Soma (saumya ānandadhārā) is called at some place in the Vedas as 'pra-sava', somewhere as 'utsava' – as if, on pressing a tube, making the liquid material within it, tend upwards. The external form of this spiritual practice is the Soma-sacrifice.

Calcutta, 11/10/70