



# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

*Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those  
who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!*

Vol. 12, No. IV, October 1975

"When I took shelter  
under thee as my One God,  
Thou didst destroy me al-  
together, Oh Arunachala !"

— *The Marital Garland  
of Letters*, verse 48

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(A QUARTERLY)

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**Vol. 12**

**OCTOBER 1975**

**No. IV**

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— Editor.

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## The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

The aim of this journal is to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics, and to clarify the paths available to seekers in the conditions of our modern world.

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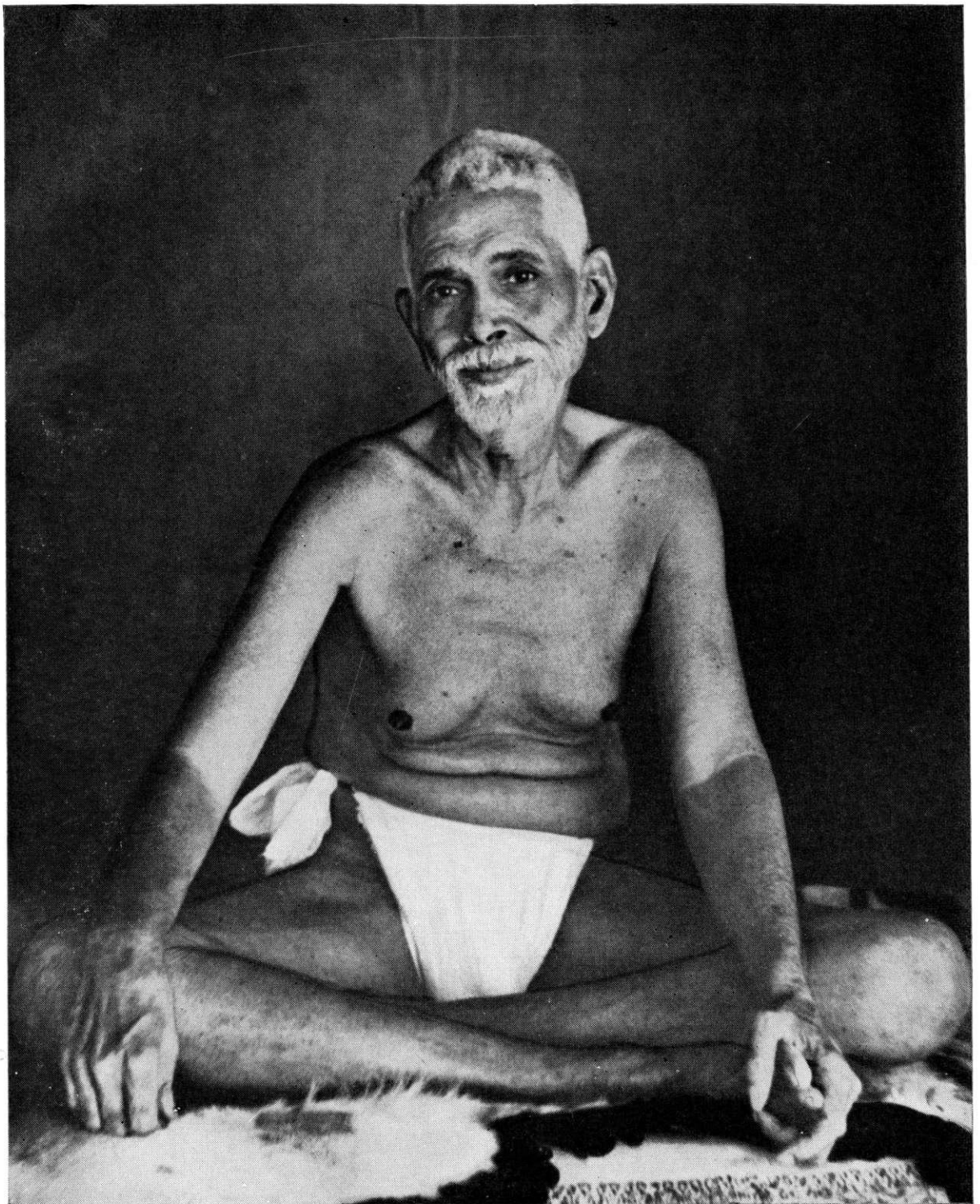
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### THE MOUNTAIN PATH

is dedicated to

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi





# The Mountain Path

Vol. 12. No. IV, October 1975

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## EDITORIAL

### Liberation During Last Moments

ON the topics of death and rebirth, of bondage and liberation, Bhagavan's teaching was to prompt the enquiry, "Who dies? Who is born? Who is to be reborn? Who is bound? Who is to be liberated?" This method leading to intensive self-enquiry, he explicitly taught or silently communicated to seekers who were capable of grasping the pure non-dual truth and they learnt soon enough that the questioner was the non-existent ego and that the real self had no questions to ask and nothing to do with birth or death, bondage or liberation. But Bhagavan was also ready, on occasion, to adapt his teaching to the understanding of the seeker, to admit "the lower, contingent point of view" of those who were not yet ready for pure non-dual awareness. Like Sri Krishna who asserts in Chapter II of the *Gita* that no one is born and no one dies and speaks in Chapter IV of "the numerous incarnations" of himself and Arjuna, Bhagavan too varied and adjusted his teaching to the mood and capacity of the listener.

The general Hindu belief is that liberation from the cycle of birth and death is obtained by divine grace when one is ripe by virtue of one's devotion and surrender to God. Three such instances are described in this article, which is written from the relative standpoint.

\* \* \*

Palani Swami was one of the earliest devotees of Bhagavan Ramana, noted for his non-attachment to anything worldly. When Bhagavan was living in Gurumurtham<sup>1</sup> immersed in *samadhi* day and night, Palani

Swami heard of him and went and attached himself to Bhagavan as an attendant. He served Bhagavan till the end of his stay at Virupaksha Cave on Arunachala for more than 17 years.

When Bhagavan went up to Skandashram, a newly built abode for him, higher up, Palani Swami chose to continue at the Virupaksha Cave itself for solitude. Then Bhagavan used to visit him there off and on and found him growing weaker. When he fell ill and was unable to move out, Bhagavan began to visit him daily and help him in whatever way he could.

One day he saw a peacock flying up from the Virupaksha Cave to Skandashram in great excitement and it struck him that Palani Swami should be in a critical condition. At once Bhagavan went down to the Cave and found his intuition correct. Palani Swami was in the throes of death gasping for breath. Bhagavan sat near him with his right hand on his chest. Palani Swami's breath became soft and Bhagavan took off his hand when he felt a quivering within Palani Swami's chest. This, Bhagavan has said is the sign of life becoming extinct in the body. But when Bhagavan took off his hand, that very moment, Palani Swami's eyes opened. "I thought he would subside at the heart, but he escaped!" Bhagavan remarked, adding, "That is said to be the sign of one going to higher states of spiritual experience, though not immediate merger at the Heart."

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<sup>1</sup> A samadhi-shrine situated near Keenathur, - suburb of Tiruvannamalai on the east.

The following passage from *Sri Ramana Gita* may be of interest here :

"There is no difference between the experience of one liberated here and that of one, who according to the Scriptures, goes to *Brāhmāloka* and gets liberated there.

"Identical with the experience of the above two is that of the *Mahatma* whose *pranas* merge into pure Being even here (at the time of death).

"Abidance in the Self is the same for all, the destruction of bondage is the same for all and there is but one kind of *Mukti*. Difference between *Muktas* appears only to the minds of others.

"The *Mahatma* who abides in the Self and gets release while yet alive, his life-forces too get absorbed in the Self even here."

Ch. XIV-5, 6, 7, 8.

\* \* \*

Next we take up the case of Bhagavan's mother, **Alagammal**, on the last day of her life on earth. She was living in the immediate presence of Bhagavan at Virupaksha Cave and Skandashram for many years getting spiritually evolved thereby. On the last day of her life — May 19, 1922 — noticing signs of approaching death, Bhagavan sat near her with his right hand on her chest and the left on her head from 8 in the morning till 8 at night. What happened then has been described by Bhagavan himself : "It was a struggle between mother and myself. Her accumulated tendencies of the past (*vāsanās*) rose up again and again and then and there got destroyed. Thus the process was over and peace reigned supreme. I felt the last quiver of the heart but did not take off my hand until it completely stopped. This time I was careful thanks to my experience with Palani Swami and saw that mother's *prana* (life) got completely merged at the Heart.<sup>2</sup>"

Here one is reminded of the following famous *slokas* of the *Bhagavad Gita* :

"One who gives up his body remembering me alone even at his last moments gets merged in my Being. There is no doubt about it.

"Thinking of whatsoever one leaves the body at the end, by dint of that last thought one attains that.

"This, O Partha ! is the state of Brahman. Reaching this, one is no more deluded. Remaining in this state even during one's last moments, one gets liberated as Brahman."

Ch. VIII-5, 6 & Ch. II-72.

Bhagavan had not taken any food that day till then and so he took his meal peacefully after he had finished attending on his mother. The whole of that night there was devotional singing and Bhagavan himself participated in the chanting the whole of *Tiruvachakam*.<sup>3</sup>

The body of Alagammal was brought down from the hill to a place south of it next morning and interred there. The body was not cremated as usual, not only because Alagammal was a *sannyāsini* for many years, wearing *kāśhāya* (ochre cloth) but also was liberated by the remarkable grace of Bhagavan. A *linga* was installed on her *samādhi* by Bhagavan himself. Ganapati Muni who was present on the occasion has sung six verses in Sanskrit about the Liberation of Alagammal. Here is the translation of two of them :

"The Light Supreme indicated by the texts of Vedānta,  
The Light pervading all the worlds  
That Light shone clear to mother  
Alagammal by the Grace of her son  
And She herself shone as that Light.

"May Maharshi's holy mother shine forth,  
May her shrine of Grace shine forth,  
May the Linga installed shine for ever  
And may the fresh Spring flow for ever".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> It will be interesting to note here that many years before, when Alagammal was seriously ill at the Virupaksha Cave Bhagavan had composed four verses in Tamil, in one of which he prays to Arunachala, the Hill of Fire, to burn up his mother with the Fire of Jnana, so that there may be no need of cremating the body after death. Bhagavan being Arunachala Himself, did what he had put in the form of a prayer years ago.

<sup>3</sup> The rare collection of *Hymns in Praise of Siva* (Tamil) by the Saint, Manikyavachakar.

<sup>4</sup> The reference here is to a crystal-clear spring of water which gushed forth on digging at a spot pointed by Bhagavan near his mother's samadhi.



True to the words of the inspired poet there stands now a beautiful temple constructed over the Mother's Samadhi with a granite *Sri Chakra Meru* installed at the Sanctum, along with Bhagavan's shrine of grace adjoining it with its perennial Spring of grace !

\* \* \*

Next we come to the **Cow Lakshmi**. She, as a calf, was presented to Sri Ramanasramam with her mother by a villager as directed in a dream. As a mark of acceptance Bhagavan fondled the calf. But, due to lack of facilities at the Ashram for taking care of them, they were entrusted to a devotee living in Tiruvannamalai. He took care of them and was bringing the milk to the Ashram every day. On the day of Cow worship (*Go-puja*), on the second day of the month of *Thai*, the devotee brought Lakshmi, the calf, and her mother to the Ashram. Lakshmi was fondled by Bhagavan and she also got particularly attracted to Bhagavan. Thenceforward whenever Lakshmi was not tethered to her post at home she used to run to the Ashram by herself and go straight to Bhagavan and Bhagavan used to fondle and give her fruits and eatables.

After some years, when proper arrangements were made at the Ashram to maintain cows, she was brought back to the Ashram. Even at the Ashram whenever Lakshmi was not tethered to her post at the Cow-shed (*Gosāla*) she used to run direct to Bhagavan's Hall and present herself to him. And whatever work Bhagavan had on hand, he would put it all aside, to receive and fondle Lakshmi looking deep into her eyes. Such was the attraction Lakshmi felt for Bhagavan and such the response she received from Bhagavan. As years rolled by Lakshmi gave birth to calves often on Bhagavan's birthday itself.

Lakshmi grew old and fell ill. Bhagavan used to visit her daily in the Cow-shed. Then one day it looked she would pass away soon. Bhagavan sat near her touching and looking at her with compassion. Soon after she passed away. Arrangements were made to have Lakshmi's body interred within the Ashram premises. She was given the customary sacred

bath and after due rites was buried near the northern compound of the Ashram, a few yards from Bhagavan's Hall. Bhagavan was sitting nearby on a chair watching all the proceedings. Fruits and puffed rice were distributed to all those present on the occasion.

That evening Bhagavan enquired about the date and constellation of that day. Devotees wondered why he enquired about them — it was so unusual. Next morning Bhagavan showed them a verse he had composed in Tamil stating the year, month, date, day and constellation on which the Cow Lakshmi got liberated. Devaraja Mudaliar asked Bhagavan if he meant *Mukti* itself (final liberation from the cycle of birth and death) or he had used the term in a formal way. Bhagavan assured him that he had used the word deliberately in its real sense. And so it became clear that Bhagavan had brought about her liberation as he was capable of it. There is now a stone-image of Lakshmi over her Samadhi with the Tamil verse written by Bhagavan (on her liberation) inscribed on a stone-slab in the background.

Nearby there are the *samadhis* of a dog (Jackie), a deer (Valli) and a crow also which had received Bhagavan's attention during their last moments. These are but a few acts of Bhagavan's grace known to us. The very proximity of a *Jnani* is described as *Brahmaloka* (the region of Brahman) and fortunate indeed are those who have had the opportunity of being near one such during their life-time or last moments.

Though the ultimate truth is that there is neither bondage nor release, that there is only Pure Awareness, the One Self of all, the relative also has to be accepted and taken seriously, since from there we begin and in it alone all *sadbanas* proceed. Bhagavan, it should be remembered, has dealt with all the steps, *nishkāmya karma*, devotion, *japa* and *dhyāna* in his *Upadesa Sara*. Later, he comes to Self-enquiry, the result of which is the realization that there is no separate individuality as such and therefore neither bondage nor release.

# PERSEUS AND THE GORGON

## A New Interpretation of the Ancient Myth

By

Douglas E. Harding

**M**AN is wiser, his roots go deeper, than he knows. His Unconscious is always coming up with images, often elaborately disguised, whose function is to redress the imbalance of his conscious mind. A remarkable instance of this hidden wisdom arising from the depths is the ancient Greek myth of Perseus and the Gorgon. No enlightened man or group of men ever made up this story in order to convey, in the form of an easily followed and exciting tale, profound religious and psychological truths that the people weren't ready for. No; the story just grew up along with the ancient Greeks themselves, much as their language and social customs grew up, and got written down and thought about much later. In fact, we are still thinking about the adventures of the Greek heroes. There can be no final and conclusive interpretation of the great myths of mankind. We find in them what we currently need.

In this article we present (1) an outline of the myth as it comes down to us from the Greek poets and dramatists and sculptors. Then we offer (2) our own interpretation in terms of Self-realisation. And conclude with (3) some sayings of Ramana Maharshi, by way of summary; plus (4) a warning footnote.

### (1) THE MYTH

A typical hero of Greek mythology, Perseus was half divine and half human — a son of Zeus, the Father of the gods, and Danae, a mortal woman. Danae's father, Acrisius, had been warned that he would be killed by Danae's son, so he took the precaution of shutting her in a brass tower. This did not deter Zeus who, turning himself into a shower of golden rain, came down through the roof

and impregnated her, thus begetting Perseus. When Acrisius discovered that his daughter had given birth to a son, he set them both adrift at sea in a chest. However Zeus caused them to come ashore at Seriphos, where a fisherman rescued them and took them to the king of the country, who befriended the refugees.

When Perseus reached manhood the king set him the formidable task of killing Medusa, one of the terrible Gorgon Sisters, whose head was covered with writhing snakes instead of hair — a sight so frightful that one look at her turned everyone to stone. Perseus equipped himself for the adventure with great thoroughness. First, he visited the Weird Sisters who shared one Eye between the three of them, and snatched it as they were passing it round. Then he made them direct him to the Nymphs, from whom he obtained the Winged Sandals (which enabled their wearer to travel rapidly through the air), the Magic Wallet (into which things disappeared and out of which they re-appeared), and the Cap of Invisibility (which gave its owner the power of vanishing at will). Next, Hermes presented him with a wonderful Sword for beheading Medusa. Finally, Athene, the goddess who personified ideal wisdom and power, lent him her Mirror-shield, in which alone Medusa could safely be viewed. Thus magnificently armed, our hero duly tracked down and decapitated the monster without looking directly at her, concealed her head in his Magic Wallet, and got away unharmed from her enraged sisters — thanks to his Cap of Invisibility. Other adventures followed, in which he overcame his enemies by producing from his Wallet the Gorgon's head and freezing them in their tracks.



## (2) INTERPRETATION

Such, in brief, is the famous legend of Perseus and Medusa the Gorgon. According to the interpretation which follows, Perseus is everyman — in particular, myself coming to realise Who I really am, my true Identity.

(a) *The Divine-human Hero*

On one side (his mother's) Perseus was mortal; on the other (his father's) divine. My nature is dual. Looked at from outside, I appear all-too-human; from inside, I'm nothing of the sort.

(b) *The Fall*

Perseus is at sea, abandoned, all hint of divinity gone, in danger of death. So, again, with me. I am lost. I have indeed come down in the world.

(c) *The Task*

Reaching maturity, Perseus is required to solve *the* problem, aptly called petrification. In other words, solidification, the universal but false idea that one is shut up in a body, entombed, imprisoned, condensed and shrunk into a limited, substantial, opaque, coloured thing, an object like those objects out there. For myself, growing up from infancy, my mother's face, every face I see, becomes in effect Medusa's, forever telling me, "You too are like this: the thing you are looking *at* is your clue to the thing you are looking *out of*." My task is to see through this lie. I have to find a way of looking at that face, of somehow coping with it, without letting it petrify me — *a way of seeing I'm not like that at all*. For this great task I'm already marvellously equipped, as follows:

(i) *The Third Eye*. For a start I can't do better than, like Perseus, find my Single or Third Eye. The fact is I've only to notice I never looked out of anything else! I have only to count, in all honesty and simplicity, the number of windows my 'house of clay' really has, seen from indoors. And, having counted *one*, to notice how this huge and speckless Window has no frame and is set in no wall and has no structure at all *this* side

of it. My two-windowed facade exists for others.

(ii) *The Winged Sandals*. Again, as soon as I have the courage and the honesty to attend, I discover that the world is given as two-dimensional — high, wide, and without depth. Distance is a put-up job, a convenient social fiction. I clearly see that I'm no further from that star than from that treetop, and no further from that treetop than this hand. Looking at myself right here, I'm not in the world at all: it's in me. Whereas Perseus, shod with Winged Sandals, *gets* all over the place, at speed; I *am* all over the place, instantly.

(iii) *The Magic Wallet*. Like Perseus, again, I'm furnished with the Magic Wallet, the Void here that is forever taking in and producing all the world's treasures. Indeed I *am* this Bottomless Purse or Horn of Plenty. My very essence is Capacity, with room and to spare for all the shapes and colours and sounds and smells and tastes and feelings and thoughts that come and go in It.

(iv) *The Cap of Invisibility*. The Cap fits, and I wear it — and find no wearer! Not for others there, but for myself here, I vanish.

(v) *The Sword*. This is the indispensable weapon in the fight against petrification, the keen Vajra Sword for severing Self from not-Self, Reality from all its appearances, *Nirvana* from *Samsara*, this First Person Singular from all second and third persons, this Void from its filling, this featureless Original Face from all those Gorgon faces. So long as the cut-and-thrust of my Sword of Discrimination leaves one strand of connecting tissue between subject and object, I remain an object among objects, threatened by them in a million ways, petrified with fear. But when all connection is severed, I see I've always been unconnected, no object but the Space in which objects occur. As such, I coincide with them, I *am* them all, and their menace is overcome. But it's only when the distinction between the Space and its contents is seen as total that their union is seen as total.

(vi) *The Mirror-shield*. Whenever I look *directly* at any face there, while overlooking the featureless Space, the mirror-like Clarity

here in which that face is presented, I'm thing-ed, trapped, faced up, petrified. (It's all imagination, of course, but none the less painful for that.) My only protection against those baleful features is, like Perseus confronting Medusa, to turn my attention round from them to my Absence-of-features, to the clear Mirror here which is my Shield from all harm. Seen as if she were self-existent, real in her own right out there and independent of the Seer here, Medusa turns me to something like stone. Seen from her Origin here, she's not only rendered harmless, but is revealed as a unique and indispensable expression of Who I am, and probably quite beautiful into the bargain. What's more, she's yet another reminder to me to look back at Who's looking.

(vii) *Medusa's Head Re-deployed.* My task accomplished, the world's a safe place for living in me. I'm its life, and it has none whatever of its own. For now it's my turn, like Perseus exposing Medusa's head to his pursuers, to petrify all comers. There are no embodied minds, no separate consciousnesses around. Only here, where I can find no eyes, no face, no obscuring body at all, is the indivisible Spirit, and none of it is left out there lurking behind those little eyes. No goblins peep through those windows at me. Eyes and faces and bodies are now seen for exactly what they are — decor, interesting scenic features, charmingly coloured shapes as unhaunted as clouds and flowers are, as devoid of menace. I no longer feel under inspection. And in case this should sound as if I'm merely killing everyone off, reducing them to so many walking corpses or mechanical dolls, let me immediately add that the opposite is also true: there's more than enough Consciousness here to go round and bring the whole Universe — including all the officially 'dead' parts — to abundant life again. But this time the life is from here. I AM the life and soul of the cosmic party. There are no others.

### (3) SUMMING UP

Who could better conclude for us than Ramana Maharshi himself? Most of the following quotations are taken from his *Talks*, a few from his *Translations*. They are arranged

to correspond with the items of equipment used by our hero in the fulfilment of his great task.

#### (i) *The Third or Single Eye, for really seeing with*

The forms perceived are various — blue and yellow, gross and subtle, tall and short, and so on; but the Eye that sees them remains one and the same.

If the eye becomes the Self, the Self being infinite, the Eye is infinite.

*Disciple*: What is the significance of the spot between the eyebrows?

*Maharshi*: It is mentioned as if to say, "Do not see with your eyes".

#### (ii) *The Winged Sandals, for conquering space*

Where is the star, in fact? Is it not in the Observer?

The trouble is you see the world as external.

The "I" has no location.

#### (iii) *The Magic Wallet or Hold-all*

What is not in you cannot appear outside.

Everything is within one's Self.

The idea that one is limited is the trouble.

#### (iv) *The Cap of Invisibility, worn by No-body*

Anything seen cannot be real.

If you think you are a body the world seems external.

Do not confound yourself with the object, namely the body.

Identification of the Self with the body is the real bondage.

#### (v) *The Sword of Discrimination*

Countless scriptures proclaim only discrimination between Self and non-Self.

To qualify for enquiry into the Self, a man must be able to discriminate between the Real and the unreal.

The Self has no sort of relationship with anything.

#### (vi) *The Mirror-shield of the Self*

Find the Subject, and objects will take care of themselves.



Wonder of wonders . . . they see phenomena apart from the Self !

Can anything new appear without that which is eternal ?

If you know your Self no evil can befall you.

(vii) *Medusa's Head Re-deployed :*  
*the end of the others*

There are no others.

In reality, all these are nothing but the Self.

Nothing can be apart from you.

Phenomena are real when experienced as the Self, and illusory when seen apart from the Self.

#### (4) FOOTNOTE

If the story of Perseus and the Gorgon has a defect, it is its very richness : it puts one simple point in so many ways. He didn't really need to collect all that gear : any part of it would have done the job at once. This needs saying in case we should regard the stages of his preparation as a hint that we have

to go through similar stages. Of course, if we want to put off dealing with the problem of Medusa indefinitely, we can always plead careful preparation as our excuse. But if we are serious, we shall deal with her now, using any device that's to hand. As actually experienced, there's no real difference between our Single Eye, our Cap of Invisibility, and the rest. One way of escaping petrification is as good as another, and the resulting Transparency is exactly the same.

In another respect our myth can mislead. Medusa isn't, in real life, overcome once and for all. She has unsuspected powers of regeneration — and petrification — and has to be killed again and again till she stays dead. In plain language, it takes much dedicated practice before one sees effortlessly and unbrokenly into one's Clear Nature. No doubt the initial seeing is the easiest and most natural thing in the world ; keeping it up is just about the most difficult. Nevertheless, having once been seen, This can always be seen again. Our hero's armoury leaves us no excuse for not getting on with the job.

## THE DESCENT

By  
Cornelia Bagarotti

When God is Found  
then Peace Descends  
all seeking  
all striving . . . ceases.  
In the Great all of eternity  
Man learns just to Be.

## His All-Embracing Love

By  
S. S. Cohen

*"I thought of Thee and was caught in  
Thy Grace ;  
and like the spider in his web didst Thou  
Keep me captive to swallow me at Thine  
own hour."*

(Aksbara-manamālai  
of Sri Bhagavan)

THE builders have put the finishing touches to my small mud-wall hut in Palakottu Garden on April 4, 1936, and although its walls and lime plaster were still wet I decided to enter it the very next day.

Palakottu is a large garden of about ten acres of ground granted by the Government over eighty years ago to a Vira Shaiva Community for the purpose of growing in it flowers for the famous big Arunachaleswara temple in the township of Tiruvannamalai. It lies on the western boundaries of Ramanasramam and has a clean and well-preserved deep tank seasonally fed by the rain water which falls down the slopes of the sacred Arunachala hill, apart from two or three natural springs at its bottom. Around the huge century-old trees of this garden, devotees of Ramana Bhagavan since many years had built their small *kutirs*, in which once lived many famous ones : Paul Brunton, Yogi Ramiah, B. V. Narasimha Swami, the author of *Self Realisation*, Muruganar Swami, the Tamil *vidwan* and poet (who filled a bulky tome of songs in praise of Sri Bhagavan) and many others, and where some devotees still live. In Palakottu, then the only available place within a mile radius from the Ashram, I chose for my hut a lonely site to the north-west of the tank, edging the shady foot-path over which Sri Bhagavan took his midday walk, so that he daily saw the progress of the work during the construction of my hut, till the fourth of April, when I informed him of my decision to start living immediately in it.



Bhagavan had known of my chronic asthma and probably thought it foolhardy on my part to live in a place which would take two to three weeks to dry up. I noticed his hesitation in uttering his usual "Yes, Yes", but being very pressed for accommodation, and very reluctant to leave his sacred feet even for a day, I completed my arrangements for the warming-ceremony, known here as *grihapravesham* to take place the next day.

However, on the fifth of April devotees gathered in my hut, and about noon Sri Bhagavan himself strolled in on his way back from his usual walk, and refusing the special chair I had made ready for him, he squatted like the others on the mat-covered floor. Ceremony over, Bhagavan left. I followed him from a distance, waited till the devotees cleared away and approached him. "Bhagavan", I said, "you have given a home for my body, I expect your Grace to give the eternal home to my soul, for which I closed



my business and broke all my human relationship." He stopped in the shade of a tree, gazed silently on the calm water of the tank for a few seconds and replied : "Your firm conviction brought you here ; where is the room for doubt ?" Where is the room for doubt indeed !

Three years rolled by and Bhagavan continued to pass daily by my hut. In the beginning he used to take shelter, from the midday sun on my verandah for about five minutes, during which I made myself scarce in order not to inconvenience him, till one day I foolishly placed a chair, quietly, for his use, which made him once for all boycott my verandah. Despite his full knowledge of our adoration of and utter self-dedication to him, he was extremely sensitive to the slightest suggestion of trouble which might ensue from him to us, or for the matter of that to anyone : thus placing a special chair for him, in expecting him every day at a fixed hour he interpreted as interfering with my rest — hence the boycott.

Three years have passed since that *grihapravesham* day, years of great soul-searching, of almost incessant attempts to penetrate the Master's mind through practising his teaching and method of approach, of earnest efforts to adjust oneself to the entirely new conditions of life, and strange environments of physical and psychical strain and stress. They were admittedly intense years, in fact, so intense that I then felt that I must either quit immediately or burst, and I chose the former.

"Bhagavan", I said one day then, near my hut, "I feel a strong urge to go on a *yātrā* (pilgrimage) to the south : Chidambaram, Srirangam, Rameshwaram . . ." but stop ! A look on Bhagavan's face struck me forcibly with the thought : "*Yātrā*, what for ? Are you still doubting ?" Whence is this thought, and why should it now come after these years of intimate contact with him, and of many private talks wherein I had laid bare my soul before him, where not a vestige of doubt remained lurking ? . . . Oh, now I got it — I remembered his words of long ago : "where

is the room for doubt ?" and as if to reply a verbal question from him, I continue : "No Bhagavan, I was a new-comer when I once asked for Bhagavan's grace, I had not yet known it to be perpetually flowing as much to those who ask as to the wise ones who do not ask for it. But now I feel I need a change for about six months as well as visiting places holy to Hindus." He smiled approval and enquired when I was starting and whether I had made any arrangement for my stay in the various places I was to visit — your compassion, beloved Bhagavan, is infinite ! I answered with tears in my eyes that I was going as a sadhu, mainly trusting to chance for accommodation.

For three months I lay on a mat in Cape Comorin, extremely relieved of the mental tension which the physical form of Bhagavan had caused me. I lay in solitude plunged in thoughts of his blissful silence and calm repose. The stillness of his heart followed me everywhere — in the beautiful, gem-like temple, in the vast blue ocean before me, in the sand dunes, the fishing villages, and the endless stretches of coconut groves which run along the sea-shore and the interiors of the Cape. Oh Bhagavan ! how mighty you are, and how sublime and all-pervasive is the immaculate purity of your soul ! With what tender emotions do we, your devotees, think now of your incomparable qualities — divine in their beauty — your gentleness, your serene, adorable countenance, your cool, refreshing smiles, the sweetness of the words that came out of your mouth, the radiance of your all-embracing love, your equal vision and treatment of one and all — your devotees or total strangers, and even diseased stray animals which come within that vision !

I still feel the same peace and stillness in his Ashram ; in the hall where I and lakhs of people so often met him, and where at least for three nights in 1937 I slept ; in the *Nirvana* room where he discarded his body. My physical eye does not see Bhagavan's form, but my spirit constantly feels the spirit here and everywhere, although much more here than elsewhere.

## The Approach to Faith

By

**Rabbi Moshe Leib**  
of Sassov

1. A dull and closed heart cannot see the greatness of His Holy Name, nor His Exaltedness.

2. To keep society with evil doers, women and heretics, removes one's faith.

3. See your own debasement and your eyes will be illumined by the exaltedness of His Holy Name.

4. Lift yourself from this world, and your eyes will be illumined through the words of our sages, which are planted like strong pegs.

5. And if matter (your body) will attempt to persuade you to do evil, raise your anger against it.

6. And if you will further see yourself about to become enticed by it, due to your liking for the useful and tasteful.

7. Then read the sh'ma, etc. "The Lord is One." He is the One who warned us concerning this.

8. And if he (your evil *alter ego*) will engage you in speculation and philosophizing.

9. Then remember the bitter day of judgement and debase your estimate in your own eye. Despise this world and then you will see eye to eye that it will help.

10. Did not all agree that he who denies what is well known by all is deranged?

11. Reflect in your mind on all the miracles and wonders that were experienced from the beginning of creation until this very day, and your eyes will become illumined.

12. Reflect very strongly on the greatness and exaltedness of His Holy Name at the time when the Holy Temple existed in its fullness.

13. And then you will be unable to deny what will become apparent to you that our city was not destroyed, our greatness did not fall except due to our sin and rebellion.

14. You can see that every day the prayers of the Tzaddikim are answered and their will is done.

15. Abraham was 58 years old when Noah died and he told him concerning all the facts of the flood, how the wicked died due to their sin and how he survived due to his good life.

16. If you will think carefully, you will see that the Heavens and the Heavens of the Heavens, and the earth and all that is in it, were not created for any other purpose, but to serve man.

17. Therefore, you will realize the design in them and the great power which He intentionally installed in them for man's sake.

18. And a holy Man once said, "When I was healed from my sickness through medicine taken from roots and herbs, I recognized that the world and all that fills it belongs to God, and that all that He had created, He did for man."

19. Every intelligent soul will realize the impossibility of such a world coming into being without purpose, and thus will come to recognize that this purpose is man, and that man himself was created with amazing wisdom, so great that all the scientists of nature cannot yet understand it, and all this was made so that man can live fully on earth.

20. His Holy Name does provide fulfilment of the will of those that fear him, even without prayer, as soon as He sees what is on their minds.

21. And he also hears our supplication interceding for others, even though they are not worthy.

22. A holy Man once told me that at one time he needed a specific book which he was not able to find, and after a few days it was sent to him as a present.

23. Consider that it is quite possible that there are such people whose minds you cannot understand, whose knowing is much wider and whose actions amaze you, whose reasons you cannot understand.

24. Therefore, how can you enter to understand that which is above you? Do not let foolish speculation concerning creation of the

worlds like the one, "Why was the world not created before now?" enter your mind, for this is folly.

25. If the power of desire for worldly things burns in you, remember who planted this power of desire in you, that it is His blessed Name. Thus you will fear and separate yourself from the desire out of awe.

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## GOD LOVE FAITH

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By

Mikhail Naimy

GOD is your captain, sail, my Ark!  
Though Hell unleash her furies red  
Upon the living and the dead,  
And turn the earth to molten lead,  
And sweep the skies of every mark,  
God is your captain, sail, my Ark!

LOVE is your compass, ply, my Ark!  
Go north and south, go east and west  
And share with all your treasure chest.  
The storm shall bear you on its crest  
A light for sailors in the dark.  
Love is your compass, ply, my Ark!

FAITH is your anchor, ride, my Ark!  
Should thunder roar, and lightning dart,  
And mountains shake and fall apart,  
And men become so faint of heart  
As to forget the holy spark,  
Faith is your anchor, ride, my Ark!

— From *The Book of Mirdad*.

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## Faith: The Intrinsic Radar Sense

By

Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan

A DEVOTEE is more like an aviator than a weary pedestrian. His sky is the field, his aeroplane is his physical body, his steering device is his mind, and his most dependable navigational aid the I-sense. He has to make good his path along storm-tossed clouds in poor visibility. If he goes off course, he can kiss the transient rainbows (of worldly pleasures), but he may not reach the destination. On the other hand, he has his intrinsic radar sense. He has only to keep himself tuned to the Source at all times. Rain or shine, storm or calm, he remains steadfastly on course. Such fine tuning to the Source and remaining locked to the Source at all times is faith.

First let us consider the 'weather' in the field. The human brain can pick up disturbances in the field in the form of sense inputs. The processed outputs of the brain give concrete imagings out of such disturbances. How such field disturbances influence the mind is the subject of interesting scientific study.

A field disturbance (such as electromagnetic waves) artificially created by appropriate apparatus (such as a transmitter or pulse generator) can be made to cause minute electric shocks directly and deliberately to the selected parts deep inside the brain. When so stimulated the behaviour of the person alters dramatically. Such a technique is called 'Electrical Stimulation of the Brain' (ESB).

When part of the brain near the back of the head was stimulated by electric impulses, the person's right hand suddenly contracted, and its fingers twisted. Even though the same person was warned beforehand and he tried his best to stop the behaviour of his hand, he simply could not. The environmental effect (the stimulated field effect) was stronger than his so-called will power.

Another experiment, even more dramatic, was conducted by Professor Jose Delgado at Harvard University. He faced a bull, specially bred for ferocity in a bull ring, armed with a

transmitter-receiver by which he could trigger specific areas of the bull's brain through previously inserted electrodes. Upon seeing the Professor, the bull charged with characteristic fury. When the bull was a few yards from him, the Professor switched on the transmitter. The signal triggered the 'aggression centre' and the 'movement centre' of the brain. The bull stopped abruptly and, with the look of a disciple who became suddenly aware of the presence of his most beloved Guru, turned away.

These experiments relate not merely to behaviour, but feelings as well. For example the bull did not feel aggressive when appropriately triggered. Similarly, stimulation of the caudate nucleus can suddenly interrupt the process of eating or drinking. Maternal feelings are normally highly developed in the monkey as they are in man. While a female monkey is nursing and grooming her offspring, if you stimulate the mid-brain region, she will lose all her interest in the offspring so long as the stimulation lasts.

Which proves my reasoning. All aspects of human *structure*, (the ingredients which make the *whole* human, the gross individual) except, I repeat, except the basic pure I-sense, are environmentally induced. Man has the freedom to tune himself to the disturbances in the field and suffer or to tune in to the pure Consciousness.

When you consciously switch off the interfering influence of the external world and those of your ego, then you can pick the signal from the Source clearly; this is strengthening faith. When faith matures in you and is transmitted through you like a relaying signal for the guidance of the lost pilgrims, it is pure love. Love enables you to receive an uninterrupted flow of grace from pure Consciousness. When you are filled with grace, you become Self-realised.

## A Stumbling Block Vanishes

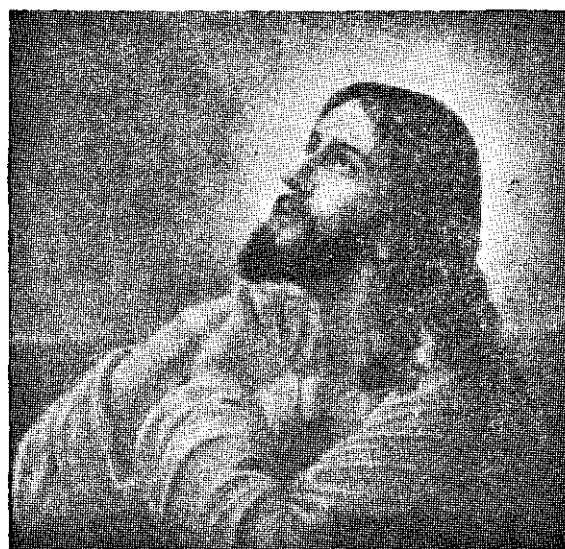
By  
Norman Fraser

SOME people have experienced it and know what is meant by the wordless feeling of "Ah! Now I know!" which comes upon one when one is concentrating on something utterly different and least expects it.

While listening entranced to Fischer-Dieskau singing Wolf my attention was suddenly interrupted by the certainty that I knew, at any rate as far as I was concerned, the truth about one of the most troublesome of the Christian doctrines for non-Christians to accept: the Virgin Birth. I switched off the record-player and gave my complete attention to what had flooded my consciousness and am now compelled to write it down.

To start from the materialist angle, parthenogenesis is a fact of nature, but it occurs mostly in the lower forms of life and has never — I believe — been scientifically attested with regard to the human species. So it has often been said that the legend surrounding the birth of Jesus grew up because it was quite a common one associated with the gods of mythology, where women of noble birth were visited by divine beings. But I am now convinced that these explanations are irrelevant.

The fact of Jesus fully recognizing his Christhood can be understood from Bhagavan's own experience. It must have happened very early — perhaps even before His human birth — as there was that episode when He was 12 (Luke 2: 41-50) when He was already fully conscious that God was his Father. Like Bhagavan He had left His earthly family; only, being younger, He allowed Himself to be led back home by his mother. It is said that He then "increased in wisdom and stature", which must mean, again as with Bhagavan, that He went on abiding in the Self. The final stage of His unfoldment may have taken place among the Essenes — we do not know



Jesus Christ

for certain — but in early manhood, at the time of the marriage in Cana, He had already shown his exceptional powers as his mother disclosed when she forced His hand in the matter of turning water into wine (*John 2: 3-5*). Was it after that revealing incident that He left home for good? We actually know so little. However, as soon as His disciples could take it, He was telling them not to call any man their father (*Mat. 23: 9*). Now this was really a shocking thing to tell orthodox Jews and they probably did not in their hearts believe it. When He assured them that He Himself had no Father apart from God the seeds of the 'Virgin Birth' were sown; their wonderful Master was indeed the miraculous Son of God by Mary. Yet on one recorded occasion He stunned them by waiving her aside: "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" and He goes on to say, 'Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, my sister, my mother.' (*Mat. 11:*



49-50). This denial of His human mother must have made a devastating impression on His hearers and is recounted in all three of the synoptic gospels.

Now the Jewish religion had no place in it for the concept of Christ as the living activity of the Self. To them the Messiah was to be a mighty, earthly king who would vanquish their foes for them. So none of them really understood what Jesus was talking about. Peter seemed to understand, but in the light of later events, did he? Only John, the favourite disciple, showed signs of really having begun to understand.

The Jews were obsessed with their belief in the man-like personal God, Jehovah, which they had created for themselves in spite of the all-embracing, he-she eternal singular-plural Elohim of Genesis I. In later times, even after the mystic Isaac-the-blind started the movement, in 12th century Lunel, which culminated in the Zohar, the Talmudists stuck to their concept of God as a great Person. Is

it a wonder, then that the tradition of Jesus having no earthly father spread among the ever-widening groups of early Christians as an act of faith? And so it has remained down the centuries until today when orthodox understanding still skates round the dual concept of Jesus of Nazareth and Jesus the Christ, leading to strange mental acrobatics. I had a friend who was a very eminent Baptist missionary, minister and university professor with whom I used to discuss Biblical matters. On one occasion I mentioned the passage (*Mat.* 19 : 17) where Jesus is reported to have said : 'Why callest thou me good?' and was told, quite seriously, that Jesus was being modest.

The question now is how long will it be until Christendom wakes up to the Truth which is so simple : *the Self can have no earthly father*. So of course Jesus the Christ had no earthly father and the genesis of the Bethlehem Babe is of little importance. However, things are moving. Sri Bhagavan has provided the heaven — may it work fast and smoothly !

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## THE MASTER'S TOUCH

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One afternoon as Sri Bhagavan re-entered the Hall, the attendant turned on the electric fan as it was sultry. After a few minutes Sri Bhagavan insisted on stopping it.

He said : "When one is tired, the breathing becomes a little hard and irregular. Then the fan serves to harmonise the breath. That is all its purpose. To continue fanning afterwards would be a waste."

Sri Bhagavan was opposed, of course, to any form of waste !

— from *Day by Day with Bhagavan*

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## Renewal of Faith in the West

By  
Philip Pegler

**R**ELIGIOUS life seems to be undergoing a fundamental transformation in the West and this much-needed renewal of faith appears to be happening largely outside the institutional Church. It is the Eastern religions rather than Christianity that are providing the essential inspiration. The fusion of Western and Eastern cultures has a lot to do with the swing of interest to esoteric religions. But more profoundly, it is deep spiritual discontent which is at the root of the revival of religious values in Europe and America.

Limitations found in some aspects of Christianity have resulted in dwindling congregations and sceptical denial of traditional beliefs. This is certainly not to say that Christianity has no application in the modern world, not that tradition should be totally rejected — as some extremists advocate. Only there should be full scope for a healthy renewal. If anything vital is to be discovered in the realm of spirituality, there must be not only a deep and urgent yearning for truth at any price, but also reasonable conditions of outer freedom.

Clare Cameron, editor of *Science of Thought Review* — an English magazine based on the Christian-oriented teachings of Henry Thomas Hamblin — recently drew attention to this need for enrichment of tradition.

"We do urge a regard for all that was of good report in the past, a seeking out of meaning in tradition that *we* as ordinary people may receive new hope," she wrote, "Life can be infinitely richer than we imagine when we look about us and begin to reflect. For all that has crystallised in tradition can be dissolved (is it not already dissolving?) in order that the Tree of Life may put forth new branches."

One of these vital new branches may well be this fresh spiritual movement, which is

gaining much of its impetus from young people. Bitterly disillusioned with the existing materialistic society, they seem to be returning to the essence of religion — but in their own unique way through a folk culture, chiefly embodying music and psychedelic drugs. Such drug-taking is mostly condemned without understanding the deep impulse behind it. However this is none other than the urge for true fulfilment, which only the heart of religion can provide! Concerning this, many young folk now believe Eastern teachers have something of great importance to communicate, while their own religion has nothing significant to say about spirituality. They are not actually hostile to the Church — they are simply not interested in it. Where a residue of faith does remain the trend is towards fringe Christianity to be seen especially in the United States where many underground free churches have been established. There is a darker side to such developments too, for undeniably, some of the new non-Christian movements include a strong element of escapism. Evidently some are treading on dangerous ground in their misguided fervour.

There is bound to be some irresponsibility among the youth anywhere, but in the West despite severely misdirected energy, generally the soil is fertile for germs of truth. Perceiving that the time is ripe, more and more spiritual guides, chiefly from the Buddhist and Hindu traditions, of Japan and India, are settling down to disseminate their teachings to eager audiences. Some of these teachers may be more authentic than others and aspirants may also differ in their degree of earnestness. But the overall benefit cannot be denied.

A hopeful and concrete sign of regeneration is shown in the spread of small lay communities leading an invigorating life close to Nature. Some communes or centres are pre-

sided over by Eastern preceptors, who have adapted themselves admirably to strange conditions. On the whole there is a genuine working towards a naturally integrated existence in fellowship of spirit, based on the twin foundations of love and service. Overall there is a growing realisation that manifold ills of society are due only to a basic selfish separation of man from his true being and his environment. Such fragmentation cannot be mended by surface reform, but only healed by the power of love. Because of almost total lack of true understanding on the part of humanity, the balance of Nature is threatened — and harmony must be restored before such exploitation goes too far.

The new spirit of the age is exemplified in the remarkable life of the late Rolf Gardiner, an Englishman who dedicated his whole life to a re-discovery of essential values. Not only was he an enterprising farmer and forester who held a number of responsible public posts, but also he was an important ecologist, poet and prophet. At the age of 21, Gardiner prophesied the birth of religious communities "living apart from the poisonous atmosphere of the big towns, searching back in themselves towards a deeper contact with life, communities which one day may produce a new culture and perhaps a new religion... some of these communities will survive the hurricanes of this wintry period of civilisation and become cases of light." An accurate forecast — or so it seems.

In 1968 at a religious gathering three years before his death, he mentioned that there are now groups of dedicated folk all over the world, who "in a spirit of true repentance are devising ways of turning the waters of suicidal error into constructive channels of healing." Deeply concerned at the plight of man and Nature, he continued: "We have to hold to our inner peace and be fortresses of faith while the storms rage, knowing that, though the earth be poisoned and mankind rudderless, the true values cannot fail to return, because they are the laws on which this planet is founded."

A notable example of the sort of community to which Gardiner was referring is to be found

in France. Known as the Community of the Ark, it was started in 1948 by a Western disciple of Gandhi. The order is securely based on principles of non-violence and in this must be asking to the company of people known as the Springhead Ring, who are furthering the ideals of Rolf Gardiner at his former home.

All members of the Ark, like those of Noah's Ark, bear a name from the animal kingdom or the name of a flower. Like that of Noah in the Bible, the Ark is afloat on the waters of a submerging world. This society of free men, ruled with dignity, are leading a simple, self-sufficient way-of-life in a wholesome rhythm of prayer and work. It is fundamentally a Christian community, but members of other faiths are not excluded.

Their noble ruler is the founder himself, Shantidas — so named, Servant of Peace, by Gandhi. Now aged 72, in his youth as a scholar, musician, poet and fervent Christian, he was filled with unquenchable thirst for life. His ardour finally took him to India as a pilgrim on the spiritual quest. The fascinating journey he made on foot in 1936 is recounted in a celebrated book entitled in its English translation, *Return to the Source*.

The author, writing under his original Sicilian name of Lanza del Vasto, tells of a meeting with Ramana Maharshi. But the serenity of the sage was not entirely appropriate to his active Christian temperament. Accordingly he proceeded to Wardha where he found his destined Master in Gandhi. He was seeking charity more than wisdom. "to learn how to become a better Christian."

At the outset, del Vasto recorded the chief impulse behind his quest — a motivation which even today holds good when applied to the stream of young pilgrims to India.

"Tell me what is there to be gained from going far away?" he asked himself. His own answer came. "The distance that sharpens sight and makes one see clearly, the distance that stretches links and makes one love stronger; this clarity whose name is Detachment."

Shantidas hardly differed from these modern pilgrims — but for his mode of travel.

He disembarked from steamer at Ceylon, while most of them are flying on cheap charter flights or treading the arduous overland route to India. But substantially their intention is the same as his — namely to obtain the benefit of exchange of values for revitalising their own religious heritage.

Inevitably some are casual travellers, "Hippies" or "Ashram-trotters" — a phrase coined for those who are more curious than serious about spirituality. But a growing proportion of visitors are deeply sincere about the quest. This is witnessed at Sri Ramanasramam for example. Many Western aspirants are being led to Arunachala to find an enduring refuge in the inspiration of Sri Bhagavan.

On returning home, most people find that their outlook on life has undergone a tremendous change. India, with its curious blend of profound wisdom and hopeless *material inadequacy*, enlarges the heart and broadens the vision of anybody with any sensitivity.

Yet paradoxically, many Indians, infatuated by material playthings of the West, are blind to the unfathomable riches of their own culture. Conversely there seems to be an unfortunate lack of integrity displayed by some "Gurus" liable to exploit innocent newcomers. But Truth protects sincere seekers!

In conclusion it should be emphasised again that despite the growing involvement with oriental religions, it would be wrong to imagine Christian attitudes have been obliterated thereby. As we have said traditional Christianity has suffered a setback, but this may just be the prelude to an enrichment of faith. Certainly many ordinary Christians have been deeply stirred to searchingly re-examine their old convictions in the bright light of universal truth. And this may include a new appreciation of pagan values, which existed in pre-Christian times. For there are hints that the West possessed its own ancient wisdom during a golden age perhaps long before recorded history.

Truly mature men and women, who, while adhering to the Christian (or any other) faith outwardly, are yet not unduly attached to any creed, perceiving the single essence of all. Their quiet and steady example in everyday life, behind the scenes, supports and encourages the more obvious enthusiasm of younger folk, who form the spearhead of spiritual renewal. Here perhaps is the hidden key to its success. After all, wisdom, being of the heart and not merely of the head, is founded and sustained by deep experience. Ultimately there can be no short cut to God — although many like to think so.

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## THE ILLUSION

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Once upon a time, I, Chuang-tse, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man. Suddenly, I awaked, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man. Between a man and a butterfly there is necessarily a distinction. The transition is called the transformation of material things.

— Chuang-tse

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## *Sadhu Ekarasa* (Dr. G. H. Mees):

### A Great Devotee

By

Johannes de Reede

SINCE many inmates of Sri Ramanasramam and disciples of Ramana know well Dr. G. H. Mees (or Sadhu Ekarasa, under which name he was known after 1943) it may be interesting to note that it is now twenty years and four months since he passed away.

What do we remember? That in 1936, having been offered professorates in Ceylon and in Mysore, and while roaming around in India, comparing these two places with "the rest", travelling with a big seven-seater tourer accompanied by a driver, a cook, a secretary, a couple of friends and two dogs, one good day back at Mysore, chatting in the company of the then Maharaja and Sir Mirza Ismael, the Dewan, somebody tells him: there is a strange and wonderful man in Tiruvannamalai; a journalist, Brunton, has written a chapter on him.

The then thirty-three-year-old brilliant research scholar, of an ancient patrician Dutch family, who had won acclaim with his new classic "Dharma and Society", (which promoted him from Leyden University after he had obtained his M.A. at Cambridge) travels to Tiruvannamalai with his entourage, but his ideas about a career come to an end here — and give up the ghost then and there. At the feet of Bhagawan he discovers himself in his natural role of devotee and disciple. As a devotee he writes: "the tear-drops of my eyes." as a disciple: "Two mirrors facing . . . and the emptiness between, which is the fullness". It is because of this that he hardly puts a question to Bhagawan or, if he does, it is on matters of secondary interest "just for the joy of hearing Him speak, see His gracious gestures . . ." Since "all so-called important questions related to practice (he



*Sadhu Ekarasa*

never speaks of "Sadhana") or private worries or problems, "are solved minutes after I sit down at His Feet". Later, in Travancore, he experiences that contact "just as strong or stronger, a kind of magnetic bipolarity".

It was his health that compelled him to settle down in what is now Kerala. Having found a place which is "kindred in spirit" he is not surprised to discover that the place had always been an Ashram, the Kanvashrama, graced by a sacred Vishnu Tirtham (pond) and

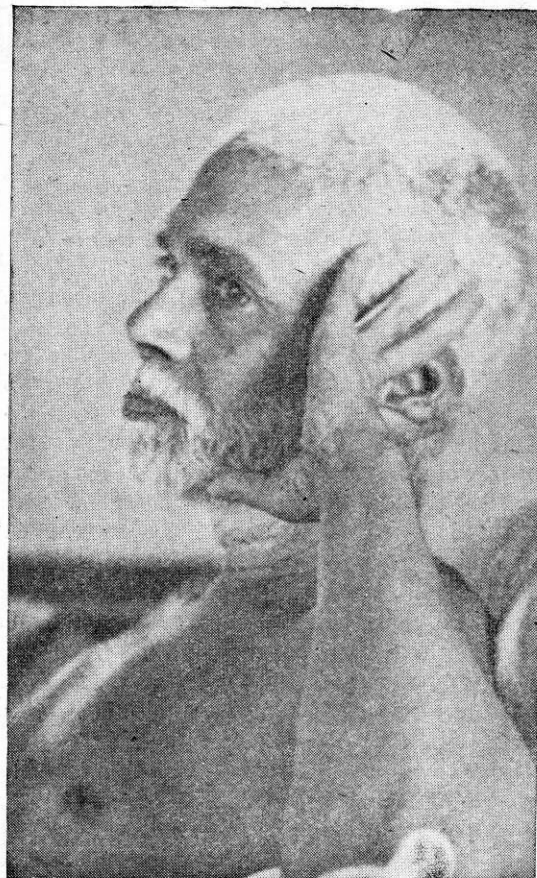


several wholesome springs, so-called underground Ganges streams. He is leading a less active life, awaiting — something.

This "something" is the 1940 war. The British, suspicious of an alien with Congress and Independence sympathies, whose friends are usually in jail somewhere, extradite him from all coastal areas of India — where the Japanese fleets are cruising around! Vague marriage plans evaporate . . .

He is glad to come back to Tiruvannamalai, to test the near-tangible relationship with the Master. He renews and deepens his friendship, often stormy, with Chadwick, with the early David McIver and Roda, with the young Swami Viswanathan, with S. S. Cohen with the thin, friendly, ascetic looking Raja Iyer, with Ethel Merston, Ella Maillart and "everybody". He photographs a lot, more for friends and relations. Many of the famous photos we owe to his "courage", since, as he said, "one really needs courage to aim at the Guru through a viewfinder". He is often "surprised that on the negative the figure of Bhagawan does appear". In 1943 he is allowed to return to the Kanvashrama. There, twenty years of his having absorbed the traditions and religions of the world, a huge reservoir of universal poetic imagination is sparked by that magnetic polarity with the Guru an implosion takes place — a mountain-top view of Comparative Symbolism is experienced and humbly his hand writes about the memory of that "vision", four years long.<sup>1</sup> It is in this connection that our Muruganar once protested: "Mees was called a Pandit by some, but he was more — he was a *rishi*."

Until 1955 he continues to visit Ramanasramam, between stays in Kerala and a last visit to his aging parents in Holland. At the Kanvashrama he is surrounded by his trusted caretaker and a few friends and pupils, one also hailing from Holland, who will accompany him on his last journey — to England. To this friend and pupil he confides his last words. Somewhat surprised, he says: "But Heaven . . . is HERE!" The source of his



inspiration having been the living experience of the relationship with the Guru, his pupils have put up a shrine to Sri Dakshinamurti and a guest cottage in Ramanagar dedicated to Ekarasa.

<sup>1</sup> *The Revelation in the Wilderness* — An exposition of Traditional Psychology.

*The Book of Signs*, Vol. I, N. Kluwer Deventer, 1951.

*The Key to Genesis.*

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*Dharma and Society*. Published by N. V. Servire, The Hague. Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1.

*India and the Human Family.*

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NOTE: For a brief resume, see the article: "Universal Symbolism" by J. J. de Reede in *The Mountain Path*, October, 1966.

## The Ten *Mahāvidyās* of the Mother

By

Viswanatha Swami

The ten *Mahāvidyās*, referred to in the editorial on THE MOTHER in our July (1975) issue, are dealt with here as expounded in Ganapati Muni's *Mahavidya Sutram* (aphorisms in Sanskrit) leaving aside details of *mantras* which may not interest the general reader.

**K**ĀLI is the first of the Ten Mahavidyas. Kāla is Time, and Kali in fact the feminine form of Kāla. It is Time as the all-pervading dynamic Power of the Supreme that is transforming everything every moment. There is nothing stagnant. Time is ever-vibrant and everything in creation is being transformed by it. In that transformation countless globes of the sun, moon and stars have been annihilated and this is symbolized by the garland of severed heads Kāli is wearing. She is a great warrior spoken of as Veerini in the Vedas. Her incessant activity is described as her dance. In that dance everything is born, grows up and is wiped out or withdrawn. Time is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of everything. Destruction is only for creation in a fresh mould. We find in the Rig-Veda Ambhrini Vāk, perfectly attuned to the Mother Divine, saying : "I am ever-flowing like the wind, creating world systems, and I transcend earth and heaven by my glory."

The same power flowing within us is termed Sreshta-prana (the supreme life-current), in the Upanishads. And so, one should meditate upon Kāli for developing one's power. Her *bija mantra* (root syllable) is Krcem. Her main mantra is of 22 syllables, known as Dakshina Kāli. In recent times Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa reached the height of spiritual glory by devoting himself to her with perfect self-surrender. And from him emanated the great force of Kali bringing about a spiritual awakening all over the world.

Kāli is of dark-blue complexion and stands on a corpse, wearing a garland of severed heads, holding a sword with one hand and a

severed head with the other, and bestowing boons and freedom from fear by the other two hands. Her dark hue indicates that she is dynamic *kriya-sakti*, her predominating features being force and speed. Ganapati Muni sings of her : "Seemingly a woman, she excels all in valour, speed and manliness. May the Mother of terrible mien, the mover of the entire universe, save me by her grace."

That the life-current is working upon inert matter is the significance of her standing on a corpse. Her sword denotes that she is out to destroy the old order to bring in the new. The hands of benediction and protection from danger reveal her ever-present grace. Her garland of severed heads denotes the mind free from attachment to the body.

Constant watching of the breathing process is the main method of adoring her.<sup>1</sup> Even an automatic process when associated with consciousness becomes something lofty. This sadhana strengthens the mind, speech and vision. Not only does it bring about longevity but it also liberates one from the trammels of samsara. This method is known as samvarga vidya in the Upanishads. It is known as Prana-vidya and Mukhyapranōdgitha vidya also.

Kāli is the force destroying the undiscerning and She is the Sword in the hands of one attuned to her, cutting asunder all bonds of ignorance.

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<sup>1</sup> We find this method approved of by Bhagavan Ramana, as recorded in *Sri Ramana Gita*, VI, 5 : "Control of breath means watching with the mind the flow of breath. Through such constant watching kumbhaka does come about."

*Tārā* is the second of the Mahāvidyās. *Tārā* is sound. The term *Gauri* also signifies the same aspect. *Tarah* is the masculine of *Tara* and it means *Pranava* (AUM). *Pranava* is infinite ; it is not a finite sound.

Like *Kālī*, *Tara* also is said to be of a dark complexion, indicative of her unmanifest nature. *Tarah* is a very special name of *Rudra*, meaning one who makes us cross the ocean of misery. It occurs as *Namas Taraya* in the eighth anuvaka of *Sri Rudra Prasna* beginning *Namah Somāya cha Rudrāya cha*, wherein is found the *Siva-panchākshari* (*Namah Sivāya*) also.

This unmanifest sound pervades all manifest sound as its core and so he who does not know it cannot understand any mantra. *Tara* is Awareness as well, because Awareness is nothing but unmanifest sound. For the experience of Pure Awareness one should meditate upon *Tara*. Her mantra is of five syllables *OM-Hreem-Stbreem-Hoom-phat*. There are two variations of it ; one without *pranava* and the other the middle three syllables alone, *Hreem-Stbreem-Hoom*. These three may indicate the three aspects of the Mother, the first as Pure Awareness, the second her form as a deity and the third as *Kundalini* (life-current) in individuals.

*Tara* is of deep blue hue, wearing a garland of human skulls, with matted hair, wearing eight serpents as ornaments, having in her four hands, a sword, a pair of scissors, a severed head and a lotus. Her matted hair stands for the single unmanifest sound. The eight serpents signify the eight divine powers. The scissors are for cutting the knot of bondage of her devotees. The lotus represents her heart ever abloom.

In her aspect as manifest sound *Tārā* is the *Sakti* of *Brihaspati*, the Lord of manifest sound. As the tongue is the seat of manifest speech in man it is described as *Tara*, the *Sakti* of *Brihaspati*. As the tongue itself by association with the mind, which is *Soma*, knows taste, *Tara* serves as the *Sakti* of *Soma* as well. This is the secret of the *Tara-Sasānka* (Moon) episode.

To be in tune with the unmanifest sound in space is the method of meditating upon *Tara*. There is no room here for likes and dislikes. By subtle mental *japa* of *Pranava* also one may get that attunement. One gets the same experience by watching the root of thoughts as well.<sup>2</sup> By the *Upasana* of *Tara* one gets divine knowledge. Not only *sannyasins* but all earnest aspirants may meditate upon *Pranava*.

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*Sundari* is the third of the Mahāvidyās. She is known as *Tripura Sundari*, *Lalita* and *Rajarajeswari*, as well. *Sundari* is *Chit-Sakti*, the Supreme Mother of the universe transcending it. She is the indivisible Awareness of the Supreme (Para Brahman) as the Light of a Lamp. As she illumines our intellect, we can experience her when we introvert it towards its source. And so she is not utterly beyond our comprehension. But, with extrovert intellect we cannot comprehend her as an object. She is the Awareness, *chit*, of the Ground, *Sat*. She is the effulgence of the Sun of Awareness. She is the Awareness which pervades individuals and shines forth as their individuality as well. She is the Light of Grace pervading the Three Cities — *Tripura Sundari*, the Awareness underlying waking, dream and deep-sleep states. That is the significance of the thrice-repeated Upanishadic text — *Ayam āvasatbab* — This is the abode. The mind is in the region of the eyes during the waking state, in that of the throat during dream and in the heart during deep sleep. These three regions are represented by the three angles of the Central Triangle of *Sri Chakra* and the Mother *Lalita* is described as the Lamp within the Triangle (*Trikōnātara-dipika*) in the Litany of her Thousand Names. The three cities are the Sun, Moon (or the space between the Earth and Sun) and the Earth.

*Sundari* herself is known as *Lalita* on account of her exquisite beauty, sweetness and grace. As the Supreme Ruler of the entire universe she is known as *Rājarājeswari*.

<sup>2</sup> Watching the root of thoughts and *pranava japa* have been taught by *Sri Ramana* as well (*Sri Ramana Gita*, III, 5, 6, 10, 11).

In the Upanishadic Mahavakya, Prajnānam Brahma (Awareness is Brahman), the ordinary meaning of the term prajnanam is the eclipsed light of the mind and the real meaning is Pure Awareness or Sundari. And so he who aspires for freedom from the bondage of the mind should devote himself to Sundari. The method of worshipping her is through Sri Vidya of fifteen syllables.<sup>3</sup> With the *bijakshara* (root-syllable) of Lakshmi added at the end it becomes sixteen lettered. And there are the Mahāshodasi and other variations of Sri Vidya.

Sundari's complexion is that of the rising Sun. She wears a crescent moon on her crown and holds in two of her hands a sugar-cane as a bow and five flowers as arrows, and in two other hands a noose and hook.<sup>4</sup> Her bright red complexion denotes her compassion and grace and the crescent indicates her eternal blissful nature as Pure Awareness. The mind is her sugarcane bow and the five senses are her arrows of flowers. Her noose indicates passion and her hook cuts off the bondage of her devotees. The whole universe is immersed in her glorious effulgence.

Inherence in the Self is really her upasana. Bhagavan Ramana says that one reaches the Feet of Sundari by searching for the source of the 'I'-thought, the root of the mind. One gets established in her by unswerving Self-awareness. One who is aware of his real nature as Pure Awareness (Sundari) experiences even sense-objects as non-different from himself. This method is known as Sad-Vidya in the Upanishads. Ātma-Vidya, Brahma-Vidya and Sad-Vidya are one and the same. By the upāsana of Sundari one gets established in the most exalted Self-awareness beyond all otherness.

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*Bhuvaneshwari* is the fourth of the ten Mahāvidyās. She is known as Maya also. She is the Vision of the Supreme. She is Aditi as well. Diti is finite and Aditi is infinite.

Vision (iksha) precedes knowledge as its cause. Vision itself is Iccha Sakti (primeval

urge). And that is the cause of the manifestation of the universe. The Vision of the Supreme is itself infinite. In a mirror it is Space as far as one's eye can see. But that space is not real. Such is our sight. In clear water we see endless space reflected along with the Sun during the day and with the moon and stars at night. That is reflected space and not real, being nothing apart from our sight. Space perceived in dream is no better. As far as one's vision goes, so far is space. But the Vision of the Supreme is infinite and so is the space of the universe. Infinite Space is the same as Akāśa and that is Bhuvaneshwari. In the universe Akāśa is the screen. All activity, sound and all percepts are the pictures on it. And so all past and present have Bhuvaneshwari as their background. Of the creeper of perception, the primeval urge (Iccha) is the root. That is to say that the first perception is the urge (Iccha). Others say that the urge is at the root of every perception. Some hold that the Supreme is the enjoyer of everything and others that he is the unconcerned Witness of all. And yet others say he enjoys everything himself unaffected. The saying that all urge is attachment serves as advice to cultivate non-attachment. In reality, swerving from the experience of the Self is attachment. The movement to enjoy objects is known as desire.

Indivisible Space is Aditi. She is the Mother of all and Kasyapa derived from the root, dris-pasy means the Seer of all, the Father of all. It is on Akasa (Bhuvaneshwari) that the whole universe is woven as warp and woof. Iccha Sakti is Bhuvaneshwari, Jñāna Sakti is Sundari and Kriya Sakhi is Kālī.

Space is width, horizontality, and Time is height, verticality. Bhuvaneshwari is supremely tranquil. She is undisturbed Tranquillity in the midst of all and every activity. One who aspires for undisturbed calmness should meditate upon Bhuvaneshwari. Her mantra is Hreem known as Maya. Her

<sup>3</sup> The significance of Sri Vidya has been explained in the article on The Mother in the July, 1975 issue.

<sup>4</sup> Pasa and ankusa.

form is the same as that of Sundari. Her upasana may be through the Vedic Mantras, beginning *Aditir dyaur Aditi rantariksham*, meaning that Aditi is everything in creation born and yet unborn, transcendental space as well as the space of the Universe. Her pure upasana is to have one's attention ever intent on the interval between the perceiver and the perceived.

Akasa is usually taken as a mere medium through which objects are perceived. None takes any notice of it at all. In everything projected in manifestation there is scope for like or dislike. But it is totally absent with regard to Akasa. And so one whose attention is ever on it enjoys supreme peace unperturbed by likes and dislikes. That is the significance of the first foot of the famous verse *Darsanāt abbrasadasi*, meaning one is liberated by the mere darsana (beholding) of it in the Hall of Akasa (Chidambaram). And that is Akasa-drishti, one's attention intent on Pure Space. Chidambaram is known as Kanaka-Sabha, the Golden Hall, as well. It is Akasa that is meant here, for in it scintillate myriads of golden stars. There dances Nataraja, the Lord of Dance.

Intent on what is between the Seer and the Seen, one should get established in the witnessing Awareness. That is awareness, the perceiving in perception. And that is known as Parovariyasi Vidya in the Upanishads. One may meditate upon inner space as well between successive thoughts. By meditating upon Bhuvaneshwari one gets established in Chidākasa, the Space of Awareness.

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*Bhairavi* is the fifth of the Mahāvidyās. She is known as Tripura Bhairavi as well. Manifest effulgence is Bhairavi. Though as effulgence, Bhairavi and Kali are the same, yet they are distinguished by their manifest and unmanifest character. Among the Vedic deities she is Agnāyi. As she pervades the earth, firmament and Heaven by her effulgence she is known as Tripura Bhairavi. In the individual she is vāk, the faculty of speech. Though Tara also represents Vāk, Bhairavi is subtler as the original source of

Vāk (Sabda-tanmātra). By the upāsana of Bhairavi one develops intellectual and spiritual brilliance.

Mulādhāra is the Centre of Bhairavi as she is the subtlest form of Vāk (Parā Vāk). The ceremonial worship of Bhairavi is by means of offering oblations in fire. The term Svāhā which gladdens the heart of all devatās is her particular name, as well as Swadhā which pleases the manes. She is known as Tripura also on account of the triangular shape of the sacrificial altar. One may practise her upāsana by means of the famous mantra, Jāta-vedase seen by Rishi Kasyapa. It does not matter that the devata of the mantra is masculine Agni, as there is no disparity between a deity and his Sakti. And moreover it is well-known as a sakti-mantra from time immemorial, recognised and practised as such. Bhairavi herself is Chandi according to some of the Tantras, both terms having the same meaning and significance. The distinction between them is that Bhairavi, though all-pervading by her essential nature, is a deity governing the earth, whereas Chandi rules over all the three regions. On Earth, she is Māyā Sakti reigning over the three gunas, sattva, rajas and tamas, known as Mahā-lakshmi. In the firmament (antariksha), She is known as Mahākālī governing tamas. In the Heavens (dyauh) she governs Sattva guna and is termed Mahāśarasvatī. Altogether she is Vaiṣṇavi Sakti. The Light that pervades the three worlds is known by the term Vishnu also. He pervades the Earth as Agni, the firmament as Vidyut (electric power) and the Heavens as the Sun. He who aspires for all the Purushārthas (fulfilment of all human aspirations) should worship Chandi. Her mantra is of nine syllables. Mahākālī is described in works on Chandi as dark of hue and ten-armed. Her ten-arms denote her incessant activity in all the ten directions of Space.

Mahālakshmi is of golden hue. Her arms are said to be a thousand or eighteen since she presides over all activity. Mahāśarasvatī is of white complexion and eight-armed. She functions with her seven rays and the white ray as well and so is known as eight-armed.



One may meditate upon Bhairavi with the aid of the Vedic mantra, *Ibendraneem upah-vayē Varunaneem svastaye Agnayeem Soma-pitaye* — "I approach and call upon Indrāni, Varunāni and Agnāyi to partake of Soma (offered by us) and to bless us." (This mantra is the darsana of Medhātithi of the line of Maharshi Kanva). Indrāni, Varunāni and

Agnāyi are the Saktis presiding over Akāsa, the Sun and Earth. Meditation on inner Light is the pure upāsana of Bhairavi. This is called Jyotir-vidya in the Upanishads. By the upāsana of Bhairavi one becomes spiritually effulgent.

(To be concluded  
in our next issue)

## RETURN

By

Cornelia Bagarotti

THE child unborn lies cradled within the womb of the mother. The love between his father and his mother had blended and descended into the world of matter and created a new human life. As this little creature emerges from the sleep and darkness and protection of his mother, he enters the world of Man.

From that moment on he will forever be in search of God. His heart will seek the Love that created him, his mind will search for the meaning and purpose of his life. And he keeps searching until he finds either through his heart or his mind the answer to his great quest.

When that moment comes he will return to the origin of his life. He will lose his sense of separate identity, he will become one with the Love that brought him into being, he will

rest in peace in the protection that gave him life.

Then he in turn will become part of all life, unbroken, endless, which pervades all that he sees or hears or touches. So that like the Christ he can say "I in my Father and my Father in me".

Some traverse the Path to God-union with their hearts, submitting their will in trust and prayer, and some through the long effort of search and study. But in the end both will say as in the commandment "Honour thy Father and thy Mother that thy days may be long upon the earth".

Did not the Christ say "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven made"? The child is the symbol of that union in God which ever-present still eludes those who seek for the secret of life outside the human heart.

# The Indivisible Trinity

By

Marie B. Byles

THE twentieth century has been the age of the dominance of the intellect with stupendous, technical and scientific achievements.

It is therefore no coincidence that the beginning of this century has also seen the discovery by the famous F. M. Alexander that the intellect must play a major part in restoring the upright posture of homo erectus that has been lost. This upright posture has been so far lost that in a long queue of men and women, probably not one will be without a pointing chin and very round shoulders.

Perhaps Indians still stand upright because they have carried things on their heads, but if they continue to ape Westerners, they will soon be as deformed as Westerners are, especially as they now have tilted easy chairs and car seats which are the most deforming of instruments.

In recent times Alexander's posture therapy has been coming into vogue again and its principles commended by such as a recent medical Nobel prize winner.

But for all that, it is hard for the modern person to be reconciled to Alexander's finding that the intellect must 'give directions' and refrain from 'trying to do it right.' This is contrary to all we learned at school about 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again' and when in gymnastics you tried to make the body jump over the horse and climb up the rope.

Alexander was a public reciter. He found to his horror that he was losing his voice at crucial times. Doctors were unable to cure his complaint. Therefore for nine years he patiently experimented with his own body as seen in mirrors. At length he found that everything hinged on what he called the pri-

mary control, the position of the head, neck and back in relation to each other. These should be in one straight line. If they are not, the whole body is affected and various complaints ensue. When Alexander at length corrected his own posture, he regained his lost voice, and his pupils many of their complaints.

From the point of view of this essay the important matter is that Alexander was certain that if the primary control was rectified in a sufficient number of people, there would result a happier and a better social order. On the face of it this may seem an extravagant claim. But it is not as absurd as it at first appears when you remember that Alexander's unique discovery was that physical exercises alone are unable to alter the misuse of the body, that the physical must be combined with mental 'directions', as he called them, that we must not aim directly at the change we hope for, and must look only at the 'means whereby' this can be brought about, that we must 'inhibit' the desire to go straight to the object, and that above all we must 'not try to do it right.' And finally of course, there is his contention that this psychophysical betterment of straight head, neck and back will achieve betterment generally and enable people to behave more rationally.

This, as he said, was a revolutionary philosophy. Have we not been taught that bodily ailments are cured by bodily means, physical means, the daily dozen exercises, or taking doctor's medicine, or undergoing his surgery? Of course there are also mental healers, and we may have read your-mind-can-heal-you type of book and this includes Coué's auto-suggestion, 'every day and in every way I'm getting better and better', and in addition there are those who are satisfied

that all is spirit, and these include Christian Scientists.

But Alexander produced something new — the insistence that mental and bodily must be combined. None of the foregoing methods worked for me, but I have not met or read of anyone who carried out the unbelievably simple Alexander technique for whom it did not work.

Is there something magical about this combination of the psycho-physical and the primary control from which a better social order might be evolved, or is there something more deep-seated than the primary control to be taken into account?

The psychologist, Carl Jung, had an even more startling explanation than the primary control to explain the muddle of the world today. But I am going to suggest that unknowingly Alexander's technique indirectly ties up with Jung's more far-seeing explanation.

Carl Jung's *Essays on Contemporary Events* was written in 1935 and published in English in 1947, that is, Jung spoke of the events that led to the outbreak of the Second World War and were still in existence after it had ended. In the essay on *Wotan* Jung says that the Germans had fallen under an autonomous force with a life and power of its own. He personifies this as *Wotan*, the ancient power of a psychic force come to life again. He says, 'We who stand aside judge the Germans as if they were responsible active agents, but we should be nearer the Truth if we regarded them as victims.'

It is these subconscious forces that account for the strange moods that sweep over people. Of a usually pleasant person we may say, 'He was in a shocking temper,' or 'he was beside himself with anger,' or 'he seemed to be possessed.' They also account for the same invention or discovery being made at the same time in widely separated countries. There are also the moods of nations and whole peoples that Jung speaks of in his essay on *Wotan*. They spread like smallpox or other epidemic. And today they account for the wave of violence that is active the world over, so that

the normal youth suddenly gets the urge to kick a harmless old lady looking at a shop window.

The saints and sages of former time knew a great deal about these psychic forces and personified them in no uncertain manner showing that they had a life and power of their own. It was Freud, Adler and Jung and modern psychiatrists generally who invented the term subconscious for the former personifications. They tried to bring these subconscious powers into consciousness and thereby exorcise them, but their efforts have been far from satisfactory.

If we could free ourselves both individually and collectively from these psychic forces, and put human beings into direct contact with the life force, that is, in harmony with the driving force of the universe, we should achieve much in the way of a more satisfactory human social life. You may of course call this driving force God, or It, or what you will.

This in fact is what the saints and sages have striven to do, and the 'means whereby' they attempted to achieve their object bear a remarkable likeness to the 'means whereby' Alexander regained his lost voice through the discovery of the primary control and the need for an upright posture.

The psychological similarity of the technique of Alexander and of the saints and sages, is illustrated by the true story of a young woman who belonged to an obscure but very sincere Christian sect. It will probably make the reader smile. The young lady required a new hat and wondered what type of new hat should replace it. Her sect advised that nothing should be done except under the guidance of God. So she gave up her own desires and her own will and prayed for guidance. The shopping expedition carried no worries or desires, for God was directing it.

There is no difference psychologically between the young lady's relinquishment of her own self will about a triviality, and Alexander's 'inhibition' of the desire to do the exercise, and also it is not different from Maharshi Ramana's term 'surrender', Gandhi's dance to the tune of God, the Zen Rishi's admoni-

tion, 'let It shoot the arrow from the bow' and my own phrase, 'surrender to the life force.'

If this attitude were adopted in all phases of life we might indeed expect a better and more rational world. But most people are prepared to give up their own desires only to a very limited extent.

Let us analyse Alexander's term 'the means whereby'.

First, there is a mental appraisal of the task to be undertaken; this means standing aside and being aware without being emotionally or personally involved. This has been called 'non-attachment', and possibly the state of conviction of 'sin' has some resemblance to it psychologically. You are not emotionally involved because a power other than your own will bring matters to fruition. You look on as a stranger might do. *Your* only task is to use your reasoning faculty to understand what you do, to inhibit the desire to do the exercise, to let it be done and not mind if the end is achieved or not.

The next matter is the refusal to trust your sensory perceptions. Alexander found that what you feel with your senses is not in fact reliable. He confined this to the sense of touch as regards the body. But the saints and sages asserted that the refusal to trust sensory perceptions must be applied to all the senses — not only touching, but also seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and thinking. The last is the most important for us of this intellectual age.

Alexander thought that man is a rational being (provided of course that his primary control is in good working order!) But man is both rational and irrational. Nothing is ever learned by reason. Einstein did not find the law of relativity by reason. It just came to him. But he used his reasoning faculty to test its validity. And so it is with the Alexander technique. You do not reason about it or seek to gain results, and your sensory perceptions are sure to be wrong. Hence his assumption that a teacher is usually necessary. You do not try to get results. You merely do the exercises and patiently observe.

When your thinking organ is stilled, it is amazing how often the rectification of an error is brought to light. The life force has far more intelligence than any human being. And of course far more than any person's body which *feels* something is right.

This applies to all sense-perceptions. The sense of taste is perhaps the silliest of them all. The man's palate has grown to like 'good food and drink', so that these things now taste right. But it is obvious to his friends that his misguided sense of taste is dragging him down to all manner of diseases including alcoholism.

Sense perceptions and talents are excellent in themselves; it is trusting to them to guide us that is wrong. Instead of our being their master, we allow them to dominate us. We should be happier if we surrendered them and our desires which spring from them to the life-force for the benefit of all, including the health of our own bodies.

The term 'inhibit' in Alexander's technique again coincides with the teaching of the saints and sages, although each used a very different terminology. Alexander used the term 'inhibition' as part of the 'means whereby'. Christians would speak of yielding to the guidance of God, Mahayana Buddhists of the Shinshu school to trusting to the great vow of the Buddha Amida, Zennists to letting It do the work in hand, Maharshi Ramana to asking who you are, and I would use the expression 'surrender to the life force'.

Alexander's mistake was the failure to take into account other sensations than that of physical touch and this despite his experience that something other than the physical is necessary. The word religion appears to come from *ligamen* meaning bond or tie (compare *ligament*). It is that which unites the world perceived through the senses (including the intellect) with the world that cannot be known through any sensory perception. This is usually called the spiritual. Alexander confined himself to one sense perception alone; worse still he altogether ignored that other world not perceived through any sense perception.

In their turn, the saints and sages tended to neglect the physical side of man's make-up. Not only have they treated the physical body as inferior, but they have often deliberately ignored it and ill-treated it by self flagellations, beads of nails, hair-shirts, excessive fasting and the like. The outstanding exception has been *batba-yoga*, but *batba-yoga* probably neglected mentioning the importance of a straight posture, presumably because for Indians it was the most elementary thing well-known.

Those who trust to the spiritual alone are cutting from under them the very instruments through which the spiritual can be perceived. Without our bodies and our brains we should cease to exist.

Body, mind and spirit are one indivisible trinity, and to free mankind from the present muddle, all three must co-operate and none must be regarded as inferior to any other of that trinity.

The discovery of the importance of the primary control is starting to revolutionize our attitude to physical culture. But perhaps the attention drawn by Jung to the influence of autonomous subconscious psychic forces is even more important. There are other factors also. Furthermore, people differ enormously in what causes lack of harmony in that indivisible trinity. Hence it is folly to assert that body or mind or spirit is most important.

It is customary to speak first of the body, second of the mind, and usually the spirit is overlooked altogether. Perhaps the greatest spiritual genius of our age who took account of all three was Mahatma Gandhi. He did not talk about the matter in philosophic terms. But he did in fact examine the body's need, test matters with mental reasoning and always depend upon God or Rama to guide him.

If therefore we recognize the need for acting as a harmonious, indivisible trinity we cannot do better than by emulating Gandhi, even while we follow our chosen spiritual guru.

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## SHELL

(after Shinkichi Takashashi)

By Lucien Stryk

Nothing, nothing at all  
     is born,  
 dies, the shell says again  
     and again  
 from the depth of hollowness.  
     Its body  
 swept off by tide -- so what?  
     It sleeps  
 in sand, drying in sunlight,  
     bathing  
 in moonlight. Nothing to do  
     with sea  
 or anything else. Over  
     and over  
 it vanishes with the wave.

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# Together and Apart

(Translated from the Tamil original of Sri Muruganar)

By

Prof. K. Swaminathan

Many of Muruganar's poems are charming or piquant variations on a theme or mode immortalized by Saint Manickavachagar. They run, but somehow escape the risk of being merely imitative or monotonously repetitive, because the Siva whom Muruganar celebrates is not an image in some dear, familiar shrine, but a concrete person, historical and contemporary, and the modern poet's approach is dynamic and metaphysical rather than devotional or lyrical.

To well trained Tamil readers, Muruganar's words through their sounds and ideas convey a meaning as clear and strong and moving as the *vina*-music which is produced but cannot be explained by taut strings and plucking fingers. The rendering which follows is a brave but far from successful attempt to reproduce the complex thought and imagery of a few selected stanzas.

Both male and female, far yet near,  
Mountain-huge and atom-small  
Pure Spirit He, whose sidelong glance  
Has made me see  
The Truth invisible  
And hear  
The dancing music of His feet.  
For He has caught within His heart  
And carries in His cosmic dance  
This midget. What extravagance  
Of Grace, to hold me in this bliss,  
Both mine and His,  
Together and apart !

Awareness wherein brightly shine  
These many forms of persons, places, time,  
All separate-seeming though in substance One :  
Into that same Awareness he transmuted  
This 'I' of mine. Now, nothing to be known,  
My past undone, my being his,  
I stand, unruffled bliss, a Rock  
Untouched by any shock.  
Lord Siva-Venkatesa, King of Kings,  
Came conquering  
And made me his alone.

What is this 'I' that rises from within ?  
Only a thought that, like a bubble, floats  
Up to the troubled surface of Awareness.  
In sleep the sea is still, no bubble rises :  
Then too you are, and are aware you are.  
You're not the 'I' that rises and then sets,  
You are the sole Awareness in the All,  
The eternal, uncreated Light of Being...

Your Grace it was I stumbled to your feet,  
Your love that raised me up and made me yours,  
Chosen to serve, though not for service meet,  
Untouched save by the Grace that from you pours.  
I too have seen all creatures live and move  
Not of themselves but Self, all living prove  
That I am nothing and can nothing do :  
So all my duties I have cast on you.

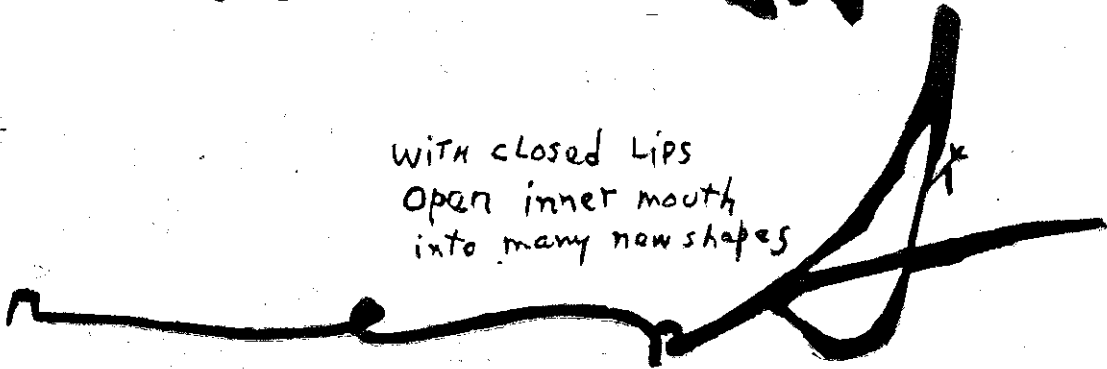
No form or feature has he of his own,  
Yet form and feature to all beings gives ;  
Knowledge and ignorance, both to him unknown,  
Each human mind from him alone derives.  
He brought me into being but to think  
Of him as 'you', of me and mine as 'yours' :  
And he has left me wordless, deedless, prone,  
Helpless on death's brink.  
Only the vast beatitude endures.

## THE INNER MOUTH

the world of 'I'  
wherein each comes  
instantly alive  
lets each go out in  
at will

If one only outs and never  
one gets lost INS  
and the life sputters  
one's slightest motion  
has one out or IN

With closed Lips  
Open inner mouth  
into many new shapes



1975

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*By* paul rePS



## Faith According to St. John

By

H. J. Noronha, S.J.

**F**AITH is a central theme in the writings of St. John the Evangelist. Although the noun 'faith' occurs only a few times, i.e., 1 *Jn.* 5:4 ; *Apoc.* 2:13, etc., the verb 'to believe' is found frequently. 'Pisteuo' often means to put faith in the words of God. Therefore faith applies to the Scriptures (*Jn.* 3:28), to Moses or his writings (*Jn.* 5:46), etc. According to John believing is not only an act of the mind, assenting to revealed truths ; it is also an act of man's free will. Yet while man's moral disposition plays a role here, faith is a gift of God. (*Jn.* 6:37 ; 8, 47). For no one can come to the Son, unless the Father draws him (*Jn.* 6:44).

St. John is very explicit in saying that the main aim of the writing of the Gospel is 'that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing you may have life in his name'. As we have said already, believing to John is closely allied with religious knowing.

We know in John 14.7 Jesus says equivalently that to know is to know the Father and this knowing is eternal life for man (17.3). To live in Christ or to be in Christ can no longer be separated from knowing that we are in Christ. To know here, is a union-in-activity, a communion of life. On the other hand, John speaks of unbelief also ; he qualifies it as living in inauthenticity and fraud, as living in an illusion with regard to the only valuable and consistent reality. Unbelief is error regarding reality.

It would be a very great mistake to suppose that the faith of catholic scholars and theologians or of educated converts is the more perfect faith, more endowed with the qualities which belong to all faith. Our Lord had said that the clean of heart should see God and

called those blessed 'who have not seen and have believed'.

It is clear that, in faith and every form of belief, knowledge is acquired and truth attained on the testimony and attestation of another. In order to acquire knowledge through testimony, three things are necessary : to know who the person is who gives the message ; to be certain that he is speaking the truth ; to understand what he has to say. Now our Lord's message is concerned with mysteries of divine truth and knowledge which no human mind can wholly grasp. Therefore in order to come to this truth through his testimony it will be of the utmost importance to interpret and understand correctly his whole presentation of that truth, i.e., the whole message of his human life.

If the message of Christ is a divine message, how is he to show us that this is so ? By signs. This point John stresses very much. Chief among these signs is Christ himself and then his miracles. Our faith then is not given primarily to a body of doctrines, a system of truths, but to a Person who is at once the message and the messenger.

St. John tells us that the Jews in the synagogue at Capharnaum the very day after the feeding of the five thousands and our Lord's walking on the water demanded from him a sign. Loaves and fishes miraculously multiplied were not sign enough for them. Moses had called down bread from heaven to show that his authority was from God and now Christ claimed to have divine authority over and above that of Moses and to supersede him, let Christ then call down bread from heaven too. And we know Jesus Christ's answer : "Moses gave you not bread from heaven . . . I am the bread of life . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven" . . .

(*Jn.* 6:30). He himself is all the while the sign for which they are looking. Hence faith is a knowledge of truth, a contact with divine reality, established in and through external and visible signs, words, deeds, a human life. Now this is the eternal life: that they may know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent. (*Jn.* 17:3) Hence we may say that within the apprehension of faith is included not only the perception that Christ in his mystery merits full belief, but the clear recognition that this object demands belief from me. It leads me to say 'I must believe'.

In faith it is admitted that there could be no reasonable assent unless there were something in it of direct awareness and immediate apprehension. On the other hand, if all were direct apprehension, we should have not faith but intuitive knowledge in the strict sense. It is possible to distinguish within the single experience of faith in Christ an element of vision and an element of indirect awareness which we may call reliance or belief. We don't directly apprehend the revealed truth but believe it on the authority of God revealing. But we directly grasp, we see with the eyes of faith that divine attestation: we see God's signs as divine authentication, we see the credibility, the credence and the fact itself of revelation. I should once again state that the complexity of faith and at the same time its simplicity lies in the fact that our Lord is at once the message which God gives to man and the divine authentication of that message.

Here I should make use of that famous quotation of John: "No man can come to me except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him" (*Jn.* 6, 14). It is the notion of grace as from God's side, a drawing of man back to himself and on man's side, as a corresponding reaching out towards God, that gives us the more dynamic conception of supernatural gifts and energies that we need. The attraction exercised by God may be shaken off and the gift it involves refused; or it may be yielded to and in the yielding the new energy and aspiration will be intensified.

Faith is reasonable because it is an act of reason; it is supernatural because it is the development and fulfilment of a power that is

only latent and unrealized within reason until God's gift draws it forth and actuates it. Jesus not only spoke to the unbelievers but also to the believers: "If you continue in my word, you shall be my disciples indeed and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (*Jn.* 8, 31f). Here one of the commentators says that faith is before all else a principle of freedom, a source of freedom bringing liberation from the dark or blind forces of determination either without or within. Hitherto these forces stood over against us, menacing or lulling us, now they are ours to possess, to master, to manipulate. I think we must agree to this opinion and say that by faith we progress towards freedom. It was promised that the truth should make us free.

To accept or reject God's revelation through Christ means to accept or to reject God Himself: "He who denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who confesses the Son has the Father too." (1 *Jn.* 2:23), Christian faith means accepting Jesus as God's revelation of Himself to men. If faith means fully accepting Christ for what he is, it obviously cannot consist in mere intellectual recognition of Him as Saviour, i.e., in mere intellectual assent to the truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God come into the world or the word made flesh. It must also mean practically accepting Him as God's offer of Himself to mankind. In short Christ's salvific mission aims at revealing God's inner life to men by making it a reality they experience. "The Son of God has come and given us understanding that we may know the True One and be in the True One through His Son, Jesus Christ." (1 *Jn.* 5:20) Hence in John faith is also man's full practical acceptance of that salvific mission.

The council of Trent, in full accord with both Pauline and Johannine theology, defined faith as the fundamental dimension of the Christian life. The second Vatican council has formulated a definition of faith that sounds surprising in its novelty of terms: "The obedience of faith must be given to God who reveals an obedience by which man entrusts his whole self freely to God offering 'full

submission of intellect and will to God who reveals and freely assenting to the truth revealed by . . . man's response to God in faith must be free . . . 'The act of faith is of its very nature a free act.' Vat. II's definition is fully in accordance with the biblical concept of faith. In St. John, faith is, as we have stated already, knowing Christ as the Son of God sent by the Father to give eternal life to men (8, 24-28, etc)

The New Testament writings describe the presence of the Spirit of Christ in man as an inner illumination opening the hearts of men to the Gospel, as a divine attraction, making man docile to the mystery of Christ.

According to Alfaro, for John to recognize Christ in history and at the same time to emphasize the relation linking the central eschatological revelation given to Jesus of Nazareth with every soteriological revelation granted by God necessarily implies faith in the pre-existence of Jesus. John 4 treats of faith as man's response to Jesus' revelation, from many aspects and, with considerable urgency. Throughout the whole gospel one can recognise the supreme importance which the evangelist accords to faith. Faith in John has developed largely in meaning and nature; it appears as a fundamental and comprehensive decision and attitude towards the eschatological envoy of God and his saving revelation. In a word: faith in John has attained a markedly theological eminence, in which it resembles that of Paul, but John brings faith into his account of the earthly work of Jesus and makes it unfold in the encounter with the redeemer during his life in this world, though its bearing on the time after Easter is always made apparent and is explicitly stated in the concluding sentence, Jesus' answer to Thomas (20:29). Thus he is enabled to describe exactly the coming and the growth of faith, the motives it springs from and the dangers it runs and at the same time bring out the fundamental soteriological significance of faith as the one thing demanded for salvation.

Faith also can be described as hearing the voice or the words of Jesus (5:24; 6:45) in the sense of obeying. Hearing must be inward hearing; it means learning from the Father

(6:45) and accepting, keeping and following up the words of the revealer (8:51f; 14:23).

To see Jesus in faith points out to the peculiar character of Christian revelation, namely that men see the Father in him (14:9). Knowledge is bound up with faith and hence preserved from the misunderstandings of mysticism or gnosticism. Elsewhere it retains its own proper meaning. It refers to other objects and truths than Jesus Christ and his revelation. In the relationship of the Son and the Father there can be no question of faith but only of knowledge. Faith gives eternal life; the knowledge of the one True God (17:3).

Johannine faith is also strongly centred on confessing; the evangelist attaches importance to the various confessions of faith which he records of various individuals (*Nathanael* 1:49; *Simon Peter* 6:68; *Marthaball* 27; *Thomas* 20:28 etc.). The Johannine faith which is thus centred on Christ gains its true significance only from the promise of salvation, which Christ makes to believers. He did not merely bring out the central function of faith within the Christian message of salvation, as the one decision and attitude demanded of man and affirm its critical significance in eliminating other ways of salvation, but he also confronted his own times and his own situation with the challenge of faith and formulated it accordingly.

John does not look like Paul mainly to the eschatological future, but he concentrates on the salvation already acquired in the present. He aims at strengthening and deepening the Christian faith (20:30) first by recalling the clear self-revelation of Jesus and then by showing his reader the nature and characteristics of genuine faith.

The trials which faith undergoes are of great importance in the education, strengthening and development of faith but once more it is the faith of the disciples which displays at its fullest the stimulating and discriminatory function of trials.

Finally the decision of faith is not a human achievement like the Jewish works of the Law, but simply the fitting answer, made possible by the grace of God, to the revelation given by Jesus Christ.

## STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTHA—VI

## THE STORY OF SURAGHU

*Translated from Sanskrit by***M. C. Subramanian****VASISHTHA** said to Rama :

Young man with lotus-like eyes ! If you search earnestly for the Self within yourself you will come to find your rest in the Supreme infinite state. The more one ponders over the meaning of the scriptures and the words of the guru and practises negation of the objective world, the more easily does one attain that state. By cultivating dispassion, understanding and control of the senses one reaches that holy state. It can be attained only through intelligent investigation. A sharp and enlightened understanding free from taints of passions enables one to attain that eternal state.

Rama asked :

Lord who knowest the past, present and the future ! There is one who has experienced samadhi and has subsequently come out of it and is attending to his duties, abiding in peace in himself all the time, and there is another who resorting to solitude is always established in samadhi. Which of these two is superior ?

Vasishtha replied :

The inner tranquillity experienced by one who looks upon this conglomeration of *gunas* (fundamental modes or constituents of *Prakriti*) as non-self is known as samadhi. Some, having come to the conclusion 'I have nothing to do with the objects of perception', calmly engage themselves in their day-to-day affairs, while others continue to remain in samadhi. Both of them will be happy if they are inwardly calm. Inner peace is the result of great austerities (spiritual practice). If the mind of one established in samadhi gets unsteady, his condition will be like the capering of a mad man. Yet, if the mind of one who capers like a mad man is absolutely free from concepts, his capering is as good as the samadhi of a sage. There is no difference

between a realized man who is active and another who lives in a forest. They both have attained the state beyond all doubts.

He whose mind is conceptless is not a doer even if he is active. He is like one seemingly listening to a story while his mind is elsewhere. He whose mind is full of concepts is troubled within though seemingly quiet. He is like a person who dreams that he is falling down from a height although his body is peacefully lying down. Steadiness of mind is real samadhi. It is the Absolute state of real Bliss.

Steadiness and unsteadiness of mind determine samadhi and its absence. Therefore divest the mind of all concepts. When the mind is free of concepts it is known as steadiness ; it is itself concentration. It is known as the Absolute state of peace as well. The eradication of concepts should be complete for that alone leads one to the supreme state. The sense of doership alone brings about concepts. As these are the cause of sorrows one should avoid them. Free from all conceptual thought you may stay in your house or live on a mountain. To the householder whose mind is under perfect control and whose ego-sense is dead his house is as good as a forest retreat.

Although there may be people in a bazaar engaged in different activities they are as good as non-existent (to a stranger) because he is not interested in them. Even so a city will be as peaceful as a forest to a sage. To one whose mind is inward-turned villages, cities and kingdoms are like forests whether one is asleep or awake sitting or wandering. Everything is void to one whose mind is always turned within. When the heart is at peace the whole world will be found to be nothing but Pure Awareness. The earth, air, ether, moun-



tains, rivers and the quarters are all nothing but mental concepts, although they appear to be outside. He who is happy within even while engaged in various activities is not affected by the joys and sorrows of the world. His mind is spontaneously controlled. He sees truly who sees all beings as himself and looks upon all possessions as trash. Let death come today or at the end of *kalpas* (aeons), he is not affected thereby like gold buried deep down. Everything is that tranquil, unborn Being, without beginning, end or middle, the pure Consciousness which shines everywhere, as the source of all joy. Even describing it thus is only to indicate it in a way. It is the significance of OM ; it is the Eternal Silence behind all manifestation.

In this context I shall narrate to you an interesting legend about a chief of the hunters, named *Suraghu*. On the range of the Himalayas known as Kailasa there lived a tribe of hunters known as *Hemajatās* (of yellow locks). They had a noble King named *Suraghu*. He had conquered many cities and humbled the pride of even the bravest warriors among the *Devas*. He attended to his kingly duties using force or persuasion as occasion required. But he soon became disgusted with the joys and sorrows arising from discharging his duties. So he thought : 'Why do I harass (*lit.* Squeeze) the people like an oil-press ? Pain is the same to all beings. But if I do not administer justice, people cannot live (safely) just as there cannot be a river without its banks'. Wavering like this he knew no peace. One day the sage *Māṇḍavya* happened to come to his palace. *Suraghu* received the sage with great respect and after he had taken rest, he said to him : 'O Sage ! I am happy to see you. I stand today as the head of all righteous (virtuous) people. Lord ! You know what is dharma and so kindly remove a doubt of mine as the sun dispels darkness. Is there anybody whose afflictions are not alleviated by the company of great souls ? Persons who know say that doubt is the worst of afflictions. Thoughts which are the sole cause of misery tear me like the claws of a lion mauling an elephant. Make me experience equanimity like the all-pervasive rays of

the Sun. O Sage ! I have no other refuge but you. Take pity on me.'

*Māṇḍavya* said :

O King ! If you make strenuous efforts and utilize all the means known to you, your anxiety will melt away like snow before the sun. The impurity of the mind can certainly be removed by Self-enquiry in the form of Who Am I ? How did this world come into existence ? How do birth and death occur ? If you enquire thus within yourself you will surely attain the highest state. When you understand the nature of your Self your mind will cease to be the mind and become tranquil and free from the fever of anxiety. Here and now, O Sinless one, you can get rid of restlessness. O King ! a petty mind is distracted even by trifles, just as a small fly is drowned even in a puddle of water formed by the hoof of a cow. As one realizes the Self, the objects of perception get discarded. The Self cannot be realized until everything else is eschewed. What remains then is the Self. Unless everything else is relinquished one does not gain even an ordinary object of desire. How then can the Self be realized without total renunciation ? Therefore one should discard everything else in order to realize the Self. What remains then is the Supreme state. Discard the mind, which projects this world of cause and effect including your body and then remain the supernal Being that you are.

After thus advising *Suraghu*, *Māṇḍavya* returned to his own abode. The king then went into solitude and began to enquire within 'Really, Who am I ?' I am not this body with hands, feet and other organs made up of bones, muscles nerves and fat. I am neither the sensory organs nor the organs of action. I am the Awareness which witnesses all these objects. I am therefore what remains after eliminating everything else, pure Consciousness devoid of concepts. Like ether I pervade everything in the universe. The Self, the Lord, exists like the string running through the pearls (of a necklace). He is the light of Pure Consciousness devoid of every concept. He pervades all the quarters. He assumes a terrible form (sometimes). The Self is immanent in all concepts. It is extremely

subtle, beyond all ideas of existence and non-existence. It exists in all the worlds beginning from the world of Brahmā downwards and it is the home of all powers. Whatever is perceived in this world is really a vibration of Consciousness. There is nothing permanent. I shall therefore abide calmly in the Self, taintless, conceptless and free from the delusion of *samsāra* (phenomenal existence). Beyond desire and distraction I shall be like one in deep sleep." Deciding thus, the king of the Hemajatās attained the incomparable state of the Self Supreme through discrimination and reasoning, just as the son of Gādhī<sup>1</sup> attained Brahminhood. He lived like one sunk in deep sleep free from all mundane pairs of opposites.

Vasishtha continued ;

Now listen to the wonderful dialogue between the enlightened Suraghu and Parnāda the royal sage. There was a well-known King of the Persians, named Parigha. He was like a *parigha* (an iron club) in war and was a terror to the warriors of the opposite side. He was a great friend of Suraghu. Once there was a great famine in Parigha's kingdom. Many people died of hunger. Seeing their distress and realizing his inability to give them relief, he forsook his kingdom, and went to a forest to perform *tapas* (austerities). While performing *japas* with a calm mind he ate only dry leaves. So he came to be known as Parnāda (eater of leaves). By performing severe *tapas* for a thousand years and by constant spiritual effort he gained Self-awareness. He gained freedom from dualities and sorrows and looked upon everything as the expression of One Reality. He moved over the three worlds as he liked. Once the King of the Hemajatās went to his abode. There the two old friends heartily greeted each other saying : 'I am very happy to see you. All my good deeds have borne fruit'.

Parigha said to Suraghu : "Just as you have attained wisdom, so also have I. Are you, O King, doing everything properly with a clear and pure mind? Are you free from bodily ailments and inner anxieties? I am sure you do not at all care for sense-pleasures which are deceptive. Are you established in the

supreme *samādhi* beyond all mental concepts gained by complete repose and tranquillity?"

Suraghu replied : "O great soul ! One who is wallowing in ignorance does not become a Self-realized man. Quiet or active, he never attains *samādhi*. Those who are enlightened will be established in *samādhi* even while engaged in worldly activity, since they firmly abide in the Self, the sole Reality. Even if one sits in the lotus-pose (*padmāsana*) holding the hands in the gesture of *brahmāñjali*,<sup>2</sup> how can one attain *samādhi* if the mind is restless? O Lord ! True Knowledge is the fire which burns up the dry grass of desires. This indeed is called *Samādhi*, not mere abstention from speech. O virtuous one ! Wise men say that the word *samādhi* denotes supreme knowledge which makes one fully wise and ever contented and reveals things as they are. *Samādhi* is declared to be that state which is totally free from all excitement, egoism and the pairs of opposites and is established firmer than the Meru Mountain. It is the fullness (perfection) of mind which is free from thoughts, desires and ideas of acceptance or rejection. Just as Kāla (god of Time) is not unconscious of even a fraction of a second, even so the wise man never forgets his Self. Like the ever-flowing breeze the wise man flows for ever as pure Consciousness. O Best of men ! The high-souled, ever aware of the reality of the Self, see everything with an equal eye. They are free from all pairs of opposites. They remain as absolute awareness beyond knowledge and ignorance."

Parighā said : "O King ! You are truly enlightened, you have attained the supreme state, your mind is tranquil and your thoughts profound. O King ! you shine everywhere, you are pure, all-pervading, absolutely perfect, free from egoism and established in the Self. In a word, there is only one way for attaining real happiness. If the mind turns away from all objectivity and recognizes the one Awareness pervading all, that is the state of supreme bliss."

(To be continued)

<sup>1</sup> Visvāmitra who was born a *kshatriya* became a Brahmin by the power of his one-pointed *tapas*.

<sup>2</sup> Salutation with folded hands during worship.

# Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR

*Translated from Tamil by*

Prof. K. Swaminathan

450.

Those firm settled in the heart  
Know nothing save the Self, which stands  
Like the screen providing for all objects  
Space and light for their appearance.

451.

The deeper into the heart one dives  
The deeper grows the bliss enjoyed,  
Of the infinite, formless Self Supreme  
In its pristine clarity all alone.

452.

Once you are well entrusted to the Heart  
True awareness rises bright.  
And then you live like a Sun unsetting  
Resplendent with the light of Truth,  
In joyous peace that knows no end.

453.

When the mind's desires get fulfilled,  
It gains the bliss of Self, its source.  
Even so in every earthly state,  
In the removal of things hated,  
In fulfilment of desires,  
In Self-abidance, swooning and sweet sleep,  
The only bliss is the bliss of Self.

454.

In the false, frenzied ego-life  
Of mind constricted by a shrunken heart,  
Who can enjoy the bliss of knowledge  
Abiding in hearts free from thought?

455.

For those who have enjoyed the bliss supreme  
Of sleep by otherness untouched,  
'Tis folly not to cherish it and long for  
The bitter sorrow of some other thing  
Deemed as more dependable.

456.

The ignorance abounding in  
sleep, swooning and such other states  
Is but the absence of those objects  
Known to the frenzied ego ; not  
The absence of the luminous Self.

457.

Regarding sleep as one among the sheaths  
Is but the self-forgetful folly  
Of mistaking waking for Awareness.  
When the notion that the waking state  
Is real and worthwhile goes, then sleep  
Becomes non-dual and absolute

458.

The embryo of the separate self  
That batters on the thought that *be*  
Is the seer in dream and waking  
Sinks confused, crestfallen, seeing  
Nothing at all in sleep.

459.

When, the ego's folly extinct,  
All triads fade away, the world as object  
Is no more, and there is one pure  
Eternal Day, this is indeed  
The Night of Siva.

460.

If the inborn *vāsanas* which produce  
Both dream and waking disappear,  
Then the nescience of deep sleep  
Void of every spreading pain  
Is the fourth state transcendent.

461.

To the intellect avid for wakefulness  
Bliss appears a sheath, one of the five.  
The puissant intellect extinct,  
Bliss abides as bliss supreme,  
Distortion as a nescient sheath having ended.

462.

If one alert enjoys true self-awareness  
Bright and clear till overpowered by sleep,  
One need not droop depressed at all  
That dark sleep has confounded one.

463.

Present when we do not see  
And absent when we truly do,  
The petty mind's illusive serpent

Sinks and disappears  
While the rope of Self-awareness  
Abides alone as sole Reality.

464.

As it shines forth for ever unsought  
In lustrous fulness of the heart  
Awareness blissful and non-dual  
Beyond all difference is Reality.

465.

As one Reality alone subsists  
For ever and ever everywhere  
Unmistakable, self-revealed,  
Whatever appears apart from that  
Is a projection of the phantom-mind.

466.

Only for those free from a sense of doership  
The bliss of tranquil peace shines pure  
within.  
For this mad ego is the sole evil seed  
Whence spring all known calamities.

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“*Dhyana* is itself the action, the rite and the effort. It is the most  
intense and potent of all. No other effort is necessary.”

— *Sri Ramana Maharshi*

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## VECTORIAL VISION

By  
Wei Wu Wei

*Physically*, 'time' seems to represent the horizontal dimension of 'length-without-breadth', whereas 'space' represents both the horizontal directions of measurement of 'length' and 'breadth' together with the vertical dimension of 'depth' forming 'volume'.

*Metaphysically*, 'vectorial vision' implies apperceiving at right-angles to all the physical directions of measurements, as each is at right-angles to each other, thereby utilising an 'Nth.' dimension or super-volume to which our relative minds have no access because reasoning by the comparison of opposing concepts has no mechanism by means of which a further direction of measurement could be conceived. Mathematically the limits of relativity can be exceeded, but then whatever is apprehended can only be expressed by algebraic symbols and cannot be conceptually envisaged.

Therefore 'vectorial vision', vision from this super-volume, represents all that we, objectively presented as part of our sensorially-perceived 'universe', could be. This may be regarded as the ultimate verity concerning what we are, and as such it cannot either be perceived or conceived sensorially or by rational processes, since it must be what is perceiving. Such apperceiving, however, should be ultimate apprehension, and should be invariable, no matter who apperceives and apprehends it, and no matter how variable the attempted translation into relative language may appear, such variation being due to the

psychic conditioning and personal intellectual preoccupations of each phenomenon so 'in-seeing'.

'Vectorial vision' may be so-called precisely because it is not one element of a pair of opposing concepts, which represent extremes in one dimension, but represents an angle of vision at 45° to all directions of measurement. But, what is needed metaphysically is not an impossible relative accuracy but only a suggestive indication susceptible of opening the required apperceiving.

*NOTE*: Both 'physically' and 'metaphysically' 'directions of measurement' connote 'direction from whatever is looking'. 'Dimension', however, is also used to imply a conceptual object of measurement.

It should not be possible for Mind to apperceive 'vectorially' when it is divided, since division implies the relative reasoning of 'subject' and 'object' by means of opposing concepts.

The word 'vector' (*vehere*) implies a 'conductor', technically a segment, originating at a fixed point directed so that its extremity can be displaced on a given curve. 'Vectorial vision', therefore, metaphysically implies a visual radius which transcends our relative tri-dimensional volume and which 'conducts' vision at right-angles to our phenomenal space-time dimensions *directly* from noumenality.

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"The Spiritual force of Self-realisation is far more powerful than the use of all the occult powers."

—Bhagavan Ramana

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## Aspects of Siva and the Significance of Siva-Linga<sup>1</sup>

*Kad Rudrāya prachetase  
Meedbushtamaya tavyasē  
Vochema Santamam Hride — Rig-Veda (I, 31-1)*

**“When shall I sing something most auspicious to Rudra, the Great Awareness, the Supreme Bliss, the Most Alert, the Heart of All!”**

**S**IVA, in his essence, is formless Pure Awareness, Supreme Blessedness (*parama-kalyāna*), the Home of genuine grace divine (*avyāja-karunā nidhib*). Though characterless, he is the source of all characteristics. He takes the form of the universe, endless individual *jīvas* and its Lord. As the Lord of the universe he takes endless forms through his inalienable Sakti. Says Sankara in the first verse of his *Soundarya Labari*: “Siva is capable of manifesting himself as the many, if he is associated with his Sakti; if not, he could not even stir.” So he begins his famous Hymn in praise of Siva, known as *Sivananda Labari*<sup>2</sup>; bowing to Siva and Siva conceived therein as the *Prakasa* and *Vimarsa kalās* (aspects of Pure Effulgence and its experience). In his invocatory verse of *Raghuvamsa Kavya*, Kalidasa bows to the Mother and Father of the universe, Parvati and Parameswara who are indivisibly united like speech and its significance.

The form taken by Siva to bless his devotees is described to be white as camphor (*karpūra-dhavalā*). Though white is the basis of all colours, it is not a colour by itself. All colours emanate from it and merge in it in their totality.

The significance of the forms taken by Siva, his weapons, bull and so on are dealt with briefly here. Of his three eyes the right eye represents the Sun, the left one the Moon and that between the brows, Fire. And so he is known by the names *Sōma-sūryāgni-lōchana* and *Tryambaka*. The eye on the forehead



Lord Siva

represents higher spiritual perception as well; ignorance and impurity cannot stand before it. Kama who tried to distract Siva got burnt to ashes by a glance of that eye. Another

<sup>1</sup> The above article got finalised and fair-copied during the *pradosha* (the hour before and after sunset, sacred to Siva) on Wednesday, September 17, 1975. It is said that Siva dances before the Mother of the universe at that hour and all *devas*, beginning from Brahma and Vishnu, play their respective parts in the dance-music or simply witness it in ecstasy.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Waves of Bliss of Siva’.

interpretation is that the Sun is the Self of Pure Awareness, the moon the purified mind and Fire, *Prana* or the life-current coursing through all creation.

The crescent over Siva's forehead stands for the sublimated mind, rid of all its grossness which alone could get attuned to the Supreme Self in its pristine purity. The river Ganga represented on Siva's head stands for the flow of nectar from *Sahasrāra* (the thousand-petalled lotus) purifying and dissolving into itself everything it touches. The matted hair of Siva denotes the merger of all thoughts in the basic awareness pure.

The tiger-skin Siva wears signifies his conquest of *rajo-guna*, all disturbance and distraction and the elephant-hide of pride and aggressiveness. His four or eight or ten arms are ever-operating in all directions. His trident (*Trisoola*) represents the three gunas, *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* as well as his three Saktis, *Iceba*, *Jnāna* and *Kriya* (the urge behind action, knowledge and movement). *Pāsupata* is his own special weapon as *Vajra* is of Indra.<sup>3</sup> He wields the battle axe (*Parasu*) as well. Arjuna got the former weapon from Siva by his tapas and Parasurama vanquished his foes with the aid of the latter. *Pināka* is the bow of Siva and *khatvāṅga*, his club and as the wielder of these he is known as *Pināki* and *Khatvāṅgi*. By his *Pāsa* (noose) he binds all and frees all from bondage at the appropriate hour. He wears a huge snake as a garland and a tiny one as his anklet. What is poisonous loses its venom in his proximity. His garland of skulls is significant of his destruction of endless world-systems. He reduces to ashes everything and smears his body with them. By the experience of *Jnana* everything in manifestation is found to be nothing but awareness pure. That is *Bhasma* (ashes) and that is a meaningful name of Siva.

Siva holds a hand-drum in one of his hands, from the notes of which emanated the root-sounds of language. They are the aphorisms known as *Māheshwara Sūtras*, forming the very beginning of Pānini's Samskrit grammar.

The Bull of Siva, seated firm facing him always represents powerful one-pointed aspiration, attention and alertness of the earnest devotee. It is the emblem of Siva's banner as



Nandi

well and hence his names *Vrishanka* and *Vrishabha-dhwaja*. The Bull (*Nandi*) is Siva's conveyance also. He rides the Bull and is therefore *Vrishabbāroodha*. The idea behind it is that the perfect devotee serves as the perfect vehicle of his Master or Lord. There is also an aspect of *Nandi* with bull's face and human body. Then he is called *Nandikeswara*, the very first Teacher of Music and dance. He serves as Siva's door-keeper as well, regulating the inflow of devotees to Siva's presence.

There are five special aspects of Siva known as *Tat-purusha*, *Aghōra*, *Vāmadeva*, *Sadyōjāta* and *Isāna*. The special *mantras* of these aspects are recited at the end of Siva-worship. The mantra of *Tat-purusha* is in the *gāyatri* metre and it is known as *Rudra-gāyatri* :

*Tat-purusbāya vidmahe Mabādevāya  
dheemahi*

*Tannō Rudrab Prachōdayāt*

It means : We know him as *Tat-purusha* (transcendent Reality) and meditate upon Him as the Great Lord (of the universe). May He, Rudra, inspire us.

*Aghōra* : Ghora is the terrible and Aghora is its opposite. He himself is the most terrible as well as the most benevolent. The Rishi bows to both these aspects of Rudra.

*Vāmadeva* : is the beautiful Lord, the foremost of all, the Supreme who is Time and the change effected by it. He is strength and valour. He is the Might that puts down

<sup>3</sup> Ganapati Muni, in his *Indreswara-abheda-sūtram* has pointed out the similitude between Vedic Indra and Siva of latter days.



the mighty (*asuras*). He is the controller of all beings, beyond mind in his essence. We bow to Him.

*Sadyōjāta* : Siva is known as Sadyōjāta as He is ever as fresh as something just born. "I take shelter with Sadyōjāta and bow to Him. May He make me established in the transcendental state every moment of my life. I bow to Him, the origin of all life."

*Īśāna* : is the Lord of all Wisdom, of all beings. He is the creator, overlord, the Lord of Brahma. He is Brahma of Brahma. May He, Sadāsiva (the Ever-Auspicious) bless me for ever. *AUM*.

Though usually, projection, sustenance, withdrawal, veiling and revealing are said to be the functions of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Iswara and Sadasiva, Pushpadanta, in his *Siva-Mahimnah Stotram*<sup>4</sup> ascribes all to Siva alone in his different aspects.

"I bow to *Bhava*, who, full of activity, projects the universe, who himself as *Hara*, full of *tamas* wipes it out and who as *Mrida*, full of tranquillity makes all happy and who as *Siva*, the Supreme Light of Awareness transcends all *gunas*."

(*Bhava*, *Hara* and *Mrida* are meaningful names of Siva here denoting his functions)

There are various aspects of Siva such as Dakshināmurti, Natarāja, Kālākāla, Bhairava and Rudra. In the Rudradhyaya of Yajurveda Rudra is described as everything animate and inanimate, all that is beautiful, ugly, benevolent or ferocious, desirable and undesirable. From the ultimate standpoint everything is Siva ; there is no distinction whatsoever there. That Siva and Sakti are indivisible is the idea behind the representation of them in the same Person, known as Ardhnārīswara (Iswara whose one half is Iswari). There is a canto in *Uma Sabasram* dealing with this aspect. Here are the two concluding verses from it :

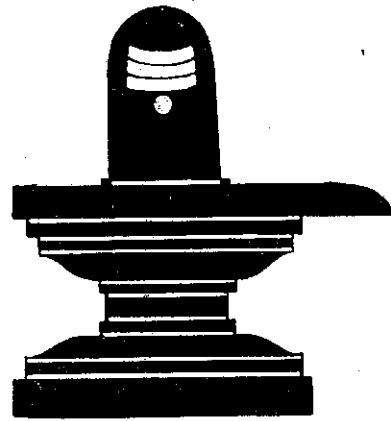
"Your half of the body is yours and Siva's half is His. As for the life-principle, you are the Life of Siva and

Siva is yours, O Mother of the Universe !

"O Life of Bhava<sup>5</sup> (Pure Existence) ! May the heart full of compassion, indivisibly yours and Siva's, may it for a moment turn towards us and bless us."

\* \* \*

Now, coming to Siva-Linga, it expresses the indivisible unity of Siva and Sakti, the base, pedestal or altar representing Sakti and the Linga rooted deep down the altar and rising above it representing Siva. Linga represents the universe as well as its Source, the Flame of Pure Awareness, *Atma-sphurana*, glow of the Self-Supreme,<sup>6</sup> Ultimate Reality



*Siva-Linga*

in which everything merges is Linga. *Siva Purāna* says : "He who worships the Linga, knowing it to be the first cause, the Source of Consciousness, the substance of the universe is nearer to me than any other being." I, 18, 50 "Space is Linga, the Earth the Altar. In it (the Linga) dwell all gods. It is called Linga, because all else dissolves in it."

The origin of the worship of Siva as Linga is to be found in *Arunachala Mahatmyam*

<sup>4</sup> Hymn on the Grandeur of Siva.

<sup>5</sup> *Bhavāni*.

<sup>6</sup> When the ego gets annihilated by the search for its source the Heart itself, the all-pervading Self-Supreme, shines forth as 'I', 'I'.—*Upadesa Sara* of Bhagavan Maharshi.



Lingodbhava

(Glory of Arunachala) a section of *Skanda Maha Purana*. The legend in brief is as follows: There was a hot contest between Brahma, the creator and Vishnu, the sustainer of the universe regarding the superiority of the one over the other. Everything in the universe went wrong and turned chaotic on account of that feud between them and Siva deciding to put an end to it and restore order appeared as an infinite column of Light and thundered forth: "Whoever finds the top or

bottom of this column is the greater one". Stunned at this Brahma and Vishnu stopped fighting and agreed between them to take up the challenge. Accordingly Brahma took the form of a swan and flew up to find the top, whereas Vishnu as a boar dug down the earth to find the bottom. After aeons of futile search, both had to return crestfallen, accepting defeat and realising that they were only instruments of omnipresent and omnipotent Siva. And they prayed to Siva to take a more benevolent and accessible Form so that they and all beings could worship him and realise the ends of life. Siva accordingly took the form of a Hill, known as Arunachala. Brahma and Vishnu worshipped the Hill Linga on the night of *Sivaratri*. Arunachala is the first and foremost of Lingas and the tradition of worshipping Siva in the Linga-form started thus. A granite representation of the Pillar of Light with Siva's form within and Brahma flying up as a swan and Vishnu digging down as a boar can be seen on the wall just behind the sanctum outside in every temple of Siva, in commemoration of this event (*Lingodbhava*).

The esoteric meaning of this legend is as follows. Brahma is the intellect and Vishnu, the ego-sense in *jivas*. They emanate from Siva, who is Pure Awareness and get confused and confounded if they fail to recognise their source and get attuned to it. By surrendering themselves at the Feet of Siva they get enlightened and function as His flawless instruments.

Bhagavan Ramana has explained the significance of the Holy Beacon, which is lit on the summit of Arunachala when the full-moon is with the constellation *Krittika* (Pleiades) in the month of *Krittika* (November-December).

Arunachala is said to be the heart-centre of the Earth<sup>7</sup> in the sacred work *Arunachala Mahatmyam*, already referred to. Now, the body of five sheaths is the earth and its centre the (spiritual) Heart is Arunachala. Giving up the egoistic delusion 'I-am-the-body' one has to reach within, the Source, the Heart and lose oneself in it. That, indeed, is the constant *darshan* of the Beacon of Arunachala.

(To be continued)

<sup>7</sup> *Tat bhumir hridayam viddhi.*

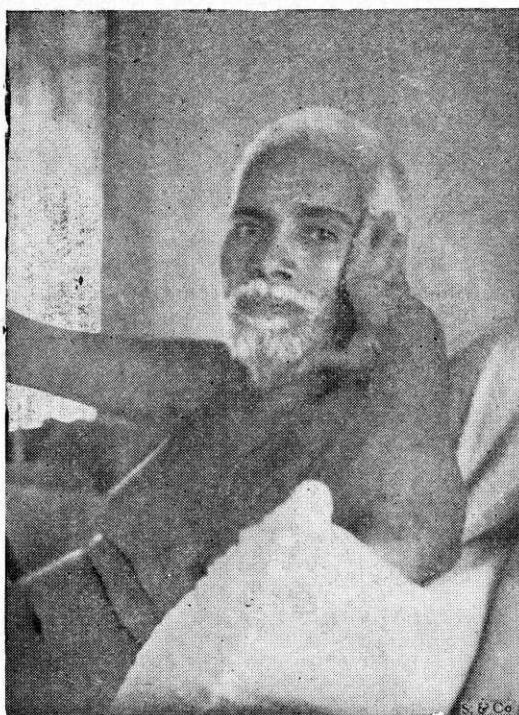
## How I Came to the Maharshi

By  
Sunya Baba

**I**T was in the year 1929 that Poet Rabindranath Tagore and his secretaries (Arya Nikam and Amiya Chakravarti) met him<sup>1</sup> and befriended him at Dartington Hall in Devonshire, England. And it was the Poet's casual invitation to the simple, 'uneducated' gardener to come to Bharat 'to teach Silence' to the ebullient Bengalis, which called him here. He discerned in the simpleton's Being a quality of Sunya-Santi-Silence and intuitive awareness which was felt to be congenial and appreciated in India. The invitation gave the sadhu-type the needed push or pull, to venture forth simply and solitarily, into India, and the proposed 3 or 4 months' stay stretched into 45 years of Himalayan ananda-grace. The solitary pilgrim in Consciousness had come 'Home'!



Sunya Baba



In India he read the Vedas, the Upanishads and the writings of genuine Masters.

He heard of Sri Ramana Maharshi while in Kashmir and Tibet from Lamas, and later from Paul Brunton and Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz. After spending several years in the Himalayas and other sanctuaries, he came to Sri Ramana Maharshi in the year 1936 for the first time and was introduced to the Maharshi by Paul Brunton. He also came three times or more later at a few years' intervals. He had no problem, no disease, and no quest and so asked no questions. Maharshi, however, did ask him some questions which he has now forgotten.

But the first *darshan* of the Maharshi remains an unforgettable experience, especially Sri Ramana's casual, as it were, statement:

<sup>1</sup> Sunya Baba — Emmanuel Sorensen in his *purvashrama* — refers to himself always in the third person in the article.

'We are always aware'; and this made a most powerful impact on him. It resounded in his consciousness like a chime and continued to linger in his memory like a *mantra* or an echo of Sri Arunachala or Dakshināmurti. He also remembers some passages mentioned from the Bible: the phrase, 'I AM THAT I AM', 'Be Still and know that I am God', 'Know ye not that you are Gods?' and the words Jesus exchanged with Nicodemus.

He found Ramana Maharshi's was pure *advaita*-experience, and his chief language, radiant Silence, to which only mature souls familiar with solitude could easily respond. When Ramana was questioned by officious officials and was later asked if it had tired

him, he said: "No, I did not use my mind". He was mind-free and ego-free!

As for Sunya, there was from babyhood no sense of guilt, no sin-complex and no egotistical grievance against *What Is*. Very little friction, imposition or conditioning, and so no ego-importance. Affectionate detachment from forms and things, is natural in the conscious awareness that there is no real division, no real detachment in the Reality we ever are, ego-free and death-free. There is no ambition to 'become' this or that and no reaching out for power or self-possession, security. Yet, there is intuitive Light-awareness, a flair for essence, wholeness and esoteric grace-awareness; a secure contentment in the fundamental all-Rightness of things and happenings — *Siva Lila*, Self-interplay!

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## The Changeless in the Change

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The Morning Star, the Milky Way, the Pleiades are no less homes for Man than this Earth, each time they send a ray into his eye they lift him to themselves. Each time he passes under them he draws them to himself.

All things are incorporated into Man and Man is in turn incorporated into them. The Universe is but a single body. Commune with the slightest particle thereof and you commune with all.

And as you die continually when living, so do you live continually when dead; if not in this body, then in a body of another form. But you continue to live in a body until dissolved in God; which is to say, until you overcome all change.

— from *The Book of Mirdad*

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## Jesus and the Bread of Life

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By  
James Grant

**A**LMOST everyone in Nazareth had some part to play in farming. Ploughing the field, sowing the seed, caring for the growing plants, and harvesting the ripened grain took the work of many hands.

Planting time was always joyous. Life was returning to the countryside after the cold, dry winter. Grass and flowers were springing up everywhere. The sun shone brightly in between the fresh spring rains. Jesus and all the other young children looked forward to the time the farmers would take the oxen and the bag of seed out into the field for planting. The farmer would open up the soil with a plough behind his ox, and put in the seed. The children would spend much of the time playing, but would also help keep the birds from getting to the seed before it was covered over. After sharing a simple common meal, and working the rest of the day, all would return to town, tired and happy.

Young Jesus was fascinated by the growing wheat. He watched in wonder as the tender blade shot through the earth, as the stalk shot up, covered by other blades, and how it responded to the farmer's tender care, the warmth of the sun, the life-giving rain. He saw the ear appear and fill out, until full of precious grain. And then he saw how the plant concentrated all of its life on developing and caring for its seed.

When life had been completely withdrawn from the plant and the grain was full and ripe, it was harvest time. This was another joyful time, in which almost all had something to do. The dry stalks were cut down, and the grain was brought in from the fields, thrashed and winnowed. Jesus held tight to the basket as he threw the thrashed grain into the air and watched the wind blow the chaff

away. When the grain was thoroughly cleaned, some was separated out for seed for the next year's planting, and the rest was stored for milling into flour for bread. Another cycle had been completed. God had blessed them with another supply of food and a means to start again, and there was rejoicing throughout the land.

Jesus helped his mother carry the wheat down to be milled. As the oxen walked around the mill and the heavy stone bore down on the grain and ground it into flour, something within him, too, was crushed. But then they took the flour home and mixed it with water and leavening and baked it in the oven, and it came out as delicious bread, to give nourishment to the bodies of men, and his spirit was renewed.

Jesus grew in strength and wisdom. He learned to walk behind the oxen and to sow the seed. He wielded the heavy scythe at harvest time, tirelessly cutting down the grain. He helped his mother bake the bread. As he participated in the whole process year after year, he began to understand its perfection, and to know why God had made bread the staff of life. He saw in the life of the plant a perfect cycle—from seed, to growing plant, to fully ripened grain, into which it had poured its entire life. And then man came to harvest, to receive from it at the precise time that it was ready to give all that it had. The grain, though it appeared dead, had within it abundant life. Some of that life was buried in the earth the next year, only to spring forth again and multiply, some thirty-fold, some a hundred-fold. Some was ground into flour, to nourish the bodies of men, just as the life in each individual will must be ground into powder by God's will so that it will be pliant

enough for Him to knead into bread that will nourish other men's spirits.

Let good fresh wholesome bread again become the staff of your life. Go with Jesus into the fields as you knead the dough. Enter into the life of the plant and the ripened grain,

and its perfect co-operation with man and perfect submission. Break bread with your brothers and sisters when you take it fresh from the oven. If your bread is baked out of love for Jesus and awareness of His Presence, it will be the Bread of Life and will nourish your spirits as well as your bodies.

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## The True Integration

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Love integrates, Hatred disintegrates . . .  
 Love is peace athrob with melodies of Life.  
 Hatred is war agog with fiendish blasts of Death.  
 Which would you : Love and be at everlasting peace ?  
 Or hate and be at everlasting war ?

*Question :* But love is attachment and attachment is bondage !

*Answer :* Nay, Love is the only freedom from attachment.  
 When you love everthing, you are attached to nothing.

Remember that the Key to Life is the Creative Word. The Key to the Creative Word is Love. The Key to Love is understanding. Fill up your hearts with these and spare your tongues the pain of many words.

— from *The Book of Mirdad*

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# Glory of Arunachala

## *Arunachala Mahatmyam*

Translated from Tamil by

M. C. Subramanian

### CHAPTER X

#### THE APPEARANCE OF AN EFFULGENT LINGA BEFORE BRAHMA AND VISHNU

Mārkaṇḍeya said (to Nandikeswara) :

**L**ORD ! Kindly tell me how the eternal Sambhu helped Brahma and Vishnu to get rid of their delusion ?" Nandikeswara said : "I shall describe how Siva, the friend of his devotees, showed his compassion. Listen. Before the two disputants there arose suddenly a column of effulgence which pierced the sky. The deep blue sky seemed to be pushed aside (made invisible) by this (column) which burst out of Brahmāṇḍa (lit. egg of Brahma : cosmic egg). Its light was dim, almost invisible, in the brightness of the effulgent linga. There was a sudden blaze in all the directions of space. The seas appeared to have been licked up by its immense tongues of flame. The waves lost their motion ; they appeared to have regained their true nature. Some stars and planets which still shone in the sky looked like sparks thrown out by the column of fire. They appeared to be covered with an ochre-coloured red glow. They and Arunagiri, the Sun of the earth, became the sole abode of brightness. The marine creatures (whales, etc.) caught in the glow of the effulgence reflected in the seas looked like the gems known as Padmarāga sticking to the Padmarāga mountain. The entire earth appeared to be covered with *kumkum* (vermilion). The quarters appeared to be strewn with *sindura* (a red powder). The sky looked red everywhere and everything appeared reddish. The vault of heaven shone with a red glow. It looked like the skull filled with blood borne by the wearer of a raiment of skin (Siva).

All things in the world, moving and stationary, appeared to be red in the glow of the column of brightness.

On seeing this wonderful Linga of effulgence the four-faced god (Brahma) and the four-armed god (Vishnu) ceased to be angry and thought : 'What a wonder is this ? Has the great lustre of the serpent gems (*nāgamani*) burst out of the earth ? Or have the twelve Adityas (Suns) risen together between the earth and the sky to bring about the end (of the Kalpa or aeon) ? Or have the numerous flashes of lightning caused by the clashing of clouds spread over all the earth ? It has dulled the vision of the eyes by its glow and has grown so large that nothing else can be perceived. At the same time it does not seem to have any purpose in view. Although it blazes fiercely it emits no heat. It does not, like fire, burn even the things that are near. By being exposed to its light not only the world but my body also has become red. Whence and how has this arisen ? What is its source ? How did it grow so big ? For what purpose and by what power does it shine ? What are its limits ? It spreads above, below and in all directions. The mind desires to delve into Pātāla (nether world), or fly up in the sky to see how far it extends."

Both Brahma and Vishnu were agitated in this manner when they saw the column of effulgence. Govinda (Vishnu) said smilingly to the extremely proud Hiranyagarbha (Brahma) : "Brahma ! This is a touchstone which has made its appearance to test both of us who claimed superiority. Neither of us can discover the limits of this column which is of immeasurable glory. So without trying to do so (we shall regard) as superior he who



between us finds out either its beginning or its end (i.e. bottom or top). He alone is the Lord of the World." Brahma agreed. Each became eager to discover either the beginning or the end of that mass of effulgence.

## CHAPTER XI

### VISHNU SEEKS THE ORIGIN (OF THE COLUMN)

Nandikeswara continued :

"Brahma transformed himself into a swan capable of flying in the sky and started (on his quest) saying 'I shall discover the top of this'. Vishnu took up the form of a boar capable of digging and penetrating the earth and eagerly began his search for the bottom (lit. root). When that huge boar bristled up the hair on its neck, ploughed up the earth with its tusks and cleft it with its snout it looked as if it was making its obeisance to the column of light. It grunted in excitement over the hard task as it entered Pātāla briskly. But however far that god in the form of a boar penetrated he saw the column standing unchanged. Numerous serpents rose up from the clefts of the earth like tongues of flame rising from the pillar of fire. Achyuta (Vishnu) saw that the ancient tortoise supporting the earth looked like a joint of the column of fire. He saw the elephants of the quarters standing far apart beneath the earth each carrying his burden, swaying gently. Madhusudana (Vishnu) saw the great tortoise which carries on its back the entire weight of the earth. Adhokshaja (Vishnu) saw also the primal power (*ādhārasakti*) by the grace of which Sesha (the serpent), Kūrma (the tortoise) and others bear the weight of the earth. The lotus-eyed god (Vishnu) traversed with difficulty the seven Pātālas (nether worlds) named Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala, Rasātala, Mahātala and Pātāla and the objects in them and reached the city of Bhōgavati belonging to

Virōchana. He also traversed the other realms of Daityas saying 'This is over, this is over (i.e., I have traversed this realm, this realm also) and penetrated further and further. Mādhava's (Vishnu's) sole object was to discover the origin (of the column). Even when he had reached the bottom of the ocean of milk he saw the column of effulgence standing (unchanged) as before. The earth was fully penetrated and the seas were churned up. But the foot base (of the column) could not be discovered by the boar that was Vishnu. Even after the lapse of a thousand years its origin could not be discovered by it. The boar became extremely weary ; its body was tired and its face injured. When it became weary and out of breath it lost its pride completely along with its desire to see the origin (of the column). Vishnu now desired to turn back although his object had not been realised. For he could not take one step more. To him who had become blind with weariness that column of brightness itself became a beacon to show his way back from Pātāla. As he came up from the region of the ancient tortoise traversing many places, the god in the form of the boar became immersed in the floods of his own perspiration. Janārdana (Vishnu) reached this hilly region with great difficulty. It looked as if he had been bound by the rope that was the glow of the column of effulgence. He said to himself : " Just as I could not discover the bottom of this mass of effulgence, even so the Creator (Brahma) cannot discover its top. Leaving the quest aside I shall surrender myself to Siva, the Lord from whom this mass of effulgence has originated. It is He who has pervaded the world and the regions beyond it. These troubles arose simply because I had been deluded by ignorance and forgotten Him."

After coming to this decision Vishnu abandoned his pride and reached the place where the column of effulgence stood steady.

(To be continued)

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"The cause of your misery is not in the life without ; it is in you as the ego."

— Sri Maharshi

## BOOK REVIEWS

**RAMANA MAHARSHI:** By Prof. K. Swaminathan. Pub.: National Book Trust, India, New Delhi-110016 and also available from Sri Ramanasramam. Pp. 156. Price: Rs. 6.

A compact, comprehensive and up-to-date handbook on the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan intended for the general reader, as distinct from devotees and specialists, has been a long felt want and this has been more than adequately met by the National Book Trust's new addition, *Ramana Maharshi*, to its National Biography Series. Its author, Prof. K. Swaminathan, has taken good care to use as his main source material the publications of Sri Ramanasramam, thus ensuring the authenticity of his facts and the correctness of his statements.

Since the Biographies of Sri B. V. Narasimhaswami and Arthur Osborne appeared, much fresh material has been made available to the reading public through books like Devaraja Mudaliar's *Day by Day with Bhagavan* and Suri Nagamma's *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam* and through the articles in the invaluable Quarterly, *The Mountain Path*. Many revealing incidents culled from these sources have been deftly woven into their proper places in the course of the narrative which makes up the first and mainly biographical part of this little book.

The second part contains an interpretative and analytical summary of the various sections of the *Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi*. The chapter on the Talks recapitulates, in an informal and interesting manner, the fundamentals of the Maharshi's teachings. The copious selections from the Sayings, apart from their intrinsic value, form a richly deserved tribute to the poet Muruganar. The comparison and contrast with J. Krishnamurti and Gandhiji and the concluding comments on jnana and karma help to relate the Sage's teachings and influence to contemporary spirituality and the future of mankind.

The author has rightly brought out at various places in the book the cardinal principle of Bhagavan's teachings, which transcend the man-made frontiers of formalised religions, that self-realisation is not something to be sought in the distant future by the chosen few but that it is our true nature to be experienced by us at all times and that *sadhana* therefor can be, and ought to be, practised wherever

we are, whether at work or worship, in office or temple, at all times. It is where the core of one's mind is anchored that matters and not the physical location of the body, its organs and limbs, or the *karma* engaged in by it.

A distinguished professor of English and college Principal, Prof. Swaminathan has been a close devotee of Ramana Maharshi for the last 30 years. He has spent many week-ends and vacations at Sri Ramanasramam between 1940 and 1950 when the *Mahanirvana* of Bhagavan took place, and thereafter he has been continuing as an ardent devotee helping to establish "Ramana Kendra" in Delhi, of which he was a Secretary for ten years and is now a Vice-President. He has given several valuable discourses on Bhagavan's teachings in Ramana Kendra, Delhi.

More than anyone else, he is eminently equipped and qualified to write on the Maharshi and his book will now be available to the general public. Practically covering everything that one would like to know about Bhagavan, described by this author, "as a man, as transcendental man, the very image and essence of humanity, the *Purushottama* of our age," this book, written in his inimitable style, in terse language, should prove a valuable acquisition for every one.

K. SIVARAJ

**SONGS FROM SRI MURUGANAR'S RAMANA SANNIDHI MURAI SET TO MUSIC:** Pub.: Ramana Kendra, 8, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110003 (Also can be had of Sri Ramanasramam Book Depot, Sri Ramanasramam, P.O., Tiruvannamalai-606603.) Pp. 92. Price: Rs. 5.

This is a fine selection of Songs from Muruganar's *Ramana Sannidhi Murai* (in Tamil), set to music by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan; there is a very fine and faithful English translation of the songs also in it by Prof. K. Swaminathan, enabling the reader to understand the significance of the songs. It was released on September 1, which marked the first anniversary of the opening of *Ramanachala*<sup>1</sup> in New Delhi.

Two active members of the Kendra, Prof. K. Swaminathan and Sri A. R. Natarajan, deserve all credit for bringing out this useful book.

**THE BLOOM OF INNER GLORY:** By N. N. Rajan. Pub.: The Author, 'Sri Ramana Nivasam', 45, Venkatesapuram Colony, 2nd Floor, Madras-600023 (and also available from Sri Ramanasramam). Pp. 76. Price: Rs. 1.25.

As the Foreword by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan found in the book brings out the value of the book quite aptly we quote from it here instead of writing a separate review.

"This is a book of musings inspired by the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana. From out of his devotion Sri N. N. Rajan has culled gems of thought which will adorn those who are in quest of the Ultimate. The direct and straight method of Self-Enquiry taught by the Master is recapitulated in simple and easy language for the benefit of all those who are athirst for the goal. To citations from the Master's *Works*, he has added relevant quotations from the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Yoga Vasishtha*. He has clearly shown how Sri Ramana's teachings constitute the essence of Vedanta. Sri Rajan has succeeded in expressing through this work both his devotion to the Master and his concern for fellow-aspirants."

'SEIN'

**RAMANA MAHARSHI AND J. KRISHNA-MURTI:** By 'Alone'. Pub.: S. N. Publications, 361, Shukravar, Poona-2. Pp. 220. Price: Rs. 10.

As the readers of 'Alone' know, our writer lives on one plane and writes on another; the reader has got to be alert and shifting his understanding at points obligingly signified by his procession of dots (...). In this comparative study of the philosophy of Bhagavan Maharshi and the Thought of J. Krishnamurti, a few points (!) emerge ... not conclusions ... they would be self-imprisonments.

The Self spoken of by the Maharshi relates to the spiritual and Truth level of existence.

The Self of which J. K. speaks relates to mental awareness.

The Void of Buddha and the Self of the Maharshi are very much the same (p. 183).

It is popularly understood that Bhagavan prescribes the enquiry of WHO AM I — there is a definite object. But the real enquiry is the "enquiry without centre" (p. 190).

The writer does not believe in 'atmosphere'. Enquirers get stuck at the level of 'conceptual Self' and "indulge in *atmosphere* so to say created by chanting Mantras, devotional songs, by doing some religious practices etc." Obviously in the "world"

of Alone there is no room for heart. But we are mistaken if we think it to be so. For he does refer to his extraordinary experience of feeling the heart-beats or throbs of heart on the right side and then there were feelings of Love too!

One factual error has crept in on page 193, The author speaks of having occupied a room where the 'Late Suddhanand Bharati' lived for some time. Shuddhanandaji is never late, he is living — very much living (as Swamiji himself would add with gusto).

**RAMAKRISHNA: HIS LIFE AND SAYINGS:** By F. Max Mueller. Edited by Nanda Mookerjee. Pub.: S. Gupta and Bros., Calcutta-16. Pp. 148. Price: Rs. 12.

For long Europe knew Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa only through Max Mueller's book on the saint. That work appeared in 1898 and became a notable channel for the pouring of the streams of present day spirituality from India over the European peoples. The writer was a thorough student of Indology with a special interest in the Vedas, Upanishads and the classical philosophies of India. He was also responsive to the stir of the various movements of Indian renaissance that were current in his days and he took it upon himself to interpret and present to the West the simple and yet comprehensive spiritual movement that was spearheaded by the saint of Dakshineswar.

His book — now reprinted with an elaborate introduction and notes, wherever necessary, by Nanda Mookerjee — first gives the background of Indian religion, ascetic tradition, spiritual values and social set-up so as to present Sri Ramakrishna's mission in the right focus. Brief sketches are given of other notable saints and savants of the times e.g., Dayananda Sarasvati, Pawari Baba, Debendra-nath Tagore etc. The controversy injected by the leaders of Brahma Samaj and other similar movements is examined.

The second half of the book contains nearly four hundred sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, utterances that have brought spirituality to the door of the common man. Recording the impact of these sayings on himself, the learned doctor observes: "These sayings are interesting because they represent an important phase of thought, an attempt to give prominence to the devotional and practical side of the Vedanta, and because they show the compatibility of the Vedanta with other religions. They will make it clear that the Vedanta also possesses a morality of its own, which may seem too high

<sup>1</sup> for details please see our Oct. '74 issue, p. 237.

and too spiritual for ordinary mortals, but which in India has done good, is doing good, and may continue to do good for centuries to come."

A review of the book by Swami Vivekananda (contributed to the *Udbodhan* in March 1899) is appended to the volume. In the course of this writing, Swamiji says in prophetic tones: "The sayings, falling direct from his holy lips, are impregnated with the strongest spiritual force and power, and therefore they will surely exert their divine influence in every part of the world."

#### THE YOGA PHILOSOPHY OF PATANJALI :

By Anthony Elenjittam. Pub. : Better Yourself Books, 28-B Chatham Lines, Allahabad-2. Pp. 222. Price : Rs. 7.

Written in order to give a right understanding of the fundamental bases of Yoga to the reader in these days of vulgarisation of *yoga* under different high-sounding names, this book is a reliable introduction to the subject. The author first gives an elaborate account of the background of the tradition of Yoga in India, the philosophy and the spiritual perception that sustain it and the role of Patanjali in systematising the floating tradition of Yoga across the ages.

A special chapter on the importance of *brahma-charya*, celibacy, in the practice of Yoga is added. The writer underlines the value of will power, prayer, vigilance, control over senses, regular practice of meditation and devotion for God.

The major part of the book is devoted to an exposition of the aphorisms of Patanjali. The text in Sanskrit, its transliteration in roman characters and translation are followed by a running commentary of the author wherein he cites from other scriptures also to explain or support the thesis. He has taken care to be faithful in spirit, though here and there the full or the right meaning is not brought out, e.g. sutra 33 of Sadhana Pada. He translates *maitri-karuna-muditopekshanam sukha-dukkha-punyapunya-vishayanam bhavanatas-cittaprasadanam*, as "Benevolence, mercy, joy and detachment from everything (that is not the Universal Self, God), indifference to happiness and unhappiness, transcending virtue and vice, these engender peace of mind." We are afraid the sense is somewhat different. It is that friendship with the happy, compassion for the suffering, felicity with the meritorious, indifference to the wicked — these lead to the contentment of the mind. Similarly in sutra 38 of the same Pada, *svapna-nidra-jnana-alambanam va*, it does not mean knowledge that one gains in dreams while

asleep; it rather means knowledge received in dream and in sleep.

We trust these shortcomings will be corrected in the next edition.

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE BHAGAVAD GITA :

By Georg Feuerstein. Pub. : Rider and Co., London. Pp. 191. Price : £ 1.95.

In approaching the Gita as "the Magna Carta of Pan-en-theism i.e., the teaching that all subsists in God without limiting Him", the author of this book strikes a fresh note that he keeps up till the last page of his study. He dismisses, and rightly, modern attempts to find interpolations in the text of the Gita, evidences of three hands in authorising the seven hundred verses etc. He discusses with precision the data of the Gita, the question whether the Gita is an integral part of the Epic or not. He notes the several interpretations that are current in certain circles e.g., allegorical, symbolic etc., and gives reasons why he accepts the spiritual interpretation behind the story and the legend. His attempts to trace the historicity of Krishna through the Veda and the Upanishads are in the right direction.

The second part of the work deals with the essential doctrines in the scripture e.g., Reality beyond the One and the Many, the Self, the edifice of the world, Man standing between the animal and the god, Yoga as a path of transformation, Ethics of Krishna and Emancipation as Self-awakening in God. He cites parallels from early Greek thinkers and mystics as well as from recent seers like Sri Aurobindo, giving a broad and comprehensive introduction stimulating interest in the Bhagavad Gita.

Among the many interesting topics he has raised is the symbolism of the number 18 which he equates with 'man as sacrifice' (p. 64).

M. P. PANDIT

WISDOM OF THE VEDAS : By Satyakam Vidyalankar. Pub. : Hind Pocket Books (P.) Ltd., G. T. Road, Delhi-110032. Pp. 127. Price : Rs. 4.

This is a nice collection of 108 *Riks* culled out from the four Vedas, freely rendered in English along with the corresponding Sanskrit text provided at the end of the book. The author rightly says that the Vedas proclaim fundamental truths of all subjects — science, philosophy, ethics, theology — in short all that man endeavours to know and they are equally applicable to all lands and peoples of all times.

The selections are inspiring and stand testimony to the universal appeal of the wisdom enshrined in these ancient *Riks*.

The author says that he has taken the liberty of overlooking literal translation and has expressed the real meaning of the *mantras* giving prominence to the message and the moral derived from that particular *mantra*. We shall provide a sample.

The famous gayatri *mantra* is rendered as under :

"Meditate on the radiant glory of God who illuminates all  
May our soul be worthy of receiving His divine light  
Enlightened by His grace, may we aspire for high objectives and resolve to proceed on the spiritual path with a drive  
May this divine flame guide the faculties of our intellect on the path of ultimate salvation."

HINDU MYTHOLOGY : By W. J. Wilkins. Pub. : Rupa & Co., 15 Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta-12. Pp. 500. Price : Rs. 18.

The second edition of this book appeared in 1900 and the publishers have to be thanked for this reprint.

Primarily intended for the Westerner so that he may 'conveniently gain a good general idea of the names, character and relationship of the principal deities of Hinduism', the book serves as a guide to the modern Hindu as well, ill-equipped as he is with the knowledge of the scriptures.

The Vedic and Puranic Deities are dealt with in the first two parts. The third part deals with 'Inferior Deities', as the author calls them and includes the Rishis, the Demons, the Planets, sacred animals, birds and trees and an assorted group which the author could not bring under the first two parts. Chaitanya is classified under the Puranic Deities and there are two or three pages about Jagannath. Typical are the following lines giving a sample of the kind of Western scholarship of those days :

"There is however, considerable reason for doubting whether originally Jagannath — the Lord of the World — had any connection with Vishnu. It is possible that he was the local divinity of some now unknown tribe, whose worship was engrafted into Hinduism, and the new god when admitted into the pantheon was regarded as another manifestation of Vishnu ; or what is more probable, as Puri was a head centre of Buddhism, when that system was placed under a ban and its followers persecuted, the temple was utilized for Hinduism and Jagannath nominally a Hindu deity, was really Buddhistic ; the strange unfinished image, being nothing else than a disguised form of the symbols of the central doctrine of the Buddhist faith. Possibly, in order to be free from persecution, it was taught that this was a form of Vishnu."

Even so, the book is very informative and the author's claim "that subjective prejudice or bias have been eliminated in favour of an objective approach to the subject" is generally tenable.

S. SHANKARANARAYANAN

HORARY ASTROLOGY : By Marc Edmund Jones. Pub. : Shambala, Berkeley, U.S.A. and London. Pp. 462. Price : \$ 4.95.

No individual can tear himself apart from the throbbing universe around him and claim a total divorce from it. "No man is an island, entire of itself." This, in short, is the rationale of Horary Astrology or "The Technique of Immediacies" as author M. E. Jones chooses to call it.

In an universe ordered by time and space, where individual differences, though real, are yet a part of the whole — logically implies every event must contribute to every other event in any complex situation. Any situation for that matter, though apparently simple, is an intricate inter-mingling of many complexities. Any particular moment is related to space ; and space so far as we humans are concerned is defined by the Sun and other planets. Time and space put together are the basis as well as the events themselves.

Incidentally, horary is 'hour' in Latin and identifies the birth of a question.

The contents of this volume are the result of a research project launched way back in the late 1920s. The author's first investigations into horary astrology date to so far back as 1913-14. Although the results were available in mimeographed form, this book is the first of a projected series of volumes on the subject.

M. E. Jones explains clearly the whys and the whats of horary astrology and how to erect a chart relating to time and space. Time and space are different in that time is a measure of internal existence, and space, of external existence. According to the author and which we all know is true, the astrological chart itself offers only abstractions, or expectations of statistical probability, but to the degree that any one fact in the given complex is known 'objectively and individually, other relative and equally tangible possibilities become intelligently deductible'.

Page after page takes you through rules and tips, most of which seem unnecessary and unduly extended.

How far an author of a book of this kind is successful in his purpose is judged by the stage of comprehension of the subject to which one is brought by the time one reaches the last pages. This is where

this volume lets one down. It tells not only about everything there is to know about Horary Astrology but to work it out in practice. A *cul-de-sac* at the end of 462 pages is a difficult proposition indeed!

GAYATHRI DEVI RAMAN

**BUDDHISM: THE RELIGION AND ITS CULTURE:** By Ananda W. P. Guruge. Pub.: M. Seshachalam & Co., Madras-1. Pp. 246. Price: Rs. 15.

**LORD MAHAVIRA — IN THE EYES OF FOREIGNERS:** Edited by Akshya Kumar Jain. Pub.: Meena Bharati, 1508 Wazir Nagar, New Delhi-3. Pp. 168. Price: Rs. 40.

**THE SIKHS:** By Dr. Gopal Singh. Jointly published by M. Seshachalam & Co., Madras and Popular Prakashan, Bombay. Pp. 136. Price: Rs. 10.

If all religions are regarded as coming from the one eternal sacred tree "growing with its roots above and its branches below", these three books are only the varied expressions of the same perennial philosophy, each suited to the needs of the time it was promulgated and appropriate to the dawning civilisation that it was intended to mould and guide in its evolution. Ananda Guruge has succeeded in accomplishing the difficult task of compressing within the confines of a couple of hundred pages the voluminous teachings of the Buddha, the scholastic contributions of his disciples and the rich and varied culture they nurtured in Asia over the last 25 centuries. He has also cleared several misconceptions prevailing about the shutting out of the Lord Buddha from the hearts of his countrymen and explained the Westerner's attraction to the religion due to its emphasis on practical ethical doctrines rather than on metaphysical tenets.

Arising after the compilation of the Vedas into three Samhitas and the development of the vast literature comprising Brahmanas, Aranyakas and the older Upanishads, Buddha's teachings are penetrated with the Hindu spirit and are put in a form specially adapted for spreading the truth outside the frontiers of India to populations less keenly metaphysical and more directly practical. His most significant contribution to human thought is the importance of the individual and the reliance on critical thinking, as he was always insistent that hair-splitting speculations on metaphysical issues were neither fundamentally related to the holy life required for the cessation of suffering, nor conducive to aversion, detachment, tranquillity, deep penetration and the realisation of the final goal of Nirvana.

The author has clearly traced the later growth of Buddhism, the development of its different schools of philosophy, the various forms of artistic expressions in architecture, sculpture and painting, the vast amount of literary activity in Sanskrit and Pali and the recent translations of Buddhist texts in the principal world languages such as English, German, French, Russian, Italian and Spanish. The concluding section giving extracts from the Lord's sayings, sermons, discussions and expositions adds value to this interesting introduction to the religion and culture of the great monastic order.

\* \* \* \*

In the year of 2,500th Nirvana Mahotsava of Bhagavan Mahavira, it is natural to expect many books on Jainism whose impact is by no means confined either to those who profess this religion or to the borders of India. This is evident from Akshaya Kumar Jain's publication which, as its title indicates, has brought together in one place scholarly contributions by eminent savants in various parts of the world, sketching the ideal life and teachings of Mahavira, the last and twenty-fourth Tirthankar of Jain religion. 'Peace' is the one word which carries with it the whole philosophy of Jainism — peace between man and man, man and animal, peace everywhere and in all that lives and breathes. The Jains may be a small community but powerful not by its members, but by its purity of life and also by the wealth of its followers — merchants, traders and manufacturers.

Both Buddhism and Jainism are fundamentally offshoots from ancient Hinduism and should have remained as Darshanas of the mother religion, rather than being separated off into different and rival faiths. One point of difference with Hinduism may be on the caste issue; and the Jains make the only distinction between the layman (*shravaka*) and the ascetic (*Yati*), each with different rules of conduct. However, the five vows of the *Yati*, namely, *ahimsa*, *sanriti*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya* and *aparigraha* are also binding on the layman, but only to a limited extent. All these subjects are dealt with in detail in this book, besides giving a clear exposition of the metaphysics of Mahavira which reveals the multi-faceted nature of reality, on the basis of which was established the doctrine of non-Absolutism or relativity. The contributors include such eminent names as Herman Jacobi, Heinrich Zimmer, Max Weber, J. N. Farquhar, Paul Tauxen, Rev. E. Osborn Martin, A. C. Bouquet, Edmund Buckley and lastly, the Russian Madam N. R. Guseva. Dr. Karan Singh, Union Health Minister, has written a foreword, where he emphasises that the contributors are no "foreign-

ers" in so far as the essence of all religions is the transcendence of national and racial barriers.

\* \* \* \*

If "peace" is the keynote of Jainism, "Bhakti" to God and also to the Guru, the Teacher, is the basic principle of Sikhism; for the very name Sikh comes from the word "Sishya", disciple. It is a movement, primarily of devotion, and being a reformatory movement, it strives against the formalism of the times in order to find the life underlying the form, the essence of the truth that had inspired the ceremonies. Fundamentally religious in its beginnings, it was forced by the pressure of circumstances into a militant organisation. Dr. Gopal Singh, M.P., well-known poet, mystic and scholar, whose translation of the *Guru Granth* in free verse is hailed by Pearl Buck as a "superb piece of work, not a translation but a creation", has presented the history, religion, culture, ceremonies and literature of the Sikhs in this little volume in the new series on "Cultural and Religious Patterns of India", to which also belongs Guruge's book on Buddhism.

It is fascinating reading about the lives and achievements of the Ten Gurus, one after the other, in unbroken succession, from Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the first, the purest, the saintliest and the noblest of all, to Guru Govind (1675-1708), who gave to the Sikhs their great military organisation, and made them into the body that raised, under Ranjit Singh, the Sikh Empire in the Punjab. Like Guruge's book, this too has at the end translations of select sayings of the Sikh Gurus.

ARGUS

**SOME CONCEPTS OF INDIAN CULTURE : AN ANALYTICAL INTERPRETATION :** By N. A. Nikam. Pub. : Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla. (Second edition, 1973). Pp. 73. Price : Rs. 18.

This compact volume of seventy-three pages discusses some of the important concepts underlying Indian culture about the significance of which most of us are likely to be a bit vague and indefinite. In his first chapter, Prof. Nikam explains the several components of Indian culture and criticises the Western Orientalists who argue that the Rigvedic worship of nature is polytheism and that monotheism slowly emerged only later. He points out that the poly-deityism of the Veda is not incompatible with the principle of monism. After pointing out that the 'Rta' is a concept which unifies science, philosophy and religion, he explains how transcendental imagination creates both illusion and reality by taking the instance of Agni and Uṣa. His treatment of

Sruti and Darsana which typify the empirical and the rational element and constitute the two parallel attributes of myth and dialect is very suggestive. In the second chapter are discussed the basic concepts like 'yajna', 'satya', 'dharma', 'karma', 'ahimsa', 'maya', 'lila', 'Atman' and lastly 'karma yoga' or mysticism of action. The treatment enables one to view these concepts in their correct perspective in the scheme of Indian culture. The *parā vidya* teaches the *akṣara* (the imperishable) and is the basis of the inquiry and myth both of which are necessary for a correct understanding of our culture.

The clarification of these concepts which are more taken for granted than viewed in their correct significance is a welcome addition to the Indian philosophic literature. The book is well got up but the price seems prohibitive.

**ESSENTIALS OF VEDANTA :** By G. Srinivasan. (A Bapco Publication). The Bangalore Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., Mysore Road, Bangalore-18. Pp. 68. Price : Rs. 6.

The alternative title claims that the book is a "critical exposition of the three systems of Vedanta to clarify their mutual differences and common presuppositions." In the words of the author, this work is "a brief but important summary of the Advaita, Viśiṣṭadvaita and Dvaita." In the concluding section the author compares the Vedanta with European thought and also with Aurobindo's Integral Philosophy. The exposition is very clear and at the same time all unnecessary and complicated details which generally make such subjects an ordeal to the reader have been omitted. The reader of these essays would probably be more benefited if the author had offered his own critical remarks on the criticisms made by the other schools on Advaita Vedanta. Also a more detailed account of Aurobindo's Integral Yoga would have been a useful addition. Nevertheless the book will be found to be very valuable for those who have no time to wade through the learned depths of the original works of these Acharyas.

**FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR LOGICAL FORMULATIONS :** By Frederick S. Johnston, Jr. Pub. : Philosophical Library, 15, East, 40th Street, New York. Pp. 231. Price : \$ 7.50.

This book requires a complete reading when the reader will realise that it is not only an interesting work but also a very instructive one. The author at the outset makes a clean distinction between the transitional and the reciprocal relationships and



then affirms the clear necessity for an entirely new method of thought as distinguished from the prevalent inferential one. The transitional form of relationship goes from facts to conclusion and traditional logic is based on this. This relationship called reciprocal is not only based on the principle of opposition in the traditional sense but also based on the principle of simultaneous opposition, both the opposing relate taking place or occurring at the same time. The author's explanation of this reciprocal relationship is very interesting and at the same time seems correct. The whole book is a discussion of this reciprocal relationship as applied to important concepts like reality/unreality. He examines popular concepts like 'freedom', 'evil', 'justice', 'love', etc. and argues that we "have gotten ourselves into trouble by our exclusive use of transitional relationships as applied to these concepts." He emphasises that the reciprocal relationships are a necessary form and function of reality. No concept can be absolute and hence there is nothing like absolute freedom or absolute love. Thus determinism and hate cannot be entirely banished. The author gives a new orientation altogether in this book and says, "The crucial point to be derived from the whole theory however, and the one that will require our reassessment of reality, is the disturbing idea that all our concepts are and necessarily will be for ever inconclusive." His other conclusion that truth is the equivalent of nothing and that knowledge itself is the very thing that excludes us from truth, may be completely true but very disturbing. Mr. Johnston can really take credit for proclaiming in this book the fourth idea which may very well change man's conception of his knowledge and of the world around him.

PROF. S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

**THE SUPREME MASTER (Sri Akkalkot Maharaj) :**

By E. Bharadwaja. Pub.: By the author at Vidyanagar, Nellore Dt., A.P., India. Pp. 95. Price : Rs. 2.75.

The Cult of Lord Dattatreya, the three-headed God, a unique manifestation of a combination of the Trinity — Siva, Vishnu and Brahma — is prevalent in Maharashtra. North Karnataka, and some parts of Gujarat and Andhra. The famous *Avadhuta Gita*, the quintessence of

Advaita, is attributed to Him. His life and works, *Sri Guru Charitra* in Marathi is a scripture which is a daily reading of hundreds, who believe its yielding miraculous results when read in the prescribed way.

There are believed to be several incarnations of Lord Dattatreya, from time to time; among them, are Janardana Swami, the Guru of Saint Eknath and Sri Narasimha Saraswati whose *pādukās* are worshipped at a pilgrimage centre in Gānagāpur (N. Karnataka). Sri Akkalkot Maharaj is accepted as the incarnation of the same Spiritual Power. The author attributes the writing of this interesting book to near miraculous concatenation of circumstances.

The parentage, birth and early life of this Master were never known. He is said to have travelled widely before settling down in Akkalkot (N. Karnataka) in 1856, hence he is known only as Sri Akkalkot Maharaj. He was a typical *avadhūta*, generally behaving like a child, but some times as one intoxicated, or even mad. He performed numberless miracles, and his grace reached the thousands who daily flocked to him. The following is an example : "Among the visitors there were some foreigners also. A Westerner who was a District Engineer at Sholapur once visited him to solicit his grace for the fulfilment of a wish. But seeing his childish behaviour he thought he was a mad man. The Swami then looked at him and said : 'You want to be blessed with a child. You will have one within a year!' The visitor was thrilled at his insight and bowed to him in reverence. And within a year he was blessed with a son!"

The author deserves all praise for bringing out this book on such a holy sage.

L. P. KOPPIKAR

**TAMIL BOOKS RECEIVED-**

**NAVARĀTHRI NĀYAKI :** By Ra. Ganapathi. Pub: Vanathi Pathippagam, T. Nagar, Madras-600017. Pp. 460. Price : Rs. 20.

**KATTI MUNAI PĀDAI :** (Tamil translation of "Razor's Edge" by Simons Roof) : By Swami Ramananda Bharati (Prof. K. R. R. Sastri). Pub.: The Author, Sri Sankara Gurukulam, Srirangam, Trichy-6, India. Pp.: 140. Price : Rs. 10.

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— *Triveni*

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# ASHRAM BULLETIN

*Inauguration of  
SRI ARUNACHALA  
RAMANA MANDIRAM  
in the Western Hemisphere*

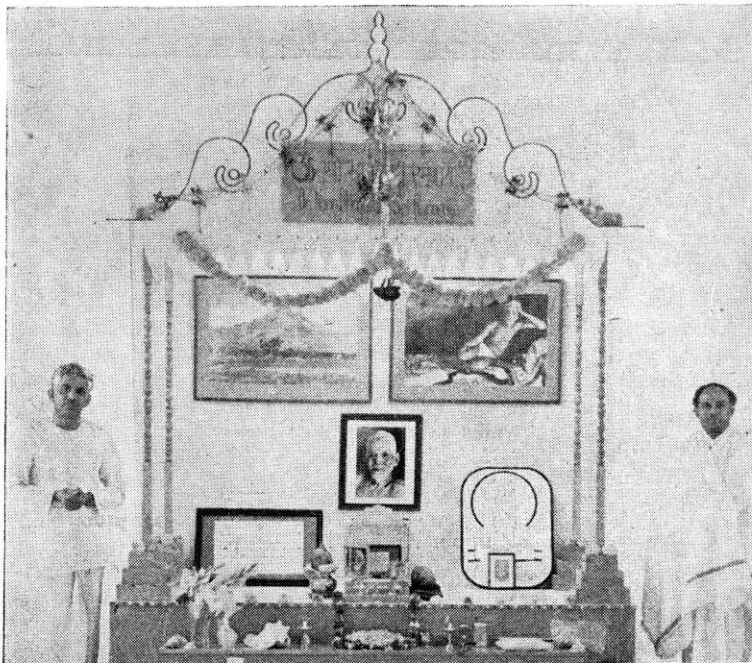
\* \* \* \* \*

*A Four-Day Festival  
at Canada*



*Sri Arunachala Ramana Mandiram  
(l to r) Dennis, Margo, Joan, Darlene, Evelyn,  
Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata.*

We have two letters from ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi Center, R.R.1, Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, Canada, dated September 5 and 11, written by Dennis J. Hartel and Joan Greenblatt of the group of devotees of Bhagavan Sri Ramana led by Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata about the inauguration of a Temple of Bhagavan Ramana, bearing the name, SRI ARUNACHALA RAMANA MANDIRAM, at Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, Canada.



These devotees had a school-house ground at that locality and they wanted to build a Temple for Bhagavan Ramana there where devotees could gather for meditation and recitation of Bhagavan's *Hymns to Arunachala* and his *Upadesa Saram* (Essence of all Teaching) and other works and arrange talks on Bhagavan and his message.

←

The *sanctum sanctorum* of Sri Arunachala Ramana Mandiram reverentially and aesthetically decorated. (l to r) Dr. Subba Rao Durvasula and Dr. J. S. S. Lakshminarayana.



Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata offering prayers at the Shrine. Dr. J. S. S. Lakshminarayana and Dennis seen deeply absorbed.

They started building the Temple<sup>1</sup> with very little money on hand, but help continued to come from somewhere or other. Special mention has to be made here regarding the timely help on various occasions from Mr. Lex Hixon.

So, the Temple got built by the grace of Bhagavan at the appointed time with the consecrated service of devotees and it was inaugurated on the forenoon of Friday, August 29, the day on which Bhagavan started for *Arunachala* (Tiruvannamalai) from Madurai in the year 1896. Bhagavan's Pictures were taken to the new Temple in procession, led by Dr. J. S. S. Lakshminarayana, Dr. Subba Rao Durvasula and Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata and installed at the Altar. Regular puja was done with chanting of the Vedas and Arunachala Siva. The wives of the Doctors, Smt. Balaji and Smt. Sitaji and their children also served making garlands and cooking food-offering to Bhagavan.

The celebration went on for four days from August 29 to September 1. There was recitation of *Sri Lalita Sahasranama* by Bhagawata and party. There was special puja and bhajan also. A picture of Mother Meenakshi of Madurai also has been installed.

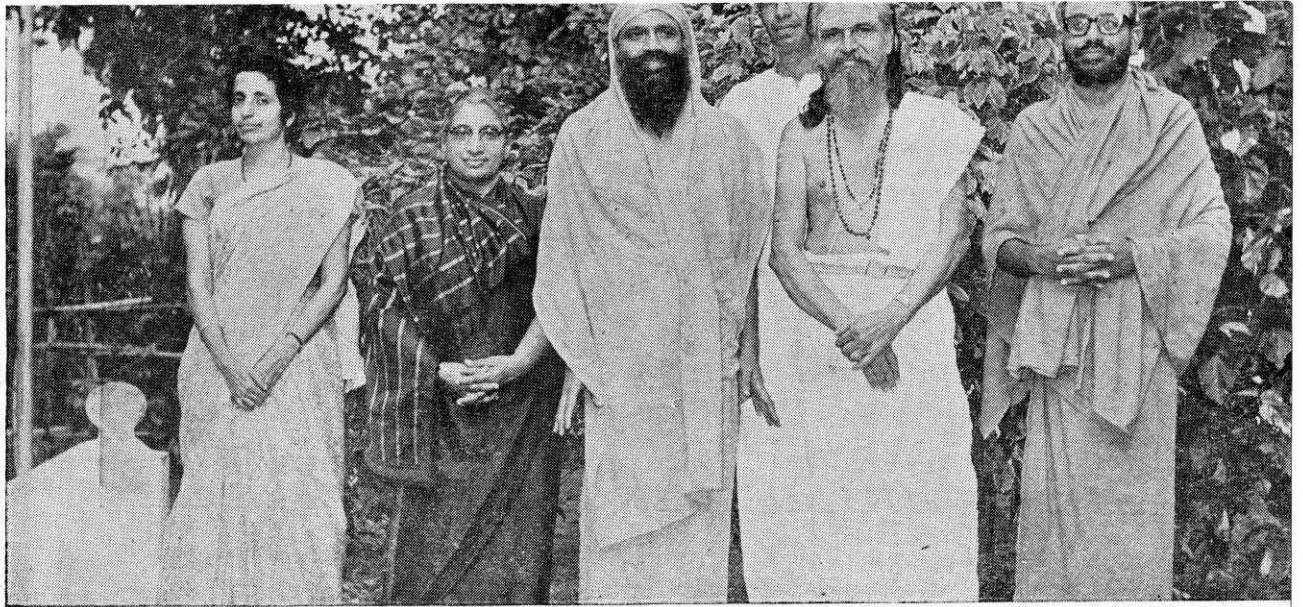
The function on September 1 (the day Bhagavan arrived at Arunachala in 1896), started with Ganesa puja and was followed by a short talk by Sri B. K. Raju of Halifax. Bhagawata recited many hymns and prayers and gave a short talk, straight and simple on Bhagavan's teaching and how to practise it in daily life. With the chanting of *Upadesa Saram* and bhajan, the function was over. *Prasad* (some Indian dishes) was served to all the devotees who had gathered. More than one hundred devotees attended the function on this chief day of the festivity.

"Bhagavan has blessed us all with a feeling of His Presence and Grace munificent. All are welcome to this Temple of Bhagavan Ramana," the letter appeals to all devotees. There is daily Veda Parayana and chanting of *Arunachala Siva* and other hymns and meditation and study at this new centre.

May Sri Bhagavan's unfailing grace constantly guide and bless all that flock to this Shrine of Grace, dedicated to the Master!

<sup>1</sup> An announcement about this was prominently made in our April 1975 issue, p. 124.





(l to r) Mrs. T. T. Narasimhan, Smt. V. S. Kamalambal Ammal, H. H. Swami Dayananda Saraswathi, Sri T. N. Venkataraman (President), Sri Swami Vijaya Chaitanya, Sri Rajagopalan (behind).

## SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATHI'S VISIT TO THE ASHRAM

Though Sri Bhagavan's main stream of teaching is through Silence, his written works speak loudly of his normal experience of non-dual Truth. The directness of his teaching of Self-enquiry is available to all, learned and otherwise.

We are very happy to know that Swami Dayananda Saraswati of Chinmaya Mission has all along been giving a series of lectures on Sri Bhagavan's *Upadesa Sara* and *Ulladu Narpadu* (Sat Darshan) wherever he has been touring. Recently he gave lectures on *Upadesa Sara* in Pondicherry for ten days.

Swamiji, besides his busy tour throughout the country conducting discourses on *Gita*, *Upanishads* and *Brahma Sutras*, has just completed a 2½-year course in Bombay for about sixty *Brahmacharis* of Chinmaya Mission, who have been very much benefited by the classes conducted on traditional lines.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati gave us the pleasure of receiving him at the Ashram on June 12. He was accompanied by Smt. V. S. Kamalambal Ammal, Smt. T. T. Narasimhan and Sri Rajagopalan. He had come to inaugurate a renovated temple at Keenattur, near Tiruvannamalai.

Swamiji's devotion to Sri Bhagavan is well brought out by his own words :

"Master's like our Sage of Arunachala are understood more in silence than by analysis. When he himself has felt and said that 'to think of the Lord is to be with oneself', a word of praise or description of Bhagavan will only be a betrayal of one's ignorance.

"One can be brief at the cost of clarity. One can be clear at the cost of brevity. But Bhagavan was clarity in brevity.

"Many talk because they want to talk something. Some talk because they have something to talk. Bhagavan Ramana had a lot to talk but he chose to be silent. Sitting at the foot of Arunachala, he was as silent and majestic as the Holy Hill behind him.

"As anyone would, I love silence. I love Ramana."

Sri Swamiji was received by the Ashram President, T. N. Venkataraman, and Swami Vijaya Chaitanya. The latter had the opportunity to study under him. Swamiji's stay, though short (one day), was rewarding both to the inmates of the Ashram and to himself.



Smt. Sulochana Natarajan and Kumaris Sarada and Ambika singing Sri Muruganar's SONGS.

### DELHI KENDRA NEWS

On Sunday, August 31, the first anniversary of the opening of the *Ramanāchala* was celebrated with *puja*, *Veda Parayana*, etc. To mark the occasion, the Kendra brought out a selection of SONGS<sup>1</sup> from Sri Muruganar's *Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, set to music by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan and containing English translations by Prof. K. Swaminathan. The book was released by Sri Swami Sadhuram. He spoke highly of Sri Muruganar's *bhakti*, *jnana* and poetic powers. Then Smt. Sulochana Natarajan and her daughters, Kumaris Sarada and Ambika, rendered with devotion five songs from the book, which was very much appreciated.

The Swami also opened the Library rooms in the *Sevalaya* of Ramana Kendra and presented to the Secretary, Sri A. R. Natarajan, the first copy of the new publication: *Ramana Maharshi*<sup>2</sup> by Prof. K. Swaminathan just brought out by the National Book Trust, New Delhi.

From July 23 to 26, Sri Swami Sadhuram gave a series of musical discourses on *Arunāchala Mahātmya*, with special reference to Saint Arunagirinathar, Seshadri Swami, Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sachidananda Swami.

On July 10, the Kendra celebrated *Jnānōdaya Day*, being the anniversary of the great event in 1896. In connection with this celebration, text-books were supplied to a number of poor students who had been promoted to higher classes in the Madras School.

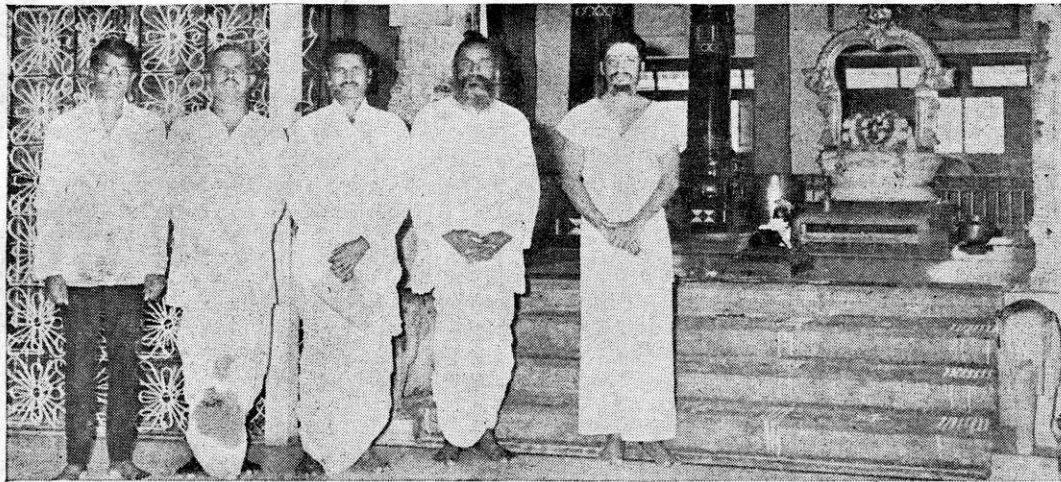
<sup>1, 2</sup> Please see the *Books Reviews* column of this issue for reviews of these books.

### VISITORS

Among the many devotees of Sri Bhagavan who visited and stayed at Sri Ramanasramam during this quarter, mention may be made of the following:

Mr. Charles Reeder, U.S.A.  
 Mrs. Anne Reeder, U.S.A.  
 Miss Anānda Reeder, U.S.A.  
 Miss Essie Tomlinson, U.S.A.  
 Mr. Tessier, France  
 G. Guffroy (Sr.) of Holland  
 Mrs. M. Boers of Holland (now in Bombay)  
 Miss Inga Muller of Germany  
 Johann Suppinger of Australia  
 Henri Winardi of Indonesia  
 H. V. Ramani, Bangalore  
 Miss J. Bharati Devi, (with mother), Vizianagram  
 N. K. Sethuraman, (with family), Madras  
 C. Sudarsanam, Railway Officer, Jaipur  
 Baij Nath Shiv Puri, New Delhi  
 Veda Chaitanya, Rishikesh  
 Br. Thiagarajan, Neduvakkalappal  
 Smt. Sumathi Narayanan, (with mother-in-law),  
 Madras  
 Ramanathan Chettiar, Vethiyur  
 Swami Tejomayananda, Sivanandashram  
 G. Dharmarajan, Perambavur  
 Br. Suddha Chaitanya of Chinmaya Mission  
 Swami Sivasatchidananda Saraswati, (and party),  
 Rangasamudram  
 Swami Hamsananda, Rishikesh  
 N. P. S. Mani Iyer, Varanasi  
 N. S. Krishnan, Bombay

We are happy to report, in addition to a number of sincere seekers coming from abroad, of the visit of two daughters of our old devotees. The keenness



(l to r) Sri S. B. Koti, Sri V. S. Wali, Sri R. B. Karadi, Sri B. S. Patil and our *Managing Editor*.

they showed in coming here and the earnestness with which they pursued their *sadhana* during their stay at the Ashram deserve special mention. They are: *Miss Gundhild Wilzbach*, daughter of Erich Wilzbach (brother-in-law of Hugo Maier) and *Miss Ingaborg Masser*, daughter of Kurt Masser, both of West Germany. The latter brought her friend, *Miss Susanne Schmitz*, along with her. We wish these young girls the best in their life and continued success in their *sadhana*!

\* \* \* \*

*Smt. and Sri J. S. Kapoor* (Dy. Director of Civil Aviation Dept., Delhi) are staunch devotees of Sri Bhagavan. Even when they were in Ahmedabad they actively participated in a *sat sangh* privately organised by interested seekers there. After transfer to Delhi the *Ramana Kendra* became their refuge. *Prof. K. Swaminathan* is now their friend, philosopher and guide. They spent ten days at the Ashram in quiet meditation and contemplation, in September.

They write: "Coming to Sri Ramanasramam is like coming home — coming to one's ancestral home — where one is assured of kindness, love and affection; and meeting the grandparents. Above all to feel the nearness of Bhagavan, to feel the Bliss of sitting at His lotus feet — to shut out the world and its turbulence, although for a short, very short time. May Bhagavan continue to bless all who pray to Him, who take shelter under His lotus feet."

\* \* \* \*

*Sri B. S. Patil* of Ingleshwar (Bijapur district in Karnataka State) is a staunch devotee of Sri Bhaga-

van and has been visiting the Ashram since 1945. During his visits he used to spend a number of days in the holy presence of Sri Bhagavan. He also used to bring his friends to have the unique opportunity of having darshan of Sri Bhagavan. His visits are, he says, more and more refreshing every time and helping him in his spiritual *sadhana*.

This year too he spent a week at the Ashram in August. He brought along with him his friends: *Sri V. S. Wali* of Sarwad, who had visited the Ashram first in 1967; *Sri S. B. Koti*, also of Sarwad, who has passed his engineering degree with distinction, comes to the Ashram for the first time and is profoundly moved by the serenity and peace that pervade the Ashram; *Sri R. B. Karadi* of Belgaum, comes for the second time to the Ashram. All these devotees feel indebted to Sri B. S. Patil for having introduced them to Sri Bhagavan.

We wish more and more of such earnest seekers to flock to our haven of Peace and benediction!

\* \* \* \*

*Sri M. N. Bhowmik*, an old sadhu of seventy-two years and an inmate of Sri Ma Ananda Mayee's Ashram at Varanasi, was on a pilgrimage to the South for the first time. After visiting Kanchipuram and paying his respects to H.H. Sri Kanchi Shankaracharya, he arrived at the Ashram on Aug. 26. Sri Bhowmik is a cheerful and endearing person and we were happy to have him in our midst for a couple of days. *Sri T. Sadasivam*, Managing Director of *Kalki*, Madras — referred to in our *Ashram Bulletin*



of January, 1974, p. 55 — made all arrangements for Sri Bhowmik's pilgrimage.

\* \* \* \*

Sri P. R. Suryanandan and Smt. Mahalakshmi Suryanandan of New Delhi, spent a busy, yet quiet ten days at the Ashram in August. They are the son-in-law and daughter of Prof. K. Swaminathan, very active members of *Ramana Kendra* there. They spent their time usefully meeting old devotees here, chanting songs by and on Sri Bhagavan and earnestly participating in the worship at the Ashram shrines. They expressed great joy at having gone round the Hill in the delightful company of Sri Viswanatha Swami.

\* \* \* \*

The inmates of the Ashram and devotees had the pleasure of having amidst them the old and famous devotees of Bhagavan, Smt. Suri Nagamma and Sri D. S. Sastri. They were here for a week in the middle of July, when Smt. Nagamma's book: *My Life at Sri Ramanasramam*, translated into English by her brother, Sri D. S. Sastri, was duly released.

#### SADHU BRAHMANIAM'S 80th BIRTHDAY

The *Satabhishekam* (80th birthday) of Sri Sadhu Brahmaniam (introduced to our readers in January,



Sadhu Brahmaniam  
with 'bilva' garland

1975 issue, p. 61), was celebrated by his ardent devotees at Sri Vaishnavi Shrine in Madras, on Monday, June 23, 1975 — *Āni* Moolam day, in a very fitting manner, along with traditional rites.

The day started with *Ganapati Homam*, *Ekadasarudra Homam*, special *abhishekam* and *puja* to Sri Vaishnavi Devi and special decorations. An eminent scholar, Sri Rama-

natha Sastrigal personally directed the *japa* and *homa* connected with the *Satabhishekam*. *Abhisheka* was done with devotion to Sri Sadhu Brahmaniam with sacred waters, by purohits in front of the shrine of Sri Dakshinamurti.

About 500 poor were fed. A large number of Sri Sadhu's disciples participated and received his blessings.

#### OBITUARY

##### MADEMOISELLE GUERINEAU

We are concerned to learn of the passing away of *Mademoiselle Guerineau*, on August 22, 1975. She was well-known to all the inmates of our Ashram and many devotees of Bhagavan since she has been coming here every year<sup>1</sup> for the past five years and staying for many weeks at the Ashram.



Mademoiselle  
Guerineau\*

Charming and friendly by nature, she endeared herself to every one with whom she came into contact. At the same time she had great dignity, born of her essential spiritual nature, which commanded the respect of all. Hers was an unforgettably bright and lovely face.

Born in France in 1895, she had qualified herself and served humanity in various capacities throughout her fruitful life in times of war and peace. She was taking a leading part in the children's section of UNESCO. As a radiologist she had her proficiency certificate signed by Madam Marie Curie herself.

Her absolute devotion to Bhagavan Ramana since she came to know of Him was the crowning event of her life and she has secured for herself a very prominent place in the galaxy of His devotees. She was particularly fond of "her little Ganesh", the President and members of his family and the entire management of Sri Ramanasramam. In her they have lost their most dear and near one!

May she rest for ever in 'the Peace that passeth understanding' at the Feet of her Lord, Bhagavan Ramana!

\* \* \* \*

##### SRI DAIVARATA GAJANANA SARMA

*Sri Daivarata Gajanana Sarma*, a worthy old disciple (85) of Ganapati Muni and Bhagavan

<sup>1</sup> referred to in our issues of April 1974, p. 126 and April, 1975, p. 123.



Ramana, passed away at Gokarna on August 13, 1975. He first came in touch with Ganapati Muni in the early years of this century and immediately attached himself to him as his ardent devotee and disciple. Even then he had learnt the whole of Rig Veda by heart and had initiation in Mantra from Ramdas Maharaj. He had had training in Hatha Yoga from the revered Yogi, Vasudevananda Saraswati. By his contact with Ganapati Muni, he learnt the secrets of Vedic Mantras and he himself became a seer of Mantra. Introduced by Ganapati Muni, he became a devotee of Maharshi Ramana and has composed a Hymn of Eight Verses in praise of Ramana, melodious and rich in substance. During his north India pilgrimage he came in contact with Madan Mohan Malaviya and Rajendra Prasad and the Maharaja of Nepal and was held in high esteem by all of them. He got the title of "Vidya-vachaspati" from the Samskrit Vidyapita of Benares.

His questions and replies given by Bhagavan Ramana form the third chapter of *Sri Ramana Gita* (Teachings of Ramana Maharshi by Ganapati Muni).

\* \* \* \*

SRI M. C. EKANATHA ROW

We regret to record the passing away of our friend and a devotee of Sri Bhagavan, *Sri M. C. Ekanatha Row*, on July 8, 1975, after a brief illness at Guntur, where he was living with his son. He was very helpful to the Ashram during his long association with it. He was 'Introduced' to our readers only in our last issue for July '75 (p. 196) and we regret his passing away so soon.

May he rest in eternal peace at the Feet of Sri Bhagavan!

## THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

### New Additions

*Buddhism : The Religion and Its Culture :* By Ananda W. P. Guruge. Pub. : M. Seshachalam & Co., Madras-600 001, India. Pp. 248. Price : Rs. 15.

*Lord Mahavira in the Eyes of Foreigners :* Edited by Akshaya Kumar Jain. Pub. : Meena Bharati, New Delhi-110 003, India. Pp. 168. Price : Rs. 40.

*Self Reliance Through Yoga :* By Selvarajan Yesudian. Pub. : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, England. Pp. 244. Price : £ 1.50 in U.K. only.

*The Jewel Ornament of Liberation :* Tr. & Annotated by Herbert V. Guenther. Pub. : Rider & Company, London, England. Pp. 333. Price : £ 1.75 in U.K. only.

*Shankara's Crest-Jewel of Discrimination :* With a Garland of Questions and Answers. Tr. by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood. Pub. : The New American Library Inc., New York, 10017, U.S.A. Pp. 127. Price : \$ 0.95.

*Christ is the Way :* By E. Le Joly. Pub. : Allahabad St. Paul Society, Allahabad-211 002. Pp. 215. Price : Rs. 7.50.

*Horary Astrology :* By Marc Edmund Jares. Pub. : Shambhala Publications Inc., Berkeley, Calif., U.S.A. Pp. 462. Price : \$ 4.95.

*Hindu Mythology :* By W. J. Wilkins. Pub. : Rupa & Co., Calcutta. Pp. 500. Price : Rs. 18.

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"To BE the Self that you really are is the only means to realise the Bliss that is ever yours."

— Sri Maharshi

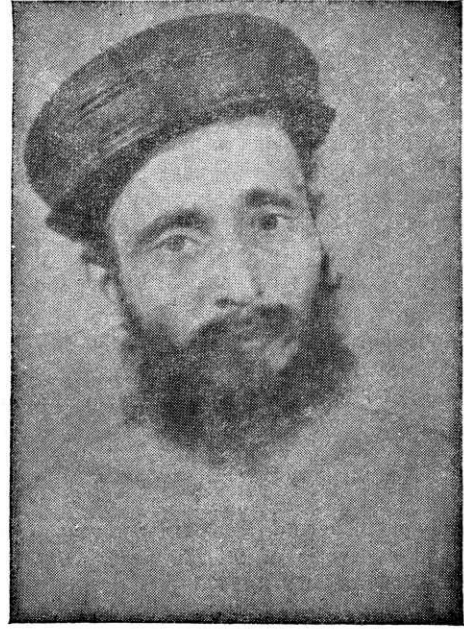
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## INTRODUCING....

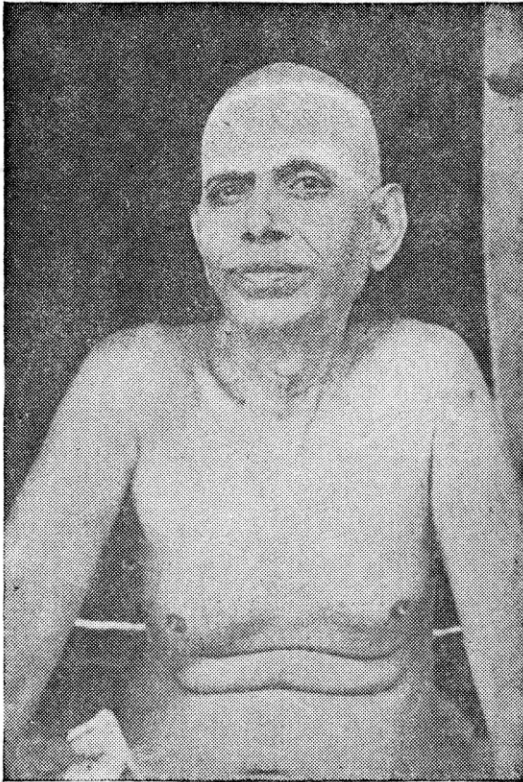
### Sri Swami Pranavananda

Swami Pranavānanda, author of books in Kannada, like *Ramanōpanishad*, *Parā Vidya*, *Ramana Gitāsāra*, *Sadguru Bōdha* and *Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi* (some of them now out of print), has been doing yeoman service in spreading the Teaching of Bhagavan Ramana in Karnataka. He is the founder of *Sri Ramana Seva Sangha* and the main spirit in the running of the Kannada quarterly, *Sri Ramana Sandesa*, from Kumta, North Kanara, Karnataka.

His life has been a series of rapid developments. As a young boy he happened to come across a book called *Jnana Sindhu*, and there sprang in him a strange dispassion on reading the chapter on *Vairāgya*. He left home when he was only 17 years and wandered about in search of a guru. But he was disappointed to find that several *sannyasins*



Sri Swami Pranavānanda



were only interested in developing their own Ashrams by giving some *upadesa* and increasing the number of followers and not capable of genuinely guiding earnest seekers.

He joined Mahatma Gandhi's freedom-struggle and went to jail in the early forties, and when in jail he happened to read about Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sri Aurobindo. On release from jail he visited Sri Aurobindo and the Maharshi and was extraordinarily impressed by the eyes of Sri Bhagavan which appeared to look at and through him from wherever he sat and looked. He has the same experience now when he looks at even a picture of Sri Bhagavan.

Once, impelled by some deep urge, he placed in the hands of Bhagavan a piece of paper with AUM printed on it, and Bhagavan returned it to him after looking at it: he took this as *Pranava Upadesa* from the Guru and adopted the name of *Pranavānanda*. As *gurudakshina* (offering to the Master) he offered

Sri Bhagavan only a few groundnuts, out of which Sri Bhagavan ate just one and asked the attendant to feed the peacocks with the rest. He, however, began to wear the ochre cloth only from 1967, long after Sri Bhagavan's *Brahma Nirvana*. He adopted it at the sacred Patala Linga, underground shrine, in Sri Arunachaleswara Temple, sanctified by Sri Bhagavan's stay in the year 1896. Pranavānanda did not at all feel the need of adopting *sannyasa* — in the traditional way — after completely surrendering himself to Bhagavan and taking him as his sole Guru and God. Bhagavan is everything to him!

His faith in Bhagavan is remarkable. Once, when bitten by a poisonous snake while sleeping at the

Ashram premises, he simply surrendered himself to Bhagavan's will, unmindful of any treatment, and nothing happened to him! Though a chronic asthmatic, he refuses to take medicines resigning himself to Bhagavan's will alone.

Swami Pranavānanda does his *chāturmāsya* (the *sannyasin's* spending the four rainy months in some sacred place in spiritual practices) at Sri Ramanasramam every year. Every spare hour here or elsewhere, is spent by him in translating Sri Bhagavan's teachings into Kannada. This year too he was at the Ashram from July to September, dedicating all his time to silent meditation and his usual writing work about Bhagavan and his teaching.

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## Letters to the Editor

We publish a few of the innumerable replies received from our readers in response to the query raised in our July '75 issue on page 202. The query was :

**"Bhagavan teaches like all true ancient masters that all is One, there are no others, there is only the Self. If so where is that Self, who is conscious of It while I am struggling in *samsara*, struggling with my thoughts and delusion ? If I alone am, where the Self while I am conscious only of my finitude ?—A Devotee"**

Reply by LUCIA OSBORNE

*"We are always aware" says Sri Ramana Maharshi, but this awareness is clouded over by the delusion of our separate existence or identification with the body. When this delusion ceases, even if only in a glimpse of Reality, one knows with absolute certainty that all is One — oneness of Being, all-pervading and ever-present. It is like waking up from sleep and realising that one has not ceased to exist during sleep though not conscious of it at the time. The following quotations also confirm this.*

"Although I am the Pure Awareness which is unparalleled, eternal, whole without parts and entirely conceptless, notions like the world, God and the soul (*jiva*) arise in me. This is the work of *Māyā* which is extremely clever in accomplishing the impossible !

*Māyā*, which is extremely clever in accomplishing the impossible, attaches what is non-dual, unbroken Consciousness and Bliss to (the world) composed of (elements) like ether, fire and sun and tosses it about violently in the ocean of *samsara*."

—from Five Verses on *Māyā* of  
Shankaracharya's *Māyā Panchakam*.

\* \* \* \*

"QUESTION : At this moment while erroneous thoughts are arising in my mind, where is the Buddha ? (Is the One Mind then no longer present in me ?)

ANSWER : At this moment you are conscious of those erroneous thoughts. Well, your consciousness is the Buddha ! Perhaps you can understand that, were you but free of these delusory mental processes, there would then be no Buddha. Why so ? Because when you allow a movement of your mind to result in a concept of the Buddha,

you are bringing into existence an objective capable of being Enlightened. Similarly, any concept of sentient beings in need of deliverance creates such beings as objects of your thoughts. . . ."

\* \* \* \*

"QUESTION : At the moment of Enlightenment, where is the Buddha ?

ANSWER : Whence does your question proceed ? Whence does your consciousness arise ? When speech is silenced, all movement stilled, every sight and sound vanished — then is the Buddha's work of deliverance truly going forward ! Then where will you seek the Buddha ? . . . you should just refrain from every kind of dualistic distinction. Hills are hills. Water is water. Monks are monks. Laymen are laymen. But these mountains, these rivers, the whole world itself, together with sun, moon and stars — not one of them exists outside your minds ! The vast chiliocosm exists only within you, so where else can the various categories of phenomena possibly be found ? Outside Mind there is nothing. The green hills which everywhere meet your gaze and that void sky that you see glistening above the earth — not a hairsbreadth of any of them exists outside the concepts you have formed for yourself ! So it is that every

single sight and sound is but the Buddha's Eye of Wisdom (meaning the eye which perceives the true unity of all things . . . Huang Po uses the phrase 'is the Eye' thereby identifying see-er and seen).

—from *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po*  
On the Transmission of Mind.

#### REPLIES BY READERS

"This is a question arising from the ignorance which mistakes the reflection of the Pure Self in the intellect during the waking state for the Pure Self which exists as Pure Awareness without any adjuncts whatsoever even in deep sleep. And so it is the ego that raises this question and not the Self. The real Self does not get lost even if one forgets it and confuses oneself with the ego. One should therefore understand that the superimposed ego which disappears during sleep and rises up on waking up and continues during the waking state is not the real Self. This is the only way of completely eradicating all doubts. This is the truth elucidated by the great Upanishadic text: *That Thou Art*, clarifying that the superficial meaning of the term *Thou* is the ego and the real meaning is the Self. It is the same truth pointed out by Bhagavan Ramana in his Teaching that one should understand one's real nature by the inner quest *Who am I?*

"If further light is needed one may point to the following passage in *Sri Ramana Gita*: 'The Light of Awareness flows from the Heart, through *sushumna* to *Sahasrāra*. From there it flows to the entire body and then all experiences of the world arise. Viewing them as different from the Pure Light one gets caught up in *samsara* (phenomenal existence).'" (Ch. V, 6-7).

"It should be quite clear by the above explanation who gets caught up in *samsara* and how, what happens to the real Self then and the relationship between the ego and the Self. The misunderstanding that the real Self gets lost somewhere when one lives as the ego, deluded I am the doer and enjoyer, will cease for ever."

SRI SADHU NATANANANDA,  
Sri Ramanasramam.

"I could imagine Sri Bhagavan Himself replying to the queries of the devotee thus: 'Who is asking these questions? — *jnani* or *ajnani*?' The reply would be '*ajnani*'. Sri Bhagavan: 'Then find out to whom such questions arise? Were you pestered with such questions and problems while you were

in sleep? But you never cease to exist in sleep. Only now, viz., in *jagrat*, you have assumed an individuality (ego) which sprouts up, raises such doubts and finds itself perplexed. But are you the ego? The ever-present Self is there always, whether you are sleeping or awake, but only in the waking state (and also in dream), you confuse your ego with the Self and get entangled in various problems. The ego is not real. Get rid of it and be happy'. All mental concepts are to be thrown overboard for the self-effulgent Self to manifest. Even to say it is only One (and there are no others) is but mental concept of unity versus diversity. It is simply Being. It is eternal NOW. An intellectual grasp of the *common factor* in the three states of waking, dream and sleep and what survives in the state of sleep will be helpful in the *sādhana*. Sleep minus the after-thought: 'I do not know anything in sleep' is the key to the Self."

DR. G. SUBRAMANIAN,  
Madurai.

"You are Pure Awareness which remains as the ever-present witness of the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. That is the Ground, the Screen on which everything else appears and disappears. Finitude and struggle are only projections of the ego whereas the Self or Pure Awareness is unaffected, ever peaceful and unruffled being, the only Reality. Bhagavan Ramana also assured us that we are always that Pure Awareness. It never gets involved in any appearances that occur by its own indefinable mysterious Force...."

SHYAMLAL THATHU,  
Simla.

"All is One, unchanging Truth — ancient sages said so, Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi says so, seers of all time now and in future will say so.

Where is the Self? *Where* and *when* are mere mental concepts. These have to be transcended before Self shines forth....

*Samsara* is the relative empirical experience perceived only under the delusion of being apart from the Self. One is only the Self and not this or that. There is nothing other than the Self...."

K. UPENDRA PAI,  
Mangalore.

The Self is Pure Awareness and Peace. It is the mind that speaks of finitude, struggling in *samsara* with thoughts and delusion. When the mind is

transcended, one experiences Oneness of Being —  
the Infinite ever-present Self."

J. MENUMAL, D.,  
Indonesia.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The Self is in the heart of every being, the  
inmost core of the I-thought, at the root of all  
thoughts...."

PADMANABHAN PANDE,  
Kullada.

"Let the devotee chant *Om Ganesaya Namaha*  
once and then incessantly chant *Om Namah Sivaya*  
till an effulgent Light is seen. The time should be  
before dawn. Let the devotee commence his day  
and go to sleep similarly. He will unfailingly dis-  
cover his thought of finitude as illusory..."

M. R. NARAYANAN,  
Bombay.

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