

Discourses on Tantra - Volume One

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The Devotee and the Lord

Each and every stage of Macrocosmic expression – crude, subtle or causal – shines with divine joy. Every atom of the universe is moving in that divine flow, in that rhythmic dance. It is as if this entire universe is the stage for the divine dance of Puruśottama. The divine dance, with Puruśottama as its nucleus, is the blissful flow of joyful creation.

When Prakrti loses Her balance, different evolutionary changes begin. Prakrti and Her principles are given different names at different stages of evolutionary change in the flow of creation.

At the first stage, when there is no imbalance in the triangle of forces, Prakrti is called Kaośikii Shakti (Shivánii Shakti). She is given this name because she is responsible for the creation of the kośas [layers of mind]. In that supreme stage Kaośikii remains unmanifested, remains as the primordial cause of all subsequent manifestations.

The second stage of Prakrti occurs when the triangle of forces loses its equilibrium. This is the stage at which Prakrti is first expressed as a straight line emerging from one of the vertices of the unbalanced triangle. It is called the Bhaeravii or intermediate stage. At this stage of expression there is no wave, and hence creation remains beyond the scope of perception. It is only when náda [flow without curvature] is converted into kalá [flow with curvature] that creation comes within the scope of perception.

When Bhaeravii Shakti attains the form of kalá She is called Bhavánii Shakti, and thus begins Prakrti's third stage of expression. Bhavánii Shakti is active in air, light, vital energy and numerous other entities, and is responsible for maintaining the coordinating link between the crude and the subtle.

In intuitional practice this process is reversed: devotees elevate themselves from Bhavánii Shakti to Bhaeravii Shakti, from Bhaeravii Shakti to Kaośikii Shakti, and finally attain oneness with the Supreme Entity. Those who pursue this path of divine adoration are called devotees. Whom do devotees ideate on? Certainly on Puruśottama. Those who accept matter as their object of ideation can never attain Puruśottama, but will invariably degenerate towards the staticity of Bhavánii Shakti. Their entire being will ultimately be converted into inert matter. To ideate on Puruśottama means to transform Bhavánii into Bhaeravii and Bhaeravii into Kaośikii, thereby establishing oneness between the devotee and the Lord. In the process of transforming crude waves into subtle waves, devotees become one with their final goal. If one's movement is towards the crude, one's psycho-physical waves will become cruder and cruder. But if one's movement is towards the Supreme, if Bhavánii Shakti is transformed into Bhaeravii Shakti, then one's waves will gradually straighten. The subtle waves of effulgence will also become straight. Thus a devotee's movement towards the Supreme One is an endeavour to transform crude energy into subtle energy. To transform Bhavánii Shakti into Bhaeravii Shakti both shraddhá [implicit veneration for one's goal] and viirya [stamina] are important. Without regular spiritual practice this transformation is impossible.

For a devotee, action is indispensable. Sádhaná itself is a type of action. If one sits idle like a piece of inert matter, sádhaná is impossible; the conversion of crude into subtle will never occur.

The relationship between devotees and their Lord is strengthened through action. At this point a question may arise: on the path of sádhaná who is greater – a bhakta [devotee] or a karmii [person of action]? The answer is simple and straightforward. For bhaktas all actions are a part of their psycho-spiritual practice, whereas for karmiis actions are merely seen as actions. Those people whose actions are indistinguishable from devotion are true devotees. Thus in the process of conversion of Bhavánii Shakti into Bhaeravii Shakti, devotion plays a greater role than so-called action.

What is the source of inspiration of the individual's efforts to convert crude energy into subtle energy? In this case the Cognitive Faculty is the source of inspiration. Bhaeravii Shakti is prevented from being converted into Bhavánii Shakti with the help of the Cognitive Faculty, and with the help of the Cognitive Faculty Bhaeravii Shakti is merged in the cognitive flow.

In the struggle to transform Bhaeravii Shakti into Kaośikii Shakti, Citishakti [Cognitive Force] plays a dominant role, because Bhaeravii Shakti is the second stage of Citishakti in the flow of creation. The Cognitive Force manifests itself as Bhaeravii Shakti to expedite the evolution of mind. The will to evolve is primarily dependent on the active role of Bhaeravii Shakti. In fact Bhaeravii Shakti is one's real "I". It is with Her help that one must carry on one's sádhaná to attain Citishakti. It is just like worshipping the Ganges with the water of the Ganges.

Suppose a certain student studies abroad with his father's financial assistance. If he saves a little money every month and buys his father one of his favourite objects, his father will certainly feel happy. The pursuit of dharma is a similar process. One attains Parama Puruśa with the proper application of devotion, knowledge and action, which are the faculties He has chosen to bestow on spiritual aspirants.

Exactly the reverse occurs in the case of materialists who are puffed up with vanity: their Bhaeravii Shakti is gradually converted into Bhavánii Shakti. Only devotees can expand Bhaeravii Shakti because only they cherish the desire for supreme union with the Cognitive Faculty. They do not ask the Supreme Being for wealth, opulence, fame or children, but pray, "O Lord, please manifest Yourself fully in me. Make me Yours, O Lord." They continue to pray like this until they merge in the Supreme.

They continue their efforts to attain the Supreme with the physical and psychic strength already bestowed upon them by the Supreme Entity. To ask for extra power without first utilizing the power already given them would be to show disrespect to Parama Puruśa. Only after all their power has been totally exhausted may they ask Parama Puruśa for anything. If He so desires, Parama Puruśa may grant that request through some third entity. While utilizing one's energy one should pray to Parama Puruśa, "O Lord, I am working with the strength given by You. Let me not make the mistake of taking it to be my own power. Let me not forget You, O Lord."

Devotees will have to straighten the waves of Bhavánii Shakti. The more the waves are straightened, the more Bhavánii will be transformed into Bhaeravii Shakti. This straightening of the waves is the first stage of sádhaná. As long as sádhakas remain within the scope of Bhavánii Shakti they observe that all finite entities of the universe are separate from one another. But when they enter the bounds of Bhaeravii Shakti after straightening the waves of Bhavánii Shakti,

they discover that all those previous differentiations have vanished into nothingness. The more the influence of Bhavánii Shakti, the greater the feeling of differentiation; and the more the influence of Bhaeravii Shakti, the greater the feeling of unity.

Many people think that social service alone is the best process of sádhaná, but they are mistaken. Through intuitional practice a sádhaka succeeds in elevating Bhaeravii and Bhavánii Shaktis in individual life. A person who develops the cognitive faculty in this way will spontaneously do social service. Service is the way and the life of such a spiritual aspirant. A balance between one's individual dharma and social dharma will thus be established.

When one's cognitive faculty becomes so subtle that one sees Brahma in all manifested entities, one can play a proper role in the practical world. Only at this stage does one realize that no one in this universe is inferior, for all are the children of the same Supreme Father and Supreme Mother. Brothers and sisters belonging to the same family cannot belong to separate castes. So those who support casteism are atheists. Those who want to perpetuate economic disparities are also atheists. No parents could sincerely desire one of their children to become fabulously rich and roll in opulence, while another slowly starves to death.

Human beings should develop themselves as individuals by expanding their dormant cognitive faculties through intuitional practice, and should develop their socio-economic life by eradicating the vested interests in the socio-economic sphere. Those who have rendered service to society and have either become government ministers or been otherwise rewarded with power and prestige, but have failed to practise sádhaná in their personal lives, generally degenerate later.

What happens before Bhavánii Shakti is metamorphosed into Bhaeravii Shakti? Bhavánii Shakti emanates from Puruśa in so many waves. It is the variation in these waves which causes the differences among the many objects of the universe. Bhavánii, Bhaeravii and Kaośikii Shaktis are created according to the way the three principles act on the Cognitive Faculty. When major changes occur in Bhavánii Shakti, ether, air, fire, water and other crude objects can be perceived. These entities acquire different forms due to the differences in the waves created by the three principles. Thus we observe the same Puruśa manifested in different ways.

It is due to a particular vibration of Bhavánii Shakti that we perceive Puruśa as a piece of iron, and due to another vibration that we perceive Puruśa as a piece of gold. Had there been no differences among the wavelengths of Bhavánii Shakti, there would have been no differences among the manifested objects. When spiritual aspirants remain within the periphery of Bhavánii Shakti and observe the differences among objects, they realize the Supreme Singularity behind the diversity of expression.

All objects are the varying forms of Puruśa. When one realizes that all these diverse objects finally merge into His supreme singularity, social service becomes more important than anything else, because service to individuals or the collectivity means service to Brahma.

So in the first stage of sádhaná, as a result of the constant superimposition of Cosmic ideation, Bhavánii Shakti is changed into Bhaeravii Shakti. Then all the objects of the world are seen as expressions of Brahma. This realization is not brought about by the study of books. Book

knowledge is only perceptual knowledge; it cannot take one beyond the boundary of perception. If people study constantly without practising sádhaná, psycho-physical parallelism will make them vain and egotistical.

Mathitvácátváro vedán sarvashástrañi caeva hi
Sáram tu yogibhih piitam takram pivanti pañditáh.

[When the Vedas and all the scriptures are churned, the essence of all knowledge is assimilated by the yogis, and the non-essential portion is eaten by the pandits.]

The constant churning of the ocean of knowledge produces butter and buttermilk. The spiritual aspirants eat the butter; the pandits remain satisfied with the buttermilk. The goal of a sádhaka is not to become a bookworm, but to become a devotee.

Remember that until one becomes one with the Cognitive Faculty, one will have to continue to act. Through karma sádhaná [the yoga of action] one advances to the second stage of progress, realizing that everything is Brahma. The outlook of differentiation is a defective outlook.

In the third stage the question of differentiation does not even arise: the difference between the seer and the “seeable” is completely obliterated. The doer, the deed and the witnessing entity merge in the same Consciousness. All that remains is one undifferentiated Supreme Entity.

The Cosmic force that is active in the psychic sphere of microcosms is Bhaeravii Shakti. As Bhaeravii is the force which starts moving from a vertex of the unbalanced supreme triangle, one will have to concentrate one’s mind on a particular point in the process of sádhaná. Thus in ásana shuddhi, Bhaeravii Shakti is concentrated at a nuclear point, and subsequently transformed into Kaośikii Shakti. When that transformation occurs, the unit mind gradually dissolves into the Cosmic Mind. The three principles of Prakrti remain perfectly balanced in Kaośikii Shakti, and thus lie unexpressed.

Devotees reach Kaośikii Shakti with the help of Bhavánii and Bhaeravii Shaktis. Hence devotees must be Sháktas, always ready to fight against the hostile forces which thwart spiritual progress. They must not encourage timidity or cowardice. If their minds are directed towards Bhavánii Shakti their Bhaeravii Shakti will become crudified. Hence sádhakas must carry on a relentless fight against all crudifying forces. For this reason they must also be viirácáriis. ⁽¹⁾ They must ideate constantly on Parama Puruśa, and gradually transform Bhaeravii Shakti into Kaośikii Shakti. But one should remember that Kaośikii Shakti is not one’s final goal. Even after merging one’s identity into Kaośikii Shakti it can still be the cause of bondage and subsequent rebirth.

Of all the bondages, the bondage of [Bhavánii] is most strongly felt, but [Bhavánii] Herself is not the original entity. While utilizing mundane objects, one should always ideate on the Cognitive Faculty working behind this myriad world of forms and colours. The regressive movement that the mind makes when ideating on matter is prevented by this Cosmic ideation or Brahmacharya sádhaná.

One who ideates on the Supreme Entity while engaged in individual and collective sádhaná establishes a happy correlation between Bhaeravii Shakti and one's cognitive faculty. Such a person will never degenerate, even though his or her cherished supreme goal may not be fully realized. The main factor is the clear awareness of one's goal. Your own excellence depends on the excellence of your goal. To build a bridge over the Ganges is not the goal in itself; the actual goal is to connect north Bihar to south Bihar. Of course, that goal is achieved by building the bridge.

The attainment of Brahma signifies the victory of one's ideology; first the victory of Bhaeravii Shakti and then the victory of Kaośikii Shakti. Or put in another way, first the defeat of Bhavánii Shakti, then the defeat of Bhaeravii and Kaośikii Shaktis at the hands of Puruśa. When one becomes the master of Bhavánii, Bhaeravii and Kaośikii Shaktis, one attains enormous power to subdue the wicked forces and protect the forces of righteousness in the external world.

One who does not practise any active sádhaná to control these three shaktis and expand one's cognitive faculty cannot fight against antisocial forces. This process of bringing these three shaktis within one's control is called sádhanásamara [the battle of intuitional practice]. This battle should end in one of two ways: in victory or in death. One should never undergo the ignominy of defeat. If one dies while seeking the Supreme, one will surely attain the Supreme after death. One who is totally absorbed in ideation on the Supreme becomes one with the Supreme at the time of death. This is certainly true in the case of devotees. The duality between the one who serves and the entity served ceases to exist. Ultimately the one who serves, the entity who is served, and the action of serving become fused into one. If one's goal is right, one is sure to attain the supreme stance. And one who attains the supreme stance will never make the mistake of differentiating between high and low, literate and illiterate, touchable and untouchable.

Shmasháne vá grhe, hirańye vá trńe,
Tanuje vá ripao, hutáshe vá jale.
Svakiie vá pare samatvena buddhyá,
Viráje avadhúto dvitiiyo Maheshah.

[The sádhaka who views everything with equanimity, be it his home or the burial ground, gold or grass, his own children or his enemies, fire or water, his own property or another's property, lives in the world as an avadhúta, as if the second manifestation of Shiva.]

Táraka Brahma

Consciousness in the psycho-physical unit structures gets manifested in the process of pratisaiñcara when Puruśottama by His ota yoga associatively reflects on the unit psychic plate. It is through this process, pratisaiñcara, that the Ever-Merciful elevates each creation of His by the force of Vidyámáyá. As already discussed, the physical and psychic clash and the attraction of the Great cause psychic dilation, and ultimately the unit psychic body can attain its final liberation or mukti by its spiritual sádhaná. Different unit minds exist at different levels and experience varying degrees of His love and proximity depending upon their progress in the process of pratisaiñcara. The auspicious day with infinite ánanda descends, and all the bondages of Prakrti shatter down when Brahmatva is attained.

Such individuals set the ideal for humanity and, in turn, humanity starts paying homage to them. Such elevated beings can and should only be called Mahápuruśa, meaning thereby elevated psychic beings. Unto their holy feet, one can offer the flowers of devotion and aspiration, but they desire no crude earthly flowers and offerings.

The advent of Mahápuruśa is misinterpreted as incarnation. Incarnation is an illogical hypothesis. The whole universe being created out of Him and by Him is His incarnation. The term avatára means a “derivation”, and the application of this term to individual units who are far advanced in the process of pratisaiñcara is a misleading misnomer. It is illogical to consider that the Macrocosm metamorphosed Himself directly into some unit structure, mostly as a human being. Human beings are the most evolved individual units as a class in His creation, and every stage of the elevated psychic Mahápuruśa is the result of saiñcara and then pratisaiñcara. It is a gradual elevation and not an abrupt descent or occurrence.

Logically speaking, therefore, it will be correct to designate any unit consciousness as incarnation of God or to say that the Messenger of God traverses the path of saiñcara, goes through a process of evolution and importance, and through psychic dilation in the process of pratisaiñcara reaches different stages of elevation. The incarnation theory, or avatáraváda, however, hypothesizes that the incarnated being is the direct descent of the Almighty, the rest of His creation remaining unexplained as to its source of origin.

The word avatára [derives from ava – tr, which means] “descend”, “derive” or “degenerate”. The incarnated being, according to this dogma of degeneration of Puruśottama, cannot have an equal status with Puruśottama. When the psychic status of a created being assumes sameness with the Cosmic Entity, the unit psychic entity actually merges into the Cosmic Mind leaving no dualism. Hence how can any equal status with Puruśottama be imagined existing as a separate entity in any stage within Brahma Cakra (the collective name of saiñcara and pratisaiñcara)? The whole theory of incarnation or avatáraváda is, therefore, not convincing and rational for an intellectual analysis.

Behind the superstitious belief of avatáraváda lies one more social current created by a class of vested interests. Inquisitiveness and reasoning is a natural impulse in human beings. Due to certain pressing circumstances or intellectual renaissance there was a reaction against the illogical faiths and superstitions prevalent in society. These superstitions provided a strong basis

for exploitation of society by intellectual parasites who had learnt to live on the blood and labour of others. To maintain their domination through a system of superstitious belief, these parasites invented means to curb this growth of reaction and intellectual rationalism and presented to the mass a sentimental appeal. Any command, rational or irrational, was enforced on society with so-called divine force by enunciation of the incarnation theory. Corruption was perpetrated in the name of God and all those raising their heads against such commands or preachings were called reactionaries, atheists, and curbed drastically. "Give the dog a bad name and hang it," was their motto. They went to the extent of manipulating, polluting and misinterpreting even the precious writings of many great philosophers whose work had been respected as religious treatises from ancient times – all with an ulterior motive, to get their interests served.

Táraka Brahma

In Brahma Cakra there is no uniformity of flow. The speed of the sentient force is greater than that of the mutative, and the mutative has more speed than the static. Thus in the beginning of sañcara the speed is greater. Similarly, after elevation, under the influence of the sentient force or reaching sámánya deha (a stage beyond the hirañmaya kośa where the unit mind experiences only the sentient force), the speed is greater. The speed of the unit mind far exceeds the normal flow in the Cosmos, and it gets accelerated if the unit mind as a result of spiritual practice tends itself towards the Nucleus Consciousness.

Since the beginning of creation humans have been aspiring for this merger with the Nucleus Consciousness. The non-uniformity of speed changes the movement of the unit mind to an elliptical force, and the motion changes to oval from circular. They get merged in Puruśottama who aspire for Him as the ultimate destiny, but those who aim at mokśa, where sádhaná is the complete surrender of self into That (Nirguña Brahma, the Objectless Consciousness), get out of this Brahma Cakra by a tangential touch. At this point of tangential touch is the abode of Táraka Brahma (who resides within the scope of both Nirguña and Saguña Brahma). Táraka Brahma is a concept of Tantra.

In Tantra the whole creation is known as sambhúti. When Táraka Brahma by His own will takes the help of the five fundamental factors (the pañca bhútas), His physical entity comes within the scope of Saguña Brahma, otherwise He is Nirguña Brahma. When Táraka Brahma takes the assistance of the five fundamental factors, according to Tantra it is called His Mahásambhúti.

In Tantra sádhaná or in Ananda Marga sádhaná one whose goal is Puruśottama merges in Saguña Brahma, and one who aims at Nirguña Brahma becomes surrendered into the Objectless Entity. It is only in Tantra that the sádhaná of Táraka Brahma has been specially defined distinct from the sádhaná of Nirguña and Saguña and has its own peculiarity. Theoretically speaking, Saguña Brahma has infinite sañskáras, and so for an infinite time to come Saguña Brahma will continue to enjoy the fruits of Its own past actions. Nirguña is the Objectless Entity with no action or derivation, but Táraka Brahma is the middle point and can fulfil the function of both. He guides, loves and favours His affectionate sons and daughters. His children say that He cannot live without loving them and address Him, "O our great Father, our affectionate Mother, our All, we remember Thee, we adore Thee. O Witnessing Entity, we offer our homage to Thee, Thou art the only rescue in this crude worldly ocean, so to Thee we surrender ourselves." This complete

surrender is the summum bonum of all spiritual sádhaná, which only can lead to Him from where decline is not even imaginable. Really blessed is one who has attained this complete surrender unto Him, like the piece of salt which went to measure the depth of the ocean – but a momentous divine jerk and an attraction occurred and the bit of salt was lost, no one knows where.

(Táraka Brahma is not a figure of philosophy – it is a creation of devotional sentiment.)

The Creation of the Universe

In the previous chapters, it has been clearly explained that the Transcendent Entity is one Infinite and Its immanent principles are the sentient, the mutative and the static. By their very nature these forces are belligerent. Their direction is haphazard, forming infinite figures with innumerable sides. Prakrti here is said to be *anucchúnyá*, and Brahma here is objectless, because there is no question of subjectivation (feeling of Doer “I”) or objectivation (feeling of done “I”), and therefore Brahma is called *nirguña*, “beyond all the attributes” of Prakrti. In common language it is said that Prakrti has not been able to get Brahma influenced or metamorphosed. Here, therefore, there is not even the seed of creation.

If more than two forces are acting at a place the figure of forces tends to become triangular. These belligerent forces, therefore, make a triangle of forces. In the initial stage, there is balance in the triangular figure. The hexagon, septagon and other multi-sided figures have been transformed into triangles of forces, but no resultant is formed because of proper adjustment of the three types of forces. In this state of equilibrium, the triple qualities of Prakrti exist, but in a balanced state. This state, however, differs from the previous one not only in the fact that a triangle of forces has been formed, but also in the fact that the sentient, the mutative and the static forces are clearly distinguishable. In the previous stage the forces had no clear identity; they were flowing without any feelings. But in this triangular stage there is a constant exchange of identities amongst the three fundamental principles (forces). This mutual exchange or transformation is called *svarúpa parińama*. The conversion involves no bondage, and though the sentient is penetrating into the mutative, the mutative into the static and so on, there is a perfect balance here. The balanced Prakrti is addressed simply as Prakrti (without any adjective).

Puruśa is the fundamental entity at every stage. When He gets encircled by the triangle of forces (sentient, mutative and static), though no resultant force has formed, there is a theoretical difference between the Puruśabháva in the first stage when Prakrti was *anucchúnyá*, and the Puruśabháva in the second stage when Prakrti has shaped Herself into a triangle of forces. In the later stage not only is Puruśa in a theoretical bondage of the three principles, but also there is a chance of His being expressed. Puruśa has not yet metamorphosed, due to equilibrium of the triangle of forces, but the chance of metamorphosis is imminent, so in spite of the fact that Puruśa here is unaffected, there is a theoretical speciality in Puruśa at this stage. This Puruśabháva is called Shiva, and Prakrti, *Shivánii* or *Kaośikii*. Prakrti is called *Kaośikii* because She is the cause of origin of different *kośas* which are formed later on in the process of evolution.

The difference between Shiva and *Shivánii* here is merely theoretical because no actual manifestation has occurred. Practical difference between Puruśa and Prakrti starts arising the moment a resultant of forces is formed. Imbalance or lack of equilibrium in the three belligerent forces causes this resultant, and metamorphosis of Puruśa starts due to activation by this Prakrti. The point at which the resultant force bursts out is known as *bijja* – in Tantra, it is called *kámabijja*. Here lies the innate desire of creation.

Shiva Shakti *vibhágena*, *jáyate srśti kalpaná*, that is, “Shiva, the Transcendental Entity encircled in the triangle of forces, and Shakti, or Prakrti, on being acted and reacted within themselves, are

the cause of the divine desire of creation.” This point (kámabiiija) is static and is dominated by Avidyámáyá and rests within its scope of activity. This is the point wherein lies the Cosmic desire. It, therefore, can also be termed icchábiiija, or “seed of desire”.

The next stage after this point is the expression of desire or the expression of the resultant force, which must be in a straight line (jñánashakti náda) because every force expresses itself by a direction. Philosophically speaking, even though the point is dominated by the static force, further expression is due to the sentient force. Prakrti has a tremendous force but is mainly sentient at this stage, even though the mutative is well active within it. At this stage the flow of expression must, therefore, be in a straight line, because the sentient-dominated force itself must be a straight line.

Prakrti by nature merges Herself in Puruśabháva regularly but by degrees. Hence the flow changes and the force of expression gradually becomes less and less. There is also a never-ending clash amongst the belligerent forces of Prakrti, due to which internal friction increases. Thus due to gradual merger of Prakrti and growing internal friction (known as guñakśobha in Tantra) within Prakrti, the flow ceases to be in a straight line, tends to take up curvature and attains a wavelength. The first curvature thus formed is termed kalá (kriyá shakti). Prakrti is active from kámabiiija to the kalá and is called Bhaeravii in the náda stage, and Puruśa is termed Bhaerava.

The conquest of the mutative over the sentient and the gradual movement towards domination (second occasion) by the static force results in curvatures following the preceding curvature. Kalá is followed by further formation of curvatures one after another, but each succeeding curve is not necessarily of the same wavelength as the preceding one. In fact, the difference goes on increasing as the wavelength continues to decrease. This sequence of curvatures is known as sadrsha parińáma. Here the static-dominated mutative Prakrti is responsible for the expression of the universe. The universe gets created. Prakrti responsible for this creation or metamorphosis is known as Bhavánii; She is the energy of evolution. The metamorphosed Puruśabháva under the influence of Bhavánii is called Bhava. In Sanskrit bhava means “to become”. Here Puruśa has become the universe of creation and therefore Puruśa is called Bhava. The practical difference between Bhava and Bhavánii is the maximum, whereas the difference between Bhaerava and Bhaeravii was tending from the theoretical to the practical aspect.

In the first chapter, on “Saiñcara and Práńáh”, it was pointed out that the whole universe is the thought-projection of the Cosmic Mind, or Macrocosm. The projection of Macrocosm towards expression is a singular positive approach by which the Cosmos appears to have taken the shape of this universe. In this path of evolutionary expression, the human physique gets its existence at a later stage of the formation of the curvatures. The complexity of the physical curvature goes on increasing, yet it is very near the point of its descent. The mental body is much more subtle and can by sádhaná, or spiritual practice, trespass and counteract the force of Avidyámáyá and proceed forth to come under the influence of Vidyámáyá, the force of Cosmic attraction. Mental liberation, or mukti, is possible this way.

Non-qualified liberation, or mokśa, is, however, only possible if the mental body, starting from the crudest mental subjectivity of the physical body, can, by any force, retrace against the

singular positive force emanating due to the thought-projection of the Macrocosm. This force against the singular positive force must be a negative one. Hence the path of non-qualified spiritual practice which can reach final mokṣa is always the path of negativity. The theoretical negative force with its fundamental negativity, which tends towards the final merger into Puruṣa for attaining mokṣa, is called kulakuṇḍalinii – the “coiled serpentine”.

Since kulakuṇḍalinii is the negative force of the unit body, it is different for each individual. As the sādhanā is more or less for a psycho-physical liberation in the initial stage, its starting-point must be in the crudest manifestation. It must reside in that portion of the physical body from which the crudest matter (kṣīṭitattva) of the body is controlled. The starting-point of the kulakuṇḍalinii, therefore, is in the mūlādhāra. It is fundamentally negative in character, and its starting-point is the negative kāmabijja of the living being, just as the point from which the positive resultant force of Prakṛti got expression is the kāmabijja, or icchābijja, of the Cosmic Being.

The arena in which the kulakuṇḍalinii resides is known as kāma-piṭha. The starting-point of the fundamental positivity, that is, the kāmabijja of the Cosmic Being, is on the back of Shambhūliṅga, and that of negativity on the back of Svayambhūliṅga. Within the self of the yoga sādhaḥ, or one who practises the scientific method of spiritual approach with the help of this kulakuṇḍalinii, the force of fundamental negativity fights out and aggressively rises up against the force of Avidyāmāyā and thereby gets domination over the flow of fundamental positivity. This path of non-compromising aggressive spirituality is the only way to ultimate oneness with Infinite Consciousness.

3 June 1959, Jamalpur

Chapter 4

4-1. Trigunátmiká srśtímátrká asheśatrikoñadhára.

[The tri-attributional primordial force (progenitrix of creation) flows on in endless triangular forms.]

Purport: In Parama Puruśa a countless number of linear waves are taking place in the different flows of sattva [sentient], rajah [mutative] and tamah [static]. Their triple-attributional flows go on evolving triangles or different other multi-conical or polygonal diagrams. Even these polygonal diagrams are gradually getting transformed into triangles due to svarúpa parińáma [homomorphic evolution]. This triple-qualitative mátrkáshakti [primordial force] is endless.

4-2. Tribhúje Sá svarúpaparińámátmiká.

[In the triangle of forces, the three attributes of Prakrti are locked in endless mutual transformation.]

Purport: In these triangles transformations of sattva into rajah, rajah into tamah, then again of tamah into rajah and rajah into sattva, have been going on back and forth endlessly. These transformations are called svarúpa parińáma [homomorphic evolution].

4-3. Prathamá avyakte Sá Shivánii kendre ca Paramashivah.

[In the first stage (not yet a stage of actual manifestation), Prakrti is called Shivánii, and the witnessing Puruśa at the nucleus is called Paramashiva.]

Purport: The thread wherewith the mid-points of these triangles are interwoven is Puruśottama, or Paramashiva. So long as these triangles do not lose their equipoise in the wake of developing forces, we may regard it as the initial stage of the triangular receptacles. This first stage is verily the pre-evolutional stage and hence it is purely a theoretical stage. Prakrti, the creatress of these initial receptacles, is called Shivánii or Kaośikii, and the witnessing Puruśa is called Shiva.

4-4. Dvitiyá sakale prathamodgame Bhaeravii Bhaeraváshritá.

[In the second phase, when the germ of evolution sprouts, Prakrti is called Bhaeravii, and the witnessing Puruśa is called Bhaerava.]

Purport: With the loss of equipoise of the triangle, the germ of evolution sprouts forth from any of the vertices and moves forward as a straight line as per degrees of the guńas. This state is really the manifested state of Puruśa and Prakrti. Here Puruśa is sagnúna [qualified], for Prakrti has got the opportunity of expressing Herself. Prakrti the creatress of this state is called Bhaeravii shakti, and the name of the witnessing Puruśa is Bhaerava.

4-5. Sadrshaparińámena Bhavánii Sá Bhavadára.

[In the vibrational world there is a sequence of similarity of curvatures (homogenesis). Here Prakṛti is called Bhavānī and the witnessing Puruṣa is called Bhava.]

Purport: In time as the result of internal clashes the flow of forces betrays some curvatures, and the density of the Puruṣabhāva [stance of Consciousness] also goes on decreasing. In this very condition develops the first kalā [curvature]. The second kalā is similar (not identical) to the first, and the third is similar to the second, and so on. So goes the kalā pravāha [sequential or phasic flow]. This sequential evolution of kalās is called sadrsha pariñāma [homogenesis, or similitude]. In these homogenetic waves are evolved the mental and physical worlds. It is due to this (homoform) curvilinear evolution that we find that the child of a human is a human and tree begets tree. The kalās are similar but not identical, and so although the difference between two successive kalās is not clearly perceivable, the differences of kalās having distant mutual relations are clearly understandable. Although the physical changes of one whom we see every day are not understandable, we can certainly make out the difference if we see a child of five, after twenty years, as a youth of twenty-five. Although human begets human, there will be a gulf of difference between a human of a million years ago and a human of today. In fact the creatress of the manifest world is this sequential force, which is called Bhavānī shakti and whose witnessing Puruṣa is Bhava. The word bhava means “creation”.

4-6. Shambhūliṅgāt tasya vyaktih.

[The process of creation starts from Shambhūliṅga.]

Purport: Actually the evolution from the theoretical stage to the practical manifestation dates from the very first expression of Bhavānī emanating from one of the points of the triangular receptacle. The common point of the theoretical and the practical evolution is called Shambhūliṅga [Puruṣa at the vertex of the triangle, the source of sañcara]. Actually this Shambhūliṅga is the root-point of the fundamental positivity, after which comes the náda [flow without any curvature], followed by kalā.

4-7. Sthūliibhavane nidritā sā kuṅḍalinī.

[In the ultimate state of crudification, the parāshakti lying dormant at Svayambhūliṅga is called the kuṅḍalinī (“coiled serpentine”).]

Purport: The last expressional point, which is the fringe of the Bhavānī shakti, is the ultimate state of expression of force – the ultimate state of crudity. In this state of crudity the parāshakti [introversial pervasive force] that is lying in a quiescent state as the jīvabhāva [finite subjectivity], is called the kulakuṅḍalinī [“coiled serpentine”, or force of fundamental negativity].

4-8. Kuṅḍalinī sā mūliibhūtā rātmikā.

[The kuṅḍalinī is the (force of) fundamental negativity.]

Purport: The ultimate point of manifestation is called Svayambhúliṅga. Svayambhúliṅga is the ultimate point of negativity, wherein resides the kulakuṅḍalinii force, quiescent and coiled like a serpent. If Shambhúliṅga be the fundamental positivity, then the kulakuṅḍalinii, lying at Svayambhúliṅga, we may call the force of fundamental negativity.

Sambhúti and Mahásambhúti

The subject of today's discourse is "Sambhúti and Mahásambhúti". In the Vedas it has been said,

Sambhútiṅca vináshaiṅca yastadvedobhayaṁsaha;
Vináshena mrtyuṁ tiirtvá saṁbhútyámrtamashnute.

[It is better for people to understand Brahma in both Its aspects, sambhúti, or creation, and vinásha, or transformation. Through vinásha – changing from one form to another – they overcome death, and through sambhúti – the gift of a human body – they gain a chance for immortality.]

What is the meaning of Mahásambhúti? To acquire knowledge about Mahásambhúti, you must first understand sambhúti and vinásha. The word sambhúti is derived as: prefix sam – root verb bhú + suffix ktin, which combine to mean literally, "proper development, proper origin".

What is proper development or origin? When something is created it is called sambhúti. But when people create something new out of some existing fundamental stuff, it is not called sambhúti. (There are certain fundamental elements which human beings cannot create, but out of which they can create various objects. These objects are called elements, and all are included in sambhúti.) Actually, sambhúti is a special creation of Parama Puruśa.

What do we mean by vinásha? Vinásha is derived as: vi – nash + ghaiṅ. Usually we come across three such words: násha, vinásha and prańásha. What we call "destruction" in ordinary language is called násha. When an object is transformed and cannot be brought back to its original form it is called vinásha. For example, when a five-year-old boy grows into a twenty-five-year-old man it signifies a major change. Where has the growing body of the five-year-old gone? It has been annihilated. When an object returns to its original source after being annihilated, it is called prańásha. Prańásha signifies destruction also, but of a different nature. For example, when you prepare puri [unleavened bread puffed by deep frying] out of wheat flour and then transform it back into wheat flour, this is prańásha.

Let us take another example. Sugar is made from cane-juice. If the sugar is transformed back into cane-juice, that will be prańásha. In brief, sambhúti means "an original creation", and vinásha is the total destruction of an object which cannot be transformed back to its original source.

The fundamental stuff of the universe has emerged from Parama Puruśa; hence all objects, big and small, are the sambhúti of Parama Puruśa. This sambhúti or creation is divided into various worlds: physical, plant, animal and human. Inanimate and animate beings are divided into various branches and sub-branches, which are also the creations of Parama Puruśa. In ordinary language they can also be called avatára. When Parama Puruśa is manifested in some physical object, that physical object is called the avatára of Parama Puruśa.

The word avatára is derived as: ava – tr + ghaiṅ. How diversified is the creation of Parama Puruśa! What striking differences there are among objects! Even in the plant world some plants are quite developed, while others are totally undeveloped. In the living world the protozoic body

is undeveloped, but the metazoic body is developed. There is tremendous complexity within the flow of evolution of living beings. The undeveloped creatures of the living world are called *jīvakotī*, and those which are highly developed are called *Ishvarakotī*. The entire gamut of evolution from protozoic cells up to human beings are called *jīvakotīs*. These *jīvakotīs* [living beings] evolve through psychic and social clash. For example, those people who are dull and unintelligent today are sure to develop one day in the gradual process of evolution. When they become highly intelligent people, their physical capacity will also increase. Through intensive self-culture, a *jīvakotī* can achieve a lot. Thus one should not worry; those who have taken the shelter of Parama Puruśa will certainly merge in Him.

Like *jīvakotīs*, the other branches and sub-branches of creation have originated from Parama Puruśa. You are not the actual owner of your physical and intellectual strength and spiritual power all these things have come from Parama Puruśa. All these powers have their limits, but Parama Puruśa is the source of all power.

In a *jīvakotī*, strength can develop only to a certain degree, for the capacity of development of living beings is limited this is why they are called *jīvakotīs*. Suppose a certain man is trying to increase his physical strength through physical exercise. His strength can increase only to a certain degree. The physical strength of human beings is such that it cannot increase beyond a certain point. In exactly the same way, a certain person may develop the power of memory; but this development can take place only up to a certain age. Once that age is reached, there can be no further improvement. An ordinary human being can never become omniscient.

And what does *Ishvarakotī* mean? In *Ishvarakotī* there is a greater manifestation of divinity. A *jīvakotī* by virtue of sincere and ardent spiritual practice can elevate itself to *Ishvarakotī*. Both *jīvakotī* and *Ishvarakotī* are creations of Parama Puruśa. Thus in the gradual process of evolution they will become one with Brahma one day. In the Vedas it has been said:

Eśo ha deva pradisho'nu sarvá
Pūrvohajātah sa u garbhe anta;
Sa eva jātah sah janiśyamānah,
Pratyamjanāmstisthate sarvatomukhah.

Eśo ha deva pradisho'nu sarvá. Each direction is a creation of Parama Puruśa. He exists in all four directions. There are considerable differences in recommendations as to which way one should face while sitting in meditation or worship. Some say east, some say west; others advise north. Superstitious people consider the south to be inauspicious, as the south is supposed to be death's door. But the *rśi* [sage] says that all the *pradisha* [cardinal points] north, south, east and west and all the *anudisha* [secondary points] northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest, above and below are the *sambhūtīs* of Parama Puruśa. So which way should people face? He pervades all the directions; all are His creations. Thus it is not necessary to face always in one direction.

Pūrvohajātah. Those objects which existed in the distant past were also His creation. For instance, this planet earth was created after dissociation from the sun about 8,000 million years ago. At that time this earth was only a gaseous substance, but that too was a creation of Parama Puruśa. Subsequently that gas cooled and gradually solidified to form the earth. This

metamorphosis took place around 2,230 million years ago, long before the advent of human beings. Naturally there was no question of anyone ascribing any name to it.

As the earth gradually cooled, many layers of rock were formed under the crust. Each of these layers is also a creation of Parama Puruśa, created by certain temperatures, pressures and atmospheric conditions. In brief, whatever was created in the past was the sambhúti of the Supreme Entity.

The totality of all the sambhútis is this universe. All the entities from the mighty sun to the tiny ant are a part of this universe. All the celestial bodies, living, dying or dead; all the nebulae, galaxies and the Milky Way; are members of the same universal family. A galaxy is vast, an ant is tiny, yet both have equal importance in maintaining the balance of the universe. If even an ant dies prematurely, that mishap may disturb the balance of the universe. Nothing in this universe is unimportant, not even a tiny ant. Suppose an ant moves an inch from the east to the west on a stone. If the balance of the stone is jeopardized by this change, this incident may be the cause of a major earthquake, because ants are also His sambhúti.

Through excavation we have discovered many fossils of animals and plants. These discoveries prove that in ancient times various gigantic animals existed, most of which have become extinct. All that remains are the fossilized bones of their bodies. Various ages – [Archean], Mesozoic, Oligocene, Eocene, etc. – have come and gone. Each of these ages had its respective animals and plants, which became extinct in a subsequent age. Each age is a sambhúti; each animal, plant and geological layer is also a sambhúti. Nothing is unnecessary.

About 1,700,000 years ago, towards the end of the Miocene Age and the early part of the Oligocene Age, the australopithecine came onto this earth. That animal is now extinct, but its successors, such as orangutans, chimpanzees, and gorillas, still exist. One branch of that group evolved into human beings. Hence the first ancestors of human beings should be called australopithecine and not “Káshyapa” or “Bharadvája” [names of early clan leaders]. The ancestors of human beings are monkeys, so monkeys are the relatives of human beings. All things that came on earth in the past were sambhútis of Parama Puruśa.

Sa u garbhe anta. Those beings which existed in the past are not the only sambhútis; those who will be born in the future will also be His sambhútis. Our ancestors used to say in ancient times, Aham̐ gacchámi [“I’m going”]. Later on this was changed into Ahammi gacchata huim. Still later the sentence was changed into Maṅy jáhátá háṅi. Finally it became Maṅy játá huṅ [in modern Hindi]. One thousand years from now the same sentence will be changed into Mái jáṅi. Thus you see, one sambhúti is dying, yielding its place to a new one. Whatever will come will be an expression of Parama Puruśa the changes will be of form and sound only.

Sa eva játah. Whatever we see at present is His sambhúti also. Nothing in this universe is unimportant, though it may be small or petty. Take the case of alcoholics. To others they are degraded persons, but one has no right to hate them. Hatred is not an expression of moral courage. It is definitely not a praiseworthy tendency.

Sa eva játah sah janiśyamánah. If all the objects of this universe are the creations of Parama Puruśa, how can you hate anyone or anything? How is it possible to meditate on one divine expression and hate another? Mahásambhúti is the object of your ideation. There are certain entities which take a long time in undergoing internal and external change. For example, during the Cretaceous Age this earth was populated by gigantic animals which had immense bodies full of fat.

The geography of this earth is constantly changing. Where the sea is surrounded by land on three sides it is called a bay, for instance, the Bay of Bengal. The water of a bay is not ruffled by the high waves of the sea. The carcasses of many animals and creatures used to wash into the waters of such bays and accumulate there. This process resulted in the creation of sargasso seas. The carcasses would form a layer on the surface of the water so thick that small animals could even walk on it. When this hard crust thickened enough, the result was the sargasso sea. Underneath was water, and on the surface people could live and move. As the dead bodies accumulated, the fatty portion of the carcasses was converted into mineral oil under climatic pressures and pressures created in the earth's surface. Thus by observing the geological structure of the earth, it is possible to determine the location of mineral oil. For example, the Assam valley, the Garo and Khasiya Hills, and the Himalayas, have large deposits of mineral oil, as do Rajasthan and Saurashtra. It takes a few tens of millions of years for animal fat to be converted into mineral oil.

The difference between the human beings of one million years ago and those of today is immense. Even the physical structures of developed human beings of today differ from those of undeveloped. The human structure also gradually changes in pace with human progress. All the ectoplasmic cells, nerve cells and nerve fibres of human beings are changing; the glands and plexi are also changing.

Pratyamjanámstíśthate sarvatomukhah. Behind every sambhúti, Parama Puruśa exists. Suppose you are sitting somewhere thinking about filing a case against your uncle. No one can know your internal thought, but Parama Puruśa knows. Or suppose your boss has arrived. You give him a proper reception and verbally request him to stay three or four days. But internally you are thinking, "The sooner this calamity is over, the better." Here you are maintaining a duality between the internality and the externality. Parama Puruśa certainly knows your dual role. He exists behind every object, in every existence. For each and every sambhúti He has created a witnessing counterpart. So it is not possible for you to keep anything secret He has vigilant eyes everywhere. He is equally present in both animate and inanimate objects. We can say allegorically that He is associated with every object of creation through His five faces and His three eyes. The three eyes represent the past, present and future.

It is physically impossible for anyone to have five faces, yet Shiva is called Paiñcánana ["Five-Faced God"]. So what are those five faces?

Shiva has one face in front flanked by two faces on the right and two on the left. The face on the extreme right is called Dakśiñeshvara. This face conveys the message: "Listen to me! This will be good for you. You should behave in this way. Follow me. Please follow this path. Don't indulge in improper deeds, but follow the path of morality and pious deeds." Dakśiñeshvara

guides people with sweet polite language. Even though it tells one not to do certain things, it is still pleasant.

The face on the extreme left is called Vámadeva. It speaks with a thunderous voice. “You worthless chap, why did you do such a thing? I will punish you severely.” Thereafter it punishes the wrongdoer with a stick. “Don’t take me lightly, your bones will learn what is proper and what is improper!” This Vámadeva is the exact opposite of Dakśiñeshvara.

The face next to Dakśiñeshvara is called Iishána. It says, “Look, my child, follow this path. If you follow any other path, it will bring you only sorrow. Don’t make such a mistake. Prakrti will never pardon you. The result will be disastrous.” Iishána clearly states the consequences of misdeeds and gives a few pieces of advice. You may experience Parama Puruśa either in the form of Dakśiñeshvara or in that of Iishána.

And on the left, the face next to Vámadeva is called Kálágni. Kálágni says, “Severe punishment is awaiting you. Your bones will be broken. Stupid! What nonsense are you doing?” In this way Kálágni scolds and threatens to punish, although it does not actually carry it out. Kálágni tries to rectify wrongdoers by creating fear in them, not by actual punishment. When someone becomes extremely angry we call him agnisharmá [red as fire]. The face in the middle is called Kalyáñasundaram. This face says, “Come, dear child, and sit beside me. I hope you are quite well.” This is the role of Kalyáñasundaram. Thus human beings want only Kalyáñasundaram.

With these five faces the Supreme Entity is watching the movement of each and every human being. He takes steps according to the particular situation. In the Vedas there appears the following prayer:

Asato má sadgamaya tamaso má jyotirgamaya;
Mrtyormámrtamgamaya ávirávirimayaedhi.

* * *

Rudra yatte dakśiñam mukham;
Tena mám páhi nityam.

“O Lord, take me from this ever-changing world to immortality. Lead me from darkness to light, from the world of death to the world of immortality, from the world of despondency to the world of joy, and, O Lord, come and manifest Yourself in me. O Rudra, with Your Dakśiñeshvara face on the extreme right, protect me always. Make me vigilant, so that I will never make any omissional mistake and you will never have occasion to scold me.”

So this is His srśtíliilá [play of creation], His sambhúti. Behind each of His sambhútis there is a particular wave of energy coming from Him. No one is neglected.

Sama plushiná sama mashakena sama nágena sama ebhistribhirlokaeh.

[Parama Puruśa looks upon a white ant, a mosquito, a mighty mammoth and the three worlds with impartiality.]

Samaplushiná. The word plushiná means “white ant”. An anthill made by white ants is called valmiika in Sanskrit. The sage around whose body the white ants once made a hill became named “Válmiki”. He was so still when engrossed in silent, deep, spiritual meditation that white ants had sufficient time and opportunity to build an ant hill around his body.

Samamashakena. Mashaka means “mosquito” or any tiny creature. Samanágena. The word nága has three meanings: “python”, “mammoth” and “mountain spring”. Parama Puruśa has equal love and affection for white ants, mosquitoes and mammoths. Even though a mammoth has a huge body, Parama Puruśa shows no special partiality for it. He is as concerned about a tiny mosquito as He is about the entire universe. Although this vast universe, along with the so-called heaven and the so-called hell and this world of mortals, is so complex and vast, Parama Puruśa does not devote any extra time to it, nor does He devote any extra time to the tiny ant. Behind every sambhúti there functions a particular force assigned by Parama Puruśa. According to scriptures this force is called deva. Deva means a special manifestation of divine power, a special effulgence radiated from Parama Puruśa. Thus no entity should be hated, and none is insignificant.

Dyotate kriidate yasmádudyate dyotate divi
Tasmáddeva iti proktah stúyate sarvadevataeh.

–Yájiñavalkya

[The vibrational manifestations emanating from the Supreme Nucleus are known as devatás, and these devatás address that Supreme Nucleus as Deva. He with His powers vibrates the entire universe, makes the entire universe dance; and He by dint of His occult and supra-occult powers brings everything back onto His lap.]

Sarvadyotanátmaka akhańda cidaekarasah.

–Shańkara

[Supreme Consciousness exists in the form of an unbroken flow of cognition, the supreme source of all kinds of emanative vibrations.]

The collection of all vibrations constitutes this universe. The existence and progress of this universe depends on the clash and cohesion of these vibrations. This process brings about some kind of disequilibrium in the sambhútis at a certain stage. That is, the imbalance in collective life becomes something that cannot be corrected by any one sambhúti. Let us suppose five thousand million people live in a particular place. Each of them is a sambhúti of Parama Puruśa. Suppose that with the passage of time (a change in the time factor) they lose their vitality, they become involved in internecine battles, and pessimism strikes deep in their hearts and creates disillusion and disappointment. This pessimism in collective life cannot be solved by one particular sambhúti; it requires the appearance of a special structure through which the Supreme Entity can

fully express Himself. This special manifestation is called Mahásambhúti [“Great Sambhúti”]. The role of Mahásambhúti is to properly guide all other sambhúti and, by enforcing proper discipline, to bring about proper harmony and coordination amongst them. This special manifestation does not come within the purview of jivakóti or that of Iishvarakóti.

Iishvarakóti is also a special manifestation of Parama Puruśa. Normally human beings look upon Iishvarakóti as an incarnation of God. Actually even jivakóti is an incarnation of God, but Iishvarakóti is a higher incarnation.

In ancient times people imagined God in a series of advents correlated with the evolutionary flow of life on earth. The first expression of life took place in the water. Thereafter, another type of living being emerged which could live both in water and on land. Later land animals evolved, followed by a sub-human level of beings and finally by humans. More and more developed forms of jivakóti and Iishvarakóti emerged. A medieval poet expressed this idea in sweet, lyrical verse:

Pralayapayodhijale dhrtavánasi vedam
Vihita vahitra caritramakhedam.
Keshava dhrta miina shariira
Jaya jagadiisha hare.

[You deftly rescued the book of knowledge from amid the vast waters of the deluge – that book of knowledge which extols You as a great ship to cross this tremendous ocean of worldliness. O Lord in the form of a fish, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You. ⁽¹⁾]

Miina means “fish”. So the first sambhúti was in the form of a fish. The second sambhúti was in the form of a tortoise, which could live both in water and on land.

Kśitiriha vipulatare tava tiśthati prśthe
Dharañii dharaña kiñá cakra gariśthe.
Keshava dhrta kúrma shariira
Jaya jagadiisha hare.

[This world is poised on the huge round callus formed on your vast back by bearing its weight for such a long time. O Lord in the form of a tortoise, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

So this second sambhúti was associated with both land and water. And the third sambhúti was in the form of a creature which lived only on the land, but which was very undeveloped. This sambhúti is called baráha avatára [boar].

Vasati dashanashikhare dharañii tava lagná
Shashini kalaunkakaleva nimagná.
Keshava dhrta baráharúpa
Jaya jagadiisha hare.

[Just as the lunar seas remain inseparably associated with the moon, and add to its beauty, this world is affixed to the tips of Your tusks. O Lord in the form of a boar, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

The fourth sambhúti was in the form of a narahari [half human and half lion] an intermediate stage between an animal and a human being.

Tava karakamalabare nakhamadbhútashrunḡam
Dalita hirańyakashiputanubhrńgam.
Keshava dhrta Naraharirúpa
Jaya jagadisha hare.

[With the sharp claws of your exquisite, lotus-like hands, You pierced the body of the demon Hirańyakashipu and ripped it to pieces. O Lord in the form of Narahari, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

Narahari literally means “man and animal combined”. Then came an undeveloped human, a vámana [dwarf]:

Chalayasi vikramańe balmimadhútavámana
Pada nakha niira janita jana pávana.
Keshava dhrta vámanarúpa
Jaya jagadiisha hare.

[O strange dwarf, earth, heaven and hell all become hallowed by the sacred water that has washed Your feet. You outwitted King Bali when You, a dwarf, took those three gigantic steps. O Lord in the form of a dwarf, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

Then more developed human beings evolved who were called bhr̥gupati:

Kśatriyarudhiramaye jagadapagatapápaṃ
Snapayasi payasi shamita bhavatápaṃ.
Keshava dhrta bhr̥gupati rúpa
Jaya jagadiisha hare.

[You drenched the world with the blood of the warriors, and thus removed all the sins of the earth and eradicated the afflictions of the world. O Lord in the form of Parasurama (a bhr̥gupati), O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

In a later age, developed human beings emerged, who were not only physically developed but also mentally evolved. Ráma represents these developed human beings. Age after age, this evolution continued:

Vitarasi dikśu rańe dikpati kamaniiyam
Dasamukhamaoli baliirń ramańiiyam.

Keshava dhrta Ráma shariira
Jaya jagadisha hare.

[You distributed splendid offerings – the ten heads of Rávaña – and thereby satisfied the desires of the presiding deities of all ten directions of the world. O Lord in the form of Ráma, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

Then humans developed further. They evolved methods of agriculture, they established an orderly family life, they learned how to build houses. Balaráma represents these developed human beings. He was a great civil engineer who built the city of Dwaraka. (The old capital of Shrii Krśńa was in Mathura. Krśńa’s cousin Jarásandha, the king of Magadha, was a notorious man who attacked Mathura again and again. For that reason Krśńa shifted his capital to Dwaraka; between Mathura and Dwaraka stretched the vast desert of Rajasthan, which the army of Magadha could not cross.) Balaráma was also proficient in agriculture and town planning.

Vahasi vapuśi vishade vasanañ jaladábham
Halahati bhiiti militayamunábham.
Keshava dhrta Haladhara rúpa
Jaya jagadisha hare.

[You wear silken robes that derive their colour from the blue glow of the River Yamuna blue due to its terror at the thunderous blow of that plowshare You wield with Your giant body. O Lord in the form of Shañkarśańa Balaráma, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

In the final phase of development [intuitively-developed] human beings emerged. Buddha represents the developed humans of the developed age.

Nindasi yajñavidherahaha shrutijátam
Sadayahrdyadarshita pashughátam.
Keshava dhrta Buddha shariira
Jaya jagadisha hare.

[O merciful Lord, you condemned the custom of sacrificing animals, knowing well that it is a ritual much praised in the Vedas. O Lord in the form of Buddha, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

Thereafter, in order to destroy sin, weapons are necessary.⁽²⁾

If sinners are free from fear of retribution, they do not follow the right path. Vinu bhaya hoi na piriiti [“Where there is no fear there is no love”].

Mleccha nivaha nidhane kalayasi karaválam
Dhúmaketumiva kimapi karálam.
Keshava dhrta Kalki shariira
Jaya jagadisha hare.

[You wielded your dreadful sword, blazing like a comet, in the destruction of the unrighteous. O Lord in the form of Kalki, O Supreme Entity, victory unto You.]

In Iishvarakoṭī we find the abundant expression of the power of Parama Puruṣa. There are differences in this power among different human beings; so the different kinds of human beings are called kalávatára, aṁshávatára and khaṁdávátára [different degrees of avatára, none of them complete]. But note that Shiva and Krśṇa are not mentioned as avatáras of the Supreme. Hence the most significant part of the shloka is Keshava⁽³⁾ dhrta... “Keshava came in these forms” which implies that Keshava Himself is not one of this sequence of avatáras.

Shiva and Krśṇa are Mahásambhúti. They came to earth to correct the disorder among the other sambhúti. Mahásambhúti signifies an unlimited flow of intellect, wisdom and learning. There cannot be any comparison between sambhúti and Mahásambhúti. By evolving new systems and new ideas and ideals, and through scolding and punishment, these Mahásambhúti created a new world.

About seven thousand years ago Sadáshiva came onto the earth, and about 3500 years after that Lord Krśṇa appeared as another Mahásambhúti. When the Supreme Entity appears as Mahásambhúti, He is not regarded as an avatára, rather He is called Táraka Brahma. The entity who brings freedom from all sorts of bondages is given the special name of Táraka Brahma. All the superstitions, inequities and defective social customs that have arisen in the last 3500 years, and which are impeding human progress, will be dispelled with His coming.

July 1967 DMC, Delhi

Footnotes

(1) Editors’ note: Each of the ten verses of this poem refers to a different one of the many Puranic, or mythological, stories universally known in India. By tying them together in the appropriate order, the poet depicts in a vivid way the process of animate evolution – biological, sociological, psychic and spiritual.

(2) Editors’ note: In the shloka to follow, we will find that Parama Puruṣa is due to come “in the form of Kalki.” Kalki is the avatára of Kali Yuga, the Iron Age. His iconography features an array of weapons. Though mythological, in the qualities he displays he is roughly equivalent to Iishvarakoṭī.

(3) Editors’ note: A name of Krśṇa; hence (as here) a term sometimes used for the unexpressed Supreme Consciousness.

The Balanced Triangle of Forces

In the balanced triangle of forces, in the pre-creation stage, when the unmanifested primordial Cognition has not yet come under the influence of the unmanifested primordial forces, that is, when the principles are purely in the subjective case and in the opposite direction there is nothing objective, that Cognitive Faculty in the unmanifested balanced triangle is called Guñamaya. Parashiva is a philosophical equivalent term. When the three forces in a state of manifestation give rise to an objective case in the opposite direction, that antithesis in the form of the objective case is called Aparashiva. Parashiva is Guñamaya, but Aparashiva, although Guñamaya in the practical sphere, is actually not Guñamaya in the theoretical sphere, because the alternation between manifestation and non-manifestation of the forces goes on constantly, simultaneously with the emanation, externalization, reflection and refraction from the points of Shambhúliṅga and Svayambhúliṅga.

The Siddhántácára, Vámácára and Kulácára of Shaeva Tantra [Shiva Tantra, Shaivite Tantra] are recognized by both the Hindu and Buddhist schools of Tantra. The Buddhist Vajrayána, Mantrayána, Tantrayána and Kálacakrayána sub-schools of Tantra recognize all of these ácáras and follow them in actual practice. The purest part of Shaeva Tantra, which is beyond both Dakśiñácára and Vámácára⁽¹⁾ and was formerly to be learned in sámrájya diiksá [a kind of Tantric initiation] from a kaola guru [Tantric guru], is now included in Rájádhirája Yoga. Some of the subtler processes of Ananda Marga sádhaná bear a close relation to Rájádhirája. Maharśi Aśtávakra, while staying at Vakreshvar tiirtha [place of pilgrimage], introduced Rájádhirája and gave the first initiation in that school to the young Prince Alarka. In Hindu Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, and Rájádhirája Yoga, this concept of Parashiva in the unmanifested balanced triangle of forces has been recognized implicitly or explicitly. Naerátma Devii of Kálacakrayána and Shúnyátma Devii of Kauṅkála-málinii Tantra are simply alternative names of Parashiva.⁽²⁾

In later years the school of Shaeva Tantra altogether lost its high-grade spiritual cult, and there remained only the more inconsequential of Vámácára Tantric practices such as dancing with a dead body and performing a type of sádhaná with a skeleton. In a later period, lasting about 150 years, when the school of Terapanthá Jainism was to be found throughout all of northern India, Vámácára-oriented Shaeva Tantra had become practically extinct from all of India, particularly from Bengal. The school of Aghorpanthá, which is still to be found covertly practised in Bengal, is also a distorted form of Vámácárii Shaeva Tantra. The original features of Shaeva Tantra, in the absence of a competent Tantric master and deserving Tantric disciples, have today become confused. Now it is like a labyrinth. Saora Tantra, Gáñapatya Tantra, and Shaeva Tantra do not have adequate scriptural literature, as Shákta Tantra and Vaeśńava Tantra have;⁽³⁾ Saora Tantra and Gáñapatya Tantra have almost no literature of their own. Once I ran across a few manuscripts of Shaeva Tantra written on palm leaves in red ink. The owners of the manuscripts could neither read them nor understand their meanings if they heard them, nor were they willing to transfer ownership of them to anyone else. But this much can be said, that their basic theme is Parashiva-oriented. It can also be said (through pure philosophical analysis and analysis of the cult which they prescribe) that their basic theme is the Parashiva Guñamaya of Shaeva Tantra.

11 March 1990, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors' note: Dakṣiṇácāra Tantra attempts to overcome Māyā by appeasement; Vāmácāra Tantra attempts to overcome Māyā by fight, but without any clear goal. See the chapter "Overcoming Māyā" in Volume Two.

(2) Editor's note: In Buddhism the Cognitive Principle is symbolized by female and the Operative Principle by male.

(3) Editors' note: For these five schools of Tantra, see pp. 240-243.

Mantra Caetanya

Before we try to understand what a mantra is, let us be clear about shabda [sound]. Everything in this manifest universe is vibrational. Creation is also vibrational. And the first and subtlest expression of the vibrational flow is shabda. As shabda is the first vibrational expression of Brahma, Shabda Brahma is the first expression of Kárya Brahma [Effect Brahma, Expressed Brahma]. The fundamental difference between Kárya Brahma and Káraña Brahma [Causal Brahma] is that all vikásha, all expression, in Káraña Brahma is purely svagata (subjective) and svarasátmaka (blissful). There is no paragata (objective) or pararasátmaka (extroversial) pleasure therein. Being purely subjective and blissful, it has no vyaiñjanátmaka bháva, no exceptional quality. In other words, it is purely original and cannot [contain] any compound or mixture.

Prior to its practical emergence in the practical sphere, shabda was present in the realm of bháva, or ideas. And the starting point of shabda in the world of ideation is called paráshakti. Paráshakti exists both in the unit⁽¹⁾ and in the [Cosmos]. Although potentially paráshakti has full possibilities of expression, due to lack of a medium it does not get expressed. It germinates into expression as soon as it finds a medium. And its vibrational expression is shabda. In other words, we hear sound within and without when there is a mutual clash in the medium due to the formation of troughs and crests of various waves. This then is shabda.⁽²⁾

Káraña Brahma [is represented] in Tantric scriptures by all the svaravarña [vowel] sounds taken together. When those sounds are converted into action, that is, acquire the potential to form mixtures and compounds, they are called vyaiñjana [consonants]. The diversity of creation is expressed through consonants, not through vowels. This is the logic behind the division of the Indo-Aryan alphabet into vowels and consonants.

What is a mantra? It has already been stated that the starting point of shabda, parábindu, exists both in the unit and in the [Cosmos]. In the flow of evolution, in the unit as well as in the Cosmic, shabda is born out of pará. Pará is the womb of all sounds. A mantra is a collection of a few particular shabdás - not each and every shabda. Mantra means “that collection of sounds meditation on which leads to liberation” – Mananát tárayet yastu sah mantrah parikiirttitah. Man plus the root verb trae plus the suffix dá make up the word mantra.

By way of illustration, suppose you are sitting somewhere and you do not have the strength to move. A gentleman happens to come that way. If you say to him, “Come, sir, let’s have a little talk,” that will not prompt the gentleman to lift you by the hand and support your movement. If, on the other hand, you tell the gentleman, “Come, sir, I don’t have the strength to get up – please take my hand and lift me up,” it may bring about that result. Thus we get the result we desire by means of an appropriate expression in words. In this illustration the seed of the idea was the same at the level of pará, but due to two different formations of expression, different results were obtained. A given expression carries a particular meaning for you, as it expresses a particular feeling and it possesses a particular value. In other words, when a particular feeling is expressed through a particular combination of sounds, it achieves a particular value. But even then it does not attain the status of a mantra.

Unless the shabda or the collection of shabdas, when meditated upon, leads to the path of liberation, it cannot be called a mantra. Every mantra is thus sonic or vibrational and is vibrating simultaneously in the Cosmic system and in the unit body. When, with the help of a mantra, a person finally establishes the parallelism of the unit ectoplasmic vibration with the Cosmic vibration, that person gets mantra siddhi.

And what is mantra caetanya, or the awakening of a mantra? Mantra caetanya is the condition where, with the help of a particular shabda, a person establishes parallelism between his or her external physical vibration and his or her internal ectoplasmic vibration, and then raises this to the spiritual level.⁽³⁾ And the culmination of this process in the achievement of the final spiritual goal is called mantra siddhi. The same shabda without being made “live” or awakened in the above process is meaningless; it acquires force and meaning when it becomes “live” in the aforesaid manner. The parallelism between the internal ectoplasmic vibration and the external Cosmic vibration can only be established when one has complete control over one’s own ectoplasmic vibration.

According to one’s saṁskāras, a person will be vibrated immediately by one shabda, but remain immune to the vibrations of another. Thus some people get angry when you say “Sitá-Rám” to them, but are pleased when you greet them with “Rádhe-Shyám”. Our attitude towards different shabdas becomes defined.

It will be noted that many writers repeat the use of particular words. Many, for instance, use the word “but” in every other sentence. All this happens because of their attachment to particular rhythmic vibrations. Similarly, when the vibrational expression is ectoplasmic, that is, when the individual gets equilibrated with the Cosmic vibration, [Cosmic] mantra caetanya takes place.

As already mentioned, not only human existence but every existence in this universe is vibrational. But the vibrations of each individual, of each object, differ from those of other objects. For instance, there is a difference between the vibrational expression of iron and that of gold. Just as the vibrations of a human differ from those of iron or gold, the vibrations between one human and another also differ. A person’s life is nothing but a mesh of multilateral rhythms, and the goal of human life is a singular Entity having no rhythm.

The style of a person’s speech represents a particular rhythm of his or her own. The way the person eats represents the rhythm of his/her own eating. Every person is thus special on account of these specialities. The rhythms of two individuals cannot be identical. An individual rhythm is the particular property of a particular person. It has been said in Ánanda Sútram:⁽⁴⁾ Vaecitryam prákrtadharmah samānam na bhaviśyati [“Diversity, not identity, is the law of nature”]. In this universe every person in every action possesses a particular rhythm of his own. If someone wants to obstruct or strike that rhythm through disciplinary measures or expressions of anger, the person will not tolerate it. Personal liberty – individual liberty – really means the unobstructed expression of individual rhythmic vibrations.

When with the help of one’s paráshakti (pará in the sense of the starting point of shabda and not in the context of pará and apará) a person coincides his or her individual rhythmic vibrations with the rhythmic vibrations in the realm of this quinquemental universe, from that moment

onwards his or her rhythms become vibrated with mantra caetanya. This is the awakening of, or putting life into, a mantra. Therefore Sadáshiva has said:

Caetanyarahitáh mantráh proktáh varnástu kevalam
Phalam náeva prayachanti lakśakotíjapaerapi.

In order to make a mantra “live”, the individual rhythms have to be made parallel to the Cosmic rhythms. Then the starting point of expression of the unit will have to be made to coincide with the starting point of expression in the Cosmic field. “If this has not been done,” says the shloka, “even hundreds of thousands, even millions, of repetitions of the mantra will not lead to mantra siddhi.”

There are several essential factors to bring about mantra caetanya. The first is that the mantra should suit the sańskára of the individual concerned. And the second is that the individual should feel a fraternal emotion for and attachment to the external world. This sentimental contact with the external world is a must. If someone is under the impression that “I am doing sádhaná for the sake of personal liberation and I have nothing to do with the world,” and thus denies his or her contact with external physicality, although the person’s physical body is very much in this world, the person is cheating himself and indulging in selfishness. Service to humanity with a view to serve Parama Puruśa and with the same attachment which one feels towards oneself and Parama Puruśa is an essential prerequisite for progress in sádhaná. This will establish the equilibrium and parallelism of the individual rhythms with the rhythms of the external physicalities.

The microcosm is in a dormant state, and the jivabháva, the feeling of the unit state, is in a condition of slumber. The point where the jivabháva, that is, the sense of the unit identity, is locked, is called kula. Hence those who achieve perfection through sádhaná are called kaola. (Kaola, with this meaning, is also used as a surname.) Those who can move the collective ectoplasm through the medium of their ectoplasmic rhythm, can awaken new power in shabda through their own ectoplasmic strength. The awakening of this power in shabda is called purashcarańa in Sanskrit. And those who can perform such a tough task are called Mahákaola. They alone are worthy of the status of guru and no one else. When a Mahákaola awakens vibrations in the universal ectoplasmic body through the medium of particular shabdas, those shabdas [are also altered and] acquire the status of siddha mantras. A spiritual aspirant can only achieve perfection through the medium of those siddha mantras. Other mantras are not capable of leading to success, and spiritual aspirants cannot awaken them. A person’s individual efforts will never be sufficient for that task.

Every person has certain mental limitations. He or she can only proceed to a certain extent and then cannot do anything further. Further progress requires special power and special grace. And this power and grace of God are always available for everyone. But people must use their existing strength in order to utilize that grace.

What is the range of these shabdas, whose troughs and crests are expressed in vibrational rhythms? The medium as well as the spirit of the human’s individual life are personal, but in the Cosmic body, as well as in the case of less-developed creatures, the spirit is personal or

individual but the medium is impersonal or Cosmic. An existence where the medium is impersonal [or Cosmic] but the spirit is individual is called an animal existence. In other words, any progress in the life of an animal is due to the vibrational power of Parama Puruśa; the medium therefore is Cosmic or impersonal, but the spirit is individual. The progress which is attained through the personal spirit and impersonal medium is towards Parama Puruśa Himself. Therefore there is no chance of a spiritual fall in the life of an animal. Animals are set firmly on a path of gradual progress.

As the medium is impersonal, the growth in animals is from the crude to the subtle. But when due to engagement in subtler activities the medium also acquires individual influence, when its [mental] colour and its feeling do not remain entirely impersonal, gradually thinking and intellect are born. We find this in developed animals. The transformation in a dog is due to the effect of the personal, or individual, medium on the impersonal medium; this does not occur in lower creatures.

There is a big difference between a wild Alsatian in a jungle and one who is a pet. The medium of the one is influenced by the impersonal, that of the other is under the impact of an educated person. When in a living being the influence of the personal or individual surpasses the influence of the impersonal [or Cosmic], at that point the frame of that being can no longer be called animal but is called a human being. So this is the human status.

Due to one's individual effort, pará gradually develops step by step into pashyantii, madhyamá, [dyotamána], shrutigocará and vaekharii.⁽⁵⁾ These steps are from the subtle to the crude.

Similarly in the Cosmic order, development is from the subtle to the crude, as the medium there is Universal Mind. The vibrational principle appears in the third phase of extroversial development. This vibrational principle is fully operative in matter and in the bodies and minds of undeveloped and underdeveloped creatures. The same vibrational principle functions in the human body when it starts from the point of pará and gets full extroversial expression. When a person will awaken caetanya in a mantra, that is, when he or she will do purashcaraña, he or she will move from negativity to positivity, from human parábindu to human sahasrára.

The starting point of the vibrational principle is the culminating or last point of the primordial principle. In other words, the last point of the primordial expression and the starting point of the vibrational faculty are one and the same. The movement after mantra caetanya is from the fundamental negativity to the fundamental positivity. In other words, this movement will be the reverse of the movement of the vibrational faculty; it will be from crude to subtle and not from subtle to crude. In the vibrational principle, the first crest and trough are far apart, and thereafter the distance becomes shorter and shorter. In spiritual practice, the first troughs and crests will be frequent, and then the intervals will gradually lengthen till a straight line is formed. Thus, in the second phase, that is, in the returning phase, the vibrational principle will be reconverted into the primordial principle and the primordial principle or primordial faculty will ultimately convert itself into the basic faculty.⁽⁶⁾ This movement, however, is only possible after the mantra has become [awakened], not before that.

Spiritual practice is essential for human beings; and for spiritual practice initiation is necessary. And those human beings who do not perform spiritual practice are under the influence of the Cosmic principle. They are guided by the Cosmic rhythmic order, but as this is an impersonal entity they will never be able to enjoy liberation or salvation. So what is the way out? In what direction must they move after mantra caetanya? They have to do an about-turn and cross the three phases described above. They have to return to their original abode. They have to merge back into the One from where their existence sprang.

Ánando brahmeti byajánat
Ánandádhyeva khalvimáni bhútáni jáyante
Ánandena játáni jivanti
Ánandam prayantyabhisamvishantiiti.

[Know ye that ánanda, bliss, is Brahma. It is out of ánandam that the five fundamental factors have emerged. All created beings live within ánandam, and finally merge with ánandam.]

What then is to be done? The scriptures say that you do not have to exert very much. I have said before that there can be no progress either in the realm of physicality or in the realm of intellectuality. Those who are hankering for progress in these fields are indulging in a self-cheating business. Whether they admit it or not, they know that they know nothing. Ask them whether they are getting pleasure in the realm of physicality. They will admit that they are not. Ask a good businessman whether he is earning good profits. His reply will be, “What profit? I am incurring losses.” This will be his reply whether you belong to Income Tax Department or not! To run after progress in the realm of physicality and intellectuality is utter foolishness, a waste of time, as there is no progress in these fields. But I have already said that you may make efforts in these directions provided you can convert or metamorphose them into spirituality. But as far as spiritual sádhaná is concerned, or as far as efforts to achieve bliss are concerned, there is no touch of pain in them, as bliss is infinite pleasure alone. Sádhaná then is what wise men have to do. And in sádhaná, the first thing to be done is to use mantra caetanya.

In simple words, what we have to do is to return home from where we came. We have all come from Parama Puruśa – the Supreme Entity – and from the práña-kendra, the nucleus of the universe – that is, Puruśottama. We have to return to the same place. It is like a boy who has played throughout the day away in the fields, and now that evening comes, returns home. Sádhaná is the process of returning home. The child has played outside for the whole day. As evening approaches, he thinks, “Father must have returned home. Let me also return home and sit next to him.” When one is tired of this world and worldliness, one yearns to go back to spirituality, that is, to one’s home.

And what is our permanent abode – our home? It is Parama Puruśa paramáshrayah Shriinivásah. Here shrii refers to the Universal Creative Faculty, or Paramá Prakrti. The abode of this Universal Faculty is also your abode. Therefore going home is a simple task. It requires no scholarship, no knowledge, no intellectual faculty – no long and tedious lecturing. The scriptures tell us to remember three points in order to return home. They are shravana [hearing about the Supreme], manana [ideating on the Supreme] and nidi-dhyásana [meditating on the Supreme with an unbroken flow of mind].

We know that the vibrational faculty converts subtler waves into cruder waves in the phase of creation. Hari kathá [devotional talk] provides subtler vibrations. You must allow yourself to receive these subtler waves. It has already been said that sound waves are the subtlest in the chain of Cosmic expression. The importance of Hari kathá in spiritual development is great. Hearing about God is much more important than studies in spirituality, as sound is subtler than visual form. Therefore wherever there is an opportunity, listen to His name and speak it to others.

When you speak His name to others, you also hear it. This dual enjoyment in reciting His name is called kiirtana. Bhajana, on the other hand, is hearing His name by oneself.⁽⁷⁾ You must do both – both bhajana and kiirtana. This is shravana. The effect of shravana is that vibrations of sound which are moving from crude to subtle are set in motion against the flow in the vibrational faculty, where wordly sounds are moving from subtle to crude. This will set in reverse motion a flow of sounds, and this will take one up to the starting point of the vibrational faculty.

I have already stated that the starting point of the vibrational faculty and the culminating point of the primordial faculty are one and the same. You will therefore reach the culminating point of the primordial faculty. The vibrational phase is called bhava – also bhava ságara or bhava párávára [ocean of creation]. The word bhava thus denotes the entire realm of the vibrational principle. This is the world of mundane involvements. The Caetanya, or Cognitive Principle of this faculty is called Bhava, and the Shakti, or Operative Principle of this faculty is called Bhavánii Shakti. This is the worldly bondage. Only through the medium of Hari kathá can one cross this ocean of bhava, the entire range of the vibrational faculty.

Thereafter comes manana, that is, thinking only about Parama Puruśa and about no one else. If any other person or thing comes in the mind, ascribe Brahma-hood to that person or thing. This process is manana; you learn this process through the medium of Guru Mantra.⁽⁸⁾ The effect of manana will be that it will take you from the last point of the primordial principle or faculty, and gradually take you to the starting point of the primordial faculty.

At this point you meet the basic faculty or basic principle. The basic principle or faculty is a point in the unbalanced triangle of forces. It is situated at a particular vertex of the triangle of forces. Manana can take you up to that point. What is now left is the point of “I”-hood, the ego. Now we have to wipe out this “I”-hood.

All burdens, all confusions, all considerations of respect and disrespect, are connected to the “I”. When someone does not agree with you, you file a suit in court. Why do you take such trouble? Only to vindicate yourself. All bother and frustration is solely due to the unit ego. The fact is that even after surrendering everything to Parama Puruśa, your arch-enemy – the “I” – remains. Because you will say, “I have surrendered everything to God.” “I”, “I”, “I” – my friend, surrender that “I” to God. Then alone will your surrender be complete. All the trouble is due to this “I”.

Ratnákarastava grham grhíni ca padmá
Deyam kimapi bhavate Puruśottamáya

Ábhiiravámanayanápahrta^mánasáya
Datta^m mana yadupate tvamida^m grhá^{ña}.

[Your abode is brimming over with gems and jewels. The goddess of fortune is Your housekeeper. What can I offer to You, O Lord? Oh yes, there is one thing You lack, as it has been stolen by Your devotees; it is Your mind. I therefore offer my mind to You. Please accept it.]

After the surrender of this “I”, Parama Puruśa is satisfied, as you have reached the central point in the triangle of forces.⁽⁹⁾

Actually, the only task to be performed is to give away everything to Him. All that you possess – your body, your name, fame, wealth, everything – you have received from Him. So what are you to give to Him and how are you to do it? So far you were only giving God’s own things back to Him. What you must give Him now is something of your own. This is the crux of the matter. Suppose someone gives you a flower as a gift and you return the same flower to that person. This is not proper. Why not give your “I” to Him, which anyway to you is the source of all troubles, all confusions, all complications. There is nothing dearer to you than this “I”. It is most difficult to give it up. Thus in the above shloka, the devotee exclaims, “O Lord, this universe is Your abode. It is full of precious jewels. Whatever of value exists in this world belongs to You. What precious gift can I give to You? You have no desire for anything. What is the use of offering anything to one whose house is full of precious jewels? The almighty Prakṛti is Your own consort; at Your will She will make innumerable jewels in a moment – aghā^tana gha^tana pa^tīiyasii Má^yá [‘the dexterous hand of Má^yá that can even create things impossible to create’] – this creative power is ever ready to serve You. O Lord of lords, although I have a yearning to offer You something, I do not know what that thing should be. Although I want to offer, You have no desire or want. If You lack nothing, what can I offer? If I knew of anything that You did not possess, I would offer it to You.

“O Lord of lords, we hear that Your great devotees have stolen Your mind from You. The Lord becomes the slave of his devotees. A devotee steals the heart of the Lord – almost forcibly. The deed is performed openly and not in secrecy. Therefore, O Lord, You lack one thing – You have no mind.”

The devotee says, “Despair not, O Lord, I am offering my mind to You. Please accept it.”

This offer of one’s mind to the Lord is nididhyāsana. The inner sense of nididhyāsana is that all the propensities of the mind are to be concentrated at a point to be offered to Parama Puruśa.

Today the human mind consists of fifty dominant propensities. Definitely when the human structure becomes more complex in the course of evolution, the number of these propensities will also increase. The number of these vṛttis is not going to remain fifty forever. It will increase. Similarly, the number of glands will increase, and so also the number of sub-glands. Not only will the number of mental propensities increase; the propensities will also undergo change. The concept of beauty will also change with the change in outlook of the human mind. An owl may then appear beautiful and a peacock ugly.

Shravana therefore enables one to cross the vibrational faculty. Manana enables one to cross the primordial faculty. And nididhyásana makes it possible to merge with the Supreme Entity. This is God-realization. The essential thing therefore is to awaken the mantra, whether one also does intellectual things such as reading and writing or not. What is important is to have proper shravana, manana and nidi-dhyásana. If one does this, one will no longer find it difficult to learn to do anything. Mantra caetanya is sure to lead to mantra siddhi, to the attainment of the supreme goal. The process of sádhaná will automatically arouse devotion.

When you come in close contact with the Supreme Entity, you will find that you have no wealth superior to devotion. All worldly possessions will prove of no avail. Only devotion enables you to come into close contact with Him. This is the goal of human life. This is true progress.

You have been wandering through the labyrinth of a myriad of lives. You have been ever advancing toward this stage. Knowingly or unknowingly, you are being drawn unto Him. This is the summum bonum of life. As long as you have not realized Him, there is no siddhi in your life.

28 May 1967 DMC, Allahabad

Footnotes

- (1) Editors' note: In the unit, before awakening, it is the "sleeping divinity", or kulakuṅḍalinii.
- (2) Editors' note: At this point in the original magazine publication of this discourse, some text appears to be missing.
- (3) Editors' note: To "raise to the spiritual level" is to establish the parallelism of unit and Cosmic mentioned above.
- (4) Editors' Note: Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, Ánanda Sútram, 1962.
- (5) Editors' note: See the discussion of this sequence pp. 93-98.
- (6) Editors' note: The basic faculty is the starting point of the primordial principle, as mentioned below. That is, it is paráshakti, or parábindu.
- (7) Editors' note: Kiirtana, like bhajana, can be done individually, but it is preferable to do it collectively.
- (8) Editors' note: A lesson of Ananda Marga meditation.
- (9) Editors' note: That is, you have progressed from the basic principle at one vertex of the triangle to Puruśottama at the mid-point of the triangle.

Stages of Samádhi

Virtue and vice are temporal entities. These things have nothing to do so far as a person's relationship with the Supreme Father is concerned.

Suppose several boys are moving along a particular road and one particular boy falls into the drain. His dress, his body, become dirty; other people, passers-by, will laugh at him, but when the boy's father sees his boy in that condition, what is he to do? Will he laugh at his own son? No, no, no. What will he do? He himself will go there, into the drain, and take his boy in his own lap, and clean his dress, clean his clothes, clean his body; and after that he will say, "My boy, you should walk carefully."

Sinning persons are just like those boys in the drain. Now, high or low, upgraded or degraded, all are equal, all are equal for Him, because heaven is His creation, and hell is His creation. If we say that He is only in heaven, it will not be a correct utterance, because He is in hell also. His sons, His daughters, are never alone. He is with you even in hell.

What are you to do? You are always to remember that you are the child of a Great Father. You must not think that you are a sinner, you are a degraded person. If you think that you are a sinner, it means you are meditating on sin! And when sin has become your object of meditation, actually you will become a sinner, because a person becomes just like his or her object of ideation, object of meditation. If you always meditate on sin, "I am a sinner, I am a sinner," actually you will become a sinner. The psychological approach is, you should forget it – even if you are actually a sinner, you should think, "I am the son of a Great Father, I am the son of a Great Father, I am the son of a Great Father." And thus you are meditating on the Great Father, and a day is sure to come when you will become one with your Great Father. But to think, "I am a sinner, I am a sinner, oh Father, save me, oh Father, save me," is a defective approach! You should say, "I am your son, I am your daughter, oh Father, take me on your lap, I am your son, I am your daughter." This will be the approach. You should forget what you do not want.

Now in the phase of creation, the first point of creation is called Shambhúliṅga. Liṅga means "the point, the supreme point, the terminus of all expressions, all movements". And that terminus is a singular entity. In the phase of extrovert, it is the starting-point, and in the phase of introvert, it is the culminating point. It is the Supreme Desideratum.

At this starting-point, wherefrom the first expression takes place in the first phase of creation, what happens? In that triangle of forces, triangle of principles, sentient, mutative and static, what happens due to their intertransmutation? All of a sudden the triangle becomes unbalanced, and the released resultant force comes out from one of the vertices of the triangle. There are three vertices, and it comes out from one of the vertices. And the point from which this extroversial force comes out is called Shambhú. In the phase of extrovert, in the phase of creation, it is Shambhú; and in the phase of introvert also it is Shambhú. In the phase of creation it is the starting point, it is the fundamental positivity. It is the fundamental positivity because in it lies the seed of all creation. And in the phase of introvert, it is the Supreme Desideratum, because here in this point all the aspirations, all the hopes, all the desires, of all living beings terminate.

Similarly, in the unit structure, in each and every unit structure, there is a starting-point, a microscopic expression of Shambhú in the entire Macrocosm. That is, in the entire Cosmological order there is a Shambhú point, the starting-point, and similarly, in the unit expression, in the microcosm, there is Shambhú in miniature form, in microcosmic form, controlling the microcosm. And it is this point [crown of the head], the controlling point of the pineal gland. It is the site of Parama Puruśa, Paramashiva. And in the phase of creation, while Shambhú is the starting-point, the last point of creation, the crudest point, is called Svayambhú.

Shambhú and Svayambhú. In Sanskrit, sham means “to control”, and bhú means [“created”]. So shambhú means “the controller, self-created controller”. And Svayambhú – svayam means “self”, [so svayambhú means] “self-created”. But it is not the controller, because it is the crudest point. It is the last point, the crudest point.

Now, wherever there is any expression or wherever there is no expression, the Witnessing Entity is there, just like the light of a stage, a theatrical stage. When there is an actor, the light is there, witnessing the activities of the actor. The actor says something, recites something, and the light of the stage witnesses the activities of that particular actor. And when a singer comes, that light witnesses the activities of the singer. A dancer comes, and that very light witnesses the activities of the dancer. And when nobody is present – no actor, no dancer, no singer – the light, that very light, witnesses that “Nobody is present here now.” It expresses the fact before the audience, before the spectators, that there is nobody on the stage. Similarly, where there is expression, that Cosmic Light, that Cosmic Father, is there. And where there is no expression, the Father is there to say that nobody is present now – just like that light of the theatrical stage.

Now in the case of Shambhúliṅga, the fundamental positivity from where the creation starts, the Supreme Entity is there. And where the creation terminates, the last point, the crudest point, the Svayambhúliṅga – the Witnessing Entity is there also, the Supreme Father is there also. Now in [Shambhúliṅga], the human entity, the entity of a living being, is in subtlest form, is in purest form, is in unadulterated form. And in Svayambhúliṅga, in the lowest point, in the lowest bone, of your body, the created being, the living being, is in crudest form. Because of that crudest expression, the living being will also be in crudest form. That is, all one’s divinity, one’s divinity in its entirety, is sleeping there, is in latent form there, in the last bone of the body. That sleeping divinity – actually it is divinity, but it is sleeping – is called kulakuṅḍalinii in Sanskrit, “coiled serpentine” in English. “Coiled serpentine”. It is just like a serpentine loop.

Now, by dint of sádhaná – what is sádhaná? Whenever a sádhaka gets his or her own peculiar incantation from his ácárya, his or her own mantra to be practised, that sleeping divinity, kulakuṅḍalinii, is aroused by the vibration of that mantra. And by dint of the person’s constant practice, regular practice, what happens? It moves that serpentine loop upward. Its original residence is in the múládhára cakra, the lowermost cakra. Now when the sádhaka by dint of his or her sádhaná, intuitional practice, exalts that kulakuṅḍalinii, and when the kulakuṅḍalinii crosses the svádhiśhána cakra, the next higher cakra, the sádhaka’s feeling, his or her expression, his or her status, is known as sálókya. It is the first stage of samádhi. A sádhaka by constant practice is sure to attain that status. But you know, the yogis say that a sádhaka cannot attain that status without the special favour of the spiritual guru. This is what they say. That stage is called sálókya.

Sálokya means that the sádhaika feels that in the stratum, or sphere, where he or she is, where that person's exalted mind is, he or she is not alone; the Supreme Father is also there. This samádhi, where the feeling is that in the stratum, or status, where the person is, that person's Supreme Father is also there, gives the person very much pleasure. This first pleasure is called sálokya samádhi.

Then when this coiled serpentine, sleeping divinity, crosses the mañipura cakra, just near the hub, the controlling point, of the pancreas, the person enjoys another sort of pleasure, and that pleasure is called sámiiþya samádhi. Sámiiþya is a Sanskrit word. It means "proximity". That is, the sádhaika feels his or her proximity to the Supreme Father.

In the first stage, the sádhaika felt that the Supreme Father was there in the same status. He is not in the sky, he is everywhere, He is with you. If you are here and He is in the sky, then you are alone here, and He is also alone there. No, no, no, no. In the first phase the feeling was that "Where I am, He is also with me." And in the second phase, "I have come very close, very near, that Supreme Father; I am in close proximity to the Supreme Progenitor. By dint of my sádhaná, the gap between my Father and myself is being bridged." It is the second phase, known as sámiiþya. Sámiiþya means "proximity".

Then when that sleeping divinity, that kulakuñðalini, crosses the anáhata cakra, this plexus, this "solar plexus" (in Latin), the sádhaika's feelings are known as sáyujya. Sáyujya means "in close contact". In Sanskrit sáyujya means "close contact, just side by side, just touching". In sálokya He is with you. In sámiiþya you feel the proximity, the nearness. And here in sáyujya what do you feel? A tactual experience. You get a tactual experience.

Then when by dint of your sádhaná the divinity, the sleeping divinity, the kulakuñðalini, crosses this point [the throat], one will experience another sort of sádhaná, a subtler sádhaná, subtler samádhi. And that one is called sárúþya. In sárúþya the feeling is "I am one with Him." "I am one with Him" – not close contact, but oneness. "I am one with the Supreme Progenitor, I am one with the Supreme Cognition." This is sárúþya.

Then by still more sádhaná, when the sleeping divinity crosses this point [between the eyebrows], the controlling point of the pituitary gland, the ájiñá cakra, the sádhaika's feelings, or experiences – another sort of sádhaná, still more high – are known as sársthi in Sanskrit. At that point, the feeling is that "I am He;" that is, "I" and "He", these two entities, have become one. "I am;" but "He" and "I" have coincided.

"I" – "He". There is one gap. "I am the Supreme Entity, I am the Supreme Entity." There is still the connecting link "am". But when "I" and "Supreme Entity" coincide, the gap "am" disappears. "I", "Supreme Entity", and the connecting link "am". When this will coincide with this, the connecting "am" will disappear, because there is no gap. "I" becomes one with "He". Clear? Or "He" becomes one with "I". This stage is called sársthi.

And the last stage is when that kulakuñðalini comes here [crown of the head]. I said that in the unit structure, Shambhúliuᅅga, Parama Puruᅅa, is here, at the controlling point of the pineal gland. The divinity, the sleeping divinity, is to be exalted to that point, to the controlling point of

the pineal gland. And there is the final stage of samádhi. That final stage of samádhi is called nirvikalpa samádhi in yoga, and kaevalya in Tantra. In Sanskrit kaevalya means “only”. Kevala means “only”, and the noun of kevala is kaevalya.

That is, only one entity exists. That entity may be I, that entity may be He. But the differentiation between “I” and “He” disappears. So “I exist” and “He exists” – these two ideas disappear: “exists”. That is, it is the stage of non-attributional consciousness. It is the supreme stage of yogic sádhaná. It is the supreme stance for a yogi.

Now by dint of sádhaná, one is to arouse and exalt that sleeping divinity. That Svayambhúliuᅅga becomes one with Shambhúliuᅅga.

But for this one requires divine help. And I know one is sure to get divine help. And I know further that one is getting divine help. And I know still further that in future, for infinite time and infinite space, one will be getting this divine favour. And you are all sádhakas. You will certainly attain that supreme stance and enjoy that divine blessedness. You are sure to enjoy it, my sons and my daughters.

22 April 1969, Manila

Mantra and Incantation

The word mantra in Sanskrit is very meaningful, and it has no synonymous term in any other language. Mananát tárayet yastu sah mantrah parikiirtitah – “Mantra is that particular word whose repetition or auto-suggestion or outer-suggestion helps the microcosm free itself of all the fetters of physical and psychic life.” Man plus trae plus da is the derivation of the term.

Now for a mantra two things are essential. It must be meaningful, that is, in the ordinary sense of the term the word should have proper significance; and at the same time it must be supported by the proper acoustic root, that is, it must be supported by acoustic propriety. In the realm of spirituality, each and every term should have these two meanings – one the mundane significance, and the other the acoustic significance.

Take the word krśna. The root verb is krś. One meaning of krś is “to attract”. So the faculty that attracts everything towards itself is krś plus na, that is, “Krśna”, the all-attracting, all-attractive faculty of the world, the nucleus of the universe. “Krśna” means Puruśottama, the nucleus of the entire Cosmic order, because it comes from the root verb krś.

Another meaning of krś is “to be”. A sādhaika says that “Krśna” means, “I exist because He exists,” “My existence is dependent on His existence.” Krś means “to be”, “to exist” – that’s why He is “Krśna”. “He is my life’s life. He is the supreme existence behind all my existences in so many frameworks, in so many structures, in so many lives.” That’s why He is “Krśna”.

Among so many colours, the dark colour is most attractive, and for that reason in Sanskrit “dark” is also one meaning of krśna. And so far as the acoustic root is concerned the acoustic root of Krśna is klr̥m̐. The Sanskrit term, the Sanskrit acoustic root (not just Sanskrit – the acoustic root is universal for the entire Cosmos) of Krśna is klr̥m̐.

What is klr̥m̐? Ka + lr̥. And what is ka? The word ka has three meanings in Sanskrit.

One, it is the first consonant of the Sanskrit alphabetical order. The second meaning of ka is as follows. You know in the phase of expression or manifestation, that is, when the Noumenal Cause is translated into the phenomenal effect, the sound created (during this phase of translation) is ka; and that is why ka is the first letter of our alphabetical order.

The entity from which this phase or this process of translation starts, from which the process of metamorphosis starts, is represented by the sound aum. Because in it, within its scope, lie the faculties of creation, preservation and destruction.

The acoustic root of creation is a. First comes creation, then follows everything else – and that is why a is the first vowel. A is the first letter of the Indo-Aryan alphabetical order.

First creation – When the Supreme Entity creates something, this creation takes place within the periphery of the Macrocosmic order; but a stir is created in the Macrocosm during the phase of creation, and wherever there is a stir, there is movement, there are waves – light waves, acoustic

waves and so on. When He desires to create something, the stir created in the Macrocosm is represented by the sound a.

And in the next phase He is to preserve those created beings. So in that Macrocosmic structure another stir is created representing the desire to preserve. And that is represented by the sound u. And the point from which the culminating march starts is represented by the sound ma, hence ma is the last letter of the vargiya varñamálá.⁽¹⁾ The pa varga is the last varga, and ma is the last sound of the pa varga pa, pha, ba, bha, ma. So the creating personality is represented by these three sounds – a, u, and ma – the Generating Entity, the Preserving Entity and the Destructive Entity. (Here everybody should remember that His destruction is not the destruction of ordinary living beings. His destruction means withdrawal withdrawing the created being from the phenomenal world to its noumenal cause. Just a play of withdrawal, and nothing more than that.) The Generator, the Operator, the Destructor – if we take the first letter of “generator”, “g”; of “operator”, “o”; and of “destructor”, “d”; we get G-O-D, “God”.

Now, while this Supreme Entity, the Supreme Subjectivity, the Supreme witnessing faculty, creates something, then He is aum. Aum gets as its counterpart the objective world, this quinquemental universe; and this world of objectivity is represented by the acoustic root ka. Hence, aum is the Káraña Brahma, or Causal Brahma, and ka is the Kárya Brahma, the Effect Brahma. The second meaning of ka is the Effect Brahma, the objectivated universe.

So the first meaning of ka is that it is the first consonant. The second meaning is this objectivated world or effect world. And the third meaning of ka is “water”. A few days back I told you that kaccha means “the land surrounded by water”: ka means “water” and cha means “surrounded by”.

The acoustic root of Krśña is klrñ. The first letter is ka. Ka means the objectivated world. The entity that preserves this objectivated world is ka. (Human beings who have taken the responsibility, the moral responsibility, of serving this ka, that is, of serving this objectivated world, are called kápálíka. Our avadhútas and avadhútikás practise kápálíka sáadhaná, that is, they do the pálana kriyá of ka, they do the pálana kriyá of this objectivated world. They are to serve humanity.) The first letter is ka and the second is la. La represents solid entities; that is, everything converted into solid is represented by the acoustic root la. Now, the divine faculty that serves, or helps, or rather vibrates, the entire objectivated world, and keeps close proximity to the material world (at the same time vibrating the entire objectivated universe), is ka + la. Hence the acoustic root of Krśña is klrñ.

Similarly, all mantras must have two meanings. One meaning is the mundane significance, and the other is the acoustic root. And wherever either meaning is wanting, the word cannot be treated as a mantra. That is why I said the word mantra cannot be properly represented by the word “incantation”. But for want of a proper word in English, we find no alternative but to use the word “incantation”.

Similarly for Shiva. One name of Shiva is Hara. Ha represents the ethereal stratum, and ra represents energy – kriyáshakti, electrical energy, magnetic energy, etc. All these energies are represented by the acoustic root ra. So ha plus ra means “the entity that rules over the entire

ethereal plane and at the same time controls all the energies of the universe”. Hara is the acoustic root of Lord Shiva.

So only when a particular word has both a mundane meaning and an acoustic root may it be accepted as a mantra – if, that is, it is recognized as a siddha mantra by a Mahákaola, by a Mahásambhúti. Otherwise it is not a mantra.

29 November 1978, Madras

Footnotes

(1) Editors’ note: Varña means “letter”, and varñamálá means “chain of letters”. Most of this chain, or alphabet, of fifty letters in Sanskrit is phonetically divided into groups, or vargas, of five letters each. Each varga is named after the first letter that falls within it. Ma is the last letter of the last varga, though the varñamálá – that is, the non-vargiyya varñamálá – continues for nine letters more.

Acoustic Roots

Do you know what a saying is? It is a collection of words. And what is a word? A collection of syllables. And what is a syllable? A collection of letters. And what is a letter? A [sound having a] particular wavelength, or a particular acoustic expression. Everything comes out of the Supreme Entity, so many waves of light, sound, so many waves of tactual vibration... Ssh! – hot! Tssh! – very cold! These are all tactual variations having different wavelengths. Similarly, the acoustic wave, which means the expression of sound, also comes from the very source, from the very nucleus, from the very controlling point of the universe – who, we say, is Parama Puruśa.

Sounds are innumerable. Say, the English letter “a”. In the English language this sound “a” has twenty-two types of pronunciation. A-N-T, “ant”. But E-L-E-P-H-A-N-T “eleph-ent”, not “eleph-ant”. Here, A-N-T is not “ant” but “ent”. The same A-N-T will be pronounced ant [“ahn”] in French, elephant [“elephahn”]. The same vowel or same consonant may have so many sounds. Even in the case of the pictorial expression of sound, a particular figure may be pronounced in a particular way in Mandarin, in a particular way in Shanghailese, in a particular way in Cantonese, in a particular way in North Japan, in a particular way in South Japan. So many expressions, innumerable expressions, of human vocality. “Acoustic” means “pertaining to –” – what? The Latin term for “concerning sound” is “acoustic”, and for “concerning ear”, “auricular”; “concerning eye”, “ocular”; “concerning seeing”, “optical”. All these are Latin words.

These many expressions are all sacred. All sounds are sacred, no sound can be bad, because all come from that Entity. All human expressions are certainly sacred. All languages are certainly sacred. That is why I pay respect, I pay reverence, to all languages of the world. All have the same dignity.

Now if we try to bring those expressions – so many expressions – together, it will be beyond human capacity, but we may try. And as a result of human endeavour, those expressions have been brought within the range of fifty main sounds. Those fifty main sounds are controlled by fifty main glands and sub-glands of the human body.

In the morning span I was saying something regarding the pancreas. There are ten sub-glands; each and every sub-gland has a particular sound. Amongst the fifty sounds, ten are controlled by the pancreas – *da, dha, na, ta, tha, da, dha, na, pa, and pha*. Each and every sound has something to do with the physical world and with the mental world. These ten sounds control ten propensities of the human mind – shyness, fear, etc.

Suppose all those sounds are expressed at one time. What will happen? Suppose you go to a market. Somebody will say, “What’s the rate of potato?” Somebody else will say, “What’s the rate of brinjal [eggplant]? What’s the rate of meat?” – like this. And the shopkeeper will say, “I want this much;” and the customer will say, “No, no, no, I won’t give more than that.” So many sounds. But if you go, say, about one hundred yards from the market, what will be the sound? Something like “hawawawawa”. All the sounds together will create a peculiar collective sound, is it not a fact? Will you hear “potato” or “beans” or “cauliflower” from a distance? No, you hear the collective sound “hawawawawa”. Is it not a fact? Similarly, all those sounds, innumerable

sounds, brought under the broad category of fifty, will create a collective sound in the universe. That collective sound is aum, A-U-M.

Now listen to these three sounds of aum: a, u, ma. They represent the creation, the retention [or preservation], and the destruction. The first sound, a, represents creation; the second sound, u, represents retention; the third sound, ma, represents destruction. So all those innumerable sounds, all those fifty sounds, are represented by these supreme sounds, a, u and ma; and collectively a-u-ma becomes aum. For each and every action there is a supporting sound in this universe. That supporting sound is called the acoustic root of that action.

You are moving. The sound khaṭ-khaṭ-khaṭ-khaṭ is created. That sound, khaṭ-khaṭ-khaṭ, is the acoustic root of the action of moving.

You are laughing. The sound há-há-há-há is created. The sound há-há-há is the acoustic root of the action of laughing. Each and every action has its acoustic root.

The portion of the tree that remains under the earth is the root; the acoustic root is the sound which may be treated as the rudimental portion of an action. The Latin adjective of “root” is “rudimental”. For each and every action of this world there is an acoustic root.

You see, tantra. The root tan means “to expand”, and tra means “liberator”. The science that liberates you from all bondages, physical, mental and spiritual, is Tantra. Tan means “expansion” and tra means “liberator”. The science that expands your mind and spirit and thus liberates you is Tantra. The metamorphosed form of tantra about seven thousand years ago became taota. The Sanskrit dhyána became c’han [in Chinese], c’han became chen [in Korean], chen became zen [in Japanese]. It is a very interesting science. Now, tantra became taota; taota after further distortion, further metamorphosis, became taoa – in modern language [Chinese], tao. Taoism, don’t you know? Its root is tantra. Do you relish this topic? Do you like what I am saying? But I must be paid for it! [Everybody laughs.]

So then for all the universe, the acoustic side is aum – A-U-M. It includes all the spheres of work also. It is the collective sound of all the work of the universe.

The earth moves around the sun; certainly a sound is created. It may or may not be audible to you, you may or may not hear it, but certainly a sound is created. The moon moves around the [earth]; certainly waves are created, and certainly due to those waves, sounds are also created. It may or may not be audible to you. Everywhere there is sound. If you move stealthily, as the cat moves while catching a mouse, even then there is sound. Everywhere there is wave; everywhere there is light also. That light may or may not be visible to you.

In the night you cannot see, but owls can see, moles can see – Moles, you know? Rat-like creatures of small size... for example, “to make a mountain out of a molehill”. Moles can see in the night. Owls can see in the night. Bats can see in the night. The bat is neither bird nor animal, it is a mammal. It lays no eggs; it is a mammal. It can see in the night, so there is light. Aum is the collection of all sounds, so within the scope of aum come all the activities of the world. For each and every work there is sound; aum is the collection of all sounds. So within the scope of

aum comes all the work of the world. Aum represents the mundane expression of Parama Puruśa; aum represents the worldly expression of Parama Puruśa.

In each and every human being there is sleeping divinity, divinity in latent form, divinity in dormant form. When that sleeping divinity is aroused, stops sleeping, is in a wakeful stage, what happens? A person will acquire immense power. He or she may become omniscient, all-knowing – will know everything, without going through any book, without going to any library – will know everything of this universe, because that person will be one with Parama Puruśa. The person is Parama Puruśa, because the sleeping divinity has been aroused.

The sleeping divinity in the human body lies in the lowermost portion of your backbone. That lowermost bone is called kula in Sanskrit. That sleeping divinity is called kulakuṇḍalinii. Kuṇḍalinii means “in coiled form”. It is sleeping, and when it is aroused, is elevated, by dint of your sādhaná, by dint of your dhyána, c’han, chen, zen, it will go upwards. When it comes up, that is, touches the controlling point of the pineal gland, one will become one with Parama Puruśa. One will become Parama Puruśa.

Now the spot, the kula, where divinity is in sleeping form, is found in each and every human being. When by Tantra and yoga it is aroused and brought upwards by applying a special force, that special force is called diipanii. Raising it, elevating it, it finally becomes one with Parama Puruśa when it comes here [crown of the head].

Now the seat where the kula is, the seat where the kulakuṇḍalinii is, has got existence, and wherever there is any action or there is any existence, there is acoustic root. There is a sound for it. (Because of your presence, air, light, everything – every expression’s flow – is barred, the flow is checked. You are standing here; air comes; because of your existence, it will refract or reflect; so your existence also has got a certain sound.) The existence of the seat of that kula, where that kulakuṇḍalinii, that coiled serpent, sleeps, also has an acoustic root, and there is a certain psychic place allotted for it.

That psychic spot is called in old Sanskrit mañipadma, or mahámañipadma, or munipadmá or mahámunipadmá. (Mahámuni is a name of Lord Buddha. Mahámuni means “great sage”.) So, “Using aum, I remember Parama Puruśa; and mañipadma is the seat of that coiled serpentine, that sleeping divinity, in the human body. I remember that entity also.”⁽¹⁾

There are so many sounds. Each and every thing has got some sound. Suppose you want to learn. A particular vibration is created, “I want to learn, I want to learn.” A vibration is created. The meaning of the vibration is, “I want to learn.” The vibration of this desire is a mental flow. “I want to do something.” “I want to eat jackfruit.” “I want to eat – ” – what? “Passion fruit.” [laughter] There are several different flows. “I want to eat mango” and “I want to eat pineapple” are not the same flow. In the case of “mango” there is a picture of a mango in your mind. In the case of “pineapple” there is another picture in your mind, a picture of a pineapple with small thorns. In “mango” there are no thorns. You prepare different pictures in your mind, so the waves will also be different.

You want to fight against so many weaknesses. The human mind has so many weaknesses. The doctor says, “You see, you are suffering from liver disease, you must not take oil. You must not take butter.” It is human weakness. There are so many human weaknesses. “Bábá⁽²⁾ says I should fast on Ekádashii day, so I am fasting on Ekádashii and secretly taking chocolate.” Bábá knows this, but Bábá won’t say anything. Simply, when you come before Bábá during P.C., then in Personal Contact Bábá will say, “O my little boy, can you explain to me what’s the actual taste of chocolate?” And if that person has intellect he will understand. Do you follow everything? [Laughter. One Mǎrgii, in particular, becomes red-faced.] According to mental desire, there are acoustic roots, there are sounds. Each and every man has certain weaknesses; one is always moving after name, one is always moving after fame, or after money, always money so many weaknesses. One wants to fight against internal and external enemies. You have enemies in your mind, you have enemies outside your mind. There are so many depraving forces, they are all your enemies. When you want to fight against the mind, a particular flow is created in your mind, a particular flow. The acoustic root of that flow is hummm. [Makes fighting gesture.] The hummm sound is created. The hummm sound is the acoustic root of fight.

When you are to raise your sleeping divinity, elevate the sleeping divinity from the lowermost bone of your body, the mañipadma, the lowermost seat, you will also fight against so many adversities and pass through the entire cord, the entire backbone of your body. After so many fights, you will be able to elevate the sleeping divinity in your body to the status, or to the stance, of Parama Puruśa. Parama Puruśa touches the human body through this point [crown of the head]. It is called Brahma randhra.

Brahma means Parama Puruśa and randhra means “cord”, the cord through which Parama Puruśa touches the body. It is the pineal gland controlling all fifty – that is, fifty times two times ten – one thousand – propensities. One thousand propensities of the human mind are controlled by this pineal gland. By the pituitary gland only the conscious, subconscious and unconscious portions of your mind [are controlled]. Now, just to raise the coiled serpentine, your sleeping divinity, you have to fight against many fetters, so many fetters of animality, so there is a fight, and this should be represented by the sound hummm.

So the old Maháyániis used this incantation, Oṅm mañipadme hummm. Now it is clear. I think perhaps the monks do not know, though they should know, the inner meaning of what they say. I think it is very interesting and very pleasing, although it has been a bit terse.

25 August 1979, Taipei

Footnotes

(1) Editors’ note: Refers to the mantra Oṅm mañipadme hummm.

(2) Editors’ note: An affectionate name for the author, used by the author’s disciples.

The Acoustic Roots of the Indo-Aryan Alphabet

Every vibration in this universe has colour and sound. Every vibration also represents a particular idea, and hence each idea has a vibrational sound and vibrational colour. Many vibrational waves are too long or too short to be perceived by human beings - we cannot hear their sound or see their colour – but they do exist. We can speak of them as causal matrices in the realm of vibrational colour; and consider them as the biija mantras [acoustic roots] of the ideas with which they are concerned.

A

The sound a is the acoustic root of creation, and thus is the controller of the seven notes of Indo-Aryan music [the surasaptaka or “seven notes” – in Western music, the “octave”], which are as follows: *sya* or *khya* (*śádaja* [peacock]⁽¹⁾ – the Yajurvedic pronunciation *khadaja* is also permissible, but in that case *kha* should be pronounced with the mind concentrated on the front part of the palate and not like the second consonant of the *ka* varga);⁽²⁾ *re* or *r* (*rśabha* [ox] – the pronunciation *rkhhabha* is also permissible, but *kha* should not be pronounced like the second consonant of the *ka* group); *gá* (*gándhára* [goat]); *má* (*madhyama* [deer]); *pá* (*paiñcama* [cuckoo]); *dhá* (*dhaevata* [donkey]); and *ni* (*niśáda* [elephant] – it can also be pronounced *nikháda*, but again *kha* is not pronounced like the second consonant of the *ka* group.)

Although *a* indirectly controls the seven musical notes, it chiefly controls the first note, *śádaja*. This note is represented in the surasaptaka or sargam [gamut of notes] by its initial letter, *sya*. Remember that in the vilambita [prolonged] technique of pronunciation of this note, the vowel sound *á* is not employed;⁽³⁾ rather the *saṁvrta* [lengthened]⁽⁴⁾ pronunciation of *a* is employed. That is, the vowel here will not be pronounced *á-á-á-á-á-á-á-á*, but will be pronounced somewhat like *aya*, as they do in northern India. (More precisely, the pronunciation will be intermediate between *aya* and *á*). If singers were to pay more attention to proper pronunciation, they would benefit.

As the sound *a* is the acoustic root of the note *śádaja*, the letter *a* is the first step in the learning of music. In Occidental music, the octave (*do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti-do*) has evolved in a similar way.

The difference between Occidental and Oriental music is that in the former the first note, *śádaja* [or “do”], is repeated at the end to form an octave. Thus in Oriental music we say surasaptaka or musical “septave” (“collection of seven notes”) whereas in Occidental music we say “octave” (“collection of eight notes”).

Sadáshiva arranged sounds in the form of the surasaptaka, which contributed on the one hand to the acoustics of science, and on the other hand to the rhythmic phonetics of music. Hence in the study of music we cannot afford to forget his unique contribution.

A little while ago I said that every sound has colour too. Alternative words for *raṁ* [“colour”] are *varña* [which also means “letter”] and *rága*. The word *rága* is derived from the root-verb *rañj* plus the suffix *ghaiñ*, and means “to colour” something. By permutating and combining different sounds, Shiva created various *rágas* and arranged them in a perfect orderly sequence. In this way

He created six rāgas and thirty-six rāginiis. This was an immense contribution to the world of music and earned him the epithet Nādatanu [Embodiment of Divine Sound] in the Vedas. Of course it was Maharṣi Bharata who popularized these rāgas and rāginiis amongst intellectuals.

These rāgas and rāginiis are subject to changes according to the shortening or lengthening of their notes. Following this system, Indian music is divided into two main branches: northern Indian music (colloquially “Hindustani music”), which is popular to the north of the Vindhya Hills, and Deccan music (or “Karnatak music”), which is popular to the south of the Vindhya Hills. Many new rāgas and rāginiis are being evolved today and will be evolved in the future. There can be no end to this process of evolution. In Prabhāta Saṁgiita⁽⁵⁾ also, a few new rāgas and rāginiis have been evolved, but they have not yet been given names.

Á

The sound á is the acoustic root of rābha, the second musical note. This acoustic root directly controls rābha and indirectly controls gāndhāra (gá), madhyama (má), paiṅcama (pá), dhaevata (dhá) and niśáda (ni). In the Vedas other than the Rgveda, we usually come across komala [soft] ni and sādharāṇa [ordinary] ni. In the older portions of the Rgveda, kādii [hard or high-pitched] ni was used. It could be uttered with both sides of the uvula. The seven Vedic and Tantric notes, the seven Vedic metres and the two bhāvātmaka svāra [spiritual sounds] constitute the sixteen prominent sounds which in Indo-Aryan phonetics are known as śodasha dhvanikalā [the “sixteen sounds” of Brahmavidyā – intuitional science – and gandharvavidyā – the science of music]. These musical notes were used in music and incantation in different combinations according to the waxing and waning of the moon and according to the time of day or night. Accordingly, a specific period of the month and time of the day was fixed for the performance of each rāga and rāgini.

I

Each of the letters of the Indo-Aryan alphabet, from a to kśa, is an acoustic root. That is, these fifty sounds are the vibrations corresponding to the colours of the fifty propensities. The third letter of the alphabet, i, is the acoustic root of gāndhāra (gá). It directly controls gāndhāra and indirectly controls madhyama (má), paiṅcama (pá), dhaevata (dhá) and niśáda (ni).

II

The sound ii is the acoustic root of the fourth note of the surasaptaka, madhyama (má). This sound directly controls madhyama, and indirectly controls paiṅcama (pá), dhaevata (dhá), and niśáda (ni). In ancient times, the very prolonged pluta ii was used in musical notation to denote kādii [hard or high-pitched] má, but in modern languages there is no separate letter for pluta ii.

U

The short u sound is the acoustic root of paiṅcama (pá), the fifth musical note. This sound directly controls paiṅcama (pá), and indirectly controls dhaevata (dhá) and niśáda (ni).

Ú

The long ú sound is the acoustic root of the sixth musical note, dhaevata (dhá). It directly controls dhaevata (dhá), and indirectly controls niśáda (ni).

R

The r sound is the seventh letter and seventh vowel of Southeast Asian alphabets, as well as of the Indo-Aryan alphabet. It is the acoustic root of the seventh musical note niśáda (ni). Niśáda is derived as follows: ni – sad + ghaiṅ. A sa sound occurring in any root-verb after the prefix ni may be changed into the letter śa, that is, nisáda and niśáda are both permissible. Similarly, upaniśad and upanisad are equally correct. But in Bengali there is a convention of using śa in such spellings. Now, if niśáda is written with śa, then both the Rgvedic and Yajurvedic pronunciations must be accepted.⁽⁶⁾ Of course singers singing scales need not utter the complete word niśáda, but only ni.

The sound r directly controls the seventh musical note, niśáda. As it is a half-letter [has no vowel sound],⁽⁷⁾ designated as such [in the Bengali alphabet] with a hasanta diacritical mark (ঁ),⁽⁸⁾ it does not directly control any other sound.

RR

The rr sound is the acoustic root of oṅm. You may say, Since oṅm is the acoustic root of creation, preservation and destruction, and the acoustic root of Saguña and Nirguña [it is used to symbolize Nirguña], how can rr be the acoustic root of oṅmákára?

What is the sound oṅm (ॐ, ॐ)?

Oṅm consists of five symbols: a, the acoustic root of creation; u, the acoustic root of preservation; ma, the acoustic root of destruction, (.), the symbol of the unmanifested universe; and ([BENGALI CRESCENT SYMBOL]), the symbol which signifies the process of manifestation.

A is not only the acoustic root of śadája, it is also the acoustic root of the force of creation. When the idea to create something arises in the mind of Parama Puruśa, or in the microcosmic mind, its acoustic root is the sound a. Since a is the acoustic root of creation, from which everything else proceeds, a is the first letter of the alphabet.

The sound u is the acoustic root of the fifth musical note, and is also the acoustic root of a few other factors, the force of preservation being one of them. When the desire to maintain the created entities arises in the mind of Parama Puruśa, or in the individual microcosmic mind, then the acoustic root of that sort of desire is u.

The sound m with hasant [indicating that its pronunciation is m rather than ma], as well as being the acoustic root of the tendency [prashraya vrtti] to treat someone or something indulgently, is

the acoustic root of the vinásha [destruction] that occurs in the course of time. When people feel that something has become monotonous, they want to change it.

It should be remembered that vinásha does not mean complete annihilation, but transformation or metamorphosis. Complete annihilation is called pranásha. (In fact, nothing in this physical universe is subject to pranásha or complete annihilation. But philosophically, pranásha means that change which takes an entity back to its original form. If sugar made from sugar cane is transformed back into sugar cane, that will be the pranásha of the sugar. Thus from a philosophical point of view, if a microcosm, through sádhaná, merges into that Parama Puruśa from whom it originated, that will be the pranásha of that microcosm.) This m sound is the acoustic root of annihilation.

The manifested universe is constituted of creation, preservation and destruction (a-u-m). A + u = o, hence a + u + m = om. But that is not the end of the story; the dot (.) and the crescent ([BENGALI CRESCENT SYMBOL]) that form part of oṃkára are also important. The former represents the unmanifested universe; the latter represents the principle of transmutation from the unmanifested to the manifested.⁽⁹⁾ Hence, oṃ is the acoustic root of creation, preservation and destruction, plus the principle of transmutation from the unmanifested to the manifested.

The source of most acoustic roots is Tantra, although some of them already existed in the Vedas and were later accepted by Tantra. Oṃ is one of the latter. Those Dakśiṇácára Tantrics who do not want to accept annihilation as the last word, and thus do not want to place the acoustic root of destruction as the last sound, utilize the full letter ma as opposed to the half-letter m, and place the letters in the following order: u + ma + a = umá. According to Dakśiṇácára Tantra, “Umá” is another name of Paramá Prakṛti.

Oṃkára is also called praṇava (pra + nu + al), which literally means “that which helps tremendously in attaining the supreme stance”. In the Tripádavibhútináráyaṇa Shruti it has been said, Praṇavátmakaṃ Brahma [“Brahma is in the form of praṇava”]. Elsewhere it has been said,

Etaddhyevákśaraṃ Brahma etadevákśaraṃ param
Etadevákśaraṃ jñátvá Brahmaloke mahiyyate.

[This is the immutable Brahma, this is the supreme sound. After knowing this supreme sound, one attains the divine realm of Brahma.]

Now even though oṃ (which includes the dot and crescent) can serve as the acoustic root of this expressed universe, since oṃ is nevertheless a combination of sounds, it requires an acoustic root of its own. The acoustic root of another root is called atibijja or mahábijja. So rr is the mahábijja of oṃkára. This rr sound is necessary from the viewpoint of phonetics and of sandhi [the science of combining sounds]. Since it is an important acoustic root, it is imperative to decide whether such a letter should be deleted from the alphabet [as some linguists have suggested].

The Indo-Aryan alphabet consists of fifty letters from a to kśa. If any of these fifty letters is deleted, the entire alphabet will become defective and the acoustic importance of the letter

concerned will be jeopardized. It is up to you to think over and decide whether rr should be retained in the alphabet or not.

LR

The sound lr is the acoustic root of the sound hummm and of its inner import. The sound hummm is itself the acoustic root of struggle, of sádhaná, and according to Tantra, of the kuńdalínii. As hummm is the acoustic root of struggle, people call it the battle cry. You may have noticed that when sádhakas progress along the spiritual path and attain bliss they sometimes release the sound hummm spontaneously during the practice of sádhaná. It has been mentioned that the utterance of hummm during sádhaná is a sign of progress in Tantra.

According to Tantra the kulakuńdalínii is the sleeping divinity. By virtue of sádhaná and with the help of mantrágháta [striking at the kulakuńdalínii with powerful incantative vibrations] and mantra caetanya [conceptual understanding of and psychic association with a mantra], and

by smashing all obstacles, the kuńdalínii can be raised to the sahasrára cakra. The practice adopted to raise the kuńdalínii is called purashcarańa in Tantra. The kuńdalínii is the sleeping divinity. To arouse it from slumber and raise it upwards is quite a struggle and hence hummm must also be the acoustic root of the kuńdalínii. The controlling point of the kuńdalínii, the múládhára, is called mańipadma or mahámańipadma in Maháyána Buddhist philosophy. The Tibetan Maháyániis recite Om mańipadme hummm while turning their dharma cakras [prayer wheels]. I have seen Om mańipadme hummm inscribed on the walls of Tibetan caves.

LRR

Lrr is the acoustic root of the sound pha' (which is the acoustic root of putting a theory into practice) and is thus the atibiiija, or mahábiiija [super-acoustic root], of the pha' biiija. It is just like the sprouting of a seed, like a sudden awakening from slumber. When something which is sleeping or dormant suddenly bursts into the realm of light, we say colloquially [in Bengali] that it is making a pha' sound. Lrr is also the acoustic root of the removal of lethargy. Hence, considering its enormous importance, it should not be deleted from the Bengali alphabet.

Each of the fifty letters is called mátrká varńa (“causal matrix”) because each is an acoustic root of some important factor, sound, vibration, divine or demoniacal propensity, human quality, or microcosmic expression. Thus no letter should be deleted from the alphabet. But the final decision in this regard rests in the hands of the scholars.

E

The rhythmic expression of mundane knowledge; the sprouting of mundane knowledge; mundane welfare; and the thought of mundane welfare; are symbolized by vaośa'. The sound e is the atibiiija, or mahábiiija, of the vibrations of vaośa'. In ancient times kings hungry for more land would pray to Indra, the king of the gods, to bless their Rájasúya Yajña⁽¹⁰⁾ or Ashvamedha Yajña [Horse Sacrifice] to help them attain a vast empire. On those occasions they would say, Eń Indráya vaośa'.

AE

The thought of welfare and the materialization of welfare in the subtler sphere are symbolized by *vaśat*. Those who pray to Lord Shiva for all-round human welfare say, *Aeṁ Shiváya vaśat*; those who pray to their guru for the attainment of subtle knowledge say, *Aeṁ gurave vaśat*; and those who pray to the rain-god for relief from floods say, *Varuṅaya vaośat* (in this case the thought of welfare is confined to the physical sphere). But those who pray for victory in war against the forces of wickedness, say, *Varuṅaya vaśat*. Within the acoustic root *vaśat* lies the thought of welfare in the subtle sphere; it is the *atibijja*, or *mahábijja*, of the sense of blessing in the subtle sphere.

While uttering any incantation it is the common practice to add *m* to the end of the acoustic root. Thus *ae* is pronounced as *aeṁ*.

Aeṁ is the acoustic root of vocalization. Linguistic expression is divided into six stages: *pará*, *pashyanti*, *madhyamá*, *dyotamáná*, *vaekharii*, and *shrutigocará*.

Whatever you have said, or are saying, or will say in future, lies within you as dormant vitality. A great potentiality lies dormant in each human being, just as a huge banyan tree lies latent within a tiny seed. The banyan seed sprouts when light, air, water and fertile soil exist in requisite amounts. It subsequently grows foliage and branches, and in the course of time develops into a gigantic tree. Similarly, the immense potentialities of human beings lie latent and hypnotized in the *kulakuṅḍalini* at *múládhára* cakra as dormant humanity. When the *kuṅḍalini* is raised upwards through *mantrágháta* and *mantra caetanya* in the process of meditation (this process is called *purashcaraṇa* in Tantra and *amrtamudrá* or *ánandamudrá* in yoga), the doors of human potentiality start opening one after another. Human beings grow in beauty and vitality, their flowers divine, their foliage lush. Such individuals develop into great people in the eyes of the public and finally become one with the Supreme Entity. This process is called *parábhyudaya* in the scriptures.

The first stage of linguistic expression, that is, language in its potential form or seed form, lies dormant in the *múládhára* cakra, and it leads through successively clearer stages of manifestation to full-fledged linguistic expression. This primordial phase of linguistic expression is called *paráshakti*, the primordial phase of vocalization.

Incidentally, I would like to say a few words about the fundamental *paráshakti*. The *shakti* [energy] with which unit beings discharge their physico-psycho-spiritual actions is called *aparáshakti*. *Aparáshakti* is by no means insignificant – it helps microcosms to maintain their existence and achieve greater evolution and elevation. But the energy with which microcosms direct their physico-psycho-spiritual efforts towards the divine and reach the highest rung of the evolutionary ladder by piercing every tender layer of microcosmic existence, is called *paráshakti* (this *paráshakti*, which is the primordial phase of vocalization, is not the same as the *paráshakti* or Supreme Operative Principle in the unbalanced triangle of forces). Here we are concerned with the ways of expression of language. All the potentialities of vocal expression lie dormant in the form of *paráshakti* at the *múládhára* cakra. *Paráshakti* is raised step by step and finally leads to the vocal expression of language.

If vocalization remains dormant in seed form at the mûlâdhâra, it is neither audible nor perceivable in the practical world. The latent parâshakti has got to be awakened. Human beings visualize whatever they want to communicate, sometimes only for a fraction of a second, consciously or unconsciously. If they are already aware of the name and form of the visualized object, they can progress further in the process of expression, otherwise that name or form will continue to remain in the abstract world. This stage, in which one can mentally visualize what one is going to communicate, is the second stage in the process of vocalization. Its controlling point is the svâdhîsthâna cakra. The energy which causes the visualization is called pashyanti. Pashyanti is derived from the root verb drsh plus shatr, and means “that which is seeing”.

This seeing is of two things: that which is original in the abstract world (its image is mostly indistinct) and that which is of a recurring nature in the abstract world, in other words, that which is reproduced from memory. Anubhûtavîśayâsampaśah smrti. “After perceiving an object in the external world with the help of the eyes or any other external indriya, one often thinks about it.” The energy which helps one to visualize that thought is pashyanti shakti. This is the second stage of vocalization. Of course just to visualize the perceived object (with the help of pashyanti shakti) is not enough; other people cannot see your mental images or mental words, because those things belong to the psychic world. Linguistic expression pertains to the mundane world. Words are transmitted in the outer world through the medium of air or electro-magnetic waves, or some such medium. Mental images can be projected in the external world with the help of vital energy, but this sort of psychic projection is beyond the capacity of pashyanti shakti.

Ideas in the psychic world gain momentum with the addition of vital energy. This process of coordination must be consolidated step by step before ideas can be expressed through words in the external world. The human body’s energy, or indrashakti, or luminous factor, is located in the mañipura cakra.⁽¹¹⁾ The mañipura cakra maintains the body’s physical balance. When pashyanti shakti comes to the mañipura cakra and there receives the assistance of vital energy, it becomes madhyamâ shakti. The controlling point of madhyamâ shakti is the mañipura cakra or navel area.

To externalize an idea one has to apply physical energy (philosophically, this energy is called indra). We can call this stage the first expression of the sound tanmâtra. Although this sound tanmâtra is not audible to the external ear because it has not yet been vocalized, it does have internal sound.

The transformation of madhyamâ shakti into the form of speech takes place at a point between the mañipura and vishuddha cakras. This is a state of calamânâtâ [mobility].⁽¹²⁾ The force which functions between the mañipura and vishuddha cakras, trying to give vocal expression to mental ideas, is called dyotamânâ.

Dyotamânâ shakti is expressed as a relentless effort to transform idea into language. If, however, in this process of transformation, the mind is affected by fear or by any other instinct, there will be only a partial or incoherent vocal expression.

In the dyotamânâ stage, if the idea is not metamorphosed into a corresponding picture, or if there is any defect in the area between the mañipura and vishuddha cakras, or if there is no proper command over language, then vocal expression is bound to be affected. In such cases people are

unable to give linguistic expression to things that they know. They say, “The idea’s in my mind but I just can’t find the words to express it.”

The dyotamáná stage exists in collective life, also. Ever since the dawn of human civilization, human beings have been searching for ways to fulfil their various desires: the desire to fly, the desire to move fast over land, the desire to reach the distant planets, the desire to cross the oceans. Sometimes they have succeeded, sometimes they have failed. But even after failure, they have not given up the struggle, but have persisted with renewed vigour. We are still waiting for that glorious day to arrive when we will be able to give a full and rich expression to the vast world of human thought. Today, however, we can only express a small fraction of the vast world of ideas.

The vocal cord lies in the area of the vishuddha cakra. It is the organ responsible for transforming abstract idea into vocal expression. The energy which helps in this task is vaekharii shakti. Vaekharii shakti is the energy which causes ideas to take the form of language. It is the fifth stage in the process of vocal expression. When someone talks too much, this is the uncontrolled expression of vaekharii shakti. Some pandits, in order to prove their intellectual might through intellectual extravaganza, indulge in such unnecessary vocalization. It has been said,

Vákvaekharii shabdayharii
Shástravyákhyána kaoshalañ;
Vaeduśyañ viduśań tadvat
Bhuktaye na tu muktaye.

[Garrulousness, grandiloquence and conflicting interpretations of the scriptures are nothing but intellectual extravaganza. They do not lead to salvation, but merely satisfy the intellect.]

Neither individual life nor collective life is benefited from such useless talk. Pandits may receive temporary applause but they ultimately gain nothing but a big zero.

Even after an idea gets metamorphosed into language, if there is the slightest defect in the uvula, vocal expression will be disturbed. (The Sanskrit equivalents of “uvula” are lambiká, galashuńdiká, and áljihvá.) Even if one articulates properly, one will not be able to speak correctly if there is any defect in the uvula.

The energy through which the exact language is conveyed to the human ears is called shrutigocará. This is the last stage in the process of vocalization. The sound ae is the acoustic root of the six stages of vocalization: pará, pashyanti, madhyamá, dyotamáná, vaekharii, and shrutigocará.

Ae is also called vágbhava bijja, and is the acoustic root of the guru. People acquire knowledge through gurus, hence the guru is also invoked through this acoustic root: Aeń gurave namah. Those who believe in idol worship use this particular acoustic root in invoking the goddess of knowledge: Aeń sarasvatyae namah. And it is also used to invoke Shiva, the propounder of Tantra: Aeń Shiváya namah.

O

The acoustic root of the completion of an action is sváhá. When ghee is offered into the fire, that cannot be called sváhá. Only when the ghee is consumed by the fire, that is, the ghee is totally effaced from existence, can that be called sváhá.

The sváhá mantra is often uttered when any action is being done with a divine purpose. When action is performed with a noble purpose in the psychic and spiritual spheres, or even in the mundane sphere, the controlling acoustic root is sváhá. This is the meaning of sváhá in the general sense. More specifically sváhá is used while offering oblations to fire. In this sense it is related to the acoustic root svadhá. The general meaning of svadhá is “one who is self-reliant” (sva + dhác = svadhá). Sváhá is also used as an acoustic root for spiritual actions, while svadhá is used while making offerings to the ancestors.

In ancient times, in the entire Rgvedic period and in the first half of the Yajurvedic period, su and sva were used almost synonymously. But later they acquired different meanings: sva came to mean “own” (svadesha means “own country”) and su came to mean “good” (sujan means “good man”). One Sanskrit word for “good” is bhadra, from which the Bengali word bhálo comes. The Hindi word bháláii is the abstract noun of bhálá. In old Rárhii Bengali, the word bhálá is used in the sense of “look at”. It is an indigenous Bengali word. Ajaná pathik ek deshke eseche bhálgo. [“An unknown traveller has come to our land; look at him.” – Prabháta Samgiita]

Sváhá is split up as sva + áhá or su + áhá. In ancient times sváhá and svadhá were synonymous, but later sváhá came to convey the thought of welfare, that is, “Let there be prosperity,” and svadhá came to mean, “May the peace of God be with you.” Hence sváhá was used in the course of offering oblations to gods and goddesses, and svadhá for ceremonies in memory of departed ancestors.

In ancient times people used to observe a period of austerity before offering oblations to the gods or ancestors; this preparatory period was called adhivása. In the Vedic period, as far as is known, people had a great weakness for surá [an alcoholic drink]. (Sanskrit synonyms for surá are somarasa, madya, madhu, ásava, arišta and sudhá.) During their adhivása the priests would of course have to abstain from drinking. So they would cover their shoulders with a mrgacarma ⁽¹³⁾ [a deerskin – a symbol of their adhivása], so that other people would not invite them to drink. When they conducted rituals concerning the gods and goddesses, they would utter the sváhá mantra and would wear the skin on the left shoulder (in this case the skin was called yajiṇopaviita, or upaviita, for short); and when they conducted rituals concerning the ancestors, they would use the svadhá mantra and wear the skin on the right shoulder (in this case the skin was called práciináviita.) When they were not conducting either of these rituals, they would place the skin around their necks (in this case it was called niviita). While invoking the gods and goddesses, they would chant the sváhá mantra with the sampradána mudrá; for ceremonies using the vaosát and vaśát mantras, they would use the baradá mudrá; and for ceremonies involving the svadhá mantra they would use the arákusha mudrá.

A little while ago, I mentioned that su and sva could be used almost synonymously. [When reading mantras from ancient texts, people would understand from the context whether su or sva

meant “good” or “own”.] But to use sva in place of su [in the sense of “good”] was not so common.

Rtañ pibantao sukrtasya loke
Guháyám praviśtao parame parárdhe;
Cháyátapao Brahmavido vadanti
Paiñcágnayo ye ca triñáciketáh.

“Human beings reap the consequences of their own karma [deeds].” In this shloka, sukṛta is used instead of svakṛta [to mean “done by oneself”, “own” (referring to karma, “deeds”)].

The human mind is divided into two functional chambers: the kartṛ ámi or subjective “I”, and the karma ámi or objectivated “I”. The objectivated “I” moves forward; the subjective “I” remains in the background, as an observer. “Just as it is difficult to discern the precise line between sunshine and shade, it is almost impossible to discern the transition point between the subjective ‘I’ and the objectivated ‘I’. This is what the brahmanvids [knowers of Brahma] say, and it is corroborated by the paiñcágnii, or renunciates, and the triñáciketa, or householders.”

Regarding the metempirical entity, the Vedas say:

Dvá suparná sayujá sakháyá
Samánám brkśám pariśasvajáte;
Tayoranyah pippalam svádvattyan
Ashnannanyo abhicákashiiti.

[Two friendly birds with beautiful plumage are perched on the same branch of a tree. One of them is eating the sweet fruit while the other looks on as a mere witness.]

The acoustic root sváhá signifies pious resolve and the psychic desire for universal welfare. The sound o is its super-acoustic root or atibijja. So whatever may be the importance of o in the alphabetical order, its value as an acoustic root is immense.

AO

The posture of surrender to the greatness of another person or entity is called namah mudrá or namomudrá. Such surrender results in one’s mental body being vibrated by the greatness of the Supreme. It is the person doing namomudrá who benefits, and not the one for whom the mudrá is performed. The way to do this mudrá to the guru is to lie prostrate before him with the palms placed together, that is, with the middle fingers of each hand placed parallel to each other. This represents the pinpointed concentration of mind which is directed towards the supreme goal.

In this mudrá all eight parts of the body are engaged. (According to áyurveda the human body has eight main parts. The áyurvedik system of medical treatment is called aśtáuṅga [eight-limbed] cikitsá vijiñána.) The body itself becomes as straight as a staff [one Sanskrit word for which is dañda], and thus one of the mudrá’s names is dañdavat prañáma.⁽¹⁴⁾ This is namomudrá, the systematic endeavour to acquire greatness in return for one’s surrender unto greatness.

[Namah is the acoustic root of acquiring greatness in life; and ao is the super-acoustic root of namah biija.]

The science of dance recognizes about 850 mudrás [meaningful gestures], such as namo mudrá, lalita mudrá, baradá mudrá, abhaya mudra, amkusha mudrá, mahá mudrá, kákacaiṅcu mudrá, tejasii mudrá, ámbhásii mudrá, párhivii mudrá, váyavii mudrá, ákáshii mudrá, bháva mudrá, shparshiká mudrá, cetasii mudrá, sarpa mudrá, kapálii mudrá, and many, many more.

In order to master the art of dance, one must become skilled in the art of mudrá. Dance as practised in human society can be broadly divided into two schools:⁽¹⁵⁾ chandapradhána nrtya [rhythmic dance] and mudrápradhána nrtya [mudraic dance]. Occidental dance (such as ballroom dance) is more rhythmic, whereas Oriental dance is more mudrá-oriented.⁽¹⁶⁾ Of course, mudrás are used in Occidental music also, but their role is secondary; and rhythm is an integral part of Oriental dance, but is nevertheless secondary to mudrá.

The sound ha is the acoustic root of the sun, of the stars, and of the ethereal factor. Tha is the acoustic root of satellites, such as the moon. When the moon, which is the physical symbol of the psychic realm, and the sun, which is the physical symbol of mundane energy, are made to become one, that is called hátha yoga (Háthena kurute karma). When an action is done abruptly, out of sudden impulse, there is a sudden release of energy called hathatah (hátha + tas) or hathát (fifth case-ending of hátha in Sanskrit). A synonym of hathát is balát, meaning “by force” or “suddenly”; and another meaning of hathát is “to get expressed suddenly without giving any scope for thought”. To do something good or bad suddenly without prior thought is called balátkár. Remember that the meaning of balátkár is not necessarily a bad one.

The magnanimity of Shiva was as vast as the sky. People used to show their veneration for Him either in namah mudrá or with the sound ao. Hence the acoustic root of Shivatattva [essence of Shiva] is haom: Haom Shiváya namah. Those entities who were very dear to Shiva by virtue of their personal simplicity, naturalness and spirit of selfless service, were also revered using the sound ha. Shiva’s favourite flower was the common dhustara flower. Ha is the acoustic root of the dhustara flower. Thus you can easily understand why haom is the acoustic root of Shiva.

AM

Am is the acoustic root of an idea. The same sound, when uttered with a different mental ideation, acquires different meanings, and the effect it has varies from person to person. The word betá, for example, can be used as an endearing term for one’s child. A parent may say, Ájá betá, khána khále [“Come, my dear child, come and eat your food”]. In this case betá (“my child”) sounds very pleasing to the ears; when the child hears it s/he feels very gratified. But one could also say, Áy betá toke dekhe noba; tor caudda puruđer shráddha karchi. [“Come here you wretch, I’ll teach you a lesson! I’m going to send you and fourteen generations of your ancestors to hell!”] In this case the utterance of betá injects poison into the mind of the listener. The acoustic root of the poisonous mentality which utters poisoned words is am. The acoustic root of that pleasant ideation which adds sweetness to a word is ah. You should remember that whenever you speak to someone, or recite a poem, or play any part in a drama, or sing any song, you

should know the underlying meaning of what you are expressing. Only then will you be able to touch your listeners' hearts and influence them.

AH

There are some words which are neither good nor bad, but adopt a positive or negative meaning due to the way in which they are uttered or due to the mentality behind their utterance. *Á jáná beá baethná, khána kháye ho?* ["Come and sit here, my child. Have you had anything to eat yet?"] In this example the word *beá* is very pleasing to the ears. It is uttered in such a sweet way that the child will feel gratified. But when someone says, *Áy beá toke dekhe noba!* ["Come here, you wretch, I'll teach you a lesson!"] the word *beá* becomes repulsive.

If one tells a boy, *Eso khoká mišti niye yáo* ["Come, little child, take some sweets"], a very pleasant mentality is expressed. But if one says, *O ár nyákámi kare khoká sájte habe ná, aman dhañ anek dekhechi* ["Stop being so childish. I'm sick of it"], that same pleasing mentality is not expressed. The same word, *khoká*, when uttered with a different mentality takes on a different meaning. Where the mentality is bitter or repulsive, it is indicative of poison, and its acoustic root is *am*; and where the mentality is sweet or attractive, it is indicative of nectar, and its acoustic root is *ah*. So when singing, or reciting a poem, or acting in a play, or even when saying ordinary things, one should have full control over one's expression, be it pleasant or unpleasant. Singers should also remember this and sing accordingly. The controlling point of *viśa* [poison] and *amṛta* [nectar] is the vishuddha cakra.⁽¹⁷⁾ Thus one should exercise a certain degree of control over the *kúrma nádii* [a nerve] at the vishuddha cakra.

KA

The way in which people think varies from individual to individual. The thought processes of sub-human creatures flow in four directions – towards food, sleep, survival, and procreation. Broadly speaking, human thought moves in five directions - towards food, sleep, survival, procreation and dharma. Yet there are many sub-streams. Human thought can be roughly divided into two categories: *abhiipśátmaka* (*áshá vṛtti*) and *vishuddha sañvedanátmaka* (*cintá vṛtti*).

A major part of the world of thought revolves around *áshá vṛtti* [the propensity of hope]. Goaded by this propensity, various creatures, especially human beings, are inspired to work in various ways. *Ka* is the acoustic root of the *abhiipśátmaka áshá vṛtti*. It is also the acoustic root of *Kárya Brahma* [the expressed universe].

In ancient times, before people learned to dig in the ground, they collected water from the rivers and springs. Hence, anything that produced sounds like the roaring of rivers, the babbling of brooks, or the gushing of spring water, would inspire the hope of survival in their minds. *Ka* (derived from the root-verb *kae* plus suffix *da*) etymologically means "that which produces sound". It also means "water", and thus *ka* is the acoustic root of flowing water (*va* is the acoustic root of water in general).

If someone keeps a matted lock of hair on his or her head, it will be quite visible even from a distance. If the hair is properly oiled, it will become glossy. From kac, meaning “glossy”, we get another meaning of ka, “hair grown on the head”.

Hair when it is curly is called kuntala. And Shiva used to tie His hair in a knot in such a way that it pointed upwards. Hence just as one of Shiva’s names was “Vyomakesha”, meaning “Hair towards the Sky” (vyoma = “sky” and kesh = “hair”), He was also called “Khakuntala”, with the same meaning, since kha means “sky” and Shiva’s hair was curly.

And, as many people know, another name of Shiva was “Dhurjatii”.

We said before that ka is the acoustic root of Kárya Brahma. It is also the acoustic root of creation. According to Buddhist Mádhyamik and Saotántrik philosophy, one name for the created world is Sańvrtti Bodhicitta (which is also another name of Kárya Brahma). The then Buddhist cult called those sádhakas who took the noble vow of serving all in the living and non-living worlds, kápálikas – Kań [from ka] sańvrtti bodhi cittañ pálayati iti kápálikah. Later on, the meaning and import of the word kápálika became distorted.

As mentioned, ka is the acoustic root of Kárya Brahma. Kárya Brahma (Saguńarasátmaka Brahma), represented by ka, is the controller of the living world. Ka + iisha = kesha. Kesha can mean “hair”; it can also mean Náráyańa.

KHA

While discussing ka I mentioned that human thoughts are sometimes guided by áshá vrtti, sometimes by cintá vrtti. The acoustic root of áshá vrtti is ka, and that of cintá vrtti [the propensity of worry] is kha. Suppose the train you are travelling by from Krishnanagar to Dignagar is running late. In that case you will not only think about the train being late, but of the probable inconveniences caused as a result, notably the inconvenience you will cause your host in Dignagar if you arrive at his house late and expect him to serve you food. So you decide to eat your supper somewhere near the station before proceeding to your host’s house. All thoughts such as these are symbolized by the acoustic root kha.

Suppose you are travelling from Krishnanagar to Matiyari. The thought passes through your mind that at one time Matiyari had an important brassware industry, which today is on the verge of collapse, resulting in thousands of its employees losing their jobs. You wonder whether it might be possible to revive the industry. But as you are not personally affected by the collapse of the industry, you are not a direct player in your own thoughts. Impersonal thoughts such as these are symbolized by the acoustic root kha.

Kha means “sky”, but kha is not the acoustic root of the sky. The acoustic root of the sky is ha. Kha also means “heaven”, but it is not the acoustic root of all of heaven, either. The crude aspects of heaven are represented by kha, whereas the sphere of heaven which transcends the crude is represented by kśa.

Ka is the acoustic root of Kárya Brahma. First comes ka, Kárya Brahma, and then follows the rest of creation. That is why ka is the first consonant. And as ka plus ha equals kha, ka is immediately followed by kha in the Indo-Aryan alphabet.

GA

Every entity, whether animate or inanimate, has the potentiality of expression. An animate entity can arouse that dormant potentiality through both external and internal means, whereas an inanimate entity acquires impetus through external means. Suppose poetic genius lies dormant in a certain person. If he arouses that latent genius by applying his will-force, he can become a renowned poet. But if he fails to do that due to lethargy or for some other reason, his poetic genius will remain unexpressed. The effort made to arouse one's dormant potentiality is called ceśtá. Ceśtá is one of the psychic vrttis [propensities] and is the main cause of mundane development and spiritual elevation. So its value in the mundane and supramundane spheres is immense.

Ga, being the acoustic root of ceśtá vrtti, plays an important role in the physical, psychic and spiritual spheres of human life.

GHA

Mamatá, the vrtti of love and attachment of human beings and all other creatures, is related to time, space and individuality. It is not unusual for people to praise even the goods of the poorest quality manufactured in their own country and criticize the best-quality goods made in other countries. This occurs due to their irrational attachment for a certain place. It is a kind of psychic disease. The same sort of thing occurs in individuals as well. The mother who feels so much love and affection for her child that she sacrifices everything in life for its comfort and welfare, mercilessly slices young kai fish [walking fish] into pieces without the slightest emotional feeling. The young kai fish cry out in the agony of death, but the cruel heart of the human mother does not melt. Mamatá vrtti is also related to the time factor. The same mother cow who so lovingly suckles her calves and licks them clean today kicks them away when they grow up tomorrow.

Thus mamatá vrtti is limited by the relative factors. Only human beings can make mamatá vrtti transcend the boundaries of time, space and individuality, after persistent and intense efforts. This is something impossible for other beings. Gha is the acoustic root of mamatá vrtti.

UᅇA

Uᅇa is the acoustic root of dambha vrtti [the propensity of vanity]. The popular story goes that the great sage Vashiśtha travelled to China to learn the Chinese school of Tantra. In China he learnt the use of una in the utterance of Tantric mantras, and introduced it in India on his return. Una is used extensively in all the dialects of the Indo-Chinese languages, even in Tibetan, Laddaki, Sherpa, Manpa, etc. It is said that Vashiśtha learned that una is the acoustic root of vanity. It is also said that he first learned the Tára cult of the Buddhist Vámácára Tantra from China. Since then in Buddhist Tantra, the Tára cult has been trifurcated: Ugra Tára or Vajra Tára

is worshipped in India; Niila Tára, or Niila Sarasvatii, is worshipped in Kimpuruśavarśa (Tibet), and Bhrámarii Tára (Krsńa Tára) is worshipped in China.

It is believed that in the post-Buddhist period Vajra Tára or Ugra Tára was accepted as the Tára deity in Varńáshrama Dharma [medieval Hinduism]. Today names such as Tára Dás, Tára-pada, Tára Kumar, etc., are quite common. It is generally accepted that the Niila Tára, or Niila Sarasvatii, of Tibet was later converted into the [Hindu] goddess Sarasvatii by the supporters of Varńáshrama Dharma.

The acoustic root of Vajra Tára of India and Niila Tára of Tibet is aeń. The black-coloured Bhrámarii Tára of China is accepted as the goddess Kálii in Varńáshrama Dharma. Their acoustic root is the same, kriim (ka symbolizing Kárya Brahma plus ra symbolizing the luminous factor).

CA

Ca is the acoustic root of viveka [conscience].

CHA

Cha is the acoustic root of vikalatáh vrtti [nervous breakdown]. A nervous breakdown occurs when one's mind, which had previously been functioning properly, either starts malfunctioning or stops functioning altogether.

JA

Una is the acoustic root of dambha vrtti [the propensity of vanity]; ja is the acoustic root of ahańkára vrtti (ego). The ego becomes inflated when one allows one's "I" feeling to take a predominant role. "Since I was there, I was able to control the situation. But I wonder what would have happened in my absence. I'm sure that had I not been there the world would have met its final destruction." So spoke Aurangzeb, the last powerful Mughal emperor of India. It is an expression of ahańkára vrtti.

JHA

Jha is the acoustic root of lolupatá, lobha [greed] and lolatá [avarice] vrttis. The Bengali word nolá [the greedy fascination of a cat or a dog] is derived from lola or lolatá.

IᅇA

Ina is the acoustic root of kapaátatá vrtti [hypocrisy]. Another Sanskrit word for "hypocrite" is páśańda, which was more widely used in the past. In Hindi a hypocrite is called pákhańdii. Hypocrisy can take many forms, but we are mainly acquainted with the following three: (1) getting one's purpose served by exploiting or cheating others; (2) unnecessarily dominating somebody to conceal one's own ignorance or weakness; (3) pretending to be moral by criticizing the sins of others, which one secretly commits oneself.

ṬĀ

Ṭā is the acoustic root of vitarka vrtti [overstating one's case]. Many people think that vitarka means a type of debating, but this is only partially true. It also means overstating one's case to the point of garrulousness. Vitarka is a combination of a bad temper and garrulousness. It is in no way synonymous with kaśāya vrtti [speaking harshly to hurt others]. The following is an example of vitarka vrtti.

Suppose a person arrives at the Howrah railway station in Calcutta a little late and asks a well-dressed gentleman, "Excuse me, sir, has the Uluberia local train departed yet?" The gentleman snaps angrily, "Is it my duty to keep information about the Uluberia local train? Am I a railway timetable? How idiotic! People like you make life hell for others. This is the reason the country is going to the dogs. What do you think I am, an enquiry office?" Another gentleman standing nearby says helpfully, "Were you asking about the Uluberia local? The train will leave from platform eleven in five minutes. If you hurry you'll catch it."

The first gentleman has an uncontrolled vitarka vrtti whereas the second gentleman has uttered pramita vāk [balanced statements]. In pramita vāk only relevant words are used.

ṬĪĀ

Ṭīā is the acoustic root of anutāpa vrtti [repentance]. One is seized by a feeling of repentance when one realizes (either from within or with the help of a second person) the impropriety of one's action. In northern India anutāpa is called paschāttāpa. Both anu and paschāt mean "later" or "after"; tāpa means "heat".

ḌĀ

Ḍā is the acoustic root of lajjā vrtti [the propensity of shyness].

ḌĪĀ

Senseless, sadistic killing is called pishunatā vrtti. If meat-eaters slaughter animals in the way that inflicts the least pain, that is not pishunatā; but if they kill them slowly and cruelly, first chopping off their legs, then their tails, then their heads, it is definitely pishunatā. These days in many civilized countries people are unable to give up meat-eating, but have at least devised modern methods to kill the animals less painfully. But remember, the killing of animals, no matter how it is done, is contrary to the spirit of Neohumanism.

Once I saw a harrowing sight in a market place: part of a live tortoise had just been chopped off and sold, but the poor creature was not completely dead and was trying to crawl away, leaving a stream of blood. Such cruel things should be abolished altogether. The cruel slaughter of that innocent tortoise is certainly a case of pishunatā.

To kill human beings is totally undesirable, but if people do want to eliminate their enemies, they should do so with a minimum of torture. The kings of old used to kill criminals by impaling them

on spikes; or by half-burying them in the ground, sprinkling salt over them, and letting the dogs eat them. Sometimes people were flayed alive. These actions certainly deserve universal condemnation. They are all examples of pishunatá.

NA

Na is the acoustic root of iirśá vrtti [the propensity of envy].

TA

Ta is the acoustic root of staticity, long sleep and deep sleep. It is also the acoustic root of intellectual dullness and spiritual inertness. That which brings about the cessation of dullness and staticity is called Tantra – Tam jádyát tárayet yastu sa tantrah parikiirttitah.

The root-verb tan means “to expand”. If a person bound by ropes manages to expand his body, the ropes will snap automatically. That which leads to liberation through tan, expansion, is also Tantra – Tam vistáreña tárayet yastu sah tantrah parikiirttitah.

THA

Tha is the acoustic root of viśada vrtti, of melancholy (melancholiness, melancholia).

DA

Da is the acoustic root of peevishness. If one speaks in a nice way to a peevish person, he or she reacts adversely; if one speaks in a harsh way, he or she takes it calmly.

DHA

Dha is the acoustic root of thirst for acquisition. This limitless craving for wealth, name, fame, power and prestige is called trśna in Sanskrit. Here trśna does not mean “thirst for water”. To divert all the pure and impure thoughts of the mind towards Parama Puruśa is the only cure for limitless psychic craving.

NA

Na is the acoustic root of moha vrtti [blind attachment or infatuation]. This propensity of blind attachment is usually divided into the four categories of time, space, idea and individuality. When one loses one’s rationality out of blind attachment for one’s country, it is called deshagata moha, “geo-sentiment”. People who live in a country where not even a blade of grass grows, where people die of starvation, and which imports huge quantities of food grains from other countries, become so infatuated with their country that they say it has an abundance of water, has a bountiful fruit harvest, and is a net exporter of food to other countries.

Kálagata moha is blind attachment for a particular period of time. One becomes so attached to a certain period of time that one is unable to discern its positive or negative aspects. Some people

complain that the behaviour of the present generation of children is disappointing. They say that when they were young they could easily digest iron pans, but the present generation has trouble digesting even water! They lament the great misfortune that has befallen the present age.

When a particular idea has a strong impact on mind, the mind rushes towards it again and again. Thieves, in the shock of the moment, always make a quick getaway from the scene of the crime. Later, however, they brood repeatedly about the place, and often return, straight into the hands of the police! A person who uses an object for a long time develops a fascination for that object. This is called ádháragata moha [fascination for an object]. There are many rich people who have a strange weakness for some old, battered object such as a rickety chair with one arm broken off. I know a story about how a pretty pot made of bell-metal was the cause of a bitter quarrel among the daughters-in-law of a certain family, so bitter that it led to the eventual break-up of the family. Na is the acoustic root of moha vrtti.

The only way to free oneself from the clutches of infatuation is to superimpose the ideation of indifference and divert one's mental thoughts towards Parama Puruśa. It may be possible to control this propensity of wild fascination temporarily by intimidation or by enacting laws, but only temporarily. Those who believe in the equal distribution of the world's wealth, naively underestimate the power of moha vrtti. The human mind can be sublimated only by spiritual ideation, not by any high-sounding philosophy. This utopian idea has proved ineffective in the past and in the present and will continue to prove so in the future.

PA

Pa is the acoustic root of ghrná vrtti [the propensity of hatred or revulsion].

The underlying weaknesses which cause immense harm to human beings are called ripus [enemies]. They are six in number: káma [longing for physicality], krodha [anger], lobha [avarice], mada [vanity], moha [blind attachment], and mátsarya [jealousy]. And when our various mental bondages exploit these ripus in order to tighten their grip on the mind, they become known as páshas [fettters]. These páshas are eight in number:

Ghrná shaṅká bhayaṁ lajjá
Jugupsá ceti paiṅcamii;
Kulaṁ shiilainca mánainca
Aśtao pásháh prakiirtitáh.

[Hatred, doubt, fear, shyness, dissemblance, vanity of lineage, cultural superiority complex and egotism – these are the eight fetters.]

Pa is the acoustic root of the fetter of hatred. It is a defect not directly traceable to any one ripu, but stemming from more than one ripu. Although hatred and fear are related to other ripus, they are mainly related to the moha ripu, or propensity of blind attachment. [E.g., when one's desire for something becomes frustrated, one may develop hatred for what was the object of desire.]

When one's psychic attraction is toward the crude, the mind has a downward tendency (in Sanskrit the root-verb pat or patati carries this sense), which leads to one's eventual downfall. But when the mind moves upward it is called anurakti [attraction for the Great]. The consummation of this attraction is devotion. For this the Sanskrit verb is úrdhva gam or úrdhva gacchati.

One who is weakened by excessive attachment to alcohol falls an easy prey to the fetters of hatred and fear. Moha ripu makes people the objects of hatred to others, and makes others the objects of fear to them. Such is the deceptive allurements of moha vrtti that people rush toward their objects of desire without any discrimination. I already explained the different types of moha while discussing the consonant na.

PHA

Pha is the acoustic root of bhaya vrtti [the propensity of fear]. Though fear is generally caused by more than one factor, it is mainly born of moha ripu.

BA

Ba is the acoustic root of avajinā vrtti [indifference]. When one ignores something which is actually unacceptable, that is called upekśá, but when one neglects something which may actually have some value, that is called avajinā. Avajinā is somewhat similar in meaning to avahelá. Upekśá is not always used in a bad way, but avahelá certainly has a negative connotation. It is said,

Maetii-karuṇá-muditopekśánám-sukha-duhkha-puṇyá -
Puṇyaviśayánám bhávanátashcittapra-sádanam.

Often when someone sees another person who is happy in life he or she feels pangs of jealousy; but this is not an ideal attitude. An ideal person will develop a benign attitude toward the happy person, saying, "That person is in such a happy frame of mind - may he stay that way forever." And for those people who live in misery one should develop an attitude of compassion. One should never feel happy upon seeing the sorrows of others, but should think, "What a miserable life that person is leading. I hope things get better for him soon."

Neither should one be jealous of a person who performs many virtuous deeds and charitable actions. Rather one should think well of the person since he or she is doing good work. "Let his intellect continue to inspire him to perform such virtuous actions. I fully support him." And if someone is engaged in unrighteous deeds, his neighbours should ignore his dark side, and should not repeatedly condemn him. One should say, "Well, I'm not bothered by what he says or does – that's his own business." But this attitude of tolerance can only be accepted to a certain extent. If the person's sinful or wicked actions harm society and disrupt social life, one can no longer afford to be indifferent.

BHA

Bha is the acoustic root of the mūrccchá vṛtti. Here mūrccchá does not mean senselessness; it means to lose one's common sense under the hypnotic spell of a particular ripu. To avoid the unsalutary effects of mūrccchá vṛtti, one should direct one's mind along the path of righteousness through the practice of pratyáhára yoga.

Those who have not learned the technique of pratyáhára yoga⁽¹⁸⁾ should do kiirtana aloud or sing devotional songs to escape the clutches of mūrccchá vṛtti.

MA

Ma is the acoustic root of prańasha [the propensity of annihilation]. It is also the acoustic root of prashraya vṛtti - giving latitude [or treating with indulgence] – in Hindi bańhvá dená.

YA

Ya is the acoustic root of avishvása vṛtti [lack of confidence], and is also the acoustic root of constant movement (like the movement of air). You may have met people who have no confidence in themselves at all, even if they are told to be self-confident. Such people say right up to the end of their lives, “Shall I be able to do it?” They can never accomplish anything great in this world. As they also lack confidence in others, others have no confidence in them.

RA

Ra is the acoustic root of agnitattva or prańashakti – vitality. (Rań bijjam shikhinam dhyáyet, trikońam-aruańaprabham.) It is also the acoustic root of sarvanásha [the thought of annihilation]. Sarvanásha causes people to think, “I have nothing of my own. Everything is gone. I am undone.” Such a negative outlook can only be cured with the constant auto-suggestion, “Parama Puruśa is mine,” which in the language of Tantra is called guru mantra. The feeling that one is defeated in life is ra-bijjátmak [symbolized by ra], and its cure is the auto-suggestion that “I have come to win. I am destined to win.” People of developed mentality try to keep the minds of people of such negative outlook free from the unhealthy effect of that mentality by outer-suggestion. To do this is the duty of each and every good person. We should see that our fellow human beings are never allowed to throw themselves into the abyss of frustration and disappointment; they should be rescued before they jump.

Ra is also the acoustic root of fire. So the monosyllabic word ra means “fire”.

LA

La is the acoustic root of krurata vṛtti [cruelty]. When human beings encounter this propensity in other human beings, they should counteract it with the propensity of compassion. When one sees someone in the throes of misery one should think, “Oh, what great misery the man is suffering from! Is there anything I can do to reduce his misery? Although the person is a human in all

other respects, how crude he is in thought and behaviour. Can't I help him to arouse his latent intellect?" This attitude of compassion is the effective counter-measure for *krurata vritti*.

La is also the acoustic root of *kṣīṭitattva*, the solid factor.

Lañ biijañ dharañiim dhyāyet
Caturāsrām supiitābhām.

VA

Va is the acoustic root of *dharma*. *Dharma* means ensconcement in one's original stance. The innate propensity of human beings is to move along the path towards subtlety in the psychic and spiritual spheres, and finally to merge into *Parama Puruṣa*. The unbroken movement of the human mind towards *Parama Puruṣa* is called *mānava dharma*. It moves one from a state of ordinary happiness ever forward and eventually establishes one in the realm of Supreme Beatitude.

Sukhañ váinchatī sarvvo hi
Tacca dharma samudbhūtaḥ;
Tasmāddharmah sadākāryah
Sarvavarñaer prayatnātaḥ.

[All living beings long for happiness. *Dharma* originates from that innate propensity. Hence *dharma* should always be observed meticulously by all people.]

* * *

Dhriyate *dharma* ityāhuh sa eva paramaṃ prabhu.

[*Dharma* is that which sustains.]

The seed of humanity cannot sprout and flourish unless it is planted in the soil of *dharma*. To diverge from the path of *dharma* means to rush headlong towards total annihilation. In all one's actions one should keep *Parama Puruṣa* as the goal, and be well-established in *dharma*.

Va is also the acoustic root of *jalatattva* [the liquid factor], and the acoustic root of the mythological rain-god *Varuṇa Deva*. *Jalatattva* means not only water, but any liquid.

SHA

Sha is the acoustic root of *rajoguṇa* [the mutative principle]. It is also the acoustic root of *artha* [psychic longing].

Of the four *vargas* [basic goals of life], one, already mentioned, is *dharma*, whose acoustic root is *va*; the second *varga* is *artha*, which brings about the temporary cessation of worldly wants. (That which brings about the permanent cessation of worldly wants is *Paramārtha*.)

Sha is the acoustic root of both artha and the mutative principle. Ra is the acoustic root of energy. So shra is indicative of the mutative principle supplemented by vitality. Shra + ũiis (feminine suffix) = shrii.

The expression of vital energy arising due to the influence of the mutative principle on one's existence is natural for human beings in the mundane sphere. Hence the practice of using shrii before someone's name [as a blessing on one's dynamism] has been the custom since ancient times.

ŚA

Śa is the acoustic root of tamoguña [the static principle], and is also the acoustic root of all kinds of worldly desires - desires for things such as wealth, opulence, name, fame and social position. The word káma is used in Sanskrit as the collective term for these desires and longings.

Dharma [psycho-spiritual longing], artha [psychic longing], káma [physical longing], and mokśa [spiritual longing, the longing for unqualified liberation] are the four recognized longings or goals of human life.

To avoid any confusion, I say once again in unambiguous terms that káma means all types of physical longings.

SA

Sa is the acoustic root of mokśa [salvation, unqualified liberation]. (As mentioned, va is the acoustic root of dharma, ensconcement in one's original stance; sha is the acoustic root of artha, the removal of worldly wants; and śa is the acoustic root of káma, worldly [and especially physical] wants.) Each of the letters is the acoustic root of one of the four vargas. Va is additionally the acoustic root of the liquid factor; sha is the acoustic root of rajoguña; śa is the acoustic root of tamoguña; and sa is the acoustic root of sattvaguña [the sentient principle].

HA

Ha is the acoustic root of the ethereal factor, of daytime, of the sun, of svarloka, and of parávidyá [intuitional science]. Opposite to ha is íha, which is the acoustic root of nighttime, of the moon, of bhúvarloka, ⁽¹⁹⁾ and of the kámamaya kośa. ⁽²⁰⁾

Ha + ao = hao, which is the acoustic root of Shiva in His posture of dancing tándava. But the acoustic root of Shiva in His role of spiritual preceptor is aeń. (It has already been noted that aeń is also the acoustic root of one's preceptor and of the goddess of learning – Aeń gurave namah; Aeń Sarasvatyae namah).

KŚA

Kśa is the acoustic root of mundane knowledge, and is also the acoustic root of material science.

Footnotes

- (1) Editors' note: Each of the notes is represented by a single syllable, just as in Western music the notes are represented by do-re-mi. But each of the notes is further represented by an animal associated with its syllable.
- (2) Editors' note: The Indo-Aryan alphabet is divided into vargas, "groups", of phonetically-related sounds. The ka varga, for example (whose second consonant is kha), consists of sounds produced in the throat (gutturals).
- (3) Editors' note: According to normal Sanskrit grammar, if a is followed by a, the two combine to become á.
- (4) Editors' note: Of the three pronunciations used in Indian song to which the author refers, the saṁvrta is slightly prolonged, the vilambita is more prolonged, and the pluta is most prolonged.
- (5) Editors' note: 5018 songs composed by the author.
- (6) Editors' note: As indicated earlier, the Rgvedic pronunciation śa has a corresponding Yajurvedic pronunciation kha.
- (7) Editors' note: In spite of the fact that it is grouped with the vowels, and that in speech people find it difficult to pronounce without giving it some vowel sound.
- (8) Editors' note: In cases where it is converted to ra, such as when the noun rśi becomes the adjective árśa.
- (9) Editors' note: The combination of the two – dot plus crescent - is paralleled in Roman Sanskrit by the letter "ṅ". Either the Bengali/Devanagari or the Roman version represents, so far as phonetics is concerned, a nasalization of the vowel it is associated with. Note also that m becomes ṁ for euphony when followed by a consonant, such as in oṅmákara.
- (10) Editors' note: A royal ceremony in which a king would expect to be accepted as sovereign king.
- (11) Author's note: As the navel area is the controlling point of the luminous factor, it is not easily burnt. It is only with the application of tremendous heat that it can be burnt to ashes. A funeral pyre does not generate sufficient heat to burn the navel area. So those who cremate their loved ones retrieve this unburnt portion from the ashes and immerse it in any holy river. This practice is popularly known as asthivisarjana.
- (12) Author's note: Just as the root-verb cal [move] plus suffix shatr equals calat [that which is in motion], cal plus shánac equals calamána.

The root-verb *cal* is *ubhayapadii* [both *átmanepadii* and *parasmaepadii* – terminologies of conjugation in ancient Sanskrit]. In the early part of the Vedic age it was mainly used in the *átmanepadii* form, but later on began to be used in the *parasmaepadii* form. In modern Sanskrit, it is used in the *parasmaepadii* form. Only in a few rare cases is the *átmanepadii* form used, as in the following example, a well-known utterance of Lord Buddha:

Ihásane shuśyatu me shariiram.
Tvagasthimámsaṁ pralayanca yátu.
Aprápya bodhiṁ bahukalpadurlabhám
Naevásanát káyamatashcaliśyate.

[Until I attain the highest realization, which is rare even in hundreds of lives, I will not budge an inch from this posture, even if my skin, flesh and bones dry up and my body perishes.]

Dyotamáná is a *shánac*-ending word. Since olden days, the *átmanepadii* form *dyotate* has been used.

Dyotate kriidate yasmáduadyate dyotate divi;
Tasmádeva iti proktah stúyate sarvadevataeh.

[The vibrational manifestations emanating from the Supreme Nucleus are known as *devatás*, and these *devatás* address that Supreme Nucleus as *Deva*. He with His powers vibrates the entire universe, makes the entire universe dance; and He by dint of His occult and supra-occult powers brings everything back onto His lap.]

(13) Author's note: *Mrga* literally means “wild animal”, and thus both a deer and a tiger are equally *mrga*. Hence literally *mrgacarma* means not only “deerskin”, but the skin of any wild animal. In those days the kings hunted not only deer, but also other wild animals.

Later on, perhaps, the deerskin became somewhat rare, so people introduced the use of cotton in its place. Even today in certain sections of Indian society people wear a piece of deerskin during the holy-thread ceremony.

(14) Editors' note: This straight posture symbolizes that although one may or may not be straight in all mundane activities, one is as simple and straight as can be before the entity being revered.

(15) Author's note: Dance should not be called *shilpa* – literally, “that which is done with the hands” – because in dance, the legs, neck, chin and other parts of the body are also used. In some dances every part of the body has a certain role to play.

(16) Editors' note: Philology of “oriental”, “occidental”, and other words omitted here.

(17) Editors' note: Not only *ám* and *ah*, but all sixteen vowel sounds, are located at the *vishuddha cakra*. For correlation of other sounds with their respective *cakras*, see “Plexi and Microvita” in *Yoga Psychology*.

(18) Editors' note: In Ananda Marga sádhana, shuddhis (visualizations for withdrawing the mind) and Guru Pújá.

(19) Editors' note: The lokas of the Macrocosmic Mind are Its different "levels", or "layers", or "spheres". They represent different stages on a continuum from subtle to crude. And the kámamaya kośa represents such a stage in both the Macrocosmic Mind and the microcosmic mind. The kámamaya kośa of the microcosm is its "crude mind", as it is the layer of mind closest to the physical body. It is concerned with physical sensations and physical desires.

(20) Editors' note: The lokas of the Macrocosmic Mind are Its different "levels", or "layers", or "spheres". They represent different stages on a continuum from subtle to crude. And the kámamaya kośa represents such a stage in both the Macrocosmic Mind and the microcosmic mind. The kámamaya kośa of the microcosm is its "crude mind", as it is the layer of mind closest to the physical body. It is concerned with physical sensations and physical desires.

The Meaning of “Krśńa” in Rája Yoga

Now we come to the fourth of our various interpretations of “Krśńa”.⁽¹⁾ We come to another type of interpretation – the Rája Yaogik interpretation.

This human body is controlled by nerve fibres, which in turn are controlled by nerve cells. The human body generally moves as it is directed to by the mind. But when the body functions under the impact of certain inborn instincts, it does not require direction by the mind. Such actions are absolutely physical or mundane. Then there are some functions which, though physical, are also related to the mind, such as hunger, thirst, sleep and drowsiness. The latter functions are regulated by the ten váyus [vital-energy flows] – práńa, apáńa, samána, udána, vyána (the five [internal] váyus), and nága, kúrma, krkara, devadatta and dhanainjaya (the five [external] váyus). Through these external váyus all kinds of natural functions are performed. The mind does not play any particular role in these cases.

All other functions, however, are controlled by the mind. The mind will send instructions to the body according to how it (the mind) is controlled or regulated by physico-psycho-spiritual practices; and in order to control the mind the ten váyus have to be brought under control. The systematic and scientific process to regulate the váyus in order to control the mind is called práńáyáma. Práńán yamaytyeśah práńáyámah – “The process of controlling the váyus is known as práńáyáma.” (The word práńáyáma is derived as: [práń + á – yam + ghaiṅ].)

There is a unique causal relationship between the functioning of the váyus and the functioning of the mind. If someone keeps running at a certain pace by drawing rapidly on accumulated vital energy, the person’s respiration becomes faster, and if the respiration becomes fast, one loses the capacity for deep thinking or deep contemplation. That is, one loses the capacity to think, or to assimilate or internalize any idea through the organs, in a calm and systematic way. If the [body] is restless, the [mind] will also be restless. That is why during spiritual practice, the body should be kept motionless. One must practise seated in a certain posture, because if the body becomes calm and motionless the mind also tends to become calm and concentrated. If someone is constantly thinking that he or she will have to sit down at a certain time, stand up at a certain time, catch hold of one’s nose or ears at a certain time, the mind will automatically tend to become restless. Such is the intimate relation between the body and the mind.

Indriyáńam manonáthah manonáthastu márutah – “The indriyas⁽²⁾ – both sensory indriyas and motor indriyas – are controlled by [the mind and the mind is controlled by] the váyus.”⁽³⁾

This sort of functioning of the mind is discharged in and through the body with the help of the nerve cells and nerve fibres. Its principle controlling centre is situated in the sahasrára cakra – the pineal gland – but its substations are located in various parts of the body. The substations are located in sites of the body from which particular kinds of thought-waves control the adjacent areas of the body in their own respective ways. These substations are called cakra or padma or kamala – plexus in Latin – thus we have the various cakras – múládhára, svádhiśthána, mańipura, anáhata, vishuddha, ájińá, etc. The mind, instead of exerting its control directly from the sahasrára cakra, exerts its control through the other cakras, the other plexi. Hence in order to advance spiritually, one has first to establish control over these lower cakras, then finally over

the sahasrára cakra. If one, conversely, tries to control the sahasrára first while the other cakras remain uncontrolled, spiritual practice on the sahasrára may be hampered. Not only that; even if the sahasrára cakra can be brought under control, the final result will not be good if the subsidiary cakras are not brought under control. It is not enough that the driver of a car be efficient, the car as well must be free from any defect.

The various cakras are controlled by particular biija mantras, particular acoustic roots, and also emanate sound vibrations; and every sound vibration coming from each such plexus – each such network of nádiis [psychic-energy channels] – is in scripture given the name of a particular devatá [deity], a particular vibrational existence. When you think in a particular way, your mind is vibrated in the corresponding way, and your nerve cells and nerve fibres are vibrated in the corresponding way. When someone gets angry, the mind also becomes heated and red, and there is a corresponding reaction in the nerves. The body becomes reddish and starts trembling. Now these devatás or vibrational existences – each the repository of a particular kind of thinking and each representing one point in a given cakra – are controlled by the nuclei of their respective plexi, and all those nuclei are controlled by the human mind, which is the collective expression of fifty main propensities.

Those fifty main propensities function both internally and externally. One may donate something to someone both internally and externally. Likewise, one can steal both mentally and physically. Hence every propensity is functioning in two ways, and fifty times two equals one hundred. Furthermore, each propensity functions in ten directions [north, south, east, west, northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest, up and down]. One hundred times ten equals one thousand. Hence there are one thousand functioning propensities. These one thousand vrttis are controlled by the mind from the pineal gland, which is why [its corresponding cakra] is called sahasrára [sahasra means “thousand”]. So the nucleus of the sahasrára controls the sahasrára itself, every subsidiary plexus below the pineal gland, and the vrtti-controlling points of all those cakras. (Each of these points is a vibrational existence, a devatá.) All the devatás of a given plexus are controlled by the controlling point of that plexus, and the supreme controlling point is the controlling point of the pineal gland. This supreme controlling point is called Paramashiva in yoga philosophy – Paramashivah Puruśottamah vishvasya kendram [“Supreme Consciousness at the nucleus of the universe is known as Paramashiva or Puruśottama”]. The same entity which is called Paramashiva or Puruśottama in Rája Yoga is known as “Krśńa” in Vaesńava Tantra. This is one aspect [of the Krśńa concept in philosophy]. This is a very important point which should be well understood.

When a spiritual aspirant can concentrate all his or her psycho-physical existence or individual “I” feeling on Paramashiva or Puruśottama in the sahasrára cakra, the jiiva becomes Shiva. A jiiva is manifested out of Paramashiva as a jiiva in a human body – or rather, simultaneously in the Cosmic Body and in a human body. Each and every microcosmic structure is like a universe. Hence the yoga scriptures say, Traelokye yáni bhútáni táni dehatah – “Whatever exists in the universe exists in your small structure as well.” Just as the universe, starting from Paramashiva, Puruśottama, flows on and on along the path of saiñcara and attains the form of the crudest matter (if it undergoes further crudification it will explode), and thereafter starts moving on the path of subtlety, similarly in the human frame the last vertebra is the crudest manifestation. The

last vertebra in the human body is termed kula in Sanskrit. So kula literally means “that which bears the load of the entire body”.⁽⁴⁾

That entity which sleeps [coiled], like a snake, [around] the last vertebra, with the sleeping divinity (that is, the unexpressed divinity⁽⁵⁾ within a human or animal structure) clamped in its mouth, is called kulakuṇḍalinii.

When human beings do sādhaná, the kulakuṇḍalinii, an ideative entity, rises upward through the spine. It pierces through cakras one after the other, and simultaneously the thoughts or propensities controlled by their respective cakras are brought under control. As soon as the kulakuṇḍalinii pierces the múládhára, svádhiśthána and mañipura cakras, it brings under control all the propensities up to and including those of the mañipura cakra. The mañipura is the controlling cakra of ten propensities – shyness, sadistic tendency, envy, staticity, melancholia, peevishness, yearning for acquisition, infatuation, hatred, fear. When after rising and rising the kulakuṇḍalinii reaches the sahasrára, it becomes one with Paramashiva. This is the state of liberation.

You know very well that in medieval India, Tantra branched out into numerous schools: Saora Tantra, Shákta Tantra, Shaeva Tantra, Gáñapatya Tantra, Vaeśnáva Tantra, etc.⁽⁶⁾ So according to yoga scripture, the kuṇḍalinii resides in the múládhára and Paramashiva in the sahasrára. And according to Vaeśnáva Tantra, the kulakuṇḍalinii is called “Rádhá” and Paramashiva is called “Krśńa”. This is the essence of the concept of Rádhá and Krśńa. Unfortunately, the actual underlying spirit of the Vaishnavite Cult is forgotten or ignored by many.

Quite often at the end of a [Vaishnavite] kiirtana you will hear that Rádhá and Krśńa have become united. The participants express this with a sentence that includes the words, Haribol, Haribol. The fact is that the sádhaná has elevated the jivabháva [microcosmic bearing], and, it having become one with Paramashiva at the sahasrára cakra, the microcosm has gone beyond the periphery of all bondages, and has attained the bliss of emancipation. This is the inner secret.

Here the seven cakras, from múládhára to sahasrára, which the kulakuṇḍalinii has to pierce, are the fetters or ropes which a spiritual aspirant has to snap. Páshabaddho bhavajjivah, páshamukto bhavecchiva – “Those who are in bondage are called jivivas, and those who have been freed are Shiva.”

This is the last of our interpretations of the term “Krśńa”. In the sahasrára cakra, Paramashiva is the controlling point. Paramashiva is the same as “Krśńa”.

14 January 1980, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) The author had given various interpretations of the word “Krśńa” in his discourses of the two preceding days (in January 1980). Those two discourses appear in this book as the first chapter and the seventh chapter (p. 34). –Trans.

(2) An indriya is a sensory or motor organ, together with its respective nerves, nerve fluid, and site in the brain. –Trans.

(3) Etymology of márut (a synonym of váyu) omitted here. –Trans.

(4) A page of linguistic discussion omitted here. –Trans.

(5) The unexpressed divinity is metaphorically represented here by the tail of the snake. Sometimes the dormant kuṇḍalinii snake as a whole is called the “sleeping divinity”. –Trans.

(6) For these five schools of Tantra, see “All Bask in the Glory of Shiva – 3”. –Trans.

Krśńa Unparalleled

Yesterday I told you something about nerve fibres, nerve cells, and the positions of various cakras; about the relation of the cakras to the propensities and how people establish control over these propensities. The highest point in the human body is the controlling point of the sahasrāra cakra and is called Shiva, Puruśottama or “Krśńa”.

It will be better if I say something more about Krśńatattva [the inner meaning of Krśńa]. I have told you that in Vaeśńava Tantra the last bone of the vertebral column is called kula. [Here resides the serpentine coil.] In Tantra it is called kulakuńḍalinii, while in Vaeśńava Tantra it is called “Rādhā”, and Paramashiva [Puruśottama] is called “Krśńa”. Through sādhanā we raise the kulakuńḍalinii upwards, and in the end the union of Rādhā and Krśńa takes place. There is a secret technique to raise this serpentine coil. Previously this technique was not clearly given. At that time some people thought it proper to keep it secret. If something harmful to individual or collective life is not given, that is good; but the useful things have to be given. People will be more attracted to do sādhanā.

The first thing is that this kulakuńḍalinii rises slowly from the mūlādhāra cakra to the sahasrāra cakra in eight steps, it passes through eight cakras, and the sahasrāra cakra is the ninth. Just below the sahasrāra cakra is the guru cakra. When one meditates at the guru cakra, the kuńḍalinii takes one jump upwards, and the mind goes to the other side of the cakra [i.e., to the sahasrāra.] This is the technique of sādhanā, but it has previously neither been explained nor written in books.

The kulakuńḍalinii rises upward in eight jumps or phases, so with two syllables in a siddha mantra,⁽¹⁾ the kuńḍalinii will jump four times. But a general, or publicly-given, siddha mantra will make the kulakuńḍalinii jump eight times or in eight phases. That is why such a siddha mantra has eight syllables. So you should understand that a proper kiirtana must have eight syllables, never seven or nine syllables.

The jīvabhāva [microcosmic bearing] moves towards Krśńa, Paramashiva, the pineal gland in the sahasrāra cakra, as a result of sādhanā, and the mind also becomes introverted in gradual steps. When the kuńḍalinii reaches the navel cakra, or mañipura cakra, that is called vraja bhāva in Vaeśńava Tantra. And when it moves from the navel cakra to the trikūṭi, or ājñā cakra, that is known as gopī bhāva. And when it rises past the ājñā cakra, that is known as advaya bhāva or Rādhā bhāva. Thus there are these three stages.

During this process, one will hear the eternal sound of prañava [the oṃ sound] in the vast mahākāśha [void] in different ways, according to the different levels which the mind has reached. Sometimes one first hears the sound of rumbling clouds, sometimes ankle bells, sometimes the roar of the sea. When after hearing different sounds in this way the mind reaches the trikūṭi, one hears the sweet and harmonious sound of the flute. These are various expressions of the prañava sound. The prañava sound is heard as the trikūṭi or ājñā cakra is crossed, but then when the mind merges with Krśńa or Paramashiva there is no sound, the silence itself is the sound. There is no expression. These are some of the secrets of sādhanā. The spiritual aspirant hears the various sounds of oṃkāra or prañava at various stages, during deep sādhanā, during

sweet sáadhaná. The sound is called Krśńa's muraliidhvani. The sádhaka becomes mad because of this sound and goes deeper and attains Rádhá bháva more and more, and rushes headlong forward.

Choťe ye jan báníshir táne
Se ki tákáy pather páne?

[Can a person who rushes headlong at the sound of the flute ever think about the path he or she is treading?]

At that time one does not think at all about what people will say. One knows only that "I and my Íśa exist."

The kulakuńdalínii resides in the kula, that is, in the last bone of the vertebral column. In Sanskrit kuńdalínii means "coiled", "serpentine loop", "serpentine coil". Jilipii [a fried sweet] is also called kuńdalínii in Sanskrit because it is coiled. The poet Vidyápati has said: Hari gelá Madhupurá háma kulabálá ["The Lord is in Madhupur, that is, in the sahasrára cakra; I am kulabálá"].

Where is Hari [the Lord]? He is in Madhupur. "Madhupur" means the sahasrára cakra. In Vaeśńava Tantra, the sahasrára is "Madhupur". From "Madhupur", "Madhura" and "Mathura" have been derived. So Mathura is not only the town in Uttar Pradesh, it is also the sahasrára cakra. Háma kulabálá – "I am kulabálá," that is, "I am the jivashakti [divinity of the individual] sleeping in the last vertebra." Kulabálá does not here mean "the daughter of a family".

Vidyápati has said:

Nayanak nind gel gayának hás
Sukh gel piyásaunġa dukh morá pásh.

"Hari lives very far above, Parama Puruśa or Paramashiva is so far above, and the jivabháva is so far below, at the lowermost point. For that reason it has no sleep, no happiness. It has only suffering, pain and suffering." When will this suffering come to an end? When the jivabháva merges in the Shivabháva. This is the ultimate end of sáadhaná, the sweetest end. The separate existence of the individual is no more.

The reality of things has to be understood. The above kind of suffering is known philosophically as spiritual suffering. The jiva experiences three types of suffering – ádhibhaotika, ádhidaevika, and ádhyátmika. Ádhibhaotika suffering is mundane, that is, it derives from shortages of food, clothing, medicine, education, shelter, etc. If we change the structure of society this misery will be ended. So we must do this, we should do this. Regarding ádhidaevika suffering – if we prepare our minds through sáadhaná, all the mental cares and worries that result from a defective mental structure will come to an end. And the ádhyátmika, or spiritual, suffering is that Hari or Krśńa, who is my own and my dearest, is far off, far away from me. He is in the sahasrára cakra, the pineal gland. And the sleeping jivashakti is in the lowest cakra, the múládhára cakra. This

feeling of separation is ádhyátmika suffering. This can be eliminated by spiritual sáadhaná, that is, by dhyána, dhárańá, práńáyáma, pratyáhára, etc.

In Vaishnavite philosophy the controlling point of the sahasrára cakra is known as “Kṛ́ṣṇá”. This Kṛ́ṣṇá is not only the nucleus of the universe, He is the nucleus of each and every unit, so all Kṛ́ṣṇas are one and the same. However we try to explain Him, we will arrive at the same point. 3500 years ago in Dvápára Yuga there was another Kṛ́ṣṇá. You may say, “Puruśottama, Parama Puruśa, Shiva and Kṛ́ṣṇá – on the spiritual level, all Kṛ́ṣṇá’s are one and the same. Is the historical Kṛ́ṣṇá different from these?” No, He is not.

I raise this topic because I want to emphasize that human society moves ahead through clash and cohesion. It moves ahead through ideological unity and disunity, through ideological clash. It has moved ahead, it is moving ahead, and it will move ahead. To stop this movement means destruction, a great destruction – hence we have to advance with great speed. When the speed of this advancement gets slowed down, people will face trouble at every step. (Human beings do not want any such undesirable action, for which they may later have to repent, to be taken individually or collectively.)

But if the time does come when the advancement becomes too slow, someone will be needed who can give society a hard hammering. Whether people like this person or not, love him or not – whether they feel love, devotion, respect or fear – under his fast-tempoed hammering the society will move ahead. People basically want to feel the blow that will move them ahead. The blow will be painful, people fear it, but in their minds they want it, because only under this hammering will they decide to move forward. It is a strange condition – “I feel afraid, yet at the same time this is what I want. Or, no, I don’t want to move ahead – I’ll go a little later” – but then one is forcibly pulled ahead. The feet do not want to move ahead, they tremble, but the minds want to move ahead. The need for this kind of treatment arises when people collectively are not able to advance towards the goal under their own internal power.

Everything is created by Parama Puruśa. The root bhú plus the suffix ktin equals bhúti – “existence” or “entity”. The Sanskrit word for “entity” or “being” comes from the root bhú. And the root bhú plus the suffix kta equals bhúta. Bhúta means that which is created. But when for the benefit of human society, for human welfare, something has to be done which is not so easy to do, which is rarely done, which will deliver the necessary blow to the human race – when the right entity or being is needed to do this work – what will Parama Puruśa do? He will create a body for Himself with the help of the five fundamental factors, and He will come. He will say, “I will awaken the práńa [vital energy] of these dying people with a timely slap, I will stir up their práńa.” He will create vibrations in their práńa. He will not tolerate idleness. He will not allow us to waste this valuable human life.

When He comes, after creating His own body with the help of the five fundamental factors – solid, liquid, luminous, aerial and ethereal – to create an ideological tidal wave, that stage is called Mahásambhúti. Mahá means “great”, “having a form which is supra-natural”. And bhú plus ktin equals bhúti. Hence Mahásambhúti means “The Great Creation”, “The Great Appearance”. Whenever in the past Parama Puruśa thought it necessary, He came in the form of Mahásambhúti. In that way came Sadáshiva, in that way came Kṛ́ṣṇá. To push human society

forward, to resuscitate the half-dead human race, to awaken society, they came. They came to create a wave in the field of ideology, in the social field and in the field of humanity; they came to create a tidal wave in every dimension and on every level. They delivered hammer blows to the various human social structures of the world. For this they received both the highest praise and the most scathing condemnation.

Because Parama Puruṣa is Puruṣottama, the nucleus of the universe, the nucleus of all living entities, His Mahāsambhūti is also Parama Puruṣa.

And that Mahāsambhūti is also Kṛṣṇa. All the Kṛṣṇas – historical, biological, social, scriptural – come together at one point. That is why it is said that Tulanā vā upamā Kṛṣṇasya nāsti – “Kṛṣṇa cannot be compared with any other object on earth.” Or, “You can be compared only with Yourself.”

Because He cannot be compared with any other being, because He is incomparable, perfect in theory and also perfect in practice, the rīsis of that time spoke of Him as ananyapāy [unparalleled]. They said of Him, Kṛṣṇastu Bhagavān svayaṁ [“Kṛṣṇa is Parama Puruṣa Himself”].

15 January 1980, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) A mantra “perfected” by the guru. See “Mantra Caetanya” in Ananda Marga Ideology and Way of Life in a Nutshell Part 11 or Discourses on Tantra Vol. 1. –Trans.

Tantra and Indo-Aryan Civilization

The Aryans were not the original inhabitants of the present India. When the Aryans entered India through the Northwest Frontier Province, they contemptuously called the indigenous population whom they defeated in battle, “Anáryas” [“Non-Aryans”]. The appellation “Anáryas” did not apply to any group in particular, but rather to all the then inhabitants of India in general: the Mongolians, the Austrics and the Dravidians (a mixture of Austric and Negro). My discourse today will give a brief overview of the transformation that occurred in the civilizations of these peoples after the arrival of the Aryans, and of the effect that the Aryan migration had on the Aryans themselves. I will try to concentrate particularly upon the influence of Tantra on the Aryans.

The original home of the Aryans was in the northern part of Central Asia. By descent they were a fair, tall and healthy race. They were people of nomadic nature whose main means of subsistence was hunting. When, however, it became impossible for them to procure enough food by hunting, they started rearing cattle. But the merciless nature of Central Asia made their lives unbearable: snowstorms diminished the numbers both of their people and of their animals, and there was a chronic shortage of animal fodder. Just to survive, they had to spend almost all their time collecting food. Not only did this acute food shortage force them to make unending efforts as a group to collect food and rear cattle, it also led to perpetual inter-group skirmishes and even slaughter.

The constant fighting during this period, this kśatriya-dominated era, led to the eventual emergence of a class of intellectuals who greatly assisted the kśatriya-dominated society. They provided the kśatriya leaders with new inventions and discoveries, and satisfied their mental hunger by sharing their knowledge and wisdom. In the language of the day, these intellectuals were called rśis. The group leaders bowed their heads in reverence before these mighty intellectuals and followed the precepts framed by them. The society used to call their ideology Ársa Dharma [Religion of the Sages].

There can be no doubt that these rśis were wiser and more intelligent than the people of the time. But as script had not yet been invented, there was no means to keep a record of the wise discourses given by the rśis. The rśis’ disciples had no choice but to learn the rśis’ discourses by heart as they were being spoken. Since the discourses were memorized upon being heard, they were called shruti [literally, “ear”].

The level of intelligence of the Aryan mass at that time was so low that it hardly merits any mention. Actually, they were unable to understand these profound discourses, and as a consequence called them veda, meaning “knowledge”. They believed that the innovative rśis and intellectual munis were not men of ordinary stuff, but superior beings who heard the words of wisdom directly from the mouths of the gods. They also called them draśta [seers], as they “saw” with their own eyes the supernatural phenomena that they talked about, and uttered with their own mouths the benign incantations and mantras which produced those phenomena. Thus, every composer of the Vedic mantras was called a seer, and not a writer or composer. Generally, people believed that the composers of the Vedas were not men but veritable gods.

Even though the Vedas were considered as the creations of God and as such infallible, theism or spirituality was not fully awakened among the Aryans of that time. They only sang hymns and eulogies to appease the different natural forces.

In that age of undeveloped science they thought that smoke and the clouds in the sky were the same thing. That was why they burned ghee in sacrificial fires: they wanted to make smoke out of it to propitiate the different gods. They believed that the smoke would soar into the sky and turn into clouds; that rain would pour down from the clouds and nourish the earth causing an abundance of trees, plants and grass to sprout forth; and that their domestic animals, strengthened by the fresh grass, would multiply. That was why yajñas [sacrifices] were very common among the different groups and tribes. Those simple people believed that some gods would be propitiated by ghee, some by wine, and some by animal blood.

Human nature is such that one thinks that what is dear to oneself must be dear to everybody. So the ghee-, meat- and wine-loving Aryans thought that such food items would be liked by the gods also. Thus, after each inter-clan war, the chief of the conquering clan would offer that clan's favourite food to the gods, either in Ashvamedha Yajña [Horse Sacrifice] or in Gomedha Yajña [Cow Sacrifice] or in Rájasúya Yajña [sacrifice performed by a sovereign ruler], etc.

Each of the gods and goddesses of the polytheistic Aryans had his or her individual nature, characteristics and váhana [mount]. Although they were polytheists and nature-worshippers, they did not worship idols, not because they understood the philosophical defects of idol-worship, but because they lacked the refined artistic sense necessary to make the idols.

All their gods and goddesses were laokik figures [creations of the people]. They arose out of the peoples' worldly needs. Hence the storm, the thunder, the lightning, the rain, the sun, and the moon were all their gods. In that era of undeveloped science what they feared most was the darkness of night, so they not only regarded the night and the evening as their gods, they actually revered them as well. In their fear, they would try to escape from the darkness by making fire with flint. They would never dare to displease the night and the evening, so whenever they made a fire they would first make obeisance to the evening with the fire before doing anything else. At night's end, when the eastern horizon glowed red, the Aryans would sing the song of the dawn in unison. Aruṇa, the mythological charioteer of the sun's seven-horsed chariot (the seven horses corresponding to the seven distinct colours of the sun's rays), was also their god, as, indeed, was the sun itself.

Some of the r̥sis understood, however, in a vague way if not in a clear way, the truth that there was a Supreme Entity above these gods, a Supreme Controller – the fundamental power of all their powers. This God of gods was the r̥sis' Brahma. The common people were not familiar with the word Brahma.

The kings or chieftains staged sacrifices with great pomp and ostentation to appease the gods. The common people used these occasions for boisterous revelry. Since they lived in cold countries, of course, wine and meat were not particularly harmful to them. They would often entertain their guests with meat-cakes and wine. The children were given honey instead of wine. In the Aryan language of that time, wine was often called "honey".

The oldest portion of the Vedas, that is, the Rgveda, was composed outside India. The remaining portions, that is, the Yajurveda and Atharvaveda, were partly Indian and partly non-Indian. Sámaveda is not a separate Veda by itself but is the compilation of the lyrical and musical portions of the different Vedas. So only the Rgveda can be regarded as an ancient relic of the non-Indian Aryan civilization. The Yajurveda was composed in Iran, Afghanistan, northwest India and certain parts of what is modern Russia, so it cannot be called entirely non-Indian, particularly since the then Afghanistan (Gándhár) and certain parts of Russia were regarded as part of India at that time.

The original Rgvedic civilization belonged, in spirit and language, to the non-Indian Aryans. But the Yajurveda was composed by a particular branch of the Vedic Aryans who, when the Aryans later began to spread out in search of food (especially wheat), migrated to India via Iran (Áryańya Vraja) and Afghanistan. When we say “Indo-Aryan civilization”, we basically mean the civilization of these people.

These nomadic Aryans, on coming in contact with the different groups of people of Iran, Afghanistan and northwest India, took up farming and developed the techniques of strategic warfare. The impact of this new thought bred in them, to some extent, a refined intelligence.

In the beginning, during the Rgvedic era, the cattle-rearing Aryans were only acquainted with barley and a few other crops. After they came to the present Iran they learned to cultivate wheat and, to some extent, rice. The more they progressed on their march, the more they came to realize the importance of growing different crops. Still, their staple was generally barley.

They learned wheat cultivation from the Asuras, the primitive natives of Iran. Though they became acquainted with paddy, or briihi (briihi → riihi → rihi → risi → “rice”, as in modern English), they did not cultivate it extensively. They learned the use of boiled rice in India.

The Yajurvedic era saw the all-round development of these people, and the resultant development of the Brahmaváda of the Yajurveda – the doctrine of monotheism. During this era not only was there a noticeable intellectual development among the general mass of the Aryans; among the munis [intellectuals or seers] and the rśis, philosophy and spirituality also attained a brilliant height of expression. The Brahmaváda of the Yajurveda was a lot deeper and clearer than that of the Rgveda.

The Atharvaveda was initially composed in India. During the composition of this Veda the Aryans came in close contact with the non-Aryans, resulting in an exchange of thought between the two. The Tantra of the non-Aryans had a marked influence on the Atharvaveda.

Being non-Aryan, the Atharvaveda cannot be regarded as a representation of Aryan civilization. In the subtle philosophy of the Atharvaveda, particularly of the Nrsimha Tápańiia Shrutí, there is a far greater influence of the non-Aryan Tantra than of the Aryan Veda.

The migrating Aryans first settled in the hilly valleys of northern India. Although there was not much intermixture of blood between the Aryans and the inhabitants of this area, the Aryans were greatly influenced by non-Aryan culture. The Aryans settled down in this area, which was known

as Kash (or Khash) after defeating its ancient non-Aryan inhabitants. Using the original name, Kash, they renamed the area “Kashmeru” or “Kashmiira” [Kashmir]. Although the Aryans of Kashmiira did not give up their Vedic study, in the spiritual field they did cultivate the indigenous Indian Tantra.

As the southern part of Kashmiira was littered with pebbles resembling the jambu fruit [Eugenia jambolana Lam], the Aryans named it “Jambu Dviipa” (modern Jammu). Subsequently, Jambu Dviipa came to mean the whole of India. Possibly in the sandy beds of the many rivers that transect Jambu Dviipa they discovered gold for the first time, and so gold came to be known as jámbunada. When still later they settled throughout the entire land of India, they realized that it was ideal not only for habitation, but also for self-development. Thus they named it “Bháratarváśa”. Bhara means “that which feeds”; ta means “that which gives”, or “that which helps in the process of expansion”; and varśa means “a vast stretch of land”. Thus, bháratarváśa means “a vast expanse of land which helps in the all-round development of its inhabitants”.

The Aryans did not have their own script and thus were first introduced to the [written] alphabet after coming in contact with the Dravidians. The Dravidians of the Harappa and Mahenjodaro civilizations of India were already using a script, the Saendhavi script; after the Aryan migration into India, that script became transformed into the Bráhmii and Kharośthi scripts.

The inconvenience that the non-Indian Aryans had faced for want of script no doubt disappeared after the Indianized Aryans learned it, but owing to their old superstitions, most of the Aryans were reluctant to put the Vedas in black and white. They refused to believe that the reason that the Vedas were not written at the time of their composition was simply the lack of script. They adhered to their illogical reasoning even after the scripts came into being: they thought that the rśis had not written out the Vedas, one, because it was improper, and two, because the Vedas were named shruti. However, much later, in Kashmiira,⁽¹⁾ the Vedas were written down in the Sáradá script in use there at the time. There was really no alternative to writing them down, because there was almost nobody left who knew all the Vedas by heart, and the number of people who knew even parts of them was very small. When the Kashmiira scholars finally did write down the Vedas, it was discovered that many parts of them were missing for good.

It was not difficult for the healthy, martial, almost invincible Aryans to conquer northern India. The victorious Aryans treated the vanquished non-Aryans as slaves, trampling them underfoot to the bottom of their trivarńa [three-caste] society – their society of Bráhmańas, Kśatriyas and Vaeshyas. There the non-Aryans became the fourth class, or Shúdra Varńa, while society became a cáturvarńa [four-caste] society. In the beginning the Aryans tried their utmost to avoid blood relationships with the Shúdras – overwhelming proof of this is found in the Vedas and later books – but eventually it became impossible for them to avoid intermixture.

Although in northern India the Aryans enjoyed predominance in the political sphere, the non-Aryans’ influence in the social sphere gradually increased, and persists even today. It was not possible for the Aryans to extend their political power into southern India. There they did exert some social influence, but even less than in the north.

The courage, strength and physical beauty of the Aryans was conspicuous in the north, south and east of India, so in these areas, the non-Aryans were very eager to establish social relations with the Aryans, and often proudly called themselves Árya-Vipras [Vipra = Bráhmaña, or Brahman], Árya-Kśatriyas or Árya-Vaeshyas. Although the Aryans' predominance was mainly political, and the non-Aryans maintained social and cultural predominance, the Aryan influence over the language spread everywhere. Moreover, the influential leaders of society everywhere began to introduce themselves as Aryans. The anti-Aryan sentiment gradually weakened, causing a widespread inferiority complex to take root among the non-Aryan population. This inferiority complex proved extremely detrimental to the interests of the non-Aryans.

The Aryan leader Agastya was the first to go to southern India to popularize the ideas and ideals of the Aryans. He explained the greatness of the Aryans to the people there allegorically. According to this mythological tale, Vindhya Hill on the northern frontier of the Deccan bent its head out of reverence for Agastya, enabling him to cross into southern India, and has kept its head bent in reverence ever since. The great epic Rámáyána depicts the Aryan invasion of southern India. Needless to say, the monkeys of Kiśkindhyá and the rákśasas [demons] of Lanka, as described in the Rámáyána, were in fact neither monkeys nor demons, but the people of different sub-castes of the Dravidian society itself. The proof that the non-Aryans, particularly the Dravidians, were a highly developed community in regard to knowledge, learning, intellect, city and town building, cultivation of science, and social order and discipline, is traceable in every line of the Rámáyána. It was extremely difficult for the Aryans to hold their own in an intellectual duel with the Dravidians. At every step they found themselves outwitted, and said, "Queer are the ways of demons."

As a result of co-existing with the non-Aryans for a long time, the Aryans learned many things from them. In fact there is hardly anything of Aryanism left in them today. Of course, the non-Aryans also took on certain Aryan traits, among them their fair complexion, their proficiency in various activities, and their ostentatious lifestyle. From the non-Aryans the Aryans acquired a well-knit social system, a subtle insight, spiritual philosophy and Tantra sádhaná. In the beginning the Aryans tried hard to preserve the purity of their blood – Shúdras used to be kept scrupulously at arm's length – but such endeavours and precautions eventually proved a failure. More or less everywhere in India there was intermixing between the Aryans and the non-Aryans – the Dravidians, the Austrics, and the Mongolians - which resulted in a new mixed race. This is why dark Vipras and fair Shúdras are not at all rare in India today. Their very colours pay testimony to the intermixture of Aryan and non-Aryan blood running in their veins.

The victorious Aryans, coming from cold countries, were a skilled and competent race. Their competence, their sense of superiority over the non-Aryans, and their unity born out of hatred for the non-Aryans, helped them in their victory over India. Though the non-Aryans were defeated by the Aryans in northern India, though the non-Aryans of southern and eastern India were under the spell of an inferiority complex, none of them surrendered to the Aryans without a fight. As they were constantly engaged in warfare with the Aryans, they became much more proficient in battle. Thus Aryan victory in southern and eastern India eventually became impossible. In the accounts of major battles fought between the Aryans and the non-Aryans, as depicted in the Sanskrit books written in the subsequent period,⁽²⁾ the non-Aryans display no less competence than the Aryans.

Aryan life was full of noisy revelry and pomp, whereas the non-Aryan life was simple and unostentatious, although it was the non-Aryans who had access to more materials of enjoyment. But when the non-Aryans came in contact with the Aryans, they became tempted to enjoy pomp and splendour. Such a lifestyle proved more harmful to the comparatively inactive non-Aryans, inhabitants of a tropical country, than to the active and hardy Aryans.

The Aryans outside India had no well-structured social system nor any clearly-defined marital discipline. "Might is right" was the order of society. Nevertheless there was a predisposition in them to mould a society. The non-Aryans had happy families. They were characterized by a well-knit social structure and strong conjugal relationships. Even those nature-worshipping ethnic groups forming part of the Austric population of non-Aryan society, though comparatively backward, had very strong family relationships. So when the Aryans came in contact with these non-Aryans, they found new light for the formation of a society.

With the exception of a few munis and r̥sis, the militant (k̥satriya-predominant) Aryans used to view the world with an extroversial outlook. After major battles they would kill the men of the conquered community, employ their children as servants, and either marry the women or employ them as maid-servants. For that reason there was a large number of male and female slaves in their society.

War-loving races are generally careful to honour the rules and laws of war, and frame new laws to suit the convenience of warring armies. Thus, the Aryans displayed a commendable sense of discipline during war. Being a war-loving race, it was but natural for them to do so. The non-Aryans, however, were backward in this regard. During their battles with the Aryans they did not respect the rules and laws of war (such as not to strike at the defenceless, not to employ more than one fighter against another, not to kill a retreating or surrendering soldier or a soldier begging for mercy). Not only was this highly irritating to the Aryans; the lack of a disciplined military mentality was actually one of the main reasons for the non-Aryans' defeat.

Usually the non-Aryans were content with little. What was developed in them was their introspective nature, which not only made them devotees of God, but infused in them a surging love for spiritual philosophy. The religious practices of the Aryans, however, entailed performing certain sacrifices in order to attain certain materialistic gains. That is, their religious observances were mainly ritualistic. On the whole, the non-Aryans were followers of Tantra, or subjective s̥adhan̥a. Of course the non-Aryans, depending on their different degrees of intellectual development, ranged all the way from animists to Brahma s̥adhakas [intuitional practitioners whose goal is the Absolute]; but in general, individual s̥adhan̥a ranked very high. The religion of the Vedic Aryans was, as a rule, one of prayer. It did not include even the subtlest hint of any intuitional meditation. And here lies the difference between the Brahmav̥ada of the Vedas and the Upanishads on the one hand, and that of Tantra on the other.

As previously mentioned, by "non-Aryans" no particular ethnic group was meant. When the Aryans first migrated to India, the non-Aryans were, on the whole, divided into three populations. Of these, the Negro-Austric Dravidians were the most developed intellectually and spiritually. Their Tantra s̥adhan̥a bore a predominance of j̥iṇ̥ana and bhakti. The next groups deserving mention are those of the Mongolian population. In their Tantra s̥adhan̥a, karma and

bhakti were predominant. The groups which constituted the Austric population were almost equal to the Aryans intellectually, but in the practical and spiritual spheres they gradually lagged behind due to the comparative lack of dynamism of their society. This Austric society was content to practise the extroversial aspects of Tantra (witchcraft, involution, magic, magical incantation for evil purposes, hypnotism, etc.)

Tantra flourished in Bengal due to the pervasive intermixture of Dravidian and Mongolian blood.

Vaun̄ge prakáshitá vidyá Maethilye prabaliikrtá
Kvácit kvácit Mahárástre Gurjjare pralayaṁgatá.

[Tantra was practised in Bengal, but was more widely practised in Mithila. It was not very popular in Maharashtra, and was totally non-existent in Gujarat.]

Bengal was the home of both the Mongolian and the Dravidian populations, the Dravidians being more widespread in the southwestern areas and the Mongolians in the northeastern areas. Some groups of Austriacs lived in the western parts. In the southeastern parts of Bengal, the Mongolians held an overwhelming majority over the Dravidians. The Chakmas, Tripuris, Bodos, Kochas, Kiratas, and Chuaras of the Mongolian population; the Kaevarttas, Bagdis, Dules, Shavaras, Kurmis, Mahatas, and Kherias of the Dravidian population; and the Santhaliis, Baoriis, Mála Páháriis [(Mála or Máló)], etc., of the predominantly Austric population, were the original Bengalees.

The present Bengali society and civilization are the outcome of the mutual exchange of thought among these peoples. The greatest contribution of this civilization has been the well-structured and well-disciplined Tantra sádhaná. Tantra wields the greatest influence over the customs and usages of modern Bengal and eastern India. As a matter of fact, Tantra has had a more pervasive influence throughout all of India than have the Vedas, yet nowhere has this Tantric or non-Aryan influence been greater than in the eastern part of India. The iron bangles of the women, the vermilion mark in the parting of their hair, the various marriage customs and rites, etc., are all different social practices borrowed from the non-Aryans. The custom of addressing all women as “mother” (masiimá, pisiimá, kákiiimá [aunts], didimá [grandmother], etc.) bears the mark of Tantric influence, because in Tantra the social dominance of women was widely accepted. Even the little non-Tantric or patrilineal influence that exists in the upper castes of Bengali society is not borrowed from the Aryans of northern India, but is a result of the close and intimate trans-oceanic relations that Bengal had in those days with regions outside India.

In the life of Bengal, Tantra has surrendered to Veda only with respect to language. In fact there was no alternative but to acknowledge this defeat: The Bengalees of those days were followers of Tantra who spoke many different languages. When they decided to formulate a new language of their own, they were bound to accept the language of the foreign Aryans due to its highly expressive power. The Dravidian and Mongolian languages [although also a form of Sanskrit] were not so expressive as the Sanskrit language of the Vedas.

Although the Aryan conquerors were unable to influence the social life of Bengal to any appreciable degree, due to their influence the Tantric matrilineal social system of Bengal (the

Tantric matrilineal order prevails even today in the Dravid-Keralite and Mongolo-Khashian societies) partially accepted the patrilineal order as well. As a result Bengal, though not governed by the Mitákšará, or patrilineal, system of northern India, built up a new social order according due respect to both father and mother. Subsequently, in recognition of this new social system, Bengal officially rescinded the Mitákšará system [insofar as it officially existed], and in its place established the Dáyabhága⁽³⁾ system.

The second result of the Aryan influence was the Bengali language. The language that the Bengalees of the Vedic era used to speak had no connection with the Vedic language. Neither could the Vedic Aryans understand it. The Aryans used to say, “That is a country of birds. We don’t understand what those birds chirp and twitter.” Be that as it may, due the Vedic influence, particularly due to the influence of the eastern Vedic dialect, Mágadhii Prákṛta, there emerged a Sanskrit-based Aryan language in Bengal. Later on the Tantrics of this area composed Tantric literature using Sanskrit⁽⁴⁾ and the new Sanskrit-based Bengali.

In spite of their accepting the Aryan language, the Tantrics never gave up their own style of pronunciation. Even today the Mágadhii group of languages, particularly the Eastern Demi-Mágadhii group (Bengali, Oriya, Assamese and Maethilii), has a style of pronunciation that is completely its own. In spite of later distortions in the mode of pronunciation in northern India, due to the non-cultivation of the Sanskrit language and the heavy use of Arabic- and Persian-influenced Urdu, eastern and southern India did not give up their ancient modes of pronunciation. In ancient times the people speaking Shaorasenii and Málavii dialects used to make fun of the people speaking the Mágadhii dialect, which was heavily influenced by Tantra. Thus the people of the western part of the Mágadhii-speaking area, that is, the Magahii- and Bhojpuri-speaking people, tried to pronounce in the Shaorasenii style. Though there is, as a result, some influence of Shaorasenii and Hindi on the pronunciation of the Magahii and Bhojpuri dialects, the intonation of the saṁvrta⁽⁵⁾ a has remained unchanged. The Tantric pronunciations of jiṇa, ṛa, śa, hya, and kśa are also still prevalent in eastern India today.

The Aryans had a developed language but no script. It was indeed the Tantrics, and not the Vedics, who invented script and acoustic science. So far as correctness of pronunciation is concerned, the Tantric mode is to be accepted, not the Vedic. Remember that each of the fifty letters of the Sanskrit akśaramálá [alphabet] constitutes one acoustic root of Tantra. It was for the purpose of spiritual practice that the Tantrics had discovered these roots. Here the Aryans deserve no credit at all.

The Tantric influence exists in all the Indian languages;⁽⁶⁾ it is also prominent in observances and ceremonies. The non-Aryan and Tantric influence is prominent not only in social functions, but in religious ceremonies as well, due to the influence of the Tantric gods and goddesses. In eastern India, particularly in Bengal, popular gods and goddesses such as Shiitalá (the goddess of smallpox), Manasá (the goddess of snakes), Niila Thákura and Baṭuka Bhaerava [a Buddhist Tantric deity] are all Tantric gods and goddesses but are nevertheless worshipped in Hindu temples as Hindu gods and goddesses. (Baṭuka → Baṭua → Baṭuyá → Baṭo – in the rural areas of Bengal, Boṣo Shiva or Buṣo Shiva.⁽⁷⁾)

Even the Satyanáráyaña of eastern India is a non-Aryan deity. Of course in this worship we also find some influence by the Muslims who came from the Arab world. Betels, plantains, areca nuts and coconuts [as used to worship Satyanáráyaña] are the main paraphernalia of non-Aryan worship, because they are Dravidian in origin. Perhaps the Vedic Aryans had never heard of these things, and perhaps there were no words for them in the Vedic language or in old Sanskrit. Words like nágavallarii [a kind of creeping plant], kadalii [plaintain] and nárikela [coconut] are modern Sanskrit, but these things are widely used in the worship of Satyanáráyaña and in other popular worship. Only the shirńii [food offered to a god] of the Muslims in the worship of Satyanáráyaña is imported.

Sugar cane, coconut, limes, grapefruit, powdered rice, etc., used in the Chań Pújá [Sun Worship] are important food items in Dravidian festivities. Another noteworthy fact is that in the Chań and a number of other popular pújás, the Vedics or Brahmans have no place at all, or if they do participate, have a secondary role. The women play a most significant role in these pújás. The speciality of non-Aryan ceremonies is that the women's role is predominant. Yet another remarkable factor is that although the Vedic sun-god is a male god, the non-Aryan sun-god is female, a goddess. Thus in eastern India worshippers address the sun-god as "Chań Máyii" instead of "Chań Pitá". The non-Aryan worship of Dalapati or Gańapati (group leader or people's leader) prevalent in the non-Aryan Austric society, is also prevalent in the Aryan society in the name of Gańapati Pújá or Gańesha Pújá [actually this worship meant the worship of the group or society of the Austric people]. The head of an elephant, a big and mighty animal, placed on the shoulders of the deity's body, was only symbolic of the superiority of the group leader of the society concerned. It is noteworthy that such worship was also prevalent in the non-Aryan Mayan civilization of America.

As said before, the Aryans became acquainted with paddy at a much later period. Previously they had had no idea how to get rice out of paddy, and only learned when they came in contact with the non-Aryans. It was the non-Aryans who taught them to eat boiled rice. It is noteworthy that powdered rice or its paste was widely used in the popular worship of the gods and goddesses of south and east India. It would appear that rice seemed to be rather a queer thing to the Aryans, because in the Vedas it is called tańdula. Evidently the Aryans saw grains of rice jumping from the mortar while the paddy was being threshed and husked in the traditional hand-driven or foot-driven husking devices, and thus named it tańdula. Tańdula means "one whose characteristic is to jump". The word cáal or cául [husked but uncooked rice] is derived from the Bengali root cála – which means "sifting" in order to separate the rice from the chaff.

Spiritual practice was common in the Tantric society. There is no spiritual vigour whatsoever in the lives of those who support pompous, so-called religious, ceremonies, as there is in the lives of introspective spiritual practitioners. After the Aryans came into India, two types of practice used to take place side by side: on the one side the sacrificial fires of the rńis, characterized by the smell of burning ghee and the sonorous refrains of those paying homage to the manes while offering oblations into the fire; and on the other side, the non-Aryans' Tantra sádhaná, the practice of self-control and attainment of divine power. Spiritual depth and power of sádhaná brought fearlessness into the spiritual lives of the non-Aryans, as befitting staunch Tantrics.

The non-Aryans regarded the Aryans' sacrificial ceremonies as a time-killing childish pastime and would sabotage them whenever convenient. The Aryan munis and r̥sis asked the Aryan kings for protection against these saboteurs – or, in the language of the Aryans, these r̥k̥sasas, pashus and pish̥acas. Innumerable stories to this effect can be found in different Sanskrit books, even today. Although the words r̥k̥sasa [demon], pashu [beast] and pish̥aca [ghoul] were used in a general way to describe the non-Aryans, actually the Dravidians were normally called r̥k̥sasas (the short-statured among them “monkeys”), the Mongolians, asuras [monsters], and those Tantrics who did shava s̥adhan̥a [s̥adhaña upon dead bodies] in cemeteries and cremation grounds, pish̥acas. The Aryans also declared that these gangs of r̥k̥sasas and pish̥acas were cannibals. They drew horrible sketches of the dark-complexioned Dravidians and high-cheekboned and flat-nosed Mongolians, with grotesque forms and features, to prove them contemptible and vile. Actually they were a lot more civilized and educated than the Aryans.

Apart from this there were many Aryans who married the daughters of these r̥k̥sasas and asuras, entranced by their beauty and qualities (those who had a mixture of Mongolian and Dravidian blood had particularly beautiful features). Bhiima married Hidimb̥a, a non-Aryan girl; Arjuna married Citr̥aṅgad̥a, also a non-Aryan girl. R̥avana, the leader of the r̥k̥sasas, had a father from an Aryan Brahman family – Mahar̥si Vishvashrav̥a, the descendent of Pulasta R̥si – and a non-Aryan mother – Nikaś̥a, or Kaekasii. In other words, though the Aryans had been proud of their colour and features, that pride faded away within a short time. At that time and also later, even though a few Aryan-proud individuals attempted to defame these r̥k̥sasas and asuras, the general mass did not pay much attention to them.

On the one hand the Aryan-proud pandits of Bengal engaged in scurrilous and abusive attacks on the Mongolians and the original Bengalees –

Sarve m̥amsarat̥ah m̥urh̥ah
Mlecch̥ah gobrahma gh̥atak̥ah,
Kuvacak̥ah pare m̥urh̥a ete k̥ut̥ayonayoh,
Teṣ̥am̥ paesh̥acik̥ii bh̥as̥a lok̥ac̥aro na vidyate.

–*Padma Pur̥ana*

[They are all excessive meat eaters. They are fools. Killers of cows and Brahmans, they speak foul and meaningless words. These are foolish people born out of bad women. Their language is gibberish. They don't follow decent customs.]

– but on the other hand we observe the emergence of a new civilization in Bengal, out of the Austrico-Mongolo-Dravidian combination, at about 1000 BC.

This civilization, though similar to other civilizations in India, had its own customs and rites, language and mode of pronunciation, manners and behaviour, religious and social systems, rights of inheritance and disinheritance under the D̥ayabh̥aga code of law, and dress and food habits. Proud of its own speciality and uniqueness, it never agreed to be a part of the Āryāvartta [northern India dominated by the Aryan culture]. In order to keep itself free from Aryan subjugation, Bengal rebelled again and again. The northern Indian orthodox Aryans, full of

Aryan chauvinism (actually they too were Tantrics, but outwardly displayed an enamel coating of Aryanism), were reluctant to accept the highly Tantric areas such as Auṅga [Monghyr and its adjacent areas], Vaṅga [Bengal]),⁽⁸⁾ Kaliuṅga [Orissa], Mithila and Magadha [Bihar] as parts of their Áryavartta. For them Káshii [Benares] served as the eastern border of the Áryavartta.

These orthodox, but internally Tantric, people could not avoid being influenced by the Tantric civilization of eastern India even in their external life. The predominance of the Bengali script of east India (Shrii Harśa Lipi) extended up to Prayága in the far west. Most Sanskrit books on Hindu and Buddhist Tantra were written in this Bengali script. After the Muslim invasion, the influence of east India upon north India began to wane gradually. At about that time some Nagar Brahmans from Vedic Gujarat went to northern India to propagate the Vedas and the Sanskrit language. They used Nágrii script for writing Sanskrit, and under the Brahmans' influence the Nágrii script too gradually became popular in northern India. The use of Bengali script became confined to eastern India only. It is worth noting that many of the Nágara Brahmans of Gujarat were followers of Tantra, particularly Vaesńava Tantra.

The greatest difference between the Aryans and the non-Aryans was in their outlook. The Aryans wanted to establish their dominance on the basis of their racial superiority, whereas the non-Aryans, following the precepts of Tantra, did not recognize any distinction among people. The identity of everyone was the same: all belonged to the same family, the family of Shiva. In the first stage of sádhaná, everyone is an animal. To merge in Brahmatva [Cosmic Consciousness], after first elevating themselves to devatva [god-hood], was their sádhaná. But in the first stage, while still rising above crude animality, their adorable Shiva was known as "Pashupati", "Lord of Animality".

Here it is necessary to remember that Tantra is not a religion, but a way of life, a system of sádhaná. The fundamental goal of this sádhaná is to awaken the dormant jivashakti [unit force], known as kulakuńdalinii, and, after elevating it stage by stage, to merge it in Brahmabháva [Cosmic Consciousness]. Tantra is a science of spiritual meditation or sádhaná which is equally applicable to anyone no matter what their religious affiliation might be. Tantra is certainly older than the Vedas. Just as the shlokas or mantras of the Vedas were handed down from guru to disciple in a genealogical tradition, the Tantra sádhaná of the Mongolo-Dravidian society was handed down from guru to disciple hereditarily. The Vedas are theoretical – full of ritualistic ceremonies and formalisms. It would be incorrect to regard Tantra as a more recent version of those Vedic rituals: Tantra's esoteric practices had long been known in the society of sádhakas. Its theoretical portion was not as elaborate as that of the Vedas, which took years and years to memorize.

When the Aryans came to India, roughly during the period of the Atharvaveda, they learned Tantra sádhaná to some extent after coming in contact with the Indian Tantrics. This resulted in the Atharvaveda being pervasively influenced by Tantra. Even if the orthodox Vedics try to reject the many Tantra-influenced portions of the Vedas as later interpolations, they will not be too convincing, for Tantra has now infiltrated into the marrow of the so-called Aryans. Although during the post-Vedic Buddhist era as well as the post-Buddhist Brahmanical era changes in the religious outlook of the people were apparent, the process of sádhaná remained Tantric as it does even today, for without Tantra spiritual sádhaná is impossible. Yoga, which is the paramount

factor in spiritual practices, is itself based on Tantra. The great Tantric Vashiśtha, when he returned from China after learning the Chinese techniques of sádhaná, brought about a great improvement in Tantra sádhaná. He was widely acclaimed as a great yogi. His book Yogavashiśtha is a philosophical exposition of the subtle spirituality of Tantra sádhaná.

There are many who try to make a distinction between Hindu Tantra and Buddhist Tantra. This is absolutely wrong, for as I have said earlier, Tantra is one and only one. It is based on one sentiment, on one idea. The Buddhist and Hindu Tantras express the same thing in different words. For example, Hindu Tantras use the word kulakuṅḍalinii for the dormant unit force and ida, piṅgalá and suśumná for the three psycho-spiritual channels. They state that the kulakuṅḍalinii pierces through the six cakras – (1) múládhára [situated above the perineum], (2) svádhísthána [in the region of the genital organ], (3) mañipura [in the region of the navel], (4) anáhata [in the region of the heart], (5) vishuddha [in the region of the vocal cord] and (6) ájñá [between the eyebrows], and finally unites with Paramashiva at the seventh cakra, the sahasrára cakra [at the crown of the head], giving the sádhakas, or intuitional practitioners, the bliss of Cosmic Consciousness. The Buddhist Tantras say the same thing in different words. They have named the mañipura cakra, nirmána cakra, the anáhata, dharma cakra, the vishuddha, sambhoga cakra, and the sahasrára, usñiśa kamala or mahásukha cakra.

Some have named the múládhára, mañipadma. In both the Buddhist and Hindu Tantras, hummm is the acoustic root of the unit force, the kulakuṅḍalinii, lying dormant in mañipadma. The so-called Buddhist Tantrics also say, Om̐ mañipadme hummm. To them ida, piṅgalá and suśumná are lalaná, rasaná and avadhútikárespectively. So where, in reality, is the ideological difference between the Hindu Tantras such as Mahánirvána Tantra, Kulárnáva Tantra, Ajiñána-bodhinii Tantra, Jiñána-saṅkalinii Tantra, Rudrayámala Tantra, Bhaerava-yámala Tantra, Niila Tantra, etc., and the Buddhist Tantras such as Hevajra Tantra, Vajra-várahii Kalpamahá Tantra, Ekallaviira Caṅdarośána Tantra, Óákárnava Tantra, Advaya Siddhi Tantra, etc.? Kauṅkalamálinii Tantra cannot be called either a Hindu Tantra or a Buddhist Tantra with any clear certainty.

Even the popular assumption that the Hindus borrowed idolatry from the Buddhists is totally wrong. Although there was a conception of gods and goddesses among the Aryan Vedics, there was no custom of modelling images for worship. But in the lowest stratum of Tantra sádhaná (that is, the lowest of the low grade) idolatry was prescribed:

Uttamo Brahmasadbhávo
Madhyamá dhyána dhárańá;
Japastúti syádhadhamá
Múrtipújá dhamádhamá.

–*Kulárnáva Tantra*

[Ideation on Brahma is the best, dhyána and dhárańá are second best, repetitious incantation and eulogistic prayer are the worst, and idol worship is the worst of the worst.]

The word *uttama* in the first line of the shloka is interchangeable with *sahajāvasthá*. *Sahajāvasthá*, the “tranquil state” of the Buddhists, is no different from the ideation on Brahma of the Hindus.

According to their respective intellectual strata, the primitive non-Aryan Tantrics utilized all the practices, from the lowest-of-the-low image worship to the highest-of-the-high Brahma *sáadhaná*. Thus idolatry is as much a part of Hindu Tantra as it is of Buddhist Tantra. Neither has borrowed it from the other.

I have just referred to the ideological unity of the Hindu and the Buddhist Tantras. So far as the goal is concerned, the ultimate object of both is to merge the unit force in the introversial force and the introversial force in Parama Puruśa. In various places in the Hindu Tantras, Parama Puruśa has been called Paramashiva, Puruśottama and Krśńa, and Paramá Prakrti has been called Kálii, Rádhá, etc. In the Buddhist Tantras Parama Puruśa or Bhagaván Sarveshvara has been called Shriiman Mahásukha, Vajrasatva, Vajradhara, Vajreshvara, Heruka or Hevajra – or in places Cańdaróśańa – and the Maháshakti of Mahákaola has sometimes been called Bhagavatii Sarveshvarii, sometimes Vajravárahii, sometimes Vajradhátviishvarii, sometimes Prajińá Páramitá, and sometimes, in sandhyá bháśá,⁹ Ómbii, Cańdálii, etc.

In both the Hindu and Buddhist Tantras, men and women are permitted to do *sáadhaná* together. In the Hindu Tantras, males are advised to ideate that they are Bhaerava, and *sádhikás* [female spiritual aspirants] to ideate that they are Bhaeravii. Buddhist Tantras prescribe the same thing. There the *sádhaka* is Vajradhara and the *sádhiká* is Vajrayóśita.

Naráh Vajradharákáráh śóśitah Vajrayóśitah.

–Ekallaviira Cańdaróśańa Tantra

[The male aspirants are called Vajradhara, and the female aspirants Vajrayóśita.]

Actually Tantra is one. Therefore it is as much a mistake to distinguish between the Hindu and the Buddhist Tantras as it is to grope in vain for any differences in the inner import or final goals of the Hindu Tantras such as Shaeva Tantra, Shákta Tantra, Saora Tantra, Gáńapatya Tantra, Vaeśnaviia Tantra (Rádhá Tantra), etc.

The similarity between the gods and goddesses of the Hindu Tantras and those of the Buddhist Tantras is also particularly noteworthy. Each Tantra has either absorbed or discarded the other’s gods and goddesses according to its own convenience. Tára is one of the famous deities of the Buddhist Tantras. The worships of Bhrámarii Tára in China, Ugratára or Vajratára in Mongolia, and Niila Sarasvatii Tára or Ekajátá Devii in Tibet, date from very ancient times. Tibet’s Niila Sarasvatii Tára has been absorbed in Hindu Tantra as the second Mahávidyá of the Ten Mahávidyás, and today those Hindus who worship idols do not regard Tára as a non-Hindu deity.

Káliká Devii, the first Mahávidyá of the so-called Hindu Tantras, has been accepted by Buddhist Tantra. Clad in betel leaves (*parńa* means “betel leaves” or “turmeric leaves”), *Parńa Shavarii Devii* of the Buddhist Tantra is one of the names of the goddess Durgá of Hindu Tantra. *Prajińá*

Páramitá, the Buddhist deity, continues to be worshipped in post-Buddhist India as Sarasvatii. The bull-mounted Sarasvatii of the Vedas has not even a hint of similarity with the swan-mounted Sarasvatii, either in appearance or in nature.⁽¹⁰⁾

There are some goddesses whose sources – Buddhist or Hindu – are impossible to determine. That is to say, they are deities common to both schools of Tantra, such as Váráhhii, Kaovefii, Bhiimá, Kapálinii, Chinnamastá, etc. Goddesses of the Hindu Tantras such as Dákinii, Rákinii, Lákinii, Kákinii, Shákinii, Hákinii, etc., have been accepted by the Buddhist Tantras.

The savikalpa samádhi [trance of determinate absorption – or vacuity] of the Hindu Tantras is the prabhásvara shúnyatá [luminous vacuity] of the Buddhists. The Hindus' nirvikalpa [trance of objectless or indeterminate absorption – or vacuity] is the Buddhists' vajra shúnyatá [complete vacuity]. And the goddess of vajra shúnyatá, of the unmanifest Prakrti, is Vajravárahii, Dombii, Naerátma Devii or Naerámañi in the language of the Buddhists. The different stages of savikalpa samádhi related to the upward movement of the kulakuñḍalinii are called sálókya [within the same loka], sámiiipya [closest proximity], sárupya [identity], sarśthi [the stage between savikalpa and nirvikalpa], etc., in the Hindu Tantras; and in the Buddhist Tantras, viśáyánanda [objective bliss] in the nirmána cakra, paramánanda [supreme bliss] in the dharma cakra, virámánanda [intermittent bliss] in the sambhoga cakra and sahájánanda [absolute bliss] in the mahásukha cakra. In this mahásukha cakra, Naerátma Devii is Bhagavatii Prajiṇá Sarveshvarii, an embodiment of sahájánanda [bliss]. This sahájánanda is the Brahmánanda [absolute bliss] of the Hindu Tantras.

After the Aryan settlement in India a great man was born into the non-Aryan society. Born into a Mongolo-Aryan family, this great man had a high nose and fair complexion. He was a great Tantric - a great yogi. The name of this Mahápuruśa of the non-Aryan society was Shiva. For one man to have so many qualities and endowments at the same time was beyond the comprehension of the people, so He was called Guńátiita or Nirguńa [Transcendental or Non-Attributional] Puruśa. As the result of His Tantra sádhaná He attained extraordinary powers, which He employed for the good of humanity. It was He who systematized the science of Tantra and thus He was the guru or the father of Tantrics and yogis. To this Self-realized Mahápuruśa there was no distinction of high and low. People of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, were dear to Him. Irrespective of class - Aryan, non-Aryan, Dravidian, Austric or Mongolian – all flocked to Him. He showered His grace on them all equally. As the battles raged between the “gods” on the one hand and the “demons” and “monsters” on the other (needless to say, “gods” meant the handsome Aryan leaders, and “demons” meant the non-Aryans in general), the non-Aryan “demons” and “monsters” became more and more powerful through the blessings of this Shiva. All the rákśasas and asuras were Shiva's obedient devotees and followers. With the help and blessings of Shiva they destroyed the might and power of the “gods”. According to Sanskrit stories, when the gods would seek the help of Brahmá and Viśnú, even those two would not dare to oppose Shiva; rather they would save the gods through a compromise with Him.

Shiva had such a forgiving nature, born out of His spirit of benevolence, that even the most wicked could easily draw on His kindness. That is why to everybody He became “Áshutośa” (“Easy to Please”). Due to Shiva's pervasive influence over their society, the non-Aryans, that is, the Tantrics, used to worship Him as God, and according to their respective intellectual strata

they regarded and accepted Him in His different bearings. Just as the Aryans began to identify Shiva with their own gods and goddesses, the kaola mahátántrikas [great Tantrics in the tradition of kulakuṅḍalinii yoga] began to regard their Shiva as identical with Nirguṇa Brahma. The foremost cause behind this conception of theirs was the absolute detachment and self-forgetful bearing of Shiva, the lord of supernatural and miraculous power. Shiva's self-sacrificing nature earned Him the name "Bholánátha" ["one absolutely indifferent to his own status"] among the non-Aryans. All were attracted to Shiva's supernatural power, His imposing personality, His limitless qualities and the calm, tranquil radiance of His features.

Enthralled by the physical grace and the virtues of Shiva, Princess Gaorii, the daughter of the Aryan king Dakśa, was attracted towards Him. King Dakśa was not at all in favour of his daughter marrying a non-Aryan, but eventually he gave way before her adamant attitude. And so Shiva and Princess Gaorii were married. But envy born out of his knowledge of Shiva's formidable influence over both the Aryan and the non-Aryan societies had already made King Dakśa mad. Thus one day he publicly insulted Shiva at a large sacrifice specially planned for the purpose. Shiva's devotees, unable to bear the insult, made a pandemonium of Dakśa's ceremonial sacrifice. It is written in the books of the Aryans that Shiva's two servant-spirits, Nandii and Bhrngii, destroyed Dakśa's yajiṇa. Actually, Nandii and Bhrngii, the alleged spirits, were none other than two ardent non-Aryan Tantric devotees of Shiva.

Many Aryans supported the marriage of Gaorii and Shiva, because, on account of Shiva's extraordinary influence, they felt it would be more in their interest to establish kinship with Him than to remain hostile to Him. Whatever the reason, after Dakśa's yajiṇa, in Shiva's presence, all the Aryan and non-Aryan clashes and disputes came to a permanent end. In other words, the Aryans accepted the predominance of Shiva.

The non-Aryans were very happy to have Gaorii in their midst. Just as they revered Shiva as their god, they regarded Gaorii as their goddess. The non-Aryans were yellow-, black- or brown-complexioned, but Gaorii, being of purely Aryan origin, was white-complexioned. It was for this reason that she was named "Gaorii" [which means "white-complexioned"]. After the marriage, Gaorii lived in the Himalaya Mountains, and was thus often called "Parvata Kanyá" ["Daughter of the Mountains"], or "Párvatii" in common language. I told you a little while ago that the non-Aryans used to do Tantra sádhaná according to their respective intellectual development. They worshipped a pair of gods – Puruśa and Prakṛti. Whatever their intellectual and spiritual standards, all of them regarded their primary god as Shiva, or, in subsequent periods, some avatára [incarnation] of Shiva; and their primary goddess as Gaorii, or, later, some partial manifestation of Gaorii.

Among the backward non-Aryan society, phallus worship was prevalent. Although originally there was some social history behind this phallus worship (due to the perpetual warfare between the various clans and tribes, each group felt a constant necessity to increase its numerical strength, and thus they began to worship both the genital organs), in later periods, under the influence of Tantra, it took on a more subtle spiritual form. When, due to the influence of Shiva, everyone began to accept Shiva as their chief god, this liuṅga pújá [worship of genitals] became [the worship of] Shiva-liuṅga and Gaorii-piṭha, or Gaorii-páṭa. Subsequently the Aryans also accepted phallus worship and gave it a philosophical interpretation: Liuṅgate gamyate yasmád

talliṅgam [“The entity from which all things originate [[and towards which all things are moving]] is called liṅga”].

After Dakṣa’s yajña Shiva’s influence over the Aryans increased more and more. The Aryans began to feel that, being so indebted to Shiva, they could no longer afford to disregard Him. It was Shiva who had taught them spiritual sādhanā, āsanas and prāṇāyāma; the secret of good health; the science of medicine; and the developed art of dance and music. For His excellence in dancing, both the Aryans and non-Aryans used to call Him “Naṭarāja”, and for His proficiency in vocal music, “Nādatanu”. No one has counted the number of medicines He invented for every kind of disease. He was the first preceptor of the āyurvedācāryas [teachers of āyurveda, the science of medicine to increase longevity]. The asuras were cured of many serious diseases due to His grace. Both the Aryans and the non-Aryans thought that since Shiva knew so many remedies, He was perhaps immortal, and so they named Him “Mrtyuñjaya” [“Conqueror of Death”]. When, even today, people come across some incurable disease, they say, “Even Shiva has no cure for this disease.” Like the non-Aryans, the Aryans eventually accepted Shiva as their god and Gaorii as their goddess.

The tiger is one of the oldest animals of India. In the distant past these tigers came into India from the non-Aryan countries of China, Tibet, etc. Lions came much later from the Aryan countries bordering on the northwest corner of India. It is noteworthy that in the dhyāna mantra of Shiva, he has been described as wearing a tiger skin, that is, the skin of an animal of the non-Aryan countries (vyāghra-kṛtīm vasānaṁ); and the daughter of the Aryans, Gaorii, has been depicted as simha-vāhinī [“riding on a lion”].

In all the Aryan books of knowledge the word Shiva was invariably used to describe Parama Puruṣa. The racially chauvinistic Aryans could not remain at peace after their acceptance of Shiva as God. Thinking that the non-Aryans would make capital of this and boast about their triumph over the Aryans, they threw themselves into the task of proving that Shiva was an Aryan. The non-Aryan Shiva used to live in cemeteries, cremation grounds, lonesome plains and on the different peaks of the Himalayas. (That is why even today the non-Aryans, pointing to the Himalayan peaks such as Kailash, Gaurishankar, Everest, etc., say, “There live our Hara-Gaorii.”) But the Aryans turned Him into a full-fledged divinity of the scriptures. To prove that he was Aryan they hung a sacred thread on his left shoulder. (Needless to say, the non-Aryan Shiva had no such sacred thread; he wore a snake around his neck.) Strangely enough, the image of the Aryan god Brahmā shows no sign of any such sacred thread. No one doubted that Brahmā was an Aryan by race, but in the case of Shiva, the only way to prove that he was an Aryan was to hang a sacred thread on his shoulder.

We can still observe today that Shiva is the god of all, regardless of caste or colour, high or low, learned or ignorant, Brahman or pariah. No other deity in India enjoys such tremendous universal popularity. Even if one does not know a mantra, one can worship Shiva. Young maidens model earth into images of Shiva and worship Him; the philosophical sādhakas of old used to attain samādhi in Shivatva [Cosmic Consciousness]; and the so-called low castes such as Dōṁa and Caṇḍāla become sannyāsīs of Shiva. No other divinity would even touch the shadows of these so-called pariahs.

The present social system of India (which is fundamentally Tantric) was developed by Shiva. After accepting Shiva as God without any reservation, the Aryans appropriated everything good of the Dravidians and the other non-Aryans. Of course this did not diminish the Aryans' prestige – rather it enhanced it. After this appropriation there was a propaganda attempt to prove that Tantra was originally propounded by the Aryans themselves. The Aryans used to say:

Ágatañshivavaktrebhyoh gatañca Girijáshruta;
Matañca Vásudevasya tasmádágama ucyate.

That is to say, “This Tantra, or Ágama Shástra, was actually composed by Vásudeva [Krśńa, who was considered Aryan], and Shiva only revealed it to Párvatii.” Áre Bábá! ⁽¹¹⁾ – if Vásudeva had at all been the propounder of this doctrine, why on earth would He have put it into the mouth of the non-Aryan Shiva instead of saying it Himself? In the beginning the Aryans used to recognize the superiority of Tantra sádhaná but practise it in secret; but after acknowledging Shiva, they openly declared themselves to be Tantrics.

Not only in India, but in quite a large part of the world, in every sphere of life, the laws and injunctions of Shiva alone prevailed for a long time. Even today the civilization of modern India is intrinsically Tantric. On the outside only is there a Vedic stamp. Or if we take the Indian civilization as an enamelled ornament, then its gold is Tantric, and the enamel Vedic. For both the wandering sannyásiis of the cemeteries and cremation grounds, and the householders, this Shiva alone is the ideal man, and Gaorii the ideal woman. Shiva is the universal father and Gaorii the universal mother. Shiva's household is the three worlds.

Harame pitá Gaorii mátá svadesho bhuvanatrayam.

[Hara is my father, Gaorii is my mother, and the three worlds of earth, heaven and hell are my native land.]

When the Indians were about to forget the teachings of Shiva due to their fascination with the mundane objectivities of the world, there came another sublime entity like Shiva, who reminded them of those teachings. That great personality was Shrii Krśńa. The question as to which of the two was greater, Krśńa or Shiva, does not arise, because all knowers of Brahma are one: all are Brahma. Shrii Krśńa was the supreme teacher and ideal politician of the world, what to speak of India alone. Shiva was the guru, the father, of the human society of the world – a completely different kind of role. Shiva is the universal father. Just as Cándá Mámá [The Uncle in the Moon] is the uncle of all, Shiva is the father of all.

All three worlds are Shiva's family. His reputation is not confined to any particular country. Yet if anyone is to be singled out as the father of Indian civilization, or of Indian society, or of the so-called Indian nation – then I can say emphatically that Shiva alone is eligible to be the father, not only of the Indian nation, but of the universal human nation. Ancient Shiva alone, and no one else, can qualify to be the father of this more-than-five-thousand-year-old so-called Indian race.

May 1959, RU, Muzaffarpur

Footnotes

- (1) Author's note: It is wrong to write "Káshmiira", for the word káshmiira means "pertaining to Kashmiira", or "saffron". The Aryans saw saffron for the first time in Kashmiira.
- (2) Author's note: In these books the non-Aryans were sometimes called rákśasas [demons], sometimes pishácas [ghouls], and sometimes asuras [monsters].
- (3) Editors' note: Mitákśará entails the heirs' equal rights of inheritance, not subject to the father's discretion. Dáyabhága entails the heirs' right of inheritance subject to the father's discretion (the father enjoys the right to disinherit any of the heirs).
- (4) Editors' note: A mixture of the Vedic Sanskrit and the Bengalis' original laokik, or dialectal, Sanskrit (the "bird language").
- (5) Editors' note: One of three styles of pronunciation of Sanskrit – saṁvrta, vivrta and tiryak.
- (6) Author's note: The people of eastern India make common use of the Tantric mystic syllable phat. For example, Se phat kare bale phelle... "He said all of a sudden..."; or Loktár baṛa phatphatáni, "That person is very verbose."
- (7) Editors' note: "Old Shiva".
- (8) Editors' note: The va sound was later changed to ba under the influence of Muslim pronunciation, so the letter was changed as well. In modern Bengali there is no difference in pronunciation between ba and va, but the difference in spelling persists.
- (9) Editors' note: A "twilight language" of dual meanings.
- (10) Editors' note: There was a Vedic Sarasvatii in existence before the Buddhist Prajñá Páramitá, but the swan-mounted Sarasvatii modelled after Prajñá Páramitá is not the same goddess.
- (11) Editors' note: An exclamation, like "Good Lord!"

Mixed Tantra

In the Indo-Aryan alphabet all fifty letters, from a to kśa, are acoustic roots of one action or another, and the totality of all these fifty acoustic roots constitutes the alphabet, called akśamálá.

A kind of mixed Tantra was evolved out of three different spiritual texts: the Puranas, the Tantras, and the Atharvaveda. In this mixed Tantra, the akśamálá was held by a Tantric deity known as Bhadrakálii (who is not the four-armed goddess depicted in mythology). When idol worship first started, human beings had not yet learned how to write or recognize the letters of the alphabet. To symbolize those fifty sounds, therefore, a garland of fifty human heads was placed around the neck of the effigy of Goddess Kálii, as it is the human mouth which utters words. The acoustic root of creation is a, the acoustic root of preservation is u, and the acoustic root of destruction is ma. So a, being the acoustic root of creation, was made the first letter. That is why the deity Bhadrakálii holds the first letter a in her hand while the remaining forty-nine letters, from á to kśa, are suspended from her neck. Of course, in the idols made nowadays, just fifteen to twenty faces are placed in the garland. The artists who make these effigies today are not aware of the philosophical significance, nor are the worshippers.

11 January 1979, Calcutta

The Psychology Behind the Origin of Tantric Deities

Yesterday I talked about the Puranic gods and goddesses. In this connection let me tell you one thing more. Various types of Puranic methods, such as nyása, práñáyáma, etc., have now become accepted in the Puranic mode of worship, but in fact these methods are of Tantric origin and not related to the Puranas. When doing práñáyáma one will have to concentrate one's mind on a certain point. This is a Tantric method; when the mind is concentrated on a point it gets confined to a particular space. This method, confining the mind to a certain space, is called Yudhiśhira vidyá in yoga shástra. That is, this was invented by the first Páñdava brother, Yudhiśhira.

However, I will have to say something more about the Puranic system of worship. There are many Puranic worship practices which people are inclined to believe to be very old; many believe that they are as ancient as the Vedas. But that is not the fact of the matter. None of the Puranic systems of worship, or Puranic rituals, is older than 1200 or 1300 years. All those systems of worship are post-Buddhistic, or developed somewhat prior to the period of Buddhist Tantra [which came one thousand years after Buddha himself], or developed, at the earliest, contemporaneously with Buddha.

Numerous Buddhist gods and goddesses later became accepted as Puranic gods and goddesses for example, the Buddhist goddess Shiitalá became converted into a Puranic goddess because of the fear of smallpox and some of the Buddhist Tantric gods and goddesses also became converted into Puranic gods and goddesses. For instance, the Buddhist Tantric deity Tára is now accepted as a Puranic deity; these days many Hindus accept Tára Devii. You will find many persons with names such as Tárádás, Tárápada, etc. (Similarly, the Hindu Tantric goddess Kálii has been accepted in Buddhist Tantra.)

For these reasons I was saying that no Puranic ritual or mode of worship is older than 1200 or 1300 years. In the wake left by the collapse of Buddhism [in India], the Puranic religion or neo-Hindu religion emerged, and the Buddhist Tantric gods and goddesses became accommodated in the new religion.

A new religious movement called the Nátha Cult emerged during the period of transition from the Buddhist Era to the Puranic Era. Many gods and goddesses of the Nátha Cult can also be detected [in the Puranic religion], for instance Buño Shiva. In fact, most of the Puranic gods and goddesses receiving great reverence in our country are not older than five hundred or six hundred years. If any of them are 1200-1300 years old, that is indeed the maximum.

Some people believe that the worship of Durgá is something very old, but that is not true at all. This worship became popular during the Muslim period; that is, it is of quite recent origin.

The system of Durgá worship was in existence at the time when Krttivása first composed the Bengali Rámáyána. Since Durgá worship was a contemporary matter, Krttivása mentioned the goddess Durgá in his Rámáyána. For instance, he mentioned that Rámacandra worshipped the goddess Durgá with 108 lotus flowers. But in the original Sanskrit Rámáyána, Valmiiki's Rámáyána, these stories are absent. The worship of Durgá was popular during the time of

Krttivása, and therefore he inserted the story into his Rámáyána. But even in the Rañacaritmánas composed by Tulasii Dás, the story is conspicuously absent. Thus we can conclude that it was only created in the imagination of Krttivás. So the idea that the system of Durgá worship is quite old is entirely unfounded.

The system of worshipping the goddess Durgá was first introduced in Bengal by Kañsa Náráyána Ráy, the king of Táhirpur of Rájsáhi District, now in Bangladesh. King Kañsanáráyána had a lot of wealth. He told the pandits, “I have so much wealth, I would like to hold the Rájasuya Sacrifice.” The pandits said, “O king, in Kali Yuga there is no system for holding the Rájasuya Sacrifice. But since you have so much money, you can celebrate the worship of the goddess Durgá in accordance with the instructions in the Márkañdeya Purána.”

The story goes that Kañsanáráyána Ráy spent as much as 700,000 rupees for the worship of the goddess Durgá. 700,000 of the rupees of those days means almost 70 million rupees today. It was a huge expense, and this sparked a competition among the other kings and landlords. The following year King Jagadvaballabh (his name was Jagat Náráyána according to other sources) spent 850,000 rupees on the worship of the goddess. In this unhealthy process of competition, the worship of the goddess Durgá became an affair restricted only to the wealthy landlord households. Actually the display of wealth became the primary motive. There were gargantuan feasts, and a lot of pageantry. “I will feed multitudes of people, I will hold huge pageants.” The competition went on.

All kinds of landlord, big, small and medium, began to worship the goddess. This all happened during the period of Pathan rule [just before the Mughal Dynasty]. These are purely Puranic systems of worship, and the books considered authorities for this subject are only the Puranas. None of these books has anything to do with Tantra or Veda, except that they prescribe chanting some rks [couplets] from the Deviisukta [verse] of the Rgveda. Actually, the worship of the goddess Durgá has no direct relation to the Rgveda, except that incidentally the word “Umá” from the Deviisukta is quoted. [Umá is another name for Durgá.]

So you see that the landlords began to worship the goddess with a lot of fanfare. The middle-class people did not have enough resources to organize such expensive religious worship. But perhaps you know that there is a certain place called Hukkipára in Hooghly District. Twelve persons from middle-class families in that Hukkipára village once decided to organize the pújá [worship] of the goddess Durgá collectively, because separately they did not have the resources to organize such worship. In Urdu a friend is called iyár. Since twelve friends [in Bengali “twelve” is báro] combinedly organized the pújá, it was called “Bároiyárii Pújá”. At that point in time this form of worship spread from the landlords down to the masses.

Caste distinctions continued to be observed in Bároiyárii Pújá, but toward the end of the British rule, people began to argue, “Since you are collecting subscriptions from all kinds of people, how can we believe in casteism? Let all people participate in this worship.” At that time this worship received a new name, “Sárvajaniin Pújá”. This Sárvajaniin Pújá is also bároiyárii, but caste distinctions are disregarded.

In Tantra there is some reference to Durgá, but to an eight-armed one [ten-armed was more common]. (In western India and northern India, stone and metal images are sometimes unearthed during excavation work.)

One of the characteristics of Tantra is this, that the different gods and goddesses originate from one idea or other. Those ideas were conceived in order to arouse and develop the finer sensibilities of the human mind. Thus a person conceived of a certain idea, and to make concrete that abstract idea, an image was invented. But such an idea, whether good or bad, is not an integral idea, it is a non-integral idea. If human beings try to give expression to one such idea out of many, that means that other ideas are excluded. Anyway, this is how there arose the various gods and goddesses, through a process of giving external form to abstract ideas.

In Sanskrit the term devatá is feminine. In this respect there is no fundamental difference between Buddhist and Hindu Tantra, although there is a difference in terminology. For instance, there are Buddhist Tantric goddesses called Máriici, Vajrabaráhii, Bárahii, Vajrayoginii, Vajratára and Bhánatára. And then there are Kálii and the Dashamahávidyá [ten goddesses known as the Ten Mahávidyás], all Hindu Tantric goddesses. These various gods and goddesses represent one idea or other. For instance, Anucchúnyá Prakrti, the state of Prakrti at the stage prior to creation: that idea is represented by Kálii. But this is just a non-integral idea, not an integral one.

Meghavarńáviġatavasaná,
Shavashivárúdhá shyámá trinayaná;
Narashirakhadgarvarábhayashobhaná,
Caturbhujá Kálii Kálikárúpinii.
Garvitádánavagarvakharvákr̥ti khadga
Kharpará Niila Sarasvatii;
Sarvasaobhágyapradáyinii kartrii,
Namaste Tárárúpá táriinii,
Bálá ruńásamá-ujjvalá-ungabhá,
Caturbhujá trinayaná;
Tribhuvanamanolobhá pásháńkush-sharacápa-
Dháriinii Shivá, Śodashii rúpá Shiva bhávinii.
Hásyamukharitá nishákaravanditá,
Tribhuvana maũgala Bhuvaneshvarii máta;
Raktopaladhará koṭibhánuninditá,
Bhaeravii varábhaya dáyinii.
Vivarńa vidhavá malinámbaradhará
Kákadhvajá Dhúmávatii shúrpará;
Bagalámukhii piitavarańá piitámbará
Mudgara ari jihvá dháriinii.
Nijashirachinditá rudhirapánaratá
Digvásá ratiratá jano parisámsthitá;
Chinnamastá mátá ďakiniisamanvitá
Prabalapátakiikula ghátinii.
Manimayásane shyámakalevará,

Mátaungiirúpadhará sudhámshu shekhará;
Káiñcanakántisudiptá manohará
Kamalá harahrdivásinii.

With a particular idea in one's mind, one experiences a particular state of existence in life, and accordingly one or another Mahávidyá has been thought up. For instance, Dhúmávatii is described as vivarńá [colourless], vidhavá [widowed], with sunken eyes and wizened face, wearing dirty, dishevelled clothing. Crows hover over her head; in her hand she is holding a broken window. The entire description gives an idea of an impoverished deity, shorn of all glory and opulence.⁽¹⁾ When people are shorn of everything, the idea of Dhúmávatii symbolizes that idea. Tantra holds out one or another idea of that type.

It is not proper to create images, ostensibly for religious worship, such as that. As ideas are very pleasing to the human mind, if we draw or paint a picture on any surface, it will give us aesthetic pleasure, but what is the benefit in worshipping such things? If you worship one idea, maybe you will have some control over that idea, but you will not have influence over other ideas. After all, one particular image is not Parama Puruśa, it is just one of His partial expressions.

Take for instance the case of Kálii. She is described as meghavarńá, black. Why the black colour? Because it was conceived that there was no creation at that time. At the time when this world had not been created, there was no colour, and want of colour is black, so the idea of want of colour is represented by Kálii. It is not possible to think of any other colour, because there was no other colour.

Then again Kálii is conceived of as vigatavasaná, having no clothes. Why no clothes? Because, is it possible to cover an all-pervading entity with clothes? Can we conceive of clothing the Infinite Entity? What does logic say about this? If the Infinite Entity is covered with clothes, can it be called infinite? Here metaphorically all the directions are Her clothes. She is further described as shavashivárúdhá. When Consciousness has not been metamorphosed into the different successive stages of manifestation, Shiva [Consciousness] is just like a dead body, because at that stage Shiva cannot do anything, there is no expression of consciousness. Only Paramá Prakrti is the creative entity. She carries on Her eternal dance of creation. She is also conceived as three-eyed, because she is witnessing all the phenomena of the past, present and future.

In fact there is no such thing as Kálii, it is just an idea. In the deity's hands are a human head and a sword; those hands are in varábhaya mudrá. She is wearing a garland around her neck, a garland dotted with forty-nine severed heads, each face representing one particular acoustic root, and one hand, as mentioned, is also holding a head. (I have already told you that in that Vedic period people did not know how to write. Script had not yet been invented.⁽²⁾) The fifty sounds from a to kśa were represented by the fifty faces. The first face, symbolizing the a sound, was the one held by the hand.

Yata shona karńapuśe sab-i máyer mantra baśe.
Kálii paiñcáshat varńamayii varńe varńe viráj kare.

[Whatever you hear with your ears are the mantras emanating from the Causal Matrix. Kálii is a combination of fifty letters; she is associated with all the letters.]

At the time when the universe had not been created, the sounds were already present, and all those sounds were merged in the dark void of Mahákálii [Supreme Operative Principle].

In the poem Kálii is described as Narashríngkhakhádgavarábhayashobhaná. Here khánga [sword] is a symbol of the fight against evil and sin, and abhaya means “fearlessness”. When we confront the illusions of creation and destruction, the Supreme Entity tells us, “Don’t be nervous, don’t be afraid, there will again be creation.” And what is bara? “I will again create.” And in her hand there is a container of nectar. This is an excellent idea, but it is just an idea, it should not be worshipped. If people do so, they will be metamorphosed into that idea only; they can never attain the supreme goal.

All such Tantric ideations are very beautiful images of the different aspects of the Supreme Entity, and human beings start moulding clay statues depicting those ideas. So this Kálii, this Tára, and all the Dashamahávidyá, are one or another mental ideation, born out of the human mind. The total expression of all these ideations is what is called the human psychic expression. If a follower of Tantra or Purana remains preoccupied with a particular idea, the total development of the mind will remain an impossibility. That’s why all these ideas of [this school of Tantra] should be rejected. The great mystic Rámprasád said,

Hrdipadma úthbe phúte, maner ándhár yábe úte
Dharátale parbo lúte, “Tára” bale habo sára.
Tyajiba sab bhedábhed, ghuce jábe maner khed,
Shatashata satya ved, “Tára” ámár nirákára.

[The lotus will bloom, the darkness of my mind will disappear, I shall roll on the earth⁽³⁾ with the holy name of Tára on my lips. All sorts of distinction will be obliterated, all the afflictions of my mind will be totally removed; the scriptures are right when they declare that Tára is formless.]

So if people concentrate their minds on a particular idea, their progress will remain a far cry away from total progress. So sádhakas must try to realize Parama Puruśa, and not any non-integral entity. There is no other way.

It is not that the concepts of different gods and goddesses are based on Tantric ideas alone. For instance, when people suffer terribly from various incurable diseases, they conveniently invent one deity Rakśa Kálii (that Kálii which protects one from disease). When society faces some problem, people worship Shmashána Kálii or Vámá Kálii, and so on. Here also you see that the people are creating deities depending on their own psychic ideation.

When the deity stands with the right foot forward, she is called “Dakśíná Kálii”; whereas the Kálii deity with her left foot forward is called “Vámá Kálii”. This much is the difference between the two deities. Then again there are other deities, such as Durgá, Navadurgá, etc. The system of worship of Navadurgá she is worshipped through nine varieties of plant is centered

around Tantra, but the worship of Durgá in general does not originate in Tantra. The worship of Durgá originated in the Puranic tradition.

The nine kinds of plant having special qualities of their own are themselves treated as deities. They are repositories of power, but of partial nature. They are not as vast as the Supreme Entity. As they are conceived to be as powerful as the goddesses, they are worshipped. These nine plants are kadali [plantain], kacu [arum], haridrâ [turmeric], jayantii, ashoka, bilva [bel-fruit], dádimba [pomegranate], mán, and dhánya [rice]. Before the actual worship of the goddess Durgá, these nine plants are bathed in pure water. A plantain tree is taken as a symbol of Brahmánii Shakti. (But the presiding deity in plantain is called Káliká. Likewise the presiding deity in turmeric is called Durgá. The presiding deity in jayantii is called Kárttikii; in ashoka is called shokarohitá; in dádimba, Raktadantiká; in bel-fruit, Shivá; in mán, Cámuñdii; and in rice, Mahálaksmii.) The nine plants are worshipped as symbols of nine Tantric deities. For instance, the plantain tree represents Brahmánii Shakti, the mythological mother of Ganesha (and not the wife of Ganesha, as commonly misunderstood by the masses). So you see, these are just small ideas and limited powers. No benefit will come from adopting these ideas.

Suppose a person meditates on turmeric; one will become turmeric. If one meditates on Ganesha,⁽⁴⁾ one will become Ganesha.

I do not know whether Ganesha has any spiritual knowledge or scientific understanding. I know that he has some occult power, so if one meditates on him, one may or may not get some of his powers; but the problem is that if one meditates on Ganesha, one will have to meditate on his mount also – his mount being a mouse.

Each of the gods and goddesses has a particular mount, or vehicle. Had they been modern gods and goddesses, their vehicle would have been a jeep. But the ancient gods and goddesses had birds and animals as vehicles. Now if you meditate on these birds and animals, Yádrshii bhávaná yasyá siddhirbhavati tádrshii – “As you think, so you become.”⁽⁵⁾

Suppose someone meditates on turmeric; they may imbibe the qualities of turmeric. Now turmeric does have one quality, it is an antidote to poison; and if you eat turmeric, it kills hookworms; but remember, there are innumerable varieties of medicinal plants, with so many qualities, in our universe. So you see, you are still not adopting the qualities of all those medicinal herbs. And suppose you do adopt all the qualities of all the herbs, there are still so many animals roaming around, and various animals have various qualities which might be great assets to human beings. You may have seen certain lizards that sit silently on the walls in a state of ambush for cockroaches. You will see that the lizard does not move even slightly for ten to fifteen minutes. Is not this patience and stillness a wonderful quality? Very few human beings have that quality. They cannot sit silently that long, they become restless. You don't have that quality, you can't sit silently that long. Ants move in long columns, sheep also move in long columns; an ox stands in the middle of the road without the least motion.

The vehicles and carriages have to pass by the standing ox. How does the lizard or the ox do that? The secret is explained in yogic scripture. These scriptures say that in our throats is the kúrma nádii [a nerve]. If one's mind is fixed on the kúrma nádii, one's body becomes

motionless. So the ox can remain standing on the road without the slightest movement. A lizard can do similarly. Oxen, crocodiles and many other animals and birds have this same faculty.

A chameleon, by concentrating its mind on the úrdhva kúrma nádii, above the kúrma nádii, can change the complexion of its body every moment. A chameleon (similar to a lizard) can take on the colour of the leaves of the tree on which it is perched.

Now if one meditates on a particular animal or bird, one will imbibe the qualities of that animal. Similarly, each of the [Puranic] gods and goddesses has a particular quality of its own. Yes, one may acquire some quality, but one will never attain Parama Puruśa. Hence the only object of meditation of human beings should be Parama Puruśa. One can never attain the Macrocosmic vastness if one meditates on a limited idea, a finite entity. The Tantric gods and goddesses, whether we are speaking of Hindu Tantra or of Buddhist Tantra, have equally limited powers. Moreover, as each of the gods and goddesses has its own vehicle, and it is unscientific to meditate on that vehicle, the Tantric gods and goddesses are not to be accepted as objects of meditation. And Tantra has also emphatically said,

Uttamo Brahasadbhávo
Mahdyamá dhyána dhárańá;
Japastúti syádadhamá
Múrtipújá dhamádhamá.

[Ideation on Brahma is the best, dhyána and dhárańá are second best, repetitious incantation and eulogistic prayer are the worst, and idol worship is the worst of the worst.]

It is also stated in Tantra that if a person wants only to attain limited progress, one may practise on certain limited ideas. But those who are genuine seekers of Brahma will never agree to worship any finite idea. Those who want the Supreme Entity will have to ideate on Parama Puruśa alone. People may attain limited achievement in terms of occult power through the grace of the gods and goddesses, but they will remain far away from the attainment of the Supreme Entity.

28 April 1979, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors' note: The above poem goes on to describe, in similar fashion, the nine other Mahávidyás: Kálii, Tára, Śodashii, Bhuvaneshvarii, Bhaeravii, Bagalámukhii, Mátaungii, Chinnamastá and Kamalá.

(2) Editors' note: But the alphabet was known orally.

(3) Editors' note: As the kuńdalini of an aspirant rises, the previously-unexpressed spiritual qualities of the higher glands become expressed. Sometimes the nervous system is affected in such a way as to make certain "occult feelings" or "occult symptoms" appear in the physical

body; they are experienced by the aspirant as pleasurable. There are eight basic types (e.g., stambha, or immobility, and kampa, or trembling), and thirteen associated feelings, one of which is viluñthana – rolling on the earth.

(4) Author's note: Ganesha literally means "Leader of the Masses". (A kind of leader worship is still to be observed in many countries!)

(5) Editors' note: An example omitted here; other examples follow.

Shiva Tantra in Ráfh

Now the question is, what is the underlying spirit or essence of dharma? The underlying spirit or essence of dharma is that it carries a person in the direction of greater and greater expansion, and finally establishes that person in the supreme pervasiveness. (By the “essence of dharma” we mean its purest part, its innermost existence.)⁽¹⁾

The essence of Shaeva Dharma [Shaivism] is all-round expansion – that is, it takes an individual from the lokáyata [mundane] to the lokottara [supramundane] life. Shaivism is that which takes the individual to the supreme fulfilment along a sweet and more and more resplendent path. Shaeva Tantra [Shiva Tantra] is not a cult based on the sayings of the munis and rísis, rather it is concerned with the hopes and aspirations of the masses. It is something which deals with the subtler mystic aspect of human life.

Here let us try to understand the subtle difference between the lokáyata and the lokottara worlds. Suppose there is a bird – take the case of a bird confined in a cage. The bird in a cage eating little morsels of food can be likened to lokáyata sádhaná, and the restless, intense psychic urge to soar freely into the vast distant blue sky can be compared with lokottara sádhaná. Shaeva Dharma in Ráfh is Tantra-oriented; and as I have said, Tantra means all-round expansion. As the inhabitants of Ráfh accepted this Tantra from the core of their hearts, even in the distant prehistoric past, they made multidimensional progress: progress in art and literature, progress in dance and music, progress in architecture and sculpture. The inhabitants of Ráfh made unimaginable progress in all spheres of human life.

The women throughout Ráfh enjoyed great independence. Women were highly respected in society. Even divorced women of higher caste were permitted to remarry if they so desired.⁽²⁾ These were direct contributions of Shaeva Tantra.

26 November 1981, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors’ note: Illustration of “essence” omitted here. There should be a harmonious adjustment between movement in the psychic sphere and movement in the external sphere. There should be a healthy social structure as well. All the necessary materials for that structure are fully present in Shaeva Dharma and in Shaeva Tantra.

(2) Editors’ note: In most other cultures of the Indian sub-continent up until recent times, only lower-caste women had been permitted to remarry.

An Introduction to Shiva (Discourse 1)

When I spoke regarding Krśńa⁽¹⁾, I said that His life can be divided into two main parts: the first part is Vrajagopála and the second part is Párthasárathi. I also said in that context that Párthasárathi was not as easily accessible as Vrajagopála was. I further said that the Mahábhárata⁽²⁾ was brought about by Krśńa but it certainly did not encompass the whole of Krśńa's life. Krśńa exists without the Mahábhárata, but the Mahábhárata does not exist without Krśńa.

Regarding Shiva, we should say that His life cannot be divided in this way into two parts. From the very beginning, He was an omnipresent entity. Whenever, in the undeveloped and simple human society of those days, any need arose, Shiva was there to help; whenever any knotty problem developed, Shiva was there to solve it. So we cannot divide and analyse His life and personality into fragments, nor can we write the history of those times in that way. At the same time I feel constrained to state that, considering His unique role in building human culture and civilization, this culture and civilization cannot stand without Him. But Shiva can stand very well, shining in His own glory, quite apart from human culture and civilization. So to write history in the true sense of the term, for the sake of human society at present and in the distant future as well, Shiva cannot be neglected.

Let us first analyse the meaning of the term shiva. In trying to find the meaning of the word shiva, we must know whether or not the Sanskrit language was used in those days. Some people say that the Sanskrit language was imported to India from Central Asia, but this does not seem to be correct. Rather it is more reasonable to say that in those days one almost identical language was current all the way from Central Asia and Eastern Europe to Southeast Asia. The branch of that language that was popular in the southeastern part of that expanse was called Sanskrit, while the language that was spoken in the northwestern parts was Vedic.

The Aryans migrated to India from outside, no doubt, but the Aryan influence was not so discernible in the southeastern as in the northwestern parts of India. The Vedic language came to India with the Aryans, but the Sanskrit language is an indigenous language of India; it did not come from outside. I have stated this fact clearly in my recently-published book on Rááh.⁽³⁾

It is not at all possible to trace the exact antiquity of the Vedic language, because the only book that is available in that language is the ancient Rgveda, and the Rgveda was not in written form in those days either. The people of those days did not know how to read and write; they had no knowledge of any alphabet. They were not at all acquainted with the letters a, á, ka, kha,⁽⁴⁾ etc.

The alphabet – the Bráhmii script, the Kharośthi script, and the subsequent scripts born out of them – were invented some time during the last five thousand to seven thousand years. The Sáradá, the Náradá, and the Kuṭilá scripts were variants of the old Bráhmii script, and the Shriiharśa⁽⁵⁾ script is a variant of the Kuṭilá script. The script in which modern Bengali is written is the Shriiharśa script.

The composition of the Rgveda [began] about fifteen thousand years ago. Scripts were totally unknown in those days. It would not be incorrect to say that although the human race came onto

the earth about a million years ago, its civilization started only about fifteen thousand years ago. This shows that human civilization and human culture are not very old in relation to the antiquity of the human race. We should not belittle civilization for being so recent, but neither can we venerate it as being very old.

In the days of Shiva, the Aryans started entering India from the northwest. Many of them had already arrived, many were on the way, and many were still making preparations to come. The Vedic language of the Aryans who had already arrived in India had exerted a widespread influence on the spoken dialects of the indigenous population of India, such as the Kash, the Scythians, the Euchi, the South Kuśán, etc. Obviously, Sanskrit, the common language of the indigenous people of the then India, was not outside the orbit of influence of the Vedic language; but that influence was not unilateral; that is, the Vedic language was also influenced by the Sanskrit language. Tantra had its origin in India, and Shiva gave a systematic form to it. Of course, Tantra in its Káshmiirii and Gaodíiya Schools did exist before Shiva, but in a scattered and crude form. So naturally one has to admit that Shiva was born and brought up in an environment of Tantra, although it was not classical Tantra.

Shiva was well acquainted with the Vedic language and the Vedic religion. Both in the Vedas and in the Tantric treatises, we come across references to Shiva, but not in very ancient texts, because it was not possible to put works in writing in very ancient times, due to the lack of knowledge of the alphabet. [Thus much material was lost.] The Tantric texts used to advise people, “You should do this, you should do that, you should hear and learn these lessons from your masters,” and so on; because in those days it was not possible to write books, as scripts had not yet been invented. The Vedas would also advise people in the same way – to hear and learn things from the masters. That is why the Vedas are called shruti in Sanskrit. Shruti means “ear”; so that which is learned by hearing is called shruti.

The period of Shiva was a most turbulent period in India. On the one hand there were the Aryans, the outsiders, and on the other hand there were the indigenous people, with their Tantra-oriented culture and religion. Into this conflict-ridden environment, Shiva was born.

Now, what is the derivative meaning of shiva? From the extant texts on Tantra and Veda and from all other written and unwritten sources, we get three meanings of the term shiva. The first and most important meaning of shiva is “welfare”.

Anádyanantamakhilasya madhye
Vishvasya sraśtáramanekarúpam;
Vishvasyaekam pariveśtáram
Jiñátvá Shivañ shántimatyantameti.

[Knowing that Shiva, who has neither beginning nor end, who is the creator of this vast universe –
That multi-formed single entity who encompasses the whole universe – one attains eternal peace.]

Here shiva means “welfare”. Shivamastu means the same as Kalyánamastu [“May you be blessed”]. Kalyáñasundaram is the representation of Shiva embodying the true spirit of blessedness.

People say that He has been serving people, doing good to them, with five faces. He is described as having five faces: two on the left – Vámadeva and Kálágni; two on the right – Dakśíñeshvara and Iishána; and one in the middle – Kalyáñasundaram, the Supreme Controller which controls all the individual’s desires for action.

Dakśíñeshvara, the extreme right face of Shiva, is so called because He is showering dakśíñá [compassion] upon the created beings. That is the special role allotted to Dakśíñeshvara. Iishána – the face next to the right – is responsible for controlling all the jiiivas, individual beings, with meticulous care. And Kalyáñasundaram, the face in the centre, plays the role of controlling all the faces.

Now the question is, why is Kalyáñasundaram assigned such a role? His only purpose is to promote the greatest welfare of all living beings; He has no other purpose.

In addition, Shiva has two faces on the left: Vámadeva on the extreme left, and Kálágni next to the left. Vámadeva is terrible – rudra, rudrátirudra, rudro’pirudrah – “one who teaches others by making them shed tears”. But the underlying purpose is to teach people, not to harm them. The other face, Kálágni, also subjects people to excruciating torture, but there also, the main purpose is to teach them, to promote their welfare. Now here also, the two roles of Vámadeva and Kálágni are controlled by the central face, Kalyáñasundaram. He is sundaram, beautiful, because He promotes kalyáña [welfare]: hence, “Kalyáñasundaram”. He is terrible, but at the same time superbly calm and tranquil. Yet behind His apparent dreadfulness and tranquillity lies the kalyáñasundaram bháva [mental flow]. He is both severe and tender. He is tender, so naturally people love Him. Although He is severe, people still adore Him, because underlying His apparent severity, there is tenderness. Thus the role of Shiva is predominantly the role of a promoter of welfare. So the first meaning of the term shiva is “welfare”.

The second meaning of the term shiva is “cognition in its zenith status” – the zenith status of the Cognitive Principle, the Supreme Non-Attributional Process, the Supreme NonAttributional Entity beyond the faculties of all existential bondages. I will elaborate on these meanings as appropriate later.

The third meaning is Sadáshiva, who was born into this world about seven thousand years ago – and who, by His holy birth, consecrated, as it were, each and every dust particle of this earth and utilized His whole life for the sole purpose of advancing the cause of universal welfare. Remember, I have not said “human welfare,” because in our world, not only are there humans, there are also birds and animals, trees and plants. Shiva belongs to all; and for all living beings, He gave His all. Hence the people called Him “Sadáshiva”; sadá means “always”, and shiva – as I have said earlier – means “welfare”. So “Sadáshiva” means “one whose only vow of existence is to promote the all-round welfare of all living beings”. I will gradually tell you about this extraordinary personality. I hope you will deeply relish the discourses on this great man, this great personality.

Now the question remains: in the night of blinding darkness, do humans alone aspire to feel the soothing touch of light? No, all want it. All seek to grow out of the oblivion of existential darkness into the warmth of life, to experience finally the fulfilment of their life's urges. Up until this day, human beings have not made a proper appraisal of this great personality, this Mahásambhúti,⁽⁶⁾ who gave human beings their first opportunity to experience the sweet joy of fulfilment of all their longings. No one has discussed Him much up until now.

Why people failed to make this appraisal is irrelevant today. It is the firm duty of every individual to know and evaluate the exact contribution of Shiva, and in this process of evaluation, we cannot ignore the personality Himself. One may derive some joy from a bright ray emanating from a shining entity, but without the entity itself, the bliss will not be complete.

11 April 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Namámi Krśńasundaram, 1981. –Trans.

(2) Literally, “Great India”. Here it means the campaign led by Krśńa to unify India, and not the epic composition about that campaign. –Trans.

(3) Sabhyatár Ádibindu – Ráfh, 1981. –Trans.

(4) The first two vowels and the first two consonants of Sanskrit. –Trans.

(5) Of the existing scripts in South Asia, the Shriiharśa script is the second in antiquity to the Sáradá script (Káshmiirii script). A manuscript written in the old Sáradá script can be found in the historical museum of the author's Calcutta residence.

(6) The special manifestation of Supreme Consciousness. –Trans.

The Essential Dharma

In fact, the *Árśa Dharma* ["Religion of the Sages", Aryan Religion] was not dharma at all – it was nothing but a geo-sentiment, sometimes combined with socio-sentiment. This continued for a long period. Shiva observed that this was not dharma at all. He looked deeply into human psychology and found that human beings do not really want happiness – they want absolute peace: peace is better than happiness. People do not attain peace by performing *yajñas* [sacrifices] nor by sacrificing animals in the sacrificial fire. They may please their palates by eating meat, but they will not attain peace in this way. Shiva showed human beings how to attain peace; and that path to supreme peace should not be called a path of ordinary attainment, but of supreme attainment. Here the spiritual realization is *aparokśánúbhuti* – is direct. This path, as shown by Shiva, is known as *Shaeva Dharma* [Shaivism].

Of course, Tantra did exist before Shiva, but it was scattered, not well-organized. As I told you a little earlier, Shiva made everything systematic and regulated. He brought about a harmonious synthesis between those scattered Tantras and the people's spiritual urges for supreme fulfilment, and created His *Shaeva Dharma*, which was above all sorts of geo-sentiment and socio-sentiment. This path of Shiva, which was a happy blending of the existing Tantra and His practical processes, was an ideal adjustment between the objective world and the subjective world. In spite of that, this cult was not able to survive the ravages of time. One of the reasons was that in those days it was not possible to write anything down because script had not yet been invented. Knowledge was conveyed orally, not by writing. The Vedas could not be written due to the same difficulty.

Much later, when the Vedas were written down, many portions had already been lost. However much we may try to find those lost portions of the Vedas, they can unfortunately never be recovered. Many of the teachings of Shiva were also lost for the same reason, because people had no knowledge of the alphabet. This Shiva Tantra inspired people to move towards the supreme truth on the one hand, and on the other hand it exhorted people, "Do not neglect the practical world. Maintain a congenial adjustment with the external world." His instructions were, "*Varttámanesu vartteta* [Live in the present]. Try to penetrate as deeply as you can into your mind, keep moving inwards – *Caraeveti, caraeveti* [Proceed on, proceed on]. But do not forget the realities of the external world, because if you ignore the external realities, your internal peace will also be disturbed."

This *Shaeva Dharma* became the essential dharma of India. In this dharma no one was ignored – neither the non-Aryans nor the women nor the untouchables.

In the Vedic Age, women as a class were neglected and treated as mere commodities of enjoyment; whereas in the age of Shiva they were proclaimed as a class of mothers. As the influence of Shiva was comparatively great in Bengal, there we still find the custom of addressing unknown ladies as *Má* ["Mother"]. In Bengali, aunts are called *mási-má* [mother's sister], *pishi-má* [father's sister], etc.; that is, the word *má* is respectfully added when addressing women. And as the matriarchal system is still prevalent in Bengal to some extent, there the women are not altogether separated from the father's lineage. After marriage their *gotra* [clan]

changes, no doubt, but they still have some relation with their father's lineage. For this reason a nephew, a sister's son, inherits the properties of his maternal uncle if he dies without heirs.

Shaeva Dharma is the dharma for attaining Parama Puruṣa, and thus there is no external ritual in it. It does not enjoin any ritualistic offering of ghee, or any sacrifice of animals' blood in yajña; it is not a path of self-gratification. The followers of Shaeva Dharma proclaimed in a thundering voice that dharma is the path leading to supreme attainment – not the path of animal enjoyment.

Calcutta, 18 April 1982

The Pervasive Influence

Is Shiva a philosophy or a personality or a deity? We must first say a little about Shivatattva [the inner meaning of Shiva], devatátattva and daevii shakti, and then analyse Shiva and the other gods and goddesses who are claimed to be related to Him. There are deep-seated questions in human minds about this, but all the questions remain unanswered.

Shiva was a great personality. At the same time, His entire life we may say, His very way of life is a philosophy. And when one's personality becomes fully identified with one's philosophy of life, one becomes a god.

Dyotate kridáte yasmát udyate dyotate divi;
Tasmát deva iti proktah stúyate sarvadevataeh.

[The vibrational manifestations emanating from the Supreme Nucleus are known as devatás, and these devatás address that Supreme Nucleus as Deva. He with His powers vibrates the entire universe, makes the entire universe dance; and He by dint of His occult and supra-occult powers brings everything back onto His lap.]

The endless expressions of life emanating from the Universal Nucleus which move all-pervasively in and through everything of the universe and influence all entities are called devatás [deities, gods and goddesses]. Shiva's ideology is totally identified with His life, with His way of life. Hence, Shiva is definitely a devatá.

Now while we are discussing devatátattva [the inner meaning of a devatá] we must add something more. Normally, each and every expression that emanates from the Supreme Hub, the Cosmic Nucleus, is a devatá. In that sense, Shiva is not merely one such devatá; He is the aggregate of these devatás. Shiva is no doubt a god, but the word "god" does not encompass the totality of His personality. He is not only a god, He is the God of gods Devatánám devatá, devanám devah ityarthe Mahádevah ["The God of all gods and goddesses is Mahádeva"]. Shiva is Mahádeva.

Now it is necessary to discuss those entities who were involved with Shiva, such as Párvatii, Kálii, Gaṅgá, Sarasvatii, Lakśmii, etc.; and all the other gods and goddesses of Shiva Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, Jain Tantra, Post-Shiva Tantra and the Puranic religion. First we shall find out how much Shiva was related to them from the philosophical, social and personal points of view or whether there was any relation between Him and them at all.

In this context, the topic of daevii shakti must be discussed. When some wave of expression emanates from the Universal Hub and moves in the process of systalsis, two main forces are active, Prajñátattva [the Cognitive Force] and Shaktitattva [the Operative Force]. The former is called Citishakti, and the latter is called Káliká Shakti. It is called Káliká Shakti because the Operative Force maintains Her creation through kálacakra, the eternal time factor. (This has nothing to do with the deity Kálii.)

Now, to discuss Shivatattva, devatátattva and daevii shakti, we must review briefly a long period of history stretching over seven thousand years. In the field of applied Tantra that was popular during Shiva's lifetime, there were different forces, no doubt, but they were not deified into gods and goddesses. So to say something about gods and goddesses, we must go back still further. In the Vedic Age there were gods and goddesses, but there was no system of idol worship. People used to worship those gods and goddesses through sacrificial rituals. Indra, Ágni, Varuṇa, etc., were all Vedic gods, but they were not worshipped with idols. Nor was there any system of worshipping Parama Brahma [the Supreme Entity] with idols. It was said that Iishvarasya pratimá násti ["There cannot be any finite pratimá, image, of God"]. Pratimá means "duplicate", something identical to the original. Suppose there is an eggplant. If we create an object exactly like the original eggplant, we say that the second eggplant is the pratimá of the original eggplant. But as there is no other entity like Parama Puruṣa, Parama Puruṣa cannot have a pratimá. Tulá vá upamá Krś́nas-ya násti ["Krś́na has no parallel or equal"]. These were the ideas of the Vedic Age.

Next came the age of Shiva Tantra. In those days, many kálashaktis [deities] were accepted, but there was no system of idol worship. Then followed the age of Shivottara [Post-Shiva] Tantra, during the periods of Buddhism and Jainism. During this period, various systems of worshipping different gods and goddesses were introduced. In the subsequent period, that is, the period of the metamorphosed Post-Shiva Tantra (metamorphosed because it was Shiva Tantra but largely influenced by Buddhism and Jainism), image-worship became quite popular.⁽¹⁾

Now in the course of time, when Post-Shiva Tantra evolved, Shiva was still a devatá, but the Buddhist and Jain Tantra of that time exerted some influence on His image, and, by adding some new elements to the existing image of Shiva, tried to create a new entity. Sometimes, in the Puranic Age, Shiva was invested with a sacrificial thread, but in reality Shiva never had any thread on His body; if He had any, it was a thread of snakes.

Later, many gods and goddesses were brought to the scene and linked with Shiva, because until an entity's relation to Him was established in one way or other, that entity would not get any recognition at all. Take for instance the goddess Manasá. Sometimes she is said to be the daughter of Shiva, but in reality, there was no goddess named Manasá or Viśahari at the time of Shiva. In the Puranic Age, it was declared,

Ástikasya munermátá Vásukiibhaginii tathá;
Jaratkárumuner patnii manasáyae namo namah.

Manasá was said to be the mother of Ástika Muni and the sister of Vásukiinága and the wife of Jarátkáru Muni. We will not raise any objection to the statement that she was the mother of Ástika Muni, but we cannot accept that she was the sister of Vásukiinága. There is a story in one Purana that she was the sister of Vásukiinága,⁽²⁾ but according to another Purana, Kadru was the mother of serpents and Maharśi Káshyapa was their father. In that case the father of Manasá is Káshyapa. Then how can she be the daughter of Shiva? So the Puranas are mutually contradictory. In fact, Manasá has no relation to Shiva; Manasá is only a laokik⁽³⁾ goddess and was recognized as such in Buddhist Tantra and the Puranic religion. Shiva, however, was a great

personality about seven thousand years ago, whose existence does not depend upon the tales of the Puranas. The Puranas were composed about 5500 years after Shiva.

After Manasá, let us take the case of Párvatii. What is the meaning of the word Párvatii? Some may derive it as Párvatasya duhitá, párvatasya kanyá (using śás̥thii tatpuruśa⁽⁴⁾) that is, “daughter of a hill”. Obviously the question will arise, and quite logically, how can a human girl whose body is made of five fundamental factors be the daughter of a hill? A river may be called the daughter of a hill, but in the case of a human girl we cannot say that. So the derivation of Párvatii as párvatasya kanyá is not logically acceptable; rather, the proper derivation is Párvatadeshiiyá kanyá ityarthe Párvatii (using madhyapadalopii karmadháray⁽⁵⁾): “a girl born in a hill state”. So when people say that Párvatii was the daughter of the Himalayas, it does not mean that she was the daughter of a person named Himálaya, but that she was a person born in the Himalayan Range. This Párvatii was fair-complexioned; that is, she was an Aryan girl.

In the then India, the mutual relations between the original inhabitants of India (Austrico-Mongolo-Negroids) and the outsiders, the Aryans, were by no means cordial. The Aryans, out of deep-rooted contempt for the indigenous people of India, used to call them sometime asuras, sometimes dánavas, sometimes dásas, sometimes shúdras.⁽⁶⁾ The Aryans did not accept these people in their society; rather, they declared them to be outcastes. But these ancient people of India, of Austrico-Mongolo-Negroid blood, had their own civilization and culture. They were also developed people: they had their science of Tantra, and their medicine. There was a prolonged conflict between these people and the Aryans.

Párvatii was the daughter of an Aryan King, Dakśa, who ruled in the Himalayan regions. Many people were hopeful that after the marriage between Párvatii and Shiva, the relations between the Aryans and the non-Aryans would improve. During the period of the vow of penance that Gaorii (another name for Párvatii) undertook in order to attain Shiva as her husband, she used to dress in the fashion of a Shavara girl (the Shavaras were one of the non-Aryan communities). She used to stitch turmeric leaves together to make improvised outer garments. One of the Sanskrit words for “turmeric leaves” is parńa. As she would wear parńa as her clothes, she was called “Parńashavarii”. Later, after she became successful in her penance, people requested her, “Now please set aside the turmeric leaves and wear fine clothes.” When she actually discarded the crude turmeric leaves, she was nicknamed “Aparńa”. Unfortunately, even after the marriage between Shiva and Párvatii, the relations between the Aryans and the non-Aryans did not improve; rather they became more strained the conflicts became more acute than before. Gaorii’s father, Dakśa, and the Aryans continued their slanderous campaign against Shiva, and finally, to humiliate Shiva, they held a yajiṇa [sacrificial ceremony] to which Shiva was not invited. Párvatii went to attend the yajiṇa, and unable to bear the insults to her dear husband, immolated herself in the sacrificial fire.

Kśánta hao go pitá Shivanindá ár sahe ná;
Kuver yár bháńdárii, Brahmá Viśnú dvárer dvárii
Ámi táṅri ájiṇákárii jeneo ki tá jána ná!

“I am a follower of Sadáshiva, the brilliance of whose divine presence outshines even the dazzling brilliance of the jewels of Kuvera’s⁽⁷⁾ treasury; whose unmatched dexterity in creation

excels even that of the creator Brahmá himself; whose unequalled love surpasses even that of the dissolver Maheshvara himself; in whose loving shelter not only humans, but also animals and plants, feel absolutely secure. You certainly know this. I cannot bear this insult to Shiva any longer. Stop, Father, stop!” After that self-immolation the relations between the Aryans and the non-Aryans improved.

This Gaorii or Párvatii had no relation whatsoever to the Puranic goddess Durgá whom people worship nowadays. Gaorii, or Párvatii, was a human girl, and as such, she had only two arms. The ten-armed goddess Durgá, who was a deity of the Puranic Age, has nothing to do with Shiva or His age.

The worship of the goddess Durgá is based mainly on the Márkańdeya Puráña, and to a lesser extent on the Devii Puráña, the Káliká Puráña, the Brhatnandikeshavara Puráña, the Duragábhaktitaraunginii, the Deviihágavat, etc. None of these books is older than 1300 or 1400 years. Seven hundred shlokas [couplets] were collected from those books and gathered together, and that constituted the abridged Márkańdeya Puráña, which is also known as Durgásaptashatii, or more colloquially, Shrii Shrii Cańdii. None of these works existed at the time of Shiva; they have no relation with Him.

There are some people who believe that Durgá is the wife of Shiva, but this is not logically proved by any scriptural evidence. Shiva had only two arms, not four or six. Párvatii also had two arms. But Durgá is a Puranic goddess, and the author of puráña [educative fiction] can create in his imagination as many arms of Durgá as he likes. Nobody can object to this.

No system for the worship of Durgá is prescribed by the Vedic scripture; so to put a Vedic seal of approval on the worship of Durgá, the famous Deviisúkta of the Vedas is cited. But Haemavatii Umá [Durgá is sometimes also called “Umá”], who is mentioned in the Deviisúkta of the Vedas, has no relation whatsoever to Párvatii (or Gaorii), the wife of Shiva, nor to Durgá, the Puranic goddess. People have been thinking erroneously that Durgá was the wife of Shiva, but in reality she had no relation to Shiva.

Yes, Shiva did have a wife – Gaorii, or Párvatii. And another wife was Káliká, or Kálii. Kálii was born in a non-Aryan community which was ethnically Austrico-Mongolo-Negroid. Now you may wonder about Kálii’s appearance. Why is she undressed? Why is she sticking her tongue out? There are many tales about these matters, but you must not give any importance to these stories; you must discover the real history behind these things.

One of Shiva’s wives was Gaorii, who had a son, Bhaerava. “Bhaerava” means “one who practises Tantra sádhaná”. Another wife of Shiva, Kálii, had a daughter, Bhaeravii. “Bhaeravii” means “a woman who practises Tantra sá-dhaná”. Bhaeravii learned the process of sádhaná from her father and practised it regularly.

But Bhaeravii’s mother, Kálii, always feared that her daughter might encounter some trouble while out doing Tantra sádhaná, so one night she went in search of her daughter. At that time Shiva was deeply absorbed in meditation in the cremation ground. Kálii, while walking along the path, trip- ped over Shiva. She felt extremely contrite and stuck her tongue out.⁽⁸⁾ Shiva was

roused from His meditation, and asked, Kastvaṁ? “Who are you?” Now, Kálii was deeply embarrassed, but being Shiva’s wife, how could she conceal her identity by introducing herself as Bhaeravii? A woman cannot identify herself to her husband by the name of her daughter. So she identified herself by saying, Kaoverii asmyaham “I am Kaoverii.”⁽⁹⁾ Since then, Kálii has had another name Kaoverii. The Sanskrit word is “Kaoverii”, but sometimes people wrongly spell the word in Bengali as “Káverii”.

Later Káliká Shakti, also called Kálii, was accepted in Post-Shiva Tantra and also in Buddhist Tantra as a Tantric goddess. Still later, in the Puranic Age, this Kálii was worshipped as a goddess, and at that time she got a second name, Shyámá. But this Kálii, or Káliká Shakti, has no relation to Kálii the wife of Shiva. Kálii the wife of Shiva existed seven thousand years ago; but Kálii the deity accepted in Post-Shiva Tantra and Buddhist Tantra goes back only 1600 or 1700 years. The worship of Kálii the deity is preached chiefly on the basis of the Káliká Purána, so it has nothing to do with the Vedic Age nor the age of Shiva. But one thing should be remembered, that although she is a deity of Post-Shiva Tantra, she was accepted and worshipped in Buddhist Tantra also.

And in the same way,

Meghavarṇá vigatavasaná,
Shavashivárúdhá shyámá trinayaná;
Narashirakhadgarvarábhayashobhaná,
Caturbhujá Kálii Kálikárúpinii.

Kálii the deity has four arms. But Kálii the wife of Shiva had two arms, not four. So Kálii the goddess who is worshipped these days according to the Puranic system is not the one who was Shiva’s wife.

Not only that, there is also a difference in meaning between kálii and shyámá. First, it is a fact that Kálii or Shyámá, who is worshipped as a goddess nowadays, has no relation to Shiva. Then, regarding her colour, in one part of the shloka she is described as meghavarṇá, that is, grey-black [“having the colour of a cloud”] (Kálii the wife of Shiva was a non-Aryan girl, so she may have been that colour); then again she is described in the same shloka as shyámá. The word shyámá in Sanskrit has two meanings. One meaning is “green”. Kálii, who is grey-black, cannot be shyámá in this sense; there would be an inconsistency in meaning, a contradiction in the shloka itself. The second meaning is,

Shiitkále bhaveduśná griśme ca sukhashiitalá;
Atasiipuśpavarṇábhá sá shyámá parikiirtitá.

“One whose sweet behaviour enables one to feel warm even in winter and cool in the summer, one whose body emits the glow of the atasii flower (that is, a golden colour), is called shyámá.” By this definition of shyámá also, the foregoing shloka would be self-contradictory.

So we find that neither the goddess Durgá worshipped nowadays nor the goddess Kálii, is the wife of Shiva.

No goddess having eight or ten arms can be the wife of Shiva: He had only two arms. Similarly the Káliká Shakti having four arms cannot be the wife of Shiva.

Shiva had a third wife – Gaṅgá. She was a Mongolian girl with a yellow complexion, born in Tibet. I said a little while ago that Gaorii had a son, Bhaerava, and Kálii had a daughter, Bhaeravii. Gaṅgá had a son Kárttikeya, or Kárttika, or Sanmukham, or Śádánana. (In Tamil Sañ-mugam, Bálasubrahmañyam or Murúgam).

Bhaerava, the son of Párvatii, was an ardent spiritualist, a Tantric sádhaka. Bhaeravii, the daughter of Káliká, was also an ardent spiritualist and a sincere practitioner of Tantra; but Gaṅgá's son, Kárttika, was of a different mould. Because of this Gaṅgá was very sad at heart; she was very unhappy with her only son. To remove Gaṅgá's mental unhappiness, Shiva used to treat her with the utmost courtesy. People would complain that Shiva was not so soft and courteous in His dealings with Párvatii and Kálii as He was with Gaṅgá. He was pampering Gaṅgá too much – as if Shiva was dancing in joy, with Gaṅgá seated on His head.

On the basis of this saying, Shiva was depicted in the Puranic Age with Gaṅgá tied to His matted locks of hair. Then a story was concocted in some Purana that the water discarded after washing the feet of Viśnú, flowed down from heaven, and Shiva supported the flow on His head; then this flow became the River Gaṅgá [Ganges]. That is, Gaṅgá the wife of Shiva became the River Gaṅgá. Actually this River Gaṅgá has no relation whatsoever to Shiva. The story continues that from Shiva's head the river flowed in four directions –

Svargete Alakánandá marttye Bhágiirathii,
Pitrloke Mandákinii pátále Bhogavatii.

One of the flows went towards heaven and became known as Alakánanda; one went to the earth and became known as Bhágiirathii; the third one went to Pitrloka [Realm of the Ancestors] and became known as Mandákinii; and the last one, flowing to the underworld, became known as Bhogavatii.

These are mere tales of the Puranas. The River Gaṅgá has no relation to Gaṅgá who was the wife of Shiva. “Gaṅgá” the river is derived from gam plus gam plus dá plus tá (to show feminine gender). Ga means a vast tract of land; gá means a woman who is moving; so a woman who is coming from a distant land and going towards another distant land a woman who is flowing from Gaungottarii, the starting-point of the River Ganges, to Gaṅgáságar, the mouth of the river through a 1500-mile stretch of land is called “Gaṅgá”. This River Gaṅgá [the Ganges] has no relation to the wife of Shiva.

9 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors' note: Some pages on another topic omitted here.

- (2) Editors' note: One of the mythological serpent-kings.
- (3) Editors' note: That is, she was accorded some religious status, but her name does not figure in either the Vedas or the Tantras.
- (4) Editors' note: A particular grammatical style of splitting words.
- (5) Editors' note: A particular grammatical style of splitting words.
- (6) Editors' note: Asuras – “monsters”; dánavas – “demons”; dásas – “slaves”. “Shúdra” means a social group invented by the Aryans for this purpose of discrimination; therewith they created a fourth level at the bottom of their previously three-level system.
- (7) Editors' note: The mythological treasurer of heaven.
- (8) Editors' note: A sign of embarrassment.
- (9) Editors' note: She wavered between saying her own name, “Kálii”, and the name of her daughter, “Bhaeravii”. The word became “Kaoverii”.

Throughout the Ages

I have already said that when ideology is totally reflected in a personality, that very personality is worshipped as a divine personality, a god. Ordinary people follow His instructions; they want to be guided by His will, because they experience bliss by moving in this way. Kṛṣṇa said,

Yad yadācarati shreśṭhastad tadevetarāh janāh;
Sa yad pramāṇam kurute lokastadanuvarttate.

[The common masses faithfully follow whatever great people do; they follow the examples set by great personalities.]

In the age of Shiva, towards the end of Shiva's lifetime, the Aryan and the non-Aryan communities admitted the supremacy of Shiva. There were no longer conflicts between the Aryans and the non-Aryans regarding the issue of deities; there was no difference of opinion as to which great personality should be respected. Shiva was accepted as the supreme personality in the Vedas, and as such was considered a god. In the Vedic Age, people who worshipped the Vedic gods and goddesses accepted Shiva as one of them, and started worshipping Him and generally following His instructions. They used to follow only the ritualistic portions of the Vedas (the yajñas) and followed Shiva in all other matters. But those who did not follow even these ritualistic portions of the Vedas but followed Shiva in all matters were called Shaeva Tāntriks [followers of Shiva Tantra].

Perhaps you know that in the Vedas, the Tantras, and partly in Post-Shiva Tantra, particular gods were worshipped with specific biija mantras [acoustic roots]. Shiva was not worshipped with any particular acoustic root during His own time, in Shiva Tantra, because the people considered Shiva so much their own, so intimate with them, that they did not feel the necessity to worship Him with the help of any acoustic root. And Shiva really did become one of them. Thus they did not depend on any acoustic root to invoke Him. The then followers of the Vedas accepted the supremacy of Shiva, but their relation with Him was not so intimate. As I have already said, there was no system of idol worship in those days, but they used to accept Shiva as their deity of transmutation – as the transmutational principle.⁽¹⁾ The people in those days used m [the sound “mm”] as the acoustic root for the process of transmutation, the process of metamorphosis. Thus they used m to indicate anything concerned with Shiva.

Although Shiva was accepted in the Vedic Age, He himself did not follow the Vedic cult. He accepted only the Tantric cult and adhered to it very strictly, and persuaded others to do the same. You know that the Jain religion was introduced a little more than two thousand years ago, but the Shiva Cult is much older than the Jain religion. Some people claim that the Tirthaṅkars (the original Jain prophets) existed even before the advent of Vardhamān Mahāvīra; they propagated Jainism, but it was undoubtedly long after Shiva. When Jainism was spreading in India, Shiva had already become a god of the people; He had penetrated into all walks of Indian life and become intimately associated with each and every aspect of social life. This was not only because of His extraordinary personality and genius, but because of His pervasive influence in all spheres of human life. Though Jainism is quite old, and efforts were made to propagate it, the

people of that age accepted it only superficially. Jainism received quite a good response in India, particularly in the Ráfh area, but

Shaeva Dharma [Shaivism] maintained its existence like a subterranean flow in the people's minds.

Perhaps many of you know that Jainism is divided into several branches, and the two main branches are Digamvara and Shvetámvara. By historical research, it has been found that Jainism is mainly Digamvara.⁽²⁾ But later a time came when the Nirgranthaváda of Digamvara Jainism (granthi means “knot”, so nirgranthi means “not using the knots of clothes” – that is why the doctrine was known as “Digamvara”) was not appreciated by the householders, and it was primarily they who introduced the Shvetámvara doctrine, although Jainism is primarily Digamvara. Later this Nirgranthaváda of Jainism was associated with Shaivism. People were outwardly Digamvara Jain, but in the core of their hearts they were Shaivites. All the idols of Digamvara Tirthaṅkars which have been found are naked. Now let us move to another topic.

In the prehistoric age, before even the Vedic Age started, people used to follow the system of phallic worship. I have mentioned in my book on Ráfh that in those days there were severe conflicts among the different clans. They were never secure, neither at night nor during the day; so they always wanted to increase their numbers. Thus they worshipped the phallus as the symbol of their earnest desire to multiply. This phallic worship was more or less in vogue in almost all the countries of the world, not just in one particular country. Phallic worship was common in India, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia, and also widely prevalent in Central America – that is, in the southern part of North America and northern part of South America. Some think that this phallic worship was brought to America from India during the Shriishaelendra Empire of Andhra under the Pahlava, Pandya, and Chol Dynasties of South India. The phallus worshippers of Central America belonged to the Mayan civilization; thus America is called Máyádviipa in Sanskrit [Mayan Island]. However, the fact is that those people followed this phallic worship from prehistoric times more as a social custom than as a spiritual or philosophic cult. In the Jain age, the naked idols of the Tirthaṅkars aroused a new thought in the minds of the people, and thus for the first time phallic worship was introduced as part of the spiritual cult of Digamvara Jainism. Shaeva Dharma existed side by side with Digamvara Jainism; alongside the Jain and Buddhist doctrines, there existed Shiva Tantra⁽³⁾ also in a metamorphosed form, which may be designated as Post-Shiva Tantra. In this way the worship of Shiva-liuṅga [phallic worship] was introduced in Post-Shiva Tantra through the influence of Jainism. Thus the prehistoric phallic worship, being associated with a newer spiritual awareness and philosophical outlook, produced a new trend of thought. (It should be remembered that metaphysics had already emerged by that time, for Jainism and Buddhism were propounded after the great sage Maharśi Kapila.) Thus the worship of Shiva-liuṅga was introduced about 2500 years ago. But the phallic worship of the pre-historic age, and the worship of Shiva-liuṅga in medieval India (around 2250 years ago), were not the same. The latter, invested with a novel philosophical and spiritual significance, awakened a new trend of human thought. The people of that time started worshipping Shiva-liuṅga with a new outlook, just as they gave new significance to the Tirthaṅkaras. The intention behind the prehistoric phallic worship, as I have already said, was the worshippers' earnest desire to increase their numbers – because they had to fight day and night to survive. But in later times, when Shiva-liuṅga worship was introduced in

Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, and Post-Shiva Tantra, it received a new interpretation, Liṅgate gamyate yasmin talliṅgam [“The entity [[from which all things originate and]] towards which all things are moving is liṅgam”]. All the psychic flows and existential vibrations are flowing in the mahākāsha, the mahāvyaoma [the eternal void], and these vibrational expressions will finally terminate in that Supreme Principle of Transmutation, that Supreme Metamorphosis. So this Shiva-liṅga is the final destination of all expressions, the culminating point of all existence. Thus the mode of worship of Shiva-liṅga was altogether transformed.

Now this worship of Shiva-liṅga which began in the age of Jainism spread throughout every fibre of Indian life. In this new style of Shiva worship, both the dhyāna mantra⁽⁴⁾ and bija mantra of Shiva were changed. Now it is necessary to explain this bija mantra. All the phenomena, all the vibrational expressions in this universe have colour and sound. The human eye may be unable to perceive those subtle colours, and the human ear unable to catch those subtle sounds, but their existence cannot be denied just because of human inability to perceive them. Many animals and birds can perceive subtle vibrations and understand things which humans cannot for instance, the olfactory capacity of tigers and dogs is far greater than that of human beings. Often dogs can identify miscreants by their smell. Each and every expression has its own sound, and the collection of all sounds is oṅm̐kāra – a-u-m. A [the sound “uh”] is the acoustic root of creation, and u [the sound “oo”] is the acoustic root of operation, and m is the acoustic root of destruction. The sound created by a particular vibration is called its “acoustic root” in Latin. The concept of so-called gods and goddesses is based on these acoustic vibrations, the sound expressions which emanate from the Supreme Consciousness and flow in various directions. This is the science behind the acoustic roots.

The acoustic root of Shiva as mentioned in the Vedas was m [the sound “mm”]. I have already said that no acoustic root was necessary for the worship of Shiva [during His own time] because He was so intimate with all people. But in the age of Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, and Post-Shiva Tantra, the acoustic root became aeṁ. This ae vowel is also an acoustic root.

If we analyse this aum-sound,⁽⁵⁾ we find fifty root-sounds, and these root sounds are all within the vast spectrum of eternal time. Within this spectrum there are infinite undulations of the waves of time. Time is nothing but the mental measurement of the motivity of action. Whenever there is action, there is motivity. Time is not an unbroken flow, but consists of disjointed elements. These elements are so closely connected that they seem to become one integral whole although actually it is not continuous. However, these fifty separate emanations are all sustained by this so-called temporal factor. These are: a, á, i, ii, u, ú... kśa.⁽⁶⁾ So the alphabet is called akśa or akśamálá [málá means “garland”] – it is conceived as a garland of fifty letters.

During the time of the Atharvaveda it was thought that these fifty letters are being sustained by the time factor. I have already said that this conception of the Atharvaveda was wrong because the time factor is not an integral whole but a series of many separate entities. So these fifty letters of the oṅm sound are combined in the time factor. In the age of the Atharvaveda, people learned to read and write, although there was no system for writing the Vedas in black and white. Thus it was conceived that the time factor had put on the fifty letters in a garland, and each letter was symbolized by a human face. The letter a was kept in the hand because a is the acoustic root of

creation, and the rest of the letters (á to kśa) were put in the garland of Bhadrakálíi – a goddess of the Atharvaveda. It has been said:

Yata shona karnápute sabái Máyer mantra báte
Kálíi painçáshat varñamayii varñe varñe viráj kare.

[Whatever you hear is the incantative rhythm of the Divine Mother – the goddess Kálíi – and consists of these fifty letters.]

You understand that this Bhadrakálíi [a concept of the Atharvaveda which features the fifty letters] is not an integral whole either, but an aggregate of partial entities; so this is also a wrong concept from the philosophical point of view.⁽⁷⁾

Now, the letter ae (one of the twelve vowels) is called the vágbhava biija [acoustic root of speech]. A sprout emerges from every seed, and the seed from which the sprout of wisdom emerges is called the seed of the spiritual guide, the guru; so aeñ came to be the acoustic root of the guru. Shiva was generally accepted as the guru. So in the age of Jain, Buddhist and Post-Shiva Tantra, aeñ became accepted as the acoustic root of Shiva. The incantative rhythm of Shiva's worship became Aeñ Shiváya namah. But in the Vedic Age it was m.

Now let us consider the Jain Shiva. Nowadays large-size Shiva-liuᅅga are being excavated in different parts of India, especially in the Ráñh area. These are images either of the Jain Shiva or of the Shiva of the Post-Shiva Tantra of the Jain Age. In that age, there was intensive cultivation of knowledge throughout India. People considered this aeñ (the root of wisdom and speech) to be an ideal acoustic root for knowledge. A long time later, when the worship of Sarasvatii, the goddess of learning, was introduced, she was given the same acoustic root (aeñ – the acoustic root of speech). Aeñ Sarasvatyae namah [“Salutations to the goddess Sarasvatii”].

Thus far I have been talking about the Jain Shiva. The Jain Shiva has not been accepted in Shaeva Dharma but is accepted in Jain society because it was impossible to establish any doctrine without the influence of Shiva. In later times, Jain society was divided into different sections and sub-sections, and it influenced the contemporary Post-Shiva Tantra also. And then divisions arose regarding the worship of Shiva, and also differences of opinion about the system of Shiva-liuᅅga worship which had been practised since the Jain period. Some special types of Shiva-liuᅅga were called jyotirliuᅅga, other types were called ádiliuᅅga, others were called anádiliuᅅga – thus there were many different branches of Jainism, each with its own Shiva-liuᅅga and its own style of worship. Another distinct type of Shiva-liuᅅga is the Vánaliuᅅga, but it was of a much later period, the Puranic Age. King Vána, the monarch of north Bengal (then called Varendrabhúmi), invented the Vánaliuᅅga Shiva. In this way, the worship of Shiva underwent many changes in the Jain Age.

Now, the followers of Jainism are all vegetarians. The followers of Shiva are also vegetarians. But the Shiva Cult was more practical and thus it became the valuable asset of human beings, while Jainism became estranged from the people because of its impractical nature. For example, according to Jainism, tilling the land is not permitted because it would kill many worms and insects, thereby violating the principle of non-violence. But Shaeva Dharma is quite practical.

Lord Shiva said Varttamáneśu vartteta [“Live in the present”]. In other words, “Never ignore the practical realities of life.” So even in the age of Jainism, the followers of the Shiva Cult used to cultivate the land, because to refrain from agriculture was not common sense. Again, the followers of Jainism covered their faces with a piece of cloth so that insects might not enter their noses and die. The followers of the Shiva Cult did not do such things, and they even fought if necessary, for they strictly followed the instructions of Shiva. There was much similarity between these two cultures, but in comparison with the culture of Shiva, the Jain culture had some serious drawbacks.

Now let us consider the Buddhist Shiva. Just as Shiva was worshipped in the age of Jain culture and Jainism influenced Post-Shiva Tantra and was also influenced by it, the same thing occurred in the Buddhist Age.

The Buddhist Age and the Jain Age occurred simultaneously. Lord Maháviira was about fifty years older than Lord Buddha. There was a pervasive influence of Maháyána Buddhism in some parts of India, China and Tibet. At that time, the Maháyána branch of Buddhism split into two sections, both of which embraced Tantric culture. The Shiva of Post-Shiva Tantra was accepted in Buddhist Tantra, and the followers of the latter also preferred to worship the Shiva-liuᅅga instead of worshipping idols of Shiva.

You should remember that there is no mention of the worship of Shiva-liuᅅga in the dhyána mantra of Shiva. From this it is clear that the worship of Shiva-liuᅅga was introduced much later.

Because of the vast popularity of Shiva, He could not be neglected even in the Buddhist Age, and the worship of the Shiva idol or Shiva-liuᅅga was accepted, only with a little difference. Shiva was not accepted as a perfect god. He was accepted as a bodhisattva, and a small image of Buddha was affixed to the image of Shiva. In some cases, a small image of Buddha was attached to the head of the image of Shiva at the time of Shiva’s worship. The intention was to make it clear that Shiva was not a perfect god. He was a bodhisattva, and it was Buddha who was the goal of worship for Shiva. This kind of Bodhisattva Shiva became Baᅅuka Bhaerava, then Boᅅo Shiva, then Buᅅo Shiva [Old Shiva], at a later time.

In the remote villages of Bengal, many temples of Buᅅo Shiva are found. These images of Buᅅo Shiva are from the Buddhist Age. The worship of this Buddhist Shiva was widely popular on the eastern side of the Himalayas, in Tibet, and in some parts of Bengal; it was introduced in Bengal during the days of Vajrayána Buddhism.

It would not be irrelevant to say that though Vajrayána was prevalent in India, Tibet and a considerable part of China, the centre or the controlling point of it was a village named VajraYoginii of Vikrampur of Dhaka district. A Chinese ácárya [spiritual teacher] of Buddhist Tantra lived there, named Pháhá-u-cá. This village and Vikrampur are still existing. The history of Vikrampur goes back much earlier than the Puranic Age. If I ever narrate the history of Baᅅga-Dabák [southern Bangladesh], many things are to be said about this Vikrampur. In the age of Buddhist Tantra, the name of Vikrampur was Vikram Maᅅipur – not Vikrampur. Oᅅᅅrᅅ maᅅipadme hummm was the mantra of Vajrayánii Buddhism. The name Vikram Maᅅipur has been derived from this Maᅅipadma Mantra.

Anyway, Shiva was worshipped as a bodhisattva in the Buddhist Age. At that time a small idol of Buddha was set on the head of the image of Shiva or on the Shiva-liuṅga. The acoustic root of this Buddhist Shiva, the Jain Shiva and the Shiva of Post-Shiva Tantra was aem̄. This aem̄ is the acoustic root of speech and hearing, the root from which all knowledge springs.

Then came the Shiva Cult and Shákta Cult of the Puranic Age. In this age also, the worship of Shiva continued. The Puranic concept of Shiva was the consolidation of the worship of the twenty-two varieties of Shiva-liuṅga, including the jyotirliuṅga, the anádiliuṅga, the ádiliuṅga, etc., plus the Shiva-liuṅga of King Vána. But the interesting thing is that the Shiva of this Puranic Age was quite different from the Shiva of Jain, Buddhist, or Post-Shiva Tantra. Consequently the acoustic root of Shiva also changed from aem̄ to haom̄. The acoustic root of the Puranic Shiva became Haom̄ Shiváya namah.

The concept of a deity must change if there is a change in its acoustic root. So Sadáshiva, the very shelter of human life for seven thousand years, and this Shiva of the Jain, Buddhist or Post-Shiva Tantra, are not the same person.

There is another interesting thing which people generally ignore. You will notice that when Buddhism was gradually transformed into Puranic Shaivism, that transitional period was the age of the Nátha Cult. The word nátha [lord] used to be appended to the names of the prophets of the Nátha Cult, for instance Ádinátha, Miinanátha, Matsyendra-nátha (who invented Matsyendrásana), Gorakśanátha, Gohiniinátha, and Caoraungiinátha (after whom Chowringee street in Calcutta has been named). These were the spiritual teachers of the Nátha Cult.

This Nátha Cult was the result of the synthesis between Buddhist Tantra and the Puranic Shiva Cult. All the masters of the Nátha Cult were considered as avatáras [incarnations] of Shiva; that is, after the death of these masters, people made idols of them and worshipped them in the temples as incarnations of Shiva. Thus just as the word nátha was appended to the names of the masters, it was also appended to the names of Shiva when He was worshipped – for instance, Tárakanátha, Vaedyanátha, Vishvanátha, etc.

These deities were the objects of worship for the followers of the Nátha Cult; they had nothing to do with the Sadáshiva of seven thousand years ago. There was a vast time gap of about 5500 years between the two. Although in the Shiva Cult and the Shákta Cult of the Puranic Age people continued the worship of Shiva-liuṅga, they used to append the word iishvara [controller or lord] to the names of Shiva just to differentiate their Shiva from the Shiva of the Nátha Cult. For instance, Tárakeshvara, Vishveshvara, Rámeshvara, etc. Sometimes they used to name Shiva with the addition of both nátha, in the manner of the Nátha Cult followers, and iishvara, in the manner of the Puranic Shiva Cult. For instance, they would say either, or both, Tárakanátha or Tarákeshvara, Vishvanátha or Vishveshvara. (But the Vaedyanátha of Deoghar cannot be called Vaedyeshvara.)

From this one can easily distinguish which Shiva was worshipped by which cult – which was worshipped by the Nátha Cult followers, and which by the Puranic Shiva Cult followers.

Saoráístre Somanathaiṅca,
Shriishaela Mallikárjunám;
Ujjayinyám Mahákálaṁ,
Oṅmákaramamaleshvaram.

[Shiva of Saurashtra is called Somanátha; in Shriishaela He is Mallikárjunam; in Ujjayinyá He is Mahákálaṁ, and in Oṅmákárnáth He is Amaleshvaram.]

Again it is said:

Varánasyám Vishvanáthah,
Setubandhe Rámeshvarah;
Jháfakhaṅde Vaedyanáthah,
Ráthe ca Tárakeshvarah.

[He is known as Vishvanátha in Varanasi, as Rámeshvara in Setubandha, as Vaedyanátha in Jharakhaṅda, and as Tárakeshvara in Ráfh.]

This is how Shiva is variously worshipped by the followers of different cults. In some places He is addressed as nátha by the followers of the Nátha Cult, in other places as iishvara by the followers of the Puranic Shiva Cult. The acoustic root for Shiva in all these cases is haorṁ, and as there has been a change in the acoustic root, this Shiva is not the Shiva of seven thousand years ago.

12 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors' note: That is, that Shiva was the one fundamental substance of the universe which was transmuted into the various forms of creation.

(2) Editors' note: That is, the followers of Jainism did not use clothes. (Amvara means "clothes", and dik means "direction", so digamvara means that people will remain uncovered, just as the natural directions do.)

(3) Editors' note: "Shaeva Dharma" can be a general term for the system which Shiva gave, or can refer especially to the philosophical side of the system. "Shaeva Tantra" refers primarily to the applied side of the system.

(4) Editors' note: See Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, Namah Shiváya Shántáya, Discourse 20.

(5) Editors' note: Also spelled oṅm.

(6) Editors' note: That is, the fifty sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet, beginning with the first vowel a and ending with the last consonant kśa.

(7) Editors' note: The partial entities are not conceived as becoming unified in one Infinite Entity.

In the Glory of Shiva – Section A

From the study of history, it is known that the Rgveda was composed outside India, mainly in Central Asia and Russia. The Yajurveda was written mostly outside India; only a portion was written in India. And the Atharvaveda was composed in Afghanistan and India. Those three Vedas – Rk, Yaju and Atharva – long afterwards, say about 3500 years ago – were edited and divided into different branches by Maharśi Krśnadvaepáyana Vyása. The oldest compositions were named Rgveda, the intermediate portions were called Yajurveda, and the remaining portions were named Atharvaveda. The last-named Veda was named after the great sage, Atharva, the first author of this Veda. And by compiling the musical compositions of the three Vedas, yet another Veda - the Sámaveda, the fourth Veda – was created. SÁma in Sanskrit means “musical composition”. The Sámaveda itself is not a Veda.

Sadáshiva was born at a time when the age of the Rgveda was coming to an end and the Yajurvedic Age was about to begin. The people had not yet invented script. In the days of Shiva, the serious disadvantage was that, although the people were acquainted with the science of phonetics, that is, the intonations of the letters, they did not know how to write the letters. The Bráhmii and Kharośthi scripts were invented some time after Shiva. Thus we can generally say that the Vedas and Tantra exercised their mutual influence over each other, through the invention of script, only at the time of the Atharvaveda.

The external form that was given to Tantra by Shiva in His time underwent a slight transformation in subsequent periods. You may raise the question – well, when the goal is the same, when the path is also the same, then why this transformation? The only cause was: there was no written book in those days. All the compositions – both Vedas and Tantras – were handed down orally from one generation to another. As a result, there arose a difference of opinion among the teachers themselves – one teacher or muni [seer] would say one thing, and another muni would say something else.

Now although letters were invented during the age of the Atharvaveda, the Vedas could not be written down due to one obstacle – a peculiar superstition (better to call it a dogma) that the Vedas should not be written down. Maharśi Atharva’s followers – Aungirá, Aungirasa, Satyaváha, Vae-darbhi, etc., tried for the first time to get the Vedas written down in letters, but they were not courageous enough to do so because it was forbidden. (The very name of Vaedarbhi suggests that he was a resident of Vidarbha, and in India, particularly in the Vidarbha area, the Atharvaveda was partly written. Hence it is not proper to assume that the entire Veda was written outside India.) The Vedas were called shruti [ear] because they had to be mastered only by hearing: letters had not yet been invented. But once the script was invented, what could be the reason for not writing down the Vedas? The problem was the superstition, and the scholars did not dare to defy the superstition.

Now the Post-Shiva Tantra that gradually crystallized through the transformation of the original Shiva Tantra had two branches - the Gaodíiya School and the Káshmiirii School. In East India, that is, Bengal, where the Gaodíiya School of Tantra was popular, the Vedas had little influence. But in Kashmir, where the Káshmiira branch of Tantra was more dominant, there was the influence of both Tantra and the Vedas. During those days of ascendancy of the Káshmiira

branch of Post-Shiva Tantra, the Káshmiira scholars first wrote the Vedas in contemporary Sáradá script; that is, the Vedas were written first in Sáradá script. Later came the age of Buddhism and Jainism; of course Post-Shiva Tantra was running parallel to them. Script had already been invented. The books on Jainism were mostly written in Prákrta, in a Bráhmii script which was a bit transformed; while the books on Buddhism were written in Mágadhii Prákrta, that is, in Páli, in the Bráhmii script of that time. But the Post-Shiva Tantra was written in Sanskrit; of course in Bráhmii script. So this all proves that the invention of scripts removed a great obstacle on the way. At this time there was a mutual exchange of ideas among Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra and Post-Shiva Tantra.

When some ideas or schools of thought exist side-by-side for a long period in a certain country, there is bound to be some sort of mutual exchange, and the result of this type of exchange cannot but be beneficial. It is often found that the result is either good or, at the worst, neither good nor bad. For instance, the Puranic concept of the deity Náráyaṅa and the Islamic concept of Pírabhakti combined together to give rise to a new concept of Satyapiira in Bengal. Its effect was not bad.

Similarly, those three schools of Tantra – the Jain, the Buddhist, and the Shivottara [Post-Shiva] – began to come to an understanding. All three schools broadly accepted the division of Tantra into sixty-four main branches, considering its various expressions. The only difference that persisted was the external one of differences in terminology: each school retained certain specific terms of its own. But they all generally accepted that human life had sixty-four types of expression, and hence there were sixty-four branches of Tantra. In their internal essence, they were not very far from one another; only certain terms - something external – were used differently by different Tantras. For instance, the Múla Prajiṅá Shakti [Fundamental Cognitive Principle] was called Jinaratna or Jinaraana in Jain Tantra –

Bhaṅai Káhú jina raan bi kaesá
Káleṅ bob samvohia jaesá.

– whereas in Shiva Tantra, rather in Post-Shiva Tantra, the word Shiva was used, and Buddhist Tantra used the various epithets of Buddha. Thus the sixty-four Tantras were running parallel.

For each of these sixty-four Tantras, one particular yoginii-tattva was accepted as the presiding deity (a particular controlling deity of a particular branch of Tantra was called a yoginii). All three Tantras accepted this arrangement. And all three, in order to maintain their popularity, used the name of Shiva – they declared that each Tantric deity was the wife of Shiva. Those of you who have gone to Jabbalpur might have noticed the sixty-four small temples on a hill there dedicated to these sixty-four yoginiis. They are all sixty-four Jain Tantric deities. Similarly, in Buddhist Tantra, particularly in Vajrayánii Buddhist Tantra, sixty-four deities were accepted. Shivottara Tantra followed the same practice.

Interestingly, you will notice how at this stage a silent synthesis was taking place among the different schools. Some of the Jain deities were recognized by Buddhist Tantra (for instance, the Jain deity Bárahhii, with a swine's face, was transformed into Vajrabárahhii in Vajrayánii Buddhist

Tantra). Shivottara Tantra gave similar recognition to deities of other Tantras. Conversely, some of the deities of Shivottara Tantra were recognized and accepted by Jain and Buddhist Tantra.

All this proves that the synthesis of these three systems of Tantra charted a new path. This was all made possible by the invention of script. As long as script was unknown or unused, they maintained their distinct separateness; but with the popular use of script, they began to come closer to each other. For example, Ambiká is an accepted deity of Jain Tantra. But then she also became recognized by Shivottara Tantra – she was supposed to be a wife of Shiva. (But as you know, these deities cannot be the wives of Sadáshiva, who is seven thousand years old, whereas these deities are all of comparatively recent origin – about two thousand years old – arising after the invention of script.) This Ambiká Devii has been accepted in a different manner in Paoráńik Sháktácára [the Puranic Shákta Cult], as the goddess Lakśmii, but actually she is a Jain deity.

In Ráfh,⁽¹⁾ there is a town named Kalna where there is still a temple dedicated to the goddess Ambiká. Once there was a tremendous influence of Jainism in Ráfh. The town was named Ambiká-Kalna, after the goddess, and is now called Enbo-Kalna.

Another instance: the Buddhist goddess Tára was accepted in Shivottara Tantra, and still later, in Paoráńik Sháktácára. And her changed form was accepted in Paoráńik Sháktácára as the goddess Sarasvatii. The goddess Kálii of Shivottara Tantra was accepted in Buddhist Tantra.

Thus there came an age of synthesis. And following this synthesis, these deities were accepted as gods and goddesses in Paoráńik Shaevácára [the Puranic Shiva Cult] and Paoráńik Sháktácára in somewhat changed form. This form underwent slightly more transformation during the middle of the Pathan Age, whose influence still lingers in a minor form.

Now in the process of synthesis among Jain, Buddhist and Shivottara Tantra, there evolved a new concept, the concept of Dashamahávidyá [Ten Mahávidyás], centring around those deities who had general influence in all three systems of Tantra. The idea of Dashamahávidyá arose out of ten Tantric deities, some from Jain Tantra, some from Buddhist Tantra and some from Shivottara Tantra. These deities, in slightly changed form, were accepted in Paoráńik Sháktácára, Vaeśńavácára, Shaevácára and Gáńa-patyácára [the Puranic Shákta Cult, the Viśńu Cult, the Shiva Cult and the Gańapati Cult]. While analysing the history of Dashamahávidyá, it is interesting to see how the concept of each deity evolved – how an idea dawned upon the human mind and gradually expanded in the path of synthesis until finally its basic defects demolished its own fundaments.

These Ten Mahávidyás are Kálii, Tára, Śódashii, Bhuvaneshvarii, Bhaeravii, Chinnamastá, Dhúmávatii, Bagalámukhi, Mátaungii and Kamalá. These deities are present in all three Tantras. Sometimes their biija mantras [acoustic roots] are the same, sometimes different. For your proper understanding, let me give you a brief idea about these ten deities.

Meghavarńá vigatavasaná,
Shavashivárúdhá shyámá trinayaná;
Narashirakhadgarvarábhayashobhaná,
Caturbhujá Kálii Kálikárúpinii.

Garvitádánavagarvakharvákrti khadga
Kharpará Niila Sarasvatii;
Sarvasaobhágyapradáyinii kartrii,
Namaste Tárárúpá táriinii,
Bálá ruásamá-ujjvalá-ungabhá,
Caturbhujá trinayaná;
Tribhuvanamanolobha páshámkush-sharacápa-
Dháriinii Shivá, Śodashii rúpá Shiva bhávinii.
Hásyamukharitá nishákaravanditá,
Tribhuvana maṅgala bhuvaneshvarii máta;
Raktotpaladhará kotibhánuninditá,
Bhaeravii varábhaya dáyinii.
Vivarña vidhavá malinámbaradhará
Kákadhvajá Dhúmavatii shúrparará;
Bagalámukhii piitavaraaná piitámbará
Mudgara ari jihvá dháriinii.
Nijashirachinditá rudhirapánaratá
Digvásá ratiratá jano parisámsthitá;
Chinnamastá mátá dakiniisamanvitá
Prabalapátakiikula ghátinii.
Manimayásane shyámakalevará,
Mátaungiirúpadhará sudhámshu shekhará;
Káiṅcanakántisudiptá manohará
Kamalá harahrdivásinii.

The first of these deities is Káliká. She is one of the controlling deities of Shivottara Tantra, but simultaneously she was accepted in Buddhist Vajrayána. I have said a number of times that Shiva was the most influential personality. Therefore an attempt was made to establish some kind of relationship with Him: it was announced that Káliká was Shiva's spouse. But one should remember that Shiva was born five thousand years before the age of Káliká; so how could Káliká be His wife? Secondly, Káliká – this controlling deity – is depicted as having four hands. No human structure can have four hands. So Káliká Shakti – Kálii – this deity – is not Shiva's wife. She is a Tantric deity belonging to subsequent ages.

The second deity is Tára. Tára is one of the Tantric deities of Vajrayána Tantra. I have said previously that the Tára that was worshipped in India was known as Ugratára, while the deity that was worshipped in China was called Bhrámarii Tára – “black as a bumblebee” – and the one who was worshipped in Tibet (Kimpuruśavarśa, as it was known previously) was blue-coloured. So this Tára was later than Buddha, and later yet than Shiva; hence Tára cannot be accepted as the wife of Shiva either.

There is not even any similarity in name. Shiva did have one wife whose name was Kálii, so she has at least the similarity in name with Kálii, the deity of Post-Shiva Tantra. But this was not the case with Tára. Tára is purely a deity of the Buddhist Vajrayána Tantra. But she is accepted as a deity in Post-Shiva Tantra and the Puranic Shákta Cult.

Even today, you will come across boys with names such as Tárápada, Táráprasáda, etc., and girls with such names as Tárádevii. This is the history behind these names.

Tárá has no relation to Shiva. People wrongly believe that she is the wife of Shiva. I shall say something more about Tárá later, when I discuss Sarasvatii.

Then comes Śódashii, the third deity. In this connection, let us say something about biija mantra [acoustic roots]. At the time of Shiva, there was no use of biija mantra in Shiva Tantra. The people loved Shiva so intimately that they did not think it necessary to worship Him with a particular biija mantra. In subsequent periods the use of biija mantra became an accepted practice. In Buddhist Tantra, the acoustic root of Kálii was raṁ: this was also the acoustic root of energy. This biija mantra signifies the application of energy in action. But in Post-Shiva Tantra the biija mantra for the same purpose was changed into riiṁ. (Ra, the acoustic root of energy, plus ii suffix, indicating feminine gender, equals riiṁ.) This denotes that energy is a female entity. And in still later days, when this deity Kálii was accepted in the Puranic Shákta Cult (the present custom of the worship of the goddess Kálii is derived from the Puranic Shákta Cult), the biija mantra (riiṁ) was further changed into klrṁ: Klṛṁ Káli-káyaē namah.

Generally in the Post-Buddha days, during the period of the Puranic Shákta Cult, all the Buddhist, Jain and Post-Shiva Tantric deities were declared to be the wives of Shiva, otherwise the society would not recognize and worship them. But they have different biija mantras. In the Puranic Age, the commonly accepted practice was that the controlling deities derived from Post-Shiva Tantra were designated as “Dakśiṇá Shakti”, and those derived from Vajráyána Buddhism were designated as “Vámá Shakti”.

For instance, Káliká: she was known as “Vámá Kálii” when worshipped in Buddhist Tantra. When an image was made of her, she would be painted jet-black; her left leg would be placed forward, her right leg behind; and there would be red patches on her left leg. This deity, Vámá Kálii, was not worshipped inside houses or in villages; she was worshipped in the cremation grounds outside the villages. These days, these deities are called by various names: for instance, Vámá Kálii, Shmashána Kálii, Rakśá Kálii and Raṭantii Kálii. These are all deities of the Buddhist Tantra Cult, subsequently declared to be “Vámá Shakti”; and the goddesses of Post-Shiva Tantra who are now accepted in the Puranic Cult are called “Dakśiṇá Shakti”.

But the images of Dakśiṇá Shakti are painted black or blue, or light green, and the right leg is placed in front. They are worshipped mainly at home, or inside the villages. The idea is: we may accept the deities of Buddhist Tantra, but not as family deities or village deities. Some sort of distance must be maintained. But in the case of the Dakśiṇá Shaktis, there is no such distance.

Though both types of deity, dakśiṇá and vamá, were declared to be the wives of Shiva, historically speaking, they had no relationship with Shiva, because all these deities originated at least five thousand years later than Shiva. Not only that, no human structure can have four hands. They have been selected out of the sixty-four schools of Tantra. Basically, they are not human structures.

An old Bengali poem says,

Ek so padumá caośatti pákhuí
Te madheye nácanti dómnií bápufi.

This is very old Bengali. It means, “There is one lotus flower having sixty-four petals, and in the centre of the petals is dancing Naerátma Devii.” In Buddhist Tantra, Prakrti [the Supreme Operative Principle], who is active in all the manifestations and emanations of this universe, is called Naerátma Devii.

Let us come to Śódashii of these ten Mahávidyás. Śódashii is also called “Shivá” – that is, “the wife of Shiva, one whose object of meditation is Shiva”. Śódashii, who was originally a deity of Buddhist Vajrayána Tantra, was accepted subsequently in Post-Shiva Tantra with a new name, Rájarájeshvarii. Later, in the Puranic Shákta Cult, this deity Rájarájeshvarii was accepted and worshipped, though she was not very popular among the masses. More recently, towards the end of the Mughal period and the beginning of the British period, Krśńa Candra, the king of Nadia, introduced the worship of Rájarájeshvarii, in a slightly changed form and with a new name – Jagaddháttrií. Thus Jagaddháttrií is essentially a Buddhist Tantric deity transformed from Śódashii.

You should note carefully that the worship of Jagaddháttrií was especially popular in Krishnanagar. It is comparatively recent in origin, as it started in the early part of British history. Just as Śódashii in Buddhist Tantra was conceived to be the wife of Shiva, Rájarájeshvarii and Jagaddháttrií were also declared to be Shiva’s wives. But how can they be the wives of Shiva, who lived seven thousand years ago?

It may be a bit irrelevant to mention here, but the fact is that the worship of Jagaddháttrií is carried out in both Krishnanagar and Chandannagar with great pomp and pageantry. An inhabitant of Chandannagar – possibly his name was Gaunḡá Govinda Bandyopádhyáya – was the Dewan, the Prime Minister, of Nadia. Following the example of Krishnanagar he introduced the worship of Jagaddháttrií in Chandannagar also. In art, grandeur, pomp and pageantry, Chandannagar lags behind Krishnanagar. But Chandannagar can claim supremacy in one special area: there the Jagaddháttrií idols are of gigantic size.

Anyway, these deities, which originated in the days of medieval Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra and Post-Shiva Tantra, were not the wives of Shiva. Some had four hands, some had eight hands, etc., so they were not representations of human beings.

30 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors’ note: The territory, mostly in Bengal, from the west bank of the Bhagirathi River to the Parasnath Hills.

In the Glory of Shiva – Section B

The idea that Brahma comprises both Shiva and Shakti was consummated five thousand years after Shiva's advent. This is the idea of Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva. It was imagined that Shiva was one: His right side was like that of Shiva, and His left side was like that of Shakti, or Gaorii. One side was plain white, the other side was fair-complexioned; one side was covered with a tiger skin, the other with linen cloth; on one side there was a hooded snake, on the other, the matted locks of Gaorii's hair. This idea of Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva [Shiva Half Man and Half Woman] represents the inner spirit of Shiva Shaktyátmakam Brahma. True, Ánanda Sútram⁽¹⁾ was not composed then, but the idea was there deep in people's minds. This Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva was not known in the days of Shiva Tantra, but was very much present in the days of Post-Shiva Tantra. Later on it was accepted in the Puranic Shiva Cult, but subsequently this idea disappeared from people's minds.

I saw the figure of Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva in one of the 108 temples on the Burdwan-Guskara Road to the west of Burdwan town. This Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva is a personification of a philosophical idea: that Shiva and Shakti [the Supreme Cognitive Faculty and Supreme Operative Principle] – knowledge and energy - work in harmony. Energy is a blind force. A little child may die of electrocution, because electricity is merely a form of energy devoid of consciousness; being a blind force, it never stops to think that it is killing an innocent child. Thus there should be proper coordination between energy and cognition. This energy, unless guided and controlled by consciousness, may indulge in destructive activities. Thus all the actional expressions of Prakrti [the Operative Principle] are performed only on the vast body of Supreme Consciousness. If Shakti takes one step away from the body of Shiva, it may be harmful. So Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva is a symbolic form of this creation by Shiva and Shakti. Shiva is only working as a witnessing entity and controlling the movements of Shakti with His characteristic firmness, simplicity, and love for creation.

Kii e nirúpama shobhá manorama
Hara Gaorii ek shariire
Shveta piita káy ráuṇá dutí páy
Bhábtí bhábiyá mari re
Ádha bághachála aunge viráje ádha paťámbara mohana sáje
Ádha phańii phańá dhari re.

[What exquisite beauty have Shiva and Párvatii manifested in one body:
One is white, the other is yellow;
When I think of the qualities of those two lotus feet, I am beside myself with joy.
One side of the body is wearing a tiger-skin, the other is covered with fine silk cloth,
And half the head is adorned with a serpent.]

23 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors' note: Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, Ánanda Sútram, 1962.

In the Glory of Shiva – Section C

In those days of matrilineal order, people introduced the system of mother worship, and from that emerged the custom of caṅḍīī pūjā, the worship of caṅḍīkā shakti, the power of the group-mother. In those days the leader of a clan would invariably be a woman, a clan-mother.

Yá devī sarvabhūteṣu Matrūpeṇa saṁsthitā
Namastasyae namastasyae namastasyae namo namah.
Yá devī sarvabhūteṣu Shaktirūpeṇa saṁsthitā
Namastasyae namastasyae namastasyae namo namah.

[I offer my deepest salutations to that goddess who is in all created beings in the form of the Universal Mother. I offer my deepest salutations to the goddess who is immanent in all created beings in the form of the Supreme Force.]

Thus the people, being inspired by this idea, developed the system of mother worship in early stages of the Puranic Shákta Cult, in the last phase of Post-Shiva Tantra. Alongside this developed the custom of kumáriī pūjā [virgin worship], just to please the future clan-mothers. So the custom of caṅḍīī pūjā gave rise to the custom of virgin worship. One who is a maiden today will be a clan-mother in due course; so it was wise to please these clan-mothers-to-be by offering them something.

Thus we see that caṅḍīī pūjā or kumáriī pūjā was essentially a social affair, but in Post-Shiva Tantra and in the first phase of the Puranic Shákta Cult, a religious tinge was added to it. This is how the worship of virgins originated. Now this system has almost disappeared.

The situation changed a great deal in subsequent periods. The matrilineal order was stopped, and the supremacy of gotramátá came to an end. Then came the age of the patriarchal system, and along with it the leadership of the clan vested in the gotrapitá.

The same tradition perpetuated itself even in the patriarchal system; that is, the head of the clan had to be kept in good humour with gifts and offerings. He enjoyed unlimited power, as the clan-mother did in the heyday of the matrilineal order.

Caṅḍīkā shakti is the caṅḍá shakti, the great power exercised by the clan-mother. This caṅḍīī shakti or caṅḍá shakti reached its climax during the days of Post-Shiva Tantra and the Puranic Shákta Cult. We shall say more about Puranic Shákta later. So you understand how the concept of caṅḍīī originated. ⁽¹⁾

Gaṅeśa was the group-leader of prehistoric days. Some time after Post-Shiva Tantra, in the Puranic Age, a special cult, the Gaṅapati Cult, arose centring around Gaṅapati. You should remember that some five cults arose following the Puranic doctrine that had its origin some 1300 or 1400 years back: Shaevácára, Sháktácára, Vaeśṅavácára, Gaṅapatyácára and Saorácára.

Let us throw some light on Shaevácára [the Shiva Cult]. The main goal of human beings is Shivasamádhi [final enlightenment]. Human beings should direct all their outer expressions of

life towards the inner world, and finally merge in Paramátmá. This is the sum and substance of the Shiva Cult.

Yacched váunmanasi prájñastad
Yacched jñánamátmani;
Jñánamátmani mahati niyacched
Tad yacchecchántátmani.

This shántátmá [referred to in tad yacchecchántátmani of the shloka] means Shivátmá [Supreme Entity]; one who merges in the Supreme Entity attains Shivasamádhi, which is the goal of every spiritual aspirant.

Next is Sháktácára [the Shakti Cult]. According to Sháktácára, the static principle contained in támasikii shakti has to be merged in Bhavánii Shakti, or Káliká Shakti (the acoustic root for Káliká Shakti is sam̐). And then the mutative principle has to be withdrawn from Káliká Shakti and merged in Bhaeravii Shakti (the acoustic root of Bhaeravii Shakti is shaṁ).

Bhaeravii Shakti means energy in action. All people want to come into contact with the mutative force. The acoustic root of energy is raṁ and that for the mutative principle is shaṁ. People want energy supported by the mutative force so that they might enjoy name and fame. So they crave for sha + ra = shra (in the feminine gender, shrii, beauty.) Thus there was a custom in olden days for people to prefix their names with the word shrii. The old custom has fallen into some disuse: shrii is used less nowadays. But I hope that these days people will not become vishrii [ugly]!

Then the sentient forces [or principles] have to be withdrawn from Bhaeravii Shakti, and merged in Kaośikii Shakti, or Mahásarasvatii, the spiritual effulgence.

These are the successive phases of the Puranic Shákta Cult. This cult begins with Káliká Shakti, but Káliká is not Kálii, the wife of Shiva, nor the Káliká Shakti of Buddhist Tantra or Post-Shiva Tantra, nor Káliká the Puranic goddess. Rather, this Káliká is a philosophical term, the inner spirit of a system of sádhaná.

Next is Vaeśñavácára [the Viśnú Cult].

Vistárah sarvabhútasya Viśnorvishvamidaṁ jagat;
Draśtavyamátmavattasmádabhedena vicakśāneh.⁽²⁾

Viśnú pervades each and every thing of this universe, and because He is all-pervading, He is called “Viśnú”. And the inner spirit of Vaeśñavácára is to realize this all-pervading Viśnú.

Viśnúparistitah Viśnúh Viśnúh khádati Viśńave;
Kathaṁ hasasi re Viśnúh sarvaṁ Viśnúmayam̐ jagat.

A devout Vaishnavite is seeing Viśnú in everything. Then he sits down to eat rice from a plate. He has a dog on his lap who partakes of food from the same plate. Another scholar who happens to discover that the Vaishnavite gentleman and his dog are eating from the same plate bursts into

laughter. He asks how a devout Vaishnavite can eat food from the same plate as a dog. The Vaishnavite replies, “Viśnú in the form of a dog is sitting on the lap of a man, another manifestation of the same Viśnú. Viśnú the man and Viśnú the dog are eating rice, another manifestation of Viśnú. And why are you, another manifestation of Viśnú, laughing? Everything in this universe is Viśnú.” This is the Puranic Viśnú Cult.

The fourth is Gánápatyácára [the Gañeśa or Gañapati Cult]. When the ancient custom of group leadership – gaña-pativáda, vináyakaváda or gañeśaváda – became converted into a cult during the Puranic Age, the idea was adopted that the group-leader was the leader of the universe. “The Supreme Entity is the leader of our group. We will try to satisfy Parama Puruśa.” With this sort of outlook, the Gánápatya Cult evolved during the Puranic Age. They are worshippers of gañapati, the group-leader. This is the Gánápatya Cult.

Last is the Saora [Sun] Cult. This cult was propagated by the Brahmans who came from Shákadviipa. Shákadviipa was the southern part of Russia, with its capital at Tashkent. The original Greek name of this area was Sacdonia. These Brahmans who migrated to India from Sacdonia did not recognize the Vedas or anything else; they were astrologers and teachers of áyurveda. Since they cultivated the science of astrology and astronomy, they used to worship the sun-god, Súrya. The word saora is derived from súrya plus the suffix śná, giving the sense of “offspring”; saora means “one who is the worshipper of the sun-god”. When it developed into a full-fledged cult, the idea behind it was that the sun-god, who was the creator of this world, was also the creator of the solar system; that is, all the planets – earth, Mars, Mercury, etc. – have come from the sun. The sun is their father. Similarly, the father of this universe is the sun-like Parama Puruśa; so the sun is worshipped as the Supreme Progenitor of this universe. This is the inner essence of the Súrya Cult, which was spread by the Sacdonian Brahmans. But it was not well accepted anywhere in India; it was only accepted to a moderate extent in some places.

These were the five main cults of the Puranic Age. None of them became widely established. Some enjoyed a limited popularity, while some barely existed at all. Some have a philosophical basis, while others do not.

30 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors’ note: Some pages on other topics omitted here.

(2) Viśnúpuráña –Trans.

Tantra in Bengal – Section A

Bengal is situated on the boundary line between Jambudviipa and Suvarṇadvīpa [ancient names of India and Burma]. The civilization that grew along the banks of the Mayārāksīi, Ajaya and Damodara later blended with the civilization which developed in the areas of Páondravardhana Bhukti, Samatat, and Dábák. A new civilization was born in Bengal – a blending between the Ráfh civilization of Gaṅdoyána⁽¹⁾ and the Gangetic civilization. That is why the people of Bengal are not exactly the same as those of northern India. The modes of worship and the priesthood system are different from those of northern India. Bengali script and intonation are also different, as, indeed, is the physical appearance of the Bengalees. From their facial lineaments, one can conclude that these people are of the Bengalee stock. These are the especial characteristics of a blended civilization.

Not only that, even the type of thought varies between the different communities. The blending of the dark-complexioned people of Ráfh with the fair-complexioned Aryans led to the formation of the Bengalee race. But this is not the end of the story. The River Brahmaputra flowed from the interior of Tibet, where its name was Sang Po (Son of a God), into India. In other words, it came from within a Mongolian⁽²⁾ country. The people of Tibet are Mongolian of the Indo-Tibetan group. The Mongolians are divided into a few branches, one of them being the Indo-Tibetan group. The Brahmaputra, or Sang Po, River carries that Mongolian civilization and not the Gangetic civilization.

That Mongolian civilization was criticized by the Aryans in the Dúrma Purána:

Sarve sámgsaratáh múrháh mleccháh gobrahmaghátakah;
Kuvacakáh pare múrháh ete kútayonayáh;
Teśám paeshácikii bhásá lokácáro na vidyate.

“They do not protect cows and Brahmans. They eat fish and meat. When they eat fish, what sort of Aryans are they? By these acts of theirs they have degraded themselves even more. Their style of pronunciation is full of defects.”⁽³⁾

The Mongolian civilization that flourished in the Brahmaputra Valley blended with the Ráfhii civilization and the Gangetic civilization, resulting in a new blended civilization, the Gaodīiya or Bengal civilization. Tantra had its origin in such a blended civilization. The Ganges and the Brahmaputra meet at Goyalanda in Bengal [Bangladesh]. Thus we see that the Bengal civilization is a mixed civilization, a blending of the Gaṅdoyána civilization of Ráfh, the Gangetic civilization of northern India, and the Mongolian civilization of Tibet and China [whose access was via the Brahmaputra Valley]. That is why it is said that this Bengal civilization flourished in the border areas between Jambudviipa and Suvarṇadvīpa.

In the Bengalee race the blood of these different civilizations is mixed. Because of the blending in of Australoid and Dravidoid blood, the people of Bankura, Midnapore and Purulia are mostly dark-complexioned. A certain amount of Mongolian blood is also present. The Bengalee farmers, the Rájvanshiis and Chakmas, have come from the Brahmaputra Valley. They are flat-nosed. As a result of the permutation and combination of these various small groups, the various castes and

sub-castes of West Bengal emerged – the Brahmans, the Káyasthas, the Vaedyas, and a host of sub-castes. But the source of all these castes and sub-castes is one and the same – the blended culture of the Ráfh, Gangetic and Brahmaputra valleys. If we take Bengal as a distinct land, it has a speciality of its own. This is due to the influence of the river valleys.

15 April 1979, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors' note: Gańđoyána was an ancient continent, now (due to geophysical changes) no longer intact.

(2) Editors' note: Since in ancient times Mongolia was an empire, and symbolized all of north and northeast Asia, "Mongolian" here means the Oriental, or yellow, race.

(3) Editors' note: Paragraph on medieval categorization of cultures omitted here.

Tantra in Bengal – Section B

The social system of Bengal was basically Tantric, for the Vedic influence was minimal. In the higher realms of spiritual practice, the influence of Tantra was enormous; only in the middle and lower strata of spiritual practice was there some slight Vedic influence. In the local customs and social systems, and in some ceremonies conducted by women, the influence of Tantra was quite evident. Even today the avidhavás [married, unwidowed women] of the family play a prominent role in various social observances. The [modern Bengali] word *eyo*⁽¹⁾ developed from this word *avidhavá* through a process of linguistic distortion.

In the various rituals of worship, banana, betel leaves and betel-nuts were widely used. This is not in accordance with the Vedic system. The word *kadalii* is not used in the Vedas; but in non-classical Sanskrit, a banana is called *rambhá* and a plantain is called *kadalii*. In non-classical Sanskrit betel-nut is called *guváka* or *pungiphalam*. With changes in the temporal and spatial factors, various other things as well have undergone change. Bengalees are Austrico-Negro-Dravidian; thus they were fond of chewing betel leaves like the Dravids, and they used to keep a container with them for this purpose. Young people used to carry a betel-nut cracker at the time of their wedding. Bengalee women used to work in the fields and farms all day long, and after the day's work was over they would wash their hands and face and, with a daub from their collyrium casket, would make a black mark on their foreheads. The women of Bengal were quite fond of cosmetics, so they used to tuck this collyrium casket into their hair-buns. They still do this at the time of their marriage ceremony.

The ancient society of Bengal was basically Tantric. Both the young men and the young women would use the surnames of their fathers before and after marriage [i.e., the young women would not give up their surnames]. The young women would use their father's surname, suffixed by the word *duhitá* [daughter], even after marriage. Women, though belonging to a new *gotra* [clan] after marriage, were entitled to observe the funeral rites of their departed parents. They would observe *ashaoca* [mourning] for three days and three nights after their father's or mother's death, and on the fourth day would perform the *shráddha* ceremony [in commemoration of the departed]. In the rest of India, the rule was that the women after marriage would lose their parental *gotra* and as such would not be entitled to observe the *shráddha* ceremony of their departed parents. In the rest of India, women's right to make *pińda* [offerings] to their ancestors is not recognized, but in Bengal it is recognized. In ancient days, the social life of Bengal was based on Tantra as introduced by Shiva.

20 April 1981, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editors' note: With the same meaning, a married and unwidowed woman.

Buddhist Tantra, Jain Tantra and Hindu Tantra

There are certain deities which are recognized in more than one school of Tantra. Some of them are recognized by both Buddhist Tantra and Jain Tantra, some by both Buddhist and Shaeva Tantra [Shiva Tantra], some by both Jain Tantra and Ársá [Hindu] Tantra. The number of such deities is not negligible. Originally the deity Káliká of Shákta Tantra [Shakti Tantra] was recognized by Buddhist Tantra. There is a place called Kalka near the hill town of Simla. The place has been named after the deity Káliká. There is a particular place named Kálkáji in Delhi. That area has been named after the goddess Káliká, who has a temple there. Tára is primarily a Buddhist deity, but in Shákta Tantra also Tára is a recognized deity.

In the Buddhist period there were four variations of the Tára deity: (1) Bhrámarii Tára, whose complexion was like that of a black bee; (2) Niila Sarasvatii, who was blue-complexioned; (3) Vajratára, worshipped by the Vajrayánii Buddhists;⁽¹⁾ (4) Ugratára, a terrible blood-thirsty deity. In those days Bhrámarii Tára was worshipped in China, a Maháyánii Buddhist country. Niila Sarasvatii was worshipped in Tibet. Ugratára was worshipped in eastern India, particularly in Gaódash [approximately equivalent to Bengal]. When Vajrayána was popular in eastern India, the deity Vajratára was worshipped. Each and every Tára deity has been recognized as a deity by Shákta Tantra as well as Puranic Tantra. It is claimed that all of them are Shiva's consorts. The Niila Sarasvatii of Tibet was later changed into the all-white Puranic deity Sarasvatii.

Another deity of the Vajrayána school is Vajrabáráhii. This deity was widely popular in the Bhulua (or Noakhali) District of Bangladesh. Even today effigies of the old Vajrabáráhi deity are sometimes recovered from the earth or from the artificial ponds of that region.

The Śódashii deity of Shákta Tantra has in some places been changed into the Rájarájeshvarii Devii of Puranic Tantra, in other places into Jagaddhátirii. But in certain fundamental ways all three deities Śódashii, Jagaddhátirii and Rájarájeshvarii are one. For instance, each of them has four hands; from the face of each deity a reddish glow is exuded; all the deities are three-eyed; then again all three have ropes, goads, bows and arrows. Here Buddhist Tantra, Shákta Tantra and Puranic [Hindu] Tantra are existing side-by-side, sometimes intermixed.

Bála ruńásamá-ujjvalá-ungábhá,
Caturbhujá trinayaná;
Tribhuvanamanolobhá páshámkush-sháracápa-
Dhárińii Shivá Śódashii rúpá Shiva bhávinii.

The complexion of Niila Sarasvatii is blue. Developing a golden colour, she became Prajińá Páramitá, and then becoming all white, she turned into the Puranic goddess Sarasvatii. The deity which originally had the peacock as its mount became the deity with the swan as its mount. When Maháyánii Sanskrit became transformed into laokik [comparatively recent] Sanskrit, Sarasvatii's dhyána mantra was also changed.⁽²⁾

There is a Puranic deity called Kuvera who is still worshipped in Jain Tantra and Puranic Tantra. From kuv plus erak comes the word kuvera, meaning "one possessed of enormous wealth".

1 July 1990, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Author's note: The Dalai Lama's old name was Daláilámá Vajradhara.

(2) Editors' note: Dhyána mantra cataloguing the attributes of Sarasvatii omitted here.

The Shiva-Gájan Festival

Many of you have surely witnessed the Gájana of Shiva. [The word gájana came from the Sanskrit root word gárjana. Gárjana means “shouting” or “roaring”.] The Gárjana, Cařaka and Bolán festivals of Rárh are very ancient. Shiva’s influence in Bengal and India even today is immense, although Shiva left his mortal frame long, long ago. Shiva is gone, no doubt, but his effulgent personality continues to influence people’s minds even today. Cařaka, Gárjana and Bolán are a few of the vestiges of Shaeva Tantra [Shiva Tantra] which are still to be found in Bengali society. The greatest influence of Shaeva Tantra is found in Kuřmun Village in Burdwan District, centring around the temple of Iisháneshvara. In certain areas of Meghálaya the influence of Shaeva Tantra can still be easily traced. About two hundred years ago there was widespread influence of Shaeva Tantra in the Hájaung community of northern Maymansingh District. This Shaeva Tantra permeated every bit of the Bengali mind. A clear proof of this all-pervasive influence is that even today in all the Shiva-oriented festivals in Rárh, only the line of native Bengalees participate. The so-called high-caste Bengalees, particularly the Brahmans, Káyasthas and Vaedyas, keep their distance from these festivals.⁽¹⁾ When asked the reason for their aloofness, they say, “We are not supposed to participate in these people’s festivals.” If they are still pressed as to why, they flounder for a satisfactory reply. The reason is that the so-called high-caste people have tried to mould the Shaeva religion which was inseparably rooted in the Bengal soil into the shape of the Vedic religion. But they could not altogether obliterate the influence of Shiva.

Since the days of the Yajurveda, the Aryans as well as non-Aryans have accepted and recognized Shiva. In the Vedas the word “Shiva” has been used in many places. Shiva could not be downgraded or underrated in any way by anyone.

29 July 1990, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Editor’s note: The family lines of some members of these castes originated in northern India. But though many of the Brahman, Káyastha and Vaedyas families (perhaps the great majority) are in fact indigenous, some of them affect to have originated outside in order to give themselves a false distinction.

Glossary

ÁCÁRYA or ÁCÁRYÁ. Spiritual teacher.

ANÁHATA. See CAKRA.

ÁNANDA. Divine bliss.

ANANDA MARGA. Path of divine bliss; Ánanda Márga Pracáraka Saṅgha (Ananda Marga organization).

ANUCCHÚNYÁ. Unmanifested.

APARÁVIDYÁ. Knowledge of the mundane.

ÁSANA SHUDDHI. Meditation process to withdraw the mind from body awareness and concentrate it at one point.

ÁSANAS. Postures for curing physical problems, especially those that interfere with SÁDHANÁ.

AVADHÚTA or AVADHÚTIKÁ. Literally, “one who is thoroughly cleansed mentally and spiritually”; a monk or nun of an order close to the tradition of SHAEVA TANTRA.

AVATÁRA. Incarnation.

AVIDYÁMÁYÁ. Extroversial force; aspect of the Cosmic Operative Principle which guides movements from the subtle to the crude. See also VIDYÁMÁYÁ.

BHAJANA. Spiritual song.

BHAKTI. Devotion.

BHAKTI YOGA. Devotional form of spiritual practice.

BHAVA. The expressed universe.

BHÁVA. Idea, ideation, mental flow.

BIJA MANTRA. Acoustic root; particular sound vibration from which a particular type of action stems.

BRAHMA. Supreme Entity comprising both PURUŚA, or SHIVA, and PRAKRTI, or SHAKTI.

BRAHMA CAKRA. The Cosmic Cycle – the cycle of creation out of Consciousness, and dissolution back into Consciousness, through SAINCARA and PRATISAINCARA.

BRÁHMAÑA (BRAHMAN). The uppermost social group in India, who traditionally perform priestly functions or live by intellectual labour.

BRAHMATVA. Brahma-hood, supreme stance.

BRAHMAVÁDA. Philosophical system of which Brahma is the essence.

CAKRA. Cycle or circle; psychic-energy or psycho-spiritual centre; psychic-nerve plexus. The psycho-spiritual centres, or plexi, in the human body are all located within the spinal column but are associated with certain external concentration points: (1) for múládhára cakra, the base of the spine, above the perineum; (2) for svádhiśthána, the sex organ; (3) for mañipura, the navel; (4) for anáhata, the mid-point of the chest; (5) for vishuddha, the throat; (6) for ájñá, between the eyebrows; and (7) for sahasrára, the crown of the head.

DAKŚÍÑÁCÁRA TANTRA. A school of Tantra that attempts to control MÁYÁ through propitiation or appeasement.

DEVA. Mythologically, a god, a deity. Philosophically, any vibration, or expression, emanating from the Cosmic Nucleus.

DEVATÁ. Mythologically, a god or goddess. Philosophically, a minor expression of a DEVA,

controlled and supervised by the deva. (Deva and devatá are sometimes used interchangeably.)

DEVII. A goddess, a female deity.

DHÁRAÑÁ. Restriction of the flow of mind, conception; e.g., Tattva Dhárañá means restricting the flow of mind to, or conception of, the fundamental factors. Dhárañá is the sixth limb of aśtāṅga (eight-limbed) yoga.

DHARMA. Spirituality; psycho-spiritual longing; ensconcement in one's original stance; the path of righteousness in social affairs.

DHYĀNA. Meditation in which the psyche is directed toward Consciousness; seventh limb of aśtāṅga (eight-limbed) yoga.

DHYĀNA MANTRA. A Sanskrit verse listing the attributes of a deity, to be used for visualizing that deity in meditation.

DVÁPARA YUGA. See YUGAS.

EKÁDASHII. "Eleventh" day after the new moon or full moon, days on which fasting is especially advantageous.

GUŅA. Binding factor or principle; attribute; quality. PRAKRTI, the Cosmic Operative Principle, is composed of: sattvaguṅa, the sentient principle; rajoguṅa, the mutative principle; and tamoguṅa, the static principle.

HIRAÑMAYA KOŚA. The subtlest of the KOŚAS.

IISHVARA. The Cosmic Controller; literally, "the Controller of all controllers".

IISHVARA PRAÑIDHĀNA. Surrender to the Cosmic Controller through meditation; a lesson of Ananda Marga meditation.

INDRIYA. One of the ten sensory and motor organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin; and hands, feet, vocal cord, genital organ and excretory organ). The eye indriya (for example) comprises the eye itself, the optical nerve, the fluid in the nerve, and the location in the brain at which the visual stimulus is transmitted to the ectoplasm or mind-stuff.

JIIVA. An individual being.

JIVABHĀVA. Finite subjectivity, feeling of the unit state, sense of the unit identity, microcosmic bearing.

JIÑĀNA. Knowledge.

JIÑĀNA YOGA. A form of spiritual practice which emphasizes discrimination or intellectual understanding.

KALÁ. Flow with curvature, in a stage of the Cosmic Cycle dominated by the mutative principle.

KAOLA. One who is established in raising one's own KUÑDALINII.

KĀPĀLIKA SĀDHANÁ. A form of spiritual practice which causes the aspirant to confront and overcome all the inherent fetters and enemies of the human mind.

KARMA. Action; sometimes, selfish action which creates SAMSKĀRAS.

KARMA YOGA. A form of spiritual practice which emphasizes selfless action.

KIIRTANA. Collective singing of the name of the Lord, sometimes combined with a dance that expresses the spirit of surrender.

KOŚA. “Level” or “layer” of the mind (either Macrocosmic Mind or microcosmic mind) in terms of its degree of subtlety or crudeness.

KśatriyA. The second-highest social group in India, who traditionally discharge military functions.

KULA. Lowest vertebra of the spine.

KUÑDĀLINII or KULAKUÑDĀLINII. Literally, “coiled serpentine”; sleeping divinity; the force dormant in the KULA of the body, which, when awakened, rises up the spinal column to develop all one’s spiritual potentialities.

MAHĀKAOLA. A Tantric guru who can raise not only his own KUÑDĀLINII, but that of others also; in Buddhist Tantra, Mahākaola is sometimes symbolic of PARAMA PURUŚA.

MAHĀPURUŚA. A person highly evolved psychically and spiritually, especially one who has consequently developed a charisma felt by other people.

MAHĀSAMBHŪTI. When TĀRAKA BRAHMA utilizes the PAIṆCA BHŪTAS to express Himself through a body, this is known as His Mahāsambhūti.

MANTRA. A sound or collection of sounds which, when meditated upon, will lead to spiritual liberation.

MANTRA CAETANYA. The awakening of a mantra; conceptual understanding of and psychic association with a mantra.

MARGI. One who follows ANANDA MARGA ideology, including the practice of Ananda Marga meditation.

MĀYĀ. Creative Principle, PRAKRTI in Her phase of creation. One aspect of Māyā is the power to cause the illusion that the finite created objects are the ultimate truth.

MOKŚA. Spiritual emancipation, non-qualified liberation.

MUDRĀ. Meaningful gesture.

MŪLĀDHĀRA. See CAKRA.

MUNI. A saintly person devoted to intellectual pursuits.

NĀDA. Flow without curvature in a stage of BRAHMA CAKRA dominated by the sentient principle.

NĀDII. Psychic-energy channel; nerve.

NAMAH. Salutations.

NĀRĀYAṆA. The Lord of Nāra (PRAKRTI), i.e., PARAMA PURUŚA.

NEOHUMANISM. A worldview characterized by love for the Supreme which overflows onto all objects created by the Supreme. Adoption of the Neo-Humanistic outlook in turn safeguards and enhances the development of one’s devotion.

NIRGUṆA BRAHMA. BRAHMA unaffected by the GUṆAS; Non-Qualified Brahma.

OṂ, OṂKĀRA. The sound of the first vibration of creation; the BIIJA MANTRA of the expressed universe. Oṁkāra literally means “the sound oṁ”.

OTA YOGA. The association of PURUŚOTTAMA with each unit creation individually in PRATISAIṆCARA.

PAIṆCA BHŪTAS. Five rudimental or fundamental factors – ethereal, aerial, luminous, liquid and solid.

PARAMĀ PRAKRTI. Supreme Operative Principle.

PARAMA PURUŚA. Supreme Consciousness.

PARAMASHIVA. See PURUŚOTTAMA.

PARAMÁTMAN. Supreme Consciousness in the role of witness of His own macropsychic conation. Paramátman comprises: (1) PURUŚOTTAMA, the Macrocosmic Nucleus; (2) Puruśottama's association with all creation in His extroversial movement (prota yoga); and (3) Puruśottama's association with each unit creation individually (OTA YOGA) and (4) with all collectively (prota yoga) in His introversial movement.

PARÁSHAKTI. Introversive pervasive force.

PARÁVIDYÁ. Spiritual knowledge, knowledge of the Great.

PLEXUS. See CAKRA.

PRABHÁT SAMĠIITA. A body of 5018 spiritual and psycho-spiritual songs composed by P.R. Sarkar (Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti).

PRAKRTI. Cosmic Operative Principle.

PRÁÑA. Energy; vital energy.

PRÁÑÁH. Vital energy.

PRÁÑÁYÁMA. Process of controlling vital energy by controlling the breath; fourth limb of aśtámga (eight-limbed) yoga.

PRATISAINCARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step introversion and subtilization of consciousness from the state of solid matter to Nucleus Consciousness. (Prati means “counter” and sañcara means “movement”.)

PRATYÁHÁRA. Withdrawing the mind from absorption in the physical senses; fifth limb of aśtámga (eight-limbed) yoga.

PURÁÑA. Mythological story with a moral import; educative fiction.

PURASHCARAÑA. Upward movement of the KULAKUÑDALINII from múládhára CAKRA to sahasrára cakra, including the phases of mantrágháta and MANTRA CAETANYA.

PURUŚA. Consciousness.

PURUŚABHÁVA. Cognitive bearing; stance or aspect of Consciousness.

PURUŚOTTAMA or PARAMASHIVA. Nucleus Consciousness, the witness of SAINCARA and PRATISAINCARA.

RAJOGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

RÁRH. The territory, mostly in Bengal, stretching from the west bank of the Bhagirathi River to the Parasnath Hills.

RŚI. Sage; one who, by inventing new things, broadens the path of progress of human society.

SADÁSHIVA. SHIVA (literally, “Eternal Shiva”).

SÁDHAKA. Spiritual practitioner.

SÁDHANÁ. Literally, “sustained effort”; spiritual practice; meditation.

SADRSÁ PARINÁMA. Homogenesis, a sequence of similarity of curvatures in the phase of creation dominated by RAJOGUÑA.

SAGUÑA BRAHMA. BRAHMA affected by the GUÑAS; Qualified Brahma.

SAHASRÁRA. See CAKRA.

SAINCARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step extroversion and crudification of consciousness from Nucleus Consciousness to the state of solid matter.

SAMÁDHI. “Absorption” of the unit mind into the Cosmic Mind (savikalpa samádhi) or into the Átman (nirvikalpa samádhi).

SAMBHÚTI. Any manifestation of PARAMA PURUŚA, any created entity.

SAMSKÁRA. Mental reactive momentum, potential mental reaction.

SANNYÁSII or SANNYÁSINII. A renunciant; literally, “one who has surrendered one’s everything to the Cosmic will” or “one who ensconces oneself in Sat, the unchangeable entity”.

SATTVAGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

SHABDA. Sound.

SHAEVA DHARMA. Shaivism; the theoretical or philosophical side of spirituality as taught by SHIVA.

SHAEVA TANTRA. Shiva Tantra; the applied, or practical side of spirituality as taught by SHIVA.

SHÁKTA. A follower of Sháktácára, the Shakti Cult; hence, any aspirant who embodies the characteristics of Sháktácára, especially the judicious application of power.

SHAKTI. PRAKRTI; energy; a deification of PRAKRTI.

SHAMBHÚLIUNGA. Fundamental positivity.

SHÁSTRA. Scripture.

SHIVA. A great Tantric guru of 5000 B.C. who guided society while His mind was absorbed in Consciousness; hence, Infinite Consciousness, PURUŚA.

SHIVABHÁVA. The stance, or bearing, of Infinite Consciousness.

SHIVA-LIUNGA. Originally a phallic symbol, later given philosophical significance as “the entity from which all things originate”.

SHLOKA. A Sanskrit couplet expressing one idea.

SHÚDRA. The lowermost social group in India, who traditionally live by manual labour.

SIDDHA MANTRA. A mantra “perfected” by the guru.

SIDDHI. Self-realization; spiritual attainment.

SVARÚPA PARINÁMA. Homomorphic evolution, a state before creation in which all the GUÑAS are in equipoise.

SVAYAMBHÚLIUNGA. Ultimate point of negativity, or crudity, in the human body.

TAMOGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

TÁNDÁVA. A vigorous dance for male spiritual aspirants, originally formulated by SHIVA. It develops the glands in a way that enhances courage and fearlessness. When Shiva Himself does this dance (Shiva Naárāja), the dance becomes a metaphor in which Supreme Consciousness sends vibrations throughout the universe and causes all objects of the universe in turn to radiate vibrations.

TANMÁTRA. Literally, “minutest fraction of that,” i.e., of a given rudimental factor of matter (see PAIᅇCA BHÚTAS). Also translated “generic essence” or “inferential wave”. The various types of tanmátras convey the senses of hearing, touch, form (vision), taste and smell.

TANTRA. A spiritual tradition which originated in India in prehistoric times and was first systematized by SHIVA. It emphasizes the development of human vigour, both through meditation and through confrontation of difficult external situations, to overcome all fears and weaknesses. Also, a scripture expounding that tradition.

TÁRAKA BRAHMA. Supreme Consciousness in Its liberating aspect.

VÁMÁCÁRA TANTRA. A school of Tantra that attempts to overcome MÁYÁ by fight, but without any clear goal.

VÁYUS. The ten basic energy flows in the human body.

VEDA. Literally, “knowledge”; hence, a composition imparting spiritual knowledge. Also, a religious or philosophical school which originated among the Aryans and was brought by them to India. It is based on the Vedas and emphasizes the use of ritual to gain the intervention of the gods.

VIDYÁMÁYÁ. Introversial force; aspect of the Cosmic Operative Principle which guides movements from the crude to the subtle. See also AVIDYÁMÁYÁ.

VIIRÁCÁRII. A follower of Viirácára Tantra; a Tantric who adopts a particularly “heroic” ideation while seeking to confront and overcome all mental weaknesses.

VRTTI. Mental propensity.

YAJIṆA. Ritual sacrifice.

YAMA AND NIYAMA. Moral code.

YUGAS. The mythological four ages (Satya Yuga, or Golden Age, Treta Yuga, or Silver Age, Dvápára Yuga, or Copper Age, and Kali Yuga, or Iron Age), representing the step-by-step decline of morality and spirituality.

Discourses on Tantra - Volume Two

Sádhana

Today I would like to discuss mata and patha [opinions regarding the Supreme, and paths to the Supreme]. Mata means a certain style of thought, so we have to see where the action of thinking originates, develops, and culminates; and we have to see on what the action of thinking depends. When someone says, “It’s my opinion, my personal view,” where does the action of thinking lie and how does it take place? Thinking depends on the unit mind; it originates in the unit mind and is maintained in the unit mind.

In the absolute sense what is the unit mind? The Cosmic Mind reaches a state of maximum crudification through *saiṅcara* [the phase of extroversial movement], and thereafter starts returning to Its original abode through *pratisaiṅcara* [the phase of introversial movement]. The small “I” feeling that gradually develops within crude matter is called the unit mind. Although the Macrocosmic Mind is the Supreme Controller of everything in this universe, It does delegate a certain degree of control to unit minds as they increase in complexity in the phase of *pratisaiṅcara*. Therefore the unit mind can be called a primary sub-centre in a physical structure within the Macrocosmic Mind. Unit minds have to act within the periphery of time, place, and person, as created by the Macrocosm, and their different styles of action are called *mata* [opinions]. Just as the unit mind is dependent on time, place and person for its creation, maintenance and annihilation, each of its expressions also depends on a particular time, place and person. This is why opinion carries its highest value in a particular time, place, or individual, and loses its value, or becomes altogether non-existent, when any of these three relative factors changes. Opinions do have some value in both individual and collective life. But when one is dealing with the Absolute Entity, who transcends the boundaries of time, place and person, does one’s opinion have any value? No, in this case an individual opinion has no value whatsoever. Thus the statement *Yata mata, tata patha*⁽¹⁾ is not logically tenable. An opinion held by a particular individual or group regarding the social sphere, the economic sphere, or the political sphere does have some value, but to attempt to express an opinion concerning the absolute sphere would be simply ludicrous.

An opinion is a psychic object. An opinion of a particular person is, in effect, an object of the object of the Cognitive Faculty [the objects of the Cognitive Faculty are minds and the objects of minds are opinions]. So how can an opinion become the subject of the Supreme Subjectivity? How can it know the Knower of the known? One’s opinion in this regard has no value – for anyone to have an independent opinion about *Parama Puruṣa* is meaningless.

Regarding *Parama Puruṣa* the unit mind can do only one thing: become one with Him as the Supreme Subject. The unit mind must accept *Parama Puruṣa* as its object, and run towards Him. Even this proposition is illogical in the absolute sense. Rather it should be said that the unit mind will have to return to its own subject. This should be the only movement, movement towards the *Paramágati* [literally, the “Supreme Terminus where the movement, or journey, of finite entities culminates”].

Thus a unit mind may hold many opinions about the mundane world, but no opinion regarding the spiritual world. The path which leads to supreme bliss is a singular one; there is no second path. The path is one, and only one.

If this universe is considered as a circle, its nucleus is the blissful Puruśottama to which every point on the circumference is connected. If any microcosm located on any point of the circumference wants to reach the Nucleus, he or she will have to move with Cosmic ideation, floating on the divine waves of bliss. From no matter what point on the circumference one measures the distance to the Nucleus, that radius will always be the same. This radius is termed the *ánanda márga* [the path of bliss]. So the *ánanda márga* is the only *márga*. The spiritual path has nothing to do with the opinions of any particular individual or of any group of individuals, because Paramátmá cannot be attained by opinions.

The Three Stages of Sádhaná

In Ananda Marga there are three particular stages of *sádhaná* which can be fused into one, or can remain separate: Shákta, Vaeśnaviyya, and Shaeva. True spiritual practice is a happy combination of these three stages. In endeavouring to reach the Nucleus of the Cosmic Cycle from any point on the circumference, one must develop each stage, for each has an equal importance. To understand Ananda Marga one has to understand the significance of the three stages.

Who is a Shákta? A Shákta is one who is determined to awaken his or her cognitive faculty and fight against the negative influence of the static principle. Such a person struggles ceaselessly against psychic impurities and physical ailments in individual life, and against social evils and economic disparity in collective life. A Shákta is not afraid of the crushing load of unhappiness in life, and never surrenders to pessimism, but fights against the miseries of life with revolutionary zeal. This is the criterion of a Shákta. Such dauntless fighting spirit wins the laurels of victory for a Shákta one day, a victory which is never possible through coaxing and cajoling. Of course, as a war strategy, there can be a temporary truce, but nothing more than that.

In Indian mythology there is a story about the Shákta, Vaeśnava (or Vaeśnaviyya) and Shaeva mentalities.⁽²⁾ Perhaps you have heard that Shiva was first married to Sati, or Dakshayani. Shiva was at that stage of the story like a soul in bondage. When Sati heard from Narada that King Daksha, her father, was staging a grand sacrificial ritual, she became determined to attend it. Shiva objected to her going and tried all He could to dissuade her, but in vain. Sati went to her father's house. Up to here in the story, Prakrti has been dominant, and Puruśa dormant, as is the case with a microcosm in bondage.

Then next, Shiva's latent valour awakened. Totally absorbed in His own self, He placed the dead body of Sati on his shoulder and began to move throughout the universe. Everyone saw that the inert Prakrti had found her place on the shoulder of Puruśa. This was the *sádhaná* of Shiva. Shiva at this stage was the perfect Shákta, performing *sádhaná* to attain victory over Prakrti.⁽³⁾ This is the first stage of *sádhaná* – Shakti *sádhaná*, to establish one's supremacy over Shakti, or Prakrti.

Then Prakrti undertook the practice of *sádhaná* in order to make Herself subservient to Shiva. Prakrti wanted Puruśa to be Her Lord. Or as the mythological story goes, Sati took rebirth as the

daughter of Himalaya and Menaka and was called Parvati; she then underwent tremendous penance to get Shiva as her husband, while Shiva refused to even look at her. So Prakrti suffered immense hardship to attain Puruśa, but Puruśa remained totally indifferent. At this stage Shiva was the perfect Vaeśńava [Vaishnavite], for he had no concern at all for Prakrti.

Then finally Parvati, with the help of the gods, got her wish to be Shiva's consort. Prakrti became sheltered in Puruśa. But since Shiva meanwhile did not give up His original non-attributional stance, He was the ultimate Shaeva [Shaivite].

This beautiful allegory has immense educational value. To recapitulate: In the first stage of sádhaná one has to become a Shákta in order to acquire adequate shakti [power]. In the second stage Prakrti is willing to take the shelter of Puruśa, but the sádhaka is indifferent, and remains absorbed in the flow of Cosmic bliss – so this is Vaeśńava sádhaná, the endeavour to throw oneself into the current of Cosmic bliss and float towards the supreme goal. [And in the last stage one practises Shaeva sádhaná.]

In the Vaeśńava stage sádhakas remain totally unconcerned as to who is Puruśa and who is Prakrti. Their only desire is to become one with Brahma in the flow of bliss. They do not make a hair-splitting analysis regarding fight or non-fight, for they know they will remain absorbed in the Cosmic flow of bliss for eternity. This is the true spirit of Vaeśńava sádhaná. “Viśńu” means “all-pervading”, “expansive” – so the proper etymological meaning of “Vaeśńava” is “universalist”.

Vaishnavite bháva [spiritual stance] can be divided into two stages: liilábháva and nityabháva. When a sádhaka's mind oscillates [among different experiences] along the paths of the saiṅcara and pratisaiṅcara of Brahma and becomes inextricably merged with Its panoramic expressions, that condition is called liilábháva, and the sádhaka's blissful feeling is called liilánanda. In liilábháva the sádhakas' entire existences become vibrated with the vibrations of the Cosmic dance, causing them to burst out in dance, laughter, tears and song. But in nityánanda there is no such expression as this. Puruśottama [the Nucleus Consciousness] is the supreme source of the countless forms and flows that emanate during liilábháva; but His own stance is nityabháva [eternal and unchangeable]. So the ánanda which sádhakas experience when united with Him in His unchangeable, eternal stance is called nityánanda.

The difference between the unsullied Shaivite Shaeva bháva and the Vaishnavite nityánanda is very little. In fact nityánanda can also be experienced in Nirguńa Brahma bháva [the Shaeva bháva, here denoted the “non-attributional” bháva]. The difference between the Vaishnavite nityánanda and the Shaivite nirvikalpa samádhi [trance of indeterminate absorption] is not more than the difference between the original bháva of Puruśottama and that of Nirguńa Brahma.⁽⁴⁾ The attainment of the eternal stance at the altar of Nirguńa Brahma is Shaevávasthá [the highest Shaivite stage of realization]. In Ananda Marga there has been a unique blending of the Shákta, Shaeva and Vaeśńava systems of spiritual practice.

The Course of Physical and Psychic Development

The more that unit beings advance towards the Supreme Being, the more their physical and psychic bodies (which are made of Macrocosmic stuff) advance from crude to subtle. In the first phase of Macrocosmic imagination, the Cognitive Faculty moves from subtle to crude. One atom or particle comes in closer proximity to another atom or particle. The name of this process is *saiṅcara*. And when these particles begin to drift away from each other or become powdered down, thus going beyond the scope of sense perception, it is called the process of *pratisaiṅcara*. When an object becomes more condensed it should be understood that the Macrocosmic mind-stuff is decreasing its inter-molecular gaps. This causes an object to gradually come within the periphery of sense perception. When there comes to be a high degree of diversity in the structure of the condensed object, it requires a self-activated psychic factor for its preservation, maintenance and destruction. This psychic entity (the mind) is created as a result of clash due to inter-molecular proximity. Thus it can be said that mind emerges as a result of clash within the material structure. But it must not be forgotten that matter is nothing but a condensed state of Macrocosmic mind-stuff. What we call matter is not crude matter as such, but a metamorphosed form of Consciousness.

The unit mind finds its expression through clash. This process of clash causes the psychic atoms to get powdered down and expanded to such a degree that the mind expands into the universe, transcending the limits of the small “I”. This continuous unfoldment and expansion of the mind through constant clash and cohesion is brought about mainly by *Prakṛti*. The unit mind finds natural problems which it must solve, such as procuring food, finding accommodation, and rearing children – not to mention simply staying alive. The more difficult these obstacles are, the more scope the mind gets to unfold. The struggle to overcome obstacles is the primary factor in the development of the mind.

But there is also a secondary factor, and that is the influence of a more-developed mind on a less-developed mind. Domestic animals such as dogs and cats get ample scope for accelerated development due to their contact with the human mind. The company of human beings often accelerates their progress more than do the natural forces which present them with obstacles to overcome. So if a dog’s mind can develop into a monkey’s mind, and a monkey’s mind into a human mind, in the normal course of evolution, then a dog that is in constant contact with a human being may experience a tremendous intellectual growth and be reborn as a human being, bypassing the stage of a monkey. Such galloping changes do take place in the process of animate evolution; and comparatively undeveloped creatures, if advantaged with human contact, can establish themselves in human form in a shorter period than can comparatively developed creatures deprived of human contact.

When a microcosm reaches a stage of expanded consciousness, having made considerable psychic progress due to natural clashes or due to contact with more-developed minds, and is able to control the psychic propensities as opposed to being subservient to them, it is called *manuśya* [human being]. The term *manuśya*, or *mānuśa*, means “mind-preponderant being”.

With the development of the mind, the physical structure becomes more complex. It can be put in another way: the physical structure grows in complexity in order to serve as a proper vehicle

for the expression of a developed mind. When the psychic activities are channelized in different directions or engaged in combatting various obstacles, the brain, the medium of the mind, is bound to become more complex.

Similarly, undeveloped human beings can make rapid psychic progress due to natural clashes or due to contact with great personalities. The greater the application of psychic energy to a unit being, the more its physical stuff is transformed into mind-stuff. This helps it attain greater psychic expansion, and consequently the greater reflection of Cosmic Consciousness on the unit mental plate.

Unit beings have attained a human body after evolving from the stage of animality through structures of ever-increasing complexity. So human beings have imbibed experiences from animal lives and not from divine lives.

Humans' psychic development keeps pace with the growing complexity of their physical bodies. Moreover, various new diseases come into existence as destructive forces of that complex physical body.

In human society there are many people whose mentality is somewhere between that of forest primates and that of humans. Some have just evolved from animal life to that point, in the process of *pratisaiñcara*; while others have reverted to that point from a more developed human level, due to their mean thoughts. If they continue to allow mean thoughts to dominate their minds, they will degenerate to the even cruder stage of inert matter, becoming bricks, stone or wood. Just as animals have no scope to elevate their thoughts or practise spirituality, similarly human beings who make their minds animal-like through animalistic thinking are unable to pursue spiritual practices. Even after receiving spiritual initiation or receiving an education, they behave like ignorant fools. But those who are by mentality undeveloped human beings, but not animals, will if they receive initiation carry on spiritual practices, and will if they receive education behave like intelligent people.

Spiritual initiation and education will bring about mental development in those who have degenerated to the level of animality, but it will be next to impossible for them to develop spiritually. We must pay more attention to those people who are undeveloped but who have not entirely lost their human sense. If we fail to elevate them, our social system will be futile – all our education, culture and civilization will be futile.

All beings are made of the same consciousness. So although we may find ourselves at different stages of psychic elevation, a *Bráhmaña* and a *Kśatriya*, an Indian and an Englishman, a sweeper and a scavenger, a Zulu and a Maori, and even a tiny ant, are all linked by the bonds of fraternity. If we remember this fact, if we work for the well-being of all, then undeveloped human beings will be able to develop their spiritual potentiality when they come in contact with us. Even cows, dogs, tigers and bears who come in close contact with us will develop psychic wealth and gradually acquire spiritual treasures.

In the most developed minds, an infinite thirst becomes awakened. By attaining the supreme rank of *Brahma* – bliss personified – that infinite thirst can be quenched. The sustained effort to attain

that blissful state is called dharma sádhaná. But if human beings do not find the proper way to satisfy their thirst, they go astray. That is, those who do not follow the spiritual path may perform harmful actions at any time. Even those whom society respects as intelligent or learned may, in reality, be no better than “polished satans”, or what the scriptures call “demons”. Our modern society is full of such people. They talk about universalism like parrots. They have no defined ideology in their individual and collective lives, and merely dedicate themselves to the deception of the human race as they strive to serve their petty self-interests by any means, fair or foul. We cannot expect any beneficial contribution from them.

Surrendering Actions to Brahma

The existence of microcosms is bound up in action. Microcosms will have to act and to move; life is a dynamic process from beginning to end. No one has come to this world to remain static; staticity is contrary to living existence. Even the physical body changes every moment, even the body maintains dynamic movement.

Human beings perform two types of action: pratyayamúlaka [original actions] and sańskáramúlaka [reactive actions – actions prompted or goaded by sańskáras]. Original actions are performed under one’s own initiative, and thus one is fully responsible for them. Every original action is a new action. It may represent an extension of the experience of the past, but it is not a reaction. And the actions which human beings are compelled to perform as reactions to their previous actions are called reactive actions. In other words, original actions constitute efforts, and reactive actions constitute the resultants [of the original actions].

Suppose you have to go to Dhanbad but do not know the way. Stopping someone on the street you ask politely, “Excuse me, could you please tell me how to get to Dhanbad?” In reply the man retorts angrily, “What do you think I am, a traffic policeman who gives directions to any Tom, Dick or Harry?” You will certainly feel hurt. But you should remember that this was destined to happen to you as a reaction to one of your previous bad actions. So even though you asked that man politely, you had to undergo psychic pain. Your action of asking the man is a reactive action.

When people rob others, or indulge in hypocrisy, or cheat people, or indulge in tall talk day after day, they are committing original actions. When a dishonest government employee accepts a bribe it is an original action, and when his son gets sick and has to be rushed to the doctor it is the reactive action (the reaction to the original action). When his son dies he laments, “I haven’t knowingly done anything wrong. Oh, Lord, why have you given me such severe punishment.” But God did not give him any punishment – the deep sorrow he felt at the death of his child was the result of his past original actions.

The moment sádhakas start spiritual practice they must surrender all their original actions to Brahma so that they do not have to endure the reactions. This surrender is the most important aspect of spiritual practice.

Brahmárpańam Brahmahavirbrahmágnao Brahmańahutam;
Brahmaeva tena gantavyam Brahmakarmasamádhiná.

[The action of offering is Brahma, the ghee offered into the sacrificial fire is Brahma, the fire is Brahma, and the person who offers is Brahma. Those who will maintain this spirit in every action will finally merge in Brahma.]

Reactions in requital to past actions normally occur more in a spiritual aspirant's life than in an ordinary person's life. The reason is that when all original actions are surrendered to Brahma, there remain only the reactive actions. The reactions may be good or bad [according to whether they are resultants of good or bad original actions]. But think about how many of the deeds you performed before coming to the path of sádhaná were good and how many were bad. To tell the unpleasant truth, ninety-nine percent of your deeds were bad. Hence it is often the case that sádhakas have to suffer much more from bad reactive momenta than get to enjoy good ones. It can even be said that the more one suffers from reactions, the more one is progressing along the path of sádhaná.

Of course, the requital of the reactive momenta may possibly be pleasurable instead of painful; it all depends upon the nature of one's actions. In either case, the more one surrenders one's actions to Brahma, the shorter will be the period of requital caused by the reactions. In this case the intensity of the requital will be greater than normal; but this is a good sign, because intense requital means the exhaustion of the requital within a short period.

Suppose you have incurred a loan of a thousand rupees. If you repay the loan in monthly instalments of one rupee it will take you a thousand months to clear the loan. One rupee being such a small amount, this will hardly cause any suffering at all. But if you want to free yourself from the debt quickly, you will have to pay a larger amount every month, which will obviously cause more suffering. Likewise, if one does not feel the need to be freed of one's reactive momenta quickly, one can undergo less affliction, but then one may have to wait ten or twenty lives to exhaust all the reactive momenta. Moreover, within those ten or twenty lives one will probably undergo psychic degeneration, and due to one's mean actions imbibe new reactive momenta.

Hence genuine sádhakas always strive to be relieved of their acquired saṁskáras as early as possible; therefore they surrender completely to Brahma. The consummation of self-surrender precipitates the requital of saṁskáras, and this requital may take place in the Shákta, Vaeśnáva or Shaeva stages, but in the Shaeva stage the requitals are not felt so keenly, and therefore may be considered not to be requitals in the true sense of the term. The requital of reactive momenta is felt most acutely in the Shákta stage, because this stage involves a tremendous fight against Prakrti.

The Shákta stage is dominated by jñána and karma, not by bhakti.⁽⁵⁾ Wherever there is struggle, action is bound to become predominant; likewise one will have to acquire knowledge – the knowledge of how to struggle. Through knowledge, Shákta sádhakas become fully aware that all their sorrows and afflictions are the results of their past original actions. In order to be relieved of their affliction they do not cry pitifully to Parama Puruśa, but, displaying the spirit of valour, say, “O Parama Puruśa, give me strength to continue the struggle. I do not want to escape from affliction and suffering, I want to attain You in a joyful struggle against the affliction and suffering.” The great poet Rabindranath Tagore said in this regard,

Vipade more rakśá kara e nahe mor prárthaná,
Vipade yena ná kari kabhu bhay;
Duhkha tápe vyathita cite náí bá dile sántvaná
Duhkhe yena karite pári jay.

[My prayer to You is not “Save me from danger,” but “Bless me so that I can overcome danger.”
You need not console me in my suffering, but bless me so that I can overcome suffering.]

This is the underlying spirit of a Shákta.

The underlying spirit of Vaishnavite sádhaná is somewhat different. The mundane obstacles, the friends and foes, merge in the Vaishnavite sádhakas’ world of blissful ideation. With whom will they fight? They feel that the entire universe is an unbroken divine play composed of Rádhá and Krśná. In this stage there is a clear dominance of action and devotion. Vaishnavite sádhaná is a blissful flow indeed. Such sádhakas are like points on the circumference of the Cosmic Circle, moving towards the Nucleus, Puruśottama, along the radius, which is their sádhaná. And the expanse through which they move towards Him along the radius is the rúpaságar [ocean of beauteous forms], the rasámrtasindhu [ocean of bliss]. Such sádhakas reap only, through reactive actions, the consequences of their past actions. Jiñána is not dominant in this Vaishnavite stage. Vaishnavite sádhakas say that Puruśottama is enacting His liilá [divine game] through this expressed universe. They say, “O Lord, You are both wisdom and ignorance, happiness and sorrow. Some people You place on golden thrones as kings, others You throw into the street to beg from door to door with outstretched begging bowls. You are my joy, You are my sorrow. Do whatever You like with me.” Such sádhakas would never say, “O Lord, save me from danger,” but

Sudháraseo bhásáo yakhan
Dhanya Hari dhanya Hari;
Vyathá diye kándáo yakhan
Dhanya Hari dhanya Hari.

“When You float me on the waves of bliss, O Lord, You are really gracious, and when You make me cry in pain, You are equally gracious. In happiness I feel Your sweet touch, and burst into laughter, exhilarated by Your divine sport. In sorrow I also feel Your sweet touch, and burst into tears, overwhelmed by Your divine sport. How strange You are! How wonderful! I have nothing to complain about.”

In the final stage of Vaishnavite sádhaná, the unit mind becomes one with the Cosmic Mind. The moment before the final merger, sádhakas realize that the Entity who has come in the form of happiness is their dearest Lord, and the Entity who has come in the form of sorrow is also their dearest Lord. They feel the divine joy of the Cosmic play. They never retreat, for having passed through the Shákta stage they have acquired immense courage and valour. One who has not been an ideal Shákta cannot be an ideal Vaeśńava. In the final stage of the Vaeśńava cult, sádhakas offer their greatest treasure – their mind – to Brahma, and in exchange for this supreme gift expect nothing in return. In the absence of mind they cannot enjoy the sweetness of the divine play any longer. At that supreme stage of surrender liilánanda is transformed into nityánanda.

When sádhakas become ensconced in nityánanda they are said to have attained the Shaeva stage. One who has not been an ideal Vaeśháva cannot be an ideal Shaeva. Shaivites have no minds of their own, for they have already surrendered their minds to their dear Lord. This is the supreme surrender, this is the supreme attainment.

Ratnákarakastava grham grhíni ca padmá;
Deyam kimapi bhavate Puruśottamáya.
Ábhíravámanayanápahrtamánasáya;
Dattam mana yadupate tvamidam grhána.

[Your abode is brimming over with gems and jewels. The goddess of fortune is Your housekeeper. What can I offer to You, O Lord? Oh yes, there is one thing You lack, as it has been stolen by Your devotees; it is Your mind. I therefore offer my mind to You. Please accept it.]

The Stages of Pratyáhára Yoga

As I mentioned previously, Ananda Marga has harmoniously blended the Shákta, Vaeśháva and Shaeva sáadhanás. Of the three, the Shákta sáadhaná is the most important, because it is the initial stage of the microcosm's journey towards the Macrocosm. Progress on this journey is made through pratyáhára yoga. As all spiritual aspirants are aware, the goal of pratyáhára, dháraána, and dhyána is the attainment of samádhi.⁽⁶⁾ Pratyáhára is the conscious endeavour to withdraw the mind from mundane qualities and attractions – easier said than done! The process of varnárghyádán⁽⁷⁾ is in most cases very difficult to perform properly.

Pratyáhára has four stages: yatamána, vyatireka, ekendriya and vashiikára. Yatamána is a conscious effort to transcend the negative influence of the propensities. Suppose you see one of your colleagues taking a bribe, and think, “Had I not been an Ananda Margi I could have also earned some extra money in this way.” This shows that your propensity of greed is not fully controlled, but as you are keen to control it, you have adopted the Ananda Marga way of life. For this conscious effort on your part, you deserve the appellation yatamána.

In vyatireka, the second stage, some propensities may be controlled at one time, but uncontrolled at another time. Or a person may control physical desire, but suffer from an increase in anger; or may become free from greed for money but will develop a strong desire for name and fame. After delivering an eloquent lecture he or she will say, “All the credit goes to Brahma. It is only by His grace that I could deliver such a lecture,” but in his or her heart will think, “What an excellent speech I gave today.” This is called vyatireka.

In the ekendriya stage, the propensities are brought under control, no doubt, but not permanently. In order to exhaust the reactive momenta the propensities sometimes strongly assert themselves, causing one to repent as a result. (Ask yourself whether or not you have experienced this sort of mental torture.) Hence this stage does not represent complete pratyáhára either, because the páshas and ripus [fetters and enemies of the mind] are not totally controlled.

The páshas and ripus assert themselves through the medium of the mind and the indriyas.⁽⁸⁾ If even one indriya remains uncontrolled, it should be concluded that there is still a worm in the flower of the mind; and a worm-eaten flower cannot be offered to the Lord. Only when all the indriyas are fully controlled can it be said that the mind is under the complete control of the átman [unit consciousness]. This is real pratyáhára, or vashiikára siddhi, for it means Prakrti has merged into the Supreme Cognitive Principle. This is called Krśńasharaña [taking the shelter of Krśńa] in devotional psychology.

The importance of pratyáhára sádhaná is immense, because it involves a harmonious blending of knowledge, devotion and action. In this sádhaná, the Shákta bháva finds its consummation, and the latent devotion starts sprouting. This sprout ultimately develops into the highest Vaeśńava bháva. Shaeva bháva is the path of knowledge. So in social life there is a great need for Sháktas and Vaeśńavas. The pratyáhára yoga with which a Shákta starts rendering service to the world reaches its consummation in the perfect and total service of the Vaeśńava. Pratyáhára begins with vigorous action and culminates in selfless devotion.

Vashiikára siddhi is only attained by devotees. Even Shankaracharya [the great protagonist of jñána] admitted, Mokśakáрана samagryám bhaktireva gariyasii – “Of all the ways to attain salvation the way of bhakti or devotion is the greatest.”

If knowledge is likened to the elder brother of a family, devotion is his younger sister, happily holding her brother’s hand as she walks beside him. The little sister cannot walk alone, nor would it be safe for her to do so, but when she walks merrily along with her brother, people look lovingly at her and speak sweet words to her. They will probably ask that elder brother, “Is she your little sister?”

Vaeshákhii Púrńimá 1958 DMC, Ranchi

Footnotes

(1) “There are as many spiritual paths as there are opinions” – or, “Every opinion or personal view about a spiritual path does in fact reflect a valid spiritual path.” –Eds.

(2) In this chapter the author’s focus is psychological: the author discusses the different mentalities characteristic of Sháktas, of Vaeśńavas and of Shaevas. From a philosophical point of view, the different recognized schools of the Hindu tradition – five in all, known as the Paincopásaná – are distinguished on the basis of their different deities, or objects of meditation. In Shaevácára (Shiva Cult) one’s object of meditation is Shiva. In Sháktácára it is one of the representations of Shakti, or Prakrti. In Vaeśńavácára it is Viśńu. In Saorácára it is Súrya (the sun or the sun god), and in Gáńapatyácára it is Gańapati (Ganeśa). In all the cults, the more subtle practitioners understand that their particular deity is a representation of the infinite Brahma. –Eds

(3) The story goes that King Daksha’s main purpose in staging the sacrificial ritual was to humiliate Shiva, for he never forgave Shiva for marrying Sati against his wishes. When Sati

realized this, and saw that her pleas to stop the harsh vilification of Shiva were falling on deaf ears, she threw herself into the fire. Shiva received immediate news and rushed to the spot to try to save her from being totally consumed by the flames. –Eds.

(4) I.e., the two experiences, nityánanda and nirvikalpa samádhi, are no more different from each other than are the two bhávas, or stances, from which the two experiences respectively come. –Eds.

(5) Jiñána, karma and bhakti are forms of spiritual practice which emphasize, respectively, discrimination, selfless action, and devotion. –Eds.

(6) Pratyáhára, dhárańá, dhyána and samádhi are the last four limbs of aśtámga [eight-limbed] yoga. –Eds.

(7) Offering of mental colours to the Lord, also known as Guru pújá. –Eds.

(8) An indriya is a sensory or motor organ, together with its respective nerves, nerve fluid, and site in the brain. –Eds

Tantra and Its Effect on Society

What is Tantra? The process of transforming [latent divinity] into the Supreme Divinity is known as Tantra sádhaná. The sleeping divinity in animality is termed, in the language of spiritual aspirants, the kulakuñḍalinii. So we find that actually the spirit of Tantra sádhaná lies in infusing a [vibration] in the kulakuñḍalinii and pushing her up towards the spiritual goal.

The significance of the term tantra is “liberation from bondage [the bondage of dullness, or staticity]”. The letter ta is the seed [sound] of dullness. And the root verb trae suffixed by ḍa becomes tra, which means “that which liberates” – so the spiritual practice which liberates the aspirant from the dullness or animality of the static force and expands the aspirant’s [spiritual] self is Tantra sádhaná. So there cannot be any spiritual practice without Tantra. Tantra is sádhaná.

Spiritual practice means practice for expansion, and this expansion is nothing but a liberation from the bondage of all sorts of dullness [or staticity]. A person who, irrespective of caste, creed or religion, aspires for spiritual expansion or does something concrete, is a Tantric. Tantra in itself is neither a religion nor an ism. Tantra is a fundamental spiritual science. So wherever there is any spiritual practice it should be taken for granted that it stands on the Tantric cult. Where there is no spiritual practice, where people pray to God for the fulfilment of narrow worldly desires, where people’s only slogan is “Give us this and give us that” – only there do we find that Tantra is discouraged. So only those who do not understand Tantra, or even after understanding Tantra do not want to do any spiritual practice, oppose the cult of Tantra.

The factors behind their repulsion from sádhaná are two in number. The first is what is known as the psychology of spiritual inertness, and the second is a sort of phobia. The spiritual phobia is the greatest enemy of human society. This phobia is the main discouraging factor.

As I was saying, the [acoustic root] ta represents dullness, and the endeavour to liberate one’s self from this dullness is known as Tantra sádhaná.

At this point I would like to say a few words about the biija mantras [seed sounds, acoustic roots] of Tantra. In this universal arena each and every action has a certain acoustic implication. The fundamental sound that works behind an action is known as the seed of that action. If the different expressions of the Cosmic Self or of the Macrocosm are termed devatás, then at the root of every devatá there lies a particular seed or sound. That particular seed or sound is known as the biija mantra of the devatá concerned. The will power (biija bindu or kámabiija) of the Cosmic Self, [in] its first expression, takes the form of the náda (first expression moving in a straight line). After that the náda is converted into kalá [curvature created under the influence of mutative Prakṛti], and the sensible or perceptible manifestations of this kalá are known as the jagat or “world”. The spirit of the term jagat is “passing show”.

So we find that the world, which is an expression of kalá, comes from the náda, and the náda comes from the kámabiija, or will force (Shambhúliuṅga), of the Great. [Náda has the acoustic form of oṃ.] This oṃ is the collective form of three seed letters, a, u, and ma, representing creation, preservation and destruction, respectively. So the word oṃ can properly represent this

manifested universe. Through proper analysis we get fifty fundamental sounds, or acoustic roots, from oṃ – that is, oṃ is a collective form of those fifty sounds.

Every worldly action is expressed through activating waves having the potentialities of those fundamental sounds as their nuclei. The potentiality of a particular sound or the potentialities of more than one sound may act as nucleus or nuclei, according to the nature of the action concerned. These fundamental sounds are the creative forces of the universe, so they are known as mátrká varñas [causal matrices]. Whatever exists in the universe is [supported] by a sound of this type.

One of the things existing in the universe is contraction or dullness. Contraction or dullness is also something worldly. Since it exists, it will certainly have some bija mantra. The bija mantra of this dullness is ta, and the sádhaná that liberates spiritual aspirants from the influence of this ta is Tantra.

There is spiritual force in each and every living entity. The practical interpretation of Tantra is to awaken this spiritual force and expand it, with the one objective of unifying it with the Supreme Divinity. The lowermost portion of the spinal cord is known as kula, [the abode of] Svayambhú. It is called kula because it bears the weight of the main physical trunk: ku means “creation” and la means “holder” (lá + da = la). [The abode of] Svayambhúliuṅga, bearing the weight of the main physical trunk, is rightly termed kula.

The unconscious animality residing in this kula in a coiled form, is nothing but the latent divine force. It gets back its original status as soon as its attachment for crude objectivities is removed. Because of its coiled form, this sleeping divine force is known as the kulakuṅḍalinii, or the “coiled serpentine”. So the first and foremost phase of spiritual sádhaná lies in awakening the kulakuṅḍalinii from her long hibernation, with the help of a proper wave coming from a great spiritualist [and] with the help of a proper mantra. But for one’s spiritual march, just to awaken her is not sufficient. This awakened kulakuṅḍalinii must be pushed upwards, and her existence must be suspended in the non-attributed existence of Shiva [Supreme Consciousness]. To suspend the kulakuṅḍalinii in Shiva is the ideal of Tantra.

Dhyáyet kuṅḍaliniím sukśmám múládháranivásiniím
Támiśta devatá rupám sárdhatri balayánvitam;
Koti saodáminiibhásam Svayambhúliuṅgavesthitám.

[One should meditate on the kuṅḍalinii – residing in the múládhára cakra in a subtle and divine form – coiled three-and-a-half times – with the effulgence of a million moons – wrapped around the Svayambhúliuṅga.]

There are various glands of various types in the human structure. Each and every gland may be treated as the controlling station of a particular mental [propensity], and the intensity of expression of the mental [propensities] depends on the proper secretion of hormones from these glands. As a general rule hormones secreted from the lower glands cannot influence the upper glands, but they can, directly or indirectly, influence the glands situated at lower points. Since the sahasrára cakra [corresponding to the pineal gland] is the highest cakra, or plexus, hormones

secreted by that plexus can control all other glands of the human body. Just now I said that the kulakuṅḍalinii is awakened by the force of spiritual waves, or of mantra, and these glands help spiritual aspirants by creating such a force. The sahasrāra cakra being the controller of all the glands, it is the central station of all the waves and mantras.

In each and every important gland or sub-gland there resides the seed of its expression, that is, a mátrká varña. So in the sahasrāra cakra there [lie the seeds] of all expressions – that is, all the mátrká varñas are there. The synthetic form of all the mátrká varñas is the oṅm̐kára [oṅm-sound]. So it is crystal-clear that the potentiality of expression of all the instincts of the human mind lies in the sahasrāra cakra.

Human [staticity] can be converted into spirituality or divinity only after arriving at the sahasrāra cakra. The lowermost plexus, the múládhára, is the site of crudeness, and the uppermost plexus, the sahasrāra, is just the opposite, it is the site of consciousness. So people of animal instinct have no other way, if they want to free themselves from worldly illusions, than to take the kulakuṅḍalinii from the múládhára to the sahasrāra. The inner spirit of raising of the kulakuṅḍalinii is for one to control the [propensities] and seed sounds of the different glands and to suspend one's self in Paramashiva [the Nucleus Consciousness], whose rank is beyond the scope of all the instincts and seed sounds. It is a process of shattering the páshas [bondages] of all mental weaknesses; and after conquering these weaknesses and other mental ripus [enemies], to transform animality into divinity. This sáadhaná of the kulakuṅḍalinii is a great fight. After establishing oneself above the scope of each and every instinct, idea and seed sound, a sádhaka must go on with his or her fight, with the intention of merging himself or herself into the Supreme Entity which is beyond the arena of the world of ideation. So the sáadhaná of Tantra is a great battle, a sáadhanásamara.

The main characteristic of Tantra is that it represents human vigour. It represents a pactless fight. Where there is no fight there is no sáadhaná. Under such circumstances Tantra cannot be there, where there is no sáadhaná, no fight. It is an impossibility to conquer a crude idea and to replace it by a subtle idea without a fight. It is not at all possible without sáadhaná. Hence, Tantra is not only a fight, it is an all-round fight. It is not only an external or internal fight, it is simultaneously both. The internal fight is a practice of the subtler portion of Tantra. The external fight is a fight of the cruder portion of Tantra. And the fight both external and internal is a fight in both ways at once.

So practice in each and every stratum of life receives due recognition in Tantra, and the coordination and cooperation of the practices in all strata represents Tantra in its proper perspective. The practice for raising the kulakuṅḍalinii is the internal sáadhaná of Tantra, while shattering the bondages of hatred, suspicion, fear, shyness, etc., by direct action is the external sáadhaná. When those who have little knowledge of sáadhaná see the style of this external fight, they think that the Tantrics moving in the cremation ground are a sort of unnatural creature. Actually the general public have no understanding of these Tantrics. In the direct fight against the ripus and páshas they may appear to be unnatural for the time being, but one cannot ignore the fact that in wartime every person becomes, to some extent, unnatural in his or her activities.

Those who did not understand the inner spirit of the subtler sádhaná of Tantra,⁽¹⁾ or those who did not or could not understand the essence of [Tantric] practices or could not follow those practices in their lives, misinterpreted the real idea and did whatever they liked according to their sweet will, with the intention of furthering their narrow individual interests and fulfilling their worldly desires. A section of the polished intelligentsia, because of their meanness and degraded tastes, misunderstood Tantra and went against its idea. Those who could not understand the inner spirit of the terms madya, mámsa, miina [matsya], etc. (known as the Paiñcamakára),⁽²⁾ accepted the crude worldly interpretations of those articles, and their Tantra sádhaná was nothing but an immoral antisocial activity.

The process of Tantra sádhaná is gradual. But with even a preliminary advancement in this sádhaná, sádhakas attain certain mental and occult powers which make them stronger than the average person in terms of mental and spiritual development. But if in the process sádhakas forget Parama Brahma, the culminating point of all our vital expression, and employ their mental and occult powers to exploit the common mass and to satisfy their lusts, then the demerit lies with those individuals, not with Tantra. If sádhakas remain vigilant and alert regarding the principles of Yama and Niyama, that is, the cardinal moral principles, there is little chance of their degradation. Rather with their developed mental and occult force, they will be in a position to render better service to humanity and to utilize their intellects in a better way.

People can use any of their powers or attainments either for virtue or for vice. If anyone applies his or her potentialities in evil or destructive designs instead of in good ones, then the powers or potentialities are not to be blamed – all the lapses are lapses of the person. Money can be used in various public welfare projects; yet it can also bring on various social evils. Swords can be applied to suppress the stupid, but also the gentle. So is the sword or the money responsible for its own good or bad use? Certainly not. It is highly improper to allow the powers attained through Tantra sádhaná to become extroversial; it is proper to exercise all these attainments in more complex sádhaná, in the subtler pursuits, so that spiritual obstructions are forced out of the human mind. This spiritual attainment helps the kulakuñḍalinii to ascend and to merge with, or unify with, Supreme Consciousness.

Tantra should be utilized only in the subtle field; if applied extroversially, it brings about so much of the crude impact of worldly affairs that the degeneration of a sádhaka becomes unavoidable. The power that is applied by degenerated Tantrics in the śát karma⁽³⁾ of Tantra – that is, psychically killing, psychically dominating or controlling, stupefying, hypnotizing, etc. – has, in reality, nothing to do with spirituality. All of these powers are simply mental powers attained through Tantra sádhaná. They can be attained even without practising Tantra sádhaná, by practising certain mental processes. But then such powers can be successfully applied only against mental weaklings. No endeavour of this sort will find any opening with mentally stronger persons. And none of these actions carries any value for a spiritual sádhaka.

To attain Tantric power one has to practise both external and internal sádhaná – has to stage a fight of both kinds. As a part of the external fight one has to apply a vigorous force or control over his or her worldly conduct and expression, while in the internal fight one has to arouse and to take up his or her kulakuñḍalinii against one's crude thought with all the strength of one's intuition.

The ascent of the kulakuṅḍalinii is brought about through the practice of certain processes. At the sahasrāra, or pineal gland, the kulakuṅḍalinii drinks the hormone secreted by that plexus. The biological explanation of this is that the sādḥaka attains control over the flow of nectar secreted from the sahasrāra (i.e., over a particular hormone secreted from the pineal gland). This flow of nectar is the main support of divine life. During this period of kuṅḍalinii sādhanā (sādhanā establishing control over the “coiled serpentine”), sādḥakas attain or establish control over the ascent and descent of the [suśumnā] fluid. The mental trends of sādḥakas are vitalized by the nectar of the sahasrāra – by this hormone – and by the well-controlled movement of the [suśumnā] fluid, bringing the sādḥakas uncommon sagacity and vigour. The blending of such sagacity and vigour adorns a sādḥaka with an attractive personality, with sharp intelligence and with an unparalleled spirit. Only under the sound leadership of such Tantrics can a dharmic social and national life be lived.

On this path of human advancement from animality to divinity, everybody has a particular position and exerts an influence on society corresponding to that position. Every human being, as a matter of principle, by virtue of being Homo sapiens, certainly has equal rights with others in every walk of life, but Tantra admits specialities to individuals in proportion to their positions on metaphysical strata. Tantra does not recognize any racial, genealogical, political, national or economic differences among human beings, but it does give recognition to individual vigour. The fundamental difference between the Vedic Aryan ideals and the Tantric ideals is that among the Vedic ideals, much importance is granted to racial and clan differences, while in Tantra only the ideal human gets the honour. There is very little scope for spiritual development in the prayerful Aryan religion, and that is why the Aryans who settled in India gradually became influenced by Tantra. The effectiveness of Tantra in developing personality and vigour within a short span of time made Tantra attractive to the Aryans. So in the beginning they started practising Tantra sādhanā, but with strict secrecy. During the daytime they would remain Aryans with their usual emblems – shikhā [sacred hair] and sūtra [sacred thread] – but at night they would throw off their upaviita [sacred thread] and caste differences and practise Tantra sādhanā in Bhaeravii cakra.

Pravrtte Bhaeraviicakre sarva varnā dvijātayah;
Nivrtte Bhaeraviicakre sarve varṇah prthak-prthak.

[When they sit in the Bhaeravii cakra, they distinguish only between those who are sādḥakas and those who are not; but when they leave the cakra, they renew the traditional caste distinctions.]

Veda through its sacrificial rituals encourages materialism, while the Tantric cult through its mental and spiritual practice helps sādḥakas progress towards the intuitional self – towards the Supreme Non-Attributional Reality.

The spirit of sādhanā is to control the extroversial trends of the mind – to guide one’s self in a proper way – so sādhanā and the Tantric cult are synonymous. Ceremonial sacrifices, prayers, and other extroversial rituals are neither Tantra nor sādhanā. Every sādhanā that aims at the attainment of the Supreme, irrespective of its religious affiliation, is definitely Tantra; for Tantra is not a religion, Tantra is simply the science of sādhanā – it is a principle. In reality, can anyone stand up in any sphere of life without [sādhanā]? Can we achieve the honour, the status and the

other commodities that we want in this material world without a struggle? And when we consider our aspiration for development and advancement in the mental world – that cannot be brought about without a struggle either. So everywhere, whether in the crude sphere or in the subtle sphere, struggle is the essence of life. The proper role of human beings lies in [controlling] and harnessing all sorts of crude forces or trends. Thus not only is Tantra an asset in the spiritual world; but even in the most material and crude spheres of life there is no other recourse than to accept Tantric ideals.

Those who sparkle and arouse their vigour in the physical and the mental worlds by staging a struggle against crude tendencies become superhuman persons in human frames. Such personalities, adorned with vigour and vitality, receive ovations everywhere. As a matter of fact, whatever may be the social or administrative [system of a country] – whether it is a democratic republic, or a bureaucracy, or a dictatorship – only those rule who have [invoked] vigour and personality in themselves. Vigorous personalities always rule the weaklings. If individuals having great personalities and great vigour enter into politics, they become [strong or autocratic leaders], while others bow to their command.

Personalities of intermediate category [in regard to their vigour] do not like to shoulder the responsibilities of a [strong leader]. They carry on their [autocratic leadership] under the safe shelter of a monarchical or republican government (by making the crown or the parliament a puppet in their hand); though it cannot be emphatically stated that democracy succeeds only in countries where people lack vigour. There are many countries where the people do not lack vigour, yet where democracy has claimed success. Of course, this has a political side too. [Autocracy] makes its appearance only in those countries where the people have an ample store of vigour yet where the government has become infested with a high degree of corruption. In England and the United States of America there is no dearth of vigour, yet due to efficient forms of government, democracy has never failed. But in Pakistan and Egypt, because of hopeless and pitiable sorts of governments, the people in general have accepted [autocracy] wholeheartedly.

In this world there are also many countries where there are no honest, sincere leaders in the political sphere and whose governmental body is full of corruption, but where, nevertheless, democracy has not suffered any setback. Anyway, the essence of my comments lies in the fact that even in worldly affairs one's personality is developed through Tantra sádhaná, and sádhaná meets success everywhere.

In this regard, it may be asked whether the [strong leaders] of the world practise any Tantra sádhaná or not. To this my answer will be that, perhaps unknowingly, they have always followed Tantric principles. You perhaps know that the great hero of Indian independence, Subhash [Chandra Bose], was an ardent follower of the Tantric cult.

The caste system is based on the principle of distinctions and differences. This system has constituted the greatest obstruction to the formation of a strong, well-organized, well-knit society. This system does not provide a clue to or a seed of the possibility of unity in diversity. The caste system is recognized by the Vedas only, not by Tantra. In the Tantric cult, although there is cent per cent scope for a person's all-round development, nevertheless, as human beings,

all remain in an equal status. That is why there cannot be any compromise between Tantra and the caste system.

Varnáshramábhimánena shrutidásye bhavennarah;
Varnáshramabihiinashca varttate shrutimúrdhani.

–*Ajiñánabodhinii Tantra*

That is – Tantra has expressed in clear language – “Those who proudly espouse the caste system are slaves of the Vedas, while those who have risen above it or kicked it off, attain a place at the head of the Vedas or above the Vedas.” The present caste system of Indian society is the creation of those opportunist Vedic Aryans who entered the Tantric cult but because of their lack of sincerity could not attain the desired status. The deficiencies of Vedic society have in this way inflicted great harm on Tantra.

True Tantrics will certainly allow special honour and recognition for individual potentialities and vigour, but as human beings, all will be equal to them. In the Buddhist Age as well, Tantrics followed this principle. In ancient times, Bengal and Mithila were great seats of Tantra. At that time those who had advanced in Tantra sádhaná – those Brahmans, Kayasthas, Vaidyas, etc., who were engaged in the sádhaná of raising the kulakuñdalini – were identified as kuliinas. Those who were supporters of the Vedas (also known as shruti) were recognized as shrotriyas. Though as human beings the kuliinas and the shrotriyas all enjoyed equal status in the then society, the kuliinas used to receive special honour as sádhakas. Ballal Sen, the king of Bengal, was originally a Buddhist Tantric, but later on became a Hindu Tantric.

Tantrics are to stage a fight against all crude forces, a pauseless struggle against inequality and cowardliness. Equality in society cannot be achieved if the [basis of power] is quantitative alone, without any consideration of qualitative value, for today those who do not try to invoke vigour in themselves by sádhaná far exceed in quantity those who do. So it is not by democracy, but by entrusting power to the true Tantrics, that equality in the economic and social spheres must be established in this material world. The establishment of equality is possible only by Tantrics and not by non-Tantrics. Of course not only in the mental and spiritual arena, but in the material sphere as well, complete or cent per cent equality is an impossibility. So Tantrics have to continue their fight indefinitely. For them where is the opportunity to have a rest?

Shrávañii Púrñimá 1959 RU, Bhagalpur

Footnotes

(1) See “Tantra and Sádhaná”, section on The Crude and Subtle Paiñcamakára. –Eds.

(2) See “Tantra and Sádhaná”, section on The Crude and Subtle Paiñcamakára. –Eds.

(3) For more on the “six actions”, or “six branches”, of Avidyá Tantra, see the chapter “Vidyá Tantra and Avidyá Tantra”. –Eds.

Tantra and Sádhaná

The Practical Cult of Spirituality

To remain satisfied with a little is contrary to human nature. That is why, since the dawn of creation, human beings have been worshipping the Supreme Entity. People longed for supreme knowledge, for indirect and direct spiritual realization. This fundamental human yearning for supreme expansion led people to discover the practical cult of spirituality. Moreover, it created in the human mind the sense of inquisitiveness, the spirit of dedication, and the thirst for knowledge. It is because of these noble qualities that human beings have become what they are today.

The divine revelations experienced by the sages of the ancient Vedic age through their meditative vision have been compiled in the Vedas. Thus the Vedas have to some extent quenched the human thirst for intellectual knowledge. But they have not quenched the thirst for supreme knowledge, the fundamental thirst of human life. That thirst can only be quenched through the illuminating realizations of sádhaná [spiritual practice].

There is no reliable evidence to suggest that in the Vedic period spiritual knowledge was handed down from preceptor to disciple. As far as we know from the history of spiritual sádhaná, Lord Shiva was the first to propound it, and He gave this spiritual cult the name Tantra. Tantra is the secret behind spiritual progress.

The scriptural definition of tantra is *Tam jádyát tárayet yastu sah tantrah parikiirttitah* [“Tantra is that which liberates a person from the bondages of staticity”]. *Tam* is the acoustic root of staticity.

Tantra has another meaning as well. The Sanskrit root verb *tan* means “to expand”. So the practical process that leads to one’s expansion and consequent emancipation is called tantra. Thus sádhaná and Tantra are inseparable.

Strictly speaking, theoretical knowledge cannot be called Tantra. Tantra is a practical science. Hence in Tantra the importance of book knowledge is secondary. The practical process of Tantra begins with the physical and progresses to the physico-psychic, then to the psycho-spiritual, then ultimately results in [the supreme spiritual stance,] ensconcement in the *átmá* [self]. [This scientific process sets it apart from many other schools.]

As the practical aspect is the most important factor in Tantra, the greatest emphasis is placed on the preceptor-disciple relationship. The disciple must do intense spiritual practice to be worthy of the preceptor’s instructions at every stage of development.

And it was for this reason that Sadáshiva never wanted the Tantric teachings to be written down. However, in course of time, due to a lack of competent preceptors and disciples, Tantra was about to be lost to society. It therefore became an imperative necessity to put the teachings in book form to save them from total extinction. There are presently sixty-four Tantric texts.

Tantra is broadly composed of two parts – nigama and ágama. The former is mainly theoretical; the latter practical. As the Vedic scriptures are not based on practical instructions, some people are inclined to categorize them as nigama.

According to the Rudrayámala Tantra,

Ágatañ Shivavaktrebhyo gatañca Girijáshrutao;
Matañca Vásudevasya tasmádágama ucyate.

[The science which comes from the mouth of Lord Shiva, goes to the ears of Párvatii, and is approved by Lord Krśńa, is called ágama.⁽¹⁾]

No serious or sincere Tantric can agree with this shloka [couplet]. Why should the science which was propounded by Lord Shiva need to be “approved by Lord Krśńa”? The Rudrayámala Tantra was formulated much later than Lord Shiva. This shloka was cleverly included in the Rudrayámala Tantra by the protagonists of the Vedas.⁽²⁾

Guru and Disciple

Kśurasya dhára nishitá duratyayá. [Literally, “The edge of a razor is very sharp and difficult to walk on.”] This path, to walk upon, is like a path strewn with sharp razors. The disciple has to tread the path with extreme caution. The disciple needs the help of the guru [preceptor] at every step. Without this supervision, any defect in the process of sádhaná as imparted by the guru, or the least negligence on the part of the disciple in following the instructions, inevitably leads to the disciple’s downfall. For success on the path of Tantra, the proper preceptor and the proper disciple are both essential. So the first step in Tantra is the selection of a competent preceptor and a worthy disciple.

The situation can be explained through the following analogy with agriculture: The disciple’s heart is a field; sádhaná is the ploughing and irrigation of the field; and the preceptor’s initiation is the sowing of seeds. If the seeds are defective they will not sprout; if the field is infertile the harvest will be poor; and even if the seed and the field are ideal, yet the field is not properly ploughed or irrigated, the harvest will be poor.

According to Tantra, disciples are of three categories. The first category are likened to pitchers placed inversely in a tub of water. Such pitchers contain water as long as they are kept in the tub, but as soon as they are taken out, all the water pours out. These disciples acquire spiritual knowledge when they are in close contact with the preceptor, but as soon as they are apart from the preceptor they forget all his teachings.

The second category of disciples are like people who carefully climb a plum tree and pick plums from its thorny branches. Unfortunately they become so absorbed in climbing down the tree that they completely forget about their carefully-collected plums, which fall out of their bags and break open on the ground. Such disciples learn many things from the preceptor with great hardship, but do not take proper care to preserve those instructions. They lose their hard-earned knowledge out of negligence.

The best category of disciples are like pitchers positioned right side up. When such pitchers are put in a tub of water, there is water both inside them and all around them; and even when they are removed from the tub, they remain full to the brim with water. These disciples carefully preserve in the jewel caskets of their hearts whatever they learn from their preceptor.

According to Tantra there are also three types of preceptor: the inferior, the mediocre, and the superior. Inferior preceptors are those who deliver high-sounding speeches but do not bother about whether the disciples follow their teachings or not. Mediocre preceptors impart knowledge to their disciples, no doubt, and also check on whether the disciples are following their teachings, but they are not too demanding. Superior preceptors, however, take meticulous care to ensure that their disciples follow their teachings. If they discover that their disciples are negligent in any way, they compel them to practise more painstakingly by applying circumstantial pressure.

In the Vedic system there is no such strong preceptor-disciple relationship, for Vedic knowledge is completely theoretical. In Tantra emphasis is placed not only on the selection of competent masters and worthy disciples, but also on the need for disciples to make a total surrender to the preceptor in the early stages of the Tantric path.

The qualities of the best preceptors have been outlined in the Tantrasára:

Shánto dánto kuliinascha viniita shuddhaveslaván
Shuddhácárii supratísthita shucirdakśah subuddhimán
Áshramii dhyánaniśtashca tantramantra visháradah
Nígrahánugrahe shakto gururityabhidhiiyate.

[Composed, self-controlled, adept in raising the kuńdalínii, modest, soberly dressed, exemplary in conduct, having an honest means of livelihood, pure in thought, well-versed in the spiritual cult, highly intelligent, a householder, established in meditation, well-versed in Tantra and mantra, able both to punish and to reward the disciple – only such a person deserves to be called a guru.]

All sorts of actions, be they nivrttimúlaka [spiritual actions] or pravrttimúlaka [wordly actions] are performed by the human mind. Shravańa [hearing], manana [contemplating], and nididhyásana [focusing the mind on one object] are among the actions performed by the mind.⁽³⁾ One who has controlled all actions, and perfected the last three, is called shánta, or one who has acquired full composure of mind.

The indriyas⁽⁴⁾ are multilateral in their activities. They too play a very significant role in the processes of shravańa, manana and nididhyásana. One who has controlled all the indriyas, and perfected the actions of the indriyas in shravańa, manana and nididhyásana, is called dánta, or one who has acquired full control over the indriyas.

A kaola sádha (one who practises the science of raising the kulakuńdalínii, that is, one who is adept in purashcarańa [the process of moving upwards the kuńdalínii shakti]), is called kuliina. Only such a person can be a kula guru [preceptor of kaola sádhaná].

A preceptor must furthermore be viniita [modest], shuddhaveslavána [soberly dressed], shuddhácárii (exemplary in conduct), supratisthita (having honest means of livelihood), and shuci (pure in thought). In the spiritual sphere this person must be dakśa (well-versed in the practical and theoretical aspects of the spiritual cult). One who has only acquired theoretical knowledge is called vidvána [scholarly]. A preceptor must [be more than] vidvána, a preceptor must be dakśa.

And preceptors must be more than intelligent, they must be subuddhimána [super-intelligent]. They must also be áshramii [married], for according to Tantric injunction only a married person can be the guru of married people. It is not enough that preceptors impart lessons on dhyána to their disciples, they must be dhyániśtha (fully established in dhyána). They should also be vishárada [well-versed, i.e., both dakśa and vidvána] in Tantra and mantra.

Mantra is defined Mananát tárayet yastu sa mantrah parikiirtitah – “That which, when contemplated, leads to freedom from [all sorts of] bondages is called a mantra.” The preceptor must know which mantras are appropriate for which people, and which mantras are siddha mantras.⁽⁵⁾

The preceptor must also be nigraha (capable of inflicting punishment) and anugraha (capable of bestowing grace). One who punishes only or who bestows grace only is not an ideal preceptor.

Like the preceptor, a disciple should possess certain qualities, which are as follows:

Shánto viniito shuddhátmá
Shraddhávána dhárańákśamah;
Samarthashca kuliinashca
Prájiᅇah saccarito yatih;
Evamádi guńaeryuktah
Shishyo bhavati nányathá.

–*Tantrasára*

“A disciple must always be samartha (ready to carry out the instructions and commands of the master). He or she must be prájiᅇa and yati – that is, must have the requisite knowledge and experience, and must have full control over the mind. One who is of noble soul, of noble conduct and of tranquil mind, who is modest and reverent, and possesses a sharp memory and perseverance, who has all-round competence and is zealous in the practice of raising the kulakuńdalinii, and who is well-informed and self-restrained, is an ideal disciple.” One who does not possess these qualities should not be accepted as a disciple.

Whenever a worthy disciple is taught by a competent preceptor, spiritual progress is a certainty.

Stages

The practice of Tantra can be divided into several stages. Everyone has his or her own individual sańskáras, and there is no denying that at the initial stage human beings are normally animals

(and have hence been called “rational animals”). A human being who lacks viveka [discrimination] is actually worse than an animal. Animals are undeveloped creatures, and thus certain behaviour on their part may be condoned. But humans are developed, so improper conduct by them cannot be condoned. The initial stage of sádhaná is meant for people of animal nature and is thus called pashvácára or pashubháva [pashu = “animal”].

When sádhakas advance in the process of sádhaná, guided by the instructions of the preceptor, they develop an ideation proper for human beings. At this stage they are called viira [heroic]. Just as animals are controlled through external pressure, in the stage of pashvácára sádhaná disciples must be controlled by the external application of pressure of circumstances. This will help establish them in viirabháva. But those who are more elevated than animals do not depend on external pressure for spiritual progress. Their progress is determined by both external pressure and internal urge.

Sarve ca pashavah santi talavad bhútale naráh;
Teśám jiṅána prakásháya viirabhávah prakáshitah;
Viirabhávaṁ sadá prápya krameña devatá bhavet.

–*Rudrayámala Tantra*

“Under ordinary circumstances all are animal-like in the initial stage. When spiritual thirst awakens in animal-like people they become viira, and when they are fully established in viirabháva they become devatás [gods].” The science of Tantra is based on this truth. Hence there is no contradiction between Tantra and science. People are found at all different stages, according to their ideation – animal-like, heroic, or god-like – as they ascend on the scale of evolution. A competent preceptor imparts lessons to his disciples after considering the degree of their spiritual and psychic elevation.

Vaedikaṁ Vaeśnavam Shaevam Dáksiṇam páshavam smrtam;
Siddhānte Vame ca viire divyaṁtu Kaolamucyate.

–*Vishvasára Tantra*

“Vaedikácára, Vaeśnavácára, Shaevácára and Dakśiṇácára are the different stages of pashubháva. Vámácára and Siddhántácára are the stages of viirabháva, and Kulácára belongs to [divya]bháva.”

The first stage of pashvácára sádhaná is Vaedikácára. It has no deep principles, but is merely a set of ritualistic and showy observances and practices. So in the eye of a Tantric practitioner, Vaedikácára is the lowest grade of sádhaná.

It is also the lowest because it does not inspire the practitioner to transcend discrimination and differentiation. In the subtler stages of Tantra the artificial distinctions of caste, colour, and social status are not recognized. In this stage all aspirants merely identify themselves as Bhaerava or Bhaeravii. In the Ajiṅánabodhinii Tantra it has been said,

Varnáshramábhímánena shrutidásye bhavennarah;
Varnáshramabihiinashca vartate shrutimúrdhani.⁽⁶⁾

Elsewhere in Tantra it has been said,

Ye kurbanti naráh múrdá divyacakre pramádatah;
Kulabhedañ varnábhedañ te gacchantyadhamám gatim.

[Even those who practise Tantra sáadhaná and meditate in the Bhaeravii cakra will, if they retain belief in caste differences, degrade themselves to a crude state.]

“Those who accept differences of lineage and caste degrade themselves, and are ultimately converted into foxes, dogs, pigs, worms, or even trees and stones.” No one can prevent their degradation. The practice of Tantra is the practice of self-expansion, not self-contraction. Those who are blindly guided by the teachings of the Vedas and believe in the artificial distinctions of caste and class, etc., or beat drums proclaiming the Aryan supremacy, follow the path of self-contraction. Their sáadhaná is the sáadhaná of ignorance and annihilation.

The Crude and the Subtle Paiñcamakára

Many people criticize Tantra for its Paiñcamakára.⁽⁷⁾ In their case it can aptly be said that “a little learning is a dangerous thing.” They neither know, nor understand, nor try to understand, the underlying significance of the Five M’s.

Tantra can be roughly divided into two branches, one crude and the other subtle.⁽⁸⁾ The subtle aspect of Tantra is also called the yoga márga [path of yoga]. Sadáshiva was the propounder of both branches of Tantra, hence there cannot be any contradiction between them. Under ordinary circumstances the human mind is dominated by animal propensities. Of course, these baser propensities are not equally strong for all people. Those who have intense animal desires rush toward objects of physical enjoyment. Such people cannot just suddenly give up their objects of enjoyment in favour of spiritual sáadhaná. Those whose desire for physical enjoyment is less intense can easily abstain from physical objects, but what are the first-mentioned people to do?

If such people try forcibly to turn their minds away from their objects of enjoyment, they will face disastrous consequences. Psychologists are well aware of the dangers of attempting to suppress or repress one’s desires. One may be able to maintain saintliness for a certain time, but the raging storm cannot be contained forever. It is not unusual for those who remain virtuous early in life to fall prey to immoral desires later in life. The dark shadow of immorality fell across the lives of many sannyásiis and sannyásiniis or bhikśus and bhikśuniis [monks and nuns] in the past for this very reason, that they had tried to suppress their desires by force. Some people pretend to be virtuous but indulge in immoral deeds secretly; if their numbers increase in society it is an unhealthy sign. The practice of the Five M’s was formulated for those people who harboured secret desires for crude physical enjoyment. But for those guided by subtle propensities, the subtle Paiñcamakára, or yoga márga, was prescribed.

The main idea behind the practice of the crude Pañcamakāra is to carry out sādhanā while in the midst of crude enjoyments. While carrying out this practice, they will limit the degree of their indulgence. By limiting the use of objects of enjoyment they will gradually increase their psychic power, and will ultimately rise above the allurements of enjoyment. For example, a wine addict will drink a controlled measure of wine as a part of sādhanā. A fish-eater will follow certain restrictions: he or she will limit the quantity of fish eaten, and will not eat female fish in their spawning period.

In this way people can gradually establish the superiority of their minds over objects of enjoyment. The practice of this pravṛttimūlaka [extroversial] Pañcamakāra will gradually take them to the nivr̥tti path.

Madya sādhanā: But many people are under the impression that the Five M's means only the crude Five M's. This is incorrect. Let us take the first element of the Five M's. The deeper spirit of madya sādhanā is,

Somadhārá kṣared yá tu Brahmarandhrát varánane;
Pītvánandamayastvaṁ sa eva madyasādhakah.

“One who experiences the intoxicating joy from drinking the sudhá, or somadhārá,⁽⁹⁾ secreted from the Brahmarandhra [pineal gland] is called a madya sādhanaka.” In this connection one should remember that every gland secretes sudhá, secretes some hormone.

The hormone secretion of the Brahmarandhra, the supreme gland of the human body, is partly controlled by the moon, and the moon is also called soma; hence that nectar is called somarasa or somadhārá. This somadhārá invigorates the lower glands of the human body and intoxicates a spiritual aspirant with joy. Ordinary people cannot experience this divine joy, because crude thoughts result in somarasa being burnt up in the mental sphere (in the pituitary gland and vicinity). But a sādhanaka feels a great intoxication at the time this amṛta is being secreted.

When those who are not sādhanakas observe this condition, they mistake it for something else. Ramprasad, the great mystic, said,

Surápán karine ámi sudhá khái jaya Kálii bale;
Man-mátále mátál kare mad-mátále mátál bale.

[I don't drink wine, I take sudhárasa, saying, “Victory to Kálii.” My mind, intoxicated with bliss-causing hormones, makes me drunk. But those who are intoxicated with drink, call me a drunkard.]

There is yet another subtle interpretation of the term madya, according to Tantric yogis:

Yaduktaṁ Parama Brahma nirvikāraṁ niraiñjanam;
Tasmin pramadanañjanam tanmadyaṁ parikiirtitaṁ.

“Intense love for Nirvikára Niraiṅjana Parama Brahma leads to the annihilation of thought, intellect and ego, and appears as an intoxication which may be termed a madya sáadhaná.”

Mámśa sáadhaná: Similarly, to a Tantric, mámśa does not mean meat.

Má shabdádrasaná jineyá tadarśán rasaná priye;
Yastad bhakśayennityam sa eva mámśa sádhakah.

[Má means “tongue”, and it is through the tongue that words are uttered. One who “eats”, or controls, those words is a mámśa sádhaka.]

Má means “tongue”; mámśa means “speech”; mámśabhakśaṅa means “control over speech”.

There is yet another interpretation of the word mámśa.

Evaṁ mámśanotihi yatkarma tanmámśa parikiirtitaṁ;
Na ca káyaprati vántu yogibhimasimucyate.

That is to say, “One who surrenders all one’s actions, good, bad, righteous, sinful, wicked – even the attainment of prolonged penance – to Me, is called mámśa.”

Meat is in no way considered by yogis to be a useful item of food.

Matsya sáadhaná:

Gauṅgá Yamunayormadhye matsyao dvaḥ carataḥ sadá;
Tao matsyao bhakśayet yastu sah bhavenmatsyasádhakah.

The matsya sáadhaná of a Tantric yogi can be interpreted in this way: “One who eats the two fish that swim, one through the Ganges (representing the idá nádii) and the other through the Yamuna (the piṅgalá nádii) – that is, one who takes the breath flows of the left nostril and the right nostril to the trikúti [concentration point of the ájiṅá cakra] and suspends them there by purṅa kumbhaka [holding the inhalation] or shunya kumbhaka [holding the exhalation] – is a matsya sádhaka.”

In connection with matsya, Lord Shiva further said,

Matsamánaṁ sarvabhúte sukhadukhamidaṁ devi;
Iti yatsátvikam jñánaṁ tanmatsyah parikiirtitah.

“When a person feels all the pains and pleasures of others as one’s own pains and pleasures, this sentient feeling is called matsya sáadhaná.”

Mudrá sáadhaná: Crude mudrá sáadhaná involves the use of a certain type of food. Subtle mudrá sáadhaná has nothing to do with food.

Satsaungena bhavenmuktirasatsaungeśu bandhanam;
Asatsaungamudrañam sá mudrá parikiirttitá.

“Bad company leads to bondage; good company leads to liberation. Having understood this supreme truth, one should avoid bad company. This shunning of bad company is called mudrá sáadhaná.”

Maethuna sáadhaná: Many people comment adversely on the fifth M. Through this process of sáadhaná [i.e., through crude maethuna sáadhaná], people of cruder propensities can gradually develop self-restraint. This is the teaching of Tantra, and nobody should object to it.

And regarding subtle maethuna sáadhaná, it has been said,

Kulakuñdalinií shaktirdehinám dehadháriñii;
Tayá Shivashya sañyogah maethunañ parikiirttitám.

The lowest vertebra of the spinal cord is called kula. In this part of the múládhára cakra [basic plexus] is located the kulakuñdalinií, or daevii shakti [divine energy]. The purpose of maethuna sáadhaná is to raise the kulakuñdalinií and unite it with Paramashiva [the Nucleus Consciousness] at the sahasrára cakra [corresponding to the pineal gland].

The Lessons of Tantra

The lessons of Tantra are physico-psycho-spiritual – from the physical to the psychic, and from the psychic to the spiritual. Tantra says that one can attain spiritual elevation through physical and psychic purification. This is a very logical proposition. Hence absolute purity in food and conduct is essential for a Tantric sádhaka. Without attaining all-round purification it is impossible for a sádhaka to experience real spiritual ideation. On the path of spirituality, bháva [ideation] is the main factor.

Regarding the interpretation of the word bháva, the devotional scriptures observe,

Shuddhasattva visheśadvá premasúryámshusámyabhák;
Rucibhishcittamásríya krdasao bháva ucyaate.

[Bháva (often translated “psycho-spiritual idea” or “psycho-spiritual parallelism”) means that type of special ideation which makes the entitative rhythm very pure and holy, which arouses the latent love for Parama Puruśa, and which makes the mind smooth-surfaced and soft owing to the spiritual effulgence.]

But Tantra explains bháva as follows: Bhávo hi mánaso dharma manasaeva sadábhyáset – “Bháva is a mental tendency. The flow of bháva can be brought about through repetition.” This repetition of ideation is called japakriyá – outer-suggestion or auto-suggestion. If human beings repeatedly ideate on Paramátmá, their psychic waves gradually straighten, because they come in contact with the perfectly straight spiritual waves of that Entity. Japakriyá is the practical way to realize Iishvara. In the Vedas, Ahañ Brahma, Tattvamasi and many other mantras have been

mentioned. But what does a person gain by knowing the theory behind these words without experiencing any practical realization from them? The Vedas do not state clearly how to ideate, nor how to realize the inner import of mantra, nor even how to use mantras in practical life.

Anubhútiṁ biná múdha vrthá Brahmaṇi modate;
Pratibimbitashákhágraphalásvadanamodavat.

–*Maetreyii Shruti*

[Without God-realization, a person will try in vain to get spiritual bliss. Seeing the reflection in water of a sweet fruit hanging from the branch of a tree does not give one the taste of the fruit.]

“The sight of the reflection in water of a sweet fruit hanging from the branch of a tree does not give one the taste of the fruit.” Similarly, what is the value of book knowledge of Brahma if a person has no actual spiritual realization? In this regard Tantra says,

Ahaṁ Brahmásmi, vijñánáda jñánávilayo bhavet;
So'mityeva saṁcintya viharet sarvadá devi.

–*Gandharva Tantra*

“The realization Ahaṁ Brahmásmi [”I am Brahma“] is the only way to dispel the darkness of ignorance. But if this knowledge of Brahmásmi remains confined to mere words, it will not serve any practical purpose.” To gain knowledge of Brahma, one’s ideation – ideation on the So’ham mantra – will have to be continuous. Continuous ideation is not possible through mere parrot-like repetition of a mantra. This subtle science of psycho-spiritual practice is the discovery of Tantra.

Japakriyá and dhyánakriyá [auto- or outer-suggestion, and meditation with unbroken concentration] are the subtle techniques prescribed by Mahákaolas.⁽¹⁰⁾ Tantrics also say that mere repetition of mantra will not serve any purpose unless there is a rhythmic parallelism between the incantative flow (the flow of the mantra) and the mental flow (the flow of the unit mind). To perform japakriyá while harbouring harmful thoughts is futile. One can only attain success in japakriyá if all the psychic propensities are diverted towards the deeper spirit of the mantra. (This will simultaneously bring about stillness of the váyus [energy flows in the body]).

Mano’nyatra shivo’nyatra shaktiranyatra márutah;
Na sidhyati varánane kalpakotishataerapi.

–*Kulárñava Tantra*

“The mind runs in one direction towards its object of fascination; its object of ideation lies in another direction; the vital energy moves in yet another direction; and the váyus run in all directions uncontrollably. In the midst of such chaos ideation on Parama Puruśa is impossible, even in billions of kalpas [ages].”

Indriyánám manonáthah manonatho'stu márutah. “The controller of the indriyas is the mind, and the controllers of the mind are the váyus.” In spiritual practice the indriyas, the mind and the váyus cannot be ignored. They must be consolidated and directed towards Parama Purúša.

In Tantra the system of diikśá [initiation] is highly scientific. Initiation has two important aspects: diipanii and mantra caetanya. Diipanii⁽¹¹⁾ means “torchlight”; mantra caetanya means “conceptual understanding of and psychic association with a mantra”. Regarding the interpretation of diikśá, the Vishvasára Tantra says,

Diipa jñānam yato dadyát kuryát pápakśayam tatah;
Tasmátdiikśeti sá proktá sarvatantrasya sammata.

“The process which produces the capacity to realize the inner import of mantra and which expedites the requital of the saṁskáras, or reactive momenta, is called diikśá.”

You may have noticed that some people become extremely sad or extremely happy after being initiated. This is a good sign because it shows that the saṁskáras are being exhausted very quickly. But this sort of reaction does not occur merely by hearing the mantra or repeating it parrot-like. One must be initiated according to the prescribed system. Only then will the mantra be effective. This will be clear to those practising Ananda Marga meditation.

Andhakáragrhe yadvanna kincat pratibhásate;
Diipaniirahito'mantrastathaeva parikiirtitá.

–*Sárasvata Tantra*

You must know that both diipanii and mantra caetanya must precede the repetition of a mantra. “One cannot see even the most valuable objects in a dark room. Similarly, a valuable mantra cannot be used properly without the help of diipanii.”

Mantra caetanya: Unless the kulakuṅḍalinii is raised upwards in the process of spiritual practice, repetition of mantra becomes meaningless. The system of raising the kulakuṅḍalinii upwards is called purashcaraṇa kriyá. Mantra caetanya literally means to imbibe the proper spirit of a mantra. If a mantra is repeated with the understanding of the inner spirit, mantra caetanya will be an easier task. To repeat the mantra without understanding its spirit is a waste of time. In this connection Sadáshiva said in the Rudrayámala Tantra,

Caetanya rahitáh mantráh proktavarñastu kevaláh;
Phalam naeva prayacchanti lakśa kotí prajapati.

[Mantras without their corresponding ideation are merely a couple of letters mechanically uttered. They will not bear any fruit even if repeated a billion times.]

Dhyána: Diipanii and mantra caetanya are not necessary in the process of dhyána,⁽¹²⁾ but they are necessary in japakriyá [auto- or outer-suggestion through repetition of mantra]. Those who are unsuccessful in japakriyá find it very difficult to master the practice of dhyána.⁽¹³⁾ In the

process of dhyána, mantra, diipanii, and mantra caetanya – all three – are associated with the dhyeya Puruśa [Puruśa as the object of ideation]. So from a subtle perspective, japa is a composite of a number of processes, but dhyána kriyá is complete in itself, and this is the reason that beginners find it difficult to become established in dhyána.⁽¹⁴⁾ For those who can establish themselves in dhyána, however, samádhi is a certainty.

Vinányásaeh viná pújám viná japaeh puraskriyam;
Dhyánayogád bhavetsiddhirnányathá khalu Párvatii.

–*Shrii Krama Tantra*

[Said Shiva to Párvatii, “Through dhyána one can attain the highest spiritual success, even without nyása, pújá, japa and purashcaraña (other practices). You can take this for a fact.”]

Only after one is established in dhyána can one attain nirvikalpa samádhi. If one is established in samádhi, liberation or salvation will come as a matter of course.

Tantra, being a practical process, does not recognize any external practices or showy displays, and in particular does not recognize idol worship as the best process of sádhaná. Even the Vedas, although they contain references to idols, do not approve of idol worship; and Tantra is much more liberal, much more psychological, than the Vedas. According to Tantra idol worship is also a process of sádhaná, but the crudest process.

Uttamo Brahmasadbhávo madhyamá dhyánadhárańá;
Japastuti syádadhamá múrtipújá dhamádhamá.

[Ideation on Brahma is the best, dhyána and dhárańá are second best, repetitious incantation and eulogistic prayer are the worst, and idol worship is the worst of the worst.]

Tantra declares that Citistad shabda lakśáartháidekarasarúpinii [“The Supreme Entity is fundamentally citi (consciousness). It is an unbroken flow of cognition.”] The Supreme Entity is a continuous flow of cognition, only attainable through the process of incantation. So how could Tantra consider the worship of idols or matter an ideal type of sádhaná?

In Tantra there are three types of sádhaná: pravrtti sádhaná, nivrtti sádhaná, and a combination of the two. The crude and horrifying practices of pisháca sádhaná [pisháca = “ghoul”] are part of pravrtti sádhaná. The goal of pisháca sádhaná is to establish supremacy over material forces. Even though one acquires certain powers, and thereby the possibility of some purely temporary happiness, after practising this sádhaná for some time, one’s degeneration is inevitable, for it is based on an external outlook. Pisháca sádhanakas will suffer the inevitable fate of being reborn as animals or being converted into wood, earth or stone.

Tantra’s nivrtti márga is the highest type of practice. Through this process a spiritual aspirant attains elevation step by step. Nirvána or mahánirvána, mukti or mokśa,⁽¹⁵⁾ can be attained through this process. The path which mixes pravrtti and nivrtti is called the path of upavidyá. Nivrtti márga, or Vidyá Tantra, brings about the highest excellence in the spiritual sphere, but the

mixed path of pravrtti and nivrtti brings neither degeneration nor progress. Hence it can be said that practitioners of upavidyá simply waste their valuable time.

Tantra's freedom from superstition, and its psychological approach, are clearly illustrated in the last few lines of the Mahánirvána Tantra:

Bálariidañavat sarvarúpanámádikalpanam;
Kevalam Brahmaniśtha yah sa mukto nátra sañshayah.
Mrchiládhátudárvádímúrttáviishvaro buddhayo;
Klisyantastapasáh jñánañ viná mokśam ná yánti te.
Manasá kalpitá múrtih nrñám cenmokśasádhanii;
Svapnalabdhená rájyena rájáno mánavástadá.
Ná muktirtapanáddhomádupavásashataerapi;
Brahmaeváhamiti jñátvá mukto bhavati dehabhrt.
Váyu parña kanátoyañ vratino mokśabháginah;
Apicet pannagáh muktáh pashupakśii jalecaráh. ⁽¹⁶⁾

To realize the greatness of Tantra, one will have to carry on spiritual practice. A non-practitioner can never penetrate into the mysteries of Tantra.

Some people are under the wrong impression that as the practice of Tantra is based on an ardent love for ideology there is no room for devotion; or if there is an element of devotion, it is a very minor one. But this is not correct. On the contrary, Tantra's love of ideology is dependent on parábhakti [absolute devotion]. Hence it has been said:

Api cet sudurácáro bhajate mámananyabhák;
So'pi pápavinirmuktah mucyate bhavabandhanát.

[If even the most wicked persons worship Me with a concentrated mind, I will liberate them from the three bondages (physical, psychic and spiritual).]

And finally, regarding Parama Brahma, Tantra has said,

Oṃ namaste sate sarvalokáshrayáya;
Namaste Cite vishvarúpátmakáya.
Namo'dvaetatattváya muktipradáya;
Namo Brahmañe vyápine nirguñáya.
Tadekañ sharañyañ tadekañ vareñyañ;
Tadekañ jagatkárañañ vishvarúpam.
Tadekañ jagatkartr-pátr praharttrñ;
Tadekañ param nishcalañ nirvikalpam.
Bhayañám bhayañ bhiiśañám bhiiśañánám;
Gatih práñinám pávanañ pávanánám.
Mahaccaeh padánám niyantr tadekañ;
Pareshám param rakśakañ rakśakánám.
Paresha prabho sarvarúpavináshinnanirdeshya;

Sarvendriyágamyasatya.
Acintyáksara vyápakávyaktatattva;
Jagadbhásakádhiisha páyádapáyát.
Tadekañ smarámastadekañ japámas;
Tadekañ jagat sákšiirúpañ namámah.
Tadekañ nidhánañ nirálambamiishañ;
Bhavámbodhipotañ sharañañ vrajámah.

–*Mahánirváha Tantra*

[My salutations to the Self-Existent Entity, the supreme shelter of all the created worlds. My salutations to the Supreme Cognition, the Supreme One, the Absolute One in the form of this expressed universe. My salutations to the supreme non-dualistic Entity, the distributor of salvation. My salutations to Brahma, the All-Pervasive and Non-Attributional Entity. My salutations to that Supreme Entity who is the ultimate refuge of all, the supreme adorable one, the primordial cause of the universe, the One who has deliberately assumed the form of the universe. My salutations to That which has been creating, protecting and dissolving this universe. My salutations to that Supreme Unmovable Entity, the One without an alternative. My salutations to that which is the fear of all fears, who is the dread of all dreadful entities, the Supreme Terminus of all living beings, the purity of all purities, the Supreme Controller, controlling even the highest dignitaries of the universe. That Supreme Entity is the Subject of all subjects, the Supreme Lord of everything. All the objects, or forms, ultimately merge in Him. He cannot be shown to anybody. He is the Supreme Truth, inaccessible to the senses. He is beyond the capacity of thought. He is intransmutable. He is the most pervasive Entity, yet at the same time, He is unmanifest. It is He who has given expression to the expressed universe; yet at the same time He is above the fundamental factors of which the universe is made. Him only we remember, on Him only we contemplate; my salutations to that Supreme Entity, the witnessing force of this expressed universe. We seek shelter in that supreme ship of the universe, who is the most dependable shelter, but who has no shelter of His own.]

25 May 1960 DMC, Saharsa

Footnotes

(1) Ágama is a composite of the first letters of three words: the of gatam (“coming from”), the ga of gatañca (“going to”), and the ma of matañca (“approved by”). –Eds.

(2) The authority of Lord Shiva should be considered sufficient to validate any teaching. (And the fact that Krśña came 3500 years later than Shiva also makes the shloka unconvincing.) The protagonists of the Vedas wanted authority to rest in Lord Krśña, whom they claimed not to be a Tantric. –Eds.

(3) For more on shravaña, manana and nididhyásana, see “Mantra Caetanya” in Volume One. –Eds.

(4) An indriya is a sensory or motor organ, together with its respective nerves, nerve fluid, and site in the brain. –Eds.

(5) “Perfected” mantras. See also “Mantra Caetanya” in Volume One. –Eds.

(6) “One who accepts the divisions of society according to varña and áshrama is a veritable slave of the Vedas. But one who is above varña and áshrama is the lord of the Vedas.” There are four varñas [castes] – Vipra, Kśatriya, Vaeshya and Shdra – and four áshramas – Brahmacharya, or student life; gárhasthya, family life; vánaprasthya, retirement in solitude; and sannyása or yati, the life of renunciation. –Eds.

(7) Literally, “five ma sounds” – madya (wine), máńsá (meat), matsya (fish), mudrá (parched grains), and maethuna (sexual intercourse). –Eds.

(8) There is a middle path between the crude and subtle paths, called madhyama márga in Sanskrit, and majjhima mágga in Pali.

(9) Literally, “nectar”; actually a hormone. –Eds.

(10) A Mahákaola is a Tantric guru who can raise not only His own kuńalini, but those of others also. –Eds.

(11) In Ananda Marga meditation there is a process for performing diipanii. –Eds.

(12) They are not necessary as auxiliary practices, because, as will be explained, they are included within dhyána. –Eds.

(13) Japakriyá is a composite of processes, and those processes can be carried out one by one; therefore it is not so difficult as dhyána. –Eds.

(14) Japakriyá is a composite of processes, and those processes can be carried out one by one; therefore it is not so difficult as dhyána. –Eds.

(15) “Liberation or emancipation (non-qualified liberation)” – in the terminology first of Buddhist Tantra, then of Hindu Tantra. –Eds.

(16) Translation of first four couplets: “Meditation on the names and forms (of idols) is a kind of child’s play. Only one whose mind is reverently concentrated on Brahma will win liberation; there is no doubt about this. Those who think that Parama Puruśa is confined within idols made of clay, stone, metal, or wood, are simply torturing their bodies with penances – they will surely not attain salvation without self-knowledge. If an idol produced out of the human imagination can bring about salvation, then can a person, by creating a kingdom in his dreams, become a king in the real sense? Liberation is not attainable by penance, sacrificial rituals, or hundreds of fasts. Living beings attain liberation when they realize, ‘I am Brahma.’” –Eds.

Tantra and Supernatural Power

The science of spirituality developed out of human beings' innate desire to unravel the mystery of creation. Humans began to search for the secret causes underlying both the dreadful and the beautiful aspects of nature. They looked around them at the rivers and streams, the far-flung mountain ranges, the flashes of lightning; they heard the thunder; they listened to the roaring of ferocious animals – and they began to plumb the depths of these mysteries. These endeavours to get at the hidden truth of everything are what is known as Tantra. Since these endeavours were carried on at different times, in different places, and by different groups of individuals, we find some differences in methodology among the various schools of Tantra.

Tantra originated in [South] Asia, and its propounders were the Austrics, [the Dravidians,] and the Mongolians.⁽¹⁾ Among these peoples, the Dravidians and the Mongolians were more developed, the Austrics less. The practitioners of the more-developed Tantra would look upon things from a broad point of view, renouncing all narrow thinking. They would always strive hard to advance the welfare of the masses. Through such selfless service, they would overcome the fetters of the mind, such as hatred and shame. The practitioners of the less-developed Tantra would behave in just the opposite way. They would indulge in casteism; in expressions of untouchability; and in expressions of hatred and envy in relation to other groups.

The overcoming of material bondages signifies the greatest human progress. The word tantra signifies that one “frees oneself from the bondages of crudity;” therefore Tantra is considered the best kind of spiritual practice. Lord Sadāshiva was the first propounder of this Tantra. He developed certain fixed rules, and thereby ensured all-round progress in the different aspects of human life. He brought about a perfect system, reviewing and coordinating all branches of Tantra. He researched and proved the efficacy of both the [external] and the [internal] aspects of Tantra.⁽²⁾ The [external] aspect of Tantra consisted of sādhaná with skulls, in cemeteries. The [internal] aspect of Tantra consisted of the practice of yoga. [It is ultimately] through [internal] Tantra that human beings can reach the heights of spiritual success.

Human beings can never win liberation by flattering Prakṛti. An entity which is flattered becomes proud. Human beings must not become the slaves of matter. If sādhakas will worship Puruṣa and ignore Prakṛti, they will find that Prakṛti will automatically begin to flatter them.

There is no such thing as “supernatural” in this world. All sorts of powers lie dormant in human beings. Sometimes we get glimpses of these latent powers. In a more-developed terminology, these glimpses will be called “intellect” or “intuition”. Human beings can develop that which they have glimpsed, eventually attaining extraordinary powers. In the eyes of ordinary people, these powers appear to be supernatural, but actually they are natural. But it is a fact that ordinary persons cannot do these extraordinary things, and that is why they look upon these powers as supernatural.

Tantra is a source of such extraordinary powers. Within a short period, all the páshas and ripus [fetters and enemies] which bind the mind become broken. As long as the mind is in bondage, it tends to move towards crude material objects; that is, the mind remains inextricably associated with matter. But once the bondages become snapped through the practice of Tantra, the mind

becomes detached from those crude objects. This implies the elevation of human beings, because [it is through detachment that] physical, psychic, and spiritual progress becomes possible. Humans are predominantly-mental beings, and sometimes [certain of them] develop extraordinary intellect; because of their greater concentration of mind, their societies consider them to be a superior type of person.

When we talk about the ripus [enemies] of the mind, we mean only the [internal, or, innate] enemies.⁽³⁾ For a human being to bring the ripus under perfect control signifies an important victory. Those persons who can do so attain greater control over the forces of matter, and can perform feats that in the eyes of the common masses betoken some kind of supernatural power.

In Tantra the endeavour to establish control over matter or over external forces is called avidyá sádhaná. And the practice which leads to self-realization is called vidyá sádhaná. And that branch of Tantra which is neither vidyá sádhaná nor avidyá sádhaná is called upavidyá sádhaná. Only vidyá sádhaná contributes to the welfare of humanity; the other two practices are merely a waste of time. Máraña, uccátana, sammohan, váshiikáraña, etc., come within the definition of avidyá sádhaná. The practice of avidyá leads to degradation. Sadáshiva, the original propounder of Tantra, collected and systematized all the branches of Tantra, but He did not encourage the practice of avidyá, because it is an inferior order of sádhaná. When people practise sádhaná in order to attain “supernatural” powers, their mental objects ultimately become crude, for after attaining such powers, they utilize them for self-aggrandizement or for revenge.

Vidyá sádhaná was almost extinct for the last 1200 years. And there are now only a handful of real Avidyá Tantrics left – the rest are charlatans and hypocrites. After death, these people will be reborn as worms and insects.

Human beings practise sádhaná in order to become one with Brahma, not to become ghosts or ghouls. To become one with Brahma, they must practise Vidyá Tantra, and not Avidyá Tantra. Of course through either kind of sádhaná, sádhakas gain freedom from the páshas and ripus. But the difference between the two sádhanás is that the practitioners of Vidyá Tantra channelize their spiritual powers towards the attainment of Paramátmá, whereas the practitioners of Avidyá Tantra utilize their acquired powers for mundane benefits. Through Vidyá Tantra one “binds” [wins] Paramátmá, while through Avidyá Tantra one binds [dominates] living beings. Vidyá Tantrics accept Paramátmá as their object of supreme adoration, and in order to become one with Him, they channelize all the powers they have acquired towards Him.

From a medical point of view also, Tantra sádhaná has its usefulness. In ancient times there were Vedic experts in áyurveda.⁽⁴⁾ But as they were not Tantrics, they were handicapped in fully utilizing their medical knowledge to cure patients. Because of their prejudices – their hatred of certain groups, their belief in untouchability, their casteism, etc. – they would hesitate to touch the bodies of their patients; whereas the Tantric doctors, because of their control over [such enemies and fetters as] hatred, fear and shame, could render medical service in a proper way. The practices of dissection and surgery rested mainly in the hands of Tantric doctors.

July 1960, Muzaffarpur

Footnotes

(1) Since anciently Mongolia was an empire, and symbolized all of East Asia, “Mongolian” here means “Oriental”. –Eds.

(2) For more on the internal and external aspects of Tantra, see “Tantra and Its Effect on Society”. The distinction between external and internal is not the same as the distinction between “less-developed” and “more-developed” made previously in this discourse. –Eds.

(3) The ripus, or “enemies”, of the mind – káma [longing for physical objects], krodha [anger], lobha [avarice], mada [vanity], moha [blind attachment], mátsarya [jealousy] – are innate; the páshas, or “fettters”, are externally imposed. –Eds.

(4) School of medicine that brings about longevity, through herbal and other natural treatments. –Eds.

The Dialogues of Shiva and Párvatii – 1

You know that Tantra is a spiritual cult. It is a cult because Tantra clearly explains how to do a sádhaná of a particular type and stage, and what the achievement will be from each such sádhaná. All possible details have been worked out. It is a systematic practical science. It is vaevahárika [practical] – not bookish. Tantra is dharma, and – since Ácárañát dharmah [“Dharma is the assemblage of all your conduct”] – one has to do Tantra practically in one’s individual life. But the practical side of Tantra is very abstract and subtle. One has to be very careful indeed in practising it. So that sádhakas might know and understand the practical side clearly, Párvatii posed questions to Lord Shiva and Lord Shiva answered them.

The questions of Párvatii were for the sake of lokashikṣá [education of the people]. Those questions which are only for the sake of questioning or for the sake of measuring the knowledge of the other person have no value on the sádhaná márga [path of spiritual practice]. They are a sheer waste of time. When the questions asked are intended for the purpose of knowing and then doing, the questions are termed pariprashnas.

What to do; how to do; why to do – these are pariprashnas. Such pariprashnas make up the nigama shástra. Such pariprashnas constitute the philosophical, theoretical, side. And the practical side, constituted by the answers of Sadáshiva, is the ágama shástra. In other words, the pariprashnas of Párvatii go to make up the nigama shástra, and the practical answers of Sadáshiva make up the ágama shástra. Nigama and ágama together make up the Tantra shástra.

One of the questions posed by Párvatii was, “What is to be done to get self-realization?” She had posed this question for the sake of lokashikṣá – so that sádhakas might be highly benefited. Actually, the intellect in those days had not developed to the point that there were people who could pose such subtle questions about sádhaná. But as the subtle truths of the path of sádhaná had to be handed over to people, Hara [Shiva] and Párvatii had decided to enter into a dialogue of the type compiled in the nigamas and ágamas. Párvatii posed questions, and Shiva answered them.⁽¹⁾ So the question of Párvatii was, “What is to be done for self-realization? People are seen to undergo fasting, to perform strenuous rituals, to travel to obscure holy places, to take all sorts of pains, to know the self. What is the right path?” So Shiva replied,

Na muktirtapanádhomádupavásashataerapi;
Brahmaeváhamiti jiñátvá mukto bhavati dehabhrt.

[Liberation is not attainable by penance, sacrificial rituals, or hundreds of fasts. Living beings attain liberation when they realize, “I am Brahma.”]

The idea that one can get mukti [liberation] through tapah, that is, by torturing the body, is not correct. God is internal; what has He to do with anything external? Standing in water for days, standing on one foot for months, raising one hand or both hands heavenwards and standing like that for a long time, burying oneself in the earth for days – all these things are simply meaningless. They no doubt call for great physical power and a great capacity of endurance – but many people undertake heavy physical labour; don’t even animals work very hard? Will all such people and animals get mukti? It is not correct.

One cannot get to God through physical tapah. Neither can one get to Him through homa and havana [sacrificial rituals]. Were this possible, it would be very easy for the rich to find God! And the poor could never get near to Him! These things are all meaningless, and represent a very backward stage of humanity.

Upavása in the sense of fasting is also useless. Were it effective, the poor and the unfed would need to make little effort to reach God!

But if one does real upavása, that can do a lot. The scriptural meaning of upavása is – by derivation – upa, which means “near”, and vása, which means “to stay”. Upavása therefore means “to make the mind stay near Paramátmá”. In other words, it means to withdraw the mind from thoughts of physicalities and keep it near Paramátmá. The Sanskrit word for fasting as such is anashana.

One may do tapah, homa, upavása, a hundred thousand times, but mukti will never be obtained. So then what should one do?

After giving the negative side, after dismissing the system of worship then prevalent, Shiva went on to explain the positive side. If these things are not to be done, what then is to be done? Shiva said, Brahmaeváhamiti jñátvá mukto bhavati dehabhrt – that is, “When one is established in the knowledge that ‘I am Brahma,’ mukti is obtained.” But a theoretical knowledge that “I am Brahma” will not do – one has to be truly established in this ideation.

Anubhútiṁ viná múdha vrthá Brahmaṇi modate;
Pratibimbitashákhágraphalásvádanamodavat.

–*Maetreyii Shruti*

[Without God-realization, a person will try in vain to get spiritual bliss. Seeing the reflection in water of a sweet fruit hanging from the branch of a tree does not give one the taste of the fruit.]

One has to taste the fruit. If one sees its reflection in the water and pretends to have tasted and enjoyed it – how much reality and value there is in that you know very well.

Having heard this, Párvatii said, “Very well, I have understood. But please tell me where to search Brahma.” Lord Shiva then said, Dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guháyám – “The tattva of dharma is nihita in the guhá.”

The tattva of dharma – that is, the “essence” of dharma – is He, the Lord. He is nihita. Nihita means “hidden”. He is all around but He is hidden in the guhá. So though He is all around, one has not to search for Him all over, one has to search for Him in one’s guhá. Guhá has a couple of meanings – “cave”, and the “I”. Here the second meaning applies. One has to search for Him in one’s “I”. The one who is inside your “I” is you yourself. Search for your self – you will find Him. As long as the [real] you is there, the Lord is also there.

You are a sádha. He is the sádhyā [object of adoration]. And the link is sádhaná. As long as these three tattvas exist, you are not He. When all three have become one, one may say “I am Paramátmá” – never prior to this. Until this stage is reached, one has to do sádhaná most diligently, with greatest níśtha [sincerity]. (Having established oneself solidly in the state of Brahma-hood, one may or may not do sádhaná – one may do it to set an example for the world; that is, one may do it for lokashikṣá.)

One must do sádhaná most regularly. As long as one has a body, one must go on doing sádhaná. You must have noticed that a shiny new loṭá [small metal vessel] will no longer retain its lustre and newness after a year’s use. One has to clean it quite regularly with tamarind in order to maintain its shininess. The mind is like that – one has to do regular sádhaná to keep it neat and clean.

For those who are searching the Lord without and not within, Sadáshiva says,

Idam̐ tīrtham̐ idam̐ tīrtham̐ bhramanti támasáh janáh;
Átmātīrtham̐ na jánanti katham̐ mokṣa varánane.

[Here is one place of pilgrimage, there is another place. People of static nature wander from the one place to the other place. But without finding the real place of pilgrimage within themselves, how can they attain salvation?]

They are all persons dominated by the static principle, whose wandering from one holy place to another is simply of no use. All this wandering results in a waste of money and energy.

Lord Shiva gives another illustration concerning such persons:

Átmasthitam̐ Shivam̐ tyaktvá
Vahistham̐ yah śamarcayet;
Hastastham̐ piṇdamutsrjya
Bhramate jiivitáshayá.

[One who looks for Shiva in the external world, ignoring the Shiva of the internal world, is like one who throws away the rice that is in one’s hand and wanders from door to door in search of one’s livelihood.]

The Lord is within you and with you. Search Him in your innermost existence.

June 1967, Srinagar

Footnotes

(1) Párvatī knew the answers, but since there was no sádha of high enough calibre to ask subtle questions, Párvatī posed as the questioner. –Eds.

The Dialogues of Shiva and Párvatii – 2

Once Párvatii posed a question to Shiva: “Who is competent for mokśa [non-qualified liberation]? Who can attain mokśa?” Shiva answered,

Átmajiñanam idaṁ devi param mokśaeka sádhanam;
Suktraermánavo bhútvá jiñániicenmokśamápnuyát.

[Self-knowledge is the greatest means to attain salvation. People are born as human beings due to their past good saṁskáras, but to attain non-qualified liberation they will have to attain self-knowledge.]

The Formulation of Ágama and Nigama

Questions related to spiritual practice and spiritual progress – questions not simply for inquiry’s sake but for the sake of understanding and for the sake of following the instructions given – are known as pariprashnas (for example, questions put by disciples to their gurus as to how to sit, how to bid prañáma [respectful salutations], and how to repeat mantra). Prañipátana pariprashnena seváyá [“By surrender, spiritual questioning, and servicefulness”]. Questions put only for logic’s sake are not pariprashnas; with such questions the time of the questioner and that of the answerer is wasted. And sometimes questions are put not in order to know but in order to test the scholarship of the guru – such questions are not pariprashnas either.

If pariprashnas are put and answered, and then recorded, or if people somehow get acquainted with such questions and answers, people will be benefited. But during the time of Sadáshiva nobody was there to put such questions. Párvatii learned sádhaná from Shiva (as did their son Bhaerava). Párvatii and Shiva decided that the former would pose the questions, and the latter would reply, and thus people would get acquainted with the questions and answers and be benefited.

They decided to formulate these questions and answers for the all-round development of human society. They decided to cover all branches of knowledge – art, architecture, literature, medical science, spiritual science, etc. For example, you know that in ancient times there was [a simple form of] giita [song]. There was also [váyá, basic instrumental music]. And people were performing some mudrás unconsciously with their hands and feet. So Lord Shiva and Párvatii decided to coordinate and systematize giita, [váyá] and mudrá. Párvatii began to pose questions, and Shiva began to answer; and the saṁgiita shástra [science of music] was produced. (The combined name of nrtya [dance], giita and váyá is saṁgiita.)

Dance was known in quite a primitive age. This kind of dance was rhythmic. Even now the dances of soldiers are mainly rhythmic. There is no important role of mudrá in their dance. The rule is that rhythmic dance requires strength; only males can do it; because it is tiring. But Párvatii gave lalita nrtya, in which mudrá has an important role. Indian dances and other Oriental dances are mudrápradhána [dominated by mudrá]. And Occidental dances are chandapradhána [rhythmic].

They decided to categorize mudrá. So Párvatii questioned and Shiva answered. Párvatii would ask, “What is the meaning of such and such mudrá?” and Shiva would reply. In this way mudrá shástra came about, saṁgiita shástra came about. Shiva invented a rhythmic dance and Párvatii created a dance dominated by mudrá. In Shiva’s rhythmic dance one has to jump. In Sanskrit tańdú means “to jump”.⁽¹⁾ So the dance dominated by jumping is known as táńdava. The dance of Shiva is táńdava – “dominated by jumping”.

Mudrá directly touches the mind. For instance, if one calls to a person, as soon as the sound vibrations of “Come” touch the person’s ears, they directly reach the mind. But the person can be made to understand through mudrás [gestures of the fingers] also. Similar are the cases of expressing that one feels hot and sweaty, that one feels thirsty, etc., without speaking, through different physical gestures. Hence, mudrá has shánta bháva [it is peaceful, calm]. It is just the opposite of táńdava, and that is why it is known as lalita [graceful].

The posture of sitting which creates madhura bháva in the body is known as lalita mudrá or lalitásana. You will see different idols from ancient times of devadeviis [gods and goddesses] sitting on lotus flowers in lalita mudrá.

In ancient times those who were superior to the mass were known as devatás.

Sarve ca pashavah santi talavad bhútale naráh;
Teśám jińána prakásháya viirabhávah prakáshitah.
Viirabhávań sadá prápya krameńa devatá bhavet.

–*Rudrayámala Tantra*

[In the beginning everyone is a pashu, an animal. But when spiritual thirst develops, these people become viira, heroic. And when they are firmly established in viirabháva, they become devatás.]

When people were being taught táńdava and lalita, they found difficulty with both. With táńdava they found difficulty in jumping, and with lalita they felt troubled in expressing the correct bháva [ideation] through mudrá. Therefore they requested Lord Shiva and Párvatii to bring about a balance between the two. Párvatii posed some questions, Shiva replied, and a balance was brought about for the good of the people. The new [beat or rhythmic expression] thus produced was called tála – tá from táńdava and la from lalita.

In spiritual practice only a few get the chance to listen to spiritual discourses, and only a few among those few understand. And fewer yet are there who follow the path. And among those who follow the path, only a counted few reach the goal. Therefore, that Párvatii got the opportunity to ask spiritual questions and to listen to the answers, and that Shiva could make her understand, was a very rare thing. The questions of Párvatii, together with Shiva’s practical answers, can be called “philosophico-spiritual cult”. This means the combination of all philosophy, pariprashna, and spiritual practice, along with Shiva’s practical answers. The questions of Párvatii are known as nigama shástra, and the answers of Shiva are known as ágama shástra. The combined name of ágama and nigama is Tantra.

Ágataṁ Shivavaktrebhyoh gataiṅca Girijáshrutao;
Mataiṅca Vásudevasya tasmádágama ucyate.

Ágataṁ Shivavaktrebhyoh refers to “Shiva’s answers”. The first letter of ágatam is á, and the first letter of gataiṅca Girijáshrutao⁽²⁾ is ga. And the first letter of mataiṅca Vásudevasya – “this is the Lord’s thought” – is ma. Tasmát ágama ucyate – “therefore it is known as á-ga-ma, that is, ágama.”

Mokṣa

So Párvatii’s question was, “Who is competent to attain mokṣa?” Shiva replied,

Atmajaiṅanam idaṁ devi param mokṣaeka sádhanam;
Sukrtaermánava bhútvá jaiṅaniicenmokṣamápnuyát.

Mokṣa is átmajaiṅána. What is átmajaiṅána? Átmajaiṅána means “self-realization” – not “self-knowledge” [in the ordinary sense]. Suppose you know of a flower. Here there are three – the knower, you; the known, the flower; and the knowledge, the link between you and the flower. But in the case of self-realization, the knower, the known, and the knowledge are all one.

If you know your self [in the sense of átmajaiṅána], knower and known are one. The link between knower and known is knowledge – and there is no question of even a link there. If the two banks of a river become one, what space is there between them?

Self-realization is mokṣa. What happens there is oneness. Oneness means seeing Brahma in all objects. And who is competent to get mokṣa? Sukrtaermánava bhútvá jaiṅanii cenmokṣamápnuyát – “When one attains human form through good actions, one becomes adhikarii (competent) to attain mokṣa.” What is the meaning of sukrti? In laokik [comparatively recent] Sanskrit, su means “good” and krta means “that which is done”. But in Vedic Sanskrit, su means sva [own, self] – that is, when the jaiṅva attains humanity due to its own actions, it becomes fit to attain mokṣa.

What is the stage of mánava (humanity)? I remember having told you at Allahabad Dharma Mahácakra⁽³⁾ that humanity is obtained after reaching a particular standard of intellectuality. Animals and inanimate objects are at a lower standard. At this lower standard, the spirit is personal [or individual] and the medium impersonal [or Cosmic]. Animals and inanimate objects progress due to an impersonal medium. Therefore they can only progress – they cannot have a downfall. But if a human, with a particular intellectual standard, makes good use of that intellect, he or she will have progress, whereas if he or she abuses that intellect, he or she will have a downfall. So a human has intellect, but the intellect is double-edged. Therefore one must be very careful in making use of one’s intellect.

July 1967, Delhi

Footnotes

(1) As rice jumps in the process of being separated from the husk (implying that the nature of rice is to jump), in Sanskrit it is called tañdula. Tañdula means “uncooked rice” – cooked rice is odana.

(2) “Girijá” means Párvatii, shruti means “ears” – so, “that which has gone into the ears of Párvatii”.

(3) Ananda Marga Dharma Mahácakra was a special spiritual gathering addressed by the guru. See “Mantra Caetanya” in Subhásita Samgraha Part 10 or Ananda Marga Ideology and Way of Life in a Nutshell, Part 11 (1990) for this discourse. –Eds.

The Dialogues of Shiva and Párvatii – 3

Nigama is the collection of all the possible questions of unit minds [regarding spirituality], and ágama is the collection of the answers to those questions, those pariprashnas. Once Párvatii posed a question to Shiva. (Actually she asked it not for herself, but just to make people understand the desideratum of human life.) The question asked was, “What should be the object of worship for those who are doing sádhaná?” Humans create the objects of their worship according to their own intellectual standards. Primitive humans worshipped plants, trees, earth, rivers, etc. It is not logical to think that one can acquire puńya [virtue] by immersing oneself in the Ganges, but cannot acquire it by immersing oneself in the Thames. If puńya can be acquired by immersion, it can be by immersion either in the Ganges or in the Thames. And can there be no puńya from taking a dip in the Yamuna, which originates, like the Ganges, in the Himalayas, and runs side by side with the Ganges? There are some who worship stone: they make idols out of stone, according to their imaginations, and they worship them. How can an idol give you salvation – an idol made by you? You have shaped the idol with different chisels and hammers; you are its father, its creator; so how can it give you salvation? It is all unscientific.

Manasá kalpitá múrta nrrámñcenmokśasádhanii;
Svapnalabdhená rájyena rájánománavastathá.

[If an idol produced out of the human imagination can bring about salvation, then can a person, by creating a kingdom in his dreams, become a king in the real sense?]

The reply of Shiva to Párvatii’s question was as follows: “One cannot obtain the unlimited from the limited. Secondly, idol worship is more harmful than the worship of flora and fauna; because the flora and fauna have been created and shaped by the Operative Principle, and not by human beings. Plants and trees are in a process of growth. But the idol has been created and shaped by you, by your chisel and hammer – how can it give you salvation?” Párvatii then said, “[Is] idol worship, too, sádhaná?”

Shiva replied, “Yes, it is.”

Whatever there is in the world, it is all the manifestation of Paramátmá. Nothing is hateful – neither cap nor shoes. Each has its respective use. But if you place your shoes on your head and your cap on your feet, people will laugh and take it to be your madness. True, both cap and shoes are Paramátmá, but each of them has its proper use. The proper use of Paramátmá in the form of shoes is on the feet.⁽¹⁾

The earth is also the manifestation of Paramátmá. You address it as “Mother Earth”. But you set your feet on it. Meaning thereby that you should adopt the proper behaviour with the proper object. You must have reverence for the Ganges, as the land in north India has been made fertile by its waters. But there cannot be any puńya produced from its water – salvation cannot be obtained from it.

“Humans create the objects of their worship according to their own intellectual standards” – so said Shiva. In that [process there are] mátrábheda [difference in degree] and starabheda [difference in gradation]. So Lord Shiva’s answer to Párvatii’s question was,

Uttamo Brahmasadbhávo madhyamá dhyánadhárańá;
Japastutih syádhadhamá múrtipújádhamádhamá.

[Ideation on Brahma is the best, dhyána and dhárańá are second best, repetitious incantation and eulogistic prayer are the worst, and idol worship is the worst of the worst.]

[An acceptable alternative version of the shloka reads] Uttamá sahaívasthá. ⁽²⁾

Idol worship is also a form of sádhaná, but it is the lowest form. Everything has some effect, so an idol also has some effect. Your mind will become confined to the limitations of the idol. But a human being should perform sádhaná in order to expand his or her mind to infinity.

Japastuti [mantra repetition and flattery] is adhamá sádhaná. There is no real love for Paramátmá; it is simply flattery. Worshipers address Paramátmá and say, “O Paramátmá, give us food to eat and clothes to wear.” You will find such things said in some places. This is flattery. Stuti means “flattery”. Paramátmá is the Supreme Father; will you flatter the Supreme Father?

Suppose a student is studying for his MA, and during the holidays he has come home. Suppose he stands before his father and starts out by saying, “O Father, you are so merciful! Every month you send money. You are having me do my MA studies.”

If he utters such things, the father will say that the son has gone vagabond, and will catch hold of him and give him a good beating. Just think for yourself how unnatural this would be. Flatter you may your boss, but not your father! Hence japastuti is adhamá sádhaná.

Japa [mantra repetition] here really means nirbiiija japa. Sabiiija japa is a different thing; it comes within the scope of dhyána [meditation]. This I will explain later. (It is connected with sádhaná, so it is not proper to discuss it openly.) If you repeat “Kṛśńá, Kṛśńá” – a parrot can also do that! Can that bring about any spiritual progress? Never – because there is no ideation on the meaning. It is mantra devoid of caetanya. ⁽³⁾ So one has to ideate. It is through ideation that spiritual elevation is possible.

Ideation may be either reverent or irreverent – Shraddhayá helayá vá. “Paramátmá is my Father, hence I am repeating His name” – here elevation is bound to occur. “Paramátmá is displeased with me, and though I am His child, He does not look at me. Paramátmá is very cruel, I will fight against Him.” – here you still repeat Paramátmá, but irreverently.

Approached either reverently or irreverently, the desideratum must be Paramátmá. Dhruva and Prahlad were votaries of Paramátmá. And so was Ravana. Ravana repeated Paramátmá’s name irreverently. But irreverence cannot last forever.

Suppose one goes on repeating “Kṛṣṇa”, but the idea is also there that one has to go to Meerut tomorrow, that one has to file a case against So-and-so; then finally one again repeats “Kṛṣṇa”. Then, “The day after tomorrow there is DMC. I have to attend it in Delhi.” Finally the person again repeats “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa”. What is this? Is this a show?⁽⁴⁾

Next comes dhyānadhāraṇā. It is madhyamā [second best]. Dhyāna is taeladhāravat [like a flow of oil]. When the mind moves towards Paramātmā, that is dhyāna. Dhyāna is madhyamā because there is duality between the sādḥaka and the object of his or her worship. And the supreme state, the uttamāvasthā, is that where the sādḥaka and the object of worship are one – where the worshipper, the worshipped and the worship unify themselves into one. Therefore, saḥajāvasthā is supreme – it is uttamā. This is the saying of Shiva. Kabir has also said, Sādḥu saḥaja samādhi bhaliḥ [“The seeker attained saḥaja samādhi”]. Saḥaja is derived from the prefix saḥa plus the root jan plus the suffix ḍa. Ja means “that which is born”. With what is it born?

Jiivātmā [unit consciousness] and Paramātmā [Supreme Consciousness] are born together. They are together, but jīvas simply do not look to Him. People think that Paramātmā is without, so they are not able to attain Him. When they look within, there is oneness. This alone is saḥajāvasthā.

Saḥajāvasthā [also] means “[that which] is easily to be attained”. (Saḥaja means “easy”.) Bear in mind that the process of dhyānadhāraṇā [may lend some of its elements to] Iishvara prañidhāna, in which there are so many mental processes. Hence saḥajāvasthā is uttamā.

Now regarding this saḥajāvasthā, there is nothing to be had from without – everything can be had from within. Diikṣā [spiritual initiation] means “an inward march”. This eternal march has to be learned. This alone is diikṣā. Those who roam about looking for Paramātmā outside themselves, and make [ritual] offerings of water to Him – all of these people are roaming outside instead of looking inside. It is as if there is plenty of food at home and one is going out to beg. All of you are very rich; you have much wealth within. So why will you roam outside?

So Lord Shiva told Pārvatī, “O Devī, just see – ”

Idam tīrtham idam tīrtham bhramanti tāmasāḥ janāḥ;
Ātmatīrtham na jānanti katham mokṣa varānane.

“Here is a place of pilgrimage; if one takes a dip in this particular kuṇḍa⁽⁵⁾ or in this particular river, one will acquire this much puṇya’ – all this is false.” If one can acquire puṇya by taking a bath in the kuṇḍa, then all the creatures in the water of the kuṇḍa will also get to heaven. And all the kuṇḍas which you see nowadays at different places of pilgrimage are full of stinking water! Those who take a bath with such ideas are people dominated by the static principle. Their condition is (as Lord Shiva told Pārvatī, to make her understand) well described

Ātmasthitam Shivanam tyaktva vahistham yah samarcayet;
Hastastham pinḍamutsrjya bhramate jīvitāshayā.

Those who are performing external pújá, worshipping the Shiva of stone that is found in the temples, while their internal Shiva is left unworshipped, are hastastham piñdamutsrjya bhramate jivításhayá [“like one who throws away the rice that is in one’s hand and wanders from door to door in search of one’s livelihood”]. Piñda means “food”.⁽⁶⁾ Lord Shiva said that those persons are truly fools who throw away the food that is in their hand and wander to different doors to beg.

Then Párvatii said, “Now that is clear. But please tell me what the qualifications are which a sádhaika should possess.”

Shiva said, “There are seven points.”

Párvatii asked, “What are those seven points? Everyone should try to acquire those seven points if they want to be successful.”

Phaliśyatiiti vishváśah siddherprathama lakśānam;
Dvitiyaṁ shraddhayá yuktaṁ trtiyaṁ gurupūjanam.
Caturtho samatābhávo paiñcamendriyanigrahaḥ;
Śaśthaiñca pramitāháro saptamaṁ naeva vidyate.

–*Shiva Samhitá*

Phaliśyatiiti vishváśah siddherprathama lakśānam – “‘I must be successful in my mission.’ This firm determination is the first requisite factor.”

Dvitiyaṁ shraddhayá yuktaṁ. “[Secondly,] there must be shraddhá for the object towards which one is moving.” Then Párvatii asked, “What is shraddhá?” Shiva replied, Shrat Satyaṁ tasmin dhiiyate iti shraddhá. Shrat means Sat [or Satya], “Absolute Reality”, Parama Tattva. And dha means “to march towards That”. “When humans make Absolute Reality their desideratum and move towards It, caring little either for praise or for condemnation, that sort of movement is shraddhá.”

The third qualification is gurupūjanam – that is, shraddhá for the personality from whom sádhaná has been obtained.

The fourth is samatābháva [seeing others as yourself]. Say you have performed sádhaná and you have obtained some occult powers; you feel that you are a bit above X, Y, and Z, and that you are not an ordinary person. If this feeling creeps into the mind, samatābháva is lost, because then one begins feeling that there is a group of people far inferior to oneself. Such a pattern is to be observed in the case of people who have come to the city from the village. They say that they don’t feel like returning to the village, as the villagers are illiterate and under-developed. This feeling is very dangerous. And if such feelings creep into the mind as a result of having acquired a little intellectual knowledge, the chances of developing this complex are much greater in the realm of spirituality, when a sádhaika begins feeling somewhat elevated with the development of some occult powers and the feeling of a little bliss. In the second stage of spiritual practice every

sádhaka faces this test. One must be very, very cautious, so that vanity may not develop. What vanity will do to a sádhaka is,

Abhimánaṁ surápánaṁ
Gaoravaṁ raoravaṁ dhruvam;
Pratiśthá shúkariiviśthá
Trayaṁ tyaktvá Hariṁ bhajet.

[Abhimána is like surápána, gaorava leads to raorava, and pratiśthá is like shúkariiviśthá: an inflated ego is like drinking wine, self-aggrandizement leads one into the deepest hell, and social status is like the excrement of a pig. Give up all three of these and only sing the glories of the Lord.]

Abhimána is no better than drinking wine. Gaorava is truly like raorava hell. (The highest loka is Satyaloka and the lowest loka is raorava. One who suffers from a superiority complex is converted into stone – he or she will be crudified to this extent.⁽⁷⁾ This is the result of the feeling of a superiority complex.) And pratiśthá is like shúkariiviśthá. “I will be at the pinnacle of society and people will respect me” – this sense is like [a desire for] shúkariiviśthá. So give up these three mental ailments – abhimána, gaorava and pratiśthá – and then engage yourself in contemplation on Hari.

So the fourth is samatábháva.⁽⁸⁾

Paincamendriyanigraha. The fifth qualification is indri- yanigraha, self-restraint.

Śáshtaiṅca pramitáháro. Pramitáhára – there is a difference between pramitáhára and parimitáhára. Parimitáhára means “[limited] diet”, and pramitáhára means “balanced diet”. The body should have a balanced diet. [Limitation] alone will not do. Just to [limit] the quantity of food will not do – one will have to take a balanced diet, to make the body and mind strong. Food should be substantial, though moderate in quantity. This is pramitáhára.

After having explained this sixth factor, Shiva kept quiet. Then Párvatii asked, “What’s the seventh factor?”

Shiva replied, Saptamaṁ naeva vidyate – “There is no seventh factor. If these six factors can all be remembered, there will definitely be progress.”

July 1967, Delhi

Footnotes

(1) And a statue may have a proper aesthetic use, but it should not be used in an attempt to win salvation. –Eds.

(2) The author has explained elsewhere that “Sahajāvasthá, the ”tranquil state“ of the Buddhists, is no different from the ideation on Brahma of the Hindus.” –Eds.

(3) See “Mantra Caetanya” in Subhásita Saṁgraha Part 10 or Ananda Marga Ideology and Way of Life in a Nutshell, Part 11 (1990). –Eds.

(4) If one’s mind is concentrated on Paramátmá, even if that concentration is irreverent, one will progress spiritually. Irreverent concentration will eventually become reverent concentration. But even reverent ideation, if constantly broken by thoughts of one’s personal concerns, will be ineffective. –Eds.

(5) A spring (sometimes a hot spring) restricted to use in religious ritual. –Eds.

(6) That which is known as anna (ad + kta) in the Sanskrit language is called piṇa in the Vedic language. I remember having mentioned before that in ancient times, when the Aryans from Russia came to India, they started cultivation. The border country of Bhárata [India] was called Saptanada Desha [Land of Seven Rivers], which later on came to be known as the Punjab. (Those seven rivers were the Jhelam, the Chenub, the Satluj, the Ravi, the Beas, the Kabul and the Sindhu.) The people of that place used to sit together at noon to have their meal – that is, in the Vedic language, to have their piṇda. So a place where the farmers would have their meal was called piṇiika. That piṇdiika in Paeshácii Prákṛta became piṇdii-a, and this in old Punjabi became changed to piṇae, or piṇdii. In the Punjabi language, pindi means “village” – for instance, “Rawalpindi”, “the habitation of the Rawals”.

(7) Mental crudification is the actual phenomenon of which raorava hell is the mythological representation. –Eds.

(8) Sanskrit that was unclear in the original magazine publication of this discourse omitted here. –Eds.

The Dialogues of Shiva and Párvatii - 4

Párvatii once asked the Lord, “How will my children be able to get you?” Shiva replied, “That I have already explained to you a number of times and in a number of ways.” But Párvatii insisted on a repetition. Shiva replied in short, “They should do sádhaná properly and regularly and in the course of time they will come to achieve their goal.”

But the mother pleaded for her children. “This you have of course said before. But all my children are not made of the same stuff. Some are good, some wicked, some even more wicked. Some are good and pious sádhakas, but there are many who are never calm and collected. They will never be able to do difficult sádhaná that regularly. So will they never get mukti? These children are ours also. You must say something that will help everyone, including this group.”

Lord Shiva insisted that everyone should do sádhaná according to the proper system He had taught; that would bring them to their goal. But Mother Párvatii still insisted on some easier way to mukti. Finally the Lord yielded and said, “Those who surrender completely to the Lord may or may not do sádhaná. All their burdens and duties will be borne by the Lord Himself. The Lord will perform their sádhaná for them. So ask your naughty children to surrender to Him.”

8 October 1967, Aurangabad

Overcoming My

When human beings depend solely on Parama Purua, they cross the turbulent ocean of My⁽¹⁾ through His grace. Here lies the importance of Brahma sdhan – the practice of intuitional science – and the necessity of sharaagati, total surrender to Parama Purua. The spirit of sdhan is to wage an all-round fight against My, to overcome Her tenacious influence. This battle of sdhan can be carried out in one of three ways – Dakicra sdhan, Vmcra sdhan or Madhyamcra sdhan.

Dakicra sdhan: Dakicra sdhakas are afraid to declare war directly against Prakrti. On the contrary, they want to please My through entreaties, and they pray for liberation from that propitiated My. They chant devotional prayers and eulogies to implore Vinumy⁽²⁾ to withdraw the negative influence of My.

Is it possible to attain liberation by such entreaties or flattery? Liberation means freedom from the bondage of slavery. It is never attained by flattery. Powerful people are greatly appeased by the entreaties and flattery of cowards, and might grant certain concessions or favours, but would never grant complete freedom. Dominion status may be granted, but the attainment of complete independence remains a far cry away. Thus, in order to attain salvation, to establish the reign of complete independence, a spiritual aspirant will have to fight against Avidymy.⁽³⁾

Svarj shuddhu tm hatei antarete mukti ci.
Asir bale masiir bale peshiir bale mukti ni.

[Sovereign rule springs from the tm or self. Liberation has to be attained from within. Freedom never comes about through swords, muscle power, or the power of the pen.]

Vmcra sdhan: Vmcra sdhakas are inclined to continue the random and relentless fight against My, irrespective of whether the goal is fixed before them or not. “I will fight against darkness and ultimately My, overpowered by me, will assist me in attaining fulfilment” – this is the psychology of Vmcra sdhakas. Their will to struggle, their courage and valiant spirit are undoubtedly praiseworthy. But in the absence of a fixed goal before them, they fail in their endeavour to attain liberation. Often, before attaining success in the battle against My, Vmcrii sdhakas become tempted to misuse their hard-earned spiritual power, causing damage to themselves and society. As a result they unknowingly invite more darkness, more crudity, and gradually degenerate to the level of animality. That is why wise sdhakas do not accept the path of Vmcra sdhan as an ideal one.

Madhyamcra sdhan: Madhyamcrii sdhakas want to fight against Prakrti, keeping Brahma fixed before them. They move forward towards the spiritual effulgence, or Brahmajyoti, tearing the veil of darkness of Avidy. Ananda Marga accepts the path of Madhyamcra sdhan, because in this process sdhakas have a fixed goal. A purposeless and random fight usually does not bring victory, rather it causes unnecessary wastage of time and energy.

1969, Ranchi

Footnotes

- (1) Creative Principle, Prakrti in Her phase of creation. One aspect of Maya is the power to cause the illusion that finite created objects are the ultimate truth. –Eds.
- (2) The different aspects of Maya are known as Mahamaya, Viśnumaya, Anumaya, Yogamaya, Avidyamaya, and Vidyamaya. All together, excepting Anumaya, are known as Vishvamaya. –Eds.
- (3) Extroversial force; aspect of the Cosmic Operative Principle that guides movements from the subtle to the crude. –Eds.

Kaunkálamálinii Samádhi

About seven thousand years ago Sadáshiva and His wife Kálii did intensive spiritual practice and enjoyed immense bliss. Sadáshiva was the original propounder of Tantric practices. Kálii learned the inner secrets of spiritual practice from her husband. Every day she was absorbed in deep meditation, enjoying the immense bliss of many different samádhis. One day Sadáshiva playfully withdrew her bliss for a long period. Kálii continued to practise meditation regularly, but without the blissful experiences she had previously enjoyed. After some time, the suspended bliss was released suddenly, and Kálii enjoyed the divine sweetness of that accumulated bliss.

She thought, “I shall prepare a kauṅkámála [garland of human skulls] and remain in a state of perpetual bliss while wearing it, just as Shiva did.” Kálii, when adorned with that garland of skulls, is called Kauṅkámálinii, and the samádhi in which sádhakas identify themselves with Paramá Prakṛti (symbolized by Kauṅkámálinii) and experience indescribable joy, is described as Kauṅkámálinii samádhi.

During this samádhi, sádhakas experience indescribable bliss. They totally forget their human existence and feel oneness with Paramá Prakṛti or with Paramashiva. One cannot utter anything except some inarticulate sounds through the sides of the mouth. The breathing becomes heavy, the entire nervous system feels immense pressure, and the activities of contraction and expansion in the nervous system become violent.

30 April 1969, Ranchi Jágrti

When Does He Appear?

He comes on earth when there is too much sin and it is difficult for virtuous people to live on this earth. When dharma declines and adharma, or sin, gets the upper hand; when the virtuous and the pious are tortured and the dishonest and evil-doers tyrannize over the good; in a word, when the human intellect is guided along degraded and destructive channels; Táraka Brahma forms a desire to come on earth with a specific mission of restoring dharma by launching a ceaseless fight against all injustice and sin.

There are a few notable criteria by which to distinguish Táraka Brahma from other Mahápuruśas:

1. He Himself is a born guru and has no spiritual guru.
2. He comes with a specific mission, which is to restore morality and dharma. The entire society becomes divided between moralists and immoralists. A fight between them is inevitable, and ultimately dharma comes out victorious.
3. His emergence means a new era of white peace and dharma. He needs no sádhaná, but just to set an example to others, He performs sádhaná with the masses.

1969, Ranchi

From Animality to Divinity

Sarve ca pashavah santi talavad bhútale naráh;
Teśám jiṇána prakásháya viirabhávah prakáshitah.
Viirabhávañ sadá prápya krameña devatá bhavet.

–*Rudrayámala Tantra*

[In the beginning everyone is a pashu, an animal. But when spiritual thirst develops, these people become viira, heroic. And when they are firmly established in viirabháva, they become devatás.]

As a created being, everybody in the universe by birth is a pashu, an animal. But the standard of beings is to be exalted towards divinity, towards godliness. A pashu, that is, an animal, becomes man, man becomes god. This process, the process of exaltation, the process of upliftment, from animality to godliness, is your sádhaná.

In Sanskrit it is also said that

Janmaná jáyate shúdra sañskárát dvija ucyate;
Vedapáthe bhavet vipra Brahma jánāti Bráhmañah.

“By birth, everybody is a shúdra.” (Shúdra means “having all the wongs of animality”.) “And when one gets initiation, that is, Vaedikii diikśá – that is, when one learns how to pray, how to express one’s desire to become human – the person is known as a dvija.” (Dvija means “second birth”. That is, the person is no longer an animal.) “And then after going through scriptures, acquiring proper spiritual knowledge, the person is known as a vipra. And after getting Tántrikii diikśá, that is, psycho-spiritual initiation, initiation in the realm of psycho-spirituality, the person becomes a Bráhmaña.”

Now the question is, have these pashus, these animals, these brutes, no future? Certainly they have. Because the Supreme Progenitor is with everybody, and He is with these animals-in-human-form also. And a pashu whose object of adoration, that is, whose goal of life, is that very Parama Puruśa, will address Him as – what? As “Pashupati” [“Lord of Animals”]. “O Lord, O Parama Puruśa, we are pashus, we are animals, and Thou art Lord of the animals, Thou art ‘Pashupati.’”

So one of the names of Parama Puruśa is Pashupati. For sleeping humanity, the Supreme Consciousness, Supreme Entity, is Pashupati.

Teśám jiṇána prakásháya viirabháva prakáshitah – “And when they feel, when they realize, when they understand, what to do and what not to do, what are the dos of life and what are the don’ts of life, then they become bold.” Why bold? They are to fight against all sorts of adversities, all sorts of troubles, all sorts of inimical attitudes. So they are certainly heroes; and a hero in Sanskrit is called a viira. So at that stage of humanity when this viirabháva develops, when a person becomes ready to fight against all opposite forces, he is a viira. In Tantra this is called

viirabháva, and for him, the Supreme Entity is “Vireshvara”. The man becomes viira, and his Lord becomes Vireshvara – no longer Pashupati, but Vireshvara. One of the names of Parama Puruśa is Vireshvara.

When the person is fully established in viirabháva – that is, he is never to be frightened, never to be defeated, never to accept any defeat (you girls should remember that here “he” means “she” also) – then he is established in viirabhava. And that bháva is called divyabháva. And that man is no longer known as viira. He is a deva, or devatá. Krameña devatá bhavet. “He becomes devatá, he becomes deva in human structure, deva in human framework.” That stage is divyabháva. Then that person’s goal, his object of adoration, becomes “Mahádeva”, not Vireshvara but Mahádeva.

In the first phase the Lord was Pashupati, in the second phase Vireshvara, and in the final phase Mahádeva. So the same Lord, according to one’s own psycho-spiritual stratum, is to be addressed sometimes as Pashupati, sometimes as Vireshvara, and sometimes as Mahádeva. Now, I have said that a person has three types of expression: One expression is thinking, the thinking faculty, and the second one is speaking... In the first the function is within the nerve cells, and in the second, the function is – where? With the lips. And the third action is action with the physical body, corporal action.

Now in the case of pashus, that is, animals in human structure, the thought-waves move like this... and the lips speak like this... and the actions are like that! There is no adjustment amongst these three expressions. The person is a pashu, the person is in the stage of pashu, in the stage of animality, although the structure is like that of a human. In the society these people are in the majority, and others are in a hopeless minority; and I want you boys and you girls to try your best to decrease the number of these pashus.

And in the second phase, that is, in the viira stage, the thought-waves move like that... but the words and the actions are one. That is, there are some differences between thoughts on the one hand, and words and actions on the other hand, but the words and the actions are the same. What these people say, they do. In society, these people, these people of viirabháva, are respected as great men, as Mahápuruśas, as leaders of society, as leaders of the country. But there is a defect in them also, because their thoughts and their actions are not the same. Their actions and words are the same, but their thoughts are not the same. Do you follow? They are [in] viirabháva, they are viira; their Lord is Vireshvara.

And in the final stage, that is, when one attains the stage of devatá, then what one thinks, one says; and what one says, one does. There is no difference amongst thinking, saying, and doing. And that is the best stage of human structure or human existence.

You should all try to be like this, and I want the number of such persons, who have attained the stratum of devatá, to increase. And you have become workers, or wholetimers, just to increase the number of these devatás in human society.

7 September 1978 Morning, Patna

Pratyáhára Yoga and Paramágati

Just like práñáyáma, pratyáhára yoga is not complete in itself. Práñáyáma, you know, is a practice to control the movement of the vital energy of a particular body: Práñán yamayatyēśah práñáyámah [“The process of controlling the váyus, or energy flows in the body, is known as práñáyáma”]. It is the process by which the movement of vital energy is controlled by a spiritual aspirant. But práñáyáma should always be associated with bindu dhyána, that is, meditation on a particular point. If práñáyáma is not associated with bindu dhyána, it will affect self-restraint. Práñáyáma will make the mind restless. Similarly, pratyáhára yoga – here the actual English term is “withdrawal” – should always be associated with dhárańá.

The difference between dhyána [meditation] and dhárańá [concentration] is that dhyána is something stationary; that is, the object is a stationary one in the case of dhyána. In the case of dhárańá, the mind moves along with the object; that is, there is a dynamic force behind dhárańá. And dhyána, although sentient, has no movement in it. In the sphere of – rather, in the arena of – spiritual practice, pratyáhára has very much importance, because in the primordial phase of sádhaná, one will have to withdraw one’s mind from the physicalities of the universe.

Now in pratyáhára yoga, what are you to do after withdrawing all your propensities from the objective world, from the physicalities of the world? To where are these mental propensities to be directed? If the mental propensities are withdrawn, but are not guided to some other point, what will happen? Those withdrawn mental propensities will create internal disturbance in your mind, will create disturbance in your subconscious and unconscious strata. It is dangerous. Sometimes it so happened in the past, and may happen in the future, that if a spiritual aspirant, without the guidance of a strong guru, tried or tries to practise pratyáhára only from reading books, there would be some danger. So whenever you are withdrawing your mental propensities from different objects, you are to guide those collected propensities into some moving object, moving within the realm of your mind.

And what is that moving object? That moving object is your citta – your objectivated “I” feeling. The citta is moving. The citta is something moving. So these withdrawn propensities are to move towards the citta and not towards external objects. They stop moving towards external objects, but they start moving towards the internal citta. That is the thing.

If the propensities are withdrawn, but not goaded towards the citta, then there will be a dangerous reaction. I think you have understood. That is why it has been said, Yacched váun manasi prájñah – “What are intelligent spiritual aspirants to do? They are to goad their mental propensities to the citta.” Here the word váun represents the external movement of the propensities. Then manasi + prájñah – that is, “those withdrawn propensities are to move towards the citta.” Prájñah váun manasi yacchet.

Tad yacched jñána átmani. The citta, after consuming those withdrawn propensities, also moves. It moves within the mind, not toward any external object – not toward an external elephant, but toward the elephant created within your mind. Tad yacched jñána átmani – “and the citta, along with the withdrawn propensities, is to be guided towards the ahamtattva, the doer ‘I’, the owner

‘I’ – the ‘I do’ feeling that is subject to the ‘I’ having a direct objectivity.”⁽¹⁾ Here this doer “I”, although not in movement, still has the full potentiality of movement. It can move. It may move. It can partly transform itself into the done “I”. So it has the potentiality. So that citta, that is, the done “I”, is to be directed towards the doer “I”, the ahañtattva. Not the feeling “I exist,” but the feeling that the “I” that exists is now able to do something. This is the ahañtattva.

Jiñanamátmani mahati niyacchet. Now this jiñána átmá, or aham, has also got potentiality, so the mutative principle is very prominent in it. That doer or mutative principle is also a binding fetter, a tethering agency. So “one will have to withdraw this jiñána átmá, this ahañtattva, into the mahattattva” – jiñanamátmani mahati niyacchet. Mahati means “within the mahattattva”. And what is the mahattattva? The mahattattva is the feeling “I exist.”

Now in this pure “I” feeling there is hardly any movement, because it is a creation of the sentient principle. But you know, although the sentient principle cannot give any specific figure, any boundary line, still it is a sort of bondage, and because there is bondage there is fight within and without. You are doing something. Is there no fight, is there no movement? Although there is no figure, there is fight, there is movement.

So jiñanamátmani mahati. [The mahattattva] is almost free from bondage, but there is still bondage. Suppose a very good man is harshly rebuking an immoral person for having insulted him. Is that unfair? No, no, it is not unfair. It is called sentient anger. Anger is static; but sometimes it may be sáttvika, it may be sentient. And that type of anger is sentient anger – sáttvika krodha in Sanskrit.

Tad yacchecchánta átmani. “Now this pure ‘I’ feeling, ‘I exist’” – where all your propensities, along with the citta, and the citta along with the ahañtattva, and the ahañtattva along with the mahattattva, form one strong unit of movement – “is also to be withdrawn and merged into that Cognitive Principle.” And that Cognitive Principle is free from all bondages. And that is the Paramágati, that is the Supreme Goal of human existence.

24 September 1978, Patna

Footnotes

(1) The “I” having a direct objectivity (also known as the “done ‘I’”) is the citta. –Eds.

The Tantric Definition of Yoga

What is yoga? You know that in Sanskrit almost all the vocabulary, all the words of its vocabulary, have two types of meanings, two types of significances. One is the root meaning: in Sanskrit this is called the bhávarúdhártha. The other is the use of the word in common parlance – what the common people say, how the common people use the word: this is called the word's yogárúdhártha.

For example, the word paincánana. The bhávarúdhártha, that is, the root meaning, of paincánana is “having five faces”. The yogárúdhártha is “Shiva”. There are so many Messrs. Panchanan in the state; but actually the meaning is “something having five faces”.

The word yoga has also four interpretations.

Where the root verb is yuj, and the suffix ghaiṅ is added, it becomes yoga; here yoga means “addition”. “Two plus two is equal to four” is yoga, is addition.

One thing you should know is the pronunciation of the letters in the Sanskrit alphabetical order. There are four letters known as antastha varña [convertible letters] – ya, ra, la, va. These four letters are not independent sounds or independent letters. They are known as antastha varña, that is, when they appear as the first letter of any word, they will have a special sound; and when they are not the first letter, that is, when they are in the middle or at the end of any word, they will not have this special sound.

For example, the letter ya, that is, i plus a, is a vowel. Ya is a vowel. It is ya, but it will have a special sound when it is the first letter of any word. That is, when it is the first letter of any word, its pronunciation will be ya [as in the English “jump”]. So yoga is pronounced [“joga”], not [“yoga”]. But when ya is in the middle or the last portion of a word, its pronunciation will be [“ya”] not [“ja”]. For instance, it is [“viyoga”] not [“vijoga”], [“samaya”] not [“samaja”].

When the letter ra is the first letter [of a word], its pronunciation is like [“ra”]. Otherwise it is [“r” (as in “serve”)].

When la is the first letter its pronunciation will be ordinary la, just like latá, but when it is in the middle or the end of a word then its pronunciation will be lr + a = lra. When la is not the first letter, that is, when la is the middle or is the last letter, it is pronounced lra. For example, phala is pronounced phalra, not phala. Village people say phara, this is the [comparatively] correct pronunciation. Phala is not the correct pronunciation.

Now, va. When va is the first letter its pronunciation will be like the English “v”, and when it is not the first letter, its pronunciation will be like “w”.

So it is [“joga”], not [“yoga”], because ya is the first letter.

When the root verb is yuj, the meaning is “addition” (“two plus two is equal to four”). But in the case of addition the individual identity is maintained.

However, in the second case, the root verb of yoga – pronounced [“joga”] – is yuiṅj. Yuiṅj + ghaiṅ = yoga, that is, after adding the suffix it becomes yoga. In this case yoga means “unification”. Átman becomes one with Paramátman.⁽¹⁾

In the case of unification, the unifying parties do not maintain their separate identities. Take, for instance, a mixture of sugar and water; when sugar mixes with water it forms a solution. In this case the sugar and the water fail to maintain their separate identities. This can be termed as “unification”. So in philosophy, or in Tantra, yoga is not the word derived from the yuj root but comes from the root word yuiṅj. That is, this yoga means “unification”. Átman unifies with Paramátman without maintaining its separate identity.

The third meaning of yoga is based on the Yoga Sútram of Maharshi Patanjali. There yoga means Yogashcittavrttinirodhah [“Yoga is the suspension of all psychic propensities”].

There are a great number of psychic propensities in the human mind, as compared to the animal mind. The human mind, broadly speaking, has fifty propensities. These fifty propensities work internally as well as externally and get expressed through the ten sensory and motor organs. Therefore, the total amounts to one thousand propensities. That is, these fifty basic propensities have one thousand expressions or mental occupations. These are called cittavrtti in Sanskrit. The controlling seat of these one thousand expressions is known as the sahasrára cakra in Sanskrit. It is also known as the “thousand-petalled lotus”. The English name for the sahasrára cakra is the pineal gland or pineal body.

Now, let us understand the meaning of cittavrttinirodhah. When these propensities moving in one thousand directions are withdrawn, when these expressions are suspended, this is known as cittavrttinirodhah. Now if these mental occupations are suspended, all the activities of the human structure will come to an end. According to Patanjali, this is the final stage of yoga. The word nirodhah means “suspension”. It is derived as follows: ni – rudh + ghaiṅ.

But this interpretation of yoga by Maharshi Patanjali is not accepted by Tantra. Tantra says: Saṁyoga yoga ityukto jiivátmá Paramátmanah. “The unification of the jiivátmá with Paramátmán is yoga,” as per Tantra. Saṁyoga means “unification”, and yoga ityukto means “known as yoga”. So here Tantra has moved a step further. According to Patanjali, yoga is the suspension of mental propensities. However, you know that when mental propensities are withdrawn from externalities and suspended, then, for want of a desideratum, they create disturbances in the internal layers of the mind. Although those propensive expressions will not be functioning externally, they will be active internally. One may not steal externally but may steal internally. Tantra refuses to accept this concept.

According to Tantra, the unification of the jiivátmá with Paramátmán means yoga. After withdrawing the mental propensities, they are to be guided towards the Supreme Entity. Then alone will the withdrawal be final. Only by guiding these withdrawn mental propensities towards the Supreme Cognition can the total unification of the jiivátmá with Paramátmán be possible, and this is yoga.

2 October 1978, Patna

Footnotes

(1) Átman, or jivátman, means “unit consciousness”. Paramátman is the collective name of all unit consciousnesses. –Eds.

The Seven Secrets of Success

Several times in the past I narrated a story from the Hara- Párvatii saṁváda [dialogues of Shiva and Párvatii]. The story goes that once Párvatii asked Shiva, “What are the secrets of success?” In His reply, Lord Shiva said that there are seven secrets of success:

Phaliśyatiiti vishvāsah siddherprathama lakśaṇam;
Dvitiyaṁ shraddhayá yuktaṁ trtiyaṁ gurupújanam;
Caturtho samatábhávo paiṅcamendriyanigrahaḥ;
Śásthaiṅca pramitáháro saptamaṁnaeva vidyate.

–*Shiva Saṁhitá*

The first factor or secret of success is Phaliśyatiiti vishvāsah siddherprathama lakśaṇam – “I must be successful in my mission.” This firm determination is the first secret of success. A spiritual aspirant must have this firm determination: “I must be successful in my mission.” This firm determination is the result of extreme love for the Supreme Entity. When this love for the Supreme remains unassailed, uncontaminated, it creates this firm determination: “I must be successful in my mission.” This is the first secret of success.

Dvitiyaṁ shraddhayá yuktaṁ. The second requisite factor of success is shraddhayá yuktaṁ. One must have shraddhá for one’s desideratum. What is shraddhá? Shraddhá is a Sanskrit word having no corresponding word in any other developed language of the world. That is why I will have to explain this word. Shraddhá comes from shrat, meaning satyam, and dhá from the root verb dha. When one ascribes everything to one’s goal, or one’s object, or to the Supreme Subjectivity appearing as one’s object, and moves, or rather directs one’s everything towards Him, then that movement is shraddhá. First ascribing that supreme veracity to the object (actually it is the Supreme Subjectivity taken as an object) and then directing one’s everything towards Him, is that mental movement which is called shraddhá.

“Respect” or “reverence” does not carry the sense of shraddhá. This shraddhá can also be created or can also be developed when there is sincere love, extreme love, for Him. So the second factor also depends upon the love for the Lord.

Trtiyaṁ gurupújanam. What is a guru? In old Sanskrit gu means “darkness” and ru means dispeller, “dispelling agency”. Therefore the entity, the guiding faculty, that dispels all darkness, all spiritual darkness, is the guru, and gurupújanam is doing as per the desire of the guru. This third factor is created only when one gets the guru as the embodiment of spiritual guidance, as the embodiment of Brahma in His role as spiritual guide.

Caturtho samatábhávo. Since all are the creations of the same Lord, and the progeny of the Supreme Progenitor, all have the relationship of brothers and sisters amongst themselves. Nobody is higher and nobody is lower. There must not be any superiority complex nor any inferiority complex; that is, there must be samatábhávo – complete mental balance. When this balance is established, when this mental equipoise is established, then we say it is samatábhávo.

Paiñcamendriyanigrahah. You know that the human motor organs and sensory organs are the link between the external physicalities and the internal arena of human existence. Now, if these organs, motor and sensory, are properly restrained or properly controlled, the mind can function properly, moving towards the Supreme Cognitive Faculty. That is why the fifth requisite factor is that the spiritual aspirant should restrain his or her sensory and motor organs.

Śásthaiñca pramitáháro. What is áhára? A – hr + ghaiñ = áhára. That which a man collects from the external world is áhára. This is physical áhára. Mental áhára can be obtained both from the external objectivities and from the internal psychic world. You may eat a physical rasagollá [Indian juicy sweet] and get pleasure, or you may create a rasagollá in your mind and “eat” it and get pleasure.

Here the word pramitáhára has been used, not parimitáhára. Parimita means “controlled”, not taking too much, not taking too little. But in this shloka, pramitáhára has been used, which means that the food should be controlled or balanced, and at the same time substantial or nutritious. There are many people who are otherwise good but have no control over the food they eat. It is very important that whatever one gets should not be taken indiscriminately; rather, there should be control over food, and at the same time it should be nutritious.

After narrating these six factors, Lord Shiva said, “O Párvatii, there is no seventh factor.” That is, if you practise these six factors, you require no seventh factor.

3 October 1978, Patna

Ghosts and Evil Spirits

The subject of today's discourse is "Ghosts and Evil Spirits".

Now let us see what happens when a person dies. When a person dies, their physical body, along with the nerve cells and nerve fibres, remains in the earth and finally becomes one with the earth. When death takes place, the mind, along with the reactive momenta and the non-cerebral memory, leaves the body and moves here in the universe, with the help of rajoguña [the mutative principle], till it gets another body, a suitable body to quench its thirst and satisfy its reactive momenta. Those reactive momenta, in the second body, are known as sañskará.

The mind, along with the reactive momenta and non-cerebral memory, is not visible. One cannot see it. And when it is not visible, it is not possible for anybody to say, "I have seen that mind, that videhii átmá [disembodied spirit]." But we should remember that the dissociated mind is not alone. In that mind there are the reactive momenta and also the non-cerebral memory.

(That mind moving in the universe with the mutative power of the Cosmic Operative Principle is not visible, and at the same time, for want of a nucleus, a seat for the mind, and nerve cells, the mind cannot function properly. For proper functioning it requires ectoplasmic stuff, a body of ectoplasm. So even for ectoplasmic expression it requires a new body. In proper time, due to the mixture of ova and spermatozoa, what happens? The mind becomes associated with a new structure, and the original minds and lives of both the ova and the spermatozoa cease to exist. But those ova and spermatozoa are selected to suit the purpose of this detached mind with its reactive momenta.)

Now during this period, this transitional period, when the mind has left the previous body, before it gets the new body, what happens? It moves in the universe, invisible and inaudible. But you know, by dint of Tantric practice, anybody can develop their ectoplasmic structure. They may be a Vidyá Tantric, they may be an Avidyá Tantric, but the ectoplasmic development is there. So such Tantrics can, with the help of their own ectoplasmic stuff, help the detached mind to get a temporary ectoplasmic body. And for the time being that detached mind, with the help of the ectoplasmic stuff of that Tantric – Vidyá Tantric or Avidyá Tantric – gets that ectoplasmic structure, and when that ectoplasmic structure is a bit solidified it becomes visible, and due to its vibrational frequency it may become audible too, but only for a short span of time.

You have heard stories about bones being thrown into a particular house, bricks being thrown into a particular house, a cot moving upwards, etc. You have heard these ghost stories about certain haunted houses. What are these things? A Tantric, certainly not a Vidyá Tantric, but an Avidyá Tantric, with the help of a certain portion of their own ectoplasmic stuff, sits tight in an ásana [meditation posture], and, with the help of their ectoplasmic stuff, creates an ectoplasmic body for a detached mind (known as preta in Sanskrit). And with the help of their ectoplasmic stuff, attached to the detached mind, they do all these things. But at the time their body remains motionless. So these things are actually not done by ghosts. They are actually done by that Avidyá Tantric with the help of that detached mind. One may say that these things have been done by ghosts, but they were not actually.

And there is another type of being also. I say “being” because it is difficult for me to say that they are living beings or that they are dead beings. What happens? There are seven recognized devayonis, divine entities. They are called “divine”, though actually they are not divine, because they are better, or higher, than ordinary human beings.

Suppose a person is practising spiritual sádhaná regularly, properly, and with proper inspiration and sincerity, but some other desires, some other longings, remain covert in the person’s mind. The person is a good person, he or she is sincerely doing sádhaná, but in his mind he thinks, “If Bábá gives me ten lakhs – or five lakhs – or only two lakhs – everything will be managed properly. Oh, no! I won’t ask for these things. No, no, no, it is bad, it is bad.” That desire, that longing for money, remains in him, although he or she is a developed soul, not a bad person, not at all a bad person. So what happens? Because of his piety, after death he gives up the physical structure, the solid body, and gives up the aquatic structure, that is, apatattva, also; but the other three factors – tejas [luminous factor], marut [aerial factor], vyoma [ethereal factor] – remain with him, with his detached mind.

These beings are called devayonis. They are of seven types – yakśa, rakśa, kinnara, gandharva, vidyádharma, siddha and Prakṛtiliina. In the example I gave, the person had a longing for money, but was a developed soul. Unknowingly or unconsciously the desire came into his or her mind, and that desire was the cause of his or her downfall, degradation, depravation. This type of being is called yakśa.

In Bihar, particularly in the northern portion of Bihar, in most but not all of the villages, you will find a place just outside the village, known as the Brahmasthána. That Brahmasthána is the place where the villagers used to assemble to worship the yakśa. In the images of Paoránika [Puranic] gods and goddesses you will find the yakśa and yakśinii standing just to the right and left of the deity; a yakśa and yakśinii with cámaras [ceremonial whisks] in their hands. What is a yakśa? It has a body, but not a quinquemental body; a body with three factors, tejas, marut and vyoma. That luminous body cannot be touched, but it can be seen sometimes.

Rakśa. People with fighting spirit, with proper dedication and proper spiritual aspiration, but who sometimes think, “If I get the blessing I will kill those antisocial elements – No, no, no, during pújá [worship, meditation] I should not think like this.” You have understood, I think? Those thoughts coming in the mind during pújá become the cause of degradation. After death the person won’t have a physical body or aquatic body, but tejas, marut and vyoma will be there. This type is called rakśa.

Kinnara. “Bábá has given me everything, but I am not good-looking. I want to be very good-looking, so that people will say – No, no, no, it is very bad.” Such good persons, good souls (and they are good people, not ordinary people) after death also acquire this type of three-elemented body. They are called kinnara.

Vidyádharma. “I am a good sádhaka, but haven’t any vocal power. I can’t dance properly, I can’t sing properly, my vocal cord doesn’t function well. I require more attributions, more qualifications – and if I get more qualifications I will get promotion in the service also. Oh, no, no, no. These are all bad things. These are all bad desires. A person should not have any desires.”

When such a person dies, they also get that type of body, luminous, gaseous and ethereal. These three bhútas are there. These people are called vidyádhara.

Next – a person is doing sádhaná, there is no longing. Then, “I sing bhajanas, but my sound is not good. My vocal cords don’t function properly. My vocal expression should be a bit more sweet and rhythmic – No, no, no, these are all bad things, bad things.” This type of good person, in the body they take in their next life (not “next life”, but “post-physical life”), is known as gandharva. They have a longing for music. And that is why music is called gandharva vidyá in Sanskrit.

The sixth is the siddha. What is a siddha? Suppose there is a good soul, a good person who has no physical desire. But during sádhaná – “Yes, love for God has been created. Yes, people love me, Bábá loves me. But I should have some occult power, so that people will say, ‘This person has power, and is not an ordinary person. This person has occult power – alaokika shakti – aeshvarya – vibhúti’ – No, no, no, these are bad thoughts, bad thoughts.” When this type of person dies, their post-physical body is known as siddha. They are the best among the devayonis. I will say something regarding these siddhas later on.

And the seventh is Prakrtiina – those who worship idols, ascribing Brahma-hood to that idol, thinking that the very idol is God, the very image is God; worshipping stone, worshipping wood, worshipping metal. Tantra says, Mrchiládhátudárvádímúrttáviishvaro buddhaya... [“Those who think that Parama Puruśa is confined within idols made of clay, stone, metal or wood...”] Mrt means “earthen image”; shilá means “made of stone”; dhátu means “made of metal”; and dāru means “made of wood”. And they ascribe Godhood to that wood or to that metal or to that stone. Then what happens? The person is ideating on that stone, or wood, or metal, and what happens? Yadrshii bhávaná yasya siddhir bhavati tádrshii – “A person adopts a body according to their object of ideation.” Their own self is transformed into that entity, the entity which was their object of meditation. Now such people worshipping different forms of Prakrti finally take the form of those entities, and become stone, become wood, become metal. They are called Prakrtiina. They become one with Prakrti and remain there for an indefinite period. What a durdaeva, I will say! What a painful state of existence!

Now, among these seven types of devayoni, the siddha is the best. Siddhas perform their sádhaná, but sádhaná remaining just at the half-way point. And whenever there is an assemblage of singers or dancers, what happens? Gandharvas, with their mental bodies, their reactive momenta and non-cerebral memories, assemble. Wherever there is any programme of music, there they assemble, but invisible. Sometimes, though, they become visible. I will explain.

Wherever there is any spiritual gathering, siddhas come. And during a musical function, whenever the mind of a particular artist becomes concentrated, they will see the luminous bodies of gandharvas. Similarly, during meditation, or particularly during kiirtana, when a spiritual aspirant’s mind becomes concentrated, they will feel the existence of those siddhas. In Jamalpur, in the area of the tiger’s grave, there were assemblages of large numbers of siddhas. One of our senior grhii ácáryas [married spiritual teachers] used to see them.

I will narrate a very short story. A few years back, two of our kápálika sádhakas⁽¹⁾ came to a river. That river is not a big one, but the depth is there. They were at a loss to decide how to cross the river. Just on the other side of the river there was a burial ground, a cremation ground. They were thinking hard, at midnight.

All of a sudden, they saw a luminous body just in front of them. The luminous body began moving, and these two boys followed it. Coming to a particular point, that luminous body started crossing the river, and these two boys followed him. And that particular portion of the river was very shallow, knee-deep. They easily crossed the river and reached the other side. Just on the other bank there was a tree. From there they went two different ways to do their night practice. And after night practice they came back to the tree. They again saw that luminous body and again followed it and crossed the river.

After coming to the original bank, the junior boy addressed the senior man, “Oh Dádá, let us request that luminous body to bless us.” As soon as he said this, the luminous body disappeared. What was that luminous body? A siddha.

Now what happens when a person sees some unnatural picture or unnatural image or unnatural being? One possibility I have already explained – it may be that a Tantric, with the help of his or her ectoplasmic structure, has created a body for a disembodied mind just to terrorize others. A Vidyá Tantric will not do these things, but an Avidyá Tantric may do so just to terrorize others, as they used to do in the past. After getting some money they would stop the practice.

And suppose that some time you go to a particular house which people say is haunted. There are some haunted houses in every town, and I have already told you that if you find any haunted house, you just purchase it and use it. Ghosts won't terrorize Ananda Margis, because every Ananda Margi is a ghost. [laughter] “They are the followers of Shiva.”⁽²⁾ Ghosts will not terrorize ghosts.

What happens there? Due to terror, due to pre-imposed terror, a person's mind gets concentrated. Due to fear the mind gets concentrated, and due to concentration, what happens? A certain portion of the person's own ectoplasmic stuff goes to help a detached mind in creating a body, an ectoplasmic body. So you see your own creation; the creation has been made out of your own ectoplasmic stuff. But that detached mind was also there. It was not a ghost. And those Brahmaphisháca, or several kinds of “ghosts”, are all of your creation. Your ectoplasmic stuff is transferred to that detached mind due to your mental concentration, temporary concentration.

And this type of concentration takes place under five types of circumstance – kśipta, múdha, vikśipta, ekágra and nirodha. Kśipta is when the mind is very perturbed, full of worries and anxieties. At that time, due to sudden, short concentration, such a thing may happen. Múdha is when your brain fails to decide what to do or what not to do – you are at a loss for what to do. This is called múdha – múh plus kta. Vikśipta – you are not concentrating on a particular point, but finally your mind becomes tired and, in that state, you see those things. You know by lullabies we make the minds of children vikśipta and they fall asleep. (Lullabies, you know? – poems recited in the ears to put children into deep slumber, not ordinary sleep.) Ekágra is when your mind gets pointed. And the fifth is nirodha, when you suspend all the expressions of your

propensities. In these five conditions you may see those things and you may, knowingly or unknowingly, consciously or unconsciously, transfer certain portions of your ectoplasmic body to a detached mind and create a positive hallucination of this kind.

19 October 1978, Patna

Footnotes

(1) Practitioners of kápálika sádhaná, a form of spiritual practice which causes the aspirant to confront and overcome all the inherent fetters and enemies of the human mind. –Eds.

(2) The Shivagaña, “Shiva’s people”, included ghosts, according to mythology. –Eds.

Tantra Is Sádhaná, Sádhaná Is Tantra

Many of you surely know that sádhaná means Tantra and Tantra means sádhaná. The word tantra can be interpreted in two ways. Behind every action, behind every expression, there is a particular sound. By hearing the sound of someone's approaching footsteps, you conclude that Mr. So-and-so is coming. Every action – moving, walking, etc. – has its own sound. Sometimes human beings sit completely motionless – they are inert. The acoustic root of inertness is ta.

Often we use a special sound to help us do a particular thing. For example, while goading the bullocks of a cart, different sounds are produced at different times by the driver. In the olden days, drivers of four-wheeled horse-drawn coaches (which resemble the contemporary tom-tom) would utter a ra-ra-ra-ra sound to make the horses gallop off. And when the driver pulled the reins and shouted tha, the horses would stop. So this coach became known as a ratha: a coach which starts with a ra sound and stops with a tha sound. Many words have been created in this way.

Another example: In the olden days, orthodox people wouldn't use leather shoes and wore wooden sandals instead. (They were nothing like the laced shoes which people wear today.) Now, when they walked those wooden sandals would make a thak-thak sound. Thakam-thakam karoti yah sah thakkura [“One who makes a thak-thak sound is called a thakkura.”] The surname Thákur [anglicized “Tagore”] is derived from thakkura. So people who wore wooden sandals were addressed as “Thákur Mashái”. In this way many such words have come into existence. Even today in Gujarat, you will find many people with the surname Thákur. In Maharashtra they are named Thákre or Thákare.

To resume our original discussion, ta is the acoustic root of inertness or staticity. Tantra is the spiritual practice which liberates one from the bondage of staticity (ta). It makes one active and dexterous in action. It exhorts people to work, to leap headlong into action, to run, to extend their hands and feet. This is the spirit of Tantra. Tam jádyát tarayet yastu sah tantrah parikiirtitah.

So “Tantra is the practical process which removes jádatá [dullness and inaction].” In Hindi jádatá is called já – and winter is called jáfa, because in the winter people sit like lumps of inert matter. When the warm wind blows they burn up that inertness. On the night of the Holi festival, observed one day before the Dol Yátrá festival, young people burn a heap of rubbish which represents the dullness of winter. The spirit of this is, “From today I shall no longer remain inert. I will not sit like a lump of clay in fear of winter.” This is called the Holi festival in northern India.

Tantra has another meaning. The Sanskrit root verb tan means “to expand”. A child's body gradually expands, and this expansion continues up till the age of thirty-nine; but the younger the person is, the faster the expansion. Young children have a big appetite; moreover, their hands and feet are constantly active, and this exercise facilitates the process of growth and expansion. As long as the body is expanding, it is called tanu; it expands in one way or another up till the age of thirty-nine. After thirty-nine years, however, the body gradually wears away: the head become bald and the skin wrinkles. At that stage the body is called shariira, which literally means “that whose nature is to wear out, to become wrinkled, and finally to be destroyed”.

So the root verb tan means to expand, and thus Tantra is the scientific process which leads to liberation through the process of expansion.

These are the two meanings of tantra: their inner spirit being the same.

What is the nature of the sádhaná of human beings? The bondages and mental limitations that afflict human beings exist not in the external sphere, but in the internal sphere. One whose mind is very narrow is a mean-minded person, whereas one whose mind is broad is a great person. Sádhaná broadens and enlarges the mind. How? It is the innate characteristic of the human mind to become as it thinks – Yádrshii bhávaná yasya siddhirbhavati tádrshii [“As you think, so you become.”] To associate oneself with Parama Puruśa, the Supreme Entity, is the actual sádhaná. There is no one greater than Parama Puruśa, and so, when the mind ideates on Him, it expands.

And when the mind expands, what will happen to the bondages of crudity imposed on it by Prakrti? As an analogy, imagine what will happen if your body has been bound with a rope and you then expand your body. What will happen to the rope? It will snap. Similarly, the moment your mind expands, the bondages of Prakrti, which had kept you so small, will snap, will be ripped apart.

This is Tantra in a nutshell. You should bear in mind that the fundamental spirit of humanity is expansion. Brahma paves the way for expansion and, in the process of expansion, liberates human beings from their bondages. This is why Tantra has been given its name. So Tantra is sádhaná and sádhaná is Tantra. Without sádhaná the practice of Tantra is impossible.

6 November 1978 evening, Calcutta

The Intuitional Science of Tantra

The subject of today's discourse is "The Intuitional Science of Tantra". Before I come to that topic, however, let me first say something about [the word] tantra. Usually the word tantra is derived from tan plus traë plus dá. The root verb tan means "to expand". The process by which one attains liberation from all bondages by strengthening and expanding one's entitative existence is called Tantra.

The word tantra can be interpreted in yet another way. Each and every entity, each and every existence has an acoustic expression of its own. For instance, ta is the acoustic root of dullness or inertness. And the process that brings liberation from this state of staticity, or ta, is called Tantra. Tam jáyát tárayet yastu sah tantrah parikiirtitah ["That which redeems human beings and paves the way for their emancipation from the bondages of staticity is called Tantra."]

The cult that Sadáshiva formulated and introduced into human society to ensure the removal of inertness in the physical, psychic and spiritual strata of life is called Tantra. Tantra is not at all theoretical; it is essentially practical, and on the basis of practice, its philosophy has evolved. The major portion of the science of intuition in the Vedas, on the other hand, is purely theoretical; only a small portion is practical. In Tantra, ninety percent of the intuitional science is practical, and only a very small portion is theoretical.

The science of intuition in the Vedas has already been discussed extensively. Tantric literature, like Vedic, offers an elaborate treatment of intuitional science. Both Veda and Tantra have proclaimed that everything of this manifested universe emanates from Brahma. As the Vedas have put it:

Ánandáddhyeva khalvimáni bhútáni jáyante;
Ánandena játáni jiiivanti;
Ánandañ prayantyaabhisam vishanti.

And Tantra has expressed it similarly:

Mayyeva sakalam játam Mayi sarvam pratiśthitam;
Mayi sarvam layam yati tad Brahmá dvayamasmyaham.

Parama Puruśa says, "Everything has emerged from me, everything is being maintained in me, and ultimately everything will dissolve in Me."⁽¹⁾

Mayyeva sakalam játam ["All created beings have evolved out of Me"]. The word játam is derived from the root jan plus the suffix kta. Here the Cognitive Entity has been recognized as the primordial cause of creation. Obviously, this is a major difference between Tantra and the Sámkhya school of philosophy, for in Sámkhya, Prakrti [the Supreme Operative Principle] has been given the dominant role. But in Tantra, Parama Puruśa has been given the dominant role. Ánanda Sútram⁽²⁾ clearly states, Shaktih Sá Shivasya Shaktih. Shakti [Prakrti], the Supreme

Operative Principle, carries on Her creative flow according to the expressed desire or expressed approval of Parama Puruśa. Hence Puruśa is the prime cause of creation.

Mayyeva sakalaṃ jātaṃ Mayi sarvaṃ pratiśṭhitam. Since everything in this universe is born out of Puruśa, there is nothing beyond or outside Puruśa; hence Mayi sarvaṃ pratiśṭhitam – “everything is residing in Him.” He is the base of everything; there is no way to go beyond Him. Human beings may go a little way from Puruśottama, the Supreme Nucleus of the universe; they may increase the length of their radius; but they can never go beyond the Cosmic periphery. In fact, every object emerging from Him in the phase of sañcara is maintained in Him, and in the phase of pratisañcara⁽³⁾ is finally dissolved in Him. That is to say, the Entity who was in the beginning and the middle, is also present in the end.

Tad Brahmādvayamasmyaham – “Brahma is One.” The Supreme Operative Principle is not given any special importance. To say that Prakṛti is doing everything, one will have to admit that nature is everything, but basically nature is a blind force; she cannot do anything by herself unless supported by intellect.

As mentioned earlier, in Tantra, sādhanā has been given the utmost importance. What is sādhanā? Sādhanā means practical effort. An effort to what? An endless effort to move towards Puruśottama, the Nucleus of the Cosmic Cycle.

Now this movement from imperfection to perfection, and in fact every movement in this universe, is not without obstacles. Fundamentally every movement involves opposition, and the resultant achieved during the fight against the obstacles is called progress. So the more vigorously one tries to move towards the goal, the more vehemently one will have fight against obstacles. Those who are averse to struggle will never make any progress; what to speak of progress, without struggle one will lag behind. Hence, struggle is the essence of life. Those who abhor struggle, who consider struggle to be violence, have no place in this universe. Not only that, they are hypocrites, for although in practical life they have to resort to struggle, outwardly they hesitate to confess it. They feel that if they admit it openly they will become debased in public estimation. They fail to realize that by denying the plain truth, they are hurting themselves [by acting against their own consciences].

This cult of Tantra, as enunciated by Shiva, was the first to show human beings how to attain Brahma. The earlier methods of incantation, contemplation, eulogy, or repetition of hymns, attempted in various ways to lead human beings towards Brahma, but to no avail. The essential thing is to come in the closest proximity to Parama Puruśa, to be established in Brahma. That is why Tantra proclaims:

Uttamā sahaśāvasthā madhyamā dhyānadhāraṇā;
Japastūtiḥ syādhadhamā mūrtipūjā dhamādhamā.

[Ideation on Brahma is the best, dhyāna and dhāraṇā are second best, repetitious incantation and eulogistic prayer are the worst, and idol worship is the worst of the worst.]

When spiritual aspirants start spiritual practice, they cannot understand what to accept and what to avoid. Hence in the initial stage they take to idol worship. Only afterwards do they realize its futility.

Mrcchiládhátudárvádímúrttáviishvaro buddhayo;
Klishyantastapasáh jñānām viná mokśam ná yānti te.

[Those who think that Parama Puruśa is confined within idols made of clay, stone, metal, or wood, are simply torturing their bodies with penances – they will surely not attain salvation without self-knowledge.]

“If idols made of wood, clay, iron or any other metal are accepted as objects of meditation, then what will be the result?” It is said, Yádrshii bhávaná yasya siddhirbhavati tádrshii [“As you think, so you become”]. The aspirants’ own entitative existence will be turned into clay, metal or wood – a state which in the scriptures is called Prakrtiliina. It is a dreadful state.

Higher than idol worship is the practice of dháraṇá and dhyána, through which one can make steady progress. The last stage is called nirvikalpa samádhi, or asamprajñáta samádhi, which is otherwise known as uttamá sahaívasthá, or, in the language of other scriptures, uttamo Brahmasadbhávah.

Many may think that since Tantra is a rigorous practice, a hard reality, then in Tantra there must not be any scope for sweet kiirtana. But certainly there is scope for kiirtana. Tantra exhorts spiritual aspirants to advance towards their goal, smashing the boulders of obstacles and impediments; it never tells people to suppress their sweet sentiments. On the contrary, it advises spiritual aspirants that the more love and devotion they develop for the Cosmic Goal, the more speedily they move towards Him. Hence Tantra recognizes all kinds of sweet sentiments. Kiirtana, song, dance, instrumental music – all are accepted in Tantra and unambiguously recognized as vehicles to ensure spiritual progress.

And what is more, Sadáshiva Himself was the original propounder of song, dance and instrumental music. Tantra is based on reality, and takes the qualities of the Supreme Entity in a practical way. In Tantra, Shiva is not an imaginary entity; rather He has been accepted as the benevolent Father. That is why even today, in the society of devotees, Shiva’s popularity remains totally unimpaired, because He is the original father of Tantra.

As said earlier, Tantra is completely realistic; so its relation with Iishvara [the Supreme Entity as Cosmic Controller] is also based on realism. It is not something fanciful. It has been said,

Bhayánám bhayaṁ bhiiśaṇám bhiiśaṇánám;
Gatih práñinám pávanaṁ pávanánám.
Mahoccaeh padánám niyantr tadekaṁ;
Pareshám param rakśakaṁ rakśakánám.

[You are the fear of fear, you are the most frightening to the dreadful, you are the very movement of all living entities. You are the purity of purity. You are the Supreme Controller of

all the controllers occupying exalted posts. You are the highest authority of all high authorities. You are the protector of protectors.]

“O Saviour of saviours, You are the fear of fear – fear is afraid of You as much as living beings are afraid of fear.”

Elsewhere it has also been said,

Bhiiśasmádváyuh pavate bhiiśodeti súr yah
Bhiiśasmádnishcendrashca;
Mrtyuh dhávati paiñcamah
Tasmáducyate bhiiśānamiti.

–*Atharvaveda*

[Out of fear of Him the wind blows, the sun rises on time. Out of fear of Him the fire-god, the moon-god, the god of energy and the god of death carry out their duties faithfully. This is why He is called Bhiiśānam, The Terrible.]

As He is feared by all, every action in this universe is being properly undertaken. Were He not apparently dreadful, He would not be able to discharge His responsibilities properly. Tantra has made such a realistic appraisal of Parama Puruśa and said: Bhiiśasmádváyuh pavate – “The wind blows on time out of fear of Him; it never completely ceases to blow under any circumstances”... bhiiśo’deti súr yah – “out of fear of Him, the sun rises on time every day without the least deviation”... bhiiśasmádnishcendrashca mrtyuh dhávati paiñcamah tasmáducyate bhiiśānamiti – “out of fear of Him, fire burns, and Indra faithfully discharges his duty” (Indra means “energy”; due to fear of Parama Puruśa, all other energies are doing their duties according to their inherent characteristics) “and due to fear of Him, death reaches the proper person at the proper time.” Death cannot say that he will reach somebody a couple of days later. Out of fear, he will always arrive at the stipulated time.

Gatih práñinám [“You are the very movement of all living entities”]. The property of movement, of dynamism, is one of the basic characteristics of our Supreme Lord. Life also is characterized by movement. We distinguish between living and non-living entities on the basis of their movement. Those who lack in dynamism, though physically they may be alive, are virtually dead: there is no justification for their existence. Hence my exhortation to all is to become active, vigorously active. This quality of dynamism comes directly from Parama Puruśa, because He Himself is always dynamic.

Pávanám pávanánám. Human beings consider certain objects to be sacred; those objects are called pávana in Sanskrit. “And those sacred objects in turn look upon Parama Puruśa as sacred.” Indeed, they themselves are considered sacred because they are related to Him, otherwise they would not be sacred.

Mahoccaeh padánám niyantr tadekam. In this world various persons occupy various exalted posts, and because of their posts they enjoy social respect and position. “But however high their

rank may be, they pray to the Lord, saying, ‘O Lord, I exist by Your grace – protect me, O Lord.’” So the Lord is controlling everyone, whatever may be their post. The moment one transgresses one’s jurisdiction out of vanity or ego, one is removed from that post. Whenever one misuses or abuses one’s authority, the Lord pushes the person out, and the person falls on his knees. This is the rule. The Lord is controlling everything; He does not tolerate the abuse of power or authority by anyone. In fact, one of His names is Darpahárii [Stealer of Vanity]. He does not tolerate anyone’s darpa [vanity]. We see in practical life that people may be seated today in the most exalted position in society, but if they grossly abuse their position, they will meet with such a great fall that their bones and skin will be altogether beyond recognition.

Pareshám param. In the absence of a witnessing entity, the existence of any entity or phenomenon cannot be substantiated. When an action takes place, there should be an entity to witness it, to appreciate it. Due to the presence of the witnessing entity, an action or an object is substantiated. The entity which witnesses is called para, and the entity or entities which are witnessed are called aparā. We consider many entities as para or witnessing entities, but “above all these witnessing entities there is one Supreme Witnessing Entity, Parama Puruśa.” Hence He is rightly called Pareshám param [“Witness of all witnesses”].

Rakśakaṁ rakśakānām. In various spheres of life, we look upon various objects or persons as our saviours or protectors. But “those very persons whom we looked up to as our saviours or protectors, themselves look to Parama Puruśa for protection.” However cautious one might be, there can never be any absolute security for anyone without the protection of Parama Puruśa. No one can say with any certainty that a particular medicine will cure a particular disease. Even the physician who specializes in the treatment of that disease may himself die of that disease. People invent a particular weapon, thinking that it will counteract other weapons; but often it fails. And people are often over-cautious. There is an old saying in Bengali, Sábdhāner mára nei, which means, “Caution circumvents trouble;” but Rabindranath Tagore once said that caution no doubt circumvents trouble, but it is also true that trouble sometimes circumvents caution! Hence Tantra teaches that the human mind should be channelized in only one direction, not in a thousand directions.

Tadekaṁ japāmas tadekaṁ smarāmas
Tadekaṁ jagatsákśiirúpaṁ namāmah;
Tadekaṁ nidhānaṁ nirálambamiishaṁ
Bhavāmbodhipotaṁ sharaṇaṁ vrajāmah.

[I will remember You only. I will contemplate on You only. I will salute You only, the Witnessing Entity of this expressed universe. You are the supreme shelter, but you require no shelter, and no authority lords over you. We take shelter in You in the form of a ship sailing on this vast universe.]

“If anyone’s name is to be chanted in japa, it is the name of Parama Puruśa.” What is japa? A word has a particular meaning; repeating the word inwardly again and again, after having understood its meaning, is what is termed japa. As a result of the prolonged repetition of a word, whose inner meaning is clearly understood, its ideation becomes permanently imprinted on one’s mind, and consequently there occurs a radical change in one’s mental arena. The extroversial

tendencies of the mind gradually become introverted. This is the benefit of japa. And if anyone's name is to be repeated, it is the name of the Lord.

Usually worldly people remember constantly their earthly joys and comforts, or dwell on the names of their enemies. But that is all useless. Only the name of Parama Puruṣa should be remembered and chanted, for ultimately one will have to reach Him, to merge in Him.

Namah Shiváya shántáya káraṇatrayahetabe;
Nivedayámi cátmánaṁ tvaṁ gatih Parameshvara.

[Salutations to Shiva the tranquil, the cause of the three worlds; I surrender myself to You, the culmination of my journey, the Supreme Lord.]

Ultimately one will have to reach Him. There is no other way. Hence wise persons take only the name of the One and Supreme Lord, and never the name of any other entity.

Tadekaṁ smarámah. "If one has to take refuge in any entity, or has to contemplate any entity, one should take refuge in or think about only the Supreme One," because whenever the mind broods on a second entity, it will become one with the latter; that is, if the mind constantly reflects on physicality, one's whole psycho-spiritual existence will become physical. That is a terrible situation.

Tadekaṁ jagatsákṣiirúpaṁ namámah. "If there is anyone to whom spiritual aspirants should surrender, if there is anyone to whom they should pay salutations, it is Parama Puruṣa." The system behind salutations is to look for the Supreme Being that is the inner essence of a person, and to pay salutations to that Parama Puruṣa. The generally-accepted rule is that one should say namaskára to a human being or a god or goddess, but one should say namaste or namastubhyam only to Parama Puruṣa, not to any other entity.

Tadekaṁ nidhhánam. Human beings run along many different paths, but "ultimately they will have to take the path towards the Supreme One." Nányapanthá vidyate ayanáy – "There is no other way for them." So if they begin in time to run towards the Supreme One, it saves them a lot of time and energy later.

Nirálambamiisham. In this world each and every object requires a support, a strong base. Nothing can maintain its existence without a dependable base. For example, the base of Calcutta is West Bengal; and the base of West Bengal is India. The continent of Asia is the base of India, and the base of Asia is our planet earth. The base of the earth is the solar system, and the base of the solar system is Parama Puruṣa. But "Parama Puruṣa does not depend for His existence upon any base. Rather everything is sheltered in Him – He is the base of everything." So if human beings have to look for any shelter, it must be a self-supporting, self-sheltered entity.

Bhavámbodhipotaṁ sharaṇaṁ vrajámah ["seek shelter on the ship floating on this ocean of bhava"]. "Casting aside all futile arguments and time-consuming propensities of mind, we will seek shelter only in You."

Bhavámbodhipotam [“ship floating on the ocean of bhava”]. The unrequited saṁskáras [i.e., the as-yet-unserved balance of reactions to one’s original actions] which are responsible for one’s rebirth are called bhava, and dharma is the means to cross the vast ocean of bhava. To cross this bhava is part of your sádhaná, and is also your dharma. But individually human beings are very weak; it is next to impossible for them to cross the ocean of bhava without the direct help of Parama Puruśa. Máyá⁽⁴⁾ is very powerful; human beings cannot fight against Her singlehandedly. So one must first seek the shelter of Parama Puruśa and then fight against Her. Máyá gives way to the one who is endowed with divine power from Parama Puruśa because She is, after all, the immanent power of Parama Puruśa. Shaktih Sá Shivasya Shaktih. As Krśńa said,

Daevii hyeśá guṇamayii mama Máyá duratyayá;
Mámeva ye prapadyante Máyámetám taranti te.⁽⁵⁾

[This Máyá of Mine is of the nature of three principles, and is almost insurmountable. Only those who take refuge in Me can overcome this Máyá.]

“This divine Máyá is insurmountable; microcosms, by their individual efforts, cannot surmount Her. But those who have taken shelter in Me, can easily surmount Her.” Bhavámbodhipotam sharaṇám vrajámah.

Now to cross an ocean, the passengers need to board a ship. Parama Puruśa comes to human beings as a ship does to pick up passengers. What should we do? We should secure a safe shelter on that ship – sharaṇám vrajámah. All sádhakas are rushing to that ship which will take them to their proper destination. Human beings have to take refuge in that divine ship; they will have to come rushing, without further delay. They should not and must not waste a single moment.

12 November 1978 DMC, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) This translation applies equally well to both shlokas, the Vedic and the Tantric. –Eds.

(2) Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, Ánanda Sútram, 1962. –Eds.

(3) In the Cosmic Cycle, saiṅcara is the step-by-step extroversion and crudification of consciousness from Nucleus Consciousness to the state of solid matter; and pratisaiṅcara is the reverse introversion and subtilization of consciousness. –Eds.

(4) Creative Principle, Prakrti in Her phase of creation; One aspect of Máyá is the power to cause the illusion that finite created objects are the ultimate truth. –Eds.

(5) Bhagavad Giitá. –Trans.

The Fundamental Difference Between Veda and Tantra

During yesterday's DMC⁽¹⁾ I said something about Tantra. It is not enough to say that the ideological difference between Veda and Tantra is wide; rather one should say that it is very wide. Tantra is a practical and natural process and is thus easily practised and followed by the members of society. People easily accept it as their own.

There is a shloka in the Vedas that begins, Uttiśhata jágrata prápya barán nibodhata – that is, “Arise, awake. Seek a competent teacher and start moving along the path of spirituality.” This is similar to the spirit of Tantra. But the Veda further says,

Kśurasya dhára nishitá duratyayá durgam pathastat kavayo vadanti.⁽²⁾

That is, “The path is as sharp as a razor's edge, so move along it carefully.”

Here Tantra begins to differ from Veda. The process of Tantra progressively develops the qualities latent in human beings and at the same time eliminates the defects. In Tantra, therefore, there is no question of the path being as sharp as a razor's edge. Because of this spirit, a practitioner of Tantra becomes elevated and attains mastery over a hostile environment. Tantra does not accept the teachings of the Vedas that human beings should move internally, and carefully avoid any association with their environment. Rather, Tantra suggests that spiritual aspirants should rid their minds of fear from the very beginning. The Vedas maintain, however, that fear will be automatically removed from the mind some day in the process of sádhaná; but who knows when that auspicious moment will come? It is not desirable to wait indefinitely for that. Moreover, while moving in this way, something unexpected might happen which might be detrimental to individual and collective growth.

So Tantra advises, “Jump into your environment without the least hesitation. Don't be afraid. Fear will leave you step by step. Tomorrow you will not be as fearful as you are today, the day after you will be even less fearful, and ten days from now you'll notice that you are completely fearless.” The process of Tantra sádhaná is formulated along these lines. The very first night that a Tantric goes to the burial ground he is stricken with fear; there is horripilation all over the body. But when he returns home after finishing sádhaná, the mind is much lighter than before. When he goes out for sádhaná the next night, he is much less fearful. And thus the Tantric steadily and slowly overcomes fear. This is the applied process of Tantra which will help the practitioner overcome all mental propensities. In Tantra, there is a nice blending between the internal sádhaná, an ongoing psychic process, and physico-psychic sádhaná. In the Vedas, however, physico-psychic sádhaná is totally absent – only psychic sádhaná is practised, which may lead to trouble.

Tantra is of the opinion that the Vedas cannot fulfil the hopes of beginners on the spiritual path – the hopes of making some discernible spiritual progress at the outset. In fact there is often retardation. That is why the Vedic system of sádhaná has been almost totally rejected by society. Even in the past it was not widely popular, and today it is practised by only a few people. And the little Vedic sádhaná which is practised today is merely a few prayers to Parama Puruśa. For example, they pray, “O Lord, show me the way. Please help me get Tantric initiation.”

So Vedic initiation today is just the first step towards Tantric initiation. The sádhaka says, “O Lord, I want to follow the path of spirituality and wish to practise the Tantric process of sáadhaná. Please give me the opportunity to learn it.”

Sarve ca pashavah santi talavad bhútale naráh:
Teśám jiṅánaprakásháya viirabhávah prakáshitah;
Viirabhávaṁ sadá prápya kramena devatá bhavet.

–*Rudrayámala Tantra*

“At the first stage all human beings are as good as animals.” Unable to find the light of knowledge, they fail to understand what is to be done and what is not to be done. When one is unaware of the dos and don’ts of life, one is no better than an animal. One will have to rise higher step by step.

“When one masters the first stage of Tantra sáadhaná, and acquires some knowledge and intellect and learns about the dos and don’ts of life, one is no longer like an animal but is a veritable hero.” In Tantra that system of sáadhaná is called viirácára. Viirabhávaṁ sadá prápya kramena devatá bhavet – “while doing sáadhaná in viirabháva [the ideation of viirácára], the sádhaka merges in that viirabháva.”

And just as one who fights against the fear instinct is called a viirácárii, one who has overcome fear, who has gone beyond fear, is called a divyácárii. And the divyácárii who successfully defeats the ripus and the páshas⁽³⁾ and, rising above petty selfishness, identifies himself or herself with the collective interest, becomes one with Parama Puruśa. This gradual movement towards the supreme goal is the path of Tantra. It is a safe path where there is no scope for fear. And the naturalness of human life is not impaired under any circumstances.

The Tantric sáadhaná introduced by Sadáshiva was the first sáadhaná to be given in this world. Tantra sáadhaná is the only sáadhaná. Without sáadhaná there is no Tantra and without Tantra there is no sáadhaná.

Tantra has yet another speciality. According to the Vedas, practical life is guided by theory. But the efficacy of a theory should first be tested in the practical sphere. Movement on the basis of an untested theory may or may not be fruitful. The theory of Tantra has been evolved on the basis of practical experience on the path. And as the theory is formulated on the basis of efficacy in the field of application, it always leads to success. It is infallible in applied life.

13 November 1978 morning, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Ananda Marga Dharma Mahácakra was a special spiritual gathering addressed by the guru. – Eds.

(2) Káthopaniśad. –Trans.

(3) The śádrīpu, or six enemies, of the mind are káma [longing for physical pleasure], krodha [anger], lobha [avarice], mada [vanity], moha [blind attachment], and mátsarya [envy]. The aśtápásha, or eight fetters, are ghrná [hatred, revulsion], shaun̄ka [doubt], bhaya [fear], lajjá [shyness], jugupsá [dissemblance], kula [vanity of lineage], shiilá [cultural superiority complex], and mána [egotism]. –Eds.

A Few of Tantra's Special Characteristics

During the last few days, I have been saying repeatedly that Tantra has its own special characteristics. Although Ananda Marga is essentially Tantra-oriented, it too has a few special features of its own.

As I have said previously, our ideology maintains that no one need be afraid of anything under any circumstances. If anyone does become afraid, it should be understood that he or she is doing something opposed to our ideology. So you should remember that no situation will ever arise in this world which will give you cause for fear.

It has been said that Parama Puruśa is the fear of fear. That is, fear is as afraid of Parama Puruśa as humans are afraid of [objects of] fear. Bhiīśāñāñ bhiīśāñāñām – “He is the dread of all dreaded things.” A feared object is as afraid of Parama Puruśa as others are afraid of it. So, as you are the progeny of Parama Puruśa, who or what can possibly give you cause to fear?

I have also said that sins are just like the dust that settles on our clothes. By shaking the clothing, the dust will vanish. This simple action can be done by everyone. Ananda Marga has clarified that human beings are the progeny of Parama Puruśa and are thus the objects of His love and affection. Whatever might be the nature of the sins they commit, they will never be deprived of His affection. Parama Puruśa may scold them, but He can never hate them. He will simply shake the dust off their clothes and take them onto His lap. So the most important thing is complete surrender. People should always remember that they are the progeny of Parama Puruśa. That is enough.

In this regard something also should be clarified, something which differentiates the ideas of Ananda Marga from other established ideas. Ananda Marga is very different from isms and theories. We do not want to condemn people over very small or trivial matters, a practice which was common in our past society, ridden with various caste divisions and so on. According to our philosophy, only that injustice which harms others should be considered as pāpa [sin].

In ancient times people were made outcasts on trivial charges of social crimes. We do not subscribe to such beliefs. According to us, the only error which may be considered as a sin is the one which harms society, and nothing else. In the past, mental wrongdoing was considered as a sin in all cases, according to the ancient Tantric traditions too. It is of course a fact that all sins first originate in the mind, that mental sins are transformed into external sins. But according to Ananda Marga, unless mental sins take external form, thus harming the society, they should not be considered punishable. (Sādhakas, however, will always rectify their mental sins, because they may take external form one day. If the mental sin does take an external form, it should be punished vigorously. An effective way of rectifying such a sin is to sing and dance kiirtana.)

One should not keep thinking again and again why such a thought came in the mind. It is useless to do so. You should continue to discharge your duties with an open mind, with full awareness of your responsibilities. You should not waste your time bothering about the minor deviations you make along the path of your movement. We are no longer like the ancient logicians or lawmakers. Our duty is to make the best use of the strength and capacity of the entire human

race. To analyse everything threadbare or to suppress human strength and capacity or to limit human activities can never be considered as humanistic. Moreover, I do not think it good to criticize anyone behind their backs, saying, "Well, Mr. So-and-so may be leading a virtuous life now, but don't you know, he was a terrible sinner in the past." We must forget the past. I said at the outset that sins are like the dust of the street that settles on clothing. We must shake this dust off and move ahead.

Those considered social criminals will have to accept punishment in accordance with the law. Even if society does not punish the wrongdoers, they are bound to be punished by Prakrti. Under no circumstances, however, will Parama Puruśa ever consider them as hated beings. One should not think, "Oh, dear, dear, dear, I'm such a sinner. Oh, how can I ever approach Parama Puruśa." Rather one should think that as one is a sinner one should rush up to Parama Puruśa as quickly as possible, saying, "So much dust has accumulated on my clothes. How strange it is that You still haven't taken me on Your lap and shaken it all off." One should ask insistently why one was allowed to be covered with so much dust for so long.

Always remember that an effective way of freeing the mind from one's past sins is to sing and dance kiirtana. This will certainly bring about the desired result. You should also remember that no matter how many sins you have committed, you are never subject to hatred in the eyes of Parama Puruśa. He may scold you, but He cannot hate you.

I have said many a time that Parama Puruśa cannot do two things: He cannot create a second Parama Puruśa like Himself, because whoever has established an intimate friendship with Him, whoever has identified himself with Him, becomes one with Him. Secondly, however hard He may try, He can never hate anyone, because everything is in His mind. Even if He wanted to hate someone, to hate would mean that He was indirectly hating Himself. And that is why Parama Puruśa cannot hate anyone, even if He wants to. You should always remember this.

14 November 1978, Calcutta

The Importance of Diikśá

Today in a short discourse I shall try to say something about diikśá [initiation] and its importance relative to the existence of a microcosm.

You know that in every sphere of life there is a need for some goal, or for some guiding factors that show the way to a goal. And if the sphere we speak of is human progress, in that sphere also such factors are necessary.

I have already told you that human existence is an ideological flow. To accelerate human progress, we need very powerful guiding factors. The factor of will, for example, connects the physical and physico-psychic existence of human beings to spiritual existence, and merges it into that spiritual existence.

Guiding factors should come from a subtler source, and in the case of the spiritual initiation of a human being, those guiding factors emanate from Parama Puruśa. And this is why in *Ánanda Sútram*⁽¹⁾ it has been clearly stated, *Brahmaeva Gurureka náparah* – that is to say, “Parama Puruśa alone is the Guru.” All kinds of inspiration for human beings come from that source.

As far as initiation is concerned, there are two types. The first type is usually known as *Vaedikii diikśá*, and the second type is usually called *Tántrikii diikśá*.

As you all know, the word *veda* means “knowledge”. In this sense *Vaedikii diikśá* means that when inquisitive persons want to know what they should do, how they should do, and why they should do, they pray to Parama Puruśa, “O Lord, I cannot see clearly because I am enveloped in blinding darkness. Out of Your grace, You show me the way. I cannot move by myself. Tell me, out of Your kindness, how I can move forward.” When they receive a lesson in how to pray in such a way, this is called *Vaedikii diikśá*. The “*Savitr Rk*” [a Vedic *rk*, or verse, composed in *Gáyatrii* rhythm and therefore often known as the *Gáyatrii Mantra*] and a few other *rks* of the *Rgveda* are mantras of this sort.

And thereafter, when the same persons, by His grace, learn the proper way to progress in the physical, psychic and spiritual spheres, that is called *Tántrikii diikśá*.

*Janmaná jáyate shúdrah saṁskárát dvija ucyate;
Vedapáthát bhavet viprah Brahma jánāti Bráhmañah.*

[By birth, everybody is a *shúdra*, with an animal-like mentality. Going through a renewal, the person becomes a *dvija*, i.e., expresses the desire to become human. A person next becomes a *vipra*, an intellectual, by studying scriptures. And finally, when the person begins to realize *Brahma* (through psycho-spiritual initiation) he or she becomes a *Bráhmaña*.]

What is *saṁskára*? Here *saṁskára* means *Vaedikii diikśá*.⁽²⁾

After diikśá, the concerned person acquires considerable knowledge regarding how to do, what to do, why to do, and what his or her actual path should be. The person learns all these things. This is what is called Tántrikii diikśá. After following this path, that individual reaches the zenith of spirituality. He or she becomes a Brahman.

The word diikśá in Tantra has been defined:

Diipajiñanam yato dadyát kuryát pápakśayam tatah; Tasmátdiikśeti sá proktá sarvatantrasya sammatá.

[The process which produces the capacity to realize the inner import of mantra and which expedites the requital of the saṁskáras, or reactive momenta, is called diikśá.]

Diipajiñána means “torch”, that is, the knowledge that takes a human being from the darkness of animality towards the effulgence of divinity. In the initial stage, human beings require a torch to light up the way for them. This is what is called diipajiñána. The initial letter of diipajiñána is dii.

And when a spiritual aspirant moves from the most negative point towards the ultimate positivity, what happens? His or her accumulated saṁskáras start to become exhausted. That is, all his or her saṁskáras start to wane. For this “waning of sins” the Sanskrit word is pápakśayam. The initial letter of kśayam [waning] is kśa. So the dii of diipanii together with the kśa of kśayam becomes diikśa. And with the addition of the feminine suffix ía, the word becomes diikśá.

Lord Sadáshiva is the father of all Tantric scriptures. According to Him, this is the real interpretation of the term diikśá. For psychic development and spiritual elevation, people will invariably have to pass through this process of initiation. There is no alternative.

16 November 1978, Delhi

Footnotes

(1) Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtil, Ánanda Sútram, 1962. –Eds.

(2) Literally saṁskára means “renewal”, or changing from one’s original form to another form. –Eds.

Diikśá and Initiation

In a short discourse, I shall try to say something regarding diikśá and initiation.

As you know, for want of sufficient vocabulary in certain tongues, we are to use some words having close proximity to the required term. [Here, for instance, we have to use the English word “initiation” for the Sanskrit diikśá. But] the word “initiation” cannot represent the spirit of diikśá. The rudimental meaning of “initiation” is “to resort to a new avenue of progress”. Certainly diikśá is a new avenue of progress, but diikśá is also something more.

The first thing to be known and remembered is that, as per the science of yoga, diikśá is divided into two important phases. The first phase is known as Vaedikii diikśá, and the second phase is known as Tántrikii diikśá. In Vaedikii diikśá, the aspirant requests the Supreme Entity, Parama Puruśa, to show him or her the path. It is not a cult; it is just requesting the Supreme Father to let him or her know the secrets of success in the stratum of spirituality. The Gáyattrii Mantra (it is commonly known as the Gáyattrii Mantra, but its actual name is the “Savitr Rk”) is Vaedikii diikśá. Here the request is, “O Lord, show me the path. O Lord, guide our intellect towards the supreme path, so that I may be one with the Supreme Entity.”

Om̐ bhúr bhuvah svah om̐ tat saviturvareńyam;
Bhargo devasya dhiimahi dhiyo yo nah pracodayát.

This is the “Savitr Rk”, or “Gáyattrii Mantra”. Here the aspirant says, Bhúr bhuvah svah maha janah tapah satya asya saptalokasya savitur devasya, savitur pitur devasya, savitur devasya, tatpitur devasya, vareńyam bhargo dhiimahi, vareńyam pújaniiyam, bhargo jyoti, dhiimahi bayam̐ dhyánam kurmah, kena kárańena bayam̐ dhyánam kurmah. Dhiyo yo nah pracodayát. Dhii buddhih medhá yah nah asmákam̐ sah asmákam̐ dhii pracodayát sam̐vidháman̐ karotu satpathi paricálanam̐ karotu anena kárańena bayam̐ tad vareńyam̐ bhargo dhiimahi dhyánam kurmah.^①

The exact English translation will be “The Supreme Father who did create the seven strata of manifestation – we meditate on His divine effulgence. And why do we meditate on His divine effulgence? So that He may guide our intellect unto the path of bliss, unto the path of supreme blessedness.” So here the prayer is to guide the brain unto the proper path. It is Vaedikii diikśá – tan no dhiyo pracodayát – “so that He may guide our intellect towards the path of blessedness”... sah no buddhyá shubhayá sam̐yunaktu – “so that He may connect our intellect with blessedness.”

So these things are Vaedikii diikśá. There is no scope for such an interpretation or such a phase in “initiation”.

Now, the second phase is Tántrikii diikśá. Actually this Tántrikii diikśá is a cult. In the term “initiation” this cult is not properly clarified, or rather, nothing has been clearly said regarding this cult. As you know regarding the word tantra: tan means “to expand”, and tra means “liberator”; so the science that frees the aspirant from the fetters of bondages by expansion – by expanding the mind, by expanding the existence – is Tantra.

Another meaning: ta is dullness, and tra means liberator. So the science that liberates the aspirant from dullness and expands his or her entire existence is Tantra – Tam jádyát tárayet yastu sah tantrah parikiirtitah.

Now this Tántrikii diikśá has three phases, rather you may say three sub-phases: and they are diipanii, mantrágháta and mantra caetanya. And the derivation of the word diikśá is also from diipanii:

Diipajiñanam yato dadyát kuryát pápakśayam tatah;
Tasmátdiikśeti sá proktá sarvatantrasya sammatá.

[The process which produces the capacity to realize the inner import of mantra and which expedites the requital of the saṁskáras, or reactive momenta, is called diikśá.]

Diipajiñanam. What is the first letter? Dii. Then, kuryát pápakśayam tatah. Kśayam – what is the first letter? Kśa. So the word becomes diikśa, and the feminine term will be diikśá.

Now what is diipanii? Everything lies covered within the self. The Supreme Entity is also within your “I” feeling. [He] is with you, but you do not know Him. That is, the Supreme Entity is with you, but You cannot see Him. You cannot realize Him. Why? Because you are covered by, you are surrounded by, Máyá, the cimmerian darkness of Máyá. This diikśá, Tántrikii diikśá, is just like a torch. And by focusing the torch, you see your route through the darkness. That is why the first sub-phase is diipanii – diipanii means “showing the torchlight”. But no such thing is there in the term “initiation”.

Diikśá gives the aspirant the route, the way, or rather the path, of bliss. It shows the path of bliss. And to show the path of bliss, light is required; and that light is also supplied by diikśá. This light is diipanii.

Then, pápakśayam. You know what pápa is: pápa is negative reactive momenta. Whatever you do, the reaction is there, and when the reaction is not satisfied, not quenched, it remains in dormant form. The momentum is there, but not expressed. And there is also the case of positive work, that is, when you do something for the advancement of living beings – that is something positive, it is a positive action. In samája shástra [social scriptures] this positive action is called puñya, and when you do something against the public interest, this negative action is known as pápa. Now this negative action in reactive form, that is, this negative reactive momentum, is called pápa; and pápakśayam is brought about by diikśá. And how is that kśayam⁽²⁾ to be effected? Through actions – through reactive actions.⁽³⁾ These reactive actions may be on the physical plane, or may be on the psychic plane. But diikśá teaches us how these reactive momenta are to be satisfied on the psychic plane, thus freeing the person from the bondages of pápa.

Now this process of freeing a person from the fetters of pápa is divided into two sub-phases: mantrágháta and mantra caetanya. Mantrágháta means, as I have already told you, that each and every mantra has the support of an acoustic root: and when that acoustic root strikes at the root of the coiled serpentine, it is aroused. This is called mantrágháta. After that this roused coiled

serpentine moves with the force, or the stamina, it gets from the mantra. It moves towards the supreme positivity, and this movement is called mantra caetanya. With the help of this mantrágháta and mantra caetanya, a spiritual aspirant is freed from all the mundane bondages, bondages both on the physical and on the psychic plane.

So whereas in the case of “initiation” we see that it is just a resort to an avenue of progress and nothing more than that, nothing amplified, diikśá is divided into two phases, one primordial and the other final, and that final phase is further divided into three parts, or phases: diipanii, mantrágháta and mantra caetanya. But as we have no proper word for diikśá in English or any other language, we have no alternative but to use the word “initiation” for diikśá. The actual Sanskrit word for the English term “initiation” is abhiśeka, not diikśá.

2 December 1978 Evening, Madras

Footnotes

(1) Here the author comments, in Sanskrit, on the rk. His English translation and commentary then follow. –Eds.

(2) “Waning”. Pápakśayam is “waning of the saṁskáras (the mental reactive momenta)”; literally, “waning of the sins”. –Eds.

(3) Regarding reactive actions, see “Sádhaná”. –Eds.

The Cosmic Father Has a Special Responsibility

I invented kaosikii on September 6th [1978]. This dance is both an exercise, and a medicine for twenty-two diseases. It is a sort of panacea for almost all female diseases, and for many male diseases in younger boys. It is a medicine for most liver diseases. It assures safe deliveries for women, and also checks the advent of old age. It is a medicine.

Táńdava – which was not invented by me, but by Sadáshiva some seven thousand years ago – is an all-corporal exercise, an exercise for the entire body, including the brain. (There are intellectual exercises for the brain, but hardly any physical exercise. In fact, táńdava is the only physical exercise for the brain.) And among all dances it is the best. But it is not for women.

In Sanskrit, tańđu means “of jumping habit”. You see, when rice is prepared from paddy [in the traditional rural way] the paddy and rice jump. Because of this, rice is called tańdulam in Sanskrit. Tańđu plus the suffix sna makes táńdava, the dance where jumping is the main thing. Now this dance was invented by Sadáshiva to maintain the physical and psychic purity of sádhakas. That may help them in their spiritual progress. And Párvatii, the spouse of Shiva, invented lalita mármika, which means “voice of the inner spirit”. The dance used for kiirtana is lalita mármika. It represents the inner voice of the spiritual aspirant. The main thing in lalita mármika is the expression through mudrá. In táńdava there is no mudrá.

Among the disciples, among the devotees, there was an altercation as to which dance should be accepted. It was decided that both should be equally accepted and equally respected. And as a result of this adjustment between táńdava and lalita, Indian music was started – it is known as “Indo-Aryan” music. Indian music is divided into two schools, the Áryávarta School and the Dákśinátya School. The common name for the Áryávarta School is Hindustani Sangeet, and that for the Dákśinátya School is Karnataka Sangeet. As a result of this adjustment, Indian music was started. It was started by Sadáshiva, and that is why He is called Nátarája: Nádatanunátesharń [“The One whose very body is made out of the náda – the primordial sound – is the Lord of the Dance.”]. This adjustment first created the Indian tála. The first letter of táńdava is ta, and the first letter of lalita is la – tála was created in Indian music.

Lalita is to be used during kiirtana. It is the only dance which is universally accepted as the best dance for kiirtana. Táńdava is a heroic dance, showing the fight between life and death. The knife represents life, represents your vital stamina, and the skull represents the death that wants to destroy you. You are fighting against death with your weapon, be it a knife or a trishula (trident). And as per the rule, during the day, if one so desires, one may use a live snake in place of the skull; and at night one may use a fire mashála [torch] or a damaru [small drum]. This is the rule. So táńdava represents the eternal fight, the fight for survival, the fight to maintain existence, the fight to establish oneself as a man in this world.

Now during Mahácakra⁽¹⁾ and several other discourses, there has been a vijaya for devotees. You know, in Sanskrit there are two similar words, jaya and vijaya. Jaya means “victory”, victory over the inimical force, but victory of temporary nature. When the enemy is defeated, you become a jayii; but in the next phase or in the next moment the enemy may again rise up, become victorious – you may be defeated. And what is vijaya? Vijaya means “victory of a

permanent nature when the enemy is completely destroyed”. I think during the past few discourses there has been a vijaya for devotees.

In the course of spiritual achievement, spiritual progress, the jñānī is alone in the field, as indeed is the karmī. But the devotee⁽²⁾ is always sitting on the lap of the Cosmic Father and is never alone. In the śāstras it has been said that the devotees know that the Cosmic Father maintains His relationship with His children always through ota yoga and prota yoga.

What is ota yoga? The Cosmic Father has a direct relationship with each and every entity of this world, animate or inanimate. Not a single grain of sand nor a single blade of grass is neglected by Him. All are his affectionate children. This is His ota yoga.⁽³⁾ Each and every entity, animate or inanimate, has a direct link with Him, and thus nobody can ever be alone in the world. It is His duty to look after His children. So a devotee can never develop the psychology of melancholia.

You know, “melancholia” means to feel hopeless, helpless – “There is no one to love me.” Devotees never feel this type of melancholia, because they know that they are always with their Supreme Father. But jñānīs suffer from such diseases. You will find psychic diseases, insanity mostly, among jñānīs, among so-called learned and intellectual people. Bhaktas, however, never suffer from these diseases. They are free from all psychic diseases. And the devotee’s march is a march to serve the Supreme Entity in a better way, not to attain any emancipation or salvation.

The devotees know that whatever their Supreme Father will do for them is best for them. They never ask for anything, mundane, supramundane or psychic, because they know their actual needs, their actual necessities, are better known to their Father. A child of two months does not know what it requires; its mother knows. It is solely dependent upon its mother. Similarly, devotees are solely dependent on the Cosmic Father, and for that reason the Cosmic Father has a special responsibility for the devotees.

I have already said that devotees never develop any psychological ailment or psychological depression, even if they are sinners. You know, while moving along the road, your body or your clothes may come in contact with dust and dirt – this is what is called “sin” in society. And if your body or your clothes become filthy due to any sort of dirt or dust, others may laugh at you, others may ridicule you, others may hate you, but your father cannot ridicule you, cannot hate you, cannot laugh at you. What is his duty? Then and there he will come and put you on his lap and clean you. He will wash your clothes and say, “Oh, my child, while moving along the road, be a bit careful.” This is the relationship of the Cosmic Father with pápīs [sinners]. And the devotees know this.

But the jñānīs and karmīs say that each and every action has an equal and opposite reaction, provided that the three fundamental relative factors remain unchanged. Very dangerous, very dangerous! And that is why they suffer from so many psychic diseases; they are afraid of the sins they have committed in the past. But the devotees know, “My Father is there; He may punish me, but He will free me from all those bondages, all those fetters.” So devotees are always carefree.

And as I told you, devotees are cunning people. Not only are they intelligent, they are also cunning. That is why I said that devotees are A-grade intellectuals.

You see, the path of dharma is kuṭīla for those jñāniis and karmiis, but for devotees it is straight. Dharmasya kuṭīla gatih [“The path of dharma is kuṭīla, tortuous”].

It is kuṭīla for whom? For jñāniis and karmiis?

Kśurasya dhārá nishitá duratyayá durgam pathastad kavayo vadanti.

[The edge of a razor is very sharp and difficult to walk on. Similarly, the path to the Absolute is difficult to follow. This is what realized persons say.]

Those jñāniis will say, “It is a dangerous path!” – durgam pathastad kavayo vadanti. In Vedic Sanskrit, kavi means “learned man”, “scholar”, not “poet”. (In laokika [comparatively recent] Sanskrit, kavi means “poet”.) Those scholars, those jñāniis, say it is a durgam path. What does durgam mean? “Not easy to move”. But what is it for a devotee? Sukhamanantamānandam [“Spiritual bliss is equal to infinite pleasure”]. It is a straight path, it is a movement that ends in union with the Supreme Father. So there is nothing durgam in it; rather it is very easy, it is very natural. So my advice to you all is, feel His existence within your “I” feeling.

Shrutayo vibhinnáh smrtayo vibhinnáh
Naekamuniryasya matañ nábhinnam;
Dharmasya tattvañ nihitañ guháyañ
Mahájano yena gatah sa pantháh.

[The scriptures differ, the social codes differ; each sage has a different opinion. The essence of dharma lies deep in the mind; the path followed by realized persons is the true path.]

So many scriptures say so many things. What is an ordinary person to do? Which scripture is to be followed and which is not to be followed? What is what and which is which? A person may be in a dilemma to decide what to do, and what not to do. Shrutayo vibhinnáh – “The scriptures vary from one another.” Smrtayo vibhinnáh (smrti means “social code”) – “social codes also vary from one another.” In the past there was Nārada Sañhitá, Parásara Sañhitá, Manu Smrti; and now all the smrtis have been replaced by the Hindu Code Bill. There are so many social codes. What is an ordinary person to do?

The pandits, the propounders of those social codes, vary from one another. One says, “Do this.” Another says, “No, no, no, do this.” Somebody will say that while doing your upásaná [prayers] you should face east; some will say, “No, no, no, face west.” What are ordinary persons to do? They are at a loss to know what to do.

Shrutayo vibhinnáh smrtayo vibhinnáh
Naekamuniryasya matañ nábhinnam;
Dharmasya tattvañ nihitañ guháyañ
Mahájano yena gatah sa pantháh.

“There is not a single muni who does not differ from other munis.” Muni means “intellectual”. Muni means maniiśi – “intellectual”. However, Tantra says, “No, no, no, those intellectuals are not munis.” According to Tantra, muni means, Na munih dugdhabálakah munih saṁliina mánasah – “Those so-called intellectuals, so-called scholars, are not actually munis, or actually intellectuals.” Munih saṁliina mánasah – “Those whose minds have become one with the Supreme Entity, whose mánasa has become saṁliina with Parama Puruśa, are munis.” Naekamunir yasya mataṁ na bhinnam.

Now what is one to do then? How to solve this knotty problem? Dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guháyám – “The inner spirit of dharma, the inner secret of dharma, lies covered within your very ‘I’ feeling.” In each and every person there is this “I” feeling. “I am” – Aham asmi. This “I” feeling, this feeling of “I exist”, is called guhá. The spirit of dharma, the spirit of Parama Puruśa, lies hidden within your “I” feeling. So in order to get Him, in order to discover Him, search within your “I” feeling, and not hither and thither – not on this tirtham [site of pilgrimage] or that tirtham.

Idaṁ tirtham idaṁ tirthaṁ bhramanti támasáh janáh;
Átmatirthaṁ na jánanti kathaṁ mokśa varánane.

Párvatii asks Shiva, “What is the best tirtha?” Shiva says, támasáh janáh – “Those who are guided by the static principle, those who are guided by támasika propensities, move from one place to another in search of tirtham.” In Sanskrit, tirtham means “the point that touches this world, that connects this world with that world”. That connecting point, that common point, is called tirtha. Tirthasthaṁ ityartho tirtham. Tirthasthaṁ means “the point where the water of a river touches the bank”.

Such people move from one place to another in search of tirtham. Átmatirthaṁ na jánanti – “they do not know that the actual tirtham lies within the átman”... kathaṁ mokśa varánane – “They can never attain salvation.” This was the reply of Shiva.

Dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guháyám;
Mahájano yena gatah sah panthá.

Mahájana means mahat jana. Mahat jana means “devotee”. So a sádha, a spiritual aspirant, is to follow a devotee, not a jñánii, because the devotee knows the secret of how to satisfy Him. And when one comes in contact with Him, one will know all the secrets of the universe. Because all the secrets of the universe are known only to Parama Puruśa, and to nobody else, not to any jñániis or any [karmiis].

4 December 1978, Madras

Footnotes

(1) Ananda Marga Dharma Mahácakra was a special spiritual gathering addressed by the guru. – Eds.

(2) Jñána, karma and bhakti are forms of spiritual practice which emphasize, respectively, discrimination, selfless action, and devotion. –Eds.

(3) Just as ota yoga means the Cosmic Father's relationship with each entity individually, prota yoga means His relationship with all collectively. –Eds.

An Equal Birthright

A few months back a very knotty question was placed before me. The question was knotty, no doubt, but the reply was not at all knotty. The reply was very simple. The question concerned the fact that almost all the scriptures of the past said that women are not eligible for salvation. Almost all the scriptures of almost all the so-called faiths said that before the attainment of salvation, women will have to come back in male framework. And those other faiths where there is no scope for rebirth, said that women will have to wait for the final day of judgment, that is, doomsday, before they can get or expect any salvation.

Certainly it was a knotty problem, rather, a knotty question. But according to Ananda Marga, women have equal rights in each and every sphere, so why shouldn't they also have the right to attain salvation? You see, boys and girls are just like the two hands of the father. The father loves the little girl as much as he loves the little boy. And would the father want his boy to attain supreme bliss and his girl to burn in the fire of hell? Certainly not. If one says this, one is not doing justice to the Supreme Father. To say this is bad, extremely bad.

Párvatii asked Lord Shiva, "O Lord, what is the minimum qualification for becoming a spiritual aspirant?" You know, for each and every job in the newspaper advertisement column, it will say, "The minimum qualification is this or that." So Párvatii's question was, "What is the minimum qualification for becoming a spiritual aspirant?" Párvatii's question was a healthy one, no doubt, a very healthy question. And the following reply was given by Shiva, I think about seven thousand years ago when He was here in India (but the question was not placed before Shiva in English):

Átmajiñanam idaṁ devi param mokṣaeka sādhanam;
Sukrtaermánavo bhútvá jiñániicenmokṣamápnyát.

[Self-knowledge is the greatest means to attain salvation. People are born as human beings due to their past good saṁskáras, but to attain non-qualified liberation they will have to attain self-knowledge.]

To attain salvation one is to know oneself; that is, knowledge, the projection of the knowing faculty, should not be outside, it should be inside. Inwardly-projected actional expression is átmajiñanam, and outwardly-projected actional expression is aparajiñanam. One should acquire átmajiñanam, that is, one should have inwardly-projected actional manifestations. And this is the route, this is the way, this is the path of salvation.

And who is to acquire this átmajiñanam and finally attain salvation? Sukrtaermánavo bhútvá jiñánii cenmokṣamápnyát. By passing through so many frameworks of so many animals and so many other beings, one acquires the human framework, one gets the human structure. And when one gets the human structure, one becomes eligible for self-knowledge, átmajiñanam. And by dint of acquiring that átmajiñanam, one attains salvation. So Shiva's reply is that the minimum qualification for getting salvation, for doing sādhaná, is just a human structure. He never said that it should be a male structure, that it should be the body of a male. He said it should be the body of a human being. The question was raised by an honourable woman, Párvatii, and Shiva's

reply satisfied her very much. About seven thousand years ago this was said by Shiva. So as per Tantra, women have an equal right to attain salvation, and there has been no differentiation made by Shiva in this respect.

And you see, Krśna also said,

Paritrāñāya sādhuñām vināshāya ca duśkrām;
Dharmasāñsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge.

[I incarnate Myself in this world from age to age for the protection of the virtuous, the destruction of the wicked, and the restoration of dharma.]

“Just to save the right-thinking people” – Paritrāñāya sādhuñām – “just to save the, for the paritrāñā of the, sādhus”.

What is the meaning of paritrāñā and what is the meaning of sādhu? Sādhu means:

Prāñāh yathātmano’bhiiśtāh bhūtāñām api te tathā;
Ātmaopamyena bhūtāñām dayāñ kurvanti sādhuvaḥ.

[Just as one’s own life is precious to oneself, the lives of other created beings are precious to those beings; so those who are really virtuous treat other beings as they would themselves.]

For each and every living being, one’s personal life is very dear, very costly. Each living being has love for their own life. A man who, knowing this fact, realizing this fact, loves others as he loves himself, is called a sādhu. A man should not be carnivorous, like cats, dogs and tigers. A man must not eat meat but must love each and every living being as he loves himself. Such a man is called sādhu. Such a man – here “man” is in the common gender, not the male gender – may be a male, or may be a female. You know, “man” is not only masculine gender, “man” is common gender also. “Man is mortal” – here “man” means both male and female.

Now, Paritrāñāya sādhuñām. Krśna said, “Just to save these sādhus” (sādhu means one who loves others as he/she loves himself/herself⁽¹⁾) – “for their paritrāñā – ”

(Trāñā means “to save”. Trāñā means “relief work”, which as you know is called trāñā kārya in Sanskrit. What’s the difference between trāñā and paritrāñā? Here Krśna says, Paritrāñāya sādhuñām. Paritrāñā means “saving permanently”. Suppose you have saved a person from some danger: if that saving is of a temporary nature, it is trāñā. During flood and famines you do trāñā work. You do not help people permanently, but give them temporary relief, so it is trāñā. But when permanent relief is given, when people are saved from the attacks of demons permanently, then it is called paritrāñā. When one is freed from all the worldly fetters, it is permanent relief. And this permanent relief is for sādhus. Sādhu includes both males and females. Thus Krśna supports Shiva.)

Paritrāñāya sādhuñām vināshāya ca duśkrām. “For the annihilation of, for the destruction of, duśkrām” (duśkrām means “antisocial elements”)... dharmasāñsthāpanārthāya. Krśna does as

He does for what, what is the purpose? For the saṁsthāpana of dharma. Sthāpana means placing an entity in its right position. Suppose dharma is in its right position. Due to many factors, it may become degraded. This degradation is called glāni. If it is placed back in its right position, where it was and where it should be, this is called sthāpana. But here Krśṇa says, saṁsthāpana, that is, “placing it in its proper position and making proper arrangement to keep it in its proper position”. Dharma saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge – “I come here again and again.”

Here Lord Krśṇa never says that women have no right to attain salvation. So on behalf of the philosophy of Ananda Marga, and also on behalf of the cult of Tantra, I hereby announce that males and females, who are the boys and girls of Parama Puruśa, the sons and daughters of Parama Puruśa, have an equal birthright to attain salvation. Those who say that women are not entitled to the same are antisocial elements. They represent vested interests.

5 December 1978, Madras

Footnotes

(1) The author’s spoken words here were, “he oblique she loves himself oblique herself”. –Eds.

The Phať Mantra

Those who consider themselves greatly learned, and proudly state that they know, do not really know. Those persons who, on the other hand, think that they do not know anything, may be the ones who actually know. So if we want to know who is knowledgeable and who is ignorant, it will be very difficult to arrive at a correct judgment. Offhand we cannot make any comment. Just phať kare [impulsively], we cannot say anything. Before deciding we shall have to ponder very deeply.

I shall conclude with a few remarks on a particular word I just used – the word phať. In the Tantric system of old there were three biijas [acoustic roots] – phať, vaśať and vaośať. Before performing different sorts of kriyá [work], one of the biijas would be uttered. This was the system. In whatever the work, the biija was quickly transformed into action. That is to say, the thought process was made to act very quickly. An example would be if someone had a sudden desire to go to Cuttack and he or she set out then and there – he or she gave his or her wish an immediate actional form.

So in this Tantric system, if one wanted to transform his or her work or thought into quick action, then the phať mantra was uttered before performing the action. Therefore we still say [in Bengali] that such-and-such person is doing something phať-phať – is doing something very phať-phať. Phať is that Tantric biija. Baťra phaťphaťáni – loke bale ná sab! [“This man is blurting out his thoughts abruptly and impulsively!”]

And as I said, one cannot tell phať kare whether a particular person is a learned person or a fool. One has to think a great deal before commenting on such a thing. Here it is better not to apply the Tantric biija, phať.

20 December 1978, Calcutta

Bhaerava and Bhaeravii

Today I will relate to you an episode of Tantric history – an episode which has almost been lost. I think you all know that Sadáshiva was the first Tantric Mahákaola on this planet. His mission was Kurvantu vishvamán Tántrikam – “To get the whole universe initiated into the Tantric cult”. To become a Tantric means to fight directly against the opposing forces and obstacles on the path of progress and to preach the lofty gospels of universal humanism. That human beings are the greatest of all living beings is to be proven in action, not in mere words or theoretical moral principles.

In that early phase of human civilization, there were more rifts and clashes among the different clans and tribes than there are today. It was therefore safer for human beings to live on hills. Later, with the development of civilization, they moved down to the plains and settled in woods and forests. But in those early days, they would sleep in hill-caves after blocking the entrances with big rocks. Fire had not yet been discovered, so they could not protect themselves by burning fires around their encampments in the caves and forests. Fire was discovered much later.

The hills on which people used to live were called gotras in Vedic Sanskrit. So if a person called Ráma lived on a certain hill, the hill was called “Rámagotra”. Similarly, the hill where Shyáma lived was known as “Shyámagotra”, and all the people who lived on it belonged to that gotra. This was the system followed in that early period of social development. Prior to that [patriarchal system], each hill was ruled by a gotramátá, or clan mother. The clan members would all obey her and would introduce themselves by her name; and likewise the hill itself would be named after that matriarch. These days this system has evolved into a dogmatic clan or caste system.

So each hill was named after its sage. If Maharási Káshyapa [The Great Sage Káshyapa] was the leader of a hill clan, that clan was called Káshyapagotra. If Maharási Bharadvája was the leader, it was called Bharadvájagotra. Thus, the early matriarchal system was followed by a patriarchal system of leadership.

Those people who lived on the same hill under a common patriarch lived just like brothers and sisters. However, they considered the members of other hill communities to be their deadly enemies. And since all on one hill were brothers and sisters, they could not marry among themselves. So what would they do in order to marry? One clan would defeat a neighbouring clan in battle, and they would forcibly drag the vanquished women, with hands bound, back to their own hill for a life of domestic servitude. The males of the defeated clan were utilized as slaves.

Even to this day, there is a custom whereby the mother asks her son on the eve of his marriage, “Where are you going?” He replies, “I’m going to bring you a maid-servant.” It comes from those days when the victorious clan would drag the defeated women back to its own hill. Not only that – to bind someone you need a rope or a chain ([now] called a gántchárá).⁽¹⁾ The women would be brought back in those days with chains on their wrists, otherwise they might run away. The iron bangle that a married woman wears today is a symbol of that early servitude. In those days women also fought in battle, and were often hit on the head and severely injured. A small

vermilion mark then came to represent the blood streaming from their cracked heads. But today a woman must wear that vermilion mark if she is to be recognized as married. This is quite different from the original idea. Actually these are all just different dogmas.

In Ananda Marga I have said that those who wish to use vermilion as a decorative mark may do so. Some women like to wear plastic bangles, others like to wear iron ones. I am not going to object to the use of these ornaments. Similarly, if someone uses vermilion on the forehead I have nothing to say against it, because that, too, is a matter of decoration. Those who like to use vermilion may do so. I hope, however, that the original reason for the use of vermilion is clear.

So even today women bear the mark of servitude by wearing iron bangles on their wrists, thus giving the impression that they have been vanquished; they still use the vermilion which originally symbolized bloodshed; they still tie the *gántchará* after marriage, which symbolizes their being forcibly carried away; and the bridegroom still often says to his mother on the eve of his departure for the marriage, "I'm going to bring you a maid-servant." How absurd! No one is anyone's servant. The system of slavery was abolished long ago. You should oppose these dogmatic beliefs. They are very objectionable. You should understand the history behind them, and then do the right thing.

There were three main ethnic groups in India in those days: Austric, Mongolian,⁽²⁾ and Negroid. In [East] India they all mingled into one. The dark-complexioned non-Aryan Austrics were the original people of India, and thus there is Austric blood in most of the present population of India. The Bengalees, being a mixture of these three groups, evolved in a particular way and developed a particular psychology. They have developed certain morphological characteristics from which one can easily deduce that they are Bengali. Their physical appearance and nature are a result of a special type of blood mixture. Those groups which have mixed blood are generally very intelligent, and the Bengali people are no exception. Besides being intelligent, they have other marked psychological traits which characterize them as Bengalees: they are sports fanatics, even those who do not play any sport themselves, and they are equally mad for open-air theatre and established theatre. These psychological traits result from the integration of the different racial groups.

In the days of Shiva, three ethnic groups intermingled. One was the Austric group, the black non-Aryan people; the second was the Mongolian group who came to India from the north, that is from Tibet and China; and the third was the fair-complexioned Aryan group which entered India from the west. The Aryans are further divided into three groups. The Aryans of the far north are Nordic. Their complexion is reddish-white, their hair is reddish and the irises of their eyes are brown, which is to say also reddish. The second group, the Alpine group, have bluish hair, bluish irises and a pinkish-white complexion. The third group, the Mediterranean group, have a milky-white complexion, black hair and blackish irises. The Aryans who settled in India came mostly from this Mediterranean group, and converged, as mentioned, with the Mongolians from the north [and with the Austrics].

There was a general disharmony among these three groups that had converged in India, expressed in numerous feuds and clashes among the various hill clans. In those days, a war party would ride fully armed to a rival hill to bring a woman back by force. Even today, in certain

parts of India, the bridegroom and his party act this out as a marriage ritual by riding on horseback fully armed to the marriage ceremony and staging a mock battle. The leader of the group, that is the bridegroom, is called bara, which in Sanskrit means “best of the lot”, because on that day he is the most important man.

This predominantly racial conflict among the different hill clans was raging fiercely during the period of Lord Shiva. Shiva worked hard to cultivate a perfect friendship among the three warring groups. He knew that in the absence of such a friendship, the future of humanity was dark. Just as Kṛṣṇa wanted to unite all the people of the then India and create a Mahábhárata [Great India], similarly, Shiva wanted to unite the three warring groups. He thought that his lofty spiritual cult and ideology and his unique school of medicine would not be properly conveyed to future generations if the people continued their racial battles.

Those were also the days of polygamy. Shiva himself had three wives – Párvatii, an Aryan girl; Kálii, an Austrico-Dravidian girl; and Gauṅgá, a Mongolian girl. He hoped these marriages would restore the spirit of friendship among the three races. With the help of his three wives, he propagated the gospels of dharma and the practices of Tantra. It was a great advantage for Shiva that he was accepted as a god equally by the Aryans, the Mongolo-Tibetans and the Austrians. Much later, even the Buddhists and the Jains accepted him as their god, because Shiva wanted to bring about a blending of the human race. This is the same Shiva who was known among Buddhists as Báuka Bhaerava. From “Báuka” come words such as “Búo”, “Báuýá”, “Búá”, “Boá” [all applied to Shiva] and “Búoshiva”.

In many cities and towns of Bengal you will come across [the place name] Búoshivatalá. Búoshiva was the Shiva of the Buddhists. In Calcutta, the area around Búoshivatalá became known as Búo Bájár [bájár = “bazaar”, “market”]. Many people from Marwar settled there and it became a prosperous market, but it became wrongly pronounced “Báu Bájár” [“Big Market”]. In fact, originally it was not a big market. Of course, there are Báu Bájárs in many cities, but this Báu Bájár in Calcutta was not named because it was a “big market”; rather it was the market area surrounding the Búoshiva temple.

Later Shiva felt that there should be proper media to propagate the grand and lofty ideals He was teaching. Tomár patáká yáre dáo táre bahibáre dáo shakti [“Give strength to the person to whom you give the flag to carry”]. Otherwise who would be able to carry forth so much knowledge, wisdom, intellect, and such a deep spiritual cult? Incompetent people cannot be expected to carry the legacy of anything. If I teach something to an incompetent or undesirable person, it will bear no fruit, it will get wasted. A heron can never learn to speak like a mynah bird, no matter how much it is trained. The incompetent person is just like the heron. What did Shiva do about this?

Párvatii had a son called Bhaerava, and Kálii a daughter named Bhaeravii. Shiva first taught Bhaerava Tantra sádhaná, or kápálika sádhaná (the Tantric sádhaná which utilizes the human skull); and the tándava dance. Since then all those people who have learned the Tantric practices have also been called Bhaerava, they all introduce themselves by the name Bhaerava. They lose their individual names such as Ráma, Shyáma, Tom or Dick, and automatically become a part of Shivagotra [the Family of Shiva].

Shiva proclaimed, “You are all mine. Whatever hill you live on you are still my own. I will think well of you. I will think about your collective welfare. I will work for your collective well-being. Come one and all to me safely and fearlessly and tell me your needs. I will help you. Átmagotraṁ parityajya Shivagotraṁ pravishatu [‘Leave your own gotra and enter Shivagotra’].”

Whoever is a spiritualist has left his or her own gotra and has entered the Shivagotra. In Ananda Marga also, separate gotras are not recognized. All belong to Shivagotra. I have only stated that at the time of marriage the bride and bridegroom should not have any direct relationship three generations above and three generations below.⁽³⁾ If this condition is not met, the marriage should not be solemnized.

Ananda Margis have no caste or gotra. I have said before also that the division of humanity into Káshyapagotra, Bharadvájagotra, etc., is nonsensical. This is just to mislead people. If we look back in [anthropology] we will see that the forefathers of the present-day humans were apes or ape-men. So if people are very particular about their gotras, I will say to their faces, “Boys and girls! You belong to the ape gotra.”

We have all descended from our common ancestors, the apes. The same is true in relation to the castes. [One might try to argue that] the forefathers of the Bráhmaṇas were the ape-Bráhmaṇas and the forefathers of the Kśatriyas were the ape-Kśatriyas; but that just isn’t so. As apes do not have any particular caste, the present-day caste differences are all hypocrisy and maliciousness. You should remove even the least vestige of these nonsensical notions. You must not give credence to such things.

So Shiva taught Bhaerava. Then He thought: “If I teach this only to my son; that is, if my son alone knows this secret spiritual cult, this great asset for humanity, and my daughter remains ignorant, then fifty per cent of the society will remain a burden for the other fifty per cent; that is, the women will remain a burden for the men, and the movement of the men also will be greatly impeded.” Even in those days, seven thousand years ago, Shiva thought in this way. “If I only give the strength and responsibility to carry the burden to my son, Bhaerava, that will not be good. I will also have to give some of the responsibility to my daughter, Bhaeravii.” And that is what He did. And since that day, any woman practising Tantra is known as Bhaeravii.

His other wife, Gaṁgá, had a son called Kárttikeya, but he was more of a dandy. Even though he wished to, he did not have the moral courage to practice Tantra. The practice of Tantra requires a little courage – it is not for cowards. (Some people say that Kárttikeya was known as Devasenapati and was a general of the gods [deva means “god” and senapati means “military general”], but the fact of the matter is different. Kárttikeya’s wife was called Devásená, and so he was Devásená’s pati [husband], or Devásenápati. You should remove this common misunderstanding. If people say that Kárttikeya was the general of the gods, they are wrong.) Gaṁgá was a little sad that the son of one of her co-wives and the daughter of her other co-wife were taught the practice of Tantra while her own son turned out bad. To console her and help her forget her sadness, Shiva gave her extra love and affection. This did not please his other wives, Párvatii and Kálii, who naturally complained to him about this. But actually, what he did was right. There is a rhyme about Shiva’s marriage to three girls:

Ŧápur ũpur vrŕŕi páre nadey elo bán
ShivŦákurer biye habhe tin kanyá dán.

[Pitter-patter goes the rain, the river water whirls; Lord Shiva who lived long ago was married to three girls.]

Those three girls were Párvatii, Kálii and Gaunḡá. People used to complain that Shiva was “dancing with Gaunḡá on His head.” (Suppose you are doting on someone, people will say that you are “dancing with So-and-so on your head”.) In later days, people completely misinterpreted the facts and made statues of Shiva with Gaunḡá’s head placed on his head and water flowing from her mouth.⁽⁴⁾ These are all mythological interpretations. Could such a thing ever be possible? The poet Bharat Chandra Raygunakar wrote in his famous magnum opus:

Gaunḡá náme satii tár taraunḡa emani
Jiivasvarúpa sei svámii shiromańi.

[Gaunḡá the blessed one is the jewel sitting on Shiva’s head with water flowing from her mouth.]

Here shiromańi means “a jewel placed on one’s head”. If you are doting on someone, people will say that you are “dancing with So-and-so on your head”.

Thus we see that even in those days Shiva did not accept any differentiation between males and females. He taught Tantra to both his son and his daughter.

Let me tell you a short story about Kálii. One night she thought, “What will happen if my little daughter meets with any danger when she goes out to practise Tantra? Let me go out and help her.” In Tantra, however, it is not permitted to intervene in anyone’s individual practices. Bhaeravii went out and practised her sáadhaná according to the instructions she had received. Shiva was already absorbed in samádhi in the burial ground. Kálii thought, “Even if Shiva is able to see me from a distance on this dark new-moon night he won’t be able to tell who I actually am – he’ll think I’m Bhaeravii.” Now while walking in the darkness, Kálii accidentally stepped on Shiva’s chest. When she realized whom she was stepping on, she felt ashamed and stuck out her tongue [a sign of embarrassment or shame in India]. “Who are you?” asked Shiva. Kálii was dressed like Bhaeravii to misguide Shiva, but how could she introduce herself as Bhaeravii, their daughter, to her own husband? So Kálii said, “I’m Kaoverii.”⁽⁵⁾ (In southern India there is a river named Kaoverii. People mistakenly call it “Káverii”. The actual Sanskrit word is “Kaoverii”. The English spelling was at one time “Cauveri”.)

In any case, Kálii said that she was Kaoverii, a name she has also been called ever since. Those who do not know the story in the proper context say that Shiva was lying down and Kálii was standing on his chest with her tongue stuck out.⁽⁶⁾

From a study of history we learn that in those days there was no differentiation between men and women regarding spiritual practices or the spiritual code of conduct. To enable the entire society to develop what He propounded in social, economic, educational, medical, scientific and artistic fields, Shiva taught His daughter in the same way that He taught His son. Shiva was the original

propounder of Tantra and the first Mahákaola. Those who oppose what Shiva did are to be treated as opportunists. If they wish to keep women subjugated, to curtail women's natural rights, they are opposed to Shiva and the code of dharma. In fact, I should say that they are veritable demons, and such demons in human form cast a shadow on the glory of humanity.

27 December 1978, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Gáńtcháfá is the word used for the knotting together of the bride's sari and the groom's scarf in a modern Hindu wedding ceremony. As the author will explain, it is a vestige and symbol of the "rope or chain". –Eds.

(2) Since in ancient times Mongolia was an empire, and symbolized all of North and Northeast Asia, "Mongolian" here means the Oriental, or yellow, race. –Eds.

(3) As opposed to the custom that people should not marry within their own gotras at all. –Eds.

(4) A further part of the misinterpretation was that Shiva's wife Gaṁgá was somehow the River Gaṁgá (Ganges). –Eds.

(5) Editors' note: She wavered between saying her own name, "Kálii", and the name of her daughter, "Bhaeravii". The word became "Kaoverii". –Eds.

(6) This is the popular representation of the goddess Kálii, who developed 5300 or 5400 years after the time of the actual Kálii the wife of Shiva. –Eds.

Dance, Mudrá and Tantra

You know that even before Sadáshiva there was dance, there was music; people used to sing, also; but everything was in a disorderly manner. The dexterous hands of Sadáshiva made it a science – rather, an artistic science.

It is not an easy job to dance properly and correctly. The fundamental requirements, or the fundamental spirit, of dance, instrumental music, and song were brought within the framework of science by Sadáshiva, and that is why He is also known as “Naáarája”: “Naáarája” means “King of the Dancers”. (And another name of Sadáshiva is “Nádatanu”, that is, “music personified”.)

Dance is a highly-developed art. In the Oriental variety of music, you know, three items come within the fold of saṁgiita, or music: dance, song, and instrumental music. The collective name in Sanskrit is saṁgiita. Lord Sadáshiva brought everything within the framework of science, and just now I called it “artistic science”.

In the Oriental variety of dance there are several mudrás, that is, postures. When giving something to a living being, the mudrá is like this [demonstrates]. When giving something to something past, not present in the world, the mudrá is like this [demonstrates]. The “don’t fear” mudrá is like this. The “take what you want” mudrá is like this. The “come forward” mudrá is like this. The “be serpentine” mudrá is like this. “Be subtle, maintain a link with the earth” is like this. There are so many mudrás used in the Oriental variety of dance. It is not an easy job to learn it, but rather a very difficult job.

Now the fundamentality, or rather the primordial phase of Oriental dance, is táńdava. It is not a very easy job either. The knees must cross the navel. When they cross the navel it is called Brahma táńdava. When they cross the anáhata [mid-point of the chest] it is called Viśńu táńdava. When they cross this portion [indicates the throat], it is called Rudra táńdava. It is very difficult to dance Rudra táńdava. It requires long practice.

That is why Lord Sadáshiva is known as Naáarája. And when these boys [indicates them] were dancing, it was just like a picture of Naáarája in táńdava mudrá. It is called táńdava; táńdava is a mudrá.

Why is it called táńdava? In Sanskrit tańd means “to jump”. Tańdu means “of jumping habit”. Táńdava means “having the use of tańdu, the use of jumping”. But jumping in the proper style, not in a disorderly manner. You should learn it properly in a disciplined way.

And táńdava represents life; you know Tantra is a cult of life, it is not a cult of death. For Tantra you should be strong physically, mentally and spiritually. First in the present tense; Lord Shiva says all your expressions, all your manifestations, must be based on the present tense. So this táńdava is the starting phase of Tantra.

This táńdava I said represents life, it represents vitality. There are so many forces that want to destroy you, so many forces forces that are inimical to you by nature. Say a snake – a snake is a

born enemy. There are many such born enemies. As Tantra represents life, táńdava says that one's spirit should be based on vitality, based on the principle of survival.

This human skull represents death. You are surrounded by death, but you must not be defeated, you must not develop the psychology of fear or defeatism. So the knife is with you to fight against death.⁽¹⁾ Yours is a fight for survival. In the daytime one may also use a snake to represent death – not an ordinary snake, but a venomous snake. In India our boys dance with a snake. But at nighttime neither a skull nor a snake will be visible. Here there is light, they will be visible, but in a burial ground, in a cremation ground, where there is darkness, a snake or skull will not be visible. There you may use fire to represent death.

This is the spirit of Tantra. To fight, to fight for survival. It is normal life moving towards the supreme state of abnormality.

Lord Shiva started this táńdava dance, and his spouse, Párvatii, started the lalita dance, lalita mármika. What you did just at present while singing kiirtana, that is called lalita. Lalita represents that now we are enjoying bliss, we are in a happy mood. We are in a happy mood, and the hands should be above ninety degrees. Do you follow? I think you followed me. Lalita represents a happy mood, and it was invented by Párvatii, Lord Shiva's spouse. Lalita helps people in their spiritual progress and psychic expansion.

Now the devas, the Tantrics of that era, about seven thousand years ago, learned táńdava and lalita and wanted there to be a musical expression for the general public. That is your RAWA.⁽²⁾

For the general public there was the middle course. This middle course is called madhyama márga in Sanskrit, majjhimá márga in Buddhist scriptures. And that path, where the subtle aspects of spirituality combined with the subtle aspects of vitality, was represented by [tála].

A middle course was invented, and in Oriental music it is called tála. Oriental music is based on tála. Tála means – the first sound of táńdava is tá, and the first sound of lalita is la – tá plus la.

Yes, this was the origin. And on the basis of tála, Oriental music invented so many rágas and ráginiis, so many tunes and sub-tunes, in the hoary past.

Now in all of South Asia and Southeast Asia the music is based on this tála. It is the happy blending of táńdava and lalita, and in it there are two main offshoots. One is known as the Áryávarta offshoot, from Persia to Vietnam, and the other is the Dákśińátya offshoot of all South India, Ceylon, Indonesia, Malaysia and up to Australia.

This is the science, and this science was invented by Sadáshiva. It is to be learned with proper care and proper respect. These boys displayed excellently what I am trying to say. I am extremely pleased with the sweetness they displayed.

10 May 1979 morning, Fiesch, Switzerland

Footnotes

(1) Táńdava is performed with a skull, a snake, or a torch in the left hand, and a knife in the right hand. –Eds.

(2) Renaissance Artists' and Writers' Association. –Eds.

What Are You?

You know, the cult of spiritual practice, the cult that leads one to the final desideratum of human life, is called Tantra. In Tantra, there is hardly one percent theory; ninety-nine percent is practice. And you also know that a good theory may not help a person, it is practice that counts.

Suppose you know how to prepare a particular sweet, but practically you cannot do it. In such a case, will you get that delicious taste? Theory will not be able to help you. In Tantra there is ninety-nine percent practice, and practice precedes theory. The theory was prepared on the basis of practice and not practice on theory.

It may be that a theory is very sweetly worded but cannot be translated into action. In Tantra, the theory succeeds the practice, that is, the practice precedes the theory. And when the Tantras were invented, there was hardly anything in black and white, because it was practice. Later the Tantras were given book form.

Tadekaṁ japāmas tadekaṁ smarāmas
Tadekaṁ jagatsākṣīrūpaṁ namāmah;
Tadekaṁ nidhānaṁ nirāmbamiishāṁ
Bhavāmbodhipotaṁ sharaṇāṁ vrajāmah.

[Tadekaṁ japāmah.] You say so many things, and major portions of what you say are meaningless, simply a wastage of time and energy. And not only do you say things, but you speak in your mind. And that is also a wastage of energy. Before going to Stockholm, you may say within your mind a thousand times, “I have to go to Stockholm, I have to go to Stockholm, I am to go to Stockholm” – a mere wastage of time and energy.

What is thought? Thought means to speak within. Thought is closely related to soliloquy. Suppose there is nobody to hear you and you are speaking. What is that? It is just like a thought. When you are speaking to yourself, it is called “soliloquy”. Thought is also like that. Some of your thoughts are of such a nature that, if others hear them, they will say you are insane.

So here the Tantric says, “Look, what I am to say within my mind, speak to myself, I should speak regarding You, and not regarding this or that, that or this; so my time will be properly utilized – there will not be any wastage of time and energy.”

Tadekaṁ smarāmah. You may be remembering, “Oh, when I went to Alaska, my host served me a very delicious menu.” You are thinking like this – a story of, say, twenty, or perhaps twenty-five or thirty, years ago. You are remembering – what? It is a sweet memory. What is the necessity?

Memory should be of – what? A tactual experience that took place in my mind in the course of my sādhanā, or the bliss that I enjoyed during kiirtana. Memory should be like this. “My memory should also be centred around You, so there will not be any wastage of time and energy.” What do people do generally? People generally remember past stories of pain and happiness, sweet stories of near and dear ones. But all those things are a mere wastage of time and energy.

Tadekañ jagatsáksiirupañ namámah. “If I am to pay respects to anybody, I am to pay respects to You only.” Because all other objects of this universe are expressions of that very Parama Puruśa. So I pay respect to the Nucleus who created all these great personalities, all these little and big ones.

As per yoga and Tantra, to Parama Puruśa one is to do namaste. Namah plus te – “I pay respect to You” – Namaste. And Namaskára means, “I am paying my respects.” And that is why you may use the word namaste only for Parama Puruśa, but namaskára for both Parama Puruśa and the jiiva [unit being]. Tadekañ jagatsáksiirupañ namámah. “If I am to pay respect to anybody, I am to pay respect to You only.”

Tadekañ nidhánám nirálambamiisham. Whenever one is doing something, there is some goal, there is some objective. Whenever one is moving, one must have some destination, one must have some culminating point, one must have some terminating point. So then, what are You? “You are the Terminus of all termini.” You are going to Stockholm. Stockholm is the terminus. You are going to London. London is the terminus. But for all these termini, the Supreme Terminus is You.

Nirálambamiisham [“there is no authority over You, nor are You contained within anything”]. Why? All these termini are located within certain boundaries. London, for example, is a city in Great Britain. You are going to Paris, Paris is a town in France – but you stay there under certain limitations, certain boundaries. But You, the Supreme Terminus, You are beyond the peripheries of time, space and person, above all boundaries, and that is why You are the Supreme Desideratum.

I have said so many times that “desideratum” is such a point, such a term, that it should not have any plural form. That is, there should not be any word such as desiderata. Desideratum always remains singular. Because You are the Singular Entity, You are the Single Desideratum.

Bhavámbodhipotañ sharañám vrajámah. Say, from here, if you were to go to England – how are you to go if you are not to take the help of any vehicle? Perhaps running up to the shore and then swimming. But is it practical or practicable? No. Is it feasible? No. Then what will be the better or the practical approach? By truck up to the beach and then a boat or a big steamer.

Now, if you are to cross the peripheries of time, space and person, what are you to do? You require a big ship. Bhavámbodhipotañ sharañám vrajámah – “O Parama Puruśa, Thou art a big ship, and we have taken shelter in Thee.” Bhavámbodhipotañ sharañám vrajámah – “O Parama Puruśa! Thou art the best ship. So I pay my respect to Thee.”

Bhavámbodhipotam. Bhava means “any entity coming within the scope of time, space and person”. Ambu means “water”. Ambodhi means “ocean”. Potam means “ship”. “Thou art the ship, and taking shelter on this ship, we will cross the ambodhi of bhava, we will cross the ocean of time, space and person.”

This is the spirit of this shloka of Tantra.
24 May 1979, Rotterdam

The Three Species of Human Being

Yesterday I talked about the variations amongst plants, animals and humans. Now, amongst humans also, there are certain variations. Some may have the structure of humans, but may be cherishing the ideas of an animal. From their physical structure, you may say that they are humans, but mentally they are not humans. They are just like animals. The Sanskrit word for “animal” is pashu. They are pashus in human structure. And there are some humans who are just like humans – with all the merits and demerits – and there are some whose physical structure is like that of a human, but who are godly in nature. So among humans, there are these three species – pashu, viira and deva.

Now let us see what yoga is. Then I will say something regarding these three species of humans – pashu, viira and deva.

Some people say that the proper interpretation of yoga is Sarvacintáparityágo nishcinto yoga ucyate – “When the mind is free of all thoughts and all internal projections, that state is yoga.” Some people say that just doing physical exercises and controlling the glands and tissues is yoga.

In Sanskrit, the word yoga comes from two root verbs. One is yuj, which means addition. “Two plus two equals four” – this is addition. Another meaning of yoga is yuiñj, which means “to unify, to make one”. When two become one, this is unification. When sugar is put in water, the identity of sugar is lost. This is unification.

Now, Sarvacintáparityágo nishcinto means that the mind is free from all thoughts or all psychic projections, but it does not mean unification, nor even addition, so this explanation cannot be accepted by wise men. Neither physical exercises nor suspension of the mind is yoga.

Another interpretation is Yogashcittavrttinirodhah. There was a great philosopher named Patanjali. He said this about two thousand years ago. The human mind has fifty main propensities, and these propensities, both inside and outside, are working in ten different directions. Each and every propensity works within and without, internally and externally: so, fifty [times] two. And these propensities work in all ten directions: fifty [times] two [times] ten equals one thousand. The propensities, the expressions, are one thousand. And these propensities are finally controlled by the pineal gland, and not by the pituitary gland. The pineal gland is called sahasrára in Sanskrit.

Now, as per Patanjali, the explanation is Yogashcittavrttinirodhah – that is, “controlling or suspending all these one thousand propensities”. You may have controlled all these one thousand propensities, but this does not mean any addition or any unification, so this interpretation is also meaningless. It cannot be accepted by wise people, because this interpretation has nothing to do with the proper import of the term yoga.

Then the final interpretation, the interpretation of Ananda Marga, is Sañyoga yoga ityukto jivátma Paramátmanah – “The unification of unit consciousness, jivátma, with Supreme Consciousness, Paramátma, is yoga.” When the unit entity, the unit consciousness, becomes one

with the Cosmic Consciousness, that becoming one, that unification, is yoga. In that unification, the unit consciousness loses its identity. When the river comes in contact with the sea, it no longer remains a river. It becomes one with the sea, it becomes the sea. For this process of yoga the best interpretation is Sańyoga yoga ityukto jiivátmá Paramátmanah.

What are the stages? (Suppose the little boy cannot get through the books of philosophical science – so there are stages.) I told you that amongst humans, there are three species, pashu, viira, and deva – animals in human form, men in human form, and gods in human form.

Those who are in pashu form have to elevate themselves to the standard of man-god, that is, God. Pashu form means always moving in order to eat, drink, or sleep – for these things. They will have to elevate their standard to become human both in mind and body. This style of practice is known as pashvácára, as taught by Lord Shiva about seven thousand years ago.

For those who are humans both in mind and body, the style of practice is called viirácára. Our avadhútas and avadhútikás practise viirácára. Viira means brave. Why is it called brave? It is because they are fighting against the fetters of mind, they are fighting against the satanic fetters. So certainly they are brave. This viirácára is of two kinds. In the southern Himalayas, the practice taught by Shiva is known as viirácára. North of the Himalayas – in Tibet, China, Siberia, etc. – the practice taught by Shiva was known as Ciinácára, that is, “the Chinese style”.

From ancient India, the great Tantric yogi Vashistha came to China about five thousand years ago to learn this Ciinácára, the Chinese style of viirácára, and the Chinese-oriented [Tantra]. About 1500 years ago, a great yogi from China, named Pa Fa Hu Le, went to Bengal to revive Ciinácára.

Those who are established in viirácára have elevated themselves to the standard of deva. They are gods in human structure. What is the meaning of “god” here? Here “god” is meant with a small “g”, not a capital “g”; the feminine form is “goddess”. For “God” with a capital “g”, there is no feminine form; “God” is common. So, what is God?

Everything in this universe emanates from the Supreme God – capital “g”. All are different waves, coming out, emanating, from the Supreme Entity. All the waves have their peculiar length, no two waves are the same. That is why in Ánanda Sútram I said, Vaecitryam Prákradharmah samánam na bhaviśyati – “Variety is the law of nature, there cannot be cent per cent equality.”

Each and every entity has its peculiarity, its speciality. No two articles or expressions of the world are the same. These expressions of Parama Puruśa are devas. The controller of these devas, or the factor just above these devas, is Mahádeva. Mahádeva means the Supreme God, Supreme Entity. Here the “g” is capital “g”. Those who have elevated their status and are recognized as deva – their goal is attainment of Mahádeva, attainment of the status of Mahádeva, to be one with the Supreme Entity. This is divyácára. Their souls, their spirits, their entities, their existences, finally become one with Mahádeva. Hence they are deva.

The first style, from animality to humanity, is known as pashvácára. The second stage, or the second style, is viirácára in the south of the Himalayas and Ciinácára north of the Himalayas. As the final stage, divyácára is for all people who want to elevate themselves to the supreme excellence of Parama Puruśa.

18 August 1979, Taipei

The Real Culprit

A question may arise whether the mind can at all function in an entity lacking a physical body. In a disembodied state the mind cannot work, because ectoplasmic structure can never function in that state. The stuff of which the mind is composed cannot function once it is detached from the body, because the mind-stuff functions only when the brain is active and the nerve cells are active. Physical death brings about dissociation of the nerve cells, hence the ectoplasmic structure stops functioning. So when people say that there is a ghost in such-and-such tree, it is totally baseless. The brain of a dead person has already been burnt in the cremation fire or transformed into soil in a grave, so how can it function? A disembodied soul or disembodied mind can never function.

But it is true that often a powerful person will associate his or her ectoplasmic structure with the disembodied mind. Suppose there is a man named Ráma Bábu who has great ectoplasmic strength, great mánasadhátu. (In *Ánanda Sútram*,⁽¹⁾ the word *cittánu* has been used for *mánasadhátu*). He, employing a portion of his own ectoplasm, activates the disembodied mind according to its *saṃskáras* [reactive momenta]. In this case the reactive momenta remain associated in the form of seed with the disembodied mind. Now, the disembodied mind has no ectoplasmic structure because it has no physical body. Under the circumstances Ráma Bábu can get that particular disembodied mind or soul to do many things. If people such as this happen to be wicked by nature, they can cause the disembodied entity to hurl pieces of bone, brick, etc., into someone else's house. Sometimes the cots on which people recline are also found to be tilting. All these actions are done by the ectoplasmic structure of a powerful person, not by that of the dead person.

So to stop this nonsense you should find the real culprit and give the person a good shaking. You will find that the throwing of pieces of bone, brick, etc., will immediately stop. All this comes within the scope of *Avidyá Tantra*. It often turns out that the person who was responsible for the throwing of the bricks is found sitting quietly in a corner of the burial ground, and their ectoplasmic structure is getting that hapless disembodied soul to do all those wicked things. If you hit their arm with a good stick then their wicked deeds will immediately stop. And when you see a cot rising from the ground with the ectoplasmic strength of that person (though you cannot see the ectoplasmic arm that raises it, as ectoplasm cannot be seen), just brandish a stick at random. It will turn out that the arm of that wicked Tantric gets broken. Perhaps that person was seated three miles away from the actual site of occurrence. These are all interesting things – *Avidyá Tantric* things.

5 October 1979 morning, Calcutta

Táńdava, Shástra, and the Teachings of Shiva

You know that according to the Indo-Aryan custom (commonly called simply “Aryan”) there are certain special techniques for moving different parts of the body following a particular system. The heel of the foot is related to the sound tá, the ball of the foot to the sound dhin, and the toes to the sound dhae. In the kaośikii dance all three are utilized to some extent. But in the táńdava dance tá is utilized more than dhin [and dhae not utilized at all].⁽¹⁾ About seven thousand years ago, Sadáshiva first introduced the táńdava dance, and so far as the kaośikii dance is concerned, I first introduced it on September 6, 1978. Actually, both táńdava and kaośikii are more physical exercises, useful to the body, than they are forms of dance. Kaośikii serves as a medicine for twenty-two diseases – it is a panacea.

The táńdava dance is an all-body exercise, by which even the brain and its nerve cells become strengthened. Táńdava is a very vigorous exercise. The Sanskrit word tańđu means “upward jump”, and hence the dance which involves a lot of jumping is called táńdava. You know that rice is called tańđuła in Sanskrit, because while husking the rice with a traditional wooden husking machine the rice grains leap from the paddy husks and scatter all around. Lord Sadáshiva invented táńdava as a valuable tool for dharma pracára [the propagation of spirituality], but that does not mean that táńdava is easy for everyone to do.

Párvatii lent her cooperation to Shiva in many ways in propagating spirituality. Shiva introduced the táńdava dance, and Párvatii introduced the lalita mármika dance. Ananda Marga has accepted the system of combining the lalita mármika dance with kiirtana. Now to create a link between the táńdava invented by Shiva and the lalita mármika invented by Párvatii, certain rhythms were invented or discovered. The common term for all these rhythms is tála: the tá of táńdava and the la of lalita.

The two of them together, Shiva and Párvatii, did a lot for the all-round development of the people of that dark prehistoric age. In that distant past, Shiva had to invent so many new things – the science of medicine, the science of music, the science of art, the physical sciences, etc. Párvatii would at times ask Shiva various questions, and with the replies which Shiva gave, she acquired the capacity to educate the masses in the science of spirituality. Shiva used to reply gladly to all Párvatii’s questions. The collective name of all those queries is nigama, and the collective name of the answers is ágama. Ágama and nigama together form the basis of Tantra shástra.

Now, what is shástra? That which teaches discipline to human beings is called shástra. It usually deals with the dos and don’ts, that is, with what should be followed and what should not be followed, what should be practised and what should not be practised. The book which makes people well aware of the dos and don’ts is called shástra. Shásanát tárayet yastu sah shástrah parikiirttitah – “That which provides clear-cut guidelines and thereby paves the way for the liberation of spiritual aspirants is called shástra.” The root verb trae followed by the suffix áda becomes tra, which means “that which liberates”.

We see a similar use of tra in the word mantra. A mantra is defined Mananát tárayet yastu sah mantrah parikiirtitah – “The process which, when repeated again and again in the mind, brings emancipation, is called a mantra.” Man + traē + dá = mantra.

And, tan + traē + dá = tantra. The Sanskrit root verb tan means to expand, and the verb traē means to liberate; so the scientific process that paves the way for the liberation of human beings [by expansion of their minds] is called Tantra. So the word tantra has two implications, one “expansion” and the other “emancipation”.

You all know that the name of India is Bhárata in Sanskrit. The Sanskrit root verb tan [becoming ta] forms part of the word bhárata. The root verb bhara means “to feed”, so the land which has abundant food to feed its population and where there is enormous scope for psycho-spiritual expansion is called Bhárata. As ta means “that which helps in all-round expansion”, bhara plus ta [plus añ], bhárata, means “the country which supplies abundant food to its population and provides ample scope for psychic and spiritual development” – Bharata sambandhiya ityarthe Bhárata. Similarly, tantra means “the scientific cult which provides ample scope for all-round expansion in human life and thus paves the way for the attainment of salvation”.

The word tantra has a second derivation. Tan is a Sanskrit root verb, as I have already mentioned.⁽²⁾ However, there is also the sound ta, the acoustic expression of dullness or lethargy. So [in the second derivation], the science which helps human beings to shake off the propensity of dullness or lethargy is called tantra.

Both interpretations of tantra are equally recognized. Shiva was the original propounder of Tantra, and as I said earlier, Tantra has two wings, ágama and nigama. Both these interpretations come from ágama and nigama.

As I said, Párvatii asked Shiva a number of questions, and Shiva replied to those questions in detail. One of the most important was, what are the minimum qualifications of a spiritual aspirant? Shiva said in reply that the minimum qualification of a spiritual aspirant is that he or she must have a human body: and for this neither wealth nor formal education nor social position is necessary. It is enough that one have a physical body. With that body one can carry on the practice of Tantra quite well.

In another important answer to one of Párvatii’s queries, Shiva said that a sádhaika must maintain an equanimity of mind; that is, one who is a real spiritual aspirant must not allow any sort of complex to develop in one’s mind. Any sort of complex – superiority complex, inferiority complex, fear complex, defeatist complex, hopelessness – is detrimental to spiritual progress. When Parama Puruśa is with us as human beings, why should anyone be afraid of anything? When the Supreme Entity, the greatest repository of human knowledge, is always with you, you have no reason to be afraid of anything. He is the loving Father of all created beings, so why should anyone fear anyone or anything? This is why the genuine spiritualist will never allow a fear complex to disturb his or her mind.

Likewise, when that extraordinary Entity is your Father, and you are the loving child of the Cosmic Entity, why should you indulge in an inferiority complex? Under no circumstances are

you ever inferior to anyone. Never forget for a moment that you exist within the Cosmic Mind. But again, as this entire universe is the creation of the Supreme Creator, no one is inferior to you either. That is why you can by no logic afford to indulge in any sort of superiority complex in your mind. In fact, all living beings are like your brothers and sisters. No one is superior to you, no one is inferior to you.

Those who believe in casteism in fact go against the fundamental principle of the Universal Family. One and the same creator is the Universal Progenitor, so where is the scope for caste discrimination? All are brothers and sisters, with equal dignity. This is the principle of equality, as enunciated by Lord Shiva. You are not inferior to, nor insignificant by comparison to, anyone; nor are you superior to or more important than others. You must not have any defeatist complex in your mind. When the all-powerful and all-knowing Parama Puruśa is your guide, who can defeat you? Even if this creation falls into complete dissolution, Parama Puruśa will remain with you. He will save you from utter annihilation. So under no circumstances should you indulge in a defeatist complex. This is the advice of Lord Shiva.

Yet another significant remark of Shiva is Varttamāneśu vartteta [“Live in the present”]. You can under no circumstances ignore the present. You have to determine your course of action keeping in view the present. You cannot in any way bypass the hard realities of life. That is, your movement, your activities, everything, should be directed towards Parama Puruśa; but simultaneously, you have to solve all the urgent problems you are facing at the moment. You have to become tremendously active in order to bring about a satisfactory solution to problems of all varieties – the problem of food, the problem of clothing, the problems of housing, of education, of medical care, and other mundane problems. And while trying to solve all these problems, you should always remember Shiva’s advice: that under no circumstances should human beings ignore the hard realities of life.

18 October 1979, Sambalpur

Footnotes

(1) In one style of tāñdava the dancer lands always with most of his weight on the heel of the foot, represented by tá. –Eds.

(2) Tan + u = tanu. Tanu means the physical structure of a boy or girl, a minor. The human body usually expands little by little up until the age of thirty-nine years. For that reason the human body up till thirty-nine years of age can be called tanu. But after thirty-nine, the human body should not be called tanu: it is called shariira in Sanskrit. Shariira literally means “that which keeps shrinking”.

Yoga and Tantra

Today's subject of discourse is "Yoga and Tantra". Some people are curious to know what yoga is and what Tantra is, and where they agree and where differ. First let us discuss what yoga is.

The word yoga is derived as the Sanskrit root verb yuiñj plus the suffix ghaiñ. Or alternatively, the root verb yuj plus the suffix ghaiñ. If yoga is derived as yuj + ghaiñ, it means "addition", such as "two plus two equals four." But if yoga is derived as yuiñj + ghaiñ, it means "unification", such as the unification of sugar and water. When sugar and water are mixed, you will no longer find sugar separate from water. But in the case of "two plus two equals four," you will find the first "two" and the second "two" separately. Two mangoes plus two mangoes equals four mangoes: here you will still be able to see the four mangoes separately. So in the case of yuj + ghaiñ, yoga means "unity" or "addition", and in the alternative case it means "unification".

Besides the two derivations of yoga, there are also various definitions of yoga. Maharshi Patanjali defines yoga as Yogashcittavrttinirodhah – that is, "Yoga means the suspension of all the psychic propensities." In the human mind there are fifty main propensities. If by some special means the propensities are suspended, their expressions are stopped, in that case the mind will cease to function. That state of psychic suspension is here termed yoga. But we have defined yoga above to mean unification, and we can see that the suspension of propensities does not in any way mean that those propensities are being unified. The suspension of the propensities does not necessarily lead to the unification of the unit mind with the Cosmic Mind. This definition does not make clear, unification with whom or what. Hence this definition of yoga is not acceptable.

Now the second definition is Sarvacintáparityágo nishcinto yoga ucyate. That is, "When the mind is free from any sort of thinking, the mind is completely free of thoughts, that state is called yoga." Now if the mind becomes free from thought, it does not lead to unification. When people are in deep sleep, when they do not even dream, the mind becomes free from thought, and people become unconscious. In that state also the mind stops thinking. But is that yoga? No!

Now another definition, as given by Sadáshiva, is Samýoga yoga ityukto jiivátmá Paramátmánah. That is, "The unification of the unit soul, the jiivátmá, with the Universal Soul, that is, Paramátmá, is yoga." This seems to be the best, most scientific, definition.

Now let us see what Tantra is. The Sanskrit root verb tan literally means "to expand". From the root verb tan comes the Sanskrit word tanu, which means "a body that is expanding". A child's body is called tanu in Sanskrit, because it grows and grows until thirty-nine years of age. The human body up to thirty-nine years of age can be called tanu. But thereafter it is called shariira. Shariira means something which wears out, which becomes contracted. So a child's body is not shariira, and an old man's body should not be called tanu.

The word tantra is derived as: tan + traē + dá. Tra [traē + dá] means "that which liberates." So Tantra means the science which shows the path for the emancipation of the human entity through psycho-spiritual expansion. In other words, the spirit of Tantra is ever to continue expanding.

Tantra has another meaning also. In the Indo-Aryan alphabet, there are fifty letters. A is the first letter, and kśa is the last letter. Now, the main human propensities are fifty in number, but within one propensity there are several sub-propensities; because the propensities have a certain faculty, and that is, that they can work in ten directions, and can also function both internally and externally. So ultimately we get the total number of propensities as fifty main vrttis times two (internal and external) times ten (working in ten directions), which equals one thousand. So although primarily there are fifty propensities, secondarily there are one thousand propensities. These one thousand propensities are controlled by the pineal gland in the brain.

Each of these propensities has its own vibration and its own colour as well. When someone grows angry, there is a certain vibration in the body, and in accordance with this vibration, the body trembles and simultaneously changes its colour. The fair-complexioned man becomes reddish, the black-complexioned man becomes violet. So you see, each and every object in this universe has its own vibration, its own colour.

These vibrations, representing some action or some object, are called acoustic expressions. A person when angry speaks in a certain way, but the same person in a normal state speaks in a different way. The voice of the angry man has undergone a clear change from its normal state to an abnormal one. Likewise, each and every propensity has its own vibration, and each vibration has a certain colour and sound. The sounds of the fifty propensities constitute our language. These alphabet sounds – a, á, ka, kha [the first vowels and the first consonants or the Sanskrit alphabet] – are our acoustic expressions. Each sound has its own colour, and because of these fifty sounds and fifty colours, we call the alphabet varñamálá in Sanskrit. Varña, or “letter” – there are svaravarña [vowels] and vyainjanvarña [consonants] – literally means “colour”. There are primarily fifty sounds or colours, but secondarily one thousand sounds or colours. As I said, each and every propensity has a particular colour. The colour of the sentient principle is white, of the mutative yellow, and of the static black.

For example, sha is the sound for the mutative principle. Now these representative sounds are called bijja mantras in Sanskrit, and “acoustic roots” in English. Sha is the acoustic root of the mutative principle, sa is the acoustic root of the sentient principle, and śa is the acoustic root of the static principle. When someone walks or starts moving, it produces a sound, khaś-khaś-khaś; so the acoustic expression of movement is khaś-khaś-khaś. Behind every action or existence there lies a sound vibration. The particular sound vibration supporting a particular entity or action is known as its acoustic root.

In ancient times, some orthodox people avoided wearing leather shoes. They liked to wear wooden sandals. When people wearing wooden sandals would walk, it automatically produced sounds like śhak-śhak-śhak. So the group of people who used to make a śhak-śhak-śhak sound during movement were called Śhakkara – Śhakam-śhakam karoti yah sah Śhakkarah. Śhakkara evolved into Śhákur [anglicized as “Tagore”].

So it is clear now that there is an acoustic root behind each and every action, behind each and every existence. As I said, sha is the acoustic root of the mutative principle. Similarly, ra is the acoustic root of energy (energy meaning all varieties of energy). Sha + ra = shra, meaning “where the mutative principle is backed by energy”. Now shra plus the feminine suffix ii equals

shrii. It means “where there is mutative force plus energy”. So shrii ultimately means charm. In practical life, every human being longs for charm. This is the reason why since ancient times it has been the custom in India to prefix the word Shrii to a person’s name.

So I hope you are now clear about what an acoustic root is. Similarly there is an acoustic root ta. Ta represents dullness or lethargy. So literally tantra [combining two derivations] means “a systematic and scientific process which brings about first expansion, and thereafter liberation from the bondages of dullness and lethargy”. This liberation is called tantra in Sanskrit. Tantra means “liberation from bondages”.⁽¹⁾

You know that each and every living being wants liberation from bondages. Out of this inherent longing for freedom from bondages arises dharma. Dharma means expansion. Suppose someone is tied with a rope. If the person’s body expands or swells or becomes bigger and bigger in size, the rope will snap. So Tantra is defined as the process of expansion and of emancipation from crudifying bondages.

So now yoga and tantra have come close to each other in meaning. Yoga means the unification of jivátmá and Paramátmá.⁽²⁾ And how can this unification take place? It is possible through gradual expansion, that is, by dint of the constant practice of Tantra. This practical cult or spiritual sádhaná exists only in Tantra and nowhere else. Prárthanárcaná mátraeva bhramamúlam. That is, “Prayer and eulogy only mislead one.” Only by dint of spiritual cult can one attain success. Thus sádhaná is Tantra and Tantra is sádhaná.

Now how can one attain siddhi through the practice of yoga? The jivátmá will take the ideation of Paramátmá, and then the former will become one with the latter. How is it possible for the microcosm to become Macrocosm? The Macrocosm, or Parama Puruśa, has one unique characteristic, and that characteristic is, whoever ideates on Him becomes one with Him. The very nature of the mind is to become as it thinks. If it thinks of money, the mental stuff will one day, in a gradual process of crudification, be converted into money. After one’s physical death, the mind will be converted into money, and may find shelter in the iron safe of a moneylender. Will that be desirable? No, certainly not!

Yádrshii bhávaná yasya siddhir bhavati tádrshii – “As one thinks, so one becomes.” There is a certain insect that eats cockroaches.⁽³⁾ When that insect appears before a cockroach, the cockroach becomes mortally frightened. Due to the fright its nerve fibres cease to function, and when the fright becomes more intense, its nerve cells also cease to function. The severe fright creates a picture of that voracious insect in the cockroach’s mind, and due to that persistent image a transformation of its nerve cells gradually sets in, which then extends to the nerve fibres, and at the end of this process the cockroach will appear to that insect to be a member of its own species. The insect actually thinks that the cockroach is a member of its own tribe, so how can it eat the cockroach? If human beings take the Cosmic ideation, they will also become one with the Cosmic Entity.

Now the question is, how can human beings take the ideation of Parama Puruśa? Jiṅániis will analyse, “Parama Puruśa is like this or like that.” Karmiis will think that Parama Puruśa is a master of action.⁽⁴⁾ (Now, what relation do bhaktas have to jiṅána?⁽⁵⁾ A devotee will think, “I

may be a virtuous person, I may be poor, I may be learned or foolish, but, O Lord, I belong only to You.”) And a devotee thinks of the Lord just as people think of their nearest and dearest ones. He thinks, “Parama Puruṣa is mine;” and in this process of constant ideation, his or her mind gradually expands. From this sort of closeness, a person ultimately becomes one with Paramātmā. Such a person of devotion is called a bhakta.

Thus we see that jñānīs are Tantrics, because by acquiring knowledge they expand their minds, and thus become one with the all-expansive Cosmic Mind. Karmīs are also Tantrics, for by dint of actions, they expand their minds and become one with Parama Puruṣa. Bhaktas are also Tantrics, because they develop so much love and devotion for Parama Puruṣa that, in the process of constant ideation, they become one with Parama Puruṣa. Thus there is hardly any difference between Tantra and yoga. [Jñāna, karma, and bhakti are the three main branches of yoga.]

But yes, there is one thing. Human life is very short. If someone wants to cultivate knowledge, he or she may not get sufficient time. Even if someone starts cultivating knowledge at the age of five or six, the time will not be adequate. The scope of knowledge is infinite, whereas life is finite or short. If someone diverts his or her time and energy towards the attainment of objects other than Parama Puruṣa, that person’s time becomes less utilized and more misused.

Mathitvá caturo vedán sarvashástrán caeva hi;
Sárantu yogibhih piitam takraṁ pivanti paṇḍitáh.

“After churning all four Vedas, and all the scriptures, the yogis assimilate the quintessence, and the non-essential parts are consumed by the so-called scholars.” The four Vedas and all the scriptures are as vast as the ocean. Just as by churning curd [yogurt] we separate the butter from the buttermilk, so by churning the ocean of scripture, the butter comes to the surface and the buttermilk remains at the bottom. Those who are real devotees eat up the butter, and the so-called intellectuals start quarrelling among themselves over the distribution of the buttermilk. And ultimately that also may spoil before they can drink it.

There is a story that once a man of knowledge and a man of devotion went together to a mango orchard. The man of knowledge started verifying whether the mangoes were langra or himsagar or what varieties. Now there are over 1500 varieties of mango in the world. The man began to ponder over which varieties of mango were available in that orchard; and in the process of this constant analysis the sun set and evening fell on the orchard. Then the man started counting the numbers of the leaves, the branches, the twigs, etc. The night became darker. But what did the devotee do meanwhile? He straightway climbed a tree and started eating the mangoes.

As a rule, devotees are more intelligent than jñānīs. They utilize their time properly, and you know that those who utilize their time properly are more intelligent than those who do not.

Now let us analyse how devotees conduct themselves. A devotee is confident from the very beginning that the Lord belongs to him or her, and to him or her alone. When something belongs to someone, there remains no obstacle or impediment between the person and the belonging. Suppose there is a son who says, “My father.” That son may be a scholar or a big fool, he may be rich or poor, but after all, his father belongs to him, and he can easily come near his own father

and serve him. At that time no father will ever say, “You are a fool, get out of here.” He can never do such a thing.

There is a family relation between the Father and the son, and because of this family relation, the intimacy between the two will keep growing, and the internal thoughts will also remain very, very pure. This is why wise people say that the cult of devotion is the greatest. It is the best method to expand one’s mind. And as the fundamental spirit of Tantra is to expand one’s mind, snapping the bondages, devotion is the best Tantra. That is why I repeat again and again that Tantra and yoga are not different from each other, rather they are almost the same thing.

A devotee will practise ásana, práñáyáma, dhárańá and dhyána,⁽⁶⁾ and during this practice he will have one thought uppermost in his mind – that the Entity on whom he is ideating is his nearest relation, and no one is nearer to him than his Lord. Because of this, a devotee’s mind will become highly expanded in a short period.

In the life of a person of action, kiirtana may or may not play a significant role, but in the life of a person of devotion, kiirtana is indispensable. To put it more explicitly, a devotee cannot live without kiirtana, just as you cannot remove a fish from water. If you remove a fish from water, it will die an instant death. Likewise, if a devotee is prevented from doing kiirtana, the person will die.

The secret of a devotee’s heart is known to Parama Puruśa. In Jamalpur I told you that Parama Puruśa does not reside in Vaekuńtha [the mythological abode of Lord Viśńu], nor on the throne, nor in the heart of a yogi. He actually resides in the heart of a devotee. A devotee is always bound to think of Parama Puruśa at heart, because their mutual relation is one of love and devotion. That is why Parama Puruśa clearly proclaims, Madbhaktáh yatra gáyanti tatra tiśthámi Nárada – that is, “I reside, O Nárada, wherever my devotees are singing.”⁽⁷⁾

So Parama Puruśa says to Nárada that He does not reside anywhere except where His ardent devotees are singing kiirtana. Philosophically, Parama Puruśa is omnipresent, but His nucleus remains at a particular place. That particular place, where the nucleus resides, is not Vaekuńtha. That particular place is where His ardent devotees are singing His glories in kiirtana.

So you will notice that when people do kiirtana out of deep love, a highly powerful spiritual vibration is created. Those who do kiirtana feel that vibration in their minds, hearts, and everywhere. They become virtually intoxicated with unbounded bliss. That sort of bliss is not attainable by a person of knowledge. It may be that that person of knowledge will one day become one with Parama Puruśa, but he or she will not be able to attain that bliss; nor is that bliss attainable by a person of action. That bliss is attainable only by a person of devotion. The “wholesale right” to that boundless bliss lies with that devotee only.

26 October 1979 DMC, Gaddopur

Footnotes

(1) Definition of trána omitted here. –Eds.

(2) Átman, or jiivátman, means “unit consciousness”. Paramátman is the collective name of all unit consciousnesses. –Eds.

(3) Philology of telápoká (“cockroach”) omitted here. –Eds.

(4) Without action nothing happens. It is said, Karma Brahmeti karma bahukurviita – that is, “Karma is Brahma; knowing this, try to perform as much karma as you can.” Actually, the whole universe is made of karma. Suppose someone is an ácárya/á but does not work. Is he or she still an ácárya/á? No. That person is not an ácárya/á any more. That person does not deserve to be called an ácárya/á. People will not respect the person. One becomes an ácárya/á by virtue of one’s action. What is the meaning of ácárya? Ácárañát páthayati yah sah ácárya – “One who teaches others by one’s exemplary conduct is an ácárya.” So you should remember that one’s conduct should be of a high standard. One who remains idle and avoids working should not be called an ácárya/á. Actually, everything in the universe is done by karma. Such are the qualities of a karmii.

(5) Jiñána, karma, and bhakti are forms of spiritual practice which emphasize, respectively, discrimination, selfless action, and devotion. –Eds.

(6) Stages of aśtámga (eight-limbed) yoga. –Eds.

(7) What is the meaning of nára? In Sanskrit, the word nára has three meanings. One meaning is “water”. The second meaning is “the Supreme Operative Principle”. The third meaning is “devotion”. And da means “giver”, “one who gives”. So “Nárada” means “one who distributes devotion among the people”.

Yoga, Tantra, and Kevalá Bhakti

Today's subject of discourse is "Yoga, Tantra and Kevalá Bhakti". In the sphere of spiritual practice, yoga, Tantra and kevalá bhakti, all three, are essential for the realization of Parama Puruśa. We should not ignore any of the three, although [ultimately] Parama Puruśa can only be attained by dint of bhakti – rather, kevalá bhakti [non-attributional devotion].

Now let us see what yoga is.

The word yoga may be derived either from the Sanskrit root verb yuiṅj plus the suffix ghaiṅ, or from the root verb yuj plus the suffix ghaiṅ. When yoga is derived as yuj + ghaiṅ it means "addition," such as "two plus two equals four." But when yoga is derived as yuiṅj + ghaiṅ, it means "unification". For example, when sugar and water are mixed together, they become one. Sugar loses its individual identity. This is the real yoga.⁽¹⁾

And yoga has also three major definitions. One of them is Yogashcittavrttinirodhah. The expressions or propensities of the human mind are primarily enumerated as fifty. And secondarily they are considered as one thousand in number.⁽²⁾ The mind survives because of these vrttis. If the vrttis become non-existent, the mind also loses its existence. According to Maharshi Patanjali [who gave the above definition], if the vrttis are suspended, if their expressions are withdrawn and the vrttis become functionless, at that stage the mind will enter into a state of non-manifestation, the mind will lose its outward expression, and this state will be called yoga.

Now let us see. If the mind ceases to express itself and altogether stops functioning, how can it unify itself with any other object? In the state of functionlessness, the mind is transformed into something crude. At that stage the mind will become like a desert where there is no flower or fruit. Now on the one hand yoga means unification, but here in the practical sphere there is nothing with which the mind can unify itself; hence Patanjali's definition of yoga does not seem to be very rational.

There is yet another definition of yoga, Sarvacintáparityágo nishcinto yoga ucyate – "When the mind is absolutely free of thoughts, when the mind is completely thought-less, that state of mind is called yoga." Now when a person is sleeping, not even dreaming, in that state the mind is free from thoughts; furthermore, when someone becomes unconscious, at that time also the mind remains free from any thought whatsoever. But that is not yoga. The question is, since the mind is not unified with anything, how can this be accepted as a definition of yoga?

However, there is yet a third definition, which does seem reasonable. Saṁyoga yoga ityukto jīvatmá Paramátmanah – "When the unit consciousness merges itself fully and is finally identified with the Supreme Consciousness, Shiva, that is called yoga." Here the microcosmic drop merges into the vast ocean of Consciousness; the microcosm merges into the Macrocosm. This state of supreme union or merger is what is called yoga. What is the supreme goal in the life of a spiritual aspirant? To merge the individual existence into Parama Puruśa, Paramátman, the ocean of Macrocosmic Consciousness. This is the real yoga. A person who would endeavour

continuously in his or her individual life to attain the Supreme Entity should know that [this] yoga is the only way to attain it. There is no doubt about that.

Now let us see what Tantra is, and what the relationship is between Tantra and yoga. *Tam jádyát tárayet yastu sah tantrah parikiirtitah.* The sound ta is the acoustic root of dullness.⁽³⁾ So “the science or systematic process that liberates one from the bondage of dullness or lethargy is called tantra.” The word tra is derived from the Sanskrit root verb trae, plus da. Tra means liberator, so the liberator from ta, that is, dullness, is called tantra.

There is yet another definition of tantra. In Sanskrit there is a root verb tan, which means “to expand”. (From this root verb tan the word tanu is derived. Tanu literally means the growing body of a child. The human body continues to expand up till the age of thirty-nine; that is why a young body is called tanu. Tanu means “that which is expanding”. An old man’s body should not be called tanu; it should be called shariira, because an old man’s body does not expand, it decays.) So tantra means that which shows the way towards expansion and ultimately liberation.⁽⁴⁾

When the unit soul or unit mind transcends the barriers of limitation, and in the process becomes infinite, there remains no bondage of finitude. That is the state of liberation. One’s existence becomes one with Parama Puruśa. Here Tantra and yoga are in complete agreement. So we have established that the word tan means expansion.

Let me digress a little to explain further the significance of the term ta [derived from tan]. You know the Sanskrit name of India is Bháratavarśa. The root verb bhar means “to feed” or “to nourish”, and the root verb tan means “to expand”, “to grow”. So the entity whose function is to feed, to nourish, and then help to grow, is called bhárata. And thus the land which feeds its population and thereby helps in the physical, psychic and spiritual growth of that population is called Bháratavarśa. (Varśa means “land” or “country”.) Bháratavarśa is a land which facilitates gradual growth and finally leads to emancipation; in other words, the mind and the soul gradually expand, and the soul becomes one with the Universal Soul. And in the state of highest expansion, all the eight fetters and six enemies of the human mind, that is, all the external [externally-imposed] and internal enemies of the human mind, will cease to exist; and thus when the microcosms are free from all bondages, they cease to remain as microcosms and become one with Shiva [Supreme Consciousness]. In Tantra it is said, *Páshabaddha bhavet jiivah pásha muktah bhavet Shivah* – “Those who are bound by the fetters are jiiva [unit consciousness] but one who is free from the fetters is Shiva.”

So we see that as a practical matter there is no difference between yoga and Tantra. Yoga is a practical cult; Tantra is also a practical cult. There may be a slight difference in language, but there is no difference in practice.

Now we come to kevalá bhakti. What is bhakti, or devotion? Bhakti is defined as,

Bhaktir Bhagavato sevá bhaktih prema svarúpinii;
Bhaktiránanda rupá ca bhakti bhaktasya jiivanam.

[Bhakti is service to God; bhakti is the form taken by divine love; bhakti is the embodiment of bliss; bhakti is the life of the devotee.]

When spiritual aspirants advance towards Parama Puruśa by dint of the practice of yoga or Tantra, they develop an exclusive devotion towards Parama Puruśa. Ananyamamatá Viśhnormamatá premasaṅgatá – “Spiritual aspirants withdraw their minds from all mundane objectivities, and with the same intention direct all their physical, psychic and spiritual propensities towards Parama Puruśa.” They remove their individualities, and accept Parama Puruśa as their nearest and dearest one. This is what is called exclusive love for God. This is called kevalá bhakti. And only in this stage does devotion reach its fruition or culmination.

The term bhakti is derived as bhaj + ktin. When all the propensities are withdrawn from all other objects and diverted towards the Supreme goal, this is called bhakti. You may have noticed that people sometimes establish some kind of devotional relationship with God out of selfishness. For that reason there are different gradations of devotion. For example, there is támasikii bhakti, static devotion. People sometimes wrongly pray to the Lord, “Such and such persons are my enemies. Let harm befall them.” Here the mind has a defective thought within. The ideation is related to Parama Puruśa, there is no doubt about that, but here the person does not want to attain Parama Puruśa, rather he wants Parama Puruśa to help him by harming his enemies. Here you are moving towards Parama Puruśa, you are even mentally speaking to Parama Puruśa, but to attain Parama Puruśa is not your goal. Under these circumstances, Parama Puruśa may or may not grant your prayers, but one thing is certain, you will not attain Parama Puruśa, because you do not really want Him. This type of devotion is called támasikii bhakti [static devotion]. A genuine spiritual aspirant should keep away from this type of static devotion, because it leads to degradation.

The second type of devotion is rájasikii bhakti [mutative devotion]. In this type of devotion, the mind moves towards Parama Puruśa, and there is devotion, no doubt, but the mind does not want to attain Parama Puruśa. Here the sádhaika prays to Parama Puruśa, “O Lord, grant me some kind of progress or financial achievement or a promotion in my job or more profit in business.” In this type of devotion you do not pray to Parama Puruśa to help you by harming your opponents – so far, so good – but still you do not want to attain Parama Puruśa, you also want something for yourself. And for this reason, you will not attain Parama Puruśa. This is no doubt a type of devotion, but it is not the best type of devotion.

Yet the third type of devotion is called sáttvikii bhakti [sentient devotion]. In this devotion you do not pray to Paramátmá to achieve anything. You do not want Him to harm your opponents, you do not expect anything from Him. This devotion is better in that sense. But there is still a defect inherent in this type of devotion. It is just like the prayer of an old man who feels that if he does not carry on his religious observances he is likely to be criticized by his neighbours. So he carries on his practices with that sort of devotion. Or sometimes a person prays to the Lord saying, “O Lord, I have been here on earth for a long time, I am faced with so many problems in life, now, O Lord, take me on Your lap.” Here the person who is praying wants the cessation of his or her worldly afflictions.

You cannot attain Parama Puruśa with this sort of prayer either, because at this stage you still do not say that you want Parama Puruśa to be your own. This will not serve the purpose. Only when the mind has an intense desire to attain Parama Puruśa alone, and nothing else, is it the highest devotion. This is called kevalá bhakti.

You can make an analogy. A little child is crying for its mother. But what does the mother do? She immediately rushes to the child and gives it a number of colourful toys. The child stops crying immediately. But if a persistent child insists that it does not want anything else but its mother, the mother is compelled to take the child on her lap. So the devotees with kevalá bhakti in their hearts do not ask Parama Puruśa for anything. Even if Parama Puruśa proposes to give them this or that, the aspirant will say, “No, Lord, I don’t want anything but You. I want to remain with you. What You are offering to me is a trivial thing; I want You and You alone, nothing else.”

Now even within this ideal state of devotion there is a gradation. Even those who have this sort of ideal devotion may think that they will worship Parama Puruśa because by worshipping him they may be able to enjoy bliss. So here also there is some slight selfishness, because one shows devotion to Parama Puruśa with an expectation of attaining some bliss thereby. This sort of devotion with a slight tinge of selfishness is called ráganugá bhakti. Although it is one of the higher categories of devotion, it is not altogether free from a tinge of selfishness.

There is yet another type of devotion, which is free from even this tinge of selfishness. It is [the highest kind of] kevalá bhakti, [the highest kind of] non-attributional devotion. Here the devotee says, “I serve Him, I worship Him, because I want Him to get bliss from my devotion or service or worship. I don’t want anything for myself. I want Him to enjoy the bliss.” This type of devotion is called rágátmiká bhakti, and the type of devotee having this sort of non-attributional devotion is called a gopa.

There are people who have a mistaken idea that gopa means “cowherd”. Actually, Gopáyate yah sa gopah – in Sanskrit, the word gopáyate means to give pleasure – “A gopa is one who gives pleasure to Parama Puruśa, one whose very nature is to give pleasure to Parama Puruśa.”

Now we see that in the proper spirit of the terms there is no difference between yoga and Tantra, and that both yoga and Tantra strengthen the aspect of devotion in the human heart. The cult of yoga and Tantra strengthens and nourishes the devotional aspect in a spiritual aspirant. This cult has been called in the scriptures puśthi márga, because the practice of this cult nourishes [puśthi means “nourishment”] the latent devotional faculty within spiritual aspirants. The highest stage of this puśthi márga is rágátmiká bhakti, and Parama Puruśa is attainable by this rágátmiká bhakti. He is not attainable by the vanity of jñána or the restlessness of karma. ⁽⁵⁾ He is attainable by devotion; there is no other way to attain him.

17 November 1979 DMC, Etah

Footnotes

(1) Yoga should be pronounced [“joga”], not [“yoga”], according to the rule Padánte padamadyasthe ya-kára [i]ya ucyate – “If ya occurs at the beginning of a word, it is pronounced [‘ja’], but if in the middle or at the end, [‘ya’].” So yoga should be pronounced [“joga”], not [“yoga”], but viyoga should be pronounced [“viyoga”], not [“vijoga”].

(2) The basic fifty vrttis may be expressed in ten directions (or through the ten organs – five sensory and five motor), and both internally and externally, for a total of one thousand (50 x 10 x 2). –Eds.

(3) In whatever exists in this universe, or whatever action is performed, there is a sonic expression. When people laugh they produce a sound, há-há-há. When they walk they make a sound, khať-khať-khať. And thus for every action there is an accompanying sound or sound expression. To denote an existence also there is a sound expression. You exist: therefore wherever there is light, wherever there is an acoustic wave, these come and dash against you and get reflected. The reflection also has an accompanying sound expression and an accompanying colour expression. The accompanying sound expression is called the acoustic root, in Sanskrit biija mantra. Thus dullness is a psychic propensity, and ta is the acoustic root of that psychic propensity. Ta is also a letter of the dental group.

(4) Sanskrit that was unclear in the original magazine publication of this discourse omitted here. –Eds.

(5) Jiñána, karma and bhakti are forms of spiritual practice which emphasize, respectively, discrimination, selfless action, and devotion. –Eds.

Keeping Good Company

Humans should always be careful about the company they keep. What is the result of keeping good company? By spending time with good persons, a deep impression is imprinted on the mind, causing the desire to be good to rise in the mind. If, on the other hand, one chooses to associate with a drunkard, a thought will eventually come in the mind, “What is the harm if I drink a little wine?” And if one associates with thieves, one will think, “What is the harm if I steal something?”

To give an example, suppose a person is standing beside a tea stall. There the smell of the tea wafts to the person’s nose. The person will then say, “Give me a cup, too.” In this incident, the smell of the tea affects the mind. If that person had not remained near the tea stall, the smell would not have reached the nose and perhaps that person would not have taken tea for two or three days. This is the influence that association has on the mind.

Hence humans should choose their company very carefully, for a mistake in this will cause them to repent their whole life. Even parents who realize that they themselves are not good should send their children to live in a good student hostel, or keep them with some of their relatives who are good – lest their own influence cause harm to the children. One must be very strict about this. In Tantra it is said,

Satsaungena bhavenmuktirasatsaungeśu bandhanam;
Tasmádasatsaungamudrañam sá mudrá parikiirttitá.

[Keeping good company leads to liberation, whereas the company of bad people leads to greater bondage. The mudrañam – shunning – of bad company is called mudrá sádhaná.]

The Tantric practice of mudrá sádhaná means to associate with good human beings in order to attain liberation. Here you must remember that salvation [or liberation] is not only spiritual, it is in all spheres of life, in all the strata of life. In all the spheres of life – social, economic, etc. – struggle has to be launched. Wherever there is no food, begin the struggle for it; if clothing is needed, then there should be struggle for it; if there is no irrigation system, struggle for it; if there is no accommodation, struggle for it. And the greatest [liberation] is to liberate the soul from all bondages – that alone is real liberation. Spiritual liberation is the only [ultimate] liberation, other liberations are not [the ultimate liberation]. This is because today one may become free from some physical bondage, but tomorrow it will come back again. Today one may be free from hunger, but tomorrow hunger will return. Spiritual liberation, though, is permanent liberation, eternal freedom. Good association results in salvation and bad association results in bondage. Hence evil company must be avoided.

In the Sanskrit language, mudrañam has two meanings. One is “to print”, and the other is “to shun”. The words asatsaunga mudrañam here mean “to shun evil company”. But mudrañam also means “to print” – for example, pustak mudrañ kará [to print a book – in Bengali]. By mistake people say pustak mudrita kará. In Sanskrit, mudrita does mean “to shun” – for example, Cakśu mudrita kará hala means, “One’s eyes shunned the world [by closing].” Pustak mudrita kará does

mean, “to close the book”; [but pustak mudrita kará does not mean “to print the book”];] “to print the book” should be written pustak mudráunkita kará.

However that may be, Asatsaṅga mudraṅa kará means “to shun evil company”, and this is the practice of mudrá sádhaná. Shankaracharya said that if you shun bad company and associate with very good people, you will be able to do good to society, and you will continue to do virtuous deeds.

27 May 1980, Krishnanagar

Prapatti, Viprapatti, and Aprapatti (Discourse 6)

We will discuss Tantra a little in relation to prapatti, viprapatti, and aprapatti. The original propounder of Tantra was Lord Sadáshiva.

From the viewpoint of geography, Tantra has two main divisions – one is the Bengal school of Tantra, the other is the Kashmir school of Tantra. The Bengal school is less ritualistic and more practical, while the Kashmir school is more ritualistic and less practical. And from the viewpoint of spiritual practice, Tantra has five main divisions: Shaeva Tantra, Shákta Tantra, Vaeśnáva Tantra, Saora Tantra, and Gáñapatya Tantra. It is said that Shaeva Tantra attaches more importance to the faculty of knowledge and to the elimination of caste and other social discriminations. Shákta Tantra lays greater stress on the attainment of power and its judicious application. Vaeśnáva Tantra aspires to lead humanity towards Parama Puruśa through the cult of sweet, divine bliss, but there is less social consciousness. Saora Tantra places much importance on medical treatment and astronomical progress, and Gáñapatya Tantra provides inspiration for people who are divided into different social groups to work unitedly. ⁽¹⁾

Here I do not propose to say anything special about Shaeva or Shákta Tantra, but I must say something about Vaeśnáva Tantra. It is said that Vaeśnáva Tantra aspires to lead spiritual aspirants towards Parama Puruśa through the cult of blissful experiences. (If I ever say anything in the future regarding Saora Tantra, I will discuss it at great length and during that discussion I will point out that Saora Tantra was not only concerned with the sciences of medicine and astronomy. It was much more than that, especially in the Middle East and India about one thousand to three thousand years ago. However, in the present context this is irrelevant.)

While dealing with Vaeśnáva Tantra [Vaishnavite Tantra], we notice that although it had its origin in India, more particularly in southern India, it was later significantly influenced by the Middle East. As a result, the modern Vaishnavism, or rather the Vaishnavism which was prevalent during the Mughal period, was greatly influenced by the Sufism of the Middle East.

Our topic of discussion is Krśńa and His life. During Krśńa's lifetime, Sufism was not in vogue in the Middle East. The Vaishnavism of southern India, as enunciated in the Bhágavata shástra – that is, the Shriimad Bhágavata [of that shástra], not the Shriimad Bhagavad Giitá – came much later than Krśńa. The Dravidian Brahmans of southern India had not yet become clearly divided into two branches; later they were to become divided into the Ayengars and the Aiyars. (The Ayengars were Vaishnavites and the Aiyars were Shaivites. One could easily distinguish the Aiyars from the Ayengars by their distinct styles of decorating their foreheads with holy ash.) While the different classifications of Tantra could be found in those days, they were not very rigid or distinct.

If the forward march towards Parama Puruśa through the cult of sweet, divine bliss is the basic spirit of Vaeśnáva Tantra, then that spirit must have been reflected in both Vraja Krśńa and Párthasárathi Krśńa. This forward march can be effected only through prapatti.

When a devotee advances through the cult of sweet devotion, he or she prefers to avoid the path of philosophical intricacies. Suppose you have been allotted a certain duty and you have to run hard to perform that duty. If you are offered some delicious sweets you will say, “No thank you, not now. Let me run first, then I will take some rest and enjoy the sweets little by little with great pleasure.” While running, one’s mind remains at a high speed, tremendously preoccupied. That is why you cannot, at that speed, savour even delicious food. Similarly, when you advance in the cult of sweet devotion, you enjoy more and more sweetness. While advancing, you enjoy bliss at every step. Obviously, at that stage, you do not like the tormenting harshness of jñāna and karma.

I have said several times prior to this that prapatti – that sweetness of divine ecstasy – was fully developed in Vraja Kṛṣṇa. But as I have also said, the karma yoga which is the hallmark of Pārthasārathi is not opposed to prapatti. Now let us analyse whether the jñāna mārga [path of knowledge, or discrimination], as associated with Pārthasārathi, is more consistent with the jñāna mārga of Shaivism or with the cult of sweet, divine bliss found in Vaishnavism.

Pārthasārathi Kṛṣṇa demonstrated an enormous wealth of knowledge. All His teachings were based primarily on the cult of knowledge. He taught His philosophy to Arjuna, and it does not smack of negativism or escapism. According to Kṛṣṇa, whatever takes place in this universe is designed by the Cosmic will. Nothing can happen without the Cosmic desire.

Jiivas are compelled to act under the impact of two personalities. One is the small “I” which craves to accumulate so many things, big or small, and to give so many things to society. The small “I” creates a world of its own centring around that little “I”, a world of illusion wherein the small “I” is entrapped and where it considers itself to be the supreme monarch. But simultaneously there is a larger world, the much larger world of Parama Puruṣa, a world where the small “I” is a mere bubble. All the hopes and aspirations, all the desires and urges, of that insignificant bubble residing within the vast mind of Parama Puruṣa, attain supreme fulfilment only at the time when it merges itself in the main stream of the Cosmic flow. Otherwise, individual hopes and desires remain forever unfulfilled and unrealized. Human beings cherish thousands of desires in their hearts, but those desires generally remain unfulfilled, because the waves of individual human desire do not maintain parallelism with the waves of the Cosmic desire.

It was quite natural for Arjuna to hesitate in slaying His friends and relations on the battlefield. The Kaoravas were his dear kinsmen, and there were many other kings and vassals who were bound in ties of intimate friendship with Arjuna. He felt compassion for all his friends and relatives, but that love and compassion for his relatives and friends was something related to Arjuna’s unit “I” feeling. It had no validity in the Cosmic world. Therefore Kṛṣṇa addressed and exhorted Arjuna in the following manner: “Oh, Arjuna, don’t think that you are killing anyone. No one ever kills or is ever killed. Weapons can never kill anyone.”

Naenaṁ chindanti shastrāṇi naenaṁ dahati pāvakah;
Na caenaṁ kledayantyāpo na shoṣayati mārutah. ⁽²⁾

[Weapons cannot pierce him (the soul), fire cannot burn him, water cannot drench him, wind cannot dry him up.]

Who are you to kill? You cannot do anything, for your existence is nothing but a tiny, insignificant bubble within the vast Macrocosm. As the vast Macrocosmic wave advances with its alternate troughs and crests, you move along with the wave, sometimes going up in the wave and sometimes down.

Patana-abhyudayabandhur panthá
Yuga yuga dhávita yátrii.

–Tagore

[Travellers have been moving unceasingly for ages along that high and rugged path of rise and fall.]

So what will you do? Parama Puruśa’s flow of imagination continues unceasingly. No one can resist that mighty flow of Cosmic imagination. It was erroneous for Arjuna to think that he himself was killing his dear kinsmen, the Kaoravas. Thus Krśńa said: “Things are already planned and predestined by Me. I have already planned everything out in My mind. You are just an instrument.”

There are two things to note here. The first thing is that according to Máyáváda [the Doctrine of Illusion], the very existence of the material world, though not altogether denied, is given little importance. Krśńa’s teachings, however, are not actually Máyáváda. In Máyáváda, the systaltic movement of the Macrocosm is not altogether accepted. Máyávádii philosophers argue that the universe is the magic of the miracle-creating Máyá: aghaṭana ghaṭana patiiyasii Máyá [“the dexterous hand of Máyá that can even create things impossible to create”]. “Nothing is really happening, Máyá is doing everything” – it is strict monism.

The second thing to note is that in the teachings of Párthasárathi Krśńa, there may not be absolute prapatti at first; when Krśńa advanced so many philosophical arguments, it seemed to be viprapatti, just opposite to prapatti. However, when at the next stage He told Arjuna, “I have already set everything in a pre-arranged plan, you are a mere tool in my hands,” it was clearly aprapatti. Till then it had not been clearly stated that “It is I who do everything. Everything takes place as per My wish. Your wish, your desire has no value.” Finally this aprapatti became prapatti when He said,

Sarvadharmán parityajya Mámekaṁ sharaṇám vraja;
Ahaṁ tvám sarvapápebhyo mokśayiśyámi má shucah. ③

[Set aside all other dharmas and take shelter in Me alone; I will save you from all sin, have no fear about that.]

Different entities, different jiiivas, are moving according to their respective inherent propensities, their inherent characteristics. “Countless jiiivas, countless entities, are moving around the

Macrocosmic nucleus with their respective saṁskāras [mental reactive momenta]” – Sarvájīive sarvasaṁsthe brhante tasmin haṁso bhrāmyate Brahmācakre. “This movement, this rotation, will continue until the different entities are able to realize their oneness with that Supreme Nucleus, until they realize the Supreme Entity” – prthagātmānaṁ preritāraṅga matvá juśtastatastenāmrtatvameti.

When the jīivas come to know of the Supreme Entity around whom they are moving, the eternal urge to run after Him develops, and this is the stance of total prapatti, the final culmination of sādhanā. Sarvadharmān parityajya Māmekāṁ sharaṇāṁ vraja.

The innumerable jīivas, with their innumerable propensities and characteristics, are rushing along, but their movement is not always crowned with success. I have already said that progress in the physical and psychic spheres is not possible. Progress is possible only in the spiritual stratum. Sarvadharmān means the various propensities or various instincts [of a human being], that is, the various fetters and enemies of the mind. The microcosms, with their numerous saṁskāras, are rushing along. Kṛṣṇa said to them: “Stop running after your desires”... Māmekāṁ sharaṇāṁ vraja – “Follow Me. Take Me as your final refuge. Come to Me and increase your love for Me.” (Ananyamamatā Viśhṇormamatā premasauṅgatā – “Develop love and attachment for Me. Rush to Me, I am ready to receive you on My lap.”) Vraja means “to move in joy”... Ahaṁ tvāṁ sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiśyāmi má shucah – “I will liberate you from all saṁskāras, all bondages. You need not worry at all about your spiritual progress.”

The fact is, the more one advances towards Parama Puruśa, the more one becomes free from blemishes, the more one is cleansed of the dirt and dross of mundane life. Parama Puruśa lifts His devotees and places them on His lap. This can be considered the last word of the Gīitā, the summum bonum, or goal, of human life. It is the final statement about the supreme human desideratum. Regarding the path of movement, many things are said, but regarding the goal the final word is this: “Forgetting all other things, forgetting your desires and aspirations, come to Me.” Māmekāṁ sharaṇāṁ vraja – “take shelter in Me.” This is nothing but prapatti.

Now, is there any difference between the jīṅāna of Shaivite philosophy and the prapatti of Vaishnavite philosophy? The Shaivite philosophical knowledge is hair-splitting knowledge which aspires to arrive at the goal through the conflicts and clashes arising from affirmation and negation, and through analysis of the law of cause and effect. On this path there is neither prapatti nor aprapatti. In the initial stage one makes use of viprapatti, but after reaching the goal, nothing remains, neither viprapatti nor prapatti nor aprapatti.

From the earliest times there existed differences of opinion between the Vaeśhāva scholars and the Shaeva scholars. This was an ideological conflict. And though Pārthasārathi’s teaching [of prapatti] forms part of Vaeśhāva Tantra, it is also resplendent in its own brilliance.

Initially Kṛṣṇa led Arjuna along the path of discrimination, of jīṅāna. (Here Arjuna represents the ordinary human being.) When He guided Arjuna along the path of jīṅāna, it was known as viprapatti. Then He said [expressing aprapatti], “It is I who do everything. You are doing nothing.” (Actually, people have very little strength. If a person fasts for twenty-four hours, he or she feels fatigued. If a person fasts for forty-eight hours, he or she cannot think. How weak

people are!) And in the third stage Kṛṣṇa said to humanity, “You need not worry about anything. I will do everything for you. Just move along your path and surrender to Me.” Whatever hopes and desires people cherish in their hearts find fulfilment when they are in perfect accord with the blissful flow of Parama Puruṣa.

Kii habe iccháy, iccháte kii hay? Kṛṣṇa iccháviná phal phalená. [Nothing comes out of the wishes of human beings, unless they are backed by the wish of Parama Puruṣa.]

In [this] last stage, Párthasárathi uttered something which reflects the spirit of prapatti.

Sarvadharmán parityajya Mámekaṁ sharaṇám vraja;
Ahaṁ tvám sarvapápebhyo mokṣayiśyámi má shucah.

[Set aside all other dharmas and take shelter in Me alone; I will save you from all sin, have no fear about that.]

Vraja Kṛṣṇa did not do all this [i.e., did not base His actions on a progression of philosophies]. His magic flute sang only one note – the note of prapatti. “What I do is done; nothing else is done. Remain with Me.” The teachings of Párthasárathi Kṛṣṇa and Vraja Kṛṣṇa are the same, but the path of Párthasárathi Kṛṣṇa and the path of Vraja Kṛṣṇa have led humanity, have led spiritual aspirants, in two distinct directions. A sádharma will act according to his or her respective inherent saṁskáras and will select either Párthasárathi Kṛṣṇa or Vraja Kṛṣṇa as the only object of his or her adoration, as the only desideratum of all the marches of his or her life.

28 September 1980, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) In Shaeva Tantra one’s object of meditation is Shiva. In Shákta Tantra it is one of the representations of Shakti, or Prakṛti [Cosmic Operative Principle]. In Vaeśnáva Tantra it is Viśṇu. In Saora Tantra it is Súrya (the sun or the sun god), and in Gáṇapatya Tantra it is Gaṇapati (Gaṇesha). In all the cults, the more subtle practitioners understand that their particular deity is a representation of the infinite Brahma. –Eds.

(2) Bhagavad Giitá. –Eds.

(3) Bhagavad Giitá. –Eds.

The Criteria of a Guru

Perhaps you know that the word guru is a very old Vedic word. It means “one who dispels darkness”. Now, this expression “one who dispels darkness” is often used without deeper understanding. This darkness actually belongs not only to the psychic stratum or the spiritual stratum, but to all strata of human existence. That is, darkness prevails in all the three strata – in the crude physical sphere, in the psychic sphere, and in the spiritual sphere. So a guru will necessarily have to be able to remove darkness from all three strata. If he teaches the alphabet or some academic matter to students, he will be called a teacher – teacher in the academic sense. That will not do. If, again, he removes darkness from the psychic world, he imparts intellectual knowledge to his followers, that will not be enough either. And if, finally, he dispels darkness only from the spiritual stratum of his disciples, that will not do either. The fact is that a guru – if one is to be accepted as a real guru – shall have to remove darkness from all the strata of the physical world, all the strata of the psychic world, and also all the strata of the spiritual world.

Now let us look at the spiritual world. In the spiritual world, he alone can be a guru who can lift downtrodden humanity to a high spiritual level, who can illumine humanity with spiritual effulgence. That is, only a Mahákaola has the requisite qualification to be a guru, others cannot be gurus.

In order to be an ideal guru in the spiritual sphere, one must be thoroughly conversant with the minutest details of sádhaná, every aspect of sádhaná, important or unimportant. The guru must not only learn those things, but must also possess the capacity to teach those practices to others. Otherwise he should not be treated as a guru. The Mahákaola alone has this capacity, no one else. Kaolas are those who by dint of sádhaná have successfully elevated their microcosmic stance and established it in the Macrocosmic one; but a Mahákaola is one who is a kaola, certainly, but at the same time possesses the capacity to help others as well to get to that exalted kaola position. In the past Lord Shiva was one such Mahákaola. Lord Krśna was another. To be a guru one must be a Mahákaola.

One must possess knowledge regarding sádhaná, not only thorough knowledge of the shástras [scriptures]. And in order to gain thorough scriptural knowledge, one must know as many important languages as are necessary for the purpose. That is to say, it is not enough that a guru acquire the necessary qualifications to be able to teach sádhaná (that is, impart lessons on the practical cult); he must possess adequate knowledge of theory also. That is, in order to know the inner secret of sádhaná, he must possess thorough and authentic scriptural knowledge; then only should he be accepted as a perfect guru in the spiritual sphere. One who has a fairly good knowledge of sádhaná and can also help others in that realm, but is completely devoid of intellect, or knowledge of languages and scriptures, cannot be a perfectly competent guru in the spiritual sphere; for, being a guru, he will have to explain the theoretical side also. If, suppose, I say to someone, “Do this,” I should also explain why he or she should do that, and at the same time I should be able to support it in the light of the shástras.

You may raise the question, “What is a shástra?” You might point to a voluminous book and call it a shástra, but that would be misleading. Shástra in the true sense means, Shásanát tárayet yastu sah shástrah parikiirtitah – that is, “Shástra is that which disciplines and liberates humans.” So a

guru must be well versed in shástra, otherwise he cannot show the right path to humankind. The term guru would be a misleading misnomer – which is never desirable. Shástra does not necessarily mean the Vedas; it means the way to emancipation through inculcation of rigorous discipline; it is something that prevents one from taking license in the name of liberty. It means clear instructions that guide everyone along the path, that lead to attainment of prosperity and welfare.

Shásanát. What is this shásana? Does it mean torture? No. Does it mean punishment? No. Does it mean atonement? No. Not at all. Here shástra means anushásana. What is anushásana? Hitárthe shásanam anushásanam – that is, “Anushásanam means that degree of rectificatory punishment which will be conducive to one’s well-being.”

A spiritual guru must be well-acquainted with all the processes of sádhaná, must have the capacity to convince others, must possess complete knowledge of the scriptures, must know many languages, and must have comprehensive knowledge and intellect, plus some extra qualifications. What are those qualifications? Nigrahánugrahe shakto gururityabhidhiyate – “the guru must possess the capacity both to punish, and to love, or bless, his disciples.” Punishment alone, without love, is not good. Love and punishment should go together, and the degree of punishment should never exceed the degree of love. Then only can one be called a real spiritual guru.

I have already said that a guru must be an authority on all subjects in all the three strata:

As a spiritual guru, he must be thoroughly versed in spiritual science – both the theory and the practice. He must know how Parama Puruśa associates Himself with jīvas [unit beings]; and he must know how jīvas associate themselves with Parama Puruśa (they associate themselves just as the Ganges merges into the Bay of Bengal). Otherwise, how can he teach this science to others?

And who knows this science? Only Parama Puruśa knows it, because He Himself has created everything. He has created our sense organs, and He has created the tanmátras⁽¹⁾ that our sense organs detect. He can create anything He likes. But remember, He does not do anything. His “doing” means His thinking. Things will take shape as He thinks. No one but Parama Puruśa knows how He does it. So how can people know Parama Puruśa if He does not teach to others the science of knowing Him? Only Parama Puruśa knows the science and the method to realize Him, to know Him; because He has created both human beings and the path that they must move along. So people can know the method by His grace only. Hence it has been said in Ánanda Sútram,⁽²⁾ Brahmaeva Gururekah náparah – that is, “Brahma alone is the Guru.” Through His physical structure, He teaches the actual science to the spiritual aspirants. People should clearly understand this.

There are many people who are prone to think that in the spiritual realm there is no need to acquire intellectual knowledge for God-realization; and in support of their thesis they mention the names of some great men. Now it is true that for God-realization, academic qualification may not be necessary at all: there is no differentiation between a learned person and a foolish one. But in order to be a guru, one must be a learned person. God-realization is not enough for a guru, he

must possess other qualifications as well. So a person who is devoid of learning and scriptural knowledge and the capacity to teach others, and the twin capacities to punish and reward his disciples, should never be accepted as a spiritual guru. A guru does not mean only a spiritual guru, he must be a guru for the intellectual and physical worlds also.

After the spiritual sphere comes the psychic sphere, which is cruder than the former. That is, the guru must be aware of the nature of the human mind – what it is made of, how it should be elevated step by step from crude to subtle, how all the unit minds can march together in unison towards the goal – in a word, he must know both the theoretical and the applied sides of psychology. He must know a thousand times more than is written in books. He must assimilate everything through his own refined intellect. And then only can he teach others perfectly. That shows that he must be not only a spiritual guru, but also a guru in the psychic world. There is a sense of want in the human mind. One who can remove the sense of want is a guru. In order to qualify as a guru, one must have the power to remove psychic wants.

As in the spiritual sphere, so also in the psychic sphere, a guru must be learned. He should be well-versed in the humanities; in fact, in all branches of human knowledge. In order to be a spiritual guru, it will be sufficient that he have mastery over scriptural treatises; but to be a guru in the psychic sphere, he must be well-versed in all branches of human knowledge. A limited knowledge of a few scriptures will not do. And simultaneously, he must be conversant with the style in which the human mind functions, as also in the method to control and guide it properly.

Next comes the physical world. The followers, the disciples, of the guru, are men and women of flesh and blood having physical structures. They have their sorrows and miseries, their tears and smiles. This is their life. They have their problem of food and clothing; they have their pleasures and pains, their tears of pain and tears of joy; they become elated in happy circumstances and depressed when things go wrong. It is the duty of a guru to provide his followers with the wherewithal for their progress. This is what an ideal guru is to do in the physical sphere. As a guru in the physical world, he will have to teach mankind such techniques as will solve their worldly problems – problems of food, clothing, education and medical treatment. A guru must see to it that their mundane problems are solved.

So in order to be a guru, one must come onto this earth with the highest qualifications in the spiritual field, and with the greatest capacity to face the mountainous obstacles in the physical world. To shoulder the responsibility of a guru is not child's play.

15 March 1981 DMS, Ramrajatala

Footnotes

(1) Literally, “minutest fraction of that”, i.e., of a given rudimental factor of matter. The various types of tanmátras convey the senses of hearing, touch, form (vision), taste, and smell. –Eds.

(2) Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, Ánanda Sútram, 1962. –Eds.

Avidyá – Section A

Suppose there is a rose. If the entire mind is focused on the colour of the rose, the mind will become totally identified with the rose and will ultimately think, “I am the rose.” Samádhi on the indriyas⁽¹⁾ is also possible. One who attains samádhi on a particular indriya consciously brings it under control and gets one’s work done according to one’s sweet will. This was widely practised in Avidyá Tantra in the past.

The indriyas can function either within or beyond their immediate surroundings. For instance, from here you can physically see a part of Calcutta. But if you have been to Naihati [a small town about thirty miles from Calcutta], you will certainly also be able to visualize a part of that town while sitting here in this room. In this case a proper adjustment must be brought about between your eyes and the previous perception. Your mind decides, “I want to see the features of Naihati,” and your eye indriya responds accordingly. This is called the “mental eye”.

Avidyá Tantrics make use of this sort of process. With the help of their sense organs and ectoplasms they create positive hallucinations. In Sanskrit this science is called rákásii vidyá. (Rákása does not refer to any monstrous type of animal, but to a particular group of humans.⁽²⁾) With the help of your mental eyes and your psychic power you can create an image visible to the eyes of an ordinary person. You can actually suspend the power of vision of another person so that he sees the object you want him to see. This is called rákásii máyá.

Such negative practices are common in Avidyá Tantra. For example, suppose a wicked person may be sitting in a solitary place where bones are scattered around. Using his or her psychic power, the person can create ectoplasmic “hands”, and command them to throw the bones into the house of the person whom he or she wishes to harm. The inhabitants of the house, ordinary people no doubt, will certainly be terrified by such occult phenomena. They will think it is the work of a ghost and will probably decide to move out of the house. Instead of bones, bricks or stones could also be hurled. To do this, one does not require great power – rákásii máyá is an occult power of inferior degree.

The Rámáyána, though fictional, contains some stories which illustrate rákásii máyá. The golden deer is one such story. Of course, there was never a real golden deer – can you imagine such a thing? – rather the “demon” Marich fabricated a golden deer using his occult power. Another such story goes as follows: Prince Angad, the son of King Bali, was about to present his credentials to King Ravana in court. The nineteen ministers present wanted to humiliate him in some way, and decided to use their rákásii máyá for the purpose. Present in the court at the time were Prince Angad, King Ravana and his son Indrajit, and the nineteen ministers. In order to baffle Angad, the ministers created a form tanmátra,⁽³⁾ a type of positive hallucination, through which they all assumed the form of King Ravana. So, his vision distorted, Angad’s perception was that there were a total of twenty Ravana by the side of Indrajit. Nineteen of them were the ministers, of course, but due to the hypnotic spell exercised by their ectoplasm on his mind (they put themselves into a kind of tánmátrik samádhi, in this case involving the tanmátra of form), they all looked like Ravana. The best way to disturb someone’s mental concentration is to make him or her angry by being provocative. Be it Vidyá Tantra or Avidyá Tantra, everything depends on the degree of psychic concentration. So Angad thought, “I have to disturb their mental

balance by provoking them in some way and making them angry. If I make them angry, their arms and legs will tremble and they will lose their mental balance. Consequently they will lose their ectoplasmic support, and their tánmátrik samádhi will be destroyed.” And Angad did just that. He said,

Angada kahila tabe shuńa Indrajitá
Vińti Rávańa dekhi vińti ki tor pitá?

[Listen, Indrajit – I can see twenty Ravana. Do you have twenty fathers?]

Everybody became furious, lost their mental balance, and became their original selves, permitting Angad to single out the real Ravana and submit his credentials.

5 July 1981, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) An indriya is a sensory or motor organ, together with its respective nerves, nerve fluid, and site in the brain. Samádhi on an indriya may make possible an extraordinary use of that indriya. – Eds.

(2) In mythology, ráksasa refers to demons or monsters; but the word originated historically as a term of contempt applied by the Indo-Aryans to India’s indigenous Dravidians. –Eds.

(3) Literally, “minutest fraction of that”, i.e., of a given rudimental factor of matter. The various types of tanmátra convey the senses of hearing, touch, form (vision), taste, and smell. –Eds.

Avidyá – Section B

I have already told you that rákásii vidyá is not the black magic of so-called demons, but a kind of occult science. Perhaps you know that Tantra is divided into two branches, and similarly, occult powers are expressed in two ways. Sádhakas who have reached Iishvarakóti (but not Brahmakóti, the highest stage of human realization) through intense spiritual practice attain both vidyá and avidyá shakti, both positive and negative occult power. People usually call this aeshvarya [divine power], but this is not completely accurate. The other day while discussing that phenomenon with a few people, I said that some of these occult powers are dependent on space, while others are beyond it. Iishvarakóti sádhakas, through special efforts, can master some negative and positive powers, and may apply them to certain human beings, places, or ideas. But a Brahmakóti sádhaka can apply those powers throughout the entire universe at one time, through his prota yoga. Moreover, with the help of ota yoga, he can apply his power to an individual place or person if he so wishes. The same thing, when applied on a crude level, may take the form of magic. This explains the external side; but if people remain satisfied with the attainment of these occult powers and stop advancing along the supreme path, the fullest expression of their human potentialities will be checked. To bring about the greatest fulfilment in life, sádhakas will have to reach the pinnacle of the state of ekendriya. That is, instead of directing their mind-stuff towards crude objects, they must channelize their minds towards the Macrocosm, and embrace the Macrocosm fully as their goal.

Prañavo dhanuh sharohyátmá Brahma tallakśyamucyate;
Apramattena veddhavyam sharavattanmayo bhavet.

“A sádhaka who utilizes his or her spiritual practice as the bow, her or his self as the arrow, and Parama Puruśa as the target, and then tries to pierce the target with undivided attention, attains the supreme goal.”

Sádhakas who accept this shloka as the supreme and final guidance, and move accordingly along the path of ekendriya sádhaná, are capable of devoting their minds to the highest stage of spiritual realization. Their lives become meaningful. It is not enough just to ideate on Brahma, one must also practice ekendriya sádhaná. Here ekendriya means that all the expressions of the sensory and motor nerves, and all the energy and subtle power of the nerves, indriyas, and mind-stuff, should be directed towards the Supreme Goal. This uni-directional movement towards the goal is the stage of ekendriya. In this stage the sádhaka does not attach any importance to any particular indriya, idea or thought, but attaches paramount importance to the Supreme Goal. Such a sádhaka ultimately rises above both Vidyá and Avidyá Tantra.

Vidyá Tantra is an approach of positive ideas towards the world, whereas Avidyá Tantra is an approach of negative ideas. People who tread the negative path tend to become crude. And if they follow the path of positive ideas, they may attain name, fame, social status, etc., but fail to attain Parama Puruśa. They will even fail to attain higher lokas.⁽¹⁾ The person who follows neither of these two paths, but thinks only of Parama Puruśa, will attain Him one day and will be elevated from the ekendriya stage to the vashiikára stage. This path of transcending positive and negative ideas is called in Tantra madhyama márga [middle path]. (Buddha called it majjhimá mágga). This is the only path that leads to the highest fulfilment in human life. Nányah panthá

vidyate ayanáya [“There is no other path”]. At that stage the sensory world has no attraction for a sádhaka whatsoever. But those sádhakas who dabble in the positive and negative aspects of Tantra readily become engrossed in mundane affairs. The time and energy employed to master the positive and negative aspects is a waste, for it diverts the mind and delays its movement towards the higher planes of existence. In my opinion it is better not to waste one’s time on such inconsequential pursuits. Instead it would be wiser for people to utilize their time and energy in the attainment of Parama Puruśa.

If I were to analyse the positive and negative paths you would be fascinated, but it would be of no use whatsoever in attaining Parama Puruśa.

12 July 1981, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) In mythology, the lokas are realms of existence. In yoga psychology, they are the different levels, or layers, of the Macrocosmic Mind. They represent different stages on a continuum from subtle to crude. –Eds.

Avidyá – Section C

Tantra, as you know, is divided into two branches – Vidyá and Avidyá. Shiva formulated all the Tantras, and thus all Tantrics regard Shiva as their supreme and final shelter. In all schools of Tantra there are certain rules, and these are compulsory for practitioners of both Vidyá and Avidyá Tantra. The difference between the two is that Avidyá Tantra invariably leads one towards crudification, and ultimately annihilation; whereas Vidyá Tantra leads one from crude to subtle, and invigorates the human life, mind and soul – in fact the whole existence – with exuberant joy.

At the initial stage of progress in spiritual sádhana, the human mind becomes more subtle, enabling one to achieve a certain degree of control over the physical world as well as the mind. This realm of existence, in which psychic control can be exercised to some extent, is called the kámamaya jagat [of the Macrocosmic Mind]. Through such psychic control one can gain material wealth, or earn a certain degree of name and fame. Now, where do these things come from? They come from the cruder manifestation of the Cosmic Mind (this perceptible world is itself a cruder manifestation of the Cosmic Mind). Thus at this stage sádhakas may attain and establish supremacy over certain things in the crude world.

One may also strive to make the mind more subtle while endeavouring to exercise greater control over the mundane world. This is the path of Avidyá Tantra. In this endeavour the practitioners remain totally preoccupied with the attainment of name, fame, prosperity, and material enjoyments – these are their goals. The purpose of their spiritual practice is to make the mind increasingly subtle, in order to be able to exercise further control, not only over the physical world, but over the crude minds of other microcosms as well. Their goal is not noble, and will result in their ultimately being converted into inert matter. So the final result of Avidyá Tantra is extreme crudity. I have attempted to explain this in some of my ghost stories.⁽¹⁾ Try to find time to read them.

The second stage is artha. What is artha? Suppose a person has been struck with afflictions (they are of three types – crude, subtle and causal) and seeks to destroy them. The permanent cessation of these triple afflictions is named paramártha, and their temporary cessation, artha. At this second stage of sádhana human beings also try to make their minds more subtle through spiritual elevation, but not to attain Parama Puruśa. Their goal is to develop the capacity to dominate the minds of others. Paradoxically, they are trying to make the mind subtle while attempting to establish supremacy over others. This stage is neither entirely Vidyá nor entirely Avidyá – it is an intermediate stage. Sádhakas who tread this path cannot attain the supreme fulfilment of existence, for they try to master the psychic occult powers of Parama Puruśa, and ignore Parama Puruśa Himself. Their fate is to move in the crude arena of the psychic sphere of Parama Puruśa until the day comes when they lose their psychic power and degenerate. Maharshi Jaimini formulated his philosophy, the Púrva Mīmáṃsá Darshana, on the basis of this type of psychology. But in this world, such a philosophy does not stand the test of pragmatism, either physical or mental, or of spirituality.

5 July 1981, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) [Vicitra Abhijátá](#) [Strange Experiences], circa 1960. –Eds.

Microvita and Spiritual Attainment

Khamúrtti.⁽¹⁾ Kha + múrtti = khamúrtti. Khamúrtti literally means “image in space”. Since ancient times rís, sages, yogis, and spiritual aspirants have sometimes seen a kind of luminous body or disembodied soul, by the divine grace of Parama Puruśa. These luminous bodies assist spiritual aspirants in all possible ways.

Only spiritual aspirants are able to see these luminous bodies through the grace of Parama Puruśa. Though they are visible to the naked eye, they cannot be photographed. Spiritual aspirants can speak to these luminous bodies and get answers to their questions. While the words of a spiritual aspirant may be recorded on a tape recorder, the answers given by the luminous bodies cannot be recorded. If a spiritual aspirant asks them for any mundane object, they may or may not grant the request. If they do grant the request, they do so only once, and after that they will never come within that person’s sight again.

If a spiritual aspirant asks for something spiritual, one may get it either directly or through the siddhas. Siddhas are a category of microvita⁽²⁾ which are very helpful to spiritual aspirants. I have already told you about the different categories of devayonis or microvita, and in that connection I have said something about siddhas. Yogis and spiritual aspirants say that sometimes during their sáadhaná they see siddhas and receive direct help from them.

People see khamúrttis due to the grace of Parama Puruśa. But the guru cautions them that they should never ask for any object of enjoyment or any mundane object from a khamúrtti. If people want objects of enjoyment, they will find themselves caught in the insidious snare of enjoyment.

It is worth mentioning here that one should not confuse khamúrtti with cháyá puruśa. Cháyá Puruśa is a mere game of light and shade. If someone gazes intently on a dazzling white object and then looks at a dimly-lit object, one will only see a shadow. This shadow is called cháyá puruśa. If you look towards the sun for a while and then look at another part of the sky, you will see a kind of shadow. Similarly, if you look at the flame of a burning lamp for some time and then look at a source of dim light, you are sure to see a kind of shadow.

In ancient times, people who practised hypnotism⁽³⁾ would see cháyá puruśa at night with the help of the moon, or with the help of a burning lamp (fueled by ghee) on new-moon nights. With their vision fixed on the cháyá puruśa, they would gradually become conversant with the science of hypnotism. Since olden times, the practice of Avidyá Tantra and the science of hypnotism have been well known in India and China. In modern times, the science of hypnotism was used to cure disease by Dr. Mesmer, a [European] physician. Since then, curing diseases by the science of hypnotism has been called “mesmerism”, after him. So now you understand that cháyá puruśa as used in hypnotism or mesmerism is only a game of light and shade.

A khamúrtti, however, is a thoroughly spiritual vision. Cháyá puruśa is a mere image of a shadow, whereas khamúrtti is an image of bright effulgence. If any of you have had a chance to see such a khamúrtti or are still seeing one on any occasion due to the grace of the guru, you should not pray for any mundane object or for any finite object of enjoyment from these khamúrttis.

There is yet another kind of shadowy appearance unrelated to khamúrṭti. In Tantra this is known as yakśínii darshana. As a result of practising a special type of Tantra, people attain the yakśínii siddhi. (Such people are known as yakśínii siddhas – sádhakas who have attained a type of occult power.) These yakśíniiis⁴ work under the instructions of the siddhas, and provided that some rules and regulations are not violated, they abide by their instructions. Usually the yakśíniiis cannot be induced to perform any evil deed. They have no influence in the supernatural and spiritual spheres – their influence is primarily exerted in the physical sphere and to some extent in the psychic sphere. They follow the yakśínii siddhas like a shadowy image, and very often can be found moving on walls or inside rooms like black shadows. I have never heard of anyone being harmed by a yakśínii, but it may have happened.

I know a certain person who was a professor of physics in a college in Bihar. Let us suppose his name was Swapneshwar Chattopadhyaya. I heard that he had attained yakśínii siddhi. He did not have a son, but a daughter who lived far away from him, in the house of her father-in-law. She had a daughter who used to live with her grandparents (Swapneshwar Chattopadhyaya and his wife). The granddaughter was very young – about two or three years old.

Once Mr. Chattopadhyaya had to go to Calcutta for quite a long time in connection with his academic pursuits. His wife – say her name was Kanika – was a very good but a timid woman. The thought that she would have to live alone for a long time made her feel half-dead. After all, how far could she rely on her tiny granddaughter? Mr. Chattopadhyaya consoled his wife, saying, “Don’t worry. My yakśínii will take care of you. She will help you in all ways.” On the eve of his departure for Calcutta, he showed his wife a black shadowy image reflected on the wall of their meditation room. Though the figure was very small, it looked like a human figure. Mr. Chattopadhyaya said to his wife, “This yakśínii will protect you from all troubles and dangers.”

He set out on his journey and was expected to return after forty-five days. Immediately after his departure, many strange things began to happen. Wherever Kanika went, the image of the yakśínii followed her like a shadow. For the first few days Kanika was a bit nervous, seeing the shadowy image, but later on, as she was obliged to spend time in its company, she overcame her fear. Rather, she grew more courageous than before.

At noon one day, while Kanika was washing the dishes in the kitchen, she suddenly noticed that the image of the yakśínii was shaking abnormally. At first she was puzzled, but then she saw the yakśínii move quickly out of the room. She followed the image and also left the room. The yakśínii came to the door of the living room beside the main gate. Kanika discovered that a thief dressed like a gentleman was about to escape with a suitcase that was kept in the room. The thief caught sight of Kanika and took to his heels, leaving the suitcase behind. The main gate had been left open by mistake.

On another day, Kanika was sitting in the kitchen kneading flour. Suddenly she noticed that the yakśínii was shaking violently again. Kanika looked at the figure in utter amazement. Immediately it went out of the kitchen, and Kanika followed it closely. The yakśínii rushed towards the well across the courtyard of the house. As soon as Kanika looked towards the well she became alarmed... horrified. She noticed that her three-year-old granddaughter was sitting

precariously on the edge of the well, looking down into it. If she moved slightly this way or that, or if she moved only a little to look at her own reflection in the water, she would immediately fall into the well. No one could prevent her certain death. Kanika moved stealthily forward from behind, picked the child up, and placed her on her lap.

Barely a month had passed since Swapneshwar had left for Calcutta. One day Kanika was cutting okra (“ladies’ finger”) in the kitchen. Suddenly she looked at the image of the yakśínii on the wall, and she noticed that it was gradually disappearing. She looked all over the wall but could not see the image anywhere. Meanwhile, she heard the sound of someone knocking at the front door. Kanika went to the door and opened it, only to see Swapneshwar standing on the doorstep. Seeing Kanika, Swapneshwar said, “I was supposed to stay in Calcutta for one and a half months, but as the job was finished in one month, I came home without delay.”

I am narrating what little information I have about yakśíniiis. Formerly, some people used to perform yakśínii sádhaná according to the prescribed Tantric rituals. I do not know if people still do the same thing today. In the past there were no caste or communal barriers as far as these Tantric practices were concerned, nor are there any today.

The system of performing sádhaná on various deities is not exactly the same as this, but somewhat similar. Deities like shadowy figures also become visible through this practice. Although this sádhaná is different to some extent from the sádhaná of yakśínii siddhi, the psychology in both is the same. All the systems of Kálii siddhi, Durgá siddhi, dákinii siddhi, yakśínii siddhi, etc., are different in practice, yet they are similar theoretically. In case one wants to achieve the siddhi of various deities, one should acquire more mental purity than in the case of yakśínii siddhi, dákinii siddhi, yoginii siddhi, etc., because this subject concerns the psychic stratum. It is of elevated nature, but it has no relation whatsoever to the realm of genuine spirituality.

Once when I visited Allahabad, a certain gentleman came in contact with me. He told me that he had attained Kálii siddhi. I said to him, “Well, can you try to tell me something about your experiences? For instance, what do you see, what do you understand, etc.?”

He said, “I perform sádhaná according to such and such system. One day after sádhaná I saw a shadowy image of Kálii on the wall. Since then, whenever my mind gets concentrated, that image of Kálii produces some kind of vibration in my mind which enables me to understand what it wants to convey to me. Last night that image conveyed to me that you were coming to Allahabad today from Bihar and that you would stay here for a few days.”

I asked him, “Can you see the red mark on Kálii’s feet, her ankle bells, her iron bangles, the garland of skulls around her neck, the garland of fingers, etc.?”

He replied, “No, I do not see anything like that. All those things are mixed up in the shadow. The shadow itself is the combination of all those things.”

Then I asked him about yakśínii siddhi, and I also asked if he knew the difference between yakśínii siddhi and Kálii siddhi.

In the case of sádhaná for yakśínii siddhi, there is less devotional intensity due to lack of deep ideation. But during Kálii sádhaná there is a fair degree of devotion, and at the same time the psychic state is somewhat peaceful. Usually, people do not utilize Kálii shakti for destructive purposes, but of course there may be some Avidyá Tantrics who use their acquired power for malevolent deeds.

This type of siddhi of various deities is a kind of psychic achievement of a higher order, yet this has nothing to do with the spiritual world.

Uttamo Brahmasadbhávo madhyamá dhyánadhárañá;
Japastutih syádhadhamá múrtipújádhamádhamá.

[Ideation on Brahma is the best, dhyána and dhárañá are second best, repetitious incantation and eulogistic prayer are the worst, and idol worship is the worst of the worst.]

You may have heard that some people attain bhúta siddhi or preta siddhi (the ability to communicate with ghosts). This ability is greatly inferior to yakśínii siddhi. In olden days, some people would follow the practice of bhúta siddhi, usually to extend their influence or to do harm to others, and would perform many misdeeds. Today no one follows this practice; if some people do, they are very few.

Instances of people being possessed by ghosts, gods and goddesses, dákiniiis, yoginiis, etc., are somewhat similar to this from the psychological perspective. You may have noticed that sometimes people look for those who are “possessed” by Manasá [snake goddess], Satii-Má [Mother Satii], etc., when they feel an immense desire to find answers to their questions. Others visit special places or localities to attain the exact answers to their problems.

Although these things are similar psychologically, they are somewhat different in practice. To treat various diseases by performing a special type of dhárañá [deep concentration] on various gods and goddesses, is nothing but the play of the conscious, subconscious and unconscious levels of the mind.⁽⁵⁾

If, due to the grace of Parama Puruśa, someone gets the chance to see a khamúrtti and asks that entity for success on the path of self-abnegation, then one may get such inspiration from that siddha devayoni (positive microvitum). One will merge one’s individual existence and spiritual flow into the Macrocosmic stance of Parama Puruśa and attain savisheśa or savikalpa samadhi, the state of partial absorption of mind; or, by merging in the supreme stance of Parama Puruśa, attain nirvisheśa or nirvikalpa samádhi, the state of complete absorption of mind. This is the summit of spiritual attainment. In the final stages of one’s spiritual journey, the entitative existence of the sádha is merged into Parama Puruśa.

6 September 1987, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) The contents of this chapter consists of elaboration on the words khamúrtti and khamúrttimán. The author's discourse on that day entailed linguistic discussion of a number of Sanskrit terms; the discussion of each term became an entry in the author's linguistic encyclopedia Shabda Cayaniká ("Collection of Words"). –Eds.

(2) Microvita are entities which come within the realms both of physicality and of psychic expression. They are smaller and subtler than physical atoms and sub-atomic particles, and in the psychic realm they may be subtler than ectoplasm (citta, or mind-stuff). –Eds.

(3) In those days hypnotism or sammohana vidyá was considered a part of Avidyá Tantra. The six "actions" considered part of Avidyá Tantra are máraña, vashiikaraña, uccátana, sammohana, shántikarma and stambhana.

(4) A yakśínii is not the same as a yakśa, which is one of the seven devayonis. –Eds.

(5) Etymology of khamúrttimán omitted here. –Eds.

Vidyá Tantra and Avidyá Tantra

The word *guhya*⁽¹⁾ as commonly used means something mysterious, something concealed, something like a dreadful nightmare, some secret chant, some mystical occult power; or witchcraft. Or finally, it may indicate the five branches [exclusive to] Avidyá Tantra – *máraña*, *vashiikarañ*, *uccáána*, *sammohana* and *stambhana*.

Avidyá Tantra has six branches in all; the sixth branch is called *shántikarma*, which is an element common to both Vidyá Tantra and Avidyá Tantra.

The six branches of Vidyá Tantra are: to awaken benevolent intellect, to awaken noble propensities, to arouse a sense of humility, to arouse a sense of dharma, to arouse a sense of self-surrender, and *shántikarma* [propitiatory rites for others' welfare]. So as we see, *shántikarma* is an element common to both Vidyá and Avidyá.

The *śátkarma* [six actions] of Vidyá Tantra are applied in order to elevate human beings in the world of spirituality by goading them towards auspicious thoughts; whereas the *śátkarma* of Avidyá Tantra are applied in order to exploit human beings and utilize them for one's own self interest.

The first action of Vidyá Tantra is the awakening of the benevolent intellect in human beings. Very often people are guided by the crude intellect. That is, they have intellect, but they cannot utilize it; or their intellect is not utilized in the practical sphere. Now if these people are trained to utilize their intellect in the practical sphere, they can prosper in life. This is how both human beings and animals can be guided along the respective paths of their own welfare.

The second action is the awakening of the nobler *vrttis* [propensities] in the human mind. There are approximately one thousand propensities in the human mind. They are controlled from a particular point in the guru *cakra*. That particular point is called the *sahasrára cakra*.

Not that the total number of propensities is exactly one thousand. But anyway, of the propensities, some are benevolent, some are malevolent, and some are neutral.

Some are neutral, as I said. For instance, if you inadvertently put your hand into fire, you quickly withdraw it; if thorns prick your foot, you quickly pull your foot back; when you see a snake in front of you, you take a quick jump; when you feel hungry you tell your mother to give you some food. Similarly you may feel sleepy, drowsy, etc. These are all neutral tendencies of mind. There is neither merit nor demerit in these psychic tendencies. Likewise, seeing, hearing, tasting, touching – these actions are also neutral in character, that is, neither good nor bad. Even in the most undeveloped protozoa, some of these instincts, if not all, are found to exist. The two recognized criteria of living beings – to multiply and to attempt to survive – are very prominent in undeveloped protozoa. These two are also neutral tendencies, above the domain of merits and demerits.

There are some other propensities which are definitely malevolent – for instance the eight fetters, the six enemies, harming others, tyrannizing over others without reason, profligacy, exploiting

society, deliberately confusing and misguiding others, duping society with lofty words, falsehood, and hypocrisy. These are undeniably malevolent tendencies of mind.

And as regards the benevolent tendencies, they are compassion, love, sense of righteousness, service, helping others in distress, consoling the bereaved, arousing hope in frustrated hearts, etc. So the second action of Vidyá Tantra is to arouse the benevolent tendencies in the minds of human beings and of other microcosms.

The third action of Vidyá Tantra is the awakening of the sense of humility. Arrogance disturbs peace. If human beings develop modesty instead of arrogance it does no harm to anyone, and many undesirable situations can be prevented by thus avoiding arrogance. A modest person is respected and admired by others. Hence people should be taught to be modest starting at an early age. And even with those who have grown old, efforts should be made to rectify their arrogant nature. If such people are corrected, they too can learn modesty.

Vidyá dadáti vinayaṁ vinayádyáti pátratám;
Pátratat dhanamánoti dhanáddharma tato sukham.

[A proper education leads to modesty, and through modesty one wins the respect of society.]

The fourth action is the awakening of the sense of dharma in human beings. The basic difference between human beings and other creatures is that human beings are capable of following dharma. This propensity of dharma is either dominant or dormant in human beings. A person in whom the propensity of dharma is very much alive should be encouraged to make vigorous efforts to augment it even more, so that the propensity of dharma becomes more and more manifest. One who is sleeping should be awakened. In the absence of the sense of dharma there is hardly any difference between humans and animals, rather the human without dharma goes one step lower than the animal.

Áhára-nidrá-bhaya-maethunaiṅca
Sámányametad pashubhinaránám;
Dharmo hi teśám adhiko visheśah
Dharmena hiináh pashubhih samánáh.

[Food, sleep, fear, procreation – these are the common properties of humans and animals. But humans possess an especial dharma (Bhágavata Dharma), in the absence of which they are no better than animals.]

The fifth action of Vidyá Tantra is to arouse the sense of self-surrender. Human beings are microcosms, finite; whereas Parama Puruśa is the Macrocosm, the Infinite Entity. So if a finite microcosm throws down a challenge to the Infinite Macrocosm, it is simply ludicrous. If a tiny mouse wants to wrestle with a lion, the lion may or may not even be aware of the final outcome, but the poor mouse will know all about it. That is why starting from early childhood one should develop the habit of self-surrender to the Supreme Entity in all thoughts and actions. There is no greater happiness or peace or joy than in complete surrender to Parama Puruśa. The essence of the spirit of self-surrender is contained in the following shloka:

Tvameva mātá ca pitá tvameva
Tvameva bandhushca sakhá tvameva;
Tvameva vidyá draviṇāṁ tvameva
Tvameva sarvaṁ mama Devadeva.

[Thou art my father and my mother, Thou art my friend and my eternal companion, Thou art my learning and my wealth, Thou art my everything, O Supreme Lord.]

Shántikarma, performing propitiatory rites, is the sixth action of Vidyá Tantra. If one's predominant defects, caused by the influence of bad stars, are removed, then the suffering consequent upon those defects, and therefore also the legacy of the bad stars, can be avoided.

Now let us analyse the six actions of Avidyá Tantra.

1. One part of Avidyá Tantra is to kill or cause the death of someone through mantra or through some related technique or in some artificial way. This is called máraṇa. [Mára literally means "annihilation".]
2. Bringing somebody under one's control by means of a mantra or a dravyaguṇa [some plant or other natural substance which projects psychic effects], or by wearing a squirrel's tail like a ring on the little finger of the left hand and chanting the mantra hriim kriim klu, or by feeding that tail to a person in a chānci pán [a betel preparation], is known as vashiikaraṇa. But remember that this action must be accompanied by purashcaraṇa [raising the kuṇḍalinii, the dormant force] as per Avidyá Tantric style. When under the influence of vashiikaraṇa, a person becomes completely controlled and behaves like a servant.
3. Caṭana or cáṭana means one's residence. When somebody is uprooted from his or her residence by means of a mantra or some mystic power or some dravyaguṇa, the process is called uccáṭana. It is said that if a particular mantra is written on a brick in red ink and buried under the northeast corner of a house by a naked person on a rainy night, the owner of that house becomes uprooted within three days. This process may or may not fructify, but if it actually does the effect is disastrous. Keeping this fact in mind, I have deliberately refrained from giving the mantra in this book.
4. To get someone to do something by hypnotizing the person with light waves or by fixing one's gaze on him or by breaking or overpowering his personality is called sammohana. In English this process is called hypnotism. The [European] physician Dr. Mesmer did some research on this method to find out if this process could be utilized for the benefit of the public; hence this process is also known as "mesmerism".
5. Stopping the flow or movement of something is called stambhana. Stambha means "pillar". Since any moving thing will be stopped when it hits a pillar, stopping the movement of something by means of a mantra and some dravyaguṇa is called stambhana. By using some mantra and holding under the tongue a kántánate root fitted into a silver ring (like a hub circled by its wheel), one can stop another person's movement or action. Suppose someone is about to urinate. The flow of urine is stopped. In the science of áyurveda, the medical condition of constricted urination is known as mútrastambha [just as this Avidyá practice is known as mútrastambha]. Vákstambha [stopping the flow of another person's voice] is a similar Avidyá Tantric practice. But the Avidyá Tantric

should be cautious about trying to maintain the stambhana for a long time, because it requires him or her to remain in an abnormal condition [sometimes physiologically abnormal], which will eventually harm the person.

6. The shántikarma of Avidyá Tantra means to save someone from a danger or a disease by means of certain rituals, and then redirect that danger or disease towards another person: that is, to help one person to survive by killing another.

When the Kálacakrayána and Vajrayána Tantras of the Buddhist school of philosophy were popular in Bengal, these six actions of Avidyá Tantra were widely practised. But when the Kálacakrayána and Vajrayána vanished from Bengal, the six actions also fell out of use. And the six actions of Vidyá Tantra fell out of use simultaneously. It is good that the actions of both have been forgotten by people. What is desirable is that people move towards spiritual elevation along the paths of jñána, karma, and bhakti⁽²⁾ with a healthy and rational outlook.

The secret processes of Vidyá Tantra and Avidyá Tantra are called guhya vidyá. The motivation behind the practice of Avidyá Tantra is Mārāya mārāya nāshaya nāshaya uccātaya uccātaya mama shatruṅām [“Kill my enemy, kill. Destroy my enemy, destroy. Uproot my enemy, uproot.”] This sort of mentality should not be allowed to develop in a person. This sort of prayer should also be avoided.

1 July 1990, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) The contents of this chapter consists of an elaboration on the word guhya. The author’s discourse on that day entailed linguistic discussion of a number of Sanskrit terms; the discussion of each term became an entry in the author’s linguistic encyclopedia Shabda Cayaniká (“Collection of Words”). –Eds.

(2) Forms of spiritual practice which emphasize, respectively, discrimination, selfless action, and devotion. –Eds.

Glossary

ABHIMÁNA. Inflated ego.

ÁCÁRYA or ÁCÁRYÁ. Spiritual teacher qualified to teach all lessons of meditation.

ADHARMA. That which goes against DHARMA.

ÁGAMA AND NIGAMA. Nigama means questions on spiritual topics; or the theoretical side of TANTRA. Agama means answers to the questions; or the practical, applied, side of TANTRA.

AHAMKÁRA. Pride.

AHAMTATTVA. Doer “I”, ego, second mental subjectivity.

ÁNANDA. Divine bliss.

ANANDA MARGA. Path of divine bliss; Ananda Marga Pracárika Saṅgha (Ananda Marga organization).

ÁSANA. The third limb of aśtáṅga (eight-limbed) yoga. Ásanas: postures for curing physical problems, especially those that interfere with SÁDHANÁ.

ÁTMA, ÁTMAN. Soul, consciousness, PURUŚA, pure cognition. The átman of the Cosmos is PARAMÁTMAN, and that of the unit is the JIVÁTMAN.

AVADHÚTA or AVADHÚTIKÁ. A monk or nun of an order close to the tradition of Shaeva Tantra. Literally, “one who is thoroughly cleansed mentally and spiritually”.

AVIDYÁ SHAKTI. Centrifugal, or extroversial, force; force of repulsion from the Nucleus Consciousness; aspect of the Cosmic Operative Principle which guides movements from the subtle to the crude. See also VIDYÁ SHAKTI.

BHAGAVÁN. Lord.

BHAKTI. Devotion.

BHAKTI YOGA. Devotional form of spiritual practice.

BHAVA. The expressed universe; that part of one’s SAMSKÁRAS which carries one to the next life.

BHÁVA. Idea, ideation, mental flow.

BIJA MANTRA. Acoustic root; particular sound vibration from which a particular type of action stems.

BRAHMA. Supreme Entity comprising both PURUŚA, or SHIVA, and PRAKRTI, or SHAKTI.

BRAHMA CAKRA. The Cosmic Cycle – the cycle of creation out of Consciousness, and dissolution back into Consciousness, through SAIṆCARA and PRATISAIṆCARA.

BRÁHMAÑA (BRAHMAN). The uppermost social group in India, who traditionally perform priestly functions or live by intellectual labour.

CAKRA. Cycle or circle; psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus. The cakras in the human body are all located along the suśumná canal which passes through the length of the spinal column and extends up to the crown of the head. Some cakras, however, are associated with external concentration points. The concentration points for the cakras: (1) for the múládhára cakra, the base of the spine, above the perineum; (2) for the svádhiśthána, the base of the genital organ; (3) for the maṅipura, the navel; (4) for the anáhata, the mid-point of the chest; (5) for the vishuddha, the throat; (6) for the ájijná, between the eyebrows; and (7) for the sahasrára, the crown of the head.

CITTA. Done “I”, objective “I”, objective mind, mind-stuff.

DEVA. Mythologically, a god, a deity. Philosophically, any vibration, or expression, emanating from the Cosmic Nucleus.

DEVATÁ. Mythologically, a god or goddess. Philosophically, a minor expression of a DEVA, controlled and supervised by the deva. (Deva and devatá are sometimes used interchangeably.)

DEVII. A goddess, a female deity.

DHÁRAÑÁ. The sixth limb of aṣṭámga (eight-limbed) yoga. Restricting the flow of mind to particular points in the body; conception. (Tattva Dhárañá means restricting the flow of mind to, or conception of, the fundamental factors.)

DHARMA. Characteristic property; spirituality; the path of righteousness in social affairs.

DHYÁNA. Seventh limb of aṣṭámga (eight-limbed) yoga; meditation in which the psyche is directed towards Consciousness.

DHYEYA. Object of meditation.

GAORAVA. Self-aggrandizement.

GUÑA. Binding factor or principle; attribute; quality. PRAKRTI, the Cosmic Operative Principle, is composed of: sattvaguña, the sentient principle; rajoguña, the mutative principle; and tamoguña, the static principle.

IISHVARA. The Cosmic Controller; literally, “the Controller of all controllers”.

INDRIYA. One of the ten sensory and motor organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin; and hands, feet, vocal cord, genital organ and excretory organ). The eye indriya (for example) comprises the eye itself, the optical nerve, the fluid in the nerve, and the location in the brain at which the visual stimulus is transmitted to the ectoplasm, or mind-stuff.

JAPA. Repetition of mantra, incantation.

JIIVA. An individual being.

JIVÁTMÁ, JIVÁTMAN. See ÁTMÁ.

JIÑÁNA. Knowledge; understanding.

JIÑÁNA YOGA. A form of spiritual practice which aims at self-realization through the path of knowledge.

JIÑÁNII. A SÁDHAKA who follows the path of knowledge or discrimination.

KALÁ. Flow with curvature, in a stage of the Cosmic Cycle dominated by the mutative principle.

KAOLA. One who practises kula sádhaná and is adept at raising one’s own KUÑDALINII.

KÁPÁLIKA SÁDHANÁ. A form of spiritual practice which causes the aspirant to confront and overcome all the inherent fetters and enemies of the human mind.

KARMA. Action; sometimes, positive or negative action which produces SAMSKÁRAS.

KARMA YOGA. A form of spiritual practice which aims at self-realization through the path of selfless action.

KIIRTANA. Collective singing of the name of the Lord, sometimes combined with a dance that expresses the spirit of surrender.

KŚATRIYA. The second-highest social group in India, who traditionally discharge military functions.

KUÑDALINII, KULAKUÑDALINII. Literally, “coiled serpentine”; sleeping divinity; the force

dormant in the kula (lowest vertebra) of the body, which, when awakened, rises up the spinal column to develop all one's spiritual potentialities.

MAHÁKAOLA. A Tantric guru who can raise not only His own KUÑDALINII, but those of others also.

MAHÁTTATTVA. "I" ("I am," "I exist") feeling, existential "I". MANTRA. A sound or collection of sounds which, when meditated upon, will lead to spiritual liberation. A mantra is incantative, pulsative, and ideative.

MANTRA CAETANYA. The awakening of a mantra; conceptual understanding of and psychic association with a mantra.

MARGI. A member of ANANDA MARGA.

MÁYÁ. Creative Principle, i.e., PRAKRTI in Her phase of creation. One aspect of Máýá is the power to cause the illusion that the finite created objects are the ultimate truth.

MOKŚA. Spiritual emancipation, non-qualified liberation.

MUDRÁ. Meaningful gesture (an inseparable part of Oriental classical dance).

MUKTI. Spiritual liberation.

MUNI. A saintly person devoted to intellectual pursuits.

NÁRÁYAÑA. The Supreme Entity; literally, "the Lord of Nára (PRAKRTI)".

NIGAMA. See ÁGAMA and NIGAMA.

NIRGUÑA BRAHMA. BRAHMA unaffected by the GUÑAS; Non-Qualified Brahma.

ONM, ONMKÁRA. The sound of the first vibration of creation; the biija mantra (acoustic root) of the expressed universe. Onmkára literally means "the sound onm".

PARAMA PURUŚA. Supreme Consciousness.

PARAMASHIVA. See PURUŚOTTAMA.

PARAMÁ PRAKRTI. Supreme Operative Principle.

PARAMÁTMÁ, PARAMÁTMAN. Supreme Consciousness in the role of witness of His own macropsychic conation. Paramátman comprises: (1) PURUŚOTTAMA, the Macrocosmic Nucleus; (2) Puruśottama's association with all creation in His extroversive movement (prota yoga); and (3) Puruśottama's association with each unit creation individually (ota yoga) and (4) with all collectively (prota yoga) in His introversive movement.

PARÁGATI. Supreme Desideratum, "where the journey of finite entities ends".

PARIPRASHNA. A question on a spiritual topic.

PÁPA. Sin.

PÁPII. Sinner.

PRAKRTI. Cosmic Operative Principle.

PRATISAIÑCARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step introversion and subtilization of consciousness from the state of solid matter to the Nucleus Consciousness. (Prati means "counter" and saiñcara means "movement".)

PRATIŚTHÁ. Social status.

PRÁÑÁYÁMA. The fourth limb of aśtámga (eight-limbed) yoga: process of controlling vital energy by controlling the breath.

PRATIKA. Emblem.

PRATYÁHÁRA. Fifth limb of aśtámga (eight-limbed) yoga; withdrawing the mind from absorption in the physical senses.

PUÑYA. Virtue.

PURASHCARAÑA. Upward movement of the KULAKUÑDALINII from múládhára CAKRA to sahasrára cakra, including the phases of mantrágháta and MANTRA CAETANYA.

PURUŚA. Consciousness.

PURUŚOTTAMA or PARAMASHIVA. The Nucleus Consciousness, the witness of saiṅcara and PRATISAIṅCARA.

QUINQUEELEMENTAL. Composed of the ethereal, aerial, luminous, liquid, and solid factors, or elements.

RAJOGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

RŚI. Sage; one who, by inventing new things, broadens the path of progress of human society.

SADÁSHIVA. SHIVA (literally, “Eternal Shiva”).

SAGUÑA BRAHMA. BRAHMA affected by the GUÑAS; Qualified Brahma.

SÁDHAKA. Spiritual practitioner.

SÁDHANÁ. Literally, “sustained effort”; spiritual practice; meditation.

SÁDHU. Virtuous person, spiritual aspirant. See also SÁDHAKA.

SAHASRÁRA. See CAKRA.

SAMÁDHI. “Absorption” of the unit mind into the Cosmic Mind (savikalpa samádhi) or into the Átman (nirvikalpa samádhi).

SAMSKÁRA. Mental reactive momentum, potential mental reaction.

SANNYÁSII or SANNYÁSINII. A renunciate; literally, “one who has surrendered one’s everything to the Cosmic will” or “one who ensconces oneself in SAT, the Unchangeable Entity”.

SAT, SATYA, SATYAM. “That which undergoes no change”; Absolute Reality.

SATTVAGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

SHÁKTA. A follower of Sháktácára, the Shakti Cult; hence, any aspirant who embodies the characteristics of Sháktácára, especially the judicious application of power.

SHAKTI. PRAKRTI; energy; a deification of PRAKRTI.

SHAMBHÚLIUNGA. Fundamental positivity.

SHÁSTRA. Scripture.

SHIVA. A great Tantric guru of 5000 B.C. who guided society while His mind was absorbed in Consciousness; hence, Infinite Consciousness, PURUŚA.

SHLOKA. A Sanskrit couplet expressing one idea.

SIDDHA MANTRA. A mantra “perfected” by the guru.

SVABHÁVA. Characteristics, one’s own nature; nature.

SVAYAMBHÚLIUNGA. Ultimate point of negativity, or crudity, in the human body.

TAMOGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

TÁNDAVA. A vigorous dance for male spiritual aspirants, originally formulated by SHIVA. It develops the glands in a way that enhances courage and fearlessness. When Shiva Himself does this dance (Shiva Nátarája), the dance becomes a metaphor in which Supreme Consciousness sends vibrations throughout the universe and causes all objects of the universe in turn to radiate

vibrations.

TANMÁTRA. Literally, “minutest fraction of that,” i.e., of a given rudimental factor of matter. Also translated “generic essence” or “inferential wave”. The various types of tanmátra convey the senses of hearing, touch, form (vision), taste and smell.

TANTRA. A spiritual tradition which originated in India in prehistoric times and was first systematized by SHIVA. It emphasizes the development of human vigour, both through meditation and through confrontation of difficult external situations, to overcome all fears and weaknesses. Also, a scripture expounding that tradition.

TÁRAKA BRAHMA. Supreme Entity in Its liberating aspect.

VÁMÁCÁRA TANTRA. A school of Tantra that attempts to overcome MÁYÁ by fight, but without any clear goal.

VEDA. Literally, “knowledge”; hence, a composition imparting spiritual knowledge. Also, a religious or philosophical school which originated among the Aryans and was brought by them to India. It is based on the VEDAs and emphasizes the use of ritual to gain the intervention of the gods.

VIDYÁ SHAKTI. Centripetal, or introversial, force; force of attraction to the Nucleus Consciousness; aspect of the Cosmic Operative Principle which guides movements from the crude to the subtle. See also AVIDYÁ SHAKTI.

VIIRÁCÁRII. A follower of Viirácára Tantra; a Tantric who adopts a particularly “heroic” ideation while seeking to confront and overcome all mental weaknesses.

VRTTI. Mental propensity.