B. Bhattacharya

Śaivism and the Phallic World

Saivism

And

The Phallic World

B. Bhattacharya

Volume I

Munshiram Manoharlal

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यद् यद् कर्म करोमि तत् तद् अखिलम्सम्भो त्वदराधनम्

YAD YAD KARMA KAROMI TAT TAD AKHILAM

SAMBHO TVADARADHANAM

All my actions, oh Sambhu, are but offerings to Thee.

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Preface to the Second Edition

Saivism and the Phallic World is a formidable treatise by any standard. Many have favoured the tome as the only standard work on the treatment of Saivik thoughts. Readers and students have welcomed the book particularly be- cause of the broad canvas on which it has been laid, opening up vistas of comparative religious trends in history of mankind, specially drawing attention to the Siva and Tantra trends, in all types of human society, ancient and modern.

But for the public appreciation it has received a heavy and ponderous book like Saivism and the Phallic World would not have entered into a second edition. In fact the publishers have done the reading public a service by venturing into this project, after the book had disappeared from popular book-shops for over three years.

From the date it had been first published (1975) to date certain aspects dealt within the text called for some special brush ups. These have been included as Additional Notes. A typeset book of this size, inevitably, erred over certain print and other slips. The author as well as the publishers have taken great care in eliminating these errors, and redressing certain phraseologies for the sake of clarity and form. To this extent the present edition has become far more reliable.

The Index of the first edition had never been to an expected standard. This major deficiency has now been removed by adding a completely remodelled Index, on which the author himself has worked very hard. Dr. V.N.Chibbar deserves thanks for going through this part of the work very thoroughly, and arranging the index with scientific and intellectual precision.

One of the most valuable addition to this edition is the sponataneous review from the eminent savant and orientalist-linguist the Late Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, National Professor of Humanities, on this book. This review has been called 'spontaneous' becaue at the time of writing this review Dr. Chatterji and the author, who used to live in the West Indies (Trinidad), had not known each other. The later bonds were established between the two only through the medium of this book.

The author expresses his thanks to the publishers for undertaking this venture. As one of the leading publishers in India of Oriental treatises the house of Messrs. Munshiram Manoharlal is reputed internationally. Thanks are also due to my daughter Mrs.

Atreyee Cordiero and my student-friend Shri Sunil Jha both of whom have been good enough to bear with the tantrums and idiosynorasies of an octogenarian perfectionist.

New Delhi BRAJAMADHAVA BHATTACHARYA

16 February 1993

Review by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji

Saivism and the Phallic World, by Professor Brajamadhav Bhattacharya, published by the Oxford and I.B.H. Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1975, in two volumes, p. 1048.

This is a stupendous book, and in its compact 1048 and more pages written in forceful and most readable English is crammed a mass of information of quite an encyclopaedic extent on almost all matters dealing with religion, both popular and higher, philosophy, mysticism, history, ethonology and everything that has got a reference or a relevance to the human phenome- non. The author is remarkably qualified to handle such a vast amount of scientific and philosophical erudition. He is born in a Brahman family with all the heritage of traditional Brahmanical scholarship and ideology. He is a present-day Indian scholar of literature and has been teaching the subject for over quarter of a century. He has moreover been an ardent seeker after the Reality behind life, and in this matter he has not confined himself to formal philosophical and scientific enquiry but also has taken note, with the spirit of an humble enquirer along the lines suggested by mystic adepts, of the ritual and dogmatics, symbolistics and myth, folklore and traditions, and whatever has developed and has found a place in human culture in its manifold essay for arriving at the unseen and the unknown.

From its title, this book would appear to give a detailed exposition of one aspect of Hinduism, namely the worship of the Divinity through the concept of Siva, the Deity of destruction and regeneration, who represents not only the forces of creation, destruction and recreation but also typifies the action of the live forces in all existence. A look into the wonderfully diverse range of topics treated in this great book would seem to suggest that no aspect of life and creation which comes within the purview of religion and thought has been left untouched by the author, who seems to embrace everything in the wonderful sweep of his view. In the Mystic Mother Section of the first volume of his book, the author has brought the topic of fundamental importance in life and being which centers round Sex-the Lingam and the Yoni-the Creative forces through the polarities of the Father and the Mother which merge into each other, the Ardha-Nariswara or the Androgyne. All this inevitably leads through Bhakti or the Abandan of Faith and Love to the Divine Essence in its Nirguna and Saguna forms. The subject has been presented with uncommon knowledge and conviction, and this

makes the book a source of serious and reflective reading of both high and profound unction.

In the second volume we have an exposition of the various aspects of Saivaism which according to the author's experience, forms the quintessence of Religion. In this volume, Professor Bhattacharya also gives an exposé of the significance of a number of Saiva myths and legends which are sometimes very little known to the domain or esoteric students of myths- of God and Goddesses and their doings, and they always bring to us startling suggestions and conclusions and give us food for fresh thought. In this and all other respects, the Saivism and the Phallic World is a unique scientific work, unrivalled in its field.

Sex is treated as a basic fact of life-as the Hindu idea is, it is one of the 4 Great Ends of Man's Existence (Chaturvarga, Purushartha), which are (1) Dharma a virtue in conforming in life to the Eternal Law of Being which holds in itself everything, (2) Artha or Wealth (which means everything that man seeks to acquire, excepting sin and evil), (3) Kama or Sex and Love (where a Man and Woman feel an attraction to each other and lean upon each other for continuing the race, for performing the duties in life, and for attainment of pleasure and happiness) and (4) Moksha or Liberation (from the bonds of Dharma, Artha and Kama, pondering upon the nature of the Supreme or the Reality). Sex is something holy, as holy as Nature or Life, and all Natural Religions recognise its value in life, the need to cultivate it as an essential thing in existence as leading to the Ultimate Reality. Repugnance to Sex is the result of a wrong attitude to life-and the deeper insight of the Phallic Cults offers the only corrective to these aberrations against sex. Here Professor Bhattacharya's book presents a common sense attitude to sex, as a part of Life and Expression.

One thing we notice in this book is the amazing extent of the author's range of studies, In that most important part of the book dealing with the Mother Goddess and the Phallic symbol in creation, we have an almost all- comprehensive treatises on the subject embracing the entire range of religious perception, imagination and experience. No religion, ancient and modern, and no king of popular belief which are exercising the mind and the action of men, has been left untouched, and one must say that one gets bewildered in the midst of this vast jungle of the sex eroticism which has joined forces with religious experience or mysticism. The author has two great languages at his finger-tips-Sanskrit, which he has inherited by tradition and the world of Sanskrit,

as well as English. His mother-tongue is Bengali, and these two languages which he handles with such vitality, beauty and force, are, it is remarkable to consider, but acquired languages with him,languages which have almost become like one's inherited mother-tongue. That is why sometimes we find, in his case too, aliquando dromitat bonus Homerus-in his use of Sanskrit and Bengali a rare lapsus calami peeps through his most excellent, almost faultless writing.

I wish I had some more time to give to this vast literary and philosophical creation by Professor Bhattacharya as presented before us. He has been not only a teacher and an educationist, both in theory and practice, but he has been something far greater. He has been a preacher of Religion and the Good Life, of Mystic Understanding and Appreciation. He has taken up the task of guiding a whole section of people along the path of full living and thought in religion. For the last 25 years or more, the forlorn Hindu community settled in far away Guyana and Trinidad in the antipodes of India in the West Indies, religion have found in him a friend, philospher and guide, to help maintain in their souls a touch of the deathless culture and thought of India. This alone has been a work of primordial value, and Professor Bhattacharya unquestionably is a dedicated soul who has felt an inner urge to take up this life of a lay missionary, seeking to bring a spiritual uplift to the neglected children of India in far away America.

I only hope that inspite of the fact that his book might prove to be rather above the heads of the general run of his readers even when they are from India and are highly educated, it will remain a beacon-light of help and guidance for all and sundry. The present reviewer himself believes in at simple faith-the faith of an agnostic who is not an atheist-an agnostic with imagination, for whom a good deal of what passes as profundity and truth in mysticism, owing to his ignorance primarily, is just the blind faith of obscurantism. With this note of scepticism for a mass of mystico-devotional literature, which for the ordinary people would sound as a rigmarole, he still can offer his homage to the scholarship, the talent, the power of exposition and the wonderful all-inclusive erudition of the literary and philosophical genius, as well as worker for the uplift of man-the self-exiled Professor from India in Trinidad, Dr. Brajmadhav Bhattacharya.

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Preface to the First Edition

Saivism and the Phallic World is more a book on comparative religion than one exclusively devoted to a remote subject such as Saivism appears to be. In fact, to deal with Saivism is to deal with Hinduism in all its aspects; and to deal with the vexed subject of the worship of sex-organs is to enter into the very complex arena of primitive religions, their traditional cultural forms. Tomes have been written on the latter, but the former has been remaining in the background. There are excellent books on Śaivism written by erudite Hindu scholars and devotees on exclusive aspects of Saivism. This book does not attempt to repeat the performances, neither to add to them.

It really attempts to make a sally into as charged a field of study as sex-worship and erotic frenzy presents; out of a hundred books referring to Śiva worship ninety-nine would equate Śiva, specially Linga worship, with the worship of sex, that is, with phallicism. Not non-Hindu writers alone, even Hindu scholars, specially the historically biased and anthropologically trained minds resort to the convenience of classifying Siva worship as a Sex worship. This is misguiding and erroneous. The truth in it subsists like water in natural milk, or spots in the sun. The sun is sun, milk, milk, because of qualities other than light or water respectively in them. In fact we call a sun a sun, and not think of the spots. In Saivism there lies a profundity that reaches sublimation. Not by sex alone could such a great theme survive through all the thousands of years of human cultural history.

This enquiry leads us to make a thorough study of the subject on the basis of comparative religion. This book has devoted itself to that end.

A book of this nature would be incomplete without the fundamental study of the basic Saivism proper. This has been done in several sections. The associated subjects like Bhakti (religion of adoration and love), the Great Mother and Tantra mysticism, and the metaphysical schools of Hindu thought have also been dealt with.

Because of the scanty resources available in Trinidad on the exceptional nature of the subject, it has not been possible to consult as many sources of reference as the topic would demand, or as the author would have liked to do. But on the whole more emphasis has been laid on the Sanskrit source books than on those secondary research

works as the academic studies which reputed scholars have been bringing out from time to time.

Of course, there have been very commendable works done in the past. I regret much to have to say that under the circumstances described I was unable to make use of those great books. I was reminded of W. H. Prescott. He wrote his monumental works on Mexico and Peru without having any knowledge of Spanish, and without having any recourse to the basic records. This gave me courage to pursue in spite of my difficulties. I was lucky, at least, not to have the great historian's physical handicap. I decided not to give up. As far as possible, wherever I have referred to the works consulted, the books and the sources, have been gratefully acknowledged. A special list of References, chapterwise, has been added for this purpose.

A book of this size would have been rendered useless without a detailed Index. Attempt has not been spared to make the Index as complete as possible. It is hoped that readers do find the Index, together with the charts, the diagrams and the photographs, of some use to the proper under- standing of the text.

A number of students has willingly come forward to lighten the haras- sing job of compiling a book of this size. Their enthusiasm has proved to be of significant encouragement in pushing through this task. But the number is too large to mention individually. The author is indeed very happy to thank one and all of these young assistants. He would be failing in his duty, however, if he did not mention a few names in this connection only for the pleasure of associating these dedicated helpers with this book, which for some time had become a part of their individual life. Of these, the name of Mr. Sugrim Gangabissoon comes to the mind first of all. This very heavily committed public servant sacrificed week-ends for months in a row just to arrange the References and go through the entire work from the manuscript to the typing stage. He assisted with his entire family plus an eager and mutual friend, Mr. J. P. Ramsundar, a retired Principal of a Govt. school in Trinidad.

Typing proved to be an arduous task. Even commercial and professional typists found it hard to cope with this kind of manuscript loaded with Sanskrt technical terms. The subject itself proved to be too remote for them to ensure accuracy, and provide some intellectual response. But for the graceful and effective intervention, in this regard, of Mrs. Roberta Muir of the British High Commission, Trinidad, I am sure this book

could have been delayed by another two years. Through her friendliness I was fortunate to have secured the valued assistance of Mrs. Claire Diffenthalar, who was responsible for the best part of the typing of manuscript at its penultimate stage. The final typing was professionally done through the financial assistance of a friend. But I record with gratitude the fact that but for the assistance received from Mrs. Muir and Mrs. Diffenthalar the manuscript would never have reached the finalform it did. Apart from these two great friends, I owe much to my humble neighbour Mr. Jawlapersad of Padmore Street who typed more than three chapters out of his friendly considerations. Mrs. Betty Raghunandan Singh, Miss Mohini Singh, Mr. Stanley Blanche Fraser, Mr. Krishna Phagoo, Mrs. Merle Sirju, Mr. Ramcharan and many others who have helped me in preparing the Index and going through the typed manuscript of the text deserve my grateful thanks.

I have the great pleasure of recording my sincere thanks to a team of young hearts but for whose timely appearance and active participation this book might not even see the light of day. I particularly mention Mr. Narine Lall, Mrs. Suruj N. Lall, Mrs Eunice Harbin and Miss Chand Bhagirathi to have taken a very bold step in putting me on the right track, and getting into the execution of what was a very difficult project.

Above all, I owe my sincere thanks to my life companion, my wife, but for whose quiet encouragement and unreserved care and attention, I am sure, I could not have achieved this formidable task.

In collecting the photographs used in this book, I am grateful to the technical assistance rendered by an adored family friend, Dr. A. De, whose skill in the job stems out of his profound respect for the art of photography. The printing of this book at a time when prices of paper and printing are sky-rocketing would have been impossible without the very generous assistance from a good and long-standing friend. It is a pity that I cannot render this altruistic soul a more specific homage than her genuine humility permits me to do.

Lastly, I thank the bunch of young workers at the Oxford & IBH Publishing Company who worked as a team to get this long and technical book printed in record time. I am particularly thankful to the quiet, efficient and dignified Mr. Mohan Primlani without whose sympathetic accommodation and effective steps the book could not have been published in four months. The credit for the presentation and manufacture of the

volumes belong to Mr. M. L. Gidwani, Production Manager, who conducted the task of copy preparation and supervised complete production.

August 1975B. BHATTACHARYA

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Introduction

Often I have found my friends wonder at the title of the book Šaivism and the Phallic World.

These friends are not at all otherwise incapable of following intellectual, even abtruse and abstract subjects. They are generally, well-read, and extensively informed. They do understand Siva; they do understand Sex. But 'Saivism and the Phallic World',-what is that? the title appears to have them knocked out.

From this experience I could infer two lessons. One, this subject has to be introduced with great care and preparation. It does not appear to be much 'popular' as a subject, although Siva-worship is the most popular form of worship amongst the largest number of the people of India. But its popularity is only formal; the spirit behind the idea of Śiva, specially the understanding and appreciation of the rationale of Saivism is very rarely cared for.

But so far as Sex is concerned, well, of course every other person seems to be a past master in the subject; at least such is the popular claim. Good. But what about Phallicism? What is that? Adoration of the sex organs. It is shadily known, but is summarily rejected as an obnoxious hang-over from the days of the tribals and the primitives. To pay any sustained and studied attention to this is considered contrary to the run of decency and culture. At least such is, or appears to be, the accepted norm. The subject, though not an utter taboo, is almost always shoo-shooed. Siva is one of the many gods of the Hindus. His worship is a well-known feature. The orthodox and the fanatics indulge in the worship of the Lingam; Sex is also known, because, who pray, does not know it? But to worship that? Ugh: how embarrassing! So we shove it clean under the carpet, and try to look decent. What a burden this 'decency' is to the undercurrents of the mind!

The exposition of such subjects to the people, thus presents utmost difficulty to writers. It is much easier to teach the untaught; but to teach the self-taught is a formidable task. Subjects that people take to be quite familiar, and accept as a matter of fact, often lose their significance for the want of a methodical study and properly educated approach. The familiar is often taken for granted.

Religion is one of those social forms which we have taken for granted. Education of religious forms lacks both in method and thoroughness. Atits best it is handed over as an ancestral and cultural behest. Religious forms and rites are just there to be accepted. Questions are often unwelcome, resented, and even forbidden. Only three things matter: dogma, authority and unquestioned submission. Enquiry is taboo; enlightenment has to be awaited. Thus, religion, which confers the sublimest of liberation, itself suffers from the lack of it.

We could cite an entire range of subjects to illustrate our point. Well-informed as we claim to be, we neglect a good part of the most valuable heritage of our life and culture, because we happen to inherit them automatically, without much effort on our part. We fail to be convinced of those gains which we are made heir to, since the gains are not immediately recognisable, neither earned through personal labour.

It is not because there is something inherently wrong with the religious amongst us, or with religions as such, that these are resented by the intellectuals. This negative escapist attitudinous approach makes them take pride in remaining ignorant of a very highly attractive, and inescapably involving facet of the human society. This resentment, which has kept us defiantly away from a vitally important engagement of life, is bad enough; but what is worse is that more often than not we are grievously and unreasonably prejudiced about it. Religion has been one of the most inspiring subjects to millions of mankind from the dawn of human culture; it has crystallised society and social forms, and contributed much to the consolations of those mysteries from which the agonised soul of man has derived an unfailing and sustaining consolation, received an urge to live, obtained a fresh lease of hope.

In every country and climate religion has taken its special form. Like the sun, the moon, the stars, air, fire, water, soil, rivers, sex which have been universally adored, certain forms too have been universally adored and cherished. The idea of Siva evolved one such form, and is thus taken for granted, which is just an euphemism for being utterly neglected. Śiva is indeed a dear god. But when one mentions Saivism, upshoots a frown. What is that? How does it concern us? Śiva we like. He, a hail fellow well met, enjoys drugs, drinks, and dances, and runs about in the nude. Quite a liberated soul. Let him remain in the temples. Mother looks after his little needs. We too pay our attention to him when fate presses, or at our convenience on special days.

The attitude does not differ from paying a visit to the doctor's chamber, or to the bank-manager. We have gods and gods; temples and temples. How do they concern any more? Then what is this Saivism? What is the point of making a study of it? Some gods are obviously understood. Some we do not, and dis- pose of as 'mysterious', 'esoteric', etc. We remain alien to our treasures, blind to our needs. We remain famished in spirit, and our hunger for fulfilment remains unsatiated. By victimising our faith, we ourselvesperish as victims of our ill-nursed ego. Modernism has given us the ennui of cynicism. Religiosity, by and large, is sneered at as a sign of backwardness, and acceptance of gods automatically exiles a person of taste from the haloed circle of progressive intellectuals. Actually our gods definitely suffer from a disfavour from the 'educated', whose only title to sneer at such knowledge springs from their ignorance of the subject.

These too take these ideas for granted. They view religion and religious establishments from a sociological and economic stand-point alone. Their dialectics spin around the uses or the misuses that certain individuals, or classes, have made of religiosity through self-styled authorities and diehard establishments through dogmatic pontifications, or fantastic reactions. Individuals and establishments have misused orders of society. They let loose malice, encouraged hatred, participated in blood-baths, ran hand in gloves with imperialistic designs, shared in denuding countries, peoples, cultures. They are still at it. The ways of sin are subtle and dark; those of virtue are tender and open as the gifts of the sun. Time has punished them by bringing in drastic retributions. But that which is essentially beneficial to the cultivation of peace cannot be abandoned through the misdeeds of a greedy force. We know certain forms of govern- ment to be bad. We have a right to change them, and have a good government. But for the sins of one pattern of government the institution of government cannot be done away with. To write off establishments for bringing in redress to the exploited and the suffering, the deluded and the handicapped is to create a dangerous vacuum. Such vacuums in history have at times ushered in, through the backdoor, such mystic rites and practices as have proved to be dearly dangerous to the mind and body of both individuals and cultures. Man will always need to follow a religion. If he rejects the old, a new religion will come up, and hold him under its spell. If old gods die, new gods will crop up. Even iconoclasts follow and shape a religion. Those who reject all religions, follow a

zeal, and make themselves fanatical followers of a novel religion. Man cannot do without some faith that relates his inner personality with his outer existence.

The answer to this dilemma is to understand the necessity for the human soul of such a quiet parking place as religion, whereby the inner person in the man could wash, repair, iron out the dirts and the rumpled creezes of his own doubts, agonies and sufferings. Religion fulfills a spiritual need; form of government satisfies our material needs. The relation between material and spiritual needs is a mysterious one, beyond the ken of regimentation. It would be highly unfair, prejudicial and regressive to condemn an entire system, because of the criminal exploitation of a situation by some cynical individual. Bad priests corrupt good religions; as power corrupts the sense of equity, or bad teachers, goodstudents. It would be highly unfair to let 'gods' suffer because of such transgressing humans, and their petty foibles. Let men think to love, and love to think.

Where there is no love for the subject, there is no worship for an Idea. Any god, to be true and functional must first find place in the heart; and an Idea, to be functional must be fully understood and appreciated. When we love, or make love even with our opposite sex-partners, but lack in a full rapport or understanding, the love remains only skin-deep and functional, but fails to grow roots. Thus a merely educated approach to the understanding of the divine is, generally speaking, lack-lustre, lackadaisical and cynically disposed. God worship has become to these a part of superstition. We are, thus, trying to condemn a subject because of the fact that some indiscriminate self-seeking rogues have been misusing and exploiting a situation for personal gains and advantages. Are we justified in condemning medicine and the medical science because of the unscrupulous behaviour of some of the professional rogues who are a disgrace to a noble and important profession?

Apart from this lack of information, and what is more concerning, this cynical attitude of considering the familiar as not worthy of study and enquiry, the subject remains very remote to the common man who thinks that all that is sex is either obscene, or viciously exciting. This brings me to the second lesson I have learnt. The fact is that Sex is an unavoid- ably serious subject. In fact it is the most dominating power in life's progress and activities. This book I am writing, these lines I am typing on my machine, the joy I am deriving from a special turn of phrase which successfully projects my ideas, contribute to the healthy functioning of my libido which is so very important for

my faith in life and living; and then through me it becomes so very important to those hundreds of persons who have to come in contact with me daily and nightly. My ego, my libido, my social identity and contribution are inextricably inter- twined. But we ignore the fact that all expressions are functions of this libido. Sex is a Power supreme; and the ancients had recognised it as the Lhadini-Sakti, the ecstatic power of the Mother; that mysterious chained reactions which generate, nurse and reproduce life and all that life functions through. To worship this power, to understand and love and bring homage to it is the birthright of the developed man, nay, if possible, of the developing man as well.

Since we do not care for the one as too familiar, or for the other as too embarrassing, the subject of the book remains unfamiliar. Unfamiliar, but not unnecessary. It is the most necessary subject. It is absolutely necessary for man to know what debts he owes to him-self, to the Life he enjoys, to the Life that surrounds him and keeps him covered from all sides: the life in the air, in the sky, in light, in rains, in the soil, in thewaves, in the rivers, in the greens, in colours, nay, even in fears and loves, in doubts and images, in dreams and aspirations, in all the aspects, all the facets of this most fantastic and splendid of miracles, the miracle of Life. We must know what we owe to it; what it owes to us; where is this commerce transacted, and what are the rules of the game. Could we remain blindfolded in the race of Life, and still hope to reach the appointed goal; or should we strive and prepare, and get ready to shape our own destiny and wrest the initiative from a merry-go-round, spun by some unseen power?

This is the challenge. This is the subject of this book. Saivism is the subject of understanding that Power which remains unmanifest in spirit and form, but expresses itself in the millions of aspects of life's manifestations. This Power of manifestation and dissolution is called Siva-Sakti, the Time, the Energy, the grand play of Communion- manifestation-maturity-disintegration-annihilation-turning again to flux, and coming to manifestation yet again. It is a complete circle; and this cyclic movement, within which has been preserved Life's well- being, is called Śiva. The ancient farmers had visualised this process in the life and death of a sheaf of barley; the sage visualises it in his meditation. The former founded religion and prayers, the latter gave us metaphysics and knowledge. To worship it, to bring homage to it, after understanding its ways and approaches, is Saivism.

This is the Siva that the Hindu has been adoring from times immemorial. Yogis have sat at its feet. Sages have sung of it; lovers have shaped it into form, and raised monuments of love around it; metaphysicians and psychologists have rationalised it, and tempered it with form, discipline, attitude and rites. This entire 'world' of Saivism is engaged to the research into the unfathomed depths of the Soul's hunger for a supreme delight. If reaching the top of the world is filled with excitement, and rewarded with glory, then it must be much more rewarding indeed to try to reach the apex of all human ideals, the Source of all Joy. This is Saivism, an adventure, and a fulfilment.

But Phallicism is different. It is the worship of the sex organs as organs, as instruments of a function which mysteriously draws the two opposite forces together and participates in an act which is supposed to contribute to the biological life its highest sensuous excitement and thrill. In many cases of living organisms this thrill is sought for and consummated at the cost of life itself. Such is its power and driving force. For achieving this thrill all life, animals, insects, birds, reptiles, risk supreme sacrifice. Danger does not deter; disease does not threaten; law does not stop the response to this call. The cruelest of punishments, the highest stakes of peace and tranquillity have been squandered for the achievement of this thrill through union.

What are the secrets of this Power? Like all mystery it has its magnetic magic influence over good sense. It spreads a net to confuse, confound and stake desperate bids. Yet it shapes, forms, creates. In order to use it properly one has to understand it; and then adore it in the way it has to be adored. This adoration of the mystery of the sex-power has been called by the anthropologists as phallic worship; and the science of understanding the secrets of this power, and of properly realising the extent and range of this power is called phallicism.

Attempt has been made in this book to make a comparative study of these two forces. The one is often mistaken for the other. It has been having for a very long time an extremely raw deal, which has to be set right. I do not know how far I have succeeded in setting this right; but I know that I have tried most sincerely and to the best of my limited ability. All I need, and would beg for is the reader's kind patience, and scholarly tolerance. If the reader's painstaking journey through the book renders him in anyway the abler to face these problems, and the general problem of life, I, as a fellow traveller, shall find my troubles amply rewarded. I seek the reader's co-operation.

The nature of the subject makes it essentially imperative that the treat- ment should follow the method of studying a course of comparative religion. The records of most of the human cultures had to be taken into account in order to discover some form of a common pattern along which the human world has faced these problems. There was no time when in human society the mystery of life was not found to be entirely fascinating, or when this fascination failed to draw a reciprocal tribute from grateful, but equally amazed souls. This is due to the yet unexplained sense of the mystical which in all sensitive minds works insistently. The world of mysticism is as old as the skies; and to this world of mysticism we are all being drawn inscrutably, inevitably even through the various forms of our religious differences. The future of religion has to find its maturity and finality in the realisation of that unbodied joy which mysticism nurses with care and profundity.

The primitive and the modern are knitted together by certain fundamental basic ties. All that is fundamental in spiritual realisation stands clear of the Time-dimension. Fundamental mystic wonder and enquiry transcends Time. From the dawn of human history the wonderment that is Life, that is Sex, has never ceased to demand man's absorbing interest. Worship is but an expression of that feeling of gratitude which the human soul bears to this abiding sense of mystery in the evolution of Life from Life. Worship is, as it were, an investment for hope and success, the two driving tonics which keep life on the run, despite its many failures and disappointments. It is a form of humble submission to forces of a higher order. If such is the case, to bring homage and tributeto this great Power of Life was, and is to be, accepted as a natural ex- pression of the natural Man. Through accepting this, Man elevates his inner personality, and achieves liberation, along with its sublime gift, namely, joy.

Later thinkers have reasoned into the human pattern of behaviour, and laid down metaphysical and psychological laws with a view to rationalise the unbroken consistency of that behaviour. The human society is as extensive and as varied as patterns of the life on earth are. This society in the course of its development has come under a variety of influences, e.g., climate, geography, food habits, etc. The influences and their differences have, to a very large extent, conducted the defences of the social forms and norms, which in their turn have influenced their pattern of worship. These forms differ as the climatic and other external influences do. This is the reason why when the human aspirations, de- mands, difficulties, challenges, etc. remain constant in

all parts of the globe, the nature of religious forms, of spiritual doubts-in other words, of gods and goddesses, spirits and gnomes also differ. They do differ; but fundamentally the problems refer to the same inspirational modes: food and security. Human society is crowded with many gods, many religions, many forms of authority conducting the gods, and the mechanics of handling them. In spite of it all God is one, and that special feeling, best described as a craving for the ultimate in joy 'the devotion to some- thing afar' is also universal. Only the forms differ. A study into this anthropological characteristic of human behaviour which concerns the area of the spiritual, or the mystical, leads us to the fascinating and very rewarding study of comparative religion.

It was an unfortunate day when European conquistadors, and adventurers appeared on the other continents, and quickly brought to the blocks very ancient cultures under different excuses like religious expansion, cultural education, political emancipation, etc. The actual design was, however, undue criminal exploitation under the support of imperialism and capitalism. Religion was cited as one of the many justifications for this type of indiscriminate denudation of human and economic material. Those religions which did not conform to the ideals of the occupying forces were rejected, at times with the assistance of sword and fire; and derided with impunity, when necessary, with the help of pseudo-intellectual scholarship and faked authority. The theory of the superior race was yet another imperialistic projection. No one found it profitable to make enquiries into the spiritual greatness of these suffering cultures through a dispassionately just vision, which a student of comparative religion alone could achieve.

Days have changed. A host of scholars are today working on the subject of evaluating the contributions of the different religions which havesupplied to nations and cultures the spiritual food they needed. With the growth of the democratic rights of the people, with the rejection of the claims of the imperialistic orders of society, specially since the Second World War, this branch of human studies has restored to a very great degree that confidence in human mind which has made it possible for aliens to have respect for the creed of others. But for this latest adventure into the realms of philosophy, religion and anthropology, this work could neither have been dared, nor presented.

In making this study as complete as possible the author has tried his best to present similar facets of religious and metaphysical ideas appearing in sister cultures, whether

ancient or modern. Starting from Sumer and Egypt our study has gone through the Greek and Roman times, covering in between the cultures that flourished in the Mediterranean and the Oriental regions. Of course, the Aryan and the Iranian cultures have finally emerged with a greater emphasis. This was so because the subject relates to the worship of the human organs, the source of Life, otherwise known as Phallicism. The Hindus adore Śiva as an Idea, a sublime source of spiritual and transcendental inspiration. But for certain external similarities the worship of the Hindu Idea of Śiva (Saivism) has been rudely identified with the primitive and the Oriental phallic worship. Although the different cultures and religions have been studied, the principal theme, that runs through it is a study of Saivism in contradistinction to Phallicism which runs through the whole of human history. This has brought us face to face with Tantric mysticism.

The subject is not at all an easy one. The sudden upsurge of a variety of books and writings dealing with sex-worship, and the worship of various types of god-forsaken aberrations muddles up further our attempt to keep our discussion clear of this mad popular hunt for excitements, miracle- men and instant liberation. We are itching for holding on to a justification for pursuing a ruinous way in the name of religion and scholarship. By its own genius and nature the subject has to be one which keeps away from saucy popularity. It not only encourages mysticism, but also faces the danger of falling into the trap of obscurantism. When we have to deal with such forms of spiritual practice as the Lamaic Tantra and the Hindu Mystical rites, we could hardly avoid being obscure to the uninitiated. While dealing with the basic rationale of Saivism and different forms, we had to deal with the Systems of Hindu Thought, and the Systems of Saivism. More often than not these abstract and subjective discussions face the charge of speculation. But one might concede that in the nature of the subject certain abstractions, both of language and form, were inevitable. These difficulties have not been particularly solved by the language difficulties of one whose mother tongue is not English, and who realises the bitter fact that English is not the most equipped language forconveying the highly metaphysical ideas and nuances of Hindu meta- physics. Most of the terms, the technical words, thus, have been left in their original Sanskrt form, although translations have been attempted.

With a view to making the presentation as authentic as possible direct references to source-books have been made. References have also been made to the scores of later

authorities of scholars who have worked on the subject and allied ideas. Those who actually speak from experience use a simple and direct language. These are the persons whose language bear the stamp of authority. Their language cannot be compared with book-workers, and men of mere secondary knowledge. The flashes of experience which have from time to time graced the present author have however aided him immensely in daring to speak of things never spoken before, and in a manner which, so far, he has missed in most of the western authors, except a very few. But how little is that in comparison with the vast scope of the subject. Simplicity and directness are divine gifts of experience of the Supreme.

The subject itself was difficult: a comparison between Sex-worship, and the worship of Siva. In dealing with it I had to dive deep into the former, and contemplate and meditate on the latter. Whilst Śiva has been kind enough to guide me all the time with His Grace and Light, the study of the adoration of sex has again and again taken me into deeper and deeper waters. This is a quicksand-subject for any scholar to fall in. Once stepped into this mystical area, the enquirer finds himself engulfed by an unseen pull that sucks all his personal control until all Time-Space bearings are taken away. It is my considered advice to those who should ever attempt to dive into the unfathomable chimera of the subject of phallicism, who dare to be sported away by the hope-raising mirage of an otherwise ever-thirsty expanse of limitless mystery, to stay away from the captivating, ensnaring light-dances of the mystical White Goddess. The study of the adoration of Sex is a study that leads to the banks of the legendary Lethe, or to the cells of the shady Bedlam. The enlightenment men seek from the study of this captivating, engrossing, absorbing study makes him search till doomsday for the lost shell on the vast, howling shores of life.

For twelve years I have been in search of the answer. The riddle gets more confusing and more confused; yet the challenge bemuses, and even transcends all fears and risks. Both angels and fools become one in this stride. Twelve years of scouring through these subterranean mines have not made me the wiser. I have sojourned through Sumer, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Crete, Iran and the mountains of the Asia Minor and the Himalayas; I have known of the Sumerians, the Akkads and the Myceneans, the Phoenicians and the Phrygians; I have gone into the stranger realms of the mysticism of the African tribes and the Sufis, justto hit upon the answer why this fascination for the adoration of Sex, and why this quest for some sublime delight in the area of the

Mind; why the quest for the Still Poise 'of the lamp's flame in a windless vista of the Spirit'?

In the course of this sojourn I have met with strange gods, goddesses and their stranger behaviours, as well as the rites that supposedly claim to assuage their destructive fury. I have met with such gods as Ba'al, Marduk, Atys, Adonis, Mithra, Zeus, Jehova, and such goddesses as Astarte, Kouretes, Isis, Cybele, Kali, Aphrodite, Diana, Tara, Esther, Sarasvati, Camunda and Chinnamasta. Many of these have been destroyed by human sword and fire, only to rise again from their ashes amongst other peoples, in other countries, and with other names. Gods that emerge from the mysterious ocean of cults prove their immortality by never dying, and by ever resurrecting themselves from their dead and cold tombs. We, perhaps, could establish a new religion as Pythagoras, or Calligula, or Julian or Mani did, and laugh at the old ones; but we are destined to confront the brutal discovery that no god is ever born without owning an ancestor before him. The latest of the religions has links with the oldest. This ultimately makes me aware of the rewarding truth that not only God is One, but Man is One too.

Throughout this book my mind was focussed but on a single point; but it had to cut through a wilderness of critical questions. The journey has not been an easy one. Whence was this Phallic? How did it captivate Man's sublime adoration? Was it an accident?-A matter of choice? -A natural expression?-A divinised mysticism?-An invention of rascality? A scandalous self-projection? Or, is it a natural expression of the most irresistible, instinctive and intimate urge of life of Man in particular? If the phallic has ever been divinised, in which form or forms did the divinity present itself, and with what rites? Did the divinity of old really indulge in Sex and Sex alone as in the Alexandrine temple of Aphrodite, on the shores of the sea at Paphos, or in the Babylonian Ziggurats of Marduk and Ba'al? Was the adored Sex-sacrifice based on and doused with orgiastic abuses? How far, then, were the temple- dancers in South India influenced by these Persian Gulf practices, and how far these 'virgins' survive in the vestal virgins of Rome, and the Christian nuns of today? Did the so-called sex abuses contribute to the disintegration of some of the ancient civilisations, or are the disintegrations traceable to entirely economic, social and political causes? Did the religion, known as Christianity which was born out of the ashes of the ancient religions and the Semetic indoctrinations, borrow from the old rites for keeping its hold on the masses? How much did it owe to Mithraism, Manichaeism and Buddhism? How came

the later gods? Were the Hindu gods entirely Hindu? Did the process of the mysticDhyana alone produce the many gods, or were the gods projected by exist- ing gods destroyed by human hands? What made the gods travel from one culture to another and demand contrary types of homage?

Thus the origin of religions, their relations with cults, perpetuity of the cult-forms in religious rites had to be discussed before a step could be taken carefully into the hazardous area of the relation between phallicism, and the later growth of the sublime Idea of Saivism, which is a thing apart, as Man is from the Ape, as the cave paintings of Brittany are from the wonders of Valesquez, Matisse and A. N. Tagore.

The search for the roots of the phallic rites eventually guided me into the burning quest for a rationale, i.e. the spiritual, even an intellectual basis for finding out a relation between Matter and Energy, Power and Consciousness, Śiva and Sakti. I could feel that in finding out and establishing that relation it would be easier to find out the relation between the phallic and the Sublime; between the immediate Life-Force and the Sublime Spirit, which unseen behind all forces, moves without moving, comes nearer without changing places, loves without having to feel, and 'is' without having to be. It becomes a becoming when understood. It transcends Life when Realised. This transcendentalism of the Matter going into the search of the Spirit, of Joy into that of ecstasy, of the limits of sufficiency into that of the liberation, of the Infinite of the overflowing Immense, enraptures and binds, spells, charms and enslaves. No; no man should get entrapped into this snare of probing into the limits of the Sex-urge, the Limits of the Life-force, of the Lhädini, of the Libido,-the limits of this Fiery Lingam. It has been forbidden in the Sastras again and again.

I. I had first to probe into the earliest instincts of Man, such as Hunger, Fear and Self-protection, Sex and Propagation, Wonderment and Enquiry. I had to find out how the honour and the glory for having patterned the infant society of the Homo Sapiens into a Culture, and then into a civilisation must go to the females, the Woman, the Eternal Virgin, and not to the Man, the usurper, the tyrant and the selfish militant diplomat. I had to watch with amazement how the roots of the much glorified modern progress (sic) of society actually lay deep into the antiquities of the skill and sacrifices of the Mother, the Eternal Virgin.

II. It was she, who, out of the serious business of life's pains and pleasures, of life's needs and fulfilment imaged her own self; and it was but natural for her to image herself in the spirit and form of the female, the one who under the maddening heat and urge of seeking the seed of propagation is ever and ever in search of drawing the life-sap from the wandering, roaming, care-free male. She wanted the male to merge into her; die in her to be reborn. She loved and adored him only to drawhis life-sap, and hand the same life over to another cycle of birth and death. Nature, the Virgin, sought the germ of the Sun.

Cultures grew out of this homage; this imaged pattern. Monuments were raised; rituals prescribed; ritualists specially appointed; the death of the male in the female as an evolute of the laws of cosmic creation had to be adjudged, perceived and expounded against the trend of the ancient pagan religions and their modern and sophisticated counterparts. From this crude blunt life and its expression, adoration entered into the area of refined, sophisticated implications and interpretations.

Of these evolutes were later gods made. These gods were the necessary growths from the projections of the primitive human mind and its different aspirations. Nature-gods, totems, taboos, symbols, myths, sacrifices, religious processions, religious assemblages and celebrations evolved out of this. The mystic and cumbrous tracts left by these practices demanded further analysis. It was found that the initiative of the importance of power of both Sex and Life on the one hand, and of Good and Plenty on the other, propelled throughout the progress of the history of Man in every country, at every time, amongst every people and culture, modern or ancient.

Having thus taken ourselves through the crowd of the gods of the ancient people we gradually become aware of the fact that in the world of religious thinking and spiritual aspirations two postulates claim our attention the most. One, Man was in need of joy; and two, Man was also in need of food, protection and power for assuring security. In this search, he found that the Idea of having a Mother-deity, a Mother- spirit alone could fill up all that he sought as his emotional and practical fulfilment. There was a universal Mother. This Mother, the White Goddess, the Eternal Virgin, the Lion-riding Mountain-Maid became the central spiritual attraction to the millions of adorers who needed a support for raising, and thereby revealing, the innermost aspirations of their soul and body. This was the Mother.

III. The Mother has been universally adored, and mostly so in the Ancient East. Hundreds of expressions of the Mother in symbols, in terracottas, in statuettes and monoliths, myths and monuments, and above all mythical compilations of Tantras and Puranas of the nation are today available for study and scrutiny. In fact, no modern civilisation, no modern religion could claim a growth free entirely from these lores and myths of the Great Mother. Much of the rites associated with the Mother has been pushed back into the darkest of chambers of mysticism. Much of the chants and prayers today are shrouded in unintelligible mystic sounds. Much of the rites have been persisting under completely changed and misleading forms;-but the Mother continues uninterrupted. The tribes, the roving Aryans, the proto-austroloid natives of the oldworld, all had their own Mother: Umu, Ummu, Amma, Umā, Ambikā, Cybele, Kouretes, Astarte, Kali, Isis, Esther, Tara and Sarasvati.

From this came the half magical, half-mystical codes of ritualism known as Tantra, most or all of which are still found in the Atharva Veda. A rite, Factura, Kytyä, Kriya, Zauber, Tanyan meant to do something; to secure health to the body, or plenty to the fields, or ruins to adversaries. The Mother has been sustaining and preserving.

The Mother was accepted by the Aryans side by side with the Father- god Symbolic to this acceptance Fire, as a form of the Mother, was also accepted by the side of the Fire-god who sought only virgins. Around Fire a thousand myths arose. Schisms and counter-schisms set apart the history of cultural developments. One society alone sprung a hundred leaks; and the legends, to this day, preserve the glories and the incarcerations of those conflicts leading to a thousand struggles, not all of which were free from severe blood baths.

IV. Soon this paganism had to give way to systematised thinking; rationalisation had to be faced sooner or later. This has been the greatest achievement of what Karl Jasper calls the Axial Era. In China, Greece, India, even Arabia and Persia great metaphysicians and logicians, through the media of mathematics, logic, astronomy and metaphysics systematised man's attitude to the divine.

The Hindus called it the Laws of Insight, or Daršana Sastra. Hindu thinking as distinguished from the Aryan, or Vedic thinking organised around the 'six Systems'. These six Systems had to be studied and mastered, without which the polytheism of the Hindus would ever and ever remain a maze of confusion to all, inclusive of the Hindus

themselves. India, where alone Hinduism is practised today without having to change its name or tenets, has been responsible for the propagation of these six Systems. Because the Hindu takes these Systems for granted, he does not, generally bother to come to any closer grips with the contents of the Systems. As a result the average Hindu accepts his many Gods as a multiplicity, with the same ease and relaxation as he faces the mounting population of his country. In the teeming tropics covered with primordial forests and cloud-brushing mountains, multiplicity of the one is accepted as a matter of course. Yet, the same thinking Hindu, on the other hand, based on these systems, accepts polytheism with a tongue in the cheek, keeping himself all the while fully alive to the dramas (Lila) of what these strange forms mean metaphysically and ritualistically. Hindu polytheism is an interesting subject, and has been separately studied even before the study of monotheism, and especially of Saivism.

We have started the study of polytheism with the Vedic gods. After this most essential study, we have tried to connect the Vedic gods with the Aryan gods in Greece, Rome and Egypt; we have also attempted to markout two clear divisions: (1) cultures and civilisations predominantly accept- ing the Mother, and practising, what has been termed in our study, Tantra, and (2) cultures and civilisations which accept a Father-god, principally practising such rites around the Fire, which has been called a Male god, and substantiates the virility of the Male. The incorporation of the fire- rites of the various peoples of the ancient world into the adoration of the Vedic fire is an engrossing study.

V. Then came the time when, in India, due to various factors the peoples from contiguous areas began to pour in large numbers, and settle. It became necessary for the homogeneous Vedic forms and non-Vedic cults to get organised before the inevitable law of syncretism operated, and pushed the age-sanctioned and sanctified Vedic forms to get almost completely lost. Out of this phenomenal movement of the large human cargo evolved the wonderful literature known as the Puranas; the sublime tradition known as Bhakti; and a supreme concept of a Godhead, the god of all the gods, Devadeva, Mahadeva, Šiva. Śaivism was the ultimate of that process which had started with the phallic and the tribal, with the Ganas and the Siddhas, fire and sacrifice, Tantra and Siddhanta, Vedic Homa and Tantric Abhicära. Peculiar to the glory of the accommodating spirit of the Indian mind the differing Systems were allowed to be superseded by enforced religions; many trends and many rites, some

Vedic, some non-Vedic, continued to exist and wait their own destined extinction either as individual religions, or as one merged into the mainstream of Hinduism.

The philosophy of Bhakti gave way to the growth of Vaisnavism, Šaivism and the age-old Tantricism. To the mainstream of the Puranas the various lores, legends and rites brought their own tributes until the great stream of the Hindu thought ran vigorously through the Time honoured land of India. The system was known as the system of Vyasa, who had collected and compiled the scattered knowledge, known as the Vedas. It was a method to synthesise a scattering and scattered heritage. It was the Vyasa heritage, the Vedic heritage. The Puranas were its last attempts, and, as they proved to be, a very abiding attempt, for sustaining and crystallising the main Hindu body into one monolithic tower of strength. The immortal Bhagavat Gitä evolved out of this very method of compilation.

VI. As the second abiding gift of this synthesising method we received the Saiva Siddhantas, in which Vedantic Monism, Tantric Empiricism and mysticism, Vaisnava Bhakti, Jaina and Bauddha schisms (in favour of an experimentation with a godless formless code of good conduct, based on a moral living and a spiritual elevation) combine together. The Siddhantas, especially the Trika of Kashmir, charged with the Tantric nuances of mysticism, has remained a monument of the spiritof Hindu accommodation. The Saiva Siddhanta of the south of India on the other hand has accommodated the various factors which challenged the Southern life-rhythm over the centuries. It developed into an emo- tionally inspired system of dualistic monism, of which Love and Faith are accepted as the two principal wings. The study of this dualistic monism has remained an adorable and fascinating exercise for students of Hindu thoughts. Pure monism takes to the study of the theories of Pratyabhijña and Spanda, Advaita and Viiisfadvaita on the one hand, and of Sthala and Sakti on the other.

This is not all about Saivism. There are numerous other Minor sects of Tantra and Saivism, such as the Näthas, the Siddhas, the Maheśvaras, the Vaikhanasas and the Pasupatas. No study of Saivism could be deemed complete without these part-occult, part-mystic sects, mostly held in suspect by the orthodox. What we call Śaivism, in spite of its having very close, but obvious resemblances with the erotic and the phallic, has been in fact and practice, for the pious Hindus, a symbol of purism, of the ethereal

sublimation of the idea of Saccidanandam of the Upanisads; and incidentally this has become the final abode of the conflicting rites of those aliens who from time to time had taken shelter in India. In Saivism we find the traces of the ancient religions of the countries and civilisations which flourished over fifty to sixty centuries around the Arabic part of the Indian Ocean, inclusive of the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the all important Mediterranean Sea. The study of Saivism, in this light, has thus compelled us to ransack partly, the history of human movements during these centuries, and the study of the myths and lores of all the gods and goddesses who came to live and die in the ancient, pagan, Greek and Roman worlds. Hinduism is the only religion into which these forgotten religions still find a place; and their mystic murmurs are still heard in the Tantric and Saivic practices and chants. Some of these charms and prayers have been appended.

VII. This has compelled us to dive into the myths. If attempt has been made to interpret these myths, it was only to illustrate the fact that the legends are but the wombs in which seeds of historical facts germinate and await the light of understanding. To connect myths with facts of history, as well as the deductions of metaphysics, is to reach the ultimate in scholarship. Distinguished scholars have attempted the task. Others shall yet come and continue doing it; for the field is vast; and life is too short for only one man to do it all. The little that has been at- tempted here might serve to inspire the inquirer to gain a peep into this yet undisturbed pyramid of lores, so that the wealth of the treasures could make a future Champollion accept the challenge of discovering it further and thoroughly.

VIII. Finally, I thought that a subject like Saivism calls for an insightinto the nature and ideals of Hindu art generally and of Hindu images in particular. The relation of the divine transcendental trance, the inducement of mind to get relaxed into cosmic expanse of Immensity and the thrill of the Time-Space converge into the image of Siva, together calls for the adoption of symbols, Mudras, Yantras, etc. which are held to be very purposive to the aim of concentration. In fact, all treatises on Yoga inclusive of Patanjali's famed Yoga Sutra, prescribe adoption of such images, within which the image of 'sound' has also been discussed. Sound as a cosmic expression gives us the mysticism of the Mantras, the chants, the prayers and the hymns. Music as a source of divine expression has been recommended in the classic Hindu books on the subject. Even the ancients and prehistoric cultures sang hymns.

We have attempted to explain the Siva icons, images and the Lingam in particular. We have given some data regarding the famous places of Šaivic pilgrimages, the Siva-sanctuaries, the details regarding the Saivic rites, and the significance of the objects, inclusive of the flora used for the Siva-worship. This covers the vexed subjects of Yogic trance and the use of drugs.

I am not sure how far I have been able to complete the task I had been called upon to undertake. I also do not know how far my researches would satisfy the scholars in the field who have produced more thorough works on sections of the subject. I have not seen so far any work which deals with this subject of a comparison of the Saiva philosophy with the phallicism practised by all cultures, Eastern or Western, specially the phallicism which has been so popular in the Orient of the ancient times, and the influence of which is still very prominently traceable to the practised religions of the West. Only the Hindus have contained that instinctively inspired strain within the bounds of rationality, and sub- limated the instinct through a religious practice of which Śiva is the Supreme Ideal godhead epitomising the monistic concept of Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram (the Real, the Still, the Beautiful). After all does not Šiva, the equaliser, the assimilator of the legends drink the poison of malice and greed which once had threatened the very existence of creation?

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Plate 25. Camunda: the Black Mother (Sculpture from Orissa, 11th century A.D.): The fiercest and most bloodthirsty form assumed by the Mother (From "New Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology", p. 322)

Plate 26. Amaravati (11th century A.D.): Adoration of a Stúpa by Nāgas (From "The Art of Indian Asia" by Zimmer, Vol. 11, pl. 79)

Plate 27. Marble Stúpa Amaravati (Late Andhra period, late 2ndcentury A.D., Govt. Museum, Madras) (From "History of Far Eastern Art" by Sherman E. Lee, p. 93)

Plate 28. Omphalos: A holy stone found as an evidence of phallic worship (From "Themis" by Miss Harrison, p. 398)

Plate 29. Omphalos: The height is to be noted, for this heralded the Roman custom of erecting such monuments around which public festivals were organised (Ibid.)

Plate 29A. The Code of Hammurabi

Plate 30. Typhon: His body was composed of coiled serpents and his wings blotted out the sun. Cf. legend of Garuda (From "New Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology", p. 91)

Plate 31. Khepri, the scarab-god: Before him he rolls the ball of the sun, pushing it into the Other World in the evening and over the horizon in the morning as the scarab beetle pushes before itself a ball of dung. As a symbol of continuity of Life and Creation, Khepri was the most popular symbol of veneration painted on walls, designed on ornaments, decorating crowns etc. (Ibid., p. 15)

Plate 32. Achaemenian fire altars, which still stand in a sanctuary near Cyrus's capital of Pasasdadae (Ibid., p. 310)

Plate 33. The Phoenicians Ishtar represented symbolically in this stele found at Dougga in Tunis, not far from the site of ancient Carthage (Ibid., p. 84)

Plate 34. Acadian Naram-Sin: Sargon's grandson Naram-Sin (Acadian Dynasty) took a title that had belonged to certain god-kings of the four quarters of the world-and was himself deified. A magnificent expression of his divinity in the pink sandstone stele below, on which, wearing the horned helmet of the gods, he stands over two foes as a third falls headlong and others plead for mercy. His men, follow him up the wooded mountain slope; but the king stands alone at the summit, close to the great gods whose stars appear overhead. An example of deification of mortals, victory of one faith over another, and portrayal of legends like Ba'al killing Aleyin. (From "Lost Worlds" by Davidson and Cottrell)

Plate 35. The seal of a bull (Ibid., p. 267)

Plate 36. Mithras sacrificing the bull (Mithraic altar, 2nd century B.C.): A god common to both Indian and Iranian Mythology though under somewhat different forms, Mithras was one of the great Persian gods. The immolation of the bull was regarded as symbolising a cosmic event, viz., sun overcoming the house of Taurusin the Zodiac (From "New Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mytho- logy", p. 316)

Plate 37. Ellora Kailasanatha (From "The Art of Indian Asia" by Zimmer, Vol. II, pl. 208)

Plate 38. Hari-Hara: Sandstone 6th century from Prei Krabas (From "New Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology", p. 361)

Plate 39. Śiva, King of dancers (From "The Art of Indian Asia" by Zimmer, Vol. II, pl. 2a)

Plate 40. Ellora Šiva Tripurantaka (Ibid., pl. 226)

Plate 41. Ardhanariivara: Sculpture from Ellora Caves, 7th century A.D. The curious composite figure, half man and half woman, represents Siva and his 'Sakti' (From "New Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology", p. 371)

Transliteration of Sanskrt Words

A	As	In	-non-
A	As	In	-car
I	As	In	-hit
i	As	In	-peel
u	As	In	-pull
u	As	In	-smooth
r	As	In	-rich
e	As	In	-pate, nay
ai	As	In	-kite
o	As	In	-note
au	As	In	-mount
c	As	In	-birch
ch	As	In	-Churchill
t	As	In	-fort
th	As	In	-hit-hard
d	As	In	-bird
dh	As	In	-bird-house
t	As	In	-Turin(as pronounced in Italian
th	As	In	-Stratham; Martha
d	As	In	-this
n	As	In	-burn; horn
v	as	In	-vow
s	as	In	-shin
s	as	In	-shard
s	as	In	-certain
h	as	In	-home
nc	as	In	-lunch

Chapter One

Phallic Adoration

I

Religion and Fear

RELIGION, RIGHTLY understood, is a personal adventure to relate individuals to the cosmic; multiplicity to Unity; so that man could come nearer to man, form a peaceful society here, and attain blessedness. To be religious is to recognise the Divine or the Absolute in others, not in the human beings exclusively.

Good is its only aim; happiness (bliss) the only prize. No other aim, either of freedom from pain in this life, or of celestial success in the next, tempts the religious man. To be religious is to attain freedom from temptations-all temptations, even temptations of bliss. Life eternal is a Reality to him; to his resurrection is not merely a vague promise, but a definite possibility. He does not await an entry into the tomb to rise from it again. For him heaven is within himself, and is attainable right here. So his is a perpetual struggle to resurrect himself from within his inward conscience; to resurrect the paradise lost to outward temptation. To reach the depths of his potential individuality from the surface of his apparent and relative individuality is the one great adventure of the man of religion. For him his soul is the seat of his bliss. All religions seek the Soul. The Soul is the Bethlehem where the hope for Resurrection shines as a guiding star. All religions, following this or the other path, have to make a pilgrimage to this Bethlehem. The man of religion seeks his salvation in the redemption of his own soul. By so doing he becomes the universal man, a guide to the deluded. He becomes a Yogin.

In other words, religion, to be worthy of its ideal, must deny a fanaticapproach, which could only result from a failure to appreciate the other man's point of view to emphasise that the only way of attainment of perfect bliss, freedom, is the one known or practised by him. Blinded by igno rance, tutored on crude dogmas, our reason, the one apparatus of under- standing, gets blunted. Religion, as it is, has been deluded to the extent of incongruity, even perversity. When religion is blinded by ignorance, and armoured in dogmas it indeed becomes a formidable weapon in the hands of those who love power for the sake of power. Often in history the success of a religion has been

measured in terms of material prosperity and splendour of showmanship; and more recently, by a show of numerical strength of masses branded with a set pattern. As a result, religiosity has suffered; and conventions and rites alone have goaded the bewildered into the trap-gate of fear and greed. To conquer fear has been the ideal of the Seeker. Religion admits of no fear. Love and fear cannot live together.

What is Love without feeling? What is philosophy without thinking? It is in religion that love and philosophy, feeling and thinking attain a happy, human union. The popularity of religion lies in hope. As long as man would be in need of hope, society would be in need of religion, in spite of the cynics, the sophists and the materialists.

As there are stages in human life, when religiosity is ignored due to intellectual cynicism, or giddying materialism, there is also a state when the blessing of a sense of proper values, of moral dimensions, dawn on the erstwhile errant. Then alone one could be said to have attained real manhood. A large majority of the matured devout of today have been the chauvinistic materialists of yesterday. To be religious is not to ignore life or matter necessarily. On the contrary, proper religiosity develops only with the correct evaluation and utilisation of life and all that succours it. All religions enjoin on the devout the duty of selfless involvement with life.

Even before man thought, man loved; even before man loved, man lived. Living, man knew, was mating; and mating, man knew, was living. Somewhere, the man who spends in mating also stores by it. Somewhere, spending and storing, Life and Death, is one process in different manifestations. Life has been the strongest enigma to man. The search for the key that could solve the riddle of life has seen many a Sphinx disappear in dust and yet the problem of life remains a problem unsolved. Religion has been one of the most fascinating and significant landmarks in civilisation's journey towards the achievement of the Spirit of Man. It has brought hope to the hopeless, light to the blind, courage to the down-trodden and discipline to the savage. In spite of the abysmal exploitation of man and materials perpetrated from ages immemorial by the guardians of the different churches in the name of religion andgod, religion still holds the faith of Man. No single idea so easily captivates the thoughts and imagination of mankind; no other single idea would so spontaneously gather the largest number of men, women and children under one banner as the idea of the church, of something beyond the common human which as a Power consoles, assimilates, pacifies, makes man bear pain and sufferings, betrayals and bereavement with some amount of compensating

consolation. Life attracts and repays by its own charisma. There is a Power succouring this Life Force.

This kind of mental fortitude has not only permitted the church to flourish with undisturbed continuity under generations of priests, despite historical onslaughts and metaphysical challenges; but it has in fact also provoked from within the church itself a spirit of revolt, resulting in schisms. The more ancient a religion is, the more divided are its schismic diversions. Only dead religions have no schisms. Schisms are the indirect homage the scrupulous pay to the basic truth underlying a faith. No religion, which is old, has held its unitary family for a length of time. Generations pass on and the family continues to get divided and sub- divided. All religions of the world have this as a common feature. What is most amazing is the fact that despite the schisms, even despite the historical ups and downs, religion as an idea has been enjoying almost an uninterrupted continuity ever since the neolithic man harboured fear as his worst enemy, and attempted to counter it by currying favour with a Superior Power. Fear was regarded as a negative deterrent when facing this positive postulate. Fear, and struggle against fear, together, form the inevitable price for existence; physically, as well as spiritually. Even those religions which might be historically termed as more modern, are mere outgrowths from the older ones, much as the modern man is an outgrowth from his neolithic ancestor.

In the passage from the old gods of Life and Fear to the modern concepts of Soul, Salvation and Bliss, the religious man had to cover milestones of metaphysical researches from concepts of nature-gods to perfect monism; from worship and offerings, to contemplation and meditation. In the process, later findings superimposed older ideas, or at least, attempted to kill them, as did the later man to eliminate the neolithic man.

Ideas are harder to be destroyed than blood corpuscles. Modern man has grown out of the neolithic; but the neolithic features persist in subtle characteristics. The cave-love of man still lives within the bed- rooms of the urban elite. Similarly, the traits of older religions persist in later religions.

Each time religion attempted to secure its authority by rivetting new chains around the errant's feet, joining new links to the old ones, it discovered that, in the process, it has got more entangled and more miserably fettered. It got chained by its own chains. The

victor aswell as the victim were ironically linked together. Traditions have been created, codified, enacted and enforced with a view to obliterating other traditions. Protestations have been made to rectify errors of orthodoxy. But all new rules in course of ages got petrified into dogmas, much in the same way as fossils are made. The followers of the revolutionist of the past tend to become more fanatic and more dogmatic than their forerunners.

Old traditions do not die. Traditions in human society, like instincts in human reflexes, persist beyond conduct or cure. They are of a tenuous nature. Those, apparently dead, persist unnoticed in the newer ones that really do not substitute the old, but only redress them. Until such times when fresh evidences rediscover the continuity of the old in the new, they are stamped with new names. But in traditions there is nothing new. This is natural and inevitable.

Faith is One. God is One. Truth is One. There never has been a new faith really. No new faith has ever appeared in history which has not borrowed from the old, or has not grown out of one. In the so-called new 'faiths' as in new brands of wine, flavours of course differ; but not the fundamentals. The differences are apparent because of different technical adjustments in apparatus, and other processes of commercial value. Ceremonial differences in ritualisms and rites leave the Oneness of God unruffled and unimpaired.

Fundamentally there being not many gods, there cannot be many religions; and there cannot be many churches because there cannot be many religions. What seems apparently divergent is fundamentally the same. In fact, it has got to be the same. Divergence of routes does not affect the fundamental point of arrival. Sooner or later all lines meet; all rivers reach an end; all lives merge into one Godhead.

Religion and Rites

The more materialistic our civilisation is tending to be, the more it is becoming conscious of the true nature of religion. In spite of materialism, hedonism has failed to progress; and more and more intellectuals are developing an awareness about the basic oneness of the religious matrix, and about the need for all human beings to approach this oneness in more or less a single body. Contrary to general belief our civilisation, getting colder and colder towards the popular, formal church-visiting religiosity, is becoming more and more concerned about the true nature of religion. The spirit of

quiet submission to a cold acceptance is being substituted by another of active enquiry into the entire area that religiosity and religious institutions cover. The dimensional concept of religion is gaining in depth. Formal rigidity of theologicalprescriptions are being held before the researching insight of spiritual realisation. Enlightenment is actively being sought. God is being brought out of dark corners into the openness of nature. Religion's extroversion is receding before spiritual introversion. Expansiveness of the practice of liberty and freedom of thinking have helped man to demand an understanding of the god he follows. He does not say that he does not heed a guide. He does. He wants a Guru, a Monitor. But he is also fed up with the show-managers and the magistrates. Modern man is a religious rebel, but also a spiritual follower.

What then is the reason for the differences in religious institutions and schisms? The reason lies in the fact that no age tolerated its reform- ers; but the same people, at a later age, did not hesitate to accept them as prophets. Words of teachers, who had been castigated in their lifetime, were later on dogmatised. Tribes of Scribes and Pharisees across ages, found it profitable to engage themselves in impractical bickerings, each in the name of preserving truth in naked innocence. The same people hesitated to accept the words when the speakers were alive. Why does man reject the genuine and inflate the interpreters? Is it then a fact that prophecies are premature? That men of vision are born ahead of their times? Or is it true that without a professional hand- ling even Truth is destined to fail?

Every time Truth got bemuddled in superstitious ritualisms and sacramental complexities, a philosopher, a reformer, a missionary, a man of superhuman piety and energy, above all of courage, came to voice his protest and resurrect some mummified Truth. History recorded them as Avataras, Messiahs, Prophets or Pygambars. Indeed, they have been supermen, with superhuman power and dignity. Individual attempts in history, in different climes and at different times of crisis, at elucidating and propagating the same fundamental Truth, have been misconceived by laymen, most of whom, through ages, have been victims of superstitious beliefs, which had become parts of their nature.

Ideas are hard to be replaced. Superstitions and dogmas are easy grooves along which the mind of man moves, without ever realising its imprisoned state. The fact that it moves, leaves with it the false taste of progress and continuity, although such a state of apathy is contrary to awareness. This peculiar texture of human thought-process has

been fully exploited by the cynical power-seeker, and the indiscriminate bully, who naturally pay greater care to the entrenched privileges and vested interests. Such interests pounce on opportunities which could be capitalised in favour of their stocks in trade. Thus even in the truthful pursuit of bringing out real facts, and divining thereby the real nature of the Godhead, deep-rooted professional interest have been known to play their sinister and reprobate roles. These malignant forces have beentrying to distort Truth for their own ends. Spiritualism was made to become a pawn for bartering in favour of material benefits. Bankruptcy in spirit is the result of age-long commercialising of man's craving for inner tranquillity.

No single class of humanity has been so much responsible for clouding the concept of God as the theological professionals. This is the reason why the scientific approach has been distinguished from the philosophic approach, and the philosophic, from the theological approach. Theology is supposed to be dogmatic. It reacts against anything scientifically progressive. Philosophy is supposed to be speculative. Although so-called science too develops an arrogant dislike for philosophy and theology. Science in the real sense must reach a Truth. Truth in its final and supreme reckoning must supersede reason and science.

Philosophy, to be worth its merit, must answer science and reasoning. To regard them as two processes, or wings in intellectual perception is a delusion. Since theology is unable to stand the searchlights of scientific or philosophical enquiry, it has been treated as a separate subject altogether. Not reason, but faith is the sheet-anchor of theology. And faith that pays scanty regard to reason degenerates into dogma, which by assuming a path of least resistance might serve some for a while, but which must provoke somehow, sometime, enquiry, challenge, rebellion and schism, one following the other. Thus faith as it were is a thing apart.

Philosophers and theologians are regarded to be two distinct classes. The former stands on strict laws of logic and science, the latter depends on dogmas, superstitions, faith and traditions. Philosophy thrives on enquiry, revolt and progress. Theology detests enquiry; frowns on originality and militates against progress. Philosophy reasons and con- templates; theology dogmatises and complies. In fact, every attempt made on behalf of intellectual emancipation of man from his theological slavery, every attempt made by science for leading the knowledge of matter from the unknown to the known, has had the misfortune of finding theologians dead-set against scientific enquiry.

Reason and progress serve as the two wings provided to the Angel of Truth; theology clips those wings in the vain hope of taming Truth. The broad mind that sought God, degenerated into narrow rites that encouraged ignorance. Every- time the Man of God, the Son of Man, the Avatara, the Realised Messiah, tried to free spirit from form, to emancipate the imprisoned soul of man from dogmas to divinity, to resurrect heaven from within the man, every time his attempts have been thwarted, his path has been dogged, his voice has been stifled by superstition and dogma. Whenever the voice of Man has been raised against the dormant, lethargic, gross mind (tamas) whenever attempts have been made for raising such minds to the transcendent heights of spiritual sublimity (sattva), the process of that revival and resurrectionhas been cut short by intrigue, poison, murder or conspiracy. Few prophets in history died a natural death.

In spite of this conspiracy, Truth has prevailed. Man has been able to win freedom of thought despite the reprobates. The struggle has been a long, intensive and uninterrupted one. Along its path, the history of these differences or schisms have left behind ugly traces of evidences, which now provide food for thought of the scholar who finds in all dogmas, superstitions and rites, significant indications of a bloody social confrontation between the forces of the spirit and those of dehumanising matter. "Books in Stones" is indeed very true to the student of history, specially of archaeological history.

Historically viewed, the process of emergence of the sublime from the crude, of the metaphysical from the physical, of bliss from hell, of spirit from form, of discipline from dogma, has been almost the same as the process of the emergence of the superman from the cave man. It has been a slow and gradual process of development. The fact that it reaches its apex in one part of the world earlier or later than in another, is due to similar causes as made the civilised man in one part of the world appear earlier or later than in another.

Savages and their cave-man-type practices have not altogether been conditioned to civilisation yet. Savage practices, sentiments, instincts, even methods, still persist as much in the African, Mexican or Brazilian forests, as in London, Washington, Tokyo or New Delhi. From cave Iman to Man, from naked savagery to civilised savagery, evolution has been marching on and on, encouraged or disencouraged by geographical, historical, commercial and social factors. Civilisation as a process has not yet been able to establish a completely human society free from fear and coercion, hunger and

disease. The promised millenium, the goal of human hope, has yet to be achieved. The civilised man of today is by no means the last word in Creation. No single religion, no single church today is the last or the only resort of the Divine. The present social world is passing through a period of struggle between simplicity and sophistication, craftsmanship and automation, proletariat structure of human commune and bourgeoise structure of sycophancy for the aristocracy of the eternal man against the temporary man.

Rites and Dogmatism

It is no use for any one church to point its fingers at another for practising rites smacking of superstition, animism of fetishism. Adoration of past practices is in human nature. It is easy, comfortable and safe to follow a cult and a dogma. Man is the last of changes, and changes last.

Traditions persist in church practices, stubbornly holding their ground,despite pretensions of progress and revolutions. Savagery-savage totems, heathen beliefs, pagan practices, persist in the 'noblest' of Churches, both in the East and the West. Modern Researches on fetishism, totems and taboos have conclusively proved the tenacious nature of these practices. Religions cannot exist without form, form without fetishes, and fetishes without dogmas. Underlying all religions, forms maintain an iron grip. They will continue to do so till life remains a riddle; religion remains empty; magic and rituals maintain a facade more impressive than the subtle nuances of the spirit of religion; and Fear and Mystery continue to play their psychological parts on the human nervous system,

History has on record that every new church, aided by the military might of monarchy, has again and again attempted to enforce reforms with a view to eradicating these practices. Millions of lives have been coldly put to the sword, to fire, to the inquisition, to the skull pyramids by authorities in power, who sincerely believed that in doing what they did, they would bring heaven to earth and light to the blind. Even the so-called peaceful spread of Buddhism has not been entirely free from this malignity. Religion itself could be another form of vanity; and like all vanities could spread vice and destruction.

For one thing, the trust of the zealots in the unfailing effectiveness of the method they used, kept their conscience otherwise free. If they acted as vandals, they did so

gracefully, religiously, full of zealous sincerity. Even the most devout of them, persons like Queen Mary Tudor of England, Marie de Medici, Philip IV of Spain, Louis XV, Aurangzeb, whose personal lives had not been totally devoid of integrity, nobility, even piousness, have been known to sanction the most horrid killings in history in the pursuit of their 'holy' ends. In doing so, they sincerely desired to exter- minate savage, unholy, immoral, obscene traditions. There is a difference between divine love and religious love, between religious devotion and spiritual freedom.

Fanaticism has always allowed truth to be thrown into the background, and facts to be severely suppressed or mystified. The spirit of religiosity, something that is innate in man, as modesty, gratitude, fellow-feeling and sympathy, has suffered from bias and prejudice due to the broad side assault caused by fanaticism. Fairness of judgement suffers from prejudice. The basic shortcomings of any proselytising faith is psychological. It is always belaboured with complexes and neurotic implications leading to fanaticism. The most discussed postulate of the mystic adoration of the phallic system is a case in point.

To understand any single religion it is necessary to understand the sister religions. To understand religion it is necessary to understand its past. Understanding is the cure against fanaticism. No incident is an event in isolation, and no beginning began in isolation. Such abeginning-in-itself, isolated and exclusive, is God and God alone.

To understand Christianity one has to ask, "What was the religion of Jesus, or of John the Baptist? Why did the religion of Moses, or Abraham not suffice the need of the Jews, or of the same people, who yet later, embraced Islam? What was the religion of the Queen of Sheba, or of the people amongst whom Cain took shelter, or of the men to whom Jesus used to turn for discussion? Who were the Magi, and what religion did they follow? Why the basic treatise of the Hindu people is known as The Book of Man (Mänava-Dharma-Sastra)?"

II

The Cult of Fertility

No religion is complete in itself. All religions are traditionally linked to their past, to their environments and their social history. All religions are exposed to vital questionings: What is life? What is death? Why is life connected with food, and why

cannot a person in isolation by himself or her-self create life? The questions of multiplying life and survival in the struggle for life are the parents of religions which discovered God. Man found God to be his complementary. Without God he found life insecure and mysterious. In religion he sought spiritual survival, freedom from uncertainty, liberation from worry.

His first need was food, and food's need was fertility. This made man directly view the phenomenon of fertility to be a great source of mystery. In going deep into this mystery man did not take much time to discover the relation of the earth's fertility to rain and to the sun. Earth (Female) and Sun (Male) have been the oldest of gods, not entirely given up i any of the religions known to man. The relation between the earth and the sun was projected through a sky-borne liquid-the rain (Generating fluid). Worship of fertility automatically projected the adoration of the procreative phenomenon.

The two counterparts that stood out tangibly in this phenomenon were, and continues to be, the phallus (Siina) and the vulva (Toni). Naturally they would adore these two as they adore the eye, the ear, the brain.

Fertility was the first mystery worshipped; and the similes of the 'sun- rain-earth' on the one hand, and 'man-semen-woman' on the other, imaged the copulatory act into a religious act worthy of veneration and adoration. The singing, dancing and what we know as orgiastic displaysare nothing but the imitative act of inducing the otherwise unconcerned sex-god to be erotically excited, and cast the valuable, life-giving spermato- zoa, the rain, on the gaping, thirsty earth, the womb. Man had to communicate somehow with the source of the mystery of such an important function as life, and life-giving food springing from earth. The only way man could communicate with the mysterious libido lay through a symbolic language, into which initiation had to be sought. This natural fact was made to be viewed as an obscene act because of prudish, hyprocrisy, leading to repression and suppression.

This they did. At first, they did this physically; in course of time by carving their representation, and then symbolically. The human act, as the bird, animal or reptile act, of copulating and discharging a fluid was symbolic of the great phenomenal cosmic act of the Sun and the Earth. Egyptian pyramids and Sumerian pyramids have yielded evidence in pictures and carvings of this phenomenal copulation of the Sun and the

Earth. The Rg Veda sings of this conjugal relation existing in Nature. Human minds read in the natural mystery some key answer to their enquiry about the mystery of life.

Naturally the early devotees and mystics did not see anything but a joyous repetition of a divine process in the very necessary and healthy act of copulation. The question of regarding this as a sin, an act against god, or a fall, did not occur to them. And when great forces of arms and erudition spent their energy in injecting into the later minds the idea of transgressions and evil, sin and hell, through a barrage of anti-sex propaganda, man and woman in their secret naked simplicity of mind remained totally unconvinced. The propaganda succeeded only in driving at naturally legitimate right into a dark secreted corner, and the naked simplicity of the mental state of man was filled with such complexes as guilt, lie, fear, deception, etc, with the awesome physical and mental consequences which have been causing human individuals and human society immeasurable amount of grief and suffering. The modern religious man appears to be a diseased item compared to his prototype living in natural surroundings, and known as savages. Mental ailments, insomnia or hysteria, are conditions unknown to the 'superstitious' savage.

The ancients lived in a more open state. Their equation with God was based on naturality. If copulation was necessary and natural, it was also, in their estimation, adorable. If the spirit of fertility was to be adored and appeased, the best offering imaginable was copulating itself, on the spot; in this case on the fields. And they did it. In the temples of the fertility gods and goddesses, on the most important days, copulating pairs offered their joy and their prowess to the divine will. No shade of evil covered their will; no compunction shaded their mind. If menstruation was the sign of blossoming, like blossoms, the blood wasoffered to the fields, rivers, canals, deities. How could that blood be dirty or unholy if blossoms were not? Blood is the red blossom of the body- plant. If the sheathing of the corn was natural for harvest and seeding. an offering of life itself was called for propagating life. Human sacrifice symbolised frankly this shearing of harvest. The later ideas of sacrifice and Resurrection camouflaged the ancient frank offering of blood and flesh, of man, of animals, of birds, even of skin and limbs torn out of frenzied bodies like skin dissected from genitals, etc. as a customary offering for some religious sects. All these trace their origin from the simple, natural and open adoration of fertility by man. There was no secrecy to obstruct a straight relation of the individual with the cosmic, no obscurity to

mystify a bold and virile fact of life that only prudishness could deny, or hypocrisy could cover.

Man worships God and remains subservient. But his nature rebels against it. He wants to equal God; he wants to replace God by becoming God, and then become omnipotent. Acquisition of Power is his motive. He plays the servile, because he desires to acquire. Thus he imagines the great red sun ejecting his hot long member, and casting his seed into the open vulva of the earth, God thereby holding the highest power through keeping to Himself the Secret of Life, a mystery. Were he to withhold his ejaculating favours, rivers would run dry; lands would perish; cattle would die and men would begin eating men. Life would end. God's power thus was equalised with the sexual vigour, and ability to impregnate Nature with Life's regeneration and multiplication through the processes of menstruation, ovulation and impregnation.

Judaism and Christianity are such cultic expressions of the endless pursuit by man to discover instant power and knowledge. Granted the first proposition that the vital forces of nature are controlled by an extraterrestrial intelligence, these religions are logical developments from the older, cruder, fertility cults. With the advance of technical proficiency the importance of religious ritual in influencing the weather and the crops grew less than attaining wisdom, and the acquiring of knowledge of the future. The Word, that seeped through the labia of the earth's womb became to the mystic of less importance than the Logos which he believed his religion enabled him to apprehend and enthuse him with divine omniscience. But the source was the same vital power of the universe.1

Universality of Phallicism

There is no faith known to man within which phallic traits could not be traced. Even those faiths which are frankly critical of phallicism, suffer from the legacies of their phallic past, as it is evidenced by certainfeatures of their rites and practices. Certain forms and figures which most religions adhere to in their day to day prayer meetings betray their ancient legacies. The very churches that destruct phallicism the most, retain within their folds such pagan hangovers as the Arc, the candle and the sacrament bread. Rites such as ablutions (oozoo) in a mosque, baptism and the ceremonial bathings (as the Hindus observe) have been critically commented on as being reminiscent of phallic cults. They have questioned the shape of the Buddhistic Caityas,

of the Pagodas, Dagobas, Pyramids, etc. of the importance of trees in religious rites; of the palm leaf, the mistletoe, the Maypole, the sacred stones worshipped at the temples, churches as well as at Kaabaa and even of the forms of the sacrificial fire-pits. The snake of Moses, the concept of the Madonna, or even of the very Cross itself has not escaped scrutiny and remark. These observations often hurt, because of the implied jibe and frivolity. But evidencial facts and inferences thereof must be placed above emotional prejudice. Scholarship often hurts devotion; and when scholarship ceases to be impersonal and objective, the hurt caused infuriates. It disturbs that peace which religiosity is expected to foster. Unless we learn to face scholarship objectively, we deny to learn, to grow.

Phallicism as a cult has been almost a universal one. This is natural. Life paid an awesome regard to the forces of life. The primitive may be crude; but it is also real, honest; so that no sophistry could dis- regard it. "Nearly all ancient people worshipped sex, in some form and ritual, and not the lowest people, but the highest expressed their worship most completely. The sexual character and functions of primitive deities were in high regard, not through obscenity of mind, but through a passion for fertility in women and the earth." This is neither strange, nor indecent, nor reprehensive. Its suppression alone would make it so. Denial of the realities by the sophisticated make men suffer from repression. Three quarters of the ailments of the modern civilised man spring from repression. Modern life is neurotic. Spiritual advancement calls for frankness. To be spiritual is to be gripping the Realities of things. There is no room in spiritual progress for fraudulent cant and hypocritical decency. Religion, to be true, has to worship the Truth, irrespective of form; it does not commerce with equivocation or pretence.

If it is a shame to worship the phallic, it must be a greater shame to try to keep such a worship covertly away from public recognition, and yet perpetuate it. The primitive adoration of the phallic was not born of license; at least there is no evidence to accept it to be so. In the primitive society no euphemism or covert methods were used for bright-panelling an avaricious exploitation of human live-flesh in the name of social equality, spiritual emancipation, international fraternisation and ad- mission within the vaunted hall of civilisation. The claim, that ModernCivilisation and Christianity together have acted as an emancipating power amongst the people of the South Sea islands, Eskimos, Red Indians, Peruvians, Mexicans and the African aborigines, has

been variously questioned by ethically inspired, economically aware and politically alert minds. Modern sophistry appears to have deprived us of the courage to be frankly open to ourselves. We have lost our paradise; and we play with our conscience, with strange hopes for redemption through interventions of the particular church we belong to. We denounce the primitive as being phallic; but we are the ones who pay homage to tycoons who amass their wealth from selling this 'abominable' sex. A society which sells sex cannot understand a society which adored and honoured it. Historians are emphatic on the point that adoration of the phallic is as old as the Bible, nay, as mother Eve. They also note the rarity of sex-crimes and perversions amongst the primitive societies.

Fear, Magic, Sex

Dr. Durant mentions the worship and sacrifice of the bull and the snake, and emphasises the implied sexual symbolism. He even says that the "snake in the garden of Eden is doubtless a phallic symbol representing sex as the origin of evil."3

Scattered all over the history of civilisation lies records of human endeavour and ingenuity to find a solution to the riddle of life. In doing so the primitive man found an enemy residing deep within his own consciousness. It was an enemy of darkening and depressing mien; it stopped him from daring uninhibitedly his conquest of life's subsistence, nay, Man faced the instinct of life's very existence. This enemy was fear. fear standing across his instincts of self-preservation and self-expression. Fear evoluted doubt, suspicion, lack of self-confidence. Religion, accord- ing to Dr. Frazer, draws its genesis from this instinct of fear. Magic, indeed, appears to have been the first of man's religion. Primitiveness and magic go hand in hand; magic and primitiveness are co-existent, even correlative, all over the primitive world. In fact modernity of thought is measured in direct proportion to freedom from fear. Hence courage is universally admired in civilised society. But one is tempted to ask, "Has man been really able to get himself totally free from atavistic fear?"

Magic has been regarded as the earliest religion of man; fear is his first inspiration; witchcraft his first sacramental prayer, and witches and sorcerers his first order of sacerdotal priests. The High priests of modern churches are what they are in replacement of these primitive prototypes; this partly explains why the priestly religions used to make a bonfire of their earlier prototypes namely the witches, with

extreme thoroughnessand zeal. They could have been regarded as professional competitors, and had to be eliminated in professional interest, with a professional finesse.

But one stops and asks, "Have the magicians, the sorcerers, the witches been really eliminated, or have they been just reorientated and substituted?" A visit to any of the modern bookshops clearly directs the trend of a decadent society getting confused and lost in search of excitements which could afford it an escape from the curse of boredom and frustration. As in the decadent Greek and Roman societies, sex, mystery, magic and witchcraft are on the increase in ours too. Besides the variety of the awesome costumes that distinguish them from the 'average' man (from whom they feel themselves and mean themselves to be so much elevated and distinguished) the totems, symbols, taboos and cult appertinences of sorts persist, of course, cleverly disguised, as secrets of the tradition. Old values persist. They are only interpreted in mystified language of so-called wisdom. Nothing changes really in history except the flesh.

This chain of atavistic persistence, according to some, is nothing but illusory. But then, apart from the Real Absolute, all that is relative to life is illusory. These theorists do not agree that the feeling of transcendence, which is religion's chief hope and attraction, springs from the crude genesis of fear. Fear is according to them, only a reactive evolute for caution against indiscretion that might result in the loss of life. In other words fear is a built-in radardefence against dangers to life. Fear is but a necessary concomitant to the instinct of self-preservation, and it has nothing to do with the spiritual elevation to transcendentalism.

In the world of actual life such factors as ingress, egress, progress are evolving events, and in considering the progress of human history and culture such progressive changes persist and claim due recognition. Ob- jects of worship, despite apparent changes, persist in refusing to change entirely. Since fear had been dominating the forms of prayers, all prayers are raised by the helpless, the prostrate, the sycophant. All prayers ask for being "saved". God of Fear alone could save from the Anti-God, the cause of Fear. Hell and Fear are inseparably obsessive. Magic and chants, sorcery and cults, have been replaced by other gods and other forms. Forms of worship retain the fundamentals of magic cults. The Magi, the witch-doctors and the priests are linked in the same chain The garb, as the neolithic cave man, the savage and the modern man. the facial decorations, the awesome aspect of the magician, the noise, the flame, the

smoke, of the charm and magic, the emphasis on mystification and secrecy persist as much as do the objects, instruments, icons, symbols and courses of stars and planets. Fundamentally, fear and magic fostered cults; cults turned into religion; religion demandedpriests; priests gave forms; forms induced veneration of objects; and most of these objects symbolised the mystery of life and death, particularly of fertility and phallicism.

The tenacity of the persistence of the old in the new could be observed from a closer survey of the objects used in the rites practised in different churches, even today.

The underlying meaning of some of the religious practices reveal strange truths when held in the crucible of close enquiry. Apart from ancient religions like Hinduism or Buddhism, which are living even now, more recent religions too, which have emerged in protest of the old, are not found without such items as the cross, the crescent, the sepulchre, the font, the candle, the bells, the Ark, the tripod, the shell, the conch, the breaking of the bread, the May-pole, the Christmas-tree, the hanging mistletoe, the sacerdotal stole, the pit, the hundred other snake-symbols, fish- symbols, stone-icons etc. All these, singly or together, are reminders of the lease phallicism holds on religions. The presence of these, their important association with rites, remind one of the fertility rites. These encourage historians to infer that religion is born of mystery; that all religions consider sex as a vital force; that religion is closely bounded to the limitations of the instincts of fear; and that religion hopes for the soul's emancipation, and gain the bliss of transcendence through the sublimation of the instincts of sex and fear. But the fact stands that repression does not assist in gaining spiritual freedom. Transcendental realisation is not obtainable through submissions to instincts. Sublimation is a process of spiritual discipline with the express purpose of obtaining a state of con- tented happiness-joy. Mystery and repression induce melancholy and morbidity.

The biochemistry of modern psychiatry has to say a good deal about the chemical reactions of fear, and of the induced psychic conditions of the human nerves. The timid need religions the most. True religions to be effective inject courage into a neurotically credulous mind. Religion binds human hopes together, as sex does the body, and fear does the mind. Timidity is an antethesis of Love.

But fear is a binding factor. Fear of annihilation through atomic weapons has been influencing nations in favour of a serious attempt for an international fraternisation. Fear against unknown forces of destructions builds up mysteriously the armour of superstition." Freedom from fear is spirit's irresistible quest. Priestly prayers and ceremonial offerings for the appeasement of spirits, evil or good, are still held in high regard. "Religion," says Goldberg, "may have its origin as humbly as in bribing off the pernicious soul of some rascal in the tribe."

The transposition of love in place of fear has been one of the noblest and sublimest transformations in religious history.

In love we seek seclusion; in fear, company. Religion of fear has been sectarian and awesome. An awesome god is not unknown in most of the religions. But the path that leads to the sublime peace of contentment and assurance lies along the laid out garden of confidence of love. It is a lonely path; a path of singleness; a path of courage. It is the loneliness of love. It is lonely at the peak; and the peak is lonely. The lonely alone could become universal. To be able to turn loneliness into blissful experience is the objective of transcendental quest. Prof. Whitehead meant it when he defined religion to be "what man does with his loneliness". From self-preservation to fear, from fear to magic, from magic to cult and religion, has indeed been a progress. But all this lacked the dimension of spiritual depth. Of that later. Meanwhile Fear was being transcended. The unique experience of feeling free of fear opened up man's vision to further achievements in the world of spirit. Man aspires to free himself from his past complexes. He hates to see his past holding him back. He is virtually concerned with Life itself, with living for the propagating of life. The Mystery of Life holds an obsessive impor- tance in the early history of man's quest for discovery of Life's "Source". It underlines all the symbolic rites and prayers of man, and it continues to hold its sway over man's spiritual development. To the homo sapiens fertility has been the most vital, and hence the supreme expression of energy. Thus the sex-motivated aspirations of Life continue to mould all types of religions. Taboo of sex and fertility, phallicism and mystery-rites has given us more complexes than necessary. In the garden of Eden, Nature reigned uncovered. And all religions have to recognise the fact that love calls for openness, and shuns secrets.

Universality of Sex-Symbols

The importance of phallicism becomes underlined from a study of the nature of the extent neolithic cave paintings, unearthed tribal dolls and toys, and other ritual symbols of figurative and iconic representations which are scattered all over as remains of bygone civilisations of the world. Phallic symbols persist to focus the psychic aspirations and aberrations of man. In creating these symbolic representations, in holding them, touching them in concrete shape and form, and bowing before them, much of man's suppressed emotions find response and release. Symbols are of high importance and significance in religion.

Because of this importance there are reasons to believe that direct physical and phallic facts such as generative organs, menstrual fluids, the 28-day cycles, and the act of copulation itself demanded adoration. Adoration of the phallic symbols, which replaced the living phallic in flesh and blood, was in itself a great progress towards man's freedom fromthe limited to the abstract. Fertility was the recognised Power; phallic forms only underlined its obvious source. But the real source was yet a mystery.

Early man conceived the creative force in nature as being two- fold-male and female; and evolved symbols for both sexes. There still are male and female symbols in the church, although their original meaning has been imposed by theological speculation. To primitive man fish was the symbol of the feminine. This fish is still a feminine symbol in the church.

Primitive man saw in the pillar, the column, the stately palm tree, a fitting symbol for the male, the active force. And the same palm in the Christian religion became suggestive of virility, of victory in the race of life. On Palm-Sunday, the triumphant entry of Christ with his followers into Jerusalem is still celebrated. On this day blessed palm leaves are distributed to the faithful; they are placed upon their door. To this day, agricultural people burn these same leaves and sprinkle the ashes over the fields to ensure fertility.

In all times the vine, so prolific in its fruit, has been symbolic of abundance in life, vitality and birth itself. For the Christian, the vine has been suggestive of the Fountain of Life in which the soul is reborn through communion with God. The ark, the classic symbol of the female principle of all times, is used everyday during the Mass in the form of the PYX, the holy receptacle for the body of Christ. The Cross, from time

immemorial a symbol of the creative forces of union, was early brought into the symbolism of Christianity, where it was ever grown in importance. And the Christian, mindful only of its relation to his Saviour, does not see in it the symbol of the saving grace of generation.

The priest as he puts on his robes for the Sacrifice, is unaware that they are full of symbolic meaning. The flowing gown, the stole he wears around his neck, and the vestment, are all suggestive of similar symbolism in ancient pagan faiths. The vestment itself a symbol, bears upon it still others; there is the Cross both in front and in the back,' and from beneath the crosses extend the golden rays of the sun, in themselves suggestive of the great life- giving force in nature.

Mary is the greatest symbol of all. She is the Mystical Rose," the Spiritual Vessel, the tower of David,10 the Ark of the Covenant;11 the poor, the sick and the humble, find in her a source of comfort and aid. The new converts to the Christian church from the sensuous pagan world added the attributes to the concept of Mary. They saw in her figure familiar to them from their own beliefs. For in every pagan religion there was a virgin goddess, a Virgin Mother, whom the faithful worshipped.

Bertrand Russell also refers to the existence of a fertility cult that evolved into the glorious concept of the Virgin Mary indicating thereby that sex symbols persist uninterrupted in the most catholic churches,although the subject has been kept studiously well-guarded and covered.

The religions of Egypt and Babylonia, like other ancient religions were originally fertility cult. The earth was female, the sun Male 13 The bull gods were common. In Babylon, Istar, the Earth Goddess, was supreme amongst female divinities. Throughout Western Asia the Great Mother was worshipped under various names. When Greek colonists in Asia Minor found temples dedicated to her, they named her Artemis, and took over the existing cult. This is the origin of 'Diana of the Ephisians'. Christianity transformed her into Virgin Mary, and it was a Council of Ephesus that legitimated the title "Mother God" as applied to Our Lady.14

The doctrine of Immaculate Conception was accepted by the Chris- tian church as late as 1854.15 The history of the Christian church lays it bare how the cult of fertility has naturally been a co-runner with it. Fertility as a cult is an expression of Life's indebtedness to the divine power that be. No form of religion is an exception to this

homage paid to the cult. It is humble to recognise the fact that faith in God is neither exceptional to any religion, nor is that faith ashamed at finding expressions in symbols, be it a cross, a fish, a lingam-yoni compact, or a Madonna. External forms do not make changes in an inner and abiding Truth. The greatest immorality is to hide. This leads to mystifications, and untruth, even to sorcery.

The abhorrence that the prude displays in associating sex, sex- symbols, sex-functions, sex-adoration as religious fetishes is considered to have its origin from psychological inaptitude. Psycho-analytical investigations have revealed amazing results in the field of so-called moral barriers. The abhorrence of post-Judaic churches of the West reflects a stoic reaction, a mental aberration, a form of dehumanisation. Such an attitude harbours a definite danger to a healthy growth of the under- standing of the inner man, to the realisation of the Spiritual Self. The vital role that sex plays in life leaves no room for doubt that it is natural and divinely planned. It is essential; it is perfect; it is inevitable and healthy.

Social laws propounded by man ensure a systematic functioning of the 'Family', and attempt some regularisation of sex impulses. The change from matriarchy to patriarchy necessitated a definite form of naming the offsprings by a patriarchal title. This replaced the earlier convention of using the mother's title in naming the new-born. Socially speaking, it had been a foolproof method of relating a progeny to its source of blood. A mother's relation to an offspring is obvious. With the growth of the patriarchal system, as paternify had to be more defined, maternity had to be well-guarded. The use of the womb, much beforethe use of the field, became an exclusive right. This necessitated two very significant impositions; one, the proprietorial possession of the female body; two, control of sex liberties through setting a system of 'moral' codes. These succeeded in introducing the curse of repression to the free life of a society. Repressions created in their turn a series of mental reservations, as formulating a religious system in which sex was associated with sin, uncleanliness, shame, inferiority and disability. Bitter pain has been sadistically associated with a so-called and imaginary punishment deservedly imposed for the 'Sin' of man.

This explains the tyranny of repression, taboo, shame, indecency, secrecy, impoliteness surrounding the natural world of sex. Modern attitude to sex has happily changed. Although the sudden discovery of personal emancipation from imposed moral restrictions has overshot the mark of natural usefulness of sex, and has resulted in some

cases in excess of orgiastic outburst of the erotic, one could hope that with the passage of time the place of sex would find its natural norm. This could help in the resurrection of correct religiosity, which at present is faced with the danger of extinction.

What had hitherto been openly sex-adoration was suppressed into symbolic representations; and once the principle of symbolic representation of man's debt to the Divine was accepted, different people at different times adopted them in various forms and fetishes. Symbolisation of the natural became a vogue. The significant choices of such symbols were more or less determined by local conditions, social, economic, geographic, climatic and syncretic. Symbolism, like life, with its faculty for survival and its tendency for self-expression, is as universal a form, as a sense of Divine Power.

Emergence of the World of Symbols

The forms of these symbols have been numerous. Some of these, of course, are more subtle than others. Attempts are often made to classify the superior culture of a people on the basis of the so-called subtle or crude symbols in use. Mere nature of the symbols is not invariably indicative of the superiority of one culture over another. Advanced cultures have often been noticed to come under the spell of gods not so 'advanced' because of political reasons.

The acceptance of sex in a subtle form is really a secret homage paid to the natural instinct of man, namely to sex, which he regards as a benign power which contributes to the charm and durability of existence. The open free expression of joy having been stifled by the greed for lust, man had to run for a hiding; and this he did under the camouflage of symbols and mystic languages. He, of course, could not give up sex, and thespirit of sex adoration. It continued in secreted forms, symbolised rites, figurative icons and mystic language of symbolic import. Legends and lores were invented to have the eternal homage of Life to its Source stowed away under the dark cellars of roundabout heavens and hells, demons and gods, kings and fairies, princes and princesses, serpents and fish, witches and oracles.

Even the language of joy and ecstasy of the spiritually awakened, the spiritually united, the spiritually free, borrowed heavily from the language of erotic and sexual experience. The system of preserving the so-called decency of human expression of divine and spiritual experience actually had to accept the subterfuge of symbols, metaphors and poetical figures. Man has tried in vain to preserve morality and decency

at the cost of truth and frankness. Angels were clipped of their wings, and suffered the drab life of the earthly manikin.

Let us take a glimpse at the life of the gods as they passed from Egypt and Sumeria to Greece and Rome, and then to the main systems of the "most holy" of the churches. Let us note that this obsession of preserving the morality of man at the cost of Truth and openness landed a an erstwhile great philosophical and metaphysical culture into the most confused of ritualistic forms which in their turn gave way to cults and occults, magics and sorceries.

Sumer, Babylon, Egypt, Crete, Cyprus, Troy, Ionian Isles, Greece, Iran and Rome; in almost that order, the mightier in arms have over- whelmed the less mighty, and imposed on them their gods, and forced on the vanquished a supposedly superior culture. But we have observed before that in the stream of cultural continuity there is never a one-way commerce. In culture the victor is often found enmeshed in the subtle shackles of the vanquished, which they, in their pride and vainglory, so mightily criticise and condemn. For Greece, Troy and the Eastern ways were barbaric; and for the Imperial Rome, Greece and Egypt had been but nests of superstition and magic, loaded with useless gods. But Rome the victor of Anatolia, Byzentium Phrygia and Thrace became, by the time of Augustus, Caligula, Adrian, and Claudius, a forest of spiritual confusion where flourished Pythagorianism, Cybelline mysticisms, Mithra-ism and a hundred other Oriental cults. And out of these massive material rose that later giant Christianity, which carefully preserved most of the pagan traits and forms, most of the pagan celebrations and rituals, most of the pagan gods and goddesses, inclusive of the sex overtones and orgiastic propensities, blood, flesh, dance, virgin, holy weddings and ecstatic trances and ecstatic confessions of spiritual unions. Most of the descriptions of such unions do use the common and mundane sex language that the profane use. But under the sanction of the holy church these are accepted as symbolisingly sacred. Sanctification of the profane draws a protective halo over what would otherwise have been denounced as vulgar, indecent profanity.

This should be quite understandable. Anthropologically speaking syncretistic admixture of traits is an inevitable feature of the history of culture. Of course, the media for such syncretistic transference are and ought to be various, such as war, commerce, natural catastrophes, leading to large immigrations, and others. Of course, in effecting a syncretic social order, the society of magic men and of priests played a

great part; so did the conquerors. The victors, as we have noted, always tried to impose their ways on the vanquished. It is not difficult to imagine that during this process of adjustment and accommodation of the faiths of alien people a certain amount of intellectual intercourse, too, did play its role. Culture seeps and percolates syncretically through cross sections of history. The record of man's capacity for narrowing distances of the mind through adoption and absorption is both fantastic and fascinating. Interchange of gods between cultures has an amazing history of its own.

In any case, it is interesting to study that these symbols are not only universal in character, but also pulsed with similar fetish-ardour. More or less, the same symbols have been found to have been adopted by a num- ber of people, and interpret similar ideas. In some cases this might have been co-incidental, but in most of the cases they were results of human contact and social influence. World in those days too appears to have been really limited and small, if not as small as Alexander had found it, for his own reasons.

Of the forms selected for such religious fervour, the cruder included, interalia, a tree, a grove, a bird, an animal, a dell, a river or a spring, as noted above. Secondary forms became symbolic and included images, icons, books, diagrams, strings of alphabets, scores of music, etc. From the ancient civilisations such as those of Sumeria, Babylon, Anatolia, Thrace, Egypt, Crete, Phrygia, Sicily and the Grecian isles, an almost uninterrupted flow of fertility symbols continue to crowd all our modern religions, spreading all over the old world. No religion is entirely new. The Semetics too exhibited the same trait although reformer after reformer unceasingly protested against the homage paid to symbols. Though they condemned symbols, in their turn, they too suggested their own symbols. Many of these, however, covertly it may be, were indirectly expressive of sex and sex alone. Through all changes and impositions, this single trait remained unchanged. It is amazing to observe how deep rooted is this desire to adore sex and fertility, how irresistible is its appeal. The peak, the pole, the tree, the mushroom, the deltas, the dells, the clifted forms of the earth; the combination of the furrow and the plough; of the earth, rain and the sun; the virile vigour in the bull, the stallion, the ram and the boar; the pine-cone and the cowrie-shells; and the scores of other similar natural unions told their own tale. Each of these assisted a mental impact of a physical fact, i.e., the importance of sex to life and procrea- tion. Mystic wonder is sublimity itself. Sex was a sublime fact.

To go contrary to this was impossible, unrealistic. Did Moses not try to stop the adoration of the orgy around the Golden Calf and hold to his serpent-staff? Did not Jesus attempt to change his church; but left the cross and the chalice in the process? Did not Hazrat Muhammed try to remove the adoration of all brazen images, and yet, ultimately, end with the symbolical stone-emblem in Mecca? How, otherwise, one explains his insistence on pilgrimage?

There must be something inherent in human nature for explaining mind's adherence to forms and symbols. There are various explanations for this. The most acceptable one observes that normal human thinking always avoids tension and disorder; it avoids disharmony and confusion. Mind has a preference for settling down to a point. Concentration leads to poise, and removes tension. That is why man meditates. Meditation gives freedom from a confusing state of the nerves, and from the resulting tension. Man, like an archer, cannot meditate on more than one point at a time. There may be a field of attention, but the field must, by a centripetal process, lead to a final single point. To be able to meditate is to concentrate the diffused mind to a point. This ensures peace, symbolically expressed through the mystic syllable (mantra) Om. Without peace (anti) man is restless. He finds himself in a mad, mad world. As the target is well-marked as the bull's eye, so meditation becomes easier by concentration on a symbol which represents a thought process into an objectively crystallised expression. Man asks for it, as the myopic asks for glasses and the drowning seeks breath. Hence symbols are very natural to a meditative or spiritual life aspiring to attain Om, or peace.1 When actually a symbolic form is to be chosen for adoration the familiar offers an easier medium for concentration. The use for religious re- presentations lies in making a difficult mystic journey familiar and friendly, through laws of constant association. All adoration is emotional. All meditation is a projection of pure emotion, impersonal projection.

Psychologically speaking, this could be the reason why such forms. enjoy an obdurate persistence. Symbols are easily adopted. Religion and mysticism are spiritually interrelated; and the common man is afraid of disturbing the mysterious. It is as it were a spell cast. Such fear of the mysterious harbours a firmer hold on human consciousness than the effects of years of spiritual harangues. Spirit that rejuvenates and fortifies the soul, being basically an experience of the unknown and the undiscovered, man does not ordinarily dare tearing to shreds previous practices.

Therein lies the mystery of persistence of symbols as objects of spiritual adoration. Some of the symbols used are overtly frank and bold; some are covertly justified and secreted. The new dared not reject the old entirely. Even the most iconoclastic had to build on the old faith inclusive of cults. What the latter carried on, or had to carry on, changed their names and forms, and perhaps the ceremonies too. They became permanent parts of rituals in the form of symbols. Religious loyalties often find it impossible to eradicate altogether traditional sources of spiritual solace. In the shipping system through the ocean of consciousness the safe law of main- taining a chain of life-boats on the decks of the fastest liners cannot be given up. It is safe for long journey to keep room for traditional safeguards and assistance. A true navigator of the seas, appreciates the value of charts and maps, however old and obsolete.

Faith could never ignore tradition. Every religion has its secret brotherhood; the brotherhood of the initiate, the brotherhood of the novices, as different from the brotherhood of the elders, of the Eleusians and the inner circles. Much of this has persisted even to our present days in the name of mysticism. Fear, like life to spirit, as sex and hunger to body, is a primal incentive that goaded men to go in quest of the divine. God, the Father, appears often as a persecutor also; and man knows that a father too has to be appeased at times. He-man as he was, even Agamemnon had to sacrifice his own daughter for appeasing the Gods. What we call faith could spring from a sublimated form of fear in the sense that the more the faith, the less the fear. Absolute faith is absolute rid- dance from fear. The Absolute is Freedom itself.

Yet religions which aim at emancipation, become involved through forming symbols as though codifying rites and ceremonials. Those who dedicated their lives to change forms of religion, and arrest the attention of the devotee from the cultic practices of phallic adorations and the associated obscenities and abominations in their turn, fell victims to organising new symbols, new forms, often themselves phallistic. Despite changes, basically, symbolism perpetuates. As a matter of fact much of religion depends on subtle symbolism. God, in the sense of Samkhya and Yoga, as in the sense of Spinoza or Descartes, is nothing more than a perpetual symbol of power, will and creativity.

Let us take only one example to illustrate this point. All over the Christian world the orthodox church pays its greatest-importance to the ceremonial rite of the Eucharist. From times immemorial in almost all the great oriental religious celebration the

principal form of this ritual consists in eating and drinking. These religions, originally matriarchal,1s indulged in human sacrifice. Cases of orgiastic dances over days ending with eating the flesh of the sacrificial victim, termed "tanist" by Dr. Graves, were not rare. These symbolised a fertility cult, that signified sowing, reaping and eating of the land-produce, which resurrected itself by reappearing for the next crop. This was physically enacted in the drama of love, dance orgy, killing and feast. Down the centuries, this ceremony underwent a great many changes. Because of the importance of this dramatic symbolism, it was responsible for many legends. Later the tanist citizen was replaced by a prisoner of war; a prisoner of war was replaced by a slave; a slave was replaced by a bull, by a lamb, by a fowl, and since Jesus and the Last Supper, by a bread. The eating of flesh and drinking of blood had been a very popular pagan ceremony. The mystery-cults of Eleusis, Sicily, Cyprus, etc., were known for such orgiastic ceremonies. Even now, in the ceremonials observed in these parts an overtone of orgy is still perceptible. The Bible refers to these practices, and condemn them. The Vedas too had instances of human sacrifice, animal sacrifice; the Aztecs and the Incas had it. But Jesus did not approve of this. He sublimated this in replacement of the sacrifice of hundreds of animals on the Passover Feast Day. Sacrifice of animals could not be eliminated by Muhammed. Jesus just meant to say, "If flesh and blood you must have for the consummation of your religious needs, well, I Jesus, I am going to offer myself as the victim for all times. Eat my flesh, my blood. Let this bread and wine suffice. When you partake of this, recall my sacrifice. But for God's sake stop this blood bath in the name of God and the Holy. Stop the paganism born of superstition. Those who in future follow me must accept the bread and wine offered on a Passover Day as flesh and blood of God's messenger on earth; and this is my new message." The mystery associated with flesh and blood would remain a mystery still in spite of the substitution. Jesus must have meant to substitute an old pagan practice, but a very strong practice, mystic, and transcendental, a practice that could not have been easily eradicated altogether without substantially damaging mysticism in religious forms. He tried to raise a religious practice to the level of spiritual sublimity.

It was quite expected in the tone and form of Jesus, the person, whom many doubt as having any intention of preaching a new religion, that he applied himself towards introducing some human qualities within the scholarly rigidities of a Rabbianic creed rather than towards establishing a new religion. Naturally, therefore, at a later stage

when the early Christians devoted themselves to turning the teachings of Jesus to a Messianic creed they had to play much with the pagan forms and pagan practices. The introduction of the Eucharist and also of Marytheism keeps Christianity as a creed quite apart from Judaism. Christian Mass for instance, the Eucharist, the most solemn of Christianity's rites, the trans- fusion of the Spirit of Christ into the wine and bread, and turning them into blood and flesh, is but a continuation of the mystic religions of the Pagans of the Eastern countries. "Christianity became the last and the greatest of the mystery religions." Not before Cyril, the Bishop of Jeru-salem (350 A.D.), the idea of "trans-elementation" had entered the Church. It was not a novelty to regard Epiclesis, the Eastern form of communion, as a transforming miracle of blood and flesh. In the Eleusian rites, as well as in the Hindu Tantric and the Buddhist Mahāyāna rites, such flesh and blood communion are even now known. The Christian church adds dignity to this pagan rite by bringing in the idea of Logos. Cyril, Gregory, John of Damascus (769 A.D.) were responsible for turning the Communion into the sublime service it now has come to be. Similar sublimity is spiritually admissible and attainable in the Eastern Romanesque, Greek and Coptic churches, in the Lamaite and Tantric rituals. We have already referred to the introduction of the matriarchal Mary cult into the ministrations that Jesus had left for the world.

Spiritually it is possible for mysticism and sublimity to coexist with as much felicity and grace as it did at the time of Agamemnon, the Aztecs and the Incas, and as it does in Hindu Tantra and Lamaite rites. But there is a difference. It is not a difference in spirit, but a difference imposed by a historical attitude.

Wherever the Christian arms had penetrated, monarchies, with the assistance of the church and its priesthood, imposed on the vanquished the original blood sacrifice, only changed into the Eucharist. A pagan form was being introduced in other societies, even where the pagan blood sacrifices were never practised. It was done on the basis of a feast which Jesus had partaken of during the Passover. This illustrates how the law of syncretism gradually introduces alien forms and practices even in unwilling or antagonistic societies. Many more similar illustrations could be cited from Buddhistic, Islamic and Hindu practices. Śaivism itself holds a variety of alien traits.

This process of infiltration of one cult into another was not only due to a victor's imposition on the vanquished, as was the case of the halting spread of Islam in India,

or that of Christianity in the new World; the vanquished too infiltrated often into the victor's creed, as the acceptance by the Romans of the Greek, as well as the Phrygian, Thrasian, Egyptian and Phoenician gods. The Orphean, or the Cybellian, or the Osirian cult was not a result of enforcement by Rome. The cults and the symbols had their own charms, and made an irresistible impact.

What appears to be symbolic today was once history. Symbols record past practices or events. Symbols are the silent historiographers of ancient forms now lost. Such elevation of events into admirable symbolisation is both natural and universal. Their forms change; but their spirit holds.

Suppression of the Matriarchal Society

In those ancient times of prehistory religions, and all that was attached to it as cults, had been under the managements of females. They as the leaders of society were the priestesses. The chief who conducted Divine Services was, therefore, a female; the Principal Deity was Female, the Mother, the Great Mother, the White Goddess, Sarasvati, the Divine Greek Demeter, the Hindu Dharitri, the Babylonian Mother, the Earth- Mother, the Lady of Fertility and Life.

The matriarchal system evolved naturally not only the Mother, but also the Mother symbols, the fertility symbols; and then their counterpart, the father symbols, the male symbols. For their appearance in the pantheon, these later male symbols could only recommend themselves as a counterpart of the Mother, a secondary functional aid subservient to the Mother, the Supreme. A matriarchal society favoured matriarchal divinities and matriarchal forms, signs, symbols. The Father-deity had to wait the pleasure of the Mother.

Today, as is found, this has changed. The matriarchal society has been suppressed by a patriarchal society. The change from matriarchy to patriarchy has not been smooth. Much bloodshed besmears this transition. The killing of Agememon, a Greek, by his wife Clytemnestra, a Thracian woman, with matriarchal traditions, and the consequent tragedy of the house of Atreus records just one of the many such transitional events from matriarchy to patriarchy through bloody murders and horrors. Hera was removed by Zeus, and many quarrels followed. The concept of the Great Sakti in Märkandeya Purana, or the legend of consorting Śiva with Uma, is uniquely narrated in a manner which goes to prove that the spiritual import of dividing the one into two actually

proves that the two are but the phases of the one. Śakti divinities in the Tantra legends too, submit to the counterparts not without some blood- shed. In Christianity too Mary seriously threatened a come-back as the Mother Goddess by suppressing Joseph completely. Joseph's role was entirely obliterated by the concept of Immaculate Birth. And when Mary did come ultimately, she came as an adjunct of Jesus, and never independently. In fact the chief difference between the different schools of Christianity lies in the importance of the role played by Maryism in the church forms and rites.

Neolithic matriarchal societies true to form, were devoted to female divinities. Soon matriarchal society was usurped by males. Naturally matriarchal divinities too changed places, goddesses giving way to gods (Hera to Zeus; Mary to Heavenly Father and Durga to Siva, Gayatri to Visnu). When tribal societies grew into well established civilisations, tribal divinities were replaced by newly formed and sophisticated gods. Ordered religions took over from magic, sorcery and rain invokers. These religious forms became more and more elaborate; the legends associated with the religions became more complex, and at times more mystical; the rites gained in showmanship and spectacular mass appeals; and the entire primitive process became organised, tyrannical and autocratic.

Time passed. The matriarchal heads became ease-loving and became tools in the hands of their erstwhile deputies. They were no longer deputies. The patriarchs developed into full-fledged royalties; and the institution of monarchy brought absolutism in its trail. The newly acquired public and private duties of the patriarch made claims on his time. He had to come to an understanding with the spiritual branch of his responsibilities, for which the females had been in charge. But the new monarchy established by the male military heads was not too eager to share with the females any more. They found their usefulness, and superiority; and they discovered the natural weaknesses of the child- bearing mother. They were confined to the home. Females were no longer trusted into confidence. But a drastic change interfered with safety and peace. A diplomatic arrangement had to be struck upon. Responsibilities had to be shared. Monarchy found religious duties too much an encroachment on royal living, at times, even too rigid. A substitute was created. Responsibilities of society were clearly defined into temporal and clerical functions. The monarch and the priest became two individuals. The functions of the two were well divided. Each paid homage to the other, as under mutual arrangements. But in reality the monarch wielded a greater

power due to the logic of the sword. The priest at first resented this, but rarely challenged it openly. The female priestess was soon obliterated by the crafty male. But the female priestly gown still continues to be used in many cases. The Vestal virgins and the nuns are the remnants of the glory that was the female.

In the tribal days when the duties of the medical man and the leader of the tribe were retained into one hand, and when that hand had been a woman's hand, the actual form of worship was frankly phallic. A woman is more direct and realistic. Phallicism meant nothing ugly to her. So for the matriarch the great Goddess was the Earth, Dharitri, the prolific mother who produced. Life was maintained by the Mother. The concept of fatherhood was not taken to much account. Life's duty was to produce; and this was obviously done by the female. She delivered the 'goods'. That was the fact. Hence the female leadership. The matriarch was given absolute and constant loyalty. Fatherhood was casual, functional and of secondary importance. It suffered from a temporariness, and lacked certainty. Lovers the female had; lovers who came and went as did the bees and the seasons. These lovers were employed for mating, for assisting in the production of the next generation. The hearth goddess, the earth goddess and the third goddess who denoted the crone, the decaying old age, the superannuated mother, who ceased to produce anymore, were the respective three forms of the Mother.

(In the Hindu Pantheon the three aspects of the Mother are represented by Prthivi or Bhi-Laksmi and Kali or Camunda or Dhumavati, the last having crows flying around her as her favourite birds. The first, loves the peacock; the second, the owl, reminding of Juno and Minerva.)

The worship of the Great Mother calls for an exclusive chapter. Let it suffice to say here that the symbol that represented the Hearth was the white cone that illustrated the conical shape of ashes gathered in every hearth for the preservation of the precious fire. The great Delphic Mother had this white icon as her representation. This was called Omphalos, the word that gave us the word phalos, phallus; and all phallic worship that descended from this, referred really to the fire-function of the goddess. She became the Hellenic Selene: the Vedic Svaha, Arci, Sikha. But the other goddess, the Earth, was Nature's generative organ; her womb, the clefted field. It had its ebbs and flows of periodic moisture, her menstrual announcements. It needed germination. This called for a male counterpart. Hence the phallic symbols not only included the clefted womb, but also the erect phallus-like projections, imitating the male. These were taken for

granted as precious facts without the least obsession for decency. The phallic in the ancients was not associated with any sense of guilt. Birth was a blessing, not a punishment. Life was happy. Seeding was a joy; not a sin.

Fertility cults predominated these societies, and the overtone of fertility will continue to predominate, as long as mankind shall stand in the necessity of growing food from the earth, and of seeking aid of the sun and the rain for that purpose. Race procreation and propagation needed males, as earth needed the Sun and the rain. Phallicism as a cult cannot be ignored. It might have grown as a cult, like life's growth from an amoeba; but it has far outgrown the amoeba-stage into a man, as the cult has grown into the deepest mystery-religions, and into the most out- standing rites and sacraments associated with the most sophisticated of the churches. Elimination of the phallic in its total entirety is neither possible, nor necessary, unless spirit is made to pay a greater regard to sophistry than to truth and fact. Frankness, innocence and truth are interdependent.

In all phallic cults, to start with, the female claimed the pride of place. Soon the society began to suspect a vague relation between the fact of mating and the fact of birth. Pregnancy and husbandry somehow were felt to be one single function; and as such the necessity of a male's role was valued higher. The male was chosen for this specific function; was called a companion of the Earth, who was regarded as the leading matriarch. But he played his role only as a temporary hand. After the duties of impregnation were completed, i.e. after the male had, in a way, actually died within the womb to be born out of the womb, he was sacrificed as a treasured gift to the Great Mother. This sacrifice made, good results are assured. This companion, the Tonist, without whose life blood there was not the least change of a continuity of life, was the focal point of the great sacrifice, which forms a sort of all religious vow. This sacrifice would be personal, or material, or a symbolic one. The male partner, for the month or for the year as the case may be, was chosen from a clan known to the chief matriarch, who was the priestess. In course of time emotional entanglements with the young Tanist made outright sacrifices difficult. The principal Tanist without offering the life of the selected male partner arranged for a substitute. Soon the Tanist would take advantage of the emotional entanglement, and prefer not only to live, but impose his own will to suppress that of the matriarch. He gradually succeeded in ousting her influence, and usurping leadership. The requirements of trusting for security against

clan-feuds and military assignments, as well as of other heavy duties, encouraged the Tanist male to appropriate a superior role over the female counterpart, who was forced under emotional pressure to accept a minor role. As she did so, the female goddess, who had been hitherto held to be of importance, had to give way to the male gods. Because of an understandable similarity with the change of the matriarchal to a patriarchal society the chief god had to change from the Great Mother to "Our Father in Heaven". The Tanist became Jesus; and the Eucharist sublimated the flesh and blood of the victim of the sacrifice. The paganism of the Old Priestess persists in the Christian church which is still referred to as a 'female'...

War on the Gods

In order to appreciate fully the scope and extension of the phallic influence on all religions, a study of the influence of tribal cults on religions has to be made. But the student must bear in mind that such investigations have been rendered difficult by ages of systematic suppression of evidence of the universal Mother-cult. Later patriarchal trends have taken great care to suppress the matriarchal origin of sacrifices, and the importance of the female in the formation of society; because this suppression would ensure the male's tenure of leadership both in this world and in the next. But certain religions failed to suppress this fact as fast, and as thoroughly as others did. This raised differences between a tribe and a tribe, a people and a people, and should we say, between an interest and an interest. This kind of socio-economic considerations led to the so-called religious war. For dying in the cause of religion one has to offer one's self to principles and ideas; one has to be true to one's soul. Religious wars have been financed by the covetous, and led by fanatical militarists. God's battle cannot be carried on by hirelings.

Most wars are the results of commercial rivalries. Religion is only a pretext for human slaughter and social misery. Few in history like Alexander or Timur or Chenghiz, spread war for war's sake. Most wars had been fought for commercial reasons; for reasons of a nation's or an individual's overflowing greed. Some foolish wars were indeed caused for personal reasons; but the largest number of humanity was devastated because of so-called religious reasons; that is to say for estab- lishing patriarchal over matriarchal way of worship; of symbolic over realistic forms of worship. It is sad to contemplate that religion's most sustaining legacy to history and to mankind has been factual misery. Fanatics having taken advantage of religion as a pretext have allowed

themselves to be played as pawns by vicious power-seekers. Neither God nor peace had been the real aim of these so-called religious wars. It is foolish to imagine that any God could be, or needs to be, established by a show of strength of the human arms.

Religious wars trace their origin to rival churches. Rivalry of churches is traced back to the rivalry between the matriarchally motivated and patriarchally motivated religions and societies. The Eastern and the Western Roman Empires, Philip's Macedonia and Olympia's Greece, fought on this score. The differences of these societies have been traced by scholars (Dr. Graves, Dr. Fisher, Havelock Ellis) to cults and phallic worship. The studious and persistent attempts on behalf of modern religions to outgrow this phallic past have not met with the desired success. The phallic traits are still traceable. These have not been given up, although these are denied again and again. It only shows that there is some amount of basic realism in what we call phallic, and vainly deride. It is more spiritual and honest to accept the phallic and understand the same, than to refuse to understand, ridicule and reject what through the centuries could not be suppressed. This appears to be the best way for accommodating contrary opinions and discover grounds for coexistence. Failing, the differences are bound to lead to more differences. Wars are bound to be admitted in a cowardly fashion into our own way of life. Social chaos could lead humanity to cynicism, apathy and disintegration. Religious differences shall always be exploited for commercial purposes and instigated by political interests, at times, also by personal greed.

Expansion of economic interest, carried on by force of arms was cunningly kept hidden under a pious desire of religious duty. Aurangzeb of India did it; the Crusaders tried it; we see this even today in the Christian and Buddhist Viet Nam. Gods and churches suffered from quick exchange of hands, during which many gods died; but ideas do not die. They are made of a more abiding and enduring stuff.

In making such desired changes effective against what they took for malpractices, such as heathenism, paganism, barbarism, kafir, the zealots of all faiths have adopted various methods of expressing their 'god-inspired' enthusiasm. The most outstanding of these methods has been force; the least practical of the methods was persuasion. Religion was used as a tool for aggrandisement. The really religious persuade.

Never before the spread of Buddhism had persuasion been adopted as a method of evangelism. Buddhism was not messianic. The method of Buddhistic approach

followed the friendly policy of peace, content- ment and persuasion. According to this the ends, however pious, must also insist on the sanctity of the means. It outlawed haste and indiscre- tion, and accepted tolerance. Somehow in the Indian subcontinent spiritual tenets lived in the living of life itself. The people believed in living good, in order to make good. This was the noblest example set by the Buddha. Such a life rejected the use of violence, enforcement and brute-force for spreading enlightenment. Buddhism as a religion is least religious and most ethical.

History is littered with the debris of innocent lives ruined by zealots in their mad pursuit of erasing false gods, and of establishing the "true" religion. Again and again history has made compromise with this evil. The past and the present have melted into an inevitable future. What indeed was the final achievement? Did the reforms reform, really? All destructions over, the old Roman Fire continued to burn in the sacra- mental candle; the vestal virgins continued to pace the floors of the nunnery; the many-godded Roman priesthood carved niches around the church walls and turrets, and add hymns to forms, colours to robes, patterns to rites and continued to thrive flourishingly in terrible authority, along with their scores and scores of saints, and holy days in specially edited calendars and almanacs. Where gods feared to linger, angels and saints stepped in. Where love and faith were throttled, hate and power en- trenched dogmatism. Dogmas changed names and forms without get- ting changed. We all know that these changes were techniques to repaint a form of paganism, and give it a new facade, a novelty which was not so novel after all. Pagan rites continued to hold sway, covertly maintained by the so-called rights of the priests.

In the so-called subtler forms of the Church, where abstract ideas seek the intellectual support of monism, pagan overtones of totems, ceremonies and rituals are not entirely absent. There is no need to be, really. Instead of trying to exterminate them, and then fail, it is far healthier to recognise and understand them. There has been a basic need and this need has to be fully recognised. Rites provide the life-breath of religions. The obstinate persistence of these rites could be traced in such forms as the spiritual-marriage, the May-pole dance, and the Christian attitude of reverence towards the holy relics, inclusive of the Holy Prepuce.1 The cross, the ark and the concept of the Son of God provide further instances, as noted before, although in subtler forms. These are, after all, expressions of the mind-devout. Many have experienced transcendental experience through these means, and could do so, as Patanjali points out. It would be

arbitrary to write them out as wrong. The fact is that man has been searching ever since an interpretation of the mystery of the Great Unknown. To be able to reach the sublime heights of ecstasy is his living challenge. He longs for himself a release; and to win for himself a heaven from within. He knew that he could achieve this only by eradicating fear, and transposing Love instead. 'Immortality' for the Hindus is unattainable without conquest over fear. This made them solve and conquer mystery with yogic application and love.

III

Religious Love and Hindu Catholicism

Fear and Love are contradictions. Love has to open the prison house of fear and emancipate the soul. Salvation is not for the weak, the timid or the oppressed. The courageous, the living and the gracious alone are free to reach heaven, the heaven that has been lost to fear and temptation, and could be certainly regained through Love and courage, 20

It is no use allocating the comparative usefulness of the different gods of the different churches, or of the different religious families. Fundamentally there is one God, one fear; one heaven, one hell; one liberation, one penalty. The world of Ideas finally crystallises into an indivisible unit. Immorality is one; Death is one. It is childish to try to measure the immeasurable with yardsticks formed out of this limited world of flesh. We all live in our respective glass-houses of ego. Looking through a false transparency, we fail to recognise the conservative and deluding nature of a tough ego, which indeed is our most formidable and stubborn enemy in achieving 'Bliss', or Paramanandam.

The substitution of the Fear of God by the Love of God gave to religious faiths a maturity hitherto unknown. Repression restricts growth. Infantile minds are incapable of the highest realisations. Cults became religions by overcoming fear; and by achieving Love.

Theoretically this appears to be the position. The attempt to secure love on the one hand, and repress sex on the other, subjected man to terrible complexes. "True Humanism tells us that there is something more in man than is apparent in his ordinary consciousness something which frames ideals and thoughts, a finer spiritual presence,

which makes him dissatisfied with mere earthly pursuits. The one doctrine that has the longest intellectual ancestry is the belief that the ordinary condition of man is not his ultimate being, that he has in him a deeper self, call it breath or ghost, soul or spirit. In each being dwells a light which no power can extinguish, an immortal spirit, benign and tolerant, the silent witness in his heart. The greatest thinkers of the world unite in asking us to know the self."21

The imposition of the idea that sex is a sin, that sex organs are obsceni- ties, that procreation is a damnable instinct, gradually robbed the indivi- dual mind of the power of viewing uninhibitedly and philosophically a vital function of Nature, which was so necessary to Life and its propaga- tion. Sex became a social inhibition, a personal obsession. Innocence in Nature was replaced by a series of complexes. Sophistication and mental diseases became inseparable features of the civilised man. The idea is to educate, evaluate and sublimate the sex-instincts just as we devote ourselves to educate, evaluate and sublimate the other instincts- anger, hunger, greed, sleep, etc. Proper education and sublimation demand adoration and regard. In this way we shall reveal unto ourselves that love and sex, like light and fire, are inseparable. We cannot under- stand love in all its glory without appreciating the vital role that sex plays in the anatomy of love. Human mind became an abode of hallucinating horrors and nervous disabilities by projecting sex as an evil companion of Love.

This explains partially the illogical attitude that religion assumes by refusing to accept the adorable position which sex demands in playing the most vital role in Life Force. The very idea of sneering any adoration of sex is attitudinous sophistry, ridiculous hypocrisy. A sense of realism demands that sex should enjoy its proper role in life, and well taken care of in every respect. Sex education has to evolve out of sex adoration. Life must develop a healthy regard for sex.

Love has to be understood. Love has to be established. Of course, this includes the problem of disciplining the nature of man in preparation for the achievement of Bliss. The Kingdom of God is within you'. One must prepare oneself to hear what the Lord God speaks within'," An inner education has to be obtained; and this is impossible without outer control and discipline. Hence the adoration of sex; not rejection, not scorn, not repression; but adoration for understanding.

No one is worthy of heavenly comfort, unless they have diligently exercised themselves in holy comfort. If you desire heartful contrition, enter into your room, and shut out the clamour of the world, as it is written, 'commune with your own heart, and in your own chamber, and be still.' Within your cell you will discover what you will only too often lose abroad. In silence and quietness the devout soul makes progress; and learn the hidden mystery of the scriptures. For, the further she withdraws from the tumult of the world, the nearer she draws to her maker.... It is better to live in obscurity and to seek the salvation of his soul. than to neglect this ever to work miracles."

Our personal ego has been our chief obstruction against a true appre- ciation of the works and sayings of those who had been on the path of self- research, and who achieved realisation in their life.

Selfless love alone is the true killer of ego. Compassion is the sure alchemy suggested by the Buddha against the ills of the world. "He indeed is the supreme Yogi (self-realised) who in considering joy or sorrow takes into consideration the joy and sorrow of all beings as if each of them was his own self." This in short is the basis of fellow-feeling and uni- versal love that made spiritual living a sustaining and rewarding exercise for the least of the Hindus of India. "Love Him, Love Him," cries St. Augustine, "He made this world, and is not far off. He did not make it, and leave it, but all is from Him and in Him. Lo, where the sweetness of truth is, there is He. He dwells in the depth of the heart." Again the emphasis is on self-research, and finding the key to all problems from within." To dwell on the defects of others, to view the transgressions of others with a sour look, to assume a pedestal of holy-authority, is to cover oneself with that hard armour of ego through which the softness of the Mother's touch is never felt. Heaven to such appears as a polemic theory alone. "If you desire to know or learn anything to your advantage, then take delight in being unknown and unregarded. A true understanding and humble estimate of oneself is the highest and most valuable of all les- sons. To take no account of oneself, but always to think well and highly of others is the highest wisdom and perfection."

The test of a man divine is only one. Does he possess enough love? Does he have compassion? Does he bear the cross for the redemption of others? It is not learning and argument that finds the way to truth; but love and compassion for others, selfless and unreciprocative love." A man of true holiness says the Gitä, "puts away the taint of malevolance, and abides in the thought of harmlessness. With kindly thought for every

living thing and creature he cleanses his heart of every taint of malevolence. Casting away sloth and torpor, he abides free from these. Conscious of illumination, mindful and self-possessed, he cleanses his heart from sloth and torpor. Abandoning flurry and worry unshaken he abides; inwardly calm in thought, he cleanses his heart of worry and flurry. He abandons wavering; and having passed wavering, so abides; no more a questioner of the how and why of things that are good, he cleanses his heart of wavering."20

Compare the Buddha with Thomas A. Kempis, "Those of whom the Eternal Word speaks are delivered from uncertainty. From one word proceed all things, and all Things tell of Him; it is He, the author of all things, who speaks to us. Without Him no one can understand or judge aright. But the man to whom all things are one, who refers everything to One, and who sees everything in One, is enabled to remain steadfast in heart, and abide at peace with God."

Complete discipline and rigorous cleansing of the ego alone leads to such a clear vision, which is not the exclusive property of ritualistic assumptions. Once this clear vision is gained, all differences appear to be aca- demical. Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, appear different to those who have not troubled themselves in going deep into the matter of searching for the real truth. Academicians fight for ego and spite; theologians and priests argue on rites and sacraments, investitures and almanac. The man of God becomes the man of Love, and regards differences as expressions of folly. Truth is always the same. One has to see it. One could, if one cultivated love and compassion, sympathy and appreciation. Ego is blinding; dogma keeps us doubly blindfolded.

Bhagavat-Gita, speaking of the same Oneness that only the truly wise sees, insists, like St. Augustine, Thomas Kempis, or the Buddha, as follows:

He whose self is harmonised by Yoga sees the Self-abiding in all beings, and all beings abiding in the Self; everywhere he sees the same.

He who sees Me everywhere, and sees all in Me; I am not lost to him, nor is he lost to Me.

The Yogi who established in oneness, worships Me abiding in all beings lives in Me, howsoever he may be active."

The opinions of the realised have always been the same, despite differences of time, people and distance. Yet we continue with our differences. Where is the difference? And why? Differences in them- selves are not necessarily bad. There could be honest grounds for difference. Difference alone need not lead to conflicts. Mother and father, water and fire are different. But they are not conflicting. In order to live totally, one must live along with the differences. To practise such a living in itself calls for spiritual excellence. Differences giving rise to conflicts are due to human ego; and to what ego produces, chauvinism and jingoism. Most differences are deliberately cultivated as they aid the individual to dominate and exert his false superiority over others.

Really speaking, there does not exist any difference in spiritual realisa- tion. Realised men find themselves in a common company. Non- difference is the essence of Realisation. The processes and methods have, of course, differed, as food and clothing have, state-craft and agriculture have, as crops and mountains, rivers and natural products, languages and arts have. Such differences are local, and subject to time. They belong to history. Love for Oneness belongs to Eternity. Difference should be ignored by the Wise, who rise above it, and realise peace. God's creation is One, and it seeks indivisible peace. The method of force ap- plied again and again in history for the purpose of enforcing uniformity either in the name of a monarch, or in the name of a church, or in the name of superiority of race, or in the name of political ideology has only increased the scope of imperialism of one shape or another. No earthly imperialism could ever be abiding. Man has to love man, understand man, appreciate the basic concepts and problems of man, before man could be free from ego, and from the resulting imperialism.

Appreciation of an unfamiliar way of life and religion is a spiritual achievement gained through a noble cultivation of tolerance, sympathy and love. Elimination is no answer to a lack of understanding. In fact, vandalism in its true sense means indiscriminate elimination for lack of understanding. A passionate disregard for other's ways is contrary to a religious respect for toleration. Such toleration results from self-discipline. Toleration need not be confused with accommodation for compromise. All compromises are tissue-bound, and time-serving at the cost of principles. Toleration is the first step towards understanding; toleration rejects partially a sense of adamant ego. Toleration is an expression of relaxation; compromise is an expression of fear.

The practice of such toleration calls for vigilant self-discipline. Most religions enjoin the practice of self-discipline. From the earliest time the Vedic society enjoins the cultivation of self-discipline starting with the trainings of brahmacarya in the younger years, and culminating in sannydia in the last years of life. The ideal of Sins epitomises the sannyasi, a person of perfect sannyasa. Hence Hindu Šaivism is based on self-discipline without rigour, positive-living without sham or excess. Šaivism crystallises self-discipline. It is a mistaken view to regard Saivism to be contrary to discipline. In a sense, in its intimate and mystic application, Islam, Christianity or Buddhism is very close to the Saivistic tenets. A fanatic disregard for Saivism does not do credit to the spiritual toleration which is characteristic of religiosity. We understand before we accept; we accept before we assimilate; and we assimilate before we in Love feel as One. Through understanding alone, not through precipitate condemnation and elimination, could Love be secured and realised. Any action prompted by prejudice is bound to err, and suffer spiritually.

In order to understand and appreciate Saivism, the non-Hindu has to come out of the iron-jackets of dogma and prejudice. Critics of Hindu polytheism and idolatry have rarely studied the subject in the spirit in which the Hindus propose, accept and identify a mode of worship, spiritually the most edifying and fulfilling. Their neglect of the spirit and emphasis on the form, makes them commit a failure by omission and commission. The failure has engendered spite and scorn on the one hand, pride and intolerance on the other.

Such hatred and intolerance proceeds from a complex leading to a sense of guilt about sex. It is not the sense of guilt, suggested by Freud in the case of man, who feels 'expelled'; and in the case of woman, who feels to be the 'tempter'. A psychological pressure of a sense of guilt is not the best companion for a spiritual journey. Such a complex encourages to maintain a false-front. It keeps the spiritual man always on the defensive. He feels vulnerable to exposures, and prefers to be on the offensive. His spiritual aspirations get bogged down in complexes of his own creation. He suffers from a sense of inferiority, of incomplete- ness. He becomes more a Freudian sick, a Nietzschian mental-case than a spiritually emancipated Buddha, Śamkara, Caitanya or St. Francis. (Is it not a psychoanalytical problem of grave importance that ecstasy as a virtue has been gradually eliminated from the concept of saintliness in Christianity? The virtues of the early Christians are just remembered only as a part of past history.

On the contrary the Sufis, the Confucians the Vaisnavas, the Saivas found in Ecstasy so much of Spiritual positiveness.A St. Theresa or a St. John on the Cross is by rarity so much a stranger to a self-enlightened joyous soul like Rabbia, Jalaluddin Rumi, Hafiz, Kabir, Nanak, Meeräbäl, or Jñândeva. Saints like Eckhart, Joan of Arc, Bernadette were often condemned for their voluptuous claims on spirit.

The steady and sure of faith prove the amplitude and catholicity of godliness by a generous expansive liberalism about other views. Even amongst the Hindus there are many who fail to appreciate Śaivism in its proper perspective. Indeed there are Hindus who, due to their igno- rance, accept the Lingam physically, crudely, and feel too embarrassed to even discuss the subject. Thinking produced by a complex is often apologetic, and evil thinkers are doubly corrupted by a dogmatic faith which they want to hide. It leads to the silent and secret exercise of a faith which is regarded as evil. This theatrical attitude damages, rather than sustains the soul. This is profane. True devotion is not tainted with hoax.

In giving an account of Indian beliefs and practices, we who are foreigners, must place ourselves in the skin of the Hindu, and must look at their doctrine and ritual through their eyes, and not our own. It is difficult, I know, for most to do this; but until they can, their works lack real value. And this is why, despite their industry and learning, the account given by the Western authors of their Eastern beliefs so generally fail to give their true meaning. Many, I think, do not even make the attempt.

They look at the matter from the point of view of their own creed, or, (which is much the worse) racial prejudice may stand in the way of the admission of any excellence or superiority in a coloured people,32

Freedom from prejudice and credo reflects true liberalism, without which to talk of the good or bad points of one religion or another is not only presumptuous prudishness, but downright bad taste. Only the cheap of minds would waste time in indulging in speaking of the quarrels and squabbles of the faiths of fellow men. It is not enough to be only logical and scientific for evaluating the standard forms of any religion; such a religious analysis, to be spiritually true, must transcend reason. It is not enough just to know; knowledge must view first hand and realise. "God is not an intellectual idea or moral principle, but the deepest consciousness from whom ideas and rules derive. He is

not a logical construction, but a perceived reality present in each of us, and giving to each of us the reality we possess." 33

In spite of the variety of philosophical schools in India, there is a basic characteristic common to all the seemingly differing Hindu thoughts. This puzzles the Westerner: Christian, Islamic or Judaic, although the basic monism of these creeds has transformed itself into many schismic differences, giving rise to different churches within the same general fold. If this is the case with more recent religions, the oldest creed of the Hindus could be expected to have a plurality of gods, ideas and interpretations. But basically a Hindu is a monist. Advaita- philosophy is based on monism. Maxmüller calls the Hindu a Zenotheist. A Hindu basically believes that there is within the human soul, a deeper and profounder niche which is the seat for the Sublime. A Hindu expects even in the most insignificant beings an inborn capacity for sublime heights. It is the purpose of all spiritual systems to reach it; even trans- cend it. It is in its essence uncreated, eternal, deathless and absolutely real. This unity of realisation is the Bliss of the Hindu. He wants to achieve it as an ideal through utilising the very functions of life. The early Christian saints, prior to the Byzantine period, were devoted to this soul-content of Christian practices. "Who knows his own nature, knows heaven," says Merrcius. St. Augustine voices a similar experience, "I went round the streets and squares of the city, seeking thee, and found thee not, because in vain I sought without for him who was within myself." "The wise sees the self in all, and all in the self," says the Gitä.

Being believers in transmigration and immortal life, a Hindu has enough time in hand. He is not afraid to advance step by step from the known to the unknown, from the near to the distant, from the relative to the absolute, from gross to substance, from matter to spirit. For him there is no denial. He uses the word Unreal in a relative sense; he knows that the world is contained in One Reality. The Real is the One and the One is the Real. Besides that One Real all else is Unreality. Matured in such principles of thinking and believing, he has as much regard for the childish idol-lover, as for the sublime Yogi. In the light of One Reality these facts are mere shadow-plays. The light is One. He submits with composure to the many forms, fetishes and rituals, knowing fully well. that the road to the Absolute Reality is a Long one; naturally the wayside inns and caravan-serais are many, peopled with many travellers with strange garbs, tongues, smells and beliefs. This has given the Hindu his basic gift of tolerance and

expansiveness, without which god-seeking becomes a tyrant's march to conquest on wheels of oppression, or the pundit's dry dialects beating its head on the threshold of intellect. Indeed such a philosophy is not reflective of passivity or inertia in the Hindu. He is simply the sage who has found realisation in meditation, and so "walks with inward glory crowned". He is at peace with the world.

The false emphasis on doing something, proving a point, making and winning a war, constructing amazing machines, attaining complex technological wonders, really appear to be against the background of Time, as childish and common, as flying a kite, baking a cake, following a marble, sucking a thumb, or building sand castles along the beach of existence. Treated as a limb of the huge society, having no other personal function, in a deeper sense, then falling into the march of the multi- tude, the Westernised and dehumanised man has been gradually disinte- grating within himself. He finds himself, even now "plunged to the depths in external things, class and nation, state and society. Man is treated as a part of the objective world and is not permitted to remain himself, have his inner own being."

The Hindu is different. He has time for others; others' thoughts, others' ideas, others' gods. He has many gods; and is not afraid to accommodate a few more if it helps others to enjoy a peaceful living within his society and state. This is how Hinduism has developed the strange faculty of accommodating such contrary ideologies as monism, pantheism and atheism. The Hindu-fold as it were, is ever-ready to grant asylum to any form of worship seeking escape from the onslaughts of tyranny and intolerance. Hinduism welcomes, but does not convert. Hospitability for the Hindus includes opening of the soul to strange ideas also.

He is not dismayed and put off by strange credos and practices. "Throughout the history of Indian religions, Hinduism and Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, the stress is more on the renewal of life, the attainment of the transcendental consciousness, than on the worship of a personal God, or gods, important as the latter is in theistic religions. Even today many religious people aim at attaining the type of consciousness in which the distinctions of subject and object are fused into an undivided state. In the state of ecstasy, of transcendental consciousness, the individual soul feels itself invaded by, and merged with an unfolding presence, exalted with a sense of having found what it always had sought "

He is not worried about the so-called differences of theological processes and rites. He wants to be certain that at the background of all these window-dressings, all those decorations, the bride within her naked heart nurses a warm love, intent on meeting her beloved, and achieve a trans- cendental union in a sublime consummation. A Hindu would collect good seed from any nursery; genuine gem from a rubbish heap. He is sure that as long as transcendental experience is the objective, nothing else matters; nothing else could deviate. We have Hindu lawgivers like Patanjali who recommends fraternisation with non-Hindu as long as the motive is the awakening of spiritual consciousness. With that as the goal, the paths do not very much matter. Baggage preparation, punctuality, routs all lose their utility once the goal is reached. When methods become more important than results, when instruments become more important than work, when maps become more important than the journey when dogma becomes more important than the underlying meaning of a symbol, then alone man loses the 'key' to which Jesus had referred when he said, "Woe unto you, lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of know- ledge; ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

A Hindu is the most tolerant of the theists. For him God-mindedness is a stage; God-union is the goal. He recognises limitations and aspirations of the individual man. Therefore he accepts a legitimate and natural variety of scope. He recommends no stencilled method as a cure-all tablet for universal consumption. The emphasis which Indian religions pay on the understanding of the philosophy of theism has enabled Hinduism to practise a unique pattern of democracy in matters ecclesiastical; indoctrinated religions are incapable of advocating or adopting that pattern with half that ease. The spirit of Western democracy stands bewildered before its theological limitations. Europe's social organisations tend towards democracy; her economic structure persists in acquistive tyranny; her religious conscience still trembles under authoritarian and canonical scepter. Achievement of a democracy of conscience, secularisa- tion of society and politics is yet unthinkable to the Western mind. Regimentation of theological purport has smothered the evolution of philosophic purpose in the West. This enigmatic imbecility of con- science in an otherwise virile, and active people renders the image of the white man very suspicious to the Asian, for whom God is synonymous with Freedom, and God-love with sublime ecstasy. The

Hindu is free to love God the way he likes to, without any external interference. Guidance, he welcomes. Regimentation, he detests.

In the Rg Veda, in the Upanisads, in the Bhagavad Gita, the freedom to worship God in the form that must appeal to one is permitted. Patanjali recommends adoption of an objective form as an aid to the realisation of Samadhi. Hindus hold that all paths lead to the summit.

Whosoever worships me in whichsoever form, I bestow grace unto him in that very form.37 Even those who are engaged in worshipping other Gods, are offering worship to Me, although their rites might differ. But they must be sincerely devoted to the gods they adore.

Even if one is extremely contrary in one's rites and methods, call one good and properly engaged, only if one is devoted to Me with single-mindedness,

The fact is that Hinduism is a way of life, a mode of thought that becomes a second nature. It is not so much its practices that are important, for they can be dispensed with; nor is it the church, for it has no priesthood, or at least no sacerdotal hierarchy. The important thing is to accept certain fundamental conceptions to acknowledge a certain spirituality, a term much abused in current parlance. For many Hindus it would be quite legitimate to take Jesus as Ista-Devata 'without even regarding Him as an avatara, so long as Indian traditions were acknowledged.

The Hindu is proud to acknowledge that he has not only understood other gods, but he has even tried to follow them. Gautama Buddha is worshipped within the Hindu pantheon. On the Gopuram of the South Indian temples, Jesus Christ brushes shoulders with Kṛṣṇa and Mahadeva. In Kashmir they pay homage to a tomb, where Muslim and Hindus collect en-mass every year, and which they know as the tomb of Christ Jesus. Kabir, a saint respected by all Hindus, was a Muslim; Nanak, the Sikh Saint, paid a visit to the Käbä in Mecca, and incorporated many of Islam's Vedantic tenets in the new creed which he offered to India. Both Nanak and Kabir have given hundreds of hymns for the Hindus to sing with their prayers.

Many devout missionaries have publicly acknowledged deeper and more genuine reverence for Christ and his teachings obtaining amongst the Hindus of India than amongst the modern Christians of Europe and America. In the name of the Pope

millions of Hindus would gladly pay their tribute by attending his ministry; no such catholicity could ever be expected in the churches of the West. Ajmer, Patnã, Delhi, Agra and Secunderabad in India contain the tombs of great Muslim saints, and are revered by the Muslim-world. These tombs are regularly visited by numerous Hindus. It is a fact that the Hindu, because of his wide outlook and a Catholic definition of the divine aim, never falters to accept avariety of forms as long as he is sure about the oneness of the Spirit. Many of the Christian hymns, if appropriately translated into Indian languages, would undoubtedly be sung by devout Hindus in their temples without the least hesitation, and with the deepest of feelings. In God-feeling, God-love and God-communication, all men become one, and equal. Love is universal.

Such catholic outlook on religion has made the Hindu love variety and detest exclusiveness. This has made the Hindu accept one god in all souls, and yet, seemingly, burden the society with the 'caste' system. He burdens his temple altar with many idols, and is yet convinced of the Oneness of God. This apparent multiplicity does not cause the Hindu the mental disturbance it causes to the non-Hindu.

He burdens his society with castes and subcastes, and yet is convinced about the spiritual potentiality of an individual, as well as the spiritual equality of all beings. The last stage of the four Asramas that the Hindus are expected to follow is known as Sannyasa (Recluse). In that stage all castes are set aside, and Man as Man faces the challenge of attaining his real Self-hood. Proofs are not lacking that the Hindu caste system as practised today is more a social arbitrary imposition perpetuated by threats of embarrassing ostracisation, than a practice of any religious significance. Its spiritual significance has always been and shall always be there.

The caste system which the Hindu has lately been practising has really been thrust upon an intimidated society, which however had to live by the pitiable and suicidal predicament of existing by double standards. Such a mockery of the intention of the Sastras and Spiritual guide-lines had been forced upon by two historical forces.

Students of the Gita and the Visnu Purana (in fact most of the Puranas) know two things about the division of Varnas, now known as caste: (a) that human beings had been classified into four sections according to their Spiritual contents, or gunas, which are three, and not four. These are sattva (spirit); rajas (agitated impulse); and tamas (inertia; ignorance); in other words, light, heat and darkness, as the neo-Platonists

would say, in the spirit of the being. In fact not only thumans, but the entire world of beings, any formed-matter with a name and a purpose are classified into the four classes, according to the degree of their attainment to the perfection of that being. As such Gods had castes; trees, rivers, animals, even metals and flames and motions have their caste, or warna divisions.

A grain of sand as much as a molecule, and an entire mountain-range have their respective varnas or castes. (b) Of the four asramas (stages of life pattern), that every Hindu is enjoined to pursue in life, the first is the period of judgement for the classification, and the guru classifies the child at the end of the pe- riod; the second is the period when according to the classification the per- son is expected to render his services to the society and to his self; in the third, everyone goes into a recluse, and retires in preparation of the final state. In a way he still retains his class-specialisations for the purpose of leading him on to the next stage. Socially he has rendered himself neutral as far as caste is concerned. The last state is that of sannyasa. And one of the necessary rules for sannyasa is to cast away the caste, and deem one above any classification. In this last stage a good Hindu has to grow above all classification.

A Genesis of the Caste System

This is the academic position. But for centuries the Hindu society has been carrying on the burden of a system of arbitrary division of the privileged and the under-privileged. It is not true to say that in the ancient Hindu Society Brahmins are not found to do the works of the KṢatriya (From Drnoa, Parasurama and Krpa to Admiral Chatterji or General Choudhury all have been militarists), or of the Vaisyas, as is proved by the class of Brahmin landlords, merchants, engineers and doctors. Brahmin kings and even emperors have been known to Indian History. All the work of the Ksatriyas and Sûdras have been undertaken by the higher castes today, provided these fetched money, authority and position. We have instances of high caste Hindus entering into matrimonial rela- tions with non Hindus (marriages of Chandragupta Maurya, AŚoka, Bäppa Rao of the Rajputs, Jodhābãi, and many others) without any effect on their caste-position. There are many subcastes resulting from such alliances.

The fact was that the laws of bourgeoisie acquisitive society were in operation against the proletariat in the name of religion. It was used as a convenient excuse to maintain an artificial control over the working class by the aristocrats. In this arrangement the

most privileged classes were the first two. The Brahmins who really should have stood against this moral turpitude and selfish and lavish exploitation, became gradually degenerated under constant threats on the one hand, and on the other hand because of the great temptation of a secured social position of living as sponges on society.

There were, of course, very many laudable and honoured exceptions. But almost invariably these of the unsullible character, who rose above the others because of their integrity, were condemned to poverty and neglect. It is amazing how despite centuries of royal and social neglect these Brahmins had preserved the tradition of learning and sacrifice, wisdom and judgement, integrity and the pride of profession. Herein we have to look for the sustaining spiritual values of Hinduism. Whereas other systems in history have been completely obliterated under the pressures of militarism and cupidity. The Hindu system has held out because of the sacrifice of a small band of people who staked much to preserve the precious little.

That was the first historical cause for this change from the original state of the Varna-Vyavastha (misguidingly called the caste system). There was another historical reason. We shall study later on in detail about the migrations of the millions of non-Hindus in this Hindu land only to be later absorbed within the body of Hinduism. In fact until Islam and Christianity, to be more precise, until these religions had entered India in a rough and riding tooth and claw character of con- querors, all the preceding immigrants, and their religions, were absorbed into Hinduism. It was at this stage, that is, the stage of this syncretic movements of races and peoples, that the social leaders found it necessary to 'classify' the races as they came.

It was not the restrictions of a prohibitory nature imposed by the native Hindus alone, these restrictions were almost self-imposed by those very peoples and races who had adopted India and the Hindu society as their motherland and their society. By assuming surnames, which described their source-stocks, they gave up the surnames prescribed by Manu for the four social classes, or varnas.

Thus the different peoples who came to India at different times under different conditions because of their own natural tendency of keeping intact an identity, held on to a particular class or caste. We shall study further on these migrations, and their influences on the Indian society and Hindu religion. But we here wish to draw attention of the reader to the fact that in spite of many reformers who tried, in the right royal

Hindu scrip- tural way, to remove these man-imposed restrictions, which create classes of the under-privileged, as well as those of the proud and power-loving minority, the attempts of the reformers have remained unsuccessful.

As a matter of fact there has never been a time in Indian history, ever since the days Gautama Buddha and Mahavira and up to Tagore and Gandhi, when the Hindu society has been wanting in devoted spiritualists who condemned the artificial caste barriers. They attacked it culturally, socially, economically, politically, ethically and above all religiously.

But the effect has been very poor, because, of the many other reasons, the stubborn reluctance of the very castes who should have gained by this reform. Absurd as this might sound, it is a fact that there are more caste restrictions amongst the 'casteless', than amongst the caste-Hindus, The outcastes more rigorously cast out the caste-Hindus, than it is the other way. This kind of insistence to remain within one's own 'caste', despite handicaps, appears to be mostly due to the tradition of clanishness which became the heritage of the many group-migrations from various parts of the world at various times; and because all of them were eager to be known as the Hindus, which alone could have assured them of a permanent and effective clearance from being called an alien.

These divisions and counter divisions of an artificial and arbitrary society were unknown in Hinduism. During the pre-Buddha Vedic times caste-divisions appear to have been flexible on merit. How it became rigid is still any one's guess. The rigid caste-laws written in the sastras (law books) were almost invariably post Buddhist. The Santi and Anusāsana-parvams of the epic Mahabharata are known to have been later additions. If so, there must have been great demands for such significantly important additions. What caused this post-Buddhist Hindu society to suffer the change? Why did it accept it? I have a faint in- clination to believe this change to have been due to the sudden success of the Greek colonies in Parthia, Bactria, Persia, Mesopotamia, and Gändhär. Alexander's effective method of Hellenisation of the East through Greek insemination of Eastern wombs, 4 led to a complete metabolism of social balance. Mixture of blood, profession, economic status, political opinions became free, perverted, decontrolled and haphazard. An entire continent of people was passing through a syncretic metamorphosis. I have a strong feeling that this precedence in

syncretistic change induced in India a proneness to and susceptibility for free mixtures of blood, and to the establishment of a patriarchally motivated line of fixed heredity. We know that up to the time of the Upanisads and Buddha it was not rare for a man to be known by a mother's name." The change from Vedic division of natural aptitude to a non-Vedic division of arbitrary heredity could be due to the Greek influence which had completely wrecked the great Iranian society of the Achaemenids and the Sassanids.

The Greek hatred for the Persian culture had almost become a neurotic obsession. The patriarchal steam-roller of father's domination through blood which had split the Greek society into patricians and plebs, nobles and slaves, freemen and war-prisoners, could not have left the Indian society alone, specially when the Greeks had settled in India first as con- querors, and then as colonists, and finally as citizens of India. The laws of matrimonial relations of the Hindus of this period says 'a girl may be taken from any and every clan;' but the rank in social caste system is determin- able by the caste in which a daughter might marry, i.e. if she marries in a higher caste, no gain (in caste position) accrues; but if she is married to a lower caste, the father and his family for ever "lose their caste-status" for the caste to which the daughter goes. All these indicate the nature of alien mixtures, and the corresponding restrictive laws. This certainly is no part of religion.

cf. Vasistha's marriage; Paraiara's birth; Visvamitra's promotion; Authorship of Aitareya Brahmana, etc.

Another fact has to be studied. Of the most popular gods that the modern Hindu worships under the leadership of the Vaisnavas the two, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are, by caste, sons of Ksatriyas. This did not stop them to be worshipped by great Brahmanas like Rāmānuja, Madhava and Goswami Tulsidas. Of the saints that the Hindus worship and follow, there are many outcastes and low-castes. (Kubera was a low varna god; a Tvaşta was of a lower rank). Nanak, Kabir, Tukarām, Dādu, Mîrābāl, Raidās, Aurobindo, Vivekananda, why even Gandhi belonged to castes much lower than the Brahmins. Yet which one of the Brahmins in India today hesitates to pay homage to them. Haridas of Puri had been by birth Islamic; yet saint Caitanya, and following him the great Vaisnavas, adopted him as a. close kith and kin.

Hindu caste system is a problem to social reformers, a source of oppor- tunity to politicians; and a veritable labyrinthian maze to the community- workers of modern India. Like Dollar in the United States, Art in Paris, in ordinary discussions one could never escape the phenomenon of 'caste' in India. It is amazing that in India even the Muslims have their caste, and the Christians theirs. The system, therefore, is not entirely religious. It is historical and cultural. To the spiritualists caste has never posed any problem. The acid-test of true religion in India is to ascend above caste restrictions. Caste or no caste, in the world of Hindu spiri- tualism, honour is paid to merit, and no terrestrial pompous honour it ever means.

One might pertinently ask why at all there is in the Hindu society the system of caste? Why is there so much distinction, inequality, disability in this society, if Hinduism is half as catholic in practice as is being claimed by the author? Before answering that question, one would enquire, "Are inequality, disability, discrimination and similar other social scourges the characteristics of the Hindu society alone?" The vast Islamic world, the more vast world of Catholic Italy, Catholic Spain, Catholic Latin America, not to speak of the white-dominated coloured world, suffer more than the Hindu India, because of the same scourges of discrimination, disability and inequality in social, political and economic systems. What religion sanctions, the conductors of religion conveniently reject. It is in the manner of rejection that their cleverness attains a consummate finesse.

The answer has to be found in the economic system of a society. This system has given the poisons of serfdom, slavery, unpaid labour, underpaid labour, a gluttonous and blind taste for unearned income, and unbounded power. These have been the characteristics of any civilised society any- where. In fact these have been respected as the hall-mark of the aristocratic elite. Disabilities and inequalities for the benefit of the minority has been guardedly fostered in all societies at all times soon as man had passed the tribal state. Order, civilisation, culture and law, in fact most of those institutions which man brags about as special titles against savagery, have been attained by man at the cost of the liberty and equality of the vast majority. Neither the great Greeks, nor the splendid Romans were free from the vice of discrimination and exploitation..

Religion has not been the cause of spreading discrimination. A power- ful political or military system saw to it that the institutional religions were headed by such groups

and individuals as would actively participate in the process of denudation of common wealth for the ruling few. The spiritualists always lived apart from these arrangements, and these were the forces who, despite great persecutions, kept the flame burning. Religion and spiritualism hardly ever saw eye to eye because of this clever arrangement. A hundred forms of social disabilities, poverty, want, hunger and contumely have been the gift to posterity, side by side with wealth, profusion and gluttony of the most glorified age of human history of any land and any people. Before asking those questions to the Hindus, and to caste system let us question who or what sanctioned this kind of inequality, and condoned a system which reserves power in the hands of a few. In Hinduism caste system has only served as a special arm of that worldwide interest. Since everything in India is religiously motivated, even this system of exploitation became a part of religion. Other than that the system and the pattern is universal. Because in India religion and philosophy have remained almost coterminous, religionists again and again protested against the caste as it was in misuse.

What we now term as the caste system has been the diabolic use of a cogent and nationalistic spiritual idealism to classify the superman from other common people; to classify degrees of potentiality in the individuals. It had been a system of screening the talents of individuals. As a system it was motivated to meet the challenge of finding the appropriate trainees for the different branches of life's requirements.

Times have changed. Growth of communication, the new science and its fantastic discoveries, particularly the cynical destruction of age-old values by the two successive world wars, and the sinister interplay of power- politics, have, together, completely changed man's idea of religion and reli- gious contents. An in-depth search for new values and new dimensions has set aside all dogmas and all authoritarian displays of a Father-Oracle. With the reawakening of a spirit of rebellion, with the growth of education and political consciousness, superfluous impositions on the system are gradually being questioned, sifted, removed and penalised when- ever possible. This is the reason why, with a revolution of the basic tenets of Hindu Yoga and Vedanta systems, the frustrated world is being gradually attracted to understand this undying way of life. To live under an outmoded system is to prolong living with the dead. A historical misuse of a well-considered system of Guna-Karma is being rechecked, revalued and followed. The spiritual classification of human potentiality has been worked out,

experimented and practised by the Hindus. Saiv- ism is its religious counterpart. Śaivism to a very considerable extent owes its popularity to being a protestant religion like Buddhism. Ghora, Rudra, Virupa, Aghora, Ugra, Vämä, Isana, as names of Śiva, indicate this angry protest.

Two wrongs do not make a right. It is no use to point out the defects of other religious forms as justification of similar defects in the Hindu system. But comparisons could make points clear. The historical dege- neration of a people is not something exclusive to the Hindus. The age of Hinduism alone causes it the embarrassment of pointing out to several periods of degenerations in the course of its very long history spread- ing easily over six to seven thousand years. This is no wonder. The real wonder is that it survives; the wonder is that it has not lost 'its cool'; and that it contains yet uncorrupted a philosophy of tranquil contentment and peace that transcends all that is in mere religion, and ascends from immemorial past in a steady unbroken stream.

But for record's sake let us check in comparison, the great Christian order, which is supposed to support and cultivate a classless casteless society of equality and love.

When did these laudable principles ever conduct the inflated Christian society? When in Europe did a Christian society of peace and content- ment find a place, for serious cultivation and promotion? If it ever did, it did so in Egypt, Anatolia and Greece; in Judea, Syria and Antioch. But the age of Philo, Origen, Arius, Boethius, Augustine, Cyril, Plotinus, died with them. With the destruction of the Roman Empire and the rise of feudalism, the peace of the Christian world was shattered under the pretext of the Crusades, which was supposed to be a series of religious wars. This bluff is still being perpetrated in Ireland, Viet Nam and the Near East, when the world knows that the real issue at stake is accummula- tion and monopoly of the commercial power guaranteed in the hands of a few at the cost of the many. The epic and tragic drama that is now being played in the vast area of Latin America, where Christianity and Christian- ity alone is supposed to be prevailing, shall one day come to light, and prove the hollowness of religion's claim as a harbinger of peace. Religion has been reduced to a plaything, a well-managed camouflage in the dirty hands of politics. What had so far been known as political empires have, of course, been liquidated in the name of sham republics; but the change of the names, instead of affecting adversely their erstwhile masters, has in fact brought the baby republics within the greedy grip of their

squeezing holds. The multinational commercial interests are gradually spreading the tentacles of a financial empire, which gains its sinister strength from its being abstract and unobserved. The vicious and cynical disregard of any human value is gradually slowly, but inexorably and inevitably, swallowing away all human rights, inclusive of man's right to be at peace with himself. So much for religion in general, and Christian peace in particular.

Not only that Man is not free, in fact, Man and his future appear to be held at ransom by powers that seek above all their own commercial interests. The added strength that science and technology has put into their evil hands, make them bold enough to play on the destiny of the dumb millions of the world, who have not been engaged in anything criminal, except the desire to live in a society of equality and brotherhood. The vicious network of the multinational commercial houses actually accu- mulate profits and powers into the pockets of a few families. Again, these have not learnt the lesson of what is enough. These have forgotten the art of living in peace. The ever encroaching and suffocating tenta- cles of the interests of these commercial houses, like the arms of a blue octopus, are reducing humanity to face a terrible death, which augurs good for no one at all. What is more than 'enough' is of no use to any individual. To learn and know what is 'enough' is the greatest of all knowledge. Man in his history has never appeared to be so helpless and humiliated as under this terrifying crisis, which has been, very unfortunate- ly, by and large, a gift of the Western Christian society. But are we going to blame Christ or Christianity for this utter betrayal? Is this a lack of the way of Christ? Is this to be referred to any want in the religiosity of the Christian ethics? To do so would be a great mistake.

Naturally under such conditions ethical values would enjoy scant credi- bility. Religions and religious institutions would become hand-maid of power-politics. Racism, Jingoism, Chauvinism, would stab Truth, throttle human dignity, and condemn God's purity. Let us quote a few illustrations of the practical ethics of this supposedly classless, casteless Christian society, and their much-vaunted hands of 'justice'. Go and ask the Africans of Angola, Rhodesia and South Africa; the Red Indians, the Eskimos and the Ameriandians of the vast and advanced continent of the Americas; the Maories of New Zealand and the aborigines of Aus- tralia. Now let us look at the very house of the administrators of the Christian ethics. Was it not a national and local charisma that had split the robes of the Papal authority into two or

three Papal heads at the same time? Was it not some mundane interests of authority that had sent the ministers of Christ's message to be clad in armours and lead an army? Was not a big commercial battle of Italian profit-making deli- berately camouflaged to pass for a religious war, and recorded as the great Crusades? Was it not a fact that the terror of Islamic persecutions of either of the Christians, or of the Jews much milder in comparison with the Christian treatment of the Jews and the Arabs? Or, worse still, the Chris- tian use of Christians? The golden age of the Jews flourished under an Islamic Government. Their worst days, over which they still weep, were governed by the most legal government of the Romans. Jew-baiting has been, and still is, a handy Christian game. If the Jew-world had succeeded in commanding some respect and regard from the Christian world today, it is entirely due to the tremendous commercial powers that the Jews have accumulated through centuries of very hard and consistent work.

The Greeks had within their social structure the virus of discrimination. The non-Greeks were automatically counted for 'barbarians'. Only a minority could enjoy the full benefits of the Greek citizenship. The European social structure was patterned on the Greek model, as passed on to our times by the Roman Empire. Therefore this virus of discrimina- tion persists. The Race-policy of the White world today is exposing the emptiness of their religious creed, which the white world strives hard to prove as their own. There is racism and class distinction at every step. The cause is neither religious, nor social. The actual cause of discriminat- ing the rights of man and man is to be ascribed to a deplorably lopsided economic system, which under the dynamism of a growing, mechanically operated commercial hunger has been affecting every nook and corner of the entire human society.

The spread of the commercial virus is total; and with that the spread of the virus of discrimination is also total; and along with this, one has to bear in mind that the cause is not religious. On the contrary, if there be any cure for this kind of crime, it is to be found in the inner philosophical understanding that a man has to arrive at within himself. Man has to face himself, and fathom his soul's bidding, and put his finger right on the cause of his personal ailment. He has to answer why is he not happy. He has to realise that the calling of Man is not to end here, alone. There is a vast area yet undiscovered where, though alone, man seems full... Man has to recognise himself in the Light of his destined Fullness. This is what actually the Hindu has been insisting on all the time. Calling him names for this or that social failing is to divert the point at

issue. We are not Hindus, neither Christians, Muslims, Jews, or Buddhists; but we are children of Light, and the same Light coming from the same Source. That is what Saivism insists on. Śaivism has been the first of recorded" human admiration for the divine; it continues to be the most popular form of divine adoration all over the world; and it looks forward to a human family of free thinking, free moving, equal-living individuals dedicated to the all-pervading sense of 'Oneness', which alone is divine; which alone is Śiva.

The caste Hindu although born in caste, let us remember, still sets for himself the task of developing into a higher being in consciousness, a worthier self to be in full command of his conscious being. He is born in caste; but he is supposed to die out of it. He is enjoined by his laws to live the last quarter of his life out of the folds of caste. This shows the all inclusive and unique socio-spiritual arrangement of the caste, which is supposed to have little to do with his existing disabilities or handicaps which as the world over is the case, is a gift of a maladious economic system.

A fall from the ideals of life has its own price. It is dearly paid off by those who refuse to adhere to a well-laid social system. The corrupt Hindu society of today feels what it feels under the false spell of some age- honoured dogmas. But the caste system, the varna vyavastha, has some ideals. These ideals, pressurised from alien conquerors, suffered miserable humiliations. As a result, the society was kicked back into the shelter of conservatism; and conservatism ushered in rigidity and dogma; this in turn, stifled the living message of Hinduism. What was an independent Tapovana culture, succumbed to a feudalistic exploitation. With the new liberty now obtaining under a popular government and alerted by the Social Revolution of her Northern neighbours, a Renaissance of a neo- Hindu revivalism has taken effective aims at not only removing the caste system, but really at removing the entire economic system of patronising and fostering vested interests. Legal steps, and reorientation of public opinion and private beliefs have successfully removed some of those anti- quated social disabilities, such as casteist atrocities, which had been insti- tuted by the Middle-Ages-Monarchies, and their counterparts, the priestly audacious rulings derogatory to human values. Hindu philosophical principles are now being held in greater honour, than those Hindu social injustices which were once upon a time much in vogue. Most of those false pretences are now being legally and constitutionally eliminated.

The voice of Hindu India has never been checked by any supreme religious Bull. As a result the Hindu-system itself produced its most acidic critics. The dignity of Man was upheld by a series of reformers. The purity of the Love for Man was acclaimed as the purity of God. Organised protests against the theological tyranny of the Hindu Law-makers and social lords were heard from spiritual leaders whom the arms of the law dared not touch. Through the healthy protest of these move- ments, of which Śaiva-Bhakti (Adoration of Śiva) system was one, the clean breath of Life in God's equality subsisted. It derived its technique as well as spiritual support from a tradition.

Saivism as a Social-Weal

In raising the protestant voice of authority Brahmanas and Ksatriyas, as usual, took the lead. Let us mention some in recent years. Rājā Rammohan Roy, Maharşi Devendranath Tagore, Acārya Sivanath Sastri, Acarya Brahma-Vandhava, Dayananda Saraswati, Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghosh, M. K. Gandhi, Lokamanya Tilak, and many more. They knew what they were talking about. They quoted the Vedas, the Upanisads as traditions to support them. They set aside the ever changing Smrtis (Books on Hindu Law). They relied much on Saivism, and the Saiva tenets, specially because of its base in the ancient neolithic proto- austroloid society. It was the best means to assimilate the Caste and the non-Caste. It had found its support in Sämkhya and Vedanta; it used the best in Vaiseşika and Mimämsä. Śaivism unifies all the diverse elements in theology and philosophy, caste and creed, race and colour. This amazing heritage of Communion ennobles, as well as satisfies man's inner challenge to realise the supreme ecstasy of Self-Realisation.

A calm and simple dignity of an independent life, freedom of thought, a quiet place to meditate and his own liberty to sing of his own god in his own way, is the common Indian's ideal life. It is not Cato's stoicism; it is the fullness of Marcus Aurelius; the grandeur of Confucius; the divine status of the simple Christ. It is Krsna's way of living; Rama's choice of suffering; Buddha's treasure chest.

The happy Indian workers perspire and sing. This amazes the Italian road-builder in Canada, the Balkan miners in United States, who do not find in work anything to sing about. It is all a question of realization, and tension, a question of East and West. The one is simple; the other is grandiose. The one is objectively subjective; the other is

subjectively objective. Ambition and competition like runaway horses are racing over dangerous precipices carrying excited Western minds from tension to tension, conflict to more conflict. The amount of sleeping pills consumed by the casteless but class-conscious modern society of the West earned millions for their manufacturers. But the commonest poor Indian enjoys a sound primitive sleep. His definition of ambition and incentive makes him seek the ways of more peace, less tension, good sleep and a broad smile. Indian poverty horrifies the West; Western tension scares the Indian.

I am reminded of the surprise of a holy man when he for the first time heard music coming out of a pocket radio set of an American. The happy millionaire wanted to make a gift of it to the holy man, as his ancestor had wanted to give away beads to a Manhattan-Indian.

The holy man, so approached for accepting a gift became still more surprised and laughed aloud. "I have no taste for toys," he remarked, "moreover I myself can sing. He who has joy, sings. Is not music an expression of emotion? He who himself sings does not need any machine to do it for him. Where is the point?" And he laughed again. That is the crux. He can. He is happy. Those who are not, like the cold and dead moon, must live under borrowed light and mirth.

But the West is determined to play kind; India, with an ancient nod, tolerates such youthful enthusiasm, and shares her sorrows and mis- fortunes as a chapter of wisdom and peace. Old India still loves to understand. "Beggars are the luckiest," says Samkara. "To live on simple alms; to live secluded from crowds; to remain free to pursue the ultimate Peace for Life; to travel along the path of abstinence; to be in meditation; to be able to stay by the roadside; to be undaunted by scanty clothes; to be able to let torn rags do; to be indifferent to ego; to be freed from pride; to enjoy the bliss of Peace; Ah, let all my desire concentrate on such a life of absolute ecstasy."4 As the sick come to the hospitals, the ailing society has to come to India, 'where knowledge is free; where the clear-stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert-sands of dead habits;""" and where even a prince takes to the roads in search of peace.

IV

East-West: An Arrogant Volte-face

As a Hindu views the progress of life from this standpoint, other points appear to him as floating in historical time. He loves life; he is ready to strive for sufficiency; he would vote for a democracy that would provide him with work, his family with a home, his children with educa- tion, and his society, with a healthy living. Adoration of relaxation and conviction of Eternity makes a Hindu abhor impatience. He watches the speed and thoroughness of revolutionary socialism, but it becomes difficult for him to identify himself with it. If the non-Hindu selfish interest persists in oppression, the Hindu tradition is also well acquainted with a bloody solution of tyranny and group power. But he also knows that all this would attend only to his animal existence for which he is not prepared to barter away his spirit. The one reason why India, a socialis- tically awakened country, has found it hard so far to swallow communism in its entirety, which is its next door neighbour and friend, is because of the spiritual dumbness of communism. It is not a religious emptiness alone, mind you; it is a total and deliberate rejection of transcendental thinking. If by so doing India today has voted for physical death in preference to spiritual death, it is largely due to the influence of the Hindu- living on the Indian Subcontinent. If India has today voted for secularism it is largely due to the fact that India, at heart and in spirit, is traditionally Hindu.

Unity of nations cannot be achieved at an external level. Deprived of an internal spiritual way no organisational aptitude would be able to deliver the soul of man from the darkness that surrounds it. This dark- ness would remain hanging over humanity as long as man fails to see the basic truth of all religions, which is to realise a God above all gods. Spiritual experience must differ from individual to individual; but such differences do not differentiate, or fractionise God. God is One. The Hindu, instead of hating other faiths even political faiths, has always attempted to understand it; and the Hindu Puranas, to this day, hold ample evidence to show how every new concept of God and Spirit found echo in Hindu thought; how whenever the evil has become too possessive and oppressive, the Mother-Power has been invoked to destroy a system by force of arms, when required. Räma did it; Krsna did it. Yet basical- ly, the Hindu stand has been for understanding, toleration, coexistence.

There exists amongst the Hindu Upanisads (books on spiritual advice) such Upanisads as have been written on concepts of the Islamic Allah, or the Christian Holy Ghost and Jesus. This trend of Hinduism has been the gift of a tradition. It is a heritage. For thousands of years the word 'Hindu' has been regarded as synonymous with spiritual

libera- lism, moral discipline and charitable hospitality. The Hindu regards a stranger as a god. He regards a new religion as an adventure into the realms of the Cosmic. He eagerly studies it, and tries to understand it to the extent that he could adopt its best parts.

But Europe in her arrogance does not admit that she can have need of Asia, whom for centuries she has trampled under foot, with- out once the suspicion stirring that she was playing the part of Alaric on the ruins of Rome. And India and China will finally vanquish Europe-a victory to the Soul.... I do not suggest that Europeans should embrace Asiatic faith. I would merely invite them to taste the delight of this rhythmic philosophy, this deep, slow breath of thought. From it they would learn those virtues which, above all others, the soul of Europe (and of America) needs today; tranquillity, patience, manly hope, unruffled joy, like a lamp in the windless place, that does not flicker.

We (the people of the West) do not fully realise the debt that Europe already owes to Asiatic force, for the discovery of Asia has hardly begun. The clear air of Asia is not merely a dream of the past. There is idealism, and there are idealists in modern India even amongst those who have been corrupted by half a century of squalid education. What is needed for the common civilisation of the world is the recognition of the common problems and to co-operate in their solution. If it be asked what inner riches India brings to aid the realisation of a civilisation of the world, then from the Indian stand-point the answer must be found in her religion and her philosophy, and her constant application of abstract theory to practical life.

The fact is that the West never tried to understand the East, which, eversince they had come in contact with, they were busy in undermining, exploiting and ridiculing. Ridicule is an easy technique for the exploiter to justify his misdeeds. In the process, Europe deliberately misjudged, and misrepresented India and Hinduism, which she never attempted to evaluate properly.

This is the reason why Hindu Saivism is so grievously misunderstood and deliberately misrepresented in the West. As a branch of theology Saivism has been erroneously equated with the Oriental phallic cults, and with the excesses these cults had indulged in. In equating Śaivism to those phallic forms, Europe's deluded fanatics deliberately

raised a campaign of obscenity against the Śiva forms. The idea was to substitute Saivism by the Christian gospels through the cheap way of putting Saivism to ridicule.

These tactics have not, fortunately, succeeded. A range of Western academicians began to rediscover the East, specially India. The mis- placed enthusiasm of the interested missionaries in holding Śaivism to ridicule has been exposed by great Indologists and Orientalists.

Western scholars of comparative religions regard Hindusim as a 'venerable', rich, baffling and often surprising and frequently elusive tradition. The complexity of what is known as Hinduism really baffles the indoctrinated dogmatic minds of those who have been brought up in a canonically dictatorial form of religion, where transgression was punishable by life or property, or both. Even the 'after-life' stood, at times, in jeopardy. A superstitious idea of a personal God was inlaid with a terrorised acceptance of authority. Independence of conscience, liberty of rites were denounced more vehemently than Zionism in Nazi Germany. The history of the Jews under Christendom, or of the free- thinking Sufis under Islam, provides remarkable data to illustrate this point.

Canonical dogmatism was never the strong point of the Hindu tradition which was based on metaphysics. Western prejudice regards philosophy as inimical to religion. Such reactionary postulates stem from the fact that minds trained in clear and logical thinking often develop as challenges to dogma and authority. The Hindu tradition encouraged clear, logical thinking, as well as free, uninhibited questions. The entire text of the vast Upanisadic literature provides evidence to this claim. Naturally this almost immemorial tradition, growing under a free thinking licence from all teachers, developed into an edifice of bewildering complexity. The Western mind has been trained to adore formalism and order. An excess of regimentation injures the capacity of independent thinking.

Trained in the Doric and Corinthian styles of architecture, bound to the anatomical slavery to forms in sculpture, the Western mind felt lost in the labyrinth of spiritual abstractions and individualistic freedom of the Eastern mind. In the East, specially in the Hindu traditions, philoso- phy, or the science of metaphysical thinking, forms the very basis of a religious background. The Idea of God, in Hindu traditions, is both individualistic (and, therefore, often personal), and intimate. It is a subject-object,

abstract form of reality, which inaugurates that transcen- dental realisation which every Hindu really seeks. The relation of philosophy and religion in Hinduism has been more elaborately dealt with in a later chapter. The Hindu refuses to reduce his spiritual libera- tion to be enclosed into a set pigeon-hole.

A good many of the earlier Western writers drew a sharp line between what was called philosophical Hinduism and popular Hinduism. Philosophical or sophisticated Hinduism was then pre- sented with a narrow reference to the dominant school associated with the mediaeval scholar-saint Samkara...which is described as monistic or pantheistic. In contrast popular Hinduism was seen as polytheistic, gathered around a superstitious respect for some of the many gods in the Hindu pantheon. Accompanying this hasty classification there was a special regard for the more philosophical systematic presentation of the Hindu thought to the comparative neglect of the poetic expression of the Hindu view of life which can be found in the great epics.

The study of comparative religions based on archaeology, linguistics and source books available through an array of excellent and scholarly translations have obliged scholars reassess the prejudicial views that attempted to give a favourable slant to Western occupations of Eastern countries. This revaluation is doing good to the understanding of all religions and, therefore, to the human duty of toleration of races and opinions. A great deal of harm caused by religious preachings has now got a chance to look forward to being healed up.

The study of comparative religion now recognises "with increasing knowledge of the many and various sources which have to be taken into account for anything approaching a more adequate understanding of the great, immensely diversified Hindu tradition that when it comes to Indian religion" scholars must look at it in terms of several religions into one, as trees make a wood, or tributaries a river. To call it Hindu religion in the concept of what religion means to the Christian world would be to misjudge the very permissive spirit of the Hindus who present completely opposed rites and views about the same things without ever feeling to be other than a Hindu. The permissiveness of the Hindus, in spite of all their experience of Islamic militantism, Christian cupidity and Western commerical imperialism, accepts Christ as a venerable Son of God, and Muhammed as a great leader of monistic realism. One has

to be in India, live amongst the humblest society, in order to be convinced of and appreciate this broad, potent, vibrant and real permissiveness in thought.

The Hindus treasure their knowledge about Christ. Their regard for Christ permits them to feel relaxed about the missionaries, who are generally viewed in India with some degree of pity and with a great deal of suspicion. By toeing their line with the occupying power of the West they were commonly viewed as quislings, infiltrators, spies and traitors. This position kept them away as pariahs and untouchables. But Christ himself found places of honour in Hindu homes and temples. Ridicule is the easiest technique to make enemies of friends. Ridiculing sanctified ideas is the suicidal folly of an occupying force which aspires to win the heart of the people. It is a matter for great credit, and greater honour to the liberalism of Hindu ideals that in spite of all the foolish stratagems of the proselytising zeal of the Christian church, the rank and file of the Hindu society continue to honour Christ as a great Son of God. A Śai- vite's regard for monistic icon and caste-free society makes him view Islam with some degree of brotherhood. This is the reason how and why some great Islamic saints in Eastern India were also mystically attached to Tantra-rites.

Hinduism Receives Other Religions

This liberalism of Hindu ethics made it easier for other religions to secure asylum in the lands of the Hindus. The attitude of the Hindus to alien religious thoughts has always been one of curiosity and interest, rather than of criticism and intolerance. As such in the course of her history, India had to open her doors to many a religion. India as a leviathan, basking on the ocean, stretches over a great area, on either sides of which humanity buzzed in multitudes; and the routes of trade and commerce, of maritime communications, passed and repassed through its ports. Commerce is an effective ambassador for cultural intercom- munication, and acts wonderfully as a religious nursery. In the Greco- Oriental regions, from the Ionian isles (inclusive of Crete and Cyprus) to the Persian Gulf and Iran the entire region was sizzling with divinities and cults of a variety difficult to be conceived today against the powerful background of monistic Judaism and Islam. And India was naturally open to the influences of all these experiences over rites and rituals practised along the centuries of pagan dominance.

These religions must have influenced the lives and thoughts of India and her religions in the remotest past. In the Puranas, Hindu chronicles of kings and their times, we hear of strange lores, obsolete practices, unfamiliar rites and rituals, which speak of strange names and customs of stranger peoples and their gods. We hear in them, however dimly, the antique voices of the charms, hymns, mantras (mystic chants), of alien peoples and their gods.

Despite the fact that there existed in the south of India amongst the aborigines, like aborigines anywhere, strange phallic rites, the Tamils of the Deccan had evolved, for their own practice and benefit, a form of religion later to be identified with Saivism. The Tamil god Murugan's rites, for example, absorbed much of the Vedic Rudra-Rites into the Skanda or Subrahmanyam rituals (q.v.). The Southern hero Rāvana's fondness for these rites brought him face to face with the Northern hero Rama.53 Tamil Murugan rites and Rudra rites evolved around philoso- phical apprehension of the nature of Matter, Evolution of Life and of the progress of the purpose of Living. (In the 'Samkhya' system of philosophy, discussed later, Kapila deals with this trend of thought; and Kapila is supposed to be a sage who belonged to a Southern culture). It is claimed to have been the earliest form of religious thinking in India, even pre- Vedic. It is a fact that in the Vedas we find traces of a struggle between an indigenous way of life and thinking, and the Vedic way. Even the Puranas record anecdotes of the struggle that involved the establishment of the cultic supremacy of Śaivism over Vedism.

Transfiguration of Primitive Phallicism

Without getting into the highly controversial problem of the beginning of the Vedas one could easily refer to the primitive cults which existed before the Vedas. Whatever doubts had there been of the existence of a pre-Vedic culture in India have been removed by the discoveries of several pre-Vedic sites from Mohenjodaro to the Murshidabad finds. Rajputana, Narbada valley, Andhra and Lower Bengal have yielded similar sites.

It is, therefore, safe to assume that a primitive culture existed. The similarities between these and the Sumerian, Cretan, Aegian Phoenician and Eutrascan and Sicilian cultures still engage very active consideration of scholars. But all and sundry agree that the earliest cults of the primitive man was phallic. Phallic representations abound in

Abyssinia, Somalia, and Egypt; Kenyan and Tanganyikan aborigines were quite familiar to phallic forms (see Plates 1, 2). Of course, phallic forms in more sophisticated and more elaborate rites engaged the mid-eastern ancient cultures. It is no wonder that the Indian subcontinent, specially the southern peninsular regions, where the Dravidian culture predominated before the period of the great Iranian and Egyptian migrations, These have to be linked to the primitive cults, the ritualistic mystery period of magic-religions. The wonder is that the cults and the forms which went out of popular acceptance, or which dug into the sub-social status, and continued as parts of heresy in other countries amongst other peoples, did not die in India; neither did the forms acquire any derisive treatment that could justify any clandestine existence.

This was due to the presence of a basic metaphysical view of life which developed in such a liberal religion as Saivism. Śiva and Sakti as the great Male-Female, Positive-Negative concept of creation and dissolution of the universe, transfigured with the symbolic representations that the phallicism of the primitive adored.

In order to appreciate the position one has to acquire an empathetic state, and feel in the skin of the Hindu whose concept of Life and Being is highly guided by what is known as the Samkhya philosophy, and its analysis of the relation between Matter, Form, Energy and Consciousness.

Saivism as a religious form embodies this metaphysical approach. Later this yogic analysis received the breath of emotion. Śiva became a personal God, and assumed a Father-image; and Sakti became his con- sort, and assumed a mother image. The emotive Bhakti-approach of dedicated and frenzied devotion turned the Southern form of Śaivism into the most popularly accepted religious practice. Even remotely no one ever felt it to be connected with the erotic excesses of the Egypto-Oriental religions of the Mediterranean stamp. Śaivism had evolutionised and sublimated the imported phallic trends into a sancti- fied, austere creed. The story of this transfiguration has been recorded in a thousand references and legends in the great Puranas which store the Hindu tradition.

Scholars are of the opinion that the original cults in peninsular India, where Tamils have been found to have lived, like cults anywhere, were predominantly phallic. But the worship of the Lingam, which is the most popular phallic symbol according to Western observers, is hardly traceable in Saivic worship before the first century of the

Christian era. There is thus a distinct difference in time of the aboriginal phallic trends, and the Tamilian Šiva trends. It is not unlikely that the Saivic sophis- tication over the phallic tribalism was the result of some sort of syncretism with alien forms and faiths. "By the time the period opens, the main elements that constitute the religious Life in India have already made their entrance into popular faith. It is now a question of making alliances and settling precedence among the major gods" of the Vedic pantheon.

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan finds Saivism a dominant religion of India after the decay of Buddhism. In fact, according to him the appearance of the Pauranic gods in the Hindu pantheon was a reaction to replace the Hinayana Buddhism. An ancient Tamil God Muruga or Murgesh, as has been stated before, gradually occupies the state of the elaborate Saivic system. The association of Muruga with birds, such as cock or peacock, and the concept of the popular gods such as Gaṇeśa and Sub- rahmanyam, associated with bird and elephant, strongly indicate traits foreign to the strict Vedic ways. But the word Muruga indicating 'bird' also indicates Saivic rites. Murasinga, a town in Bihar, has been an ancient seat of Saivism and Mura was an asura subdued by Visnu. This is interpreted to mean that the Visṇu people, the Aryanised people, suppressed and overcame the Mura (bird) people. It is there- fore clear that a number of popular Indian phallic cults challenged to coexist with the later Vedic gods, some Buddhist gods, and the gods of the Hindu pantheon. It took a very long time, however, to be so fused as to acquire the depths of the spiritual contents of the Hindu system, and become a part of it beyond any chance of detection. As the new synthetic process developed and thrived, the phallic content was entirely lost, although the forms remained. The bull, the snake, the lingam are the chief of these phallic emblems which cling to Śaivism. But for the insistent focal attention these receive from church-conscious missionaries, as reminders of phallicism, their phallic import has been totally forgotten across the run of the centuries. Sexual symbolism plays, even sub-consciously, no part in the Saivic rites of chastened discipline.

By and by the history of this fascinating syncretism, and the final conquest in India of metaphysics over theology, of thought over supersti- tion, shall have to be studied.

But at the moment it must be observed that the aboriginal phallic totems as found in the worship of Murugan, and the sophisticated Tamil Śaivism were, in the interest of

synthesis, related to the Vedic Rudra. But the merger so related could not efface totally its nascent form for the simple reason that true religion and cults are rarely so compounded so as to deceive recognition of the identity. There was no reason to do so. No attempts were made in this regard. Cults, religion and philosophy, have their respective development,one quite independent of the other. Later interpretations might discover or read traces of possible correlation; but cults remain cults to the end; religions, religions; and, of course, metaphysics always survives in logical thinking as metaphysics. It is in the nature of religion to find metaphysics, or philosophy as unpalatable and disagreeable. Religion's basis is dogma, the arch-enemy of metaphysics. The common man likes to follow religion because of its simplicity of emotional appeal. It works as a counterpoise to tension, excitement, and as a break against complete despondence. The common man is too mundane to bother about abstractions of philosophy. The function of religion is to provide release.

Saivism of the Tamils was based on the philosophy of devotion. It has been handed down to posterity as 'Siddhanta', i.e., 'the spiritually adjudged summum bonum of the Truth about Reality'. In its fully deve- loped form the Siddhantas are pure metaphysics. The expressive and practising part of this metaphysical abstraction was Śaivism, traditionally regarded as a dharma, a basic way of life'. The Tamils accepted this as their 'way of life. So does the entire Hindu India. The Hindu Puranas confirm this, despite the interesting sectarian slants in the anti- Saivic Puranas.

V

The Tamils and Saiva Evolution

Modern researches on Tamil origins and developments reveal a great area over which Tamilism had held sway. Included in the great Tamil expansion falls such a wide area as the Urals, Carthage, the south of France (Marseilles) and of Spain, the eastern-most shores of the Mediterranean, Syria, the Red Sea, Abyssinia and Somalia. There are strong reasons to believe that between the Tamils and the so-called Phoenicians there existed a number of cultural affinities and similarities of which language and alphabets are not the least. The discovery of the archaeological finds of Sumer, and the Sumerian script and language, confirm and support the above view.

Tamil history records the presence of an aboriginal race coexisting with them in the south lands of the Deccan. Though they were negrids and aboriginals they too had a

cult which was frankly and primitively phallic. These Drāviḍas are known to have had connections from the Sindh valley to the distant hills to the North of Orissa; but most of them lived in the forest and mountains of the Deccan. Their intimate relations with the Tamils make their history merge into the history of the Tamils. Unless one is very cautious in distinguishing with meticulous care, it is just likely, to take Dravidians for Tamils, and vice versa. But the aristocracy of the Tamil class-consciousness prefers to remain distinctively distinguished from primitive Dravidian trends.

The phallic trends in the Tamils and those in the Dravidas differed a good deal in details to be discussed later. But through the two strains of races and through their inter-communications with other Eastern neighbours, such as the Persians, the Babylonians, the Syrians, and the other Mediterranean cultures, traces of phallic practices of these areas seeped into the native culture of the Deccan. In this regard the Mediterranean, Babylonian and Iranian culture have to be scrutinised, before any similarity could be definitely traced.

Throughout the Orient, i.e., the Mediterranean regions and Meso- potamia, phallic propensity in religious observances reigned supreme. Although these rites used other names and forms, yet basically a frank and open preponderance in favour of the sex-motive inspired millions to this form. For centuries these mystic religions held the society in such charm, that to this day no form of church could claim to have fully done away with some of the favoured fetishes reminiscent of these ancient religions. The beginnings of these rites, these religions, and the ways. of their infiltrations into later forms of religion form an important part of the study of the phallic in Saivism as well as an intimate part of serious anthropological studies.

It has been a lamentable falling in European scholarship to have viewed the East and the Orient with the eye of the voluptuary and the depraved. In their first flux of imperial expansion, they vied with each other for finding a justification for their vulgar cupidity for grabbing land, power and wealth in the manner of the Spaniards in the New World. The church was employed to cover up, and even support this vandalism in the name of propagating the only true (!) religion.

As a result the reports, travelogues, annals and diaries, together with books on the subject projected more of eroticism than of mysticism. The Christian West had reason, thanks to these sensuous writings, to regard the East as a land of sex orgy and

licentious voluptuousness. The smell of the harem and the heat of the Sati (which, J. L. Nehru says in Discovery of India, was not at all common or even popular) set a wave of indig- nant self-pity amongst the naked bathers of the European bath-houses and political gatherings. The translations of some Arabic, Persian and Sanskrt texts kept the pot of indignation of the high and mighty boiling. Then came a gentle shock. Max Müller's Sacred Books of the East turned this wheel. A reorientation led to revaluation, readjustments. After the two world wars Europe and her regenerated scholars started taking notice of the spiritual glory of the East.

It forms one of those chapters of human history that still escapes the scholars' probe, keeping itself hidden in the glooms of the mysterious past. Archaeological excavations have brought to light that in their earliest stages these civilisations practised these cults and religions; but the finds do not indicate any primitive crudity. These, as have been excavated so far, are often indicative of a highly sophisticated state of religion and culture; sophisticated, documented and elaborately formalised. "They were certainly in an advanced state of civilisation when they began to build their cities." As a result one has to imagine a much hoarier past for these (comparatively) advanced civilisations, a past for which we have surmises, inferences, but no direct reference, or evidence. The remotest past, alas! is not yet too much past. There is always a remoter past awaiting the excavator's, shovel and pike. Excavations are still going on. The last words lie yet mute in the embryo.

The traits in these ruins of the past in their tonal forms and theological contents remind of Indo-Aryan strains in several ways. Somehow the civilisations that flourished in the lands lying immediately to the West of the lower Indus and lower Tigris had to undergo catastrophic changes. Were they caused by possible tidal destructions? or by cataclasmic dis- orders? or by both? But the Tamilian strain in India persists without break, without disturbance, except for what the inevitable time-factor might have allowed to get faded. A study of the Tamils projects a per- petuity as tenacious as Time itself.

It goes without saying, therefore, that the Indo-Aryans had come into contact with these Oriental religions, as also did the Tamils; and much later, down a stretch possibly of several millenia, the Indo-Aryans and the Tamils got together in the Deccan, the Southern Peninsula of India. Those Oriental religions had to be quite powerful to have held the entire Greco-oriental regions under its spell for over centuries. In fact, their

influences on later religions which developed in Arabia and Europe are still deeply marked. The oldest myths of the classical Europe echo the legends and gods of the oriental cultures.

The oriental religions housed many gods, goddesses, within their great temples attended by high or royal priests. They indulged in spectacular ceremonies, awe-inspiring forms and elaborate rites demand- ing a total participation from the people, irrespective of the high or the low. The impact of such a powerful religion of the neighbourly states must have been deeply felt by the Tamils. In any other part of the world, with any other people, the immediate reaction to such a surge would have been conservative obduracy. But the Indian Tamils tried to understand, analyse and make a place for the best of the past in the latest of the present. This was in keeping with a philosophical people whose religion was based on understanding and analysis, more than on dogmas or credos. They refused to take the reactionary stand of creat- ing a ghetto, or of suppressing the novel. Instead they attempted to synthesise its spirit, regularise its form, reject its rude depravities, civilise its crude practices, sublimate its instinct, make place for it within the happy comity of the native philosophy, and live with it as a reformed mode of theological variation.

The cataclasmic devastations brought about by history over the Phoenicians, the Assyrians, the Hittites, the Sumerians and the Persians had had their respective impact on India, for many of them, escaped to this land of friendliness and accommodation where their traditions and religions were respected and valued. The Sumerians eliminated by the Elamites and Amorites, were totally destroyed by the Assyrians; the Assyrians in their turn, by the Persians; and the Persians by Alexander. These Persians, followers of the great Zarathustra, came in millions to India; so came the Cylonese chased by the Arabs; the Abyssinians chased by the Egyptians; the Trojans chased by the Spartans and the Mycenians; the Christians chased by the Islamic hordes; the Jew chased by all of them at different times. The history of migrations from across the Arabian Sea to the Western coasts of India is a strange reading. We could thus imagine that the Babylonians, Assyrians, Sumerians and Phoenicians had to seek shelter in India during their distress. Most of these migrants are today indistinguishably intermixed with the blood, religion, form and language of the indigenous people. Traits of their intermixture survive in the languages that are spoken in these parts, as well as in some of the gods and goddesses they worship. Nonetheless this cultural adoption

had been so poised, even and quietly accepted, that without a very close scrutiny the stitch-marks are no longer traceable. We have to progress with much caution. We shall see that although the highly phallic and crotic trends of the Orient had been admitted to the original Saiva philoso- phy of the Tamils, the basic virtue and logic of the great Śaivism did not allow the Western phallic forms to influence it. Saivism of the Deccan retained its pristine sanctity of form, purity of thought and perenniality of philosophy.

In the Hindu Purāṇas this process of reorientation has been pictur- esquely described in a hundred battles and a thousand legends involving a merry mixture of races and a happy union of the peoples who accepted the basic tenets of the Vedic monism and Saivic concept of Oneness. These legends and battles have been described as the battles between the Devas and the Asuras. Šiva is found to have given the Vedic society a tough time; and the Siva-people and the Deva (Viṣnu) people for a long while found themselves at loggerheads. That chapter is full of significant interest to the historian. The struggle was long and bitter. The record of the titanic struggle has been sculptored on a thousand images through- out the length and breadth of India, in her caves, mountain recesses, temples and village wells. Indian iconography details the struggle piece by piece. Many view the Samkara-Ramanuja debate on Monism and Qualified Monism reflective of the old debate of Śiva and Viṣṇu.

But the fact that glorifies the annals and traditions of Hinduism is that at the end of it all the Hindu tradition of synthesis and accommoda- tion emerges in its full glory. It is significant that when all other Oriental religions change their form as well as traces, when the powerful Oriental religions are today remembered only in the pages of ancient pre-history. Hinduism continues to progress without being affected by the changes of times. The amazing enduring quality of this religion must have some basic grandeur of truth in it for making it so scholastically accommodative and so sublimely universal. This is the story of the unique philosophy of Saivism, in which the Western mystic cults found a temperamental homogeneity. Mysticism and Saivism found a haven in Tantra, a special form of mysticism reminding of the mystic religion of the Greco-Orient. That form has to be studied with care and devotion. The subject de- mands it.

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5. The Sun, the moon and the fire glow out of fear....
-Kathopanisad
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7. (a) Cf. Hindu ritualistic incantations:

जया मामग्रतः पातु विजया
पातु पृष्ठतः
-Märkandeya Candi Kavaca.
(b) Let Jaya protect the front and Vijaya protect the rear.

नमः पुरस्ताद्य पृष्ठतस्ते ।
Bow to Thee at the back,
Bow to Thee at the rear,
-Bhagavadgita.

8. पद्मालया Lotus aboded

9. आधारभूता containing the spirit of steadiness.
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10. शिखरवासिनी—The spirit of the Peak.

11. वेदमाता – The spirit that mothered the Vedas.
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20. नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः
न च प्रमादात् तपसो वायलिंगात् ।।
The soul is not attainable by one deprived of strength or mental faculties; nor is it attainable through asceticism alone; neither could heed- lessness attain it.
-Mundaka Upanisad, III: 2, 4.
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नीचेन तरोरि सहिष्णुना अमानिना मानदेन कीर्तनीयः सदा हरिः

God's praises are worthy to be chanted by those whose modesty makes them feel humbler than the grass; whose forbearance exceeds the fortitude and patience of a tree; and who could return insult and humiliation with regard and honour.

27.नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यः

न मेधया न बहुधा श्रुतेन ।।

The Soul is not attainable through mere learning, or intelligence, or by hearsay.

28. Buddha, Gautama. Dhamma- pada.

29. न लिंग धर्मकरणम् । Institutional insignia guaran- tees no religiosity.

-Smrti.

(N.B. Linga here does not mean phallus. It means insignia, or mark. See also Ref. 20 above for the use of Linga in the same sense).

30.Gita Vi.

सर्वभूतस्यमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

इछते योगमुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्व च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ।।

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Accept a jewel of a girl even from an inferior source. -Canakya.

45. कौपीनवन्तः, खलु भाग्यवन्तः ।

—Sankaracārya.

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भजत्वेकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि
वर्तते ॥
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Chapter Two

The Phallic Tradition, Gods And The Ancients

I

Roots of Śaivism

THE EARLIEST form of human fancy developed an awe for Nature. The cave man regarded the ways of Nature as a mystery. As soon as man had time to notice of something beyond the ken of the immediate, he became increasingly aware of the sweetness of beauty, and of a type of rewarding and charming thrill which was not associated just with the satisfaction of the demands of the flesh. Eve's demand was impulsive. She just wanted to know more. She refused to be mystified by life. When there was none to go to for her satisfaction, she herself made the move the firstever significantly matriarchal move. She befriended the coiling serpent, plucked the apple, tasted it; and then, she, the woman inspired the man to be enough manlike to dare a

discovery to the Un- known. This was not just the biological demand of the flesh, and auto- matic submission to some mechanical built-in super-device; just an effect of some periodical heat induced by some harmonic chain-reactions. It was something more. A Quest. A Challenge. A spiritual hunger consuming the body. What is Being? Whence is it? Why are we at all? With her guidance matriarchy and culture began. Woman found her- self in the driver's seat.

The first father and mother must have found it very intriguing how the facts of pleasure and pain could be so intimately interlaced? How could the most rewarding self-expression be entirely victimised by such excruciating pain? How does the one split into two, and get involved in so absorbing, so engaging an experience? How could the mere presence of a manikin, a pitiable, helpless, ludicrous replica of life, electrify a situation charged with ennui, boredom and bother? How, or why, could a man's physical role, a painless temporary role, be of so much urgent importance to the phenomenal fact of propagating the one into many? The obviously meaningless is not so meaningless after all. The presence of a child makes everything flushed with meaning, beauty and purpose. But how? Why? There has to be an answer; a logic behind it all; a truth more sublime, more enduring. Man made it his business to grasp this mystery. In this dedicated search for a key to the Life- Mystery he had the woman as his guide and mistress. He wanted to grasp the great Unknown. He aspired to become a part of this mystery.

The first such man in the Vedas is Svayambhuva (the one who evolved, out of the Self-evolved principle, Svayam-bhu), and his firstever consort Satarupā (the female of a hundred forms). Literally, the names indi- cate the Being and the Forms. These two, according to the Vedas, fell for each other, and decided to carry on the function of peopling the earth. They were fascinated with Nature, with natural impulses, with life's propagation, with the urge to create, to multiply, to put to order the things that could create joy in Beauty, Form, Colour and Music.

But this joy, this fascination, was not total. They also noticed the flaw, the great gap, the chasm that cruelly divided the two areas of 'to be', and 'not to be'. Physical experience is functional and fractional, and therefore non-endurable. Now it is, now it is not. And what is more, it always faces a time after which it shall never be. Whilst this was so, desire would always be there; always. That was another mystery. Why the

bodies are temporary, and desire ever-alive? Why Time is Eternity, and those in Time its victim? Why is good-bye the fate of all unions?

Then there was Death. Death, not in the ordinary sense of decay, degeneration and disintegration, but a complete fade-out, going out of existence, followed by the decaying life, lingering gradually, but inevitably; the withering flesh, losing its charm of youth, flow of warmth;- these, as experiences, had long since been tolerated and accepted. But the other kind of death; the sudden death of the new born; of the growing twaddling; of the lovingly young, through accidents, floods, disease and attacks. Such deaths created terror, made man look foolish, helpless. And the apparent unreasonableness of such a treatment, such a scheme of things, was felt to be out of line, out of joint. Man got suspicious of some lack of order; some miscalculation; some want of arrangement. This aggravated an unacceptable situation; and man wanted to know, to master, to control this hated, horrid, unknown power, an entirely un- certain antagonist whose spell was final.

These mysterious powers of nature, life and death, and the urge of these, had to have, they were sure, a source, a beginning, a Central Control somewhere. Urge for life's knowledge led to the search for the Divine. Divinity has a rude beginning, in mating, multiplying and separation. Life and the phallic were inseparable; both bristled with mystery. Divinity had a phallic start.

Man got fascinated by this mystery. Man got involved in it. It was a challenge; and automatically man moved to do something in answer to meet this challenge. Man needed a place; a firm hold on something as an answer to this challenge. The sifting, escaping, sliding, ever and ever receding mysteries of life and death had to be mastered through firmness, strength, power and assurance.

A superfluous observation of the everchanging faces of Nature made man conceive of its uncertainties. Yet, having observed the entire cycles of Nature, man was vaguely suspicious of some kind of firm cer- tainty behind the apparent uncertainties. Man conceived of the Life Force, of the Truth, of the Divine Unknown, as a two-faced benignity; Life and Death; Joy and Pain; Love and Fear. This was, of course, a mystifying position. Mysteries cause strain to nerves. Reflections and meditation relax the strain. Fear induces fear; but any prospect of assistance partially, mitigates a neurotic state. The very idea of a Super- Power which protects even while destroying

was found to be helpful to life's uncertainties, and to the consequent strains of life. A Spirit, a Power, a Great Mother, a Supreme Lady of Love and Fury was conceived. Obedience, obeisance to such a power, was found to be both conciliatory and laudatory.

Such homage needed a form. Natural forms came most handy; the soil, the river, the rains, the mountain, the tree. These formed an obvious choice. Then came the thought of morals. Sense of transgression; sense of disobedience; sense of overlooking, neglecting, ignoring. These, they found, led to destruction and catastrophe; even to phenomenal changes. From this arose the idea of conciliating an angry power through atonement, sacrifice, offerings of valuable, endeared objects, the parting from which caused, to some extent, an equal and opposite pain. Pain for pain, a retaliatory offering: the inner meaning of sacrifice was expiation.

Man Makes His God

Such obeisance had to be made to something tangible; at some place held as 'the place', the god-house; the pilgrimage, the temple, the stone gods and stone houses; idols of stones; monolithic monuments; somatic, solid, coherent icons; representations of special forms;-these had to be found, erected, created, just to be adored and worshipped; to be had for leaning on to, when in suffering, for feeling safe, sound and guarded against the contrary forces of evil. It must be made of the most endurable material, stone. God, God-house, God-forms must be made of stone, they decided.

Neolithic worship took naturalistic forms. Even savages worshipped. In evolution of man's history and culture religion, and with religion, the forms of objects and ideas contained in the objects also evolved from crude to abstract, from stone forms to seances. Expressed love shaped itself into a thousand forms, colours and designs. So did the expressions of fear, homage, gratitude and sacrifice.

The Primitive clung to reality. From the primitive to the complex and sophisticated is a progress from forms to abstraction, from stones to meditation, from aplicas to icons and symbols. But underlying all sophistication the primitive lingers. Civilisation at the bottom is naked andlaw. The primitive is still there, only just hidden. It has only been pushed back. But within all men the primitive abides. (The Hindus call it tamas). It is erroneous to think that it has gone entirely out of our lives only because we do not have

the means to detect. So, man discovered worship, as a source of confidence for fighting and facing life better.

The aboriginals in their simplicity instituted the first worship; in worship we maintain the aboriginal. It is no reflection on our ancestral purity. Our sentiments, obligations, experiences are easily tracked back to those primitive aboriginals whom we conceitedly try to spurn and look down upon due to the added vanity accumulated through generations of snobbery. In fact what we call the civilised human behaviour is but a series of decorated superstructure, burdened with superfluous oddities, patterned and shaped out of the basic plinth of essential honest primitive demands and reactions.

All which is primitive is also, to a great extent, primal. Hidden under primitiveness lies the beginnings of many of the later cultural sophistications of the human world. What we call Saivism today, has been related to the stone; but the spirit behind the stone-adoration, worship of stone as symbols of the mystery of life and death, has not always been phallic and phallic alone. Modern psychological interpretation of the use of the Lingam, and of the associated icons suffer grievously from mental pro- jections, and lack the support of objective thinking. All that is phallic has to be symbolic first; failing which there shall be nothing to distinguish the phallic from the erotic and the Bacchanalian.

To cite an example: the Babylonian couple who walked on a new- moon night to their newly turned field, and in adoration of the blessings of the White Goddess and the waxing fortnight, copulated in the open, and cast partly the seeds on the fresh-furrowed lands, was not exactly catering for that erotic sensation which we moderns seek in the night clubs of Monaco or Paris. The Jewish or the Islamic mother who holds her baby son or baby daughter before the clan-priest and celebrates the knifing of the portion of fore-skin or a bit of the clitoris, is quite innocent of any erotic motives. Similar nude ecstatic dances along the beaches of Cyprus or Alexandria did not mean to them any orgiastic perversions, as are associated with similar practices in the shadows of a high blue life. Those parents in Nineva or Siddon, Ur or Tyre, who awaited the bless- ings of the Moon Goddess on their virgin daughters, and who offered them for the grand ceremony of deflowering, could not have, and did not have, the least mental reservations about what they did, although the same could instigate other thoughts in our minds. The fact is that we in our diseased taste for erotic delights project ourselves into a free ancient society which we have lost. We are trying to look at history from

our end. There is an obvious fallacy in doing this. In order to talk of the past cultures, and criticise them effectively, we are better advised to put ourselves into the skin of the primitive ancients.

Pre-historic icons discovered amongst other places, in Mohanjo- daro, have been interpreted both as primal form of the Siva-cult, as well as of the Phallic-cult, although the same Mohanjo-daro has revealed an athropomorphic seal which has been interpreted as Śiva's representa- tion (as Pasupati-Lord of the animals). It is debatable if either of the interpretations is finally accurate. But the basic fact that Man regarded certain facets of Nature as expressions of processes of procreation is undebatable. Rg Veda has a verse recitable by the bridegroom to the bride. It says: "I am the sky, and you are the earth... I shall cast seed unto thee, to mix with your juice, and so shall we procreate."" Amongst the papyruses recovered in the pyramids there is one which represents the Sky and the Earth engaged in the act of copulation. The beams of the sun were supposed to be the male-partner's penis; the rains and the dews were supposed to be his semen which the earth was supposed to absorb into her womb, and produce. The similes have one common feature. It is a picture of the fullness of abundance. Abundance of creative fulfilment, abundance of joy, abundance of expression. It evoked obvious joy-uninhibited joy, at the exuberant liveliness of Nature's prolific power. Not eroticism; not obscenity; but the final expression of the spirit underlying the flesh. It was a supreme release of life in store. Certain French idols, as well as Thracian toys of prehistoric excavations have yielded female figures with multiple breasts (see Plates 15, 16). The symbolism of life wrote poetry in stones. Stone was the medium of expression. Stone was life itself. Stone conveyed the message of faith and security in life. Stone conveyed a sense of firmness.

We have to realise that the worship of Siva Sthanu, Mrda, Bhuta) is the neolithic worship of the Eternal Real, the stone solid reality, the core of matter. It comes down to us from the oldest of times, and as a heritage forms to be one of man's noblest patrimony. Worshipping the stone- forms of the source of life is both, the most primal and the most universal, of religious forms coming down to us from man's earliest ancestors who first worshipped.

For a long time the worship of phallic forms remained popular. Even now phallic traces are maintained in many reformed churches. But in India, when the Vedic society

continued to be exposed to non-Vedic cultures, particularly to the orgiastic ceremonial religions of Western Asia and North-Eastern Africa, this kind of phallicism was halted. The sublimated systems of Samkhya and Yoga, the monistic system of Vedanta were put into active support of evolving the Saiva System. In Saivism we find emotion and metaphysics delightfully synthesised. Śaivism attempted to redeem the primitive natural cult of stone, into something more sublime, more meaningful. It evolved out of a cult, a primitive expression of phallicism, a system of metaphysics of worship and adoration leading to great spiritual fervour. Attempts to elevate carnal facts to the level of sublime experience can be traced back to the earliest forms of human fancy as has been noted above. The fact is borne out through icons and images found in India, Egypt and elsewhere. Wherever the earliest traces of human homage to spirit has been discovered, it was found to be highly overtoned with sex and phallicism. Their development, however, has taken place along two defined schools of approach. Both tried to solve the mystery of life and death. Both served their purpose at their respective times in history. But there is no doubt that at its earliest stage Saivism was associated with aboriginal totems, as all forms of religions were. Totemism is the earliest religion; fear, the earliest inspiration; the magic-man (or the medicine-man), the earliest priest; and the cave and the grove, the earliest temple. It is the great fear that finds itself symbolised in the upraised thunderbolt, the all powerful menacing weapon of the super-god. "The whole world trembles in Brahman. Those who know that become immortal. Through Fear of Him. Agni (fire) burns; Sun gives heat; Indra (king of gods) and Vayu (wind), and Death, the fifth, speed on their way."

East-West Commerce

We are not concerned here with this aboriginal religion, except for the fact that Śaivism, which is exclusively based on a metaphysical system, and which is being practised by a society known for its high morals of life, and holiness of spirit, has absorbed the entire poison of erotic phallicism which overwhelmed the ancient societies of Assyria, Sumeria, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Thrace and the Mediterranean.

Before the in-coming Aryans had overwhelmed from their northern regions, the southern peninsula of India, before the almost impenetrable central ranges of the Vindhyas had been overcome, there flourished in the indigenous South a civilisation worthy of its own merits. There are reasons to suppose that prior to the advent of the

Aryans in India this peo- ple inhabited the whole subcontinent. There are strong grounds to accept that this civilisation had much deeper contact with the civilisations of Nineva and Tyre, Babylon and Troy, Crete and Accad, Egypt, the Red Sea: Iran and Sindh formed a regular mart for an eastern maritime commerce. Along this human sea, besides mercantile commerce, a steady communication of cultural and social commerce let flow a vibrant stream of human tides. History is not yet clear about the exact nature of relation these lands and peoples had amongst themselves; but a study of their life, society, costume, buildings, alphabets, totems suggest some bond of unbroken relationship existing between them. The shores around the great Arabian Sea, where navigation had been a matter of life and death, had always been buzzing with activities as well as ideas eversince history is known. Commerce for these civilisations appears to have been an uninterrupted concern.

It is well known that more or less trade was carried on between Greece and India from early times. After Egypt had become a Roman province, a more lively commercial intercourse sprang up between Rome and India, by way of Alexandria. A priori, it does not seem improbable that with the traffic of the merchandise there should be also an interchange of ideas. That communica- tion of thought from the Hindus to the Alexandrians did actually take place is evident from the fact that certain theologic and philosophic teachings of the Manichaeians, neo-Platonists, Gnostics show unmistakable likeness to Indian tenets."

But records recovered from the pyramids show that the same connec- tions between Greece and Egypt, and Egypt and India existed even much before the Greek conquest of Egypt.

The south of India had a large-scale maritime trade with the countries of the Arabian Sea, and Bay of Bengal, through the straits of Malacca to the China Sea, and Red Sea, Persian Gulf up to the markets and ports of Greece and Rome. Though Indians preferred to export merchandise through alien merchant ships, south Indians themselves had a variety of ships. The various ports, lists of merchandise, the code and norm of behaviour, recorded in the periplus maris erthrae (1st cent. A.D.) imply the heavy commerce that the Roman West enjoyed with India."

There could be no doubt whatsoever that this civilising exercise grew quite independent of the Aryan epoch, which came upon the peninsular India from

somewhere outside. And when it came, it challenged the existing civilisations. The original inhabitants of the southern peninsula,

the Deccan, are known to us as Proto-Austroloids, or Dravids. They had their own life, manners, customs, civilisations, language, alphabets, gods and epics. So had the Aryans, the Sumerians, the Phoenicians, the Egyptians, the Trojans, the Ionians, the Greeks and the Romans. But the indigenous Dravid system had developed quite apart from the Aryans to start with. This has been supported by mythical records and legends which we shall note later.

Side by side with these features of a separate culture, the Dravids had their Śaivism. This was based on a highly complex and involved system of thinking known as the Agamas.

The Agamas

These Agamas are said to be earlier than the Vedas. The dates of the Vedas being covered yet in darkness, those of the sources of the existing Agamas must surely have even earlier. The esoteric and ritual- istic parts of the Agamas are known as Tantra. A study of the Tantras reveals a strange universality of approach. These Tantras refer to practices that involve people from the farthest regions of Central Asia, China, Tibet, across the Himalayas, to the south up to Ceylon; and then in the east from Cambodia and the islands of the Pacific and East Indies to the Mediterranean regions of Sicily, Lybia, Egypt on the one hand, and Sumeria, Thales, Thebes, Ionia, Greece and Crete on the other. All these cultures had been under the influence of the mystic Tantra, which signifies a way of traditional worship to the generative force to power, a mother concept.

A strange mother goddess' reigning over and above a father god, strange acts of sacrifice, nocturnal worship, exposure to fertility symbols and behaviour, a powerful priestcraft, preponderance of magic, uses of blood, meat and drinks, and sacrifices offered to fire are some of the common features of this kind of worship. In Deccan, more or less, this phase of worship prevailed, particularly amongst the working class, and was known as Tantra and Agama, the latter being generally confined to a priestly class who projected thoughts contained in hymnals composed by saints.

This strain in a more or less primitive and crude state is still found current amongst the so-called tribal and working-class people of the south whose paleolithic hardiness and robustness proved to be too tough to be penetrated by Aryanised bourgeoise sophistry, which the higher class adopted, or the adoption of which conferred on a section of the people the distinction of the higher class. That this latter class was gradually augmented by the growing influx of immigrants has been accredited by historical researches and anthropological findings.

Most of those who migrated from the West sought refuge in the first three castes. The Citpāvana and the Maga Brahmin, and the Rajput are cit- able cases to the point.

The Agamas, strangely and significantly are explanations of spiritual quests given by Śiva to the 'Mother Deity'. Its opposite is Nigama, where- in the Mother deity explains questions posed by the Father.10 These texts find natural popularity amongst the traditional tribes and working classes; the higher classes maintain the purity of the texts with a peripheral exclusiveness.

Over and above this traditional growth from a tribal, paleolithic state to a sophisticated Agamic state, the growth of Saivism in the South of India bears deep similarities with the growth of the religions that flourished in an area known to the historian as Greco-Oriental regions. The gods and goddesses of this oriental region with their rites, their priestly practices, their social systems when fully viewed and studied, help much in revealing the inner outer texture of Saivism as practised in India, and the spirit- ual adoption of phallicism, which torn from its pristine simplicity and sincerity, had become the bane of the once powerful oriental people.

Phoenicians

Of these Orientals the Phoenicians had been the oldest. Speaking of Phoenicians, Western historians always begin and end with the remark "is not known."la Dr. Lissener says that they were Semites, and immediately contradicts himself by saying that they developed the un- semitic love for the sea. Indeed the greatest achievements of the Phoeni- cians concerned the sea. They were astute merchants; and along with trade, they also carried enough means and skill for waging wars in case any country refused them trading opportunities. Thus they were a type of pirates who avoided piracy as long as given opportunity in trad- ing. The highest instance of this policy is found in the trading arrange- ments of the Phoenicians of Carthage. They had

established a monopoly of all commerce by a kind of Navigation Act of their own ingenious pattern. Any country intending to trade with the northern sea-front of Africa had to arrive at the port of Carthage where they were offered extremely hospitable and advantageous treatment. In case they made the mistake of carrying their ships to any other part within the control of the Phoenician Empire, their goods were siezed, the cargo confiscated, and the entire crew thrown into the sea loaded with stones tied to their feet, 11 In their narrow galleys they covered the entire Mediterranean and beyond, up to the 'islands that produced tin' (England); they were supposed to have circumnavigated the African continent two thousand years before Vasco da Gama. "When Autumn came," says Herodotus, "they went ashore, sowed the land and waited for harvest, reaped the corn, and put to sea again." By some trick of an intuitive surmise, not entirely without some data for backing it, the present author ventures to suggest that the Bachs of the Pyrances along the coast of Biscay still bear a few stamps of these people. Marsailles, Sicily, Tunisia, Carthage, southern Spain still have the remnants of Phoenician traditions.

Who were they? They are claimed to be Semetic. But Semetics have never been known to be given to the sea much less to considered piracy. "The historian stands abashed before any question of origin; he must confess that he knows next to nothing about either the early or the late history of this ubiquitous, yet elusive people. We do not know whence they came, nor when; we are not certain that they were Semites." The theory of Semetic origin of Phoenicians is based on the evidence of Old Testament, where Sham, the legendary son of Noah, has been mentioned to have sired the Cannanites. This name pronounced as 'Kinnani' is found in the Amarna tablets (1400 B.C.) sent to the Egyptian courts. Here stops the Western scholars. Kinnani could be Cannanites; but Sham's single handed responsibility of raising a whole nation appears to be rather wishful.

Let us deal with the Phoenicians a little more. History is still being written about this amazing people for so many facets of life of which we are so proud. Bybles, their main port, has given to us the name 'paper' and 'book' from which we know 'bible' as a word meaning book and paper. Phoenician factories produced one of the most important commodities of those days, namely the red dye; red cloth and red wool dyed by the Phoenicians were in great demand in royal courts. The word Phoenician has been derived from phoinos meaning red. In Anatolia there is a 'red- river'; a sea is known as

the 'red sea'; and the word 'red' and the colour red (as we shall have occasion to note later on) has some connection with Śaivism. The doubt arises then, "Have the Phoenicians been the exporters of Saivic rites and practices? Could these people and the Siva culture be got involved?" Herein lies the relevance of the oriental religions, and of the peoples of the Mediterranean sea-board to a study of Saivism.

As undisputed masters of the Mediterranean they manufactured articles of glass and metal, precious vases, weapons, and articles of jewellery. Grain, wine, cloth, lead, gold, iron, copper, cypress, ivory, wine from France, tin from England, they practically shanghaied all commerce inclusive of a kind of slave trade. There is a theory claiming that the Phoenicians were inhabitants of Cyprus, and Crete. But the same people controlled the islands of Melos and Rhodes. In fact, the entire Aegean was under their domination. Similar potteries and crafts connect the emite Phoenicians, Sumerians with the people of the Sindh-valley in India.

We have noted this already.

In the circumstances to call them mere Semetics, and say at the same time that their origin is not known is to be optimistically vague. Western historians, as a rule, are so prejudiced regarding making an Eastward search about origins of civilisations that they find the crossing of the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf, or indeed a venture along the Arabian Sea an awful exercise in futility. But this prejudicial suppression of actual know- ledge has fortunately taken a turn since the archaeological progress of excavation in Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Iran and Crete. By and large oriental studies are increasingly being viewed in the new light shed by anthropology, comparative religion and linguistics.

We shall travel further East along the sea coasts for other types of civilisations bearing strong similarities with these characteristics. Copper, red dye, metallurgical propensity, skills in bronzes, jewellery and precious stones, skill in navigation, trade and commerce, and similarities of script, language and religious trends recall to mind the Tamils of the southern peninsula of India, one of the oldest land-structures on the earth.

Khmer and Sumer

These Tamils have been known to be the irresistible navigators of the turbulent Indian Ocean as well as of the Pacific. Their craft, which partially answers the description given of those of the Phoenicians, navi- gated the Eastern archipelago, Malaya, Kamboja (Cambodia), Campa (Indo- China) and Syama (Siam) which they colonised. Further east, the Pacific Islands have been known to have borne their aboriginal ways as well as some parts of their culture and their gods.

The name Sumer phonetically reminds one of the Sumeru of the Hindu myths; the opposite of Sumeru is Kumeru; the Sanskrt 'K' is pronounced as 'Kh' in these parts; Kumeru, therefore, should sound as Khumeru or Khmer, a place where ruins reminding one of the times and ziggurate of Marduk Amun-re, and Nebuchadnezzar have been discovered. The fact that the present Angkor Vat, Angkor Thom, Borrobudur lie about sixteen to seventeen millenia away from the ex- cavatory finds of Sumer and Assyria does not finally prove that the culture of Khmer or Campå had started and ended with these structures. Like all objects, these too had their antecedents and ancestors; and these must have emerged from further West.

The structures discovered so far, belong to the surface stratum alone. There have been no excavations yet. Serious excavations of these parts have yet to start. Although the two civilisations were separated by thousands of miles and thousands of years, culturally speaking, a distant affinity is traceable through the rough fabric of their art, religions and social customs. Anthropological characteristics too make the Khmer-people different from their immediate neighbours, the Mongolians. In both these areas similar sequence of events produced similar results.

A fertile land and industrial people created wealth; an emerging social order organized labour, skill and craftsmanship, channelled the economic potential of the country into relatively few hands. Pre-eminence was given, as always, to a highly complex religion in which the gods were worshipped through magic and ritual that only the educated and the powerful understood. The kings were venerated as incarnations of the gods; and they were accepted as such by millions of people, who wore out their lives in the endless labour of constructing and adoring their temples and their tombs.13

Henri Muhot, the French explorer, who discovered this lost glory of Mediaeval India, as established in Indo-China, stood astounded before these gigantic edifices that spoke of centuries of human culture (after the bare and monstrous pyramids) through their

sculptural decorations and designs, through their planning and architectural skill, through their interpretative carvings of myths and legends; and he asked the people who still clung to their gods in that remote part of the world, "Who built them?" "They built themselves," was the penetrative answer the bewil- dered explorer received. To Muhot Angkor Vat and its surrounding ruins were far more grandiose than anything built in the heyday of Greek or Roman Art. "It is the work of the giants," replied another. But was it not the same reply that the people of Anuradhapur of Ceylon would give if asked about their buildings. Would not the people of Martand, give the same reply when asked about the great Sun-temple in Kashmir? Did not the Dorian Greeks give the same reply about the Mycene-ruins? "They built themselves."

A close study of the plans, of the sacrificial altars, of the motifs, of the legends, of the snakes, tridents, animals, bulls, deer, bells, demons, the deities themselves, of the forms of the rituals, of the days of processions and musical extravaganza of the sacrificial ceremonies, of the preponde- rance of the priestly orders, of the emphasis of the privileged nobles and the unprivileged masses, of fire, flowers and wine, of dedicated female devotees attached to the temples, of the esoteric practices mystically preserved for us through a carefully elaborated mystic literature (most of which are still closed books to the common man)-could probably help us in connecting these mysterious Phoenicians of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, with the Tamil Kannadas (Cannanites) of the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean, the China-Sea and the distant Pacific. From Spain to Bali and Jävä these red people with a Mother goddess and a mystic ritual, with trade and navigation in their blood, held sway.

The similarities do not end here. There are further common grounds between the Phoenicians and the Tamils. The two are similar in many traits. Their language and modes of writing; their fondness for colours generally and of red and yellow in particular; their skill in metallurgy and medicine; their knowledge and taste for arts and astronomy, for medicine and magic, for polytheism and stone deities, for dances and sea life, for keenness in commercial transaction, and readiness to challenge armed might, for faith in polygamy and sex rituals, compel any scholar in favour of studying the two together for finding out a solution to this question of the Sumerians on the one hand and the Tamils on the other. Remarkably enough their noses, eyes and hair, their height, built and cranium favour this identification. We will have reasons to speak of the Sumerians again. A look at the great male and female figures as painted on the

decorative frescoes found at Knossos, and another at the figures executed by the Tamils, the Bachs, the Tunisians prove the point.

The Agamas are the Vedas of the Tamils, and are supposed to predate the advent of the Aryan Vedas in the Tamil-land by several centuries. For a very long time the Agamas were even supposed to be anti-Veda. It took a very long time to synthesise the Agamas with the Vedas. The synthesis over, a scar was left. Śaivism, evolved as the fruit of this syn- thesis, appeared to have developed along two lines: the sama (left); and the dakşina (right), the former closely sticking to the earlier tradition of Tantra, which was more involved in mystic rites which included blood- sacrifices, drinking and female consorts. The Vämācāris were also known as Cinacāris, i.e., sects given to the Chinese Tantra forms. A pure form of Mahāyāna Śaivism flourished in Kashmir in the North. These would be dealt with at appropriate places.

Side by side with this distinction of Vama and Dakṣina Mārgas (ways) there occurs in the mythologies two more significant terms; Asura and Sura. We are acquainted with phrases like Ahura Mazda, Assu- rabahnipal, Assyria, Syria. These words signify a certain trend of life and culture developed along the interesting Greco-Oriental regions and Persia: the Medes and the Persians of the Greek language, and the Madhya Desa and Parsva Desa of the Sanskrt language. The Asuras attached themselves to a civilisation and culture devoted to material prosperity through trade and commerce. As opposed to these, the Aryans, who gave the name Iran to a country, appear to have been the Suras, who preferred to remain quite away from the urbanised materialism of these mercantile and warlike people. The Shah of Iran even today wears the title of the Chief of the Aryans'. Generally speaking the Asuras are found to favour the Vama-Way, and the Suras the Dakṣina- Way. In yet later years the popular opinions held the Vamācāri as Asura and the Daksiṇācāris, Suras. Ravana of the Rāmāyaṇa fame, It is just possible that due to the later pre-occupation of the Vedic and Puranic legends with the Devas or the Suras, the chronicle of the Asuras got faded out. What we know of them is only available as the foils of the Vedic people.

The civilisation of Sumbha and Nigumbha or of Mahisa, or of Vänä as described in the Puranas appear to be of a very high order. Certainly the culture of Ravana's Lanka was very high. Yet before the predominance of the Deyas the Asura portion of the legends suffer obliteration. It could be that this neglect of Asuras, was responsible for the

gradual decay of a sustained chronicle of the people known as Phoenicians. Their clashes with the Vedic people could have taken them to oceanic expan- sions of which we have spoken before.

This suspicion regarding the relation between Asuras and Phoenicians and Tamils is further increased by some geographical names and their significance in Saivism. Red is lohita, chivam, Siva, lohita, ranja, rakta, red-are words which waft mind towards Saivism on the one hand, Phoenicia and the Red Sea-Nile region on the other hand. The sus- picion deepens.

For the purpose of discussing Saivism it is not very necessary to finalise the question of whether the Tamils became the Phoenicians, or the Phoenicians became the Tamils, or whether this one borrowed from the other. The more important part of this research is to trace some simi- larities between these two peoples; and then to trace some similarities between their forms of temple-worship and the Agamic Śaiva worship of the Deccan. The Tamil Saiva worship must have influenced the Persian-gulf forms, and these forms must have also influenced the Tamil Saivism. Like commerce, cultures too tend to overflow their respective local boundaries. Whenever trade moves, peoples also move with them; and movement of ideas take place automatically. Could the Tamils in India be in any way related to these Red Phoenicians? Let us see.

Pre-Saivic Saivism

Prehistorical evidences show signs of life in the Indian subcontinent during the Second Inter-Glacial period between 400,000 and 200,000 B.G. But these do not offer anything substantial to construct even a vague idea of life of any significance. Remains of stone implements of later date indicate a very slow growth of some scratches of civilisation. It must have taken a very long period of time for civilisation to reach the stage as the Indus Valley civilisation established. Recent discoveries in India have unearthed the existence of several sites of this or sister civilisations throughout the length and breadth of coastal and river areas.

Archaeologists have referred to these finds in Sindh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Gujarat, Godavari, Orissa and Upper Bengal. Because of the suddenness of the maturity of this culture, which could not be traced along any defined growth from the previous cultures, scholars have been proffering various theories after theories. The Harappa script has not yet been read. But in 2500 B.C., which is the time assigned to the

Harappa culture, the cities of Ur, Nineveh, Tyre, etc., the codes of Hammurabi (see Plate 29A) and Assurbanipal had been keeping civilisations buzzing in the land of the two rivers. Under no speculation this strata of civilisation that flourished between the western and eastern coasts of the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean could be called primitive. Skilled technicians who could plan from advanced cities to intricate jewellery, evidence of highly sophisticated city- life and highly developed maritime commerce leave no doubt about the evergrowing inter-communications between country and country, far flung, diverse, and linguistically different. Yet these nations were com- mon in many respects. Their picturesque epics, pantheon of divinities, urgency of literacy, moral codes, manner, dispositions, and attires, uses of art and designs on materials such as brick, metal, wood and ivory, indicate some common bond. In features, hair-styles, furniture and weapons; in hobbies games, arts and literature, various common traits could be traced. As the life of these so-called different peoples are studied together against the time-scale of history (3000 to 1100 n.c.) we hardly regard the Sumerian, the Hittites, the Babylonian, the Cretan, the Phrygian, the Mittani, the Assyrian civilisations as being 'very' different. There are startling similarities. Until the Mycenean culture was over- whelmed by the Dorians (1100 B.C.) this chain of events continued throughout the society living in the area between Crete and Thracia in the west, Egypt, and Somalia in the south-west, Caspian and Hindukush in the north, Ceylon in the south, and the Bay of Bengal in the cast.

The throb and pulsations of these diverse civilisations, when read along with the lack of definiteness about the original habits of such very important cultures as those of the Tamils, the Phoenicians, the Etruscans and the Cretans, bring into focus several facts:

(a) red, chivan, Siva, Phoene, lohita, Nila as words and their affinities;

(b) the adoration of the serpent and the bull, of the Moon Crescent; of the Moon goddess; of the Crone; of the White Goddess (see Plates 14, 33);

(c) the adoration of the Omphalos (see Plates 26, 27, 28, 29);

(d) the images of Dionysus and Priapus; Pan and Apollo (sec Plate 5);

(e) the adoration of the fertility motifs (see Plates 19, 20);

(f) the nocturnal and congregational prayers under sacerdotal guidance of spiritual leaders; etc., etc.

Together with all these, the scripts of these people and the material and method of their preservation, the image carved on the archaeological finds, tempt any scholar to pause and think if these could have been linked in their spiritual contents, as they had been in their artistic and cultural forms. The impact of such an overwhelming postulate, however hypothetical it might appear at the moment, must cause some amount of surprise and thrill to a student of the history of phallicism, fertility and Saivism.

Hence the relevance of these historical stories.

Saivism Begins in India

When did Śaivism as Saivism, a distinct form of worship, appear in India? 3102 B.c. was the beginning of the Kali Yuga according to the Hindu Astronomical calculations. But the great epics, which were written according to conservative estimates between c. 10000-7000 B.G.14 relate substantially a type of culture noted above. We find references in the Mahabharata to Šiva and Saivism. But these are supposed to be interpolations. Saivism is supposed to have been crystallised as a sectarian form in the post Buddha India. Regular Saivic rites and Saivic treatises feature in and about 700 A.D.

But the Saivic figures and specially phallic figures have been dis- covered in the Harappan excavations; Tantric gods and goddesses have been found in the Sumerian, Hittite, Cretan and Abyssinian excavations. This leaves a period between 3000 B.C. and 700 A.D. unaccounted for in the mythological or scriptural texts available to us. And this should be the period during which the indigenous Saiva concept of the Indian Yogis and the phallic concepts of the West had come to a kind of confron- tation, until it died out in the West in the flames of its own excesses, but survived in India nursed by the sublime metaphysical postulates of her scholars and the spiritual declarations of her realised Yogis. Many traditions that had died elsewhere under the weight of materialistic pressures (Asura Dharma), survived in India because of her genius of subli- mating ideas into vibrant spiritual forms.

From 3000 n.c. (Harappa civilisation) to the post Buddha Tantricism of Vajrayana and Tara-worship the Greco-Orient area had been buzzing with activities and commerce. Since archaeological finds are throwing more and more light on the epics and the traditions, we could safely assume that the neolithic concept of phallicism gained from the advantage of a very long and steady evolution into elaborate Tantric rites.

In this process, according to local ways of life, within this area, the ethical concept of good living, and the metaphysical appeal for spiritual depth came into a conflict, which lasted over millenia.

The phallic concept of the Greco-Oriental divinities developed into orgies, with a preponderance of eroticism; but elsewhere, the same phallic concept, through an evolutionary process, gained spiritual depth. A metaphysical logic of understanding of high ethics and sublime aesthetics bloomed into a great form of spiritual adoration, namely, Śaivism. Šaivism at a certain primitive stage, of course, could be associated with phallicism in the manner as man is with the ape.

The two could be linked to a common matrix in phallicism, because, phallicism, as we have been arguing, has been man's primal homage to the wonder and mystery of life, the vibrant mystery of one life incarnated into many lives. But in their evoluting process the two took completely divergent views and attained different dimensions. The path of sophis- tication passes through the wilderness of conflicting opinions. Even in India, the same Śaivism, had to develop into several forms: the Spanda system of Kashmira Šaivism; the Saiva Siddhanta of the Southern San- gama-Tevaram Schools; and the Vira-Saivism of Vasava. There are other subsidiary branches of Saivism, like the Päśupatas, Näthas, and Käpälikas. Strictly speaking, these belong to Tantricism. But Tantri- cism and Saivism, as we shall note later, are mystically interrelated, because of the Samkhya and Yoga systems of thought.,

The tradition of this interrelation between the Śaivism of the pre- historic tribes and the ancient races, and between the phallic culture of old and the Śiva culture of later days, has claimed expositions through long episodes in the Mahabharata epic, as well as in the Purāṇa- chronicles.

In the Hindu myths and Purāṇas references to these movements have been recorded through legends and anecdotes. These records, concern- ing the gods and rituals of the oriental religions, demand a close compa- rative study, which alone could establish the influence of oriental phallicism on Hindu Saivism. A close examination of these two sets of ritualistic religions could explain where Saivism and phallicism converge or diverge.

Such an exercise would reveal that whereas in the Deccan neolithic phallicism developed along spiritual lines, the oriental trends never lifted above the sensuous overtones and voluptuous practices. The aboriginal phallicism of the Deccan, like aboriginal religions all over, traces its ins- piration from the neolithic natural society of the Deccan. The Tamils, on the other hand, cultured the sublimated theology of Śiva, which later developed into a subtle subjective approach which established the presence of one Spirit in all matters. It spoke of a Supreme Principle acting through the dual concept of Matter and Energy.

But in the Greco-Oriental civilisations the same neolithic adherence to the phallic persisted in creating a motley of religious forms. Apparently, these religious rites were too virile and robust, too vigorous and exciting to be ignored. Through the ages some of these percolated into the Śiva temples. This is understandable. Being always in contact with the Indian coasts trends of Oriental sex-cults found echoes in the Tamil Saiva practices. Priestism often accommodates the demands of the common flock. Much of ritualistic priestism has to be window-dressing. In due course, we shall notice the features that record this conflict between the indigenous Saiva form, and the alien forms, attempting to pass as Šaivic rites. The conflict was a prolonged one. Naturally, the long struggle has left some scars on the Śiva-rites preserved through the ages.

The onset of the Aryans from the north intensified the conflict. Attempts were made by the Aryans to keep out the Deccanese (southerners) Śaivism as an unwelcome cult. Echoes of these attempts are heard in both whispers and crescendos in both the epics, and in the numberless dialogues on the subject, scattered all over the Purāṇas. This, however, could not continue forever. Śaivism, as we shall see, later was reinter- preted in the light of the Vedas, and Śiva was accepted at the head of the celestial pantheon. In support of the former we have the evidence of the Upanisads, and of the systems of philosophy; in support of the latter we have the Puranas, Tantra and Veda became synthesised in what we know as Hinduism. There is a fundamental difference between cults and religion. In the light of this difference religion for the Hindus goes even deeper; and Saivism as a religion for the Hindus is not only an adorable and cherished concept, but it indeed supplies the very basis for an extremely relevant and forceful branch of Hindu metaphysics. Śaivism is a form of Hindu life. Saivism, asceticism and

Sannyasa are sister concepts. It is not a cult; not to speak of a sex-cult. It was a regular religion. But what is religion?

II

Religion and Cult

The word religion has not yet been satisfactorily defined. But religion is most certainly the feature of a civilised life. Cult is more primitive. In fact, cult is the most primitive form of worship. All primitive people had their local, group, clannish or even individual cults. Even when great religions are being practised all over the world, no religion has ever been able to keep completely out of the shade of cults. As the scorn for and the fear of the reptile obstinately persists deep down man's urbanised blood, so does 'cult' persist even within the most sophisticated or complex religion. Cult is the gene around which religions flourish. Cults are the oldest, and the persistently surviving faith of mankind. Vast regions of land, and equally vast populations of mankind, inclusive of those who profess this or that religion, are secretly or overtly given to the calls of cult. Cult-priests are still going great guns covered under this or that robe. The Magi of old were of a priestly order; and they have given civilisation the word 'magic', where mystery holds the most fascinating role. It is easy to sense a lot of overtones of magic and superstition in most of the great ritualistic religions of today.

Religion, for Prof. Croce, was not an autonomous form of experience, He considered it to be based on 'philosophical immaturity'. In other words, the matured philosopher needs no religion, or grows out of it. This is a typical Western view of philosophy and religion. In the East, in India, philosophy is a system of thinking about the reality of the Absolute. And Dharma, or religion, is also the way towards achieving that realisation. The religion and the philosophy of the Hindus, from the Vedas to Vyasa, from Kapila to Samkara, from the Buddha to Rama- krishna and Aurobindo have been inseparable. Real philosophy and religion are related as much as laws of chemistry and physics are to the manufacture of fire-works. In other words, for Croce true philosophers, like the aeronautical physicists, occupy themselves with fundamental laws, when the religionists hypnotise themselves with the amusement of kite-flying.

This, however, is not the opinion of many philosophers. "Religion ,is not," says Dr. Radhakrishnan, "mere consciousness of value. There is in it a mystical element, an apprehension of the real and an enjoyment of it for its own sake which is absent in the

moral consciousness." Hegel does not regard religion as a means of transcendental experience, but calls it 'a form of knowledge', a view which many, who have the experience, would not support. Mere knowledge is regarded as a very cheap acquisition by those who experience. "This once experienced, the sources of all emotions spring into a perennial flow, the knots of all doubts are undone, and all worldly responsibilities for making two ends meet arrive at an end," says the Upanisad." God is claimed by these as the spirit of man objectified. In other words, the idea that is God encompasses and ensures the sublimest majesty of ecstasy subjectified in a sort of entire totality..

Scholars do not agree on what defines the word religion. What are its contents, implications, adjuncts or observances. It could be "the belief in spiritual beings;" but only belief does not constitute religion. It could be, "a propitiation or reconciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life;" but the idea suggests a kind of barter without which the great devotees would not dare approach their gods empty handed. The idea of propitiat ing a god is inherent in religion. If god is too slow, then there is magic whereby they could always meet a counter-god interested in doing a busi- ness deal. The idea is too commercially and materialistically motivated. But the primitive man was a lover of the mystic side of nature. He treated much of his religious being with awe and reverence, because of which E. Crawley says, "No other conception (than sacredness) will comprise the whole body of religious facts." Religion has been looked upon by man variously

as truth divinely revealed to him by his Maker; as mere super- stition; a projection of his subjective mind (signed trend). He may see religion as an innate tendency, the functioning of a special instinct, the interpretation advocated by Prof. E. D. Starbuch to the utter dismay of Dr. John B. Watson. Again, he may be psychologically more cautious, and instead of viewing it with a special innate tendency take it as an outgrowth of other instinctive reactions, such as the herd instinct, agreeing with Trotter; or the sex instinct, following Schrodder; or like McDougal, he may make religion the focal point of several instinctive tendencies, such as awe, admiration and reverence. He may agree with Thouless that religion is not so much a thing in itself-as a mode of living. This view makes it "the outlet supreme for man's all-instinctive

craving, the expression of all the urges in his heart, a channel into which he may pour all that is burdening his soul."

By emphasising on instincts and ignoring fear and love, above all by ignoring the common aspect of rituals, all these definitions appear to be attitudinous, materialistic and behaviouristic. When a man fears god, and propitiates, he is religious; when a man fears man and propitiates, he is immoral. Why this double standard?

There is a bridge between this Western attitude, and the Eastern. This bridge is provided by the Western classics. There appears to be no word either in Greek or Latin conveying the sense of religion. The Greek word 'iepa' and the Latin 'sacra' mean 'sacred'. Essentially this appears to be the only word that fully describes the attitude of the subject towards the object, which he (the subject) accepts as worthy of a religious reverence. Further search into this 'sacredness' reveals the following aspects: it is sacred, forbidden, personal, mysterious, secret, potent, animate, and ancient. Secrecy and taboo, mana and magic, animism and tradition as aspects of religion are derived from primitive times, and primitive sources.

The Hindus, unlike the Romans and the Greeks, have no word for 'religion'. Dharma, the word they use, connotes principles, property of concepts, constitutes, "that which distinguishes a word from a word, an object from an object, an idea from an idea', the way of things, which includes life and society. Dharma could be the binding factor between thing and thing, atom and atom, world and world. Each unit has its Dharma, and units in synthesis, propagate, in turn, their separate Dharmas. Dharma is that which sustains and retains through the process of integration and disintegration. It never leaves the things, and things cannot leave it. (Guna, Karma, Varna and Dharma are technical words used in Hindu philo- sophy). It is the Dharma of fire to be hot, of snow to be cold, of sun to rise in the east, of the earth and the spheres to spin. It is Dharma for man to love and serve man.

The Dharma of the Hindus is thus a spiritual idea around which numerous rites and gods rotate in unison. In Dharma man and moral society is more important than God and Religion. But above the rites, away from them, is acara, personal behaviour and cleanliness; niyama, discipline; yama, self-control over the erring and runaway emotions leading to passions; mistha, dedicated application; bhakti, devotion. These but suggest some fundamental trainings for character-building which even empiricists

might follow. A man trained in these could serve man more. This enables him to serve god. It is a dharmik approach towards an edu- cation and purification of the inner man, without which the purest of the pure, the abranam (flawless), the Juddham (unblemished), the asnäviram (unadulterated), the apapa-viddham (unpierced by defilement) cannot be realised. It is the 'positive' in which (like rivers in ocean) all 'negatives' get neutralised. This characterises the Hindu-Dharma's approach to reali- sation, which is more than just achieving Heaven. In fact, in the Gita and elsewhere, the idea of striving for mere Heaven has been ridiculed as a petty 'desire'. Dharma for the Hindu ultimately leads to the 'realisa- tion' of eternal peace; to a freedom from conflicts, freedom from desire. Religion to a Hindu is a subjective realisation, of which god is an objective content.

The Hindu Rites

This metaphysical explanation of Dharma does not, however, include the Hindu rites. An elaborate process of samskaras (sacraments) and yajñas (sacrificial rites) conduct the growth of the Hindu individual from a pre-natal stage of physical being, to the stage of final relinquishment of the body, and to the later stage of essential 'being' before fastening to another body. These, together with what he had gathered from a series of tradi- tions coming down to him, determine his atittude to his personal Dharma and to his social cbligations. These traditions, at times, expect him to get identified with the surrounding socio-spiritual circumstances, which include various rites, duties and observations. All this together consti-tutes the pantheon of Hindu ceremonies and rituals. Thus, in Hindu religious system and society one finds Dharma, and religion; primitive magic and animism, and yogic sublimity; polytheism, and atheism co- existing side by side as members of a family. The more individual Hindu believes in the three elementary injunctions: satyam vada (speak the truth); dharmam cara (Do your duty and stick to the principles); sadhyayat ma pramada (never get away from learning and teaching); the nearer to Hinduism he remains. Else he is a Hindu in name alone. He may, or may not believe in any or many gods. That is not as important as holding a father, a mother and a stranger in need of succour or shelter as living gods. The balance is the individual's choice of tradition, choice of emo- tion and choice of ritualistic formality. The Hindu spirit bathes in the joy of public observances, as in a stream of delight; but fails not to come to grips with his own quest when in seclusion. He searches himself in loneliness. In this, St. James with his emphasis on a serving

man, i.e., living a life of dedicated action is much nearer to a Hindu. Faith, alone, is dead, if not accompanied by actual work. "What doth the Lord want of thee but do justly, and to love mercy," " says Micah. Buddhism is Hinduism as explained to the Hindus by a protestant sick of priestly ritualism.

Hindu religion is so much involved in life and living that for a Hindu godliness is a constant constituent of living. His entire life must be a living religion. He may or may not believe in caste; he may or may not eat beef; he may or may not be fascinated by totem, or debarred by taboo; he may or may not offer worship; he has his life; and the fore he must understand the purpose of life, and contribute to it by getting involved in it. Like the Christian mystic Teilhard de Chardin he asks "Under what form, and with what end in view, has the Creator given us, and still pre- serves in us, the gift of participated being?" A Hindu's whole life is dedicated to answer this perennial question. His life work is aimed at finding this. This he considers to be his 'worship'. This is his religion. Hindu religion is essentially spiritual. It is the unique distinction of Hinduism that in it religion and metaphysics have been closely interwoven.One could not be separated from the other. Because of this, Saivism is distinct from phallicism inasmuch as Saivism is basically spiritual. Śaivism draws its inspiration from getting the entire mass involved in a universal feeling of equality and peace. In this, it is quite non-Vedic.

Religious Experience and Prophets

All religions are enshrined in the experience of individuals, here, there, now, or lost in the hoary past. Some individual, at some time, had had the experience; and then attempt was made to share that experience with fellow beings. They spoke of it in a language at once simple and mystic; cryptic, yet attractive. The individual's life and experience alone was its greatest evidence and argument. Those who followed the individual did so not as a result of advocacy, or ministration, or insistence, or persuasion, but because of the open virtue of the life of the man, the noble example of his sacrifice and because of the fundamental goodly joy the man imparted through his very presence.

These were called the prophets; their messages were called scriptures; and their followers were called a sect, following a special type of religion. These in time acquired forms, rites, specialities and a hundred other restrictive laws which extended

over the original joy-message, which had the virtue of directness. In course of time, when the original preceptor's person recedes further into history, a collection of his sayings, like a col- lection of recipes brought before a hungry man, appears to be not only useless, but unbearable. What he hungers for is the experience of joy, which a realised person conveys through his presence. He needs food, not recipes. He needs love, not grammar. The bill for the service becomes heavier than the value of the food. The touchstone of spirit gets lost in the wilderness of forms.

Religion provides man with the courage to put the human will in harmony with the divine will; it gives man the wise determination of ac- cepting suffering and pain with the same amount of profound gratitude as a gift of success and joy. Religion uplifts the human spirit out of the dominion of material desires, and wins for it the freedom of a purer and simpler region where joy abides without limitations and boundaries; where beginnings are synthesised with ends; where desire and fulfilment are but the rhythms of the same symphony. "The universe seems to be nearer to a great thought," says Sir James Jean, "than to a great machine." Mathematicians and physicists of the highest order speak of "some subjective reality" as the final goal for human motives and actions. The greatest man may make the largest of machines; but for the growth of a blade of grass he has to look for a mystic power. To search for it is to search for one's true religion. He is indeed a man of religion who knows the supremely courageous art of facing the truth.

Religion teaches man to come to an understanding with the deepest layers of his own being, and discover in each of them a special call for transcending to some other state beyond and above it. In this sense it is not so much a revelation as a discovery and a settlement. Some religions emphasise on the subject of the search; whilst others emphasise on the experience derived from the search. Those of the first category find their object of adoration and search outside them. Once found, they love to adore it with faith and constancy. Those of the second type are content to discover their objective within themselves, and consider the experience to be the sublimest end of life.

Essentially, sometime or the other, a Hindu has to settle with himself about this enthralling experience where personal identity gets merged in the universal identity. The 'universe', in this case, means to him the entire world of apprehension in its totality. He, humbly and devoutly, adopts his own God for this purpose; and strives

with His benedictions. In adoring a God, the devotee's chief aim is a transformation into some- thing beatifically universal. This he calls liberation, freedom, salvation, a complete lack of attachment, so that nothing whatsoever could further exist beyond and outside the ken of his experience. His involvement being total his realisation also is total, and vice versa. "It is the quantitative repletion and the qualitative consummation of all things; it is the mys terious Pleroma, in which the substantial One and the created many fuse without confusion in a whole, which, without adding anything essential to God, will nevertheless be a sort of triumph and generalisation of being. Atmapratilaksanam mokŞam: in liberation the self and the soul merge into one experience. In the chapter on bhakti this aspect of conver- gence of the adored has been more fully dealt with later. When Whitehead defines religion as the individual's concern in solitude, he means this aspect of bhakti.

When the bhakti-realiser talks of samipya (closeness); sälokya (sameness of abode); sayujya (oneness); säripya (sameness in presentation); he means that through the force of sheer steady engrossment in love for the One, through sheer devotion and service the devotee (bhakta) will feel close to the beloved; living within the same environment and status wherein lives his beloved; always feeling united to Him through mental changes, devoted actions and listening from Him and of Him, as well as talking of Him and Him alone; and lastly, ultimately feeling himself in the same skin of the beloved as one fully identified. This is a bhakta's goal. He feels what St. Theresa, or Pierre Teilhard de Chardin does.

What happened then? I could tell that, I should tell a secret indeed. But a moment came when the darkness of that ocean changed to light, the cold to warmth: when it swept to one great wave over the shores and frontiers of myself: when it bathed me, and I was renewed: when the room was filled with a presence and I knew I was not alone, that I never could be alone any more, that the universe beyond held no menace, for I was part of it, that in some way for which I had sought in vain so many years, I belonged, and because I belonged, I was no longer, 1, but something-different, which could never be afraid in the old ways, or cowardly with the old cowardice.

Says Teilhard de Chardin: "I shall go into this engagement in a reli- gious spirit, with all my soul, borne on by a single great impetus in which I am unable to distinguish where human emotions and adoration begins."

Similar songs are heard from the Indian sage Tagore:

You made me open in many flowers; rocked me in the cradle of many forms; hid me in death, and found me again in life.

I came, and your heart heaved; pain came to you and joy.

You touched me, and tingled into love.

But in my eyes there is a film of shame, and in my breast a flicker of pain; my face is veiled and I weep when I cannot see you.

Yet I know the endless thirst in your heart for a sight of me, the thirst that cries at my door, in the repeated knockings of sunrise,

And so on endlessly, from time to time, the souls of the spirits in agony have cried, in the joy of the union with the Supreme, a God, a Lover, a Christ, a Krsna, a Rama, a Laila, a Majnun, as all pagans must. Life lifts us all to paganism. Love is an object-subject relation. The deeper the level at which the encounter is realised, the more intense is the feeling of the universality of this Love." This Love begins when excitement ends.

Adoration begins when emotions end. The subjectivity of this feeling makes the object objective, as of one piece.

Such religions call upon guides and guidance. These have their prophets; and the books which contain records of their experiences are regimented into 'codes' and 'dogmas'; sacraments and rites. Sublime gives way to bathos.

Rites and Sacraments

Sacraments and rituals are, indeed, essential parts of religion, because without the rituals nothing tangible remains for the subjective feeling to adhere to; these provide 'the pegs for our ceremonial coats to hang on," as they say. Discipline is part of all training. Even the bride needs the make-up in preparation of her meeting with the beloved. What are rituals but the hundred and one gadgets and tricks on my-lady's toilet- table as she anxiously prepares herself to appear at her best for 'the moment? But at the meeting itself, the supreme moment expects innocent denudation, puris naturalibus, a luminous freedom from all restrictions and obstructions. Even the

filmiest of dress, the remotest of secrets act as a set-back in union. The self-conscious cannot love.

Religion expects a lot of forms and rites, a host of regulations and observances, codes and dogma, pilgrimages and priests; but any religion that stops at these, fails to reach the end of all religions. A bad swimmer, even when in water, tries to keep close to the shore, never daring to swim out, for fear of being drowned. Does he, under these conditions, really enjoy the thrill of swimming? Without daring there is no achieving. Religion must ultimately train, and encourage, to dare out in the open of the vast ocean of cosmic consciousness.

Religion differs from cult to cult in its sophistication of arrangements; in its disciplined and defined stages of achievement; in its emphasis on a happy union of faith and empiricism; in its ethical ministrations, and above all, in its total dedication for realising beatitude. The emotional content of religion is closely associated with ethics, aesthetics, art, civilisation and culture.

It is not so with a cult, the basis of cult is secrecy, mystery, fear and unworldliness in the sense of the eerie, the magical, the primitive, the local, the tribal. Cults have their priestly order also; but this order, as we have noted, thrives on mystification and secrecy. In approach the cults are more crude, rude and physical. They attach themselves to the primal forces of nature and supernature. They are more earthly, and sublimation is not what they seek, but a kind of material gain, earthly prospect, security, assurance, some worldly fulfilment. The prayers of a cult, and its rites have an objective to achieve; and unlike religion where the objective could be a subjective thrill, it attaches itself to mundane interest, and tends to become cultish; any ritual that aspires to elevate itself universally for a general good, becomes, by its urge, religious. Cults are tribal and primitive in this narrow sense. These very cults become religions of the world by extending its narrower limits to a wider, expansive, universal system of thought. The distinction between a tribe and a civilised community is almost the same as between a cult and a religion. Cults are supposed to be degraded; but there is no religion within which the grains of cult and cult-practices have not been deftly inlaid, and cleverly covered up. Practised religions are mosaics of cult, magic and spiritual sublimation. Our regard for religions at the derision of cult is yet another expression of our incorrigible sophistry.

Saivism and Tamil Beginnings

Naturally, therefore, Śaivism as a religion, also has to be related to its primitive past; and this has to be phallic worship, in one form or the other. But the neolithic infancy of Śaivism, although cultic, was different in the sense that its earliest antecedents reveal its association with the Tamil urge for ecstasy and devotion. It offers the Tamils, a people distinguished from the aboriginals, a philosophical content. They liked to pattern their lives in one great urbanised tiara of grandly laid, skyscrapping, elaborate and splendid tower.

The Tamils thought of Śiva as a primal cause, from which creation emanated. The basic or primitive phallicism was metamorphosed through the straightforward devotional virtue of the Tamil approach. This is demonstrated by the metaphysical contents of the hymnal literature of the Tamils. Their concept of Siva is reflected through their age-old devotional hymnology, as well as through their ritualistic offerings. These offerings were not centred around a fiery pit, as are the rites originating from Vedic antecedents. These were centred around a stone or copper symbol placed in a pit, preferably made of copper or bronze, where water and flowers were offered. Discipline, reaching the strictness of asceticism, was enjoined on the worshippers, who generally, gathered in entire families. Ritualism was not allowed to cross the bounds of decency. Sacrifice, which is the foremost rite of Vedic prayers, was very rarely encouraged. Later attempts by the interested to incorporate sacrifice in Saivic rites met with the severest condemnation.

The concept of the earliest form of Saivism, as it was known to the South from pre-Vedic times, centred around the metaphysical ideas of Oneness, monotheism, as it is called. The One-in-Two and the Two-in-One con- cept was retained in the form of matter and energy as the primal cause and state of being. No matter is without energy; and energy must get itself expressed only through matter. It is gratifying to note that modern physics declares similar ideas regarding the nature of matter and energy.

All good emanates from this causation of the primal being. In the world of primal good there is not, and cannot be, any bad. For in the world of Siva there is no opposite, for there is nothing but the One, Šiva. Matter is not an opposite of energy as the moon is not the opposite of light.

Darkness is the absence of light, and not its contradiction. These are not two. The inadequacy of the human tongue makes more differ- ences, opposites, contrasts and contraries than should be necessary for the perception of the truth and the One.

The Truth and the nature of truth is unlimited; but the scope of lan- guage and expression is limited. It is obvious that in all human expressions there is bound to remain an unbridgeable gap. Apparent contradictions peep through this gap. All beings are essentially the crys- tallised effect of the five states of matter-cum-energy, known as Siva. Siva is Sakti and Sakti is Šiva, as is revealed in the primary material forms, in all causes of beings, atoms, molecules, gene, protoplasm, etc., all fall into this description. In each of these the existence of the Primal Five states has to be admitted, conceived. These five states, in subtle and gross forms, are smell or the earth, taste or water, form or fire, touch or air, sound or ether. These five in five (subtle in Gross) in their innate united state is Šiva, which is in itself an expression of Siva-Sakti. So the number Five is of special significance to Saivic rites. The Saivaite worships the subtle in the form, the dynamic in the static. Three, Five, Seven, Nine, as odd numbers are significantly important; and wherever the numbers Five, Three, Seven, Nine come, in esoteric significance, they have to submit their mainness to the Supreme Monism of the One, Siva. The oddity about these odds is that they all remind us of the One; the even remind us of the Duality.

The Saivic doctrine, which will be discussed fully in later chapters, ad- mitted Śiva to be the Supreme Reality. It has eight attributes; self-exis- tence, essential purity, intuitive wisdom, infinite intelligence, freedom from all bonds, infinite grace, omnipotence and infinite bliss. Šiva is beginningless, infinite, uncaused, free from failings, the all-knower, and the releaser from the bonds that fetter the individual soul. Śiva as Kala (Time) is changeless, although apparent changes appear to confuse the mind, which does not fully apprehend the totality of Siva. The material cause of the world has no consciousness, and cannot organise itself into what it is, without the instrumental cause; the material cause is the Prakyti (the five elements), and the instrumental cause Sakti (Energy or Vital). Karma alone has no value unless the same is invoked by the spiritual projection of human will. Such will alone, invoked by the inner spirit acts, and could act, for the liberation of the soul. Siva, is the first Cause, as well as the Effect; and Sakti is the second cause, but not the Effect. Between Siva and Sakti the total body of the universe, inclusive of man, is possessed of one and only one

soul, and this is Siva, in whom the first and the second lay in an indivisible oneness. World is not identical with Šiva, but Siva is in the world like soul in body.

Siva is Time itself; that is, as Kala it is change itself, without changing. He acts through Sakti, the conscious energy, which does not end or change with the end or change of the body; but passing through the five stages remains itself unchanged effecting changes apparently of all material bodies. Once it is understood that this Sakti is but the reflex of Siva, it could be comprehended that the Absolute is Siva. This Absolute, the synthesised Šakti-Siva complex, the reality of metaphysics, is the Šiva of religion. Saivism has little to do with the Phallic that still receives adoration elsewhere. A commentary on Tamil Saivism, and its metaphysical structure, will find proper elaboration at a right place. But as Saivism eventually became identified with what is now known as Hinduism, it had to contain certain ideals, which have been held dear to the Hindu life. Saivism is a practising Dharma. It is no creed, or cult. Its morals are binding on the Hindu system. Essentially, Hindu- ism has to be lived. For a Hindu, religion is living. This is why, contrary to Western belief, Hindus believe religion and philosophy to be essentially two aspects of the same life. Hindus live their doctrines. Their whole life is offered as a prayer. Their life has to assume the sanctity of a sacrifice; their personal body is to be regarded as a temple of God; and Truth and Beauty, in Realisation, becomes their God.

A section of the Saiva devotees at a later date wore the Symbolic Śiva- lingam on their person to be reminded constantly of the fact that the body is the abode of the Supreme. Runs a Siva verse: "You are the Soul; Sakti, its Consciousness; attendants, the breath; and the temple, the body." These were the Lingayats, about whom we shall know more and more when we deal with the philosophy of Saivism. But this sect has been ridiculed spitefully again and again by Western writers, specially by the travellers and missionaries, whose authority to write on the subject lies in their blind adherence to sectarian pretensions alone. Greatness of a faith cannot be proved by ridiculing another.

The Guru and Experience

To the Western mind this kind of symbolism would appear inevitably to be associated with phallic cults, specially when unsupported with doctrinaire texts and prophetic authority. The Hindu mind turns contemptuously towards any indoctrinated standards

of 'preached' religions, principally based on dogmas, specially when such religions discourage enquiry, rationality and substantiation. It must look forward to the analysis of the world of life and living, and synthesise the same with an individual's actions. Knowledge about the Reality of Life and Existence could never be a groping in the dark, a blind man's buff, a fatalistic resignation to the forces. The Hindu does not question God for an answer. He questions himself. It is his birth right. He does not question a book or an authority for the ultimate knowledge. Even the Guru has to explain, and answer quo vadis. Unless he does so, he is no Guru. Gurus in Hinduism have to be great metaphysicians, with this difference that in their case metaphysics is not merely academic dry discourses bereft of the 'life' of experience; but the Hindu Guru, who discourses on metaphysics, had to live his thoughts. He is not a walking dictionary; a bundle of theories; he is an authority. He is not the fount, but the drink itself. He is the wise man who 'knows'. Only then would he expect to lead his disciple to a blissful experience by helping him to 'live' it. Hinduism insists on experience. In order to understand the Hindu approach to god, guru, religion, image-worship, polytheism, rituals and the multitude of so-called paganistic proliferations, one has fully to understand the basic interrelation existing between a Hindu's religion and his philosophy. If philosophy liberates the mind in thinking, and gives it the grandeur of sublime liberalism, then the Hindu brings that gift of philosophy to bear on the religion he follows. And he follows that religion which suits his way of understanding philosophy.

Hindu philosophy has branched out into many schools of thought. Each system or school has attempted to reach the same Truth. The differences of their ways, instead of robbing the human mind of its essential unity, has given to it, and to civilisation, the treasures of variety, diversi- fication and expanse. Furthermore, it has added a rarer confidence in the realm of spiritual experience, namely, the fact that philosophical differences need not affect the concept of the divine. This is a fact with which the Hindus have learnt to live and grow. The Hindu could pick and choose his own way of thinking, and link his thought to a particular school or system. Similarly the Hindu, who bases his religion on some philosophy, could follow any way, any process, any God, any deity, any Guru, and yet remain a Hindu. All hazards, thinks the Hindu, are due to ignorance; all ignorance provides the bonds; and enlightenment alone releases the soul from the bond of ignorance. This chain of metaphysical argument makes the

Hindu approach his God and religion through any deity, which but symbolises the truth for him. For him a deity is not God; for the deities are many, but God is One. But he certainly endeavours to realise the Divine, God, in the deity. One such is the concept of Siva where the lingam is the symbol, because it has no shape and no form necessarily.

It is God who is more worried to meet the devout soul, than the opposite. (cf. Tagore: p. 92 ante). Such a God has, like the soul of man taking a body-shape, has to assume a body. He shapes himself in the very form in which he is most sought. Śraddha makes the Spirit assume a form for the good of the devotee. Even Samkarācārya, and Buddha before him, dared not underrate the importance and efficacy of worship and devotion. The popular belief in gods has been respected by all true seers. The Supreme Godhead although inexpressible would not be so supreme in case He failed to take form. He does not fail the true heart. It is quite possible for Him to appear in forms. "Every surface derives its soil from the depths, even as every shadow reflects the nature of the sub-stance."stance." The Siva-form, the Śiva-image, too, is similarly inspired by the devotee's urge. And God bestows Grace, and manifests Himself to the devotee.

Saivism is thus essentially Hindu, though it is not entirely impossible that in the current Śiva rites foreign influences might have got mixed up through the ages. Such syncretic traces are generally accommodated, as has been the case with Tantra. The Agamas are Saivaite, and speak of Siva, the One; and the Tantra speaks of Siva and Sakti, the Two-in-One Mother-Father', concept. Tantra denotes a 'tradition' running through many peoples.

III

The Phallic World with the Antecedents

(a) Phallic-terms and Saivism

Together with Svetasvatara Upanisad the Agamas and Tantras are the earliest source for Saivism. A study of these in their proper perspectives shall be helpful in appreciating the differences between what is phallic, in the Western sense, and what is Saivic in the Hindu sense.

Great care has to be taken about following the language of these books. Language, which is an inadequate medium for expressing the Spirit, further suffers from

translation. Translated words themselves work like traps, and keep understanding closed. Language has its own somatics and sonics, which project their own auto-suggestions. The same words could have different images in different languages. Words are meaningful only as far as they reflect ideas in other minds. The entire mechanism of sound-communication, as it makes an impact on the human mind, works through thought or idea-channels already grooved within the mind for ready-receptions. Until and unless we could become certain that communicating minds are carrying on a parlance in precisely the same word-pictures, the parties concerned could be holding talks without ever being able to communicate.

The mere phrase phallic worship pushes forward a world of dirt as it were. It is the result of centuries of prejudice and ignorance. Debased unrealistic ideas have been hammered into gullible minds through a range of books, lores, legends, ministration, taboos and tales of weird practices of so-called devilry. Minds so regimented could conceive of the phallic only in the sense of debauchery.

This was not entirely without some basis. The Oriental tradition of the Great Mother, of the White Goddess, together with the traditions of Cybelline rituals, Eleusian rituals, the dreaded Cretan, Mittani and Aphro- diterites had spread an awesome magic-spell over the subconscious of the centuries. The very name phallic disturbed simple minds, and created 'horrid' suggestions, Satyrs overcoming unpretentious virgins, Pans and Fawns, and similar legends have not helped much to drive away such weird images of sex atrocities by gods and demi-gods.

The Sanskrt words yoni, yantra or lingam, which (through inadequate translations) have caused equal confusion in Western minds, connote phallicism, though in physical application alone. The root meaning of the words are not physically motivated. These are terms which connote metaphysical abstractions, such as matrix, diagram and symbol respectively. Secondary meanings evolve such terms as womb or machine or index. In the Eastern mind these connotations are so fixed as do not project any physical image at all. In their root-sense they hardly project any sense of pervert eroticism.

The Tantric approach to worship of the Yoni, or of the Lingam is quite different from the Agamic way of worshipping Siva-Sakti or Siva- Parvati. The difference could be appreciated from the following list of words associated with the study of Tantra and

Agama. Yoni-matrix or womb; Prakyti Nature; Ketra-field; Will-primal cause or urging ener- gy; Lingam Sign, index, or inertia; Bija-seed; Purusa-kṣetri, or a ploughman, consciousness, material cause, witness, or abode. 'Lingam' involves the principles of lin destruction, and gam to march, 'to move on', in one.

There is no conveniently acceptable word for phallus in Sanskrt. The entirely physical 'penis' is not Linga, but upastha. The only other word, 'Sina' is a highly physical, purposive word, bereft of any spiritualism, charged with mere crude physicality, and significantly condemned in the Vedas in connection with spiritual worships. Hence to equate the phallic with the lingam would cause a much harmful misappropriation of conceptual veracity. It tantamounts motivated dishonesty, and deliberate intellectual deception.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to disabuse the mind of the pseudo- purist's sophistry and snobbery regarding the word Lingam in Sanskrt, or even the Phallic. A sociological enquiry into the nature and form of the spiritual content of Hindu phallicism calls for the cultivation of proper attitude, and the development of a proper perspective regarding the ideas, Lingam and Toni, which do not connote the phallus or the vulva, necessarily, and invariably.

Lingam and Yoni constitute abstract concepts. These together form the basis of Tantra, which recommends a mystic process for a metaphysical approach to the realisation of the Sublime Spiritual Bliss, of reaching the Source of Consciousness. It is terse, difficult, ascetically ordered, and admits of no charlatantism. Because of its highly involved nature, the Tantra-way has been termed as the Vira (courageous, bold) way. Agamic Saivism is, on the other hand, human, emotional, relaxed. Śiva, in Agamic Saivism is imaged as anthropomorphic; and the Great Mother is Uma or Amma, or Parvati (the maid of the mountains).

Yet the Agamic Saivism has been used also as a forest into which several strains of cultish practices and pagan rites found a safe haven. Tribal cults, neolithic symbols, stones, trees, cacti, mushrooms, hemp, phallistic totems, phallistic taboos, manas, all could be traced in it. To the open eye the evidence is glaring. But these exhibitive traits do not disturb the poised devotee and the Yogi. Their physical importance could be adjudged only through their abstracted continuity. Such transformation of the accommodated cults has rendered their presence beyond common recognition. Similar

evidence relates man to the ape, moon to the earth, and the Peruvian Llama to the Arabian camel. Such academic facts leave our emotional reactions undisturbed. We cannot accept the dog as a wolf, or the panda as a bear despite zoological evidence in favour of such declarations.

(b) Svetasvatara and Saivism

On the recorded texts the Svetasvatara Upanisad for the first time enunciates Saivism. But this Saivism is of a kind different from the ancient Tantra. It is here that we meet for the first time the open liberal and all-embracing idea of Śiva, the over-lord. Deva of the devas, Mahadeva. This kind of Saivism has adopted, comforted and absorbed many other cults. The Śiva of the Svetasvatara Upanisad is the Siva of Hinduism. All forms of Saivism outside this basic Upanisad appear as cultish attempts and continue under false pretexts. We will see that such attempts have been systematically denounced. Cults have tried to sponge on Saivism, but Hindu concept of Saivism studiously condemned such attempts.

The Svetasvatara Upanisad, is as authentically related to Saivism as the Gita is to Vaisnavism. In it Śiva assumes the highest place amongst the Vedic gods. He is identified with the Eternal Absolute, the Supreme One from which all Beings emanate." Maheśvara (the Great God), Mahadeva (Supreme God), Devadeva (God of gods) are some of the honorifics that Šiva assumes in this Upanisad. Siva in Śvetāśvatara is now Isana, now Rudra, now Agni, one after the other. Later Pauranic writers worked on this theme: the theme of Siva's extending supremacy over the other important deities. A legend in the Vayu Puräna, describ- ing this theme narrates that the Lingam's adoration spreads all over the Universe; that even Visnu or Brahma (the other two Vedic deities) failed to fathom the ultimate of Siva. The limited scope of Vedic gods could not measure by their standards the cosmic grace of the Siva-idea. From a study of the root meanings of these familiar honorifics of Siva it appears that the Purana legends, the Agama emotive verses, and, the entire current of Siva-adoration had sprung out of the implications inherent in these words. It speaks very highly of the poetical and spiritual ingenuity of the inspired authors who were able to use the basic words, and spin them into such legends which conveyed the spiritual message of Saivism within the scope of the dramatic incidents of the legends so narrated. As for example; the gods confess that the only way of reaching Him lies

through true austerity (tapas), and self-control of the severest type. This aspect of austerity has been described in the Purana-language through the legend of penance by virgin Umã for having Šiva as a consort. Thus the Svestasvatara Upanisad as a treatise could be regarded as a synthesis of the Agamic Southern trend and the Vedic acceptance. The very name Svetasvatara (the white mule) conjures up pictures of alien influence. This has to be further studied at a later stage.

Although traces of Saivic characteristics are not altogether absent in the Vedas, yet, it has to be acknowledged that Saivism, actually, has been, by and large, a Tamil creed, which must have, due to the fact of geo- graphical continguity, taken to account the Proto-Austroloid, Dravido- tribal fertility cults obtaining in the Deccan.

Tamils and the Deccan are inseparable. The Deccan was the chief habitat of the aboriginal austroloids. As such the Deccan had been from times immemorial an important home of phallic cults.

The Deccan tribes, like most tribals, worshipped principally the matriarchal idea of the Mother. The Tamils, on the contrary, who were not known to be of austric descent, favoured a Father God. Yet true to form, even while imposing the Father God idea, they had to com- promise and accept the Great Mother, Uma or Amma.

Uma or Amma, significantly, is not a Sanskrt word. The word has been traced by Dr. S. K. Chatterji to a similar Goddess in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Asia Minor countries."

But Siva, the Father-God, attained a superior position. In order to secure his place in the later literature, the abstract Siva concept was given an anthropomorphic form. Šiva, the father, together with Pärvati (the mount-maiden), the Mother, even managed to develop a family without having to undergo the biological process of actual begetting. Those who study this anthropomorphic metamorphosis in the light of the 'principles' of the Siva-Siddhanta, read in the Purana-expositions a poetical symbolism of the same system. But the Bhakti philosophy would rather accept the emotive Purana for its own delight, although the greatest ex- ponents of 'Bhakti' had received the subtlest message of the abstractions contained in Saiva-thinking, or in the exposition of the Saiva metaphysics.

(c) Saivic Channels

When we keep this in mind, we understand two things. One, that even at the legendary state, the abstract concept of Siva and Uma was not allowed to be violated; their family and sociological status was fondly indulged at a superfluous and inetaphorical level alone. Śiva has no 'father', 'mother', or 'family'; 'Uma' has a 'mountain' as her father, and Menaka or (Mena) as her mother. Her family includes Vidya, Kamala, Ganesa and Kartikeya (Subrahmanya). It also includes the Bull, the Lion, Jaya, Vijaya, Nandi and Bhṛngi.

It is interesting to remind here of a plaque of Tellus Matex discovered at Ara Pacis on Campus Martius (13-9 n.c.) of a mother deity answering quite closely to this family-picture of the Hindu Mother Goddess (see Plate 22). The presence of a bull, a lamb, a swan and water-animal confirms the Hindu Mother Durga's image.

Two, that despite the Tamil attempt to absorb the Mother-cult into the abstract Saivism, a distinct Mother-mysticism prevailed undisturbed. This was the Tantra, the 'thread', the 'traditional' cult of old. In this sense Tantra, the mystic way, was not Vedic. Śiva Agama, Śiva-legends, Šiva-epics, Siva lores, Šiva songs developed side by side with Nigama, an esoteric, ritualistic, system known as the Tantra. Tantra, the traditional 'thread', has been coming down to get woven into the spiritual texture we now adore. Hindu Tantric literature and the Samkhya, Yoga as well as the Monistic Vedänta systems are today interwoven.

This is quite natural. Whenever a people has tried to win over another's faith and forms of worship, in the process, the one that spreads, has to absorb some parts of the existing belief and form. Any proselyt- ising faith has to accommodate prevailing ideas. Side by side with this idea of a Father-god, God of gods, the idea of a Mother Goddess played its persistent part. Together, they constitute the Agama-Tantra.

The above two together indicate the origin of Saivism as a definite school of spiritual quest in the Hindu mind.

Of the many forms which remind the Saivic devotee of the Father- god's relation with the matriarchal phallic cult, some are quite popular. Although their original significance has got faded through centuries of ritualistic acceptance. To the student of anthropology they assume a documentary importance. The symbolic diagrams, a triangle, a trident, a crescent, a Vajra" persist as esoteric symbols, as do the

zoomorphic holy animals and reptiles, like the bull, the boar, the lion, the serpent, the beetle and the elephant. Šiva kills a tiger or an elephant and wears the skin. Elephant and tigers are favourites of the Mother. Father- God imposes his superiority. He favours the Bull, the Deer, the Serpent and tolerates the lion with the Mother who has such names as Värähi (Sow), Narasinght (Lion faced woman), and Bhramari (Beetle); or Šakini, Sakambhari, Yogini, Camunda-names that indicate non- Aryan connection. As and when we proceed, we shall see how the Greco-Oriental and the Mediterranean religions were related to these objective deities.

Phallic symbol, Father God, Mother Goddess, zoomorphic gods together with fertility as a cult, using such signs as a snake, a bull, a crescent, a trident etc., are found common in many a creed current in the orient, specially in lands close to the sea. It is imaginable that through commercial links the cults travelled over different lands. Port towns of the Near and Middle East hummed with the praises of these varied religious forms. The East-West commerce was both mercantile and cultural."

But there is a difference between the Phallic forms current in these lands, and the phallic symbols used in the Deccan. India appears to have studiously eschewed the frank phallic forms used for spiritual purposes.

"Of all the representations of the deity that India has imagined, these (lingam) are perhaps the least offensive to look at."

Sacred records reflect open abhorrence. But this very abhorrence also proves its presence.

Compared to the phallic symbols used in India, the phallicism of the Western cults is more exposed, vivid, and physical, and therefore repelling, (see Plates 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9). This could be traced in the cults of Aphrodite and Artemis, Cybele and Demeter, Gaea and Athene. "The phallus, as a symbol of reproduction, appears in the rites of Demeter, Dionysus, Hermes, even of the classic Artemis. In classical sculpture and painting this emblem recurs with scandalous frequency." a popular celebration of Greece, ended with a great procession. In this Dionysia, procession phallic representation (not symbols) were ceremoniously carried in exhibitory gorgeousness. In the Island of Sicily exchange of re- presentations of phallus was held in greater awe and form than the modern exchanges of Christmas cards. The holy Christian Church tried to suppress this practice; but has had to put up with it through naively

compromising devices. We shall have occasion to deal with the mysteries of the Eleusian cults, as well as those of Pythagorian, Cybelline, Dionysian and Aphroditic trends separately, and at length. We also refer to the Tantra 'Laya- Karma' as a mystic rite in the Glossary. But notice could be drawn here to the discovery in the jungles of Sidamo in Abyssinia of huge representa- tions of erect phallus, 14 to 16 feet in height and 6 to 8 feet in diameter (see Plate 1). To-date, in the Sicilian and South-Italian spring-fruit festivals, the predominance of physical phallus forms could not be checked even by the orthodox church. Did we not say before that cults are first to appear, and last to disappear from practised religions because these relate to Nature's vitality.

Adoration of reproductive organs turned into clay, metal or wax was so popular amongst the people of oriental-Europe inclusive of Greece and Italy, that the organ-representations were used as fetishes and amulets. The museums of Europe, and many of the walls of the churches are filled with such relics. Representations of mother gods with rows upon rows of exaggerated mammies, or of very generously blown up super-elephantine mammies (see Plate 16), or of spaciously amplified buttocks (see Plate 15) vie with priapic forms of lengths upon lengths of phallic forms. These are forms found about the Mediterranean countries where even fingers, toes and noses of the deities, have been made to represent the phallus, We have found them in pre-historic France, India and in the historical tunes of the countries lying in between.

The subject offers a tempting bait for over-simplifying a complex situation; but intellectual honesty and spiritual hygiene demands a more thorough treatment. It is indeed true that phallicism and Saivism could be linked, but only in the sense that Christianity could be to Mithraism, or Islam or Judaism to the cult of the Prepuce. To insist on such links is less than academic; it smacks of chauvinism, human spite and intolerance.

In contradistinction with this Greco-Oriental trend, found echoed in the Soma-Siddhanta for instance, Śaivism has been described as a part and parcel of the worship of Sakti, a mother concept. Dr. A. Barth in his 'Religions of India' has competently dealt with the fact that Śiva-Sakti concept is based on fundamental metaphysical thinking, and that it could not be treated as a mere cult. Dr. Barth is in no way singular in his view (cf. Woodrooffe, Coomaraswamy, Zimmer etc.).

The Siva-Sakti Concept: What it has to Give

The Siva-Sakti concept is based on what may be explained as (1) the theories of matter and energy, their interdependence and interrelation; (2) theories of atomic cohesion; (3) theories of cosmic principles featuring through material substances; and (4) the theories of the personal self conducting itself as a fraction of the Universal Soul. In this Śaivism attempts to synthesise the material with the spiritual; the derivatives with the trans-substantive and transcendative. Śaivism makes it absolutely incumbent upon those who reach the higher spiritual stage to recognise the natures of self, soul and consciousness; of matter and energy; of body and spirit; of self-realisation through meditation and Yoga, and of self-knowledge through practice and discipline. Unlike the aim of material profit as referred to in 'fertility cults', Śaivism proposes for itself spiritual emancipation. Unlike the orgiastic abandonment in phallic rituals, Saivism reposes austere discipline on the novices and anchorites from the very beginning. The riddle of life is its challenge, and to provide an answer to the aim of existence is its real goal. It elucidates the problems of life, growth, procreation, death, emancipation and beatification. It defines the requirements of rituals, worship, devotion, penances and rigours; and enjoins the practice of unfettered uninhibited family life. Saivism hits at an artificial society that discriminates and encourages false standards of status and privileges. It militates against class conscious- ness. It welcomes the proletariat mass to a realisation of oneness. It aims at a total good for a total society, not for the human alone, but for all forms of life. Its basic contribution to human thinking is eternal, in the sense that it fulfils its promise by realising one in all and all in one.

Judged apart from the Aryan concept of a select elite society, Śaivism was a socialising challenge. Although it enjoined its own rites, those rites were non-discriminatory and universal, simple and direct. These did not depend on the intervention of priests, neither required the devotee to go into costly and time-killing ritualistic details. The poorest of poor, even the most illiterate, enjoys the same right in this form of worship as the wise, the academic and the wealthy, provided the devotee cultivates piety and humility, devotion and discipline.

Tantra differs from Saivism in its emphasis on the Mother-Image. Sakti and Prakyti provide the 'power' and 'Nature' aspects of the world- phenomenon. This as the Matrix Power has been hailed all over the an- cient world of tribes, specially hill-tribes." It is claimed as the earliest of human submission to a divine Power. Saivism, also, is

claimed to have a very ancient tradition. The former marks the matriarchal ascendancy; the latter, the patriarchal ascendancy. The tradition has been fairly well spread over the Asian continent. China, Tibet and the Cau- casian regions have provided a conventional home for Tantra. The Persian Plateau and the Indian subcontinent had been under the influence of a Father-image instead. Subsequently the two images got mixed up; and Siva and Sakti are united in a new form of Tantra. In the Puranas this has been referred to as the marriage between Siva and Parvati (the Mountain Goddess). Agama and Nigama both became the wings of Tantra which was the dominant religion of China, Tibet, Kashmir, Babylon, Aisa Minor and the vast Himalayan range. Even Buddhism had to be influenced by the spell of Tantra, and became known as the Mahayana.

Inevitably the modes and nuances of the 'marriage' of the Father and Mother images led to various schisms in the Siva-system as a whole. These were: Kashmir Saivism; Deccan Śaivism; and Vira Saivism. Besides these three principal systems there are some unorthodox systems principally owing their existence to cultish practices.

The history of Saivism is a fascinating study; so is a study of its absorb- ing philosophy. But the part that makes Saivism a noble and popular religious practice in India is its emphasis on simplicity of devotion, and simplicity of ritualistic requirements. In contrast with the Vedic practices, Saivism offered to the people a direct approach to spiritual fulfilment.

Unlike the aristocratic and proud Aryans the Saivas did not use butter in their ritualistic worship. They used the simple water; not the sacri- ficial pit red with flames, but the oblational pit, cool with water and fragrant with flowers; not the rituals chanted by the Brahmin specialists, but the devotional hymns recited by the devotees themselves; not the sacrifice tainted with blood and flesh, but by spiritual immolation, self-purification, austerity of personal discipline.

The Aryans, or the class-conscious conquerors, were not too kindly disposed towards this revolt, and a war of nerves ended with an open confrontation. A showdown was inevitable. The stories recording these episodes crowd the pages of the Puranas. This resulted in an acceptance of Saivism as a part of the Hindu life; moreover, Śiva was declared to be Deva-deva (God of gods), Mahadeva (the great god), Adi-deva (the most ancient of the gods, the Primal God).

The victory of a father-god over a mother-goddess, of Śiva over Sakti, of the proletarian mass over the aristocratic class did not take place without conflicts. It has been a long drawn bitter conflict. The (Aryan) Vedas and the (non-Aryan) Agamas were involved in this conflict. Remnants of destroyed towns, cities and human habitations have been discovered in the Indus Valley, Narmada valley, in the Gangetic valley of Bengal, as well as along the coast lands of the peninsula. At certain places, along the great rivers, not one, but layers of several cities one below the other, have been unearthed. The destruction of one type of culture by another type is evident.

From the legend of Daksa Prajapati, Jaratkaru, Šukrācārya, Astika to those of Kamsa, Väṇa, Ravana, Šišupāla, Jarasandha, legend after legend, the Puranas record the events of the conflict in which celebrated sages like Vasistha, Visvamitra, Dadhici, Pulastya, Parasurama, Balarama have been actors. New books, new Puranas, new Upanisads came to be written.

It was bound to be. Šaivism, which is a refined and sublimated form of the most ancient homage man had paid to the spirit of life, has to come into conflict with later sophisticated trends. The wonder is that Hinduism survives. It survives even after the spread of Buddhism, and against the waves of religions like Mithraism, Zoroastrianism and Manichacism. In fact, Śaivism drank deep in all of them and absorbed all of them, and survived by assimilation. Those religions which rejected and annihilated passed out into oblivion. Actually Saivism shone in its fullest glory after conquering all the faiths from Phallicism to Buddhism only after the era which gave its fundamental treatise, Svetasvatara Upanisad. The struggle became a thing of the past; and the theme of the struggle remained recorded in the Puranas.

Pan-Tantric Culture

But who were the parties? Who were the Vedic people, and who were the Agamic people? What was their respective range of influence? What were their respective modes of living, languages, religion? How could the two trends be distinctly recognised? Through what media?

This should lead us to probe into the extensive influence of those religions which affected almost all littoral civilisations from the shores of the China seas to those of the Mediterranean via the Arabian Sea, Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The people who

spread these different conflicting cultures from port to port in those ancient days must have had a developed system of both commerce and communication, especially, they must have had the uses of sea-worthy crafts. To be able to knit together Siam, Cambodia, Malaya, the East Indies, Burma, Ceylon on the one hand and Persia, Mesopotamia, Somalia, Arabia, Syria, Egypt, the Aegean archipelago and the Mediterranean isles on the other, must have been a great feat, specially when the advance had not been a military A study of these people as different from the Aryans, who did not have much care for any maritime skill, should prove rewarding. These were people who kept pace with the prevailing phallic cults of these lands, and at the same time maintained an identity of their own. They fused the Aryan-Vedic and the non-Vedic together. They developed their own system of metaphysics, which included a theory of creation. This was carried across the seas; and in time, this was coalesced with the Vedic System, despite the fact that it kept intact a nature of its own. New compasses had to be set for achieving this; new dimensions discovered; new gods created. This they apparently did. But greed and lust for power dealt a rough hand against pious and simple ideals. What religion tried to achieve, political adventurism put to the sword. Those power-stuffed empires have, in course of time, crumbled to dust; but the religious thoughts with their gods and their practices have survived through the aspiring zeal of humanity which seeks liberation of fleshly agonies through spiritual ecstasy.

Saivism, in course of years, and reacting against a variety of experiences developed into a number of systems (1) Agamas and Tantra; (2) Saiva Siddhanta; (3) Pasupatas and Käpälikas: (4) Jangamas or Lingayats; (5) Kashmira Trik Saivism; (6) Ajivakas; (7) Nathas; and (8) Siddhas. Some of these forms retain their primordial phallic traces, and attempt to practise them if required, even clandestinely. But these are the least followed, and the most derided even amongst the Hindus. Derided, but not rooted out. Perversions, refer to the psycho-analytical nature of certain sick individuals. Such cases are sociological problems, and have nothing to do with religion or philosophy.

These latter perversions were derided in orthodox Hinduism. It has been mentioned before. At times these outlandish rites are referred. to as Chin-Acara, or Paivacāra, which denote their non-Hindu origin. yaksa, kinnaras, lakas, daka, siddhas, pilacas, ganas, guhyakas, raksasas have been of non-Aryan non-Vedic descents. But today these are included in the general term Śaivism, and many of their questionable rites are

mistaken for Śaivic rites. To give only two instances (1) 'Yogi', popularly pronounced 'Jogi' is a religious sect spread over North Bihar, Bengal, Assam and north-eastern Orissa, and maintain the Sannyasi image of the Saivaites, but who are not Ŝaivaites. Many of the followers even profess Islam. They claim to have no religion and no God. They only adore the Guru and the Traditions. They are followers of mystic Tantra rites. (2) In Punjab a sect dedicated to the Saint Sri Chand, son of Guru Nanak, the Founder of Sikhism, has its own following. These are called the Udasis. They consider Śri Chand as an incarnation of Śiva, but their rites are very mystic, and are contained within themselves, though Udasis form a strong spiritual sect, and are known as the Nagas (the nude mendicants). In orthodox Saivism these sects, though powerful, are considered schismic. Thus we have to distinguish between orthodox and unorthodox systems, and their interrelation with oriental religions. In the next chapter we shall try to take a bird's eye view of the oriental and classical religions, with the hope that the study of Saivic rites and phallic rites will become easier by such comparative methods adopted.

IV

Sex and Religious Fervour

Our whole Western way of life is descended from civilisations which once flourished in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Central Asia, and the islands of the Aegean. Yet the span of time embraced by the advanced civilisations known to us is incredibly brief. Ten thousand years are like a day in the lifetime of human evolution We of today are not only burdened with the centuries of afflictions and everlasting mistakes of past millenia, but are also heirs to the discernment and knowledge which they brought in their train. We owe the brief happiness of what we call our existence to countless millions of men who returned to dust long ago,

A sense of security is a source of happiness. Religion is one of the expressions of this happiness. Since the beginning of human society, submission of human prayers to a power unseen has contributed to human existence a strange feeling of confidence and reliance. The words of prayers invoked spiritual fervour through centuries of intensive incanta- tions. Side by side with the most touching sacrifices or the most horrifying acts, sublime poetry of ecstatic magnitude and ethereal appeal has been composed for solemn music. Religion has played a part in broadening the scope of human contact

both negatively and positively. So inextricably interwoven is religion with the life of ancient societies, that it would be sheer folly to attempt to write a history of religion without considering this human aspect. All past percolates into the trough of the present; and all present is intricately rooted into the past.

Significant landmarks of cultural progress of mankind are not shaped by military victories, or greedy expansions. Political ascendancy is both temporary and clusive. Victories of peace are of more enduring value to scholars than those of war. Real historical landmarks are rather provided by such events as invention of writing by the Sumerians, the composition of the craft in Egypt, of the system of democracy in Athens, the enactment of the codes of Hammurabi, the writing of the poems of Li T'ai Bo, formation of city-states in Greece, etc., etc. Apparently disconnected, the underlying cohesion between these aspects of social progress could scarcely be underrated, because these phenomenal achievements of civilisa- tions have knitted man more firmly together than individualistic race theo- ries with their respective claims of superiority, or egoistic adventurism of armoured might and barbarous brigandism. Such claims, in the perspective of the knowledge of these different achievements of mankind, appear rudimentary, frivolous and parochial. That which reflects cohesion brings man nearer. The more the discrimination, the more the feelings of difference. When perceived spiritually, religion too, instead of difference, instead of keeping human beings divided, could help them live in togetherness and amity. Failing this, the age-old bane of religion would assist the imperialists and fascists to tighten their nefarious grip firmer on a popular social progress by keeping man divided. Religion, which in reality is motivated for the satisfaction of inner hunger of man, has so far, unfortunately, acted in retardation of the ideals of society. A highly spiritual subject like religion had to suffer this humiliation mainly because it submitted itself to be manoeuvred by political interests. Reli- gion should never allow itself to become the handmaid of position, power or expediency.

A close study of all ancient religions reveal strange resemblances, especially in their ritualistic lust and licences. This closeness becomes obvious in some more details such as, priests, penances, congregational prayers, nocturnal rituals, fertility motives, adoration of procreation, etc. Their temple architecture, clerical organisation, nature of gods, goddesses, totems, taboos and symbols also reveal some closeness.

In ancient societies, as has been mentioned, the matriarchal chief was also the priestess. In her the ruler, the ruled, the worshipper, the worshipped all got fused. Gradually her monopoly was seized by the male. He in turn became independent of her; reduced her to a subser- vient status; and then established a male god, thus removing her pantheo- nic supremacy to a secondary position. The demands of state, and the temptations of a carnally sensuous life of ease and plenty, made the priest- king call for several women at a time. In this he did nothing new or objectionable. He did what the priestess had been accustomed doing.

As the matriarchal chief she had her choice of mates as she pleased. Due to such pressures of activity the king, who had taken over from the Chief Priestess, in his turn, appointed other agents for carrying out his magic rites or mystic duties. These agents became law-givers, and sub-priests. Each of them helped in holding the other's glamours up before an awe struck public. Between them, they collected administrative and religious revenues and privileges. They assumed supreme power in different fields. They victimised through a system the very people they were sup- posed to protect. This often led to rivalry and intrigue. Often in the ensuing feud the people were made to suffer and pay in blood. Royal palaces and retainers often were over-shadowed by the priestly palaces and priestly retainers. The most awesome, expensive and expansive architectural buildings, sculptural wonders, ancient or modern, known to men, are the religious ones. Religion became the dope of the poor, the hoax of the wealthy and religious fervour was misused for increasing social poverty and spiritual helplessness. Without having to be a Marxist anyone, who would take the trouble of making a research into the evolution of priesthood in religious administration, would have to conclude that the institution of religious administration willingly or otherwise has been assisting tyranny and autocratic oppression, thereby perpetuating both ignorance and poverty. The institution of privileges and monopoly were the sinister invention of this system.

Sex-Practices in Religions

Religion at its earliest stage selected numberless objects for veneration. These objects have been divided by scholars into five different groups; terrestrial, sexual, animal, human and divine. All religions have had at least one or all of these groupings; and all religions grow out of these groupings. Modern religions, which pretend to have completely eradicated these groupings, still obvertly maintain, and tacitly hold on to

the nuances of these groupings in both spirit and form. They do not seem to express these; but there is no religion, not even Buddhism, which is completely free from the need of symbolic representations. Such symbols only succeed in containing truths within pseudo-mystic forms.

Mystification has been an ancient trade-secret of magic, rites and religious observances. There is always a section in religious practices which remains a secret.

Societies which through centuries have come to refuse, out of a sense of purity and decency, to accept sex as something vital and totally un- avoidable in life, would be shocked to learn the cultural significance of some of the practices they continue to adhere to even now. There is no chance that these could be discontinued, as most of these have become parts of social and religious traditions. When prudishness becomes a religion, religion becomes really prudish.

To cite just one example: which of us would give up decorating our lady of choice with a wedding ring? Yet which of us would not be startled to learn that insertion of the finger into the golden circlet conveys a symbolic message to the bride of things to come? Some of our most cherished, age-honoured, unsuspectedly innocent, often beautiful and aesthetic rituals startlingly reveal the most realistic sex practices. The traditions of circumcision is a case in point. What is at the basis of the sacrifice of the prepuce? To adduce medical reasons to this practice ap- pears to be puerile. The Babylonian ceremony of the prepuce, for instance, persist in the non-paganic messianic religions like Judaism and Islam. The tradition is a reminder of the earlier rituals of Istar, of the offering of man's genitals torn either by himself in an orgiastic frenzy, or by bacchiac maenads, who maddened by their religious fervour tore the young male from limb to limb as a sacrifice. The sacrifice meant and included even partaking the blood and the flesh of the victim. Today the circumcised infant has no knowledge of the orgiastic past; and his parents, or his society, would not feel too proud to associate, what they regard as a deeply holy and atavistically spiritual rite, with the tradition of a hated pagan sex orgy, or sex sacrifice.

The bride's first kiss is reserved for the Justice of Peace. This innocent privilege really is the remnant of a ritual the nature of which revealed, would upset many a mother, or the J. P. himself. The privilege of de- flowering the virgin had been the monopoly of the pagan priest in many oriental religions. This atrocity of an all powerful priest was

successfully challenged and largely done away with. Yet the echoes of this sex monopoly is being symbolically carried on through the first kiss, that the delighted J. P. claims from the happy bride.

Whilst these crude forms, mentioned by scholars like Knight, Fraser, Ryly-Scott, Graves, Goldberg, Allegro, Freud, Russell, etc., shock the sensitive prude of a 'decent' society, there are other subtler forms through which the overtone of the past orgiastic traditions are being sublimely preserved. Evolution is a growth and development in the Time-machine, and to stare at the past becomes often an embarrassing challenge.

Spiritual Marriage

The phenomenon of Spiritual Love itself, for instance, has its sexual overtones. Psycho-analysis chose to refer it to repressed sex. Some of the words used by persons like Kabir, Mirabai, Jalaluddin Rumi, St. Catherine, St. Gertrude, St. Bernard, St. Theresa and above all St. John on the Cross reveal the basis for such observations. St. Catherine's mysti-cal marriage with Christ is described by her in verbal details. She found herself in the arms of her heavenly lover who gave her a nuptial ring. "Oh my love," asks the fervent Marie d'Incarnacion, "when shall I embrace you? Have you no pity on the torments I suffer?" Her spiritual love came rather late, actually after sex experience, because she was married at eighteen, and was left a widow. Habba of Kashmir speaks in ecstatic language about her Love experiences in her spiritual life. Her songs resonate witdh a thrilling language of deep experience which a spiritual consummation alone could inflame.

Here is St. Theresa's experience in her own language.

The voice of the Well-Beloved caused in the Soul such transports that she is consumed by desire, and yet does not know what to ask because she sees clearly that her Lord 's with her. What pain could she have? And for what happiness could she wish? To this I do not know what to answer; but that of which I am certain is that the pain penetrates down to the very bottom of the bowels spouse withdraws. and that it seems that they have been torn away when the heavenly I felt that he took them with it, and left me utterly consumed. The pain was so severe that it made me utter several moans. The sweetness caused by this intense pain is so extreme that one cannot possibly wish it to cease.... Through- out the day and night I went about in a Mind of stupor.... I should experience raptures so deep that I could not resist them.

Bernini's depiction of this thrill in his famous marble of the Ecstasy of St. Theresa (Cornaro Chapel, Rome) transcends all language.

Suzo in his autobiography speaks of this intense experience. More frank is the language of St. Bernard.

He gives her the kiss asked. of which the fullness of breasts is witness. For so great is the efficacy of the holy kiss, that the Bride on receiving it conceives, the swelling breasts rich with milk being the evidence.

Says St. John on the Cross:

Upon my flowery breast,

Wholly for him, and save himself none,

There did I give sweet rest

To my beloved one....

When the first morning air

Blew from his tower, and waved his locks aside,

His hand with gentle care,

Did wound me in the side,

And in my body all my senses died.

There is an emotional basis for such love. Spiritual Love could be emotional; and the language might assume what we recognise as sexual of the exactness of sex-language. characteristics, Saints and their experiences do not have to avoid the use than sanctity itself. Truth, they hold, is more sanctified The necessity and practicality of the use of sex- language and sex-images in spiritual experience is a subject by itself.

But this, it may be noted, is thoroughly in the tradition of Apollo, Isis Aphrodite, Venus, Athene, Demeter, Ishtar and Astarte. The frank approach to the mysteries of life was greeted with ecstatic language before. In the world of the Saints too, all over the world it is greeted. Only in the dogmatic rituals of religious forms these are taboo. There, in God's house, the traditions are preserved in symbols and mystic rites. There

in God's house secrecy is preserved in the name of decency; but the most indecent act on spiritualism is to hide.

Truth could not be immodest; it could only be innocent. That is what the saints think. Common man hides. To hide is to sin. We impose taboos to have our sins balmed and preserved as mummies. In the name of shame and modesty man has been entertaining secrecy about mysteries. Such mysteries enslave our conscience, and drive us into the doom of subconscious guilt. So practised, religion, instead of freeing us, could only make us feel morbid. The old fear of the Magic Man, of the Priest, of the Monarch has been atavistically operating through church rites and social customs. An entire phase of human life lies tabooed. Sex taboos appear to announce that the use that man makes of a woman, or vice versa, for the fact of procreation, is ugly and filthy. Sex, it appears to say, is ungodly. The ungodliest thing is to attempt to improve what is God's. The duty of procreation is god-given.

The vital act of procreation is neither filthy, nor shameful. It of course demands privacy. All intimacy demands the security of duality against plurality. In intimate moments diversion becomes disturbance, Total attention brooks no third. Exposure of emotional excesses under- rates the value of the emotion, and corrupts personal joy by the cheap- ness of exhibitionism. Like a poet writing poetry, a painter engaged on a canvas, a musician composing his notes, an actor figuring his role and recit- ing his lines, the creator has to create joy in flesh, and flesh in joy, from within the self (Anandanugata-Samadhi). In fact in the actual act of a creative embrace the male and the female must forget totally their different identity.

It is not for the love of a husband that husband is dear; but for the love of the Soul in the husband that husband is dear.

It is not for the love of a wife that wife is dear; but

for the love of the Soul in the wife that wife is dear.

For where there seems to be a duality, there one sees another, one feels another's perfume, one thinks of another, knows another. But when all has become Spirit, one's own Self, how and whom could one see? How and whom could one hear? How and of whom could one feel the perfume? How and to whom could one speak?

The essence of spiritualism is contained in the flask of the body. The body and its nature cannot be kept at bay by a negativising asceticism. To allow the body to function, and adore it, is not always erotic. The phallic and the erotic are not the same. The mystic sources of Spiritual Love spring from the body of which Sex is a vital force. We call the source mystic. By our own sense of guilt we have tabooed them as mystic. In reality the ancients did not think so.

"Call no man your father on earth; for One is your Father, which is in heaven," (John, VI: 6, 3). This from John, it is thought, supports the taboo on sex. But John's language was spiritual; and should have been understood symbolically, or metaphorically. Then it would mean different, real and practical. Then John, would sound as echoeing the truth of Brhadaranyaka

When the human father thus evicts him as seed into the womb, it is really the Sun that evicts him as seed into the womb.... Thence he is born, after that seed, that breath.

John, read in the above light, means something more real, more sensible, more coherent. He accepts the germinal effectiveness of the sun, and the sun's relation to the biologic life cycle.

The Sun, its biologic influence on the mechanism of procreation has been lauded again and again by the ancients. Even Jesus had been often regarded as the human replica of the Sun's function.

Both the Semetic and the Greek word for Christ or 'the annointed', or the 'smeared one' came from the Sumerian term for semen, or the resinous saps mash and slem. The Semetic languages furthermore, combined both the Sumerian words into 'Sh..m..th, (Genitalis) which variously means a steward, a priest, an angel, a prostitute. An independently derived form came to be used for the greatest copulator of all, the sun, (Hebrew Shemesh) whose fiery glans every evening plunged glowing into the open vulva of earth, and in the morning came forth like a bridegroom from his marriage chamber."

The relation of the sun-image with the phallic function of the mush- room, of the mushroom image with the Christ and the Church, of "the man child born of the virgin womb" and later sacrificed to be eaten, is as old as the hills." In this light John's meaning of the psalm XXX: 19.5 becomes clear.

Aristotle in his Physics 11: 2 says, "Man and the Sun generate Man," a view supported by Rúmi in his Mathnawi I: 3775-779. "When the time comes for the embryo to receive the vital spirit, and the Sun becomes its helper. This embryo is brought into movement by the Sun.... By which way did it become connected with the womb with the beauteous sun? By the hidden way that is remote from our sense perception." in spite of the advanced state of the medical science the mystery of 'Life' is a mystery still. The explanation, mysticism offers, has to be accepted or contradicted only when one finds oneself in the skin of the mystic, and not otherwise.

The Mystery of Coitus

"We see that philosophers as well as religious literature of old made the subject of procreation not only one of joy, eulogy and encouragement, but gave the entire process a status of spiritual elevation and social accept-ance. Sex in the ancient days, as we have seen, was no taboo. By making it taboo, civilisation, specially spiritualism and public morals have not gained. Religious phallicism suffers from taboo because of the failure of the church to accept a great fact with truthful equanimity. Sun, the source of all light and knowledge, had been connected with this, and Jesus himself was connected to the sun. The Christian church before Rome's intervention was both realistic and honest.

Nothing was hidden. Nothing was mystified. Sun was accepted as the source of the vital powers, the source of Sakti. Sunday in the Hindu calendar is an important day. On this day, specially, sun worship is enjoined with offerings of 'doob grass, and of 'hibiscus' flower. In shape and form the bloomed hibiscus fully represents the erect penis set in the open vulva. Besides this the medical value of hibiscus on the womb, activisation and fertilising of the ovaries has always been honoured in the Indian treatises. Hibiscus bud taken in pasted form is an ovaric tonic. Similarly the haemostatis effect of the juice of doob on blood is marvellous. Other flowers, such as Atasi and Aparajita specified for sun-worship refer invariably to their drug-effect on the ovarian cycle. Marigold is one such so is the famous 'sunflower'.

...The first Christian missionaries had conducted themselves with scrupulous courtesy towards the devotees of the pagan Sun- cult, with whom they had much mystical doctrines in common. Celtic and pre-Celtic gods and goddesses became Christian

saints- for instance, St. Brigit, whose perpetual sacred fire was kept alight at Kildare until the time of Henry VIII.

The Vedas never attempted to treat copulation under any shade of secrecy; neither was it regarded as unholy. The Vedic approach to human copulation is one of sanctified homage to life. The Vedic nuptial prayers which are recited in every Hindu marriage are both bold and practical. Phallic taboos offer little answers to life's problems. Problems start with taboos.

Garbhadhana-Rites (Rites for Insemination)

The groom and the bride are preparing to meet for the first coitus. They take good care of eating healthy and vitalising special food, prepared under special care. Then together they invoke the Spirit of the Virgin to leave the virgin bride's company, and engage herself in protecting other virgins, this one having reached her matured destination. (Virginal inhibitions for the bride in her nuptial chamber would prove embarrassing, and create unhappiness. Hence the special prayer for an uninhibited night). The Buddhist canonical literature very clearly says that man and woman alone cannot create; intercourse alone cannot impregnate. Father and mother is just one factor. The mother's menstrual flow and the egg. together, provides the second factor. There is yet a third factor. The presence of a spiritual influence, of a Gandharva, as the Canon says. Tibetan Book of the Dead also meations the presence of this third factor, a spiritual presence, and calls it will or the power of the primary cause. (St. John calls it the Father in Heaven; Brhadaranyaka, Aristotle, Jalāl- uddin Rumi call it the 'Sun'. Tantra calls it will).

This 'third factor', about which the Tibetan Book of the Dead is so emphatic, has been accepted, hinted and projected in another system which evolved in ancient Iran. This system is known as the Dahara and Arciradi, both of which find mention in the Upanisads. Dahara speaks of the nature of the Abode of Cosmic consciousness, and Arciradi elaborates on the life after death. Yogis always connect the Tibetan Tantricism with the Arciradi system. In the present context, along with what in the Upanisad is known as madhu-vidya, the systems too tend definitely towards Tantric practices.

Woman, verily, O Gautama is the (sacrificial) fire; of these the sexual organ is the fuel, what invites is the smoke, the vulva is the What is done inside is the coals, the pleasure

the sparks. flame. In this fire the gods offer (the libation of) semen; from this offering arises the foetus. For this (reason) indeed, in the fifth oblations water comes to be called man.

How close was this Upanisad mysticism regarding esoteric significance of sexual practices to Tantra could be adjudged from a description of Tibetan Tantricism and its defence by one of the most celebrated Tibetan scholars of modern times. The Tibetan icons and Sakti images are known for their frank, vigorous and highly posturous figures which at times stir sentiments with awe and fear. Disgust, somehow or other, does not actually descsribe the emotive impact experienced, and most certainly the figures fail to touch the least eroticism which such stylised frankness is supposed to evoke. In this regard these Tantra-figures of Tibet are unique. The life-mystery of procreation has been set at a very highly motivated spiritual key by this Tantric system, to which many of the initiates have paid high homage.

Far from being magical or even mystical, Tantricism is essentially pragmatic, and it seeks a pragmatic explanation for all phenomenon. As for the assertion that it is a perverted doctrine that is contrived to permit unlicensed indulgence into sexual and other kinds of debauchery, this can only be said by those who have no knowledge of Tantricism. There are many in Tibet who dis- approve of Tantra, and my own Gelukpa, or Yellow Hat, sect forbids its public practice. But that is not because we do not believe the Tantras are a holy and truly spiritual path, it is because we believe that this path is too dangerous, and following the teachings of the Buddha, we try to concern ourselves with humanity as a whole, not with the very few adepts for whom the tantras are suit- able. Sexual union in particular is considered as the greatest creative act possible in this material world, and it is thought of as embodying the whole principle of creativity. To this the Tibetan Lama school of Tantricism have added the dual principle of pre- servation and destruction. The appropriate rites, to the un- initiated, read as though the participants were expected to indulge not only in sexual activity, but also in an orgy of Elood. In almost any temple one may see the sacred figures of deities, male and female, locked in sexual embrace; and further, they and other deities may be represented in either a peaceful or fierce aspect. The images symbolise the principles involved, and help the mind to concentrate on the principles, not to induce the body activity. The rites are performed with similar symbolism, and long before the novice is introduced to them he is expected to attain complete mastery over his

physical impulses. Any thought that the rites implied license to indulge in sexual activity, or to commit actual blood sacrifices, would be considered to be the greatest heresy. The power of sex cannot be denied, even by the most prudish, for they too were born by its power. The Tantras try to grasp the basic principle involved and so arrive speedily at a true under- standing of the nature of being.

Tantricism is based on Yogic practice, and the slightest know- ledge of Yoga is enough to demonstrate the extent of the self- discipline demanded; for Tantricism goes far beyond Yoga. It is probably the .nost severe self-discipline ever demanded of man in spiritual endeavour.

Just how severe is this could be illustrated by a peep into the nature of the actual practice. At a certain point Thubten Zigma Norbu permits us to have a little feel of the almost superhuman power hidden behind what we glibly call and know as sexual act.

Gyalwo Rinpoche has been a celebrated Lama of the highest order whose love-poems, popularly known to have been addressed for a female partner in his spiritual life, are still sung in Tibetan homes. The following passage written in justification of his sexual practices gives us an insight into the Tibetan attitude to Tantra, its practices, and the great expecta- tions that inspire the initiates for adopting this way.

It seems most possible that the Young Tsangyang was initiated into Tantric practices which involve physical, rather than mental, sexual intercourse with women. There are various degrees of this, all of which rest in the belief that semen is possessed of a vital force that is both physical and spiritual. By correct expenditure of the physical, the spiritual force can be released for the further elevation of the adept.

The correct practice may involve the withholding of the semen just as it is about to be ejected, or else it may be ejected and drawn back again, a practice that can only be achieved after many years of physical training. In the latter case, according to some teach- ings, the male sperm may draw back with it the female ova, fur- ther enriching the practitioner though at the expense of the female who is carefully chosen, and who, in turn, may draw into herself something of the male element, and transform it likewise into spiri- tual, rather than physical, energy.

This energy is drawn upward, as if along the spinal column, until it reaches a point at the base of the neck; when it reaches this point the practitioner reaches a state of higher awareness.

This awareness could reward him with unusual powers of hearing, seeing and doing things which, naturally, appear to the common man as miraculous. Lompon Rinpoche is perhaps the most celebrated Lama of Tibet whose miracles have remained as all-time wonders for the Tibetans to quote as illustrative of Tantric powers. In accordance with the Tantric school of thinking the severest Tantric training had won for him the powers of materialisation and dematerialisation. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had similar powers. Lompon Rinpoche, an adept at Tantric power acquired through long practices, could create images through gestures of special significance. He went into trances, and as master of will 'created' material bodies subject to physical laws.

It was in this way that he brought water from (solid) rock, and stopped the sun from setting. There are even certain Tantric rites that demand such accomplishment, though they are not per-fermed for display, but only as a necessary part of self-training and discipline. Such a rite is rolang, in which a corpse is temporarily revived in order to effect a transfer of power. (The Hindus are fully aware of an incident in the life of the great Samkarācārya when he had been forced to adopt this particular method for ex-plaining certain mysteries to Mandana Misra's wife Ubhaya-Bharati, a very learned lady-Author's comment.).... This is plainly different from the Chod rite, in which all the dreadful imagery is confirmed to the mental world of the adept.

Tibetan Tantricism could clearly be called, thus, phallically perverted. But the study of Tantra, when done with care and discretion, has had great scholars to declare that Yogic power has a means of breaking through the mystery of the material world, and reach, and survive in a world of psychical consciousness when the powers of materialisation and de- materialisation appear to be as easy and automatic as the action of the winks of eyes. Tantric powers leading to an ascendancy over supra-consciousness and cosmic communications observe all physical acts as inspired by the same breath of the Supreme Power. In their sight there is no distinction between low or high. Sex to them is not something different from Will or Energy, and no limb is exclusively designed for sinning or causing a fall in status. With the Mind-machine controlled, body- machine is but a reflexive dead matter subject to will. Sex is seen as

something bad by the very products of sex who as consummate escapists avoid a probe into the power of sex as they cannot dare a breakthrough the awful demands this power makes on their otherwise weak nerves.

Compare the bold language of the Vedic people when they celebrate the coupling of the male and the female in a sublimated ceremony known as wedlock (vivaha). The couple is brought face to face with a solemn duty of life, where they are called upon to function one of the vital roles that the very privilege of living a life has imposed on them.

Compared to the above passage on Tibetan Tantric rites the Vedic system does not appear to be less vigorous, or realistic. Here's the Vedic prayer for the nuptial rites.

Then he embraces her (saying), I am the vital breath, you are speech; you are speech, and I am the vital breath. I am the Saman and you are the Rg. I am the heaven, and you are the earth. Come, let us strive together, let us mix semen that we have children.

Then he spreads apart her thighs (saying), "Spread yourself apart, Heaven and Earth." After having inserted the member in her, after having joined mouth to mouth, he strokes her three times, as the hair lies (covering body with body as if each hair of one body covered by each of the other) saying, "Let Visnu (sun) make the womb prepared. Let Tvastr (Divine Artisan) (corresponds to Hephaistos) shape the various forms. Let Prajapati (the spirit- Lord of procreation, i.e., fertility in the sperm) pour in. Let Dhâtr (Demeter) place the sperm for you (in such order as the embryo does not get displaced). O Sinibali (the new moon's unseen first phase, which though not seen, yet is the start of a beautiful form) give the seed; give the seed, oh dame. (N.B. In this ancient text 'moon' is a female. In later Puranas she is a 'male', sun's brother. Compare Dr. Grave's theories on the myths of 'moon', Hyperion and Male). Let the two Asvins (corresponds to Demeters-twin-Castor and Pollux), crowned with lotus wreaths, place the seed. The two Asvins churn out a flame with the (two) sticks of gold. It is such a germ we beg of you to be brought forth in the tenth month. As the earth contains the germ of fire (heat) and as the heaven is pregnant with the storm, as the air is the germ of quarters, even so I place a germ in you." 57

Nothing is secret, nothing is taboo. The treatment is frank, open, practical. 'Dharma' is a way of life with the Hindus. The Hindu lives, as has been again and again said

before, his Dharma; and whatever is 'life' is his Dharma. No part of Dharma needs be mystified, secreted or held indecent. This is life; not what is known as phallic.

Yet the taboos restrict man to be what he is. Because of the self-made taboos man lives in a world of mental repression. As a result we enjoin strictures against promiscuity, which we seek in the name of religious gatherings; we forbid discussions on sex, yet indulge in smutty books, and trade in more smutty motion pictures; we cloak our act of life in mysterious darkness, and explain to our own children the mystery of birth by telling them misleading tales about some storks, etc. Thus a double standard has been imposed by our own double-living; we suffer from split-personal- ity, and we feel proud of a society which is sick from end to end.

Religion has lost its frankness. God has lost the Vedic simplicity. Artifice has deprived all our prayers of an essential directness of contact. We have imposed other values, human and ungodly, to our objective of self-knowledge. We have placed fear above love, and tact above truth. We have taken Truth into the dark, by banishing Light from it. We crowd our altars with icons and forms which we do not understand. We accept a host of symbols in place of a simple Truth. We are afraid of exposure. We confuse love with lust; Life with Sex; Phallic with Erotic; emotion with sentiment; Soul with Self. We have to reeducate ourselves to bear in mind that the more we live in an imaginary world, the more our chance of facing the realities recedes. We do not get emancipation from religion; what we do get is God-love from the rituals associated with religion; we get just mystified. We hide ourselves, behind the mysteries, and lose the essence; eventually, also the peace, that is truly ours.

The mysteries which gave us the forest of symbols are avidly main- tained by us, although we protest against Saivism being phallic. Śaivism was the bold attempt to swallow all the poison of the churning orgiastic religions of the East and West, of the Aryans and the non-Aryans. This is told in the form of a mythological legend, discussed later; this is evident from some of the names given to Śiva. Šiva has been described to have swallowed all the poison raised as an overflowing vitriolic froth from a catastrophic quarrel between two opinions about the best way of achieving immortality. The quarrel threatened to destroy the entire creation. Siva stood in the breach; and drank off the ensuing bitterness. He saved creation. Saivism is the synthetic answer between two extremes of spiritualism and eroticism, asceticism and

materialism. Saivism is realistic. Its phallicism, mostly and generally, is an imposition projected by a prejudiced mind too accustomed to phallic motifs.

To a very large extent there is a good ground for believing that this legendary record described a true but critical phase of human civilisation. The naked Siva, the uninhibited, the unsocial, unsophisticated alone could, by His simple Love and Grace save the complex situation created by man and his endless trickery of creating mysteries around broad truths of life. He was Asutosa, the benevolent; Pramathesa, Lord of the non- Aryan tribes fond of music and happy living.

The known divinities of the Vedas (as of all primitive cults), the obvious forces of Nature, were symbolically accepted as gods. These stood as the frank expressions of Man's desire and their satisfying agencies. The Sun, the Earth and the Rains had vital parts to play in providing food for the hungry, food and plenty gave health; health assisted procrea- tion, and so on. Every aspect of nature was divine and sweet. Life was divine and sweet. But with the craving for lust of power this simple atti- tude to Love and God became corrupted. Divinities became more so- phisticated; rites became more mysterious; and prayers became more specialised. Priests invented mystery, symbolism, rituals and dogmas, and gained in Power. We shall now examine these gods.

V

The Birth of Gods

1. Nature Gods-Symbols and Totems

Of the gods man worship, understandably, aspects of nature demanded the first homage. The Vedic gods set a pattern in these regards. As the Vedic gods became popular amongst many of the ancient religions, we examine the popularity of these nature gods from end to end of the earth. This was not due to evangelical propagation, it was perfectly natural to worship nature.

The Moon and the Sun, as gods, had naturally the foremost preference. The Moon probably, having been found to have influence on the tides, on vegetation, was regarded to have immense influence on menstruation, and consequently on fertility, whether of the womb or of the soil. Mens- truating females in many parts of the world were studiously kept out of the way, so that spiritual influence might not be transmitted

through them for causing unforeseen disaster to crops, New or Full-Moon days were not considered propitious for casting seed; and the humans, in many parts of the world, avoid casting seed in womb on these days (and nights). Of course the Earth was the great Mother, the goddess who gave men the most primal of its means of survival. Food, next in order, has to be dependent on rain (water, rivers and the ocean). Its abstract form, the cloud, was symbolised to have penetrating powers. Jupiter or Zeus pene- trated too in the form of a cloud reputed to have similar powers. He was often worshipped as one god in two aspects, rain and beams. It was one of the first conscious attempts in favour of finding One God becoming many.

Agni (Ignus), the fire-god, with its symbol of Aries-the ram (easy for sacrifice, and later for roastings) was the next in kin, and regarded as the best mundane representation of the Sun. The veneration of fire had posed some trouble, inasmuch as the people stood divided in splitting their loyalties between the Sun and the Fire. Die-hards have been the fathers of schisms; and the conservatives assist most in damaging conservation by spurning calls for change. But the supremacy of the Sun has hardly been tarnished. From the fields of Ireland to the palaces of the Emperor of Japan, from the Incas of Peru to the Nordic Eskimos and Scandinavians, Sun as a vigorous symbol and a distributor and promoter of health, joviality, virility, vigour and power has been honoured, deified and sung. We may call this superstition; but superstitions die hard; and the most advanced of us nurse superstitious practices without ever realising how we thrive on superstitions. Civilisation has advanced through the ex- clusiveness of a superior minority, who enjoys its fruits to the exclusion of the majority of the underprivileged who shall continue to harbour their loyalties to the gods that give them food, power, and the basic means of livelihood. The uneducated, and the unprivileged worship these gods, and follow superstition with the same nerve and energy as the privileged and the 'educated' worship money, and refuse to admit of its superstitious value. Money is the most civilised form of superstitions. The power of money stands above all other powers.

The Sky, and the stars later on, which were adored as divinities of old, stood their grounds as the Heaven, and the Angels. The highest God amongst (a) the Mongols was Tengri, the sky; (b) the Chinese was Tl, the sky; (c) the Vedics was Dyaupitar, the sky; (d) the Greeks, was Zeus, the sky; and (e) the Persians, was Ahura, the sky. The Egyptians as well as the Bg Veda conceived the Earth and the Sky as in eternal mating,

producing between them all lives that this earth is populated with Egyptian archaeology has revealed a number of frescoes and friezes describing the copulation between Geb (the earth god) and Net (the sky goddess), and the interference by Ra (see Plate 23). A 12th cent. (n.c.) papyrus of Tamenice (21st dynasty) illustrates this belief in a multi-coloured picture.

The next stage, therefore, saw the adoration of all the three in one single family-unit of Sky-Sun-Earth combination. Thus in deifications, objects such as trees, springs, rivers, mountains, fields laden with corn, even an earthquake began to be venerated. This accounts for the veneration which the Oriental group of religions pay to the Mother-image of the Earth. Almost, everywhere the Earth was the great Mother. Our language, which is often the precipitate of our primitive or unconscious beliefs, suggest to this day a kinship between matter (material) and mother (matter). The Sanskrt verb root 'Vas' relates to Vastu (matter) and Vara (Home), 'Vasavi is Earth; Vasu is spirit of earth turned to material wealth, such as metals and jewels. (b) Parthies and Pethich have the same root. Ishtar and Cybele, Demeter and Ceres, Aphrodite, Venus, (Dharity and Laksmi, Bhuvaneivari and Kamala) and Freya were comparatively late forms of the ancient goddesses of the earth whose fertility constitute the bounty of the fields.

This importance of the Mother, however, did not continue long without change. With the growth of society, protection from mass attacks became an important part for survival; and the leadership of the males in this struggle limited the scope of the leadership of the females. This gave the males the opportunity to improve their position. Being considered more useful, and more valuable to family-units, females were being taken as prisoners of war, in preference to the males. Gradually the females were reduced to a secondary state of partners. The beginnings of the patriarchal leadership were being laid down. What we take as ornaments, bangles, bracelets and necklaces, though golden and be- jewelled, are but the remnants of what had been chains, with which the victors, the males, secured their war-spoils the females. The Mother- goddesses, at first shown as superior mates of the Father-gods, later on lost their right to the male usurpers. Instead of the all pervading of Mother the primitive and the Pagan religions, a religion of Father, Pater, Jupiter, God emerged. Patriarchy was coming into being.

Despite this emergence, the miracle of fertility and growth continued to fascinate man. No matter what they won, in a special area life owed subsistence and continuity to

females. Men could not bear children. Only females did. The role that the male seed played in propagation was still unknown. Man never ceased to wonder how the females became the secret monopolists of the mystery of propagation.

Nearly all ancient peoples worshipped sex in some form of ritual, and not the lowest people, but the highest, expressed their worship most completely. We shall find such worship in Egypt and India; Babylonia and Assyria; Greece and Rome. The sexual characters and functions of primitive deities were held in high regard, not through any obscenity of mind, but through a passion for fertility in women and in the Earth."

Again we note, sex or sex-act was adored as a mystery; and was never abhorred as a taboo. Tantra of the old traditions maintain this very attitude. Tantra worships the Source of the Mystery in Life.

Symbolism is an effective esoteric language. For the cultivation of spirit of rather mundane and practical minds this language proves useful. Crude frankness is always kept removed in preference. Symbolic representations, which have the advantages of precision, concentration, secrecy, mystery and esoteric significance have always been preferred to a crude language of committal and depiction. Symbols are objective shortcuts to subjective adoration. The faculty of their acquisition eli- minates the difficulty of the actual possession of a physical partner in mystic rites. Some of the symbols were taken from animal life, like the bull, the snake, the fish, the pig, the shell, the ram and the tortoise. Thus started the phase of adoration of animal worship, and the beginnings of totem. From the lizard, the beetle and the centepede to the elephant there is hardly any animal which has not been worshipped by some people somewhere on this earth. The same could be said of the fowls. Totem- ism has given to civilisation its sacred animals. Animals like the bull and the boar have been worshipped sometime or the other in the countries near or about the Mediterranean. The Alexandrians, the Greeks, the Levantese still lay a great store as much by star gazing as by watching movements of birds, snakes, worms, and even sands. As a result we find that whereas some people do not eat certain meats of animals for one assumed reason, some others do not eat the meat of another for some other reason. Deep within, both such taboos are related to totemism.

Tribes are still related to one another by totems. Tribes are often referred to by the names of animals and birds which formed their totems. Thus we have the bird-people,

the monkey-people, the bear-people, the fish-people, the elephant-people, the tiger-people and so on. Often, as in the Hindu epics, and in the Greek epics, we meet with the great civilised 'Monkeys' who speak and read and write; and 'mermaids' who sing and love and enchant; and the half-horse-half-man Gandharvas as experts give lessons in music and prowess; (Archilles was tutored by a half-man-horse being) and the Sphinx, the Cimera, the Dragon, the Unicorn successfully take part in the human world. The dove, the fish and the sheep of Christianity are nothing but remnant of totem adoration. We have seen that the 'blood and flesh' statement of Jesus at 'the last supper' signified the existence of a current practice of partaking of blood and flesh as a religious rite. The Mass has a pagan past.

Thus the original Mother gave way to the Father image. Even in symbolic form the fact persists. The church is the Womb, the Mother, the Nave; and Jesus is the Male inside. Here too the male has ousted the female. This led to a Father-Mother image, and family concept. Sex became a matter for enquiry, mystery adoration. The Nave, the Sanctuary, the Chalice, the Rosary, the Font, the Arc, still continue to be Mysterious and remote to the commoner. Only the Reverend Father is in custody of the Mystery. The productivity of nature was traced to a fecundity of the Earth as penetrated by the virile Sun which pours his vitals into her wombs in the form of rain. The imitation of this mysterious power of the deities, the adorers offered coitus as sacrificial compliments. Pregnancy on the one hand, and usefulness in building a domesticated society on the other, increased the value of the females as war prisoners. Whereas the captive females would produce slaves to fight future wars, the enemies would run short of wombs to plant future fodder for carrying on their battles. It was an effective move. The adoration soon took symbolic forms. Special birds, reptiles and animals were chosen for sex- symbolism, and adored. This adoration led to totemical importance of certain animals and other creatures as worthy of worship. The totems became the taboos.

The transition of nature-gods to human-gods had to pass through the stage of animal-gods and zoomorphic gods. Further, the worship of the Menes, another strata for veneration, passing from the region of the living to the region of the dead came little later. Magic rites, vegetation-rites gave place to festivals of licences conducted by a privileged class which held the secrets and the rights of interpreting the mysteries of these rites and licences. These rites and licences together formed the bulk of the

Oriental religions whose gods and rites we are about to describe now, with the hope that the Saivic rites, mistaken as phallic, are better understood in the light of, and in contrast to, these pagan forms.

2. Reverence to the Mystery of Birth

Craving for a child is the oldest of all cravings, ranging perhaps only next to the craving for food. It is not so much the pleasure of the sex act, neither for favours to seek more enduring virile powers, that made men to worship the sex symbols. Man sought sex as animal instinct; man worshipped sex for Life. A desire for multiplying worked as a pious projection of the will to live even after death. Indirectly it satisfied the hope of immortality. The joy of procreation was sought for a far more sublime purpose than for mere carnal pleasures of debauchery. Man dies in body alone; but he continues to live spiritually in his progeny. The harvested crop dies when unshelled; but life lives within seeds to be sprouted next summer; the day dies in the nights; but are born again with the advent of the dawn; and the stars carry the seeds of light until the new day is up again. Pagan poetry is replete with this theme. Night is the womb of light; autumn of spring; and death of life.

And the theme had to play in the human drama. Religion gave a wide and effective scope for the dramatisation of this theme through its myths. Most of the myths contain the secret aspirations of the subjectivity of man; and in the myths, the historicity of events are often garbed in the light of the wishful and the heroic. This most ancient and tender theme runs through almost all the religions of the ancient world, down to our own day. The emotive theme of Resurrection of 'the Coming of the Lord', and of 'the Final-Day Judgement', express our desire to re-live, and see on earth the Millenium of our dreams achieved. The sacrifice of the Christ on the Cross as we have noted is in accordance with a tradition. This tradition, contained in Mithraism, in the cults of Ishtar, Isis, Artemis, Aphrodite and Venus, weilded one of the strongest influences which had overwhelmed the peoples of the world. Do we not hear echoes of the same cult in the sacrifical rites of the Incas of Peru and the Aztecs of Mexico?

For the increase of fertility, therefore, man could do anything. Man submitted to Magic in the interest of sex. Mass sublimated sex as a divine offering to fertility, to Life. Its popularity was only next to the fear from disease. Sex and disease, together with the temptation of overcoming an enemy, supply to magic the most secular of motives.

In the month of May villagers in England choose a king and a queen for a public wedding, so that from the consummation of their love the har- vest might gather a filling strength. In all carnivals, all over the paganic Christian society they still chose the king and the queen. The message of this selection is obvious. The nights that emerge out of the carnival are dedicated to festivity coupling, i.e., offering the act of sex-mating as the highest gift to a fertility God, such as Priapus, Pan, or his spiritual replica, Christ himself. Children born of these holy nights were 'holy' children, held in much regard in Greece and Rome. Man has been known to have fried and powdered the genitals of a full grown man, and strewn it over his field with the hope of increasing its fertility. Public consum- mation of marital rights on the fields is supposed to add to the fertility of the fields. So the sprinkling of the fields with sacrifical blood, even of human blood, has been regarded almost on all parts of the world as sure guarantee for ensuring good harvest,

Harvesting festivals, or festivals of sowing, amongst many peoples and tribes sanction free licence to promiscuity for days, because men and women seriously believed that, like men and women, the plants too are fond of the sexual play and enjoyments. "Not only is full sexual licence permitted to the neophites, and indeed in most cases enjoined, but any visitor attending the festival is encouraged to indulge in licentiousness. Prostitution is freely indulged in, and adultery is not viewed with any sense of heinousness, on account of the surroundings. No man attending the festival is allowed to have intercourse with his wife." Although this statement from Reverend H. Rowley refers to the Bantus, the learned reverend, with a little effort could have discovered that similar social customs characterised many of the religions of the Near Eastern regions, Mediterranean countries and isles, stretching as far as Spain. Bacchanalia of Greece, Saturnalia of Rome, Fete des Fous in France, May Day and Mardi Gras carnivals are not the only instances. We have instances in comparatively modern times from England, France, Italy and Norway where superstitions regarding May-Pole dances still are found to play active parts in the daily lives of the grass-root people. Such trends and beliefs perpetuate a tradition which holds even now immeasurable in- fluence over the people of the ancient and prehistoric times. Christian Europe, Communist China, Hindu India, Islamic Syria, Iraq or Persia, black Africa, Catholic America, the tribal world-all venerate this aspect of nature in one or another form. This type of erotic veneration in the name of pantheistic deities has been

traditional to every single religion known to man, past or present. Religions long dead have never- theless bequeathed the tradition to later times. In this context a study of the ancient religions of the Orient, and of the Mediterranean civilisations would be very rewarding in our understanding the actual nature, form and content of Saivism and Saiva-philosophy. The most astute of the Tantra- scholars and Tantric Yogis feel that Tantra or esoteric mysticism, or Saivism is universally followed for spiritual joy and power. They feel that Mysticism or Saivism is the future religion of man.

The ancient religions are many. Their forms and rites are many. Dr. Graves says that the forms continue to exist in the Christian church too,

Yet in certain things surprising similarities draw our attention. Of these similarities there is one which unmistakably and invariably offers a common source of inspiration to all the religions; it is the homage that life pays to sex. For bringing this homage effectively home, promiscuity, orgy, wine, nocturnal rites, dances have played their parts as adjuncts and corollaries. The main theme has been sex. In course of time excesses flood out the spirit; debauchery creep in, and settle. Spiritualism plays a secondary role. The importance of these religions was never realised until recently when Champollion, Wooley, Gotha and others excavated a lot of informations from Sumer.

3. Sumer

The Sumerians worshipped the sun and considered the sun a wheel of the god Shamash, the light of the gods. Apsu (Water), Enlil and Ninlil (Air), Nusku (fire), Ea, Sin, Anu, son of Anshar and Kishar, were some of the many gods of Sumer. But Marduk, son of Ea and Apsu (both of which mean water) was the greatest of the gods. This god in later times, as we shall note, shall rule Assyria.

Originally, it seems, the gods preferred human flesh. But as human morality improved they had to be content with animals. The lamb is the substitute for humanity; he hath given up a lamb for his life. Another legend narrated how the gods had created man happy by his free will; he had sinned, and been punished with a flood, from which but one man, Tagtug, the weaver, had survived. Tagtug forfeited longevity and health by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree,

Anu, the father of gods, was worshipped at Uruk along with Inanna, or Innin, the Mother Goddess of heaven, who as Ishtar, in later years almost monopolised all worship and reverence due to all other gods and goddesses. To the Sumerians, too, at the start, female deities had been of greater significance.

And why not? Was not the Earth female; or, Inanna the womb, giving birth to everything which dwells in holy habitation with living creatures? Who were these living creatures?

We know from much later Babylonian religious texts that such 'sacred marriages' did take place usually on New Year's Day, when a priest and priestess, representing a god and goddess, mounted to the sacred chamber of the topmost level of the Ziggurat, and there consummated the sexual act, as a result of which the fertility of the land was to be renewed. Such customs are well known among the ancient civilisations, and after the ceremony the principal participants are usually sacrificed,"

The imposing sanctuary of Bel rose like a pyramid above the city in a series of sight towers and stories, one on top of the other. On the highest tower,...there stood a spacious temple; and in the temple a great bed..... seen; no human being passed the night there, save and except a In the temple no image was to be single woman whom according to the Chaldean priests, the god chose from among all the women of Babylon. deity himself came into the temple at night, and slept in the great They said that the bed; and the woman as a consort of the god might have no inter- course of the mortal man."7

We see the start of the temple-prostitution, a feature of the Ancient Orient, as owned by all the scholars, ancient or modern, on the subject. This system, prevailed as part of sacred marriage, over classical Greece and Rome, as well as over the area where these cultures dominated along with their gods. Diana, Ceres, Bacchus and Artemis have been the great partners in this drama. According to the testimony of Cleres in the wood of Nemi sacred unions took place in the interest of fertility. Sacred marriages grew into a dominant feature in pagan Europe, and till now, in the Catholic church the system continues without any change."

Many of the mediaeval-clergy not only connived at popular paganism, but actively embraced it; the Queen of Heaven and her son are now decisively quit of the orgiastic rites once performed in their honour,

It will not be proper to close the topic of sexual propensity in the temple-traditions of Sumer without quoting yet another author.

It was, however, she (Ishtar)

Who roused amorous desires in all creatures.

As soon as she withdrew her influence:

The bull refuses to cover the cow,

The ass no longer approaches the she ass,

\In the street the man

No longer approaches the maid servant,"

Sacred prostitution formed part of their cult, and whenshe descend- ed to earth she was accompanied by courtesans, harlots strumpets. Her holy city Erech, was called "The Town of Sacred Courtesans'. Estar herself, however, was called 'courtesan of the gods' and she was the first to inspire the desire which she inspired. Her lovers were legions, and she was chosen of them from all walks of life. But woe to him who Ishtar had honoured. The fickle goddess treated her passing lovers cruelly, and the unhappy wretches paid dearly for the favours heaped on them. Animals enslaved by her love lost their native vigour: they fell into traps laid by them or later do- mesticated by them....

Even for the gods Estar's love was fatal. In her youth the goddess had loved Tammuz. Ishtar was overcome with grief, and burst into lamentation over her dead lover. In such a way later Aphrodite was to bewail the death of Adonis.

Alcestis had to wail the death of Admetus; Savitri had to wail the death of Satyavan; Pururava wailed the passing away of Ureali; Siva had to wail the death of Sati. Keats refers to such wails of princes and knights in his La Belle Dame Sans Merci.

No oriental religion could be studied in isolation. None of these legends died without leaving echoes. As we shall proceed with the legends of the other Oriental religions, and as we shall come to the myths of the Greeks and the Romans, we shall discover how this strain of the legend of Ishtar flows continually, like the river Ganges in India, changing its name from place to place, from people to people, from age to age, from

myths to myths. The remarkable part of this myth is that, according to many scholars it persists within the central legend of the story of Christ, in the virgin birth, in the Annunciation, in epic that surrounds that Last Supper, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the promise of perpetual life.

In the Hindu myths it has been twice reflected: once in the myth of Savitri; and again in the myth of Siva's dance with Sati's corpse.

"Tarà is the power of Hiranyagarbha (the eternal golden embryo), the primal cosmic matrix from where the world issues forth. Life in its germinal state burns in the agony of hunger." Tärä is hungry; ever-hungry. Nothing exists but without devouring something else. "Union is intensified through disunion." This double force that integrates through disintegration in the language of Empedocles is a

Two-fold tale.... At one time

The one grew from the many. Yet again

Division was, the many from the one -

And these things never cease.

But change for ever.

At one time all are joined, and all is love,

And next they fly asunder, and all is strife.

Survival of the Universe depends on Death or Decay as much as on love, a fact amply illustrated in the rites of sacrifical death of man, animal and bird. The power of the golden embryo survives in the fire of hunger that consumes matter for forming matter. This pure hunger for love and devouring at the same time is Târă. Târă and star both mean the luminous body that glows in the dark void; but etymologically Tard means 'that which leads to the other shore'; leads ignorance to knowledge, and darkness to light. And Lalita Upallyāna (A Buddhist treatise) says "Buddha alone, the destroyer of darkness (of ignorance) knows the way of my (Tara) worship; none else." But Acara Tantra says that in China alone is Tantra (Tara) fully known and practised.

Thus the concept of the great 'Love-in-Death and Death-in-Love' goddess, of the Reaper-Eater-Grower, has been universal on the old world from China to Crete and

Sicily. Esthar, Ishtar, Iis or Inana has been a continuous Mother-tradition which will be later dealt with in a separate chapter on Power or Sakti, the Mother Goddess. The worship of the Great Mother and of her consorting alter-ego, in the form of different deities, continues in the Western churches despite the political destruction of the pagan societies. Seen in this light it is not difficult to appreciate the contents quoted from Gyalwo Rinpoche and Lompon Rinpoche before.

This Ishtar or Târâ was fond of lust in life, as well as lust in death.

The omophagia or Eating-of-Raw-Flesh was a rite not confined to the Kouretic initiation of Bacchae. We meet it again in the Thracean worship of Dionysus. The Bacchae (in Crete, Thrace and Macedon) recount their rites and sing of the

Joy of the quick red fountains,

The blood of the hill-goat torn."

She continues in the Christian mysticism, in the Christian churches. The Geion,-King Arthur legend of Arthur's death for coming back again, and the story of the three queens carrying him away, is a Christianised version of the Orphian Sacrifice and Resurrection. Malory had been a Nordic Teuton; his version of the Arthur tales, like the legends of the Grimm brothers, was to be covered with the mysteries the Teutons were so fond of.

The Tärä-hunger, Tärä-lust, Tärä-Resurrection, Tärä-fire are preserved in the Great Mother cult obvertly maintained within the churches.

St. Brigit...retained her original fire-feast.... On the evening of February 1st.... She was greeted in the Hymn of Broccan as 'Mother of my Sovereign', and in the hymn of Ultan-as Mother of Jesus (She had once been mother of Dayda). In the Book of Lismore she is named: "The Prophetess of Christ, the Ocean of the South, the Mary of Goidels. Exactly the same thing had happened in Greece and Italy, where the Goddess Venus became St. Venere, Goddess Artemis, the St. Artemidos; the Gods Mercury and Diony- sus, Sts. Mercourios and Dionysius; the Sun-God Helios, St. Elias,77

We will meet with the Sumerian traditions of Istar, Anu, Inanna and temple-vigils in discussing the subject of schisms in Saivism.

Sumer's Antiquity: In our study of Saivism the people of Babylon, Sumer and Egypt (Misr) prove to be of great significance to us. ButSumer has not yet revealed its earliest. On the basis of what has been so far discovered, it would be unfair to term the civilisation of Sumer as primitive or prehistoric. What the labours of Botta, Rawlinson, Wooley, Layard and others have revealed to us prove to be of great value in our reading of the Hindu Purana traditions, and specially, in our study of Saivism, and other images that the Hindus adore and worship to this day. Hence for such a study our watchwords are care and caution; objectivity and patience. Sumer and Babylon, on the basis of their temple rites as described by travellers and sundry other records, have been cheeringly painted by the interested who wanted to deride paganism, as to be the hot-bed of a lurid culture of debauch, perversion and immorality. To nurse this idea about Sumer would be contrary to facts. In order to take a more complete view of this culture, or these cultures, one has to take into account certain other facts now available to us, uninfluenced by those religion-peddlers whose chief organisational stock-in-trade has been a blasphemous, puerile campaign of calumny and slander.

Sumer enjoyed in full measure a highly moral civilisation and a well organised state policy. In his history of Sumer (History Begins at Sumer 1956) Kramer lists the following firsts:

1. The first schools.

2. The first case of apple polishing.

3. The first case of juvenile delinquency.

4. The first 'war of nerves".

5. The first bi-cameral congress.

6. The first historian.

7. The first case of tax-reduction.

8. The first Moses; Law codes.

9. The first legal precedent.

10. The first pharmacopoeia.

11. The first farmer's almanac.

12. The first experiment in 'shade tree gardening'.

13. Man's first cosmogony and cosmology.

14. The first moral ideals.

15. The first Job.

16. The first proverbs and sayings.

17.The first Animal Fables.

18. The first literary debates.

19. The first Biblical parallels.

20. The first 'Noah'.

21. The Epic Literature: Man's first Heroic Age.

22. The first tale of Resurrection.

23. The first 'St. George'.

24. Tales of Gilgamesh: The first case of literary borrowings.

25. The first love song.

26. The first literary catalogue.

27. World's Peace and Harmony: Man's first Golden Age.

And further firsts are still in the coming, because the picks have increased in number; more scientific investigators and scholarly diggers are at it. The process has only been started. All that has been revealed so far unfold the story of a well-developed and sophisticated society. The dusts have yet to disgorge the history of the primitiveness of man; the remains of the first strata of earth have yet to be revealed. The earliest in man might have been found out; but man's earliest has yet to be found out and connected.

This requires, first of all, freedom; intellectual freedom, scholarly freedom, political freedom, financial freedom; freedom from prejudice, local prejudice, religious prejudice and scholarly and academic prejudice which have been doing the utmost harm to the resurrection and re- habilitation of truth..

We have seen in connection with the Sumerian gods that no historian is yet ready to admit who the Sumerians were. But most admit that their antiquity is laid yet somewhere else, and not exactly where Sumer or Sumeria is. There must have been a hereditary abode where the beginnings of the Sumerian script had been started. "They (Sumerians) appear settled in this (Coast of the Persian gulf) territory from the intelligence we have of them, and their own tradition of a fabulous antiquity gives no hint of another home."

Apart from what Will Durant speaks in the above lines, the following from C. Leonard Wooley (Digging up the Past) confirms civilisations indebtedness to Sumer. "If human effort is to be judged merely by its attainment, then the Sumerians, with due allowance made for date and circumstance, must be accorded a very honourable, though not a pre-eminent place; if by effects of human history, they merit higher rank. Their civilisation, lighting up a world still plunged in primitive barbarism, was in the nature of a first cause. We have out-grown the phase, when all the arts were traced to Greece, and Greece was thought to have sprung, like Pallas, full-grown from the brain of the Olympian Zeus; we learnt how the flower of genius drew its sap from Lydians and Hittites, from Phoenicia and Crete, from Babylon and Egypt. But the roots go further back; behind all this lies Sumer."""

The admission of a historian's failure may be read along with other admissions of like sort. "We know exactly what race they belonged to, but we do not know very much about their history.... The Phoenicians' ancestors were the Semites, and belonged to the Cannanites of whom the Bible speaks (nothing)." At once the same author contradicts him- self, "If the Phoenicians were really Semites, it is remarkable that they ever developed such an un-Semetic love for the sea."

"Of the history of the Sumerians we know nothing," says Helmolt, "who the Sumerians were, how they originated, is still a mystery, in spite of the archaeologists' endeavour to trace their origins to the mountains of Persia and central Turkey. But one fact is certain; they were not Semetic." (Note the downright contradictions that confuse.)

The Greek historian Herodotus had never heard of the Sumerians "The Sumerians did not arrive in Mesopotamia...until 3500 B.c. (According to their own records they had a history going back twelve hundred centuries more.) But, of course, it is quite possible that these early settlers had previously lived for thousands upon thousands of years in

other cradles of civilisation." As we notice, civilisation moved from East to West, we could assume that these Sumerians (a) were earlier residents of further East; and (b) because they were not Mongoloids, they had to come from the southern part of the Indian peninsula, an autochthon of civilisa- tion, this part of the Asian land mass being one of the oldest land masses of the earth.

Despite much research we cannot say of what race the Sume- rians were, nor by what route they came to Sumeria. Perhaps they came from Caucasus or Armenia; perhaps, as the legends say, they sailed in from the Persian Gulf (but from where across the Gulf?), from Egypt? or elsewhere (how vague) and slowly made their own way up the river. We do not know.

(The comments within the brackets are the Author's.)

Berosus of Babylon (250 B.c.) in his history knew a "legendary" Sumeria (1). He mentions their craft in the following words, "All the things that make for amelioration of life were bequeathed to man by Oannes, and since that time no other inventions have been made." What he calls 'Oannes' became Sumeria because Oppert called these 'hypothetical' people Sumerians,

Who were the Phoenicians, "Who have so often been spoken in these pages, whose ships sailed every sea, whose merchants bargained in every port? The historian is abashed before any question of origin; he must confess that he knows next to nothing about either the early or the later history of this ubiquitous, yet, elusive people; we do not know whence they came, how, when. "s We are not certain that they were Semites (see contradiction with previous quotation); and as to the date of their arrival on the Mediterranean they themselves are quoted by Herodotus as to have descended from ancestors who had migrated from beyond the seas through the Persian Gulf 'twenty-eight centuries back'. They were called Phoenix, the red people. Was it because they looked coppery tan, or because they were manufacturers of dyes, specially of red? (Yet, these sea-faring people have been, as we have noted, related by historians to the Mongolians).

Prejudices of race, religion and a false sense of superiority work as moles that cover a historian's eye. History to be factual must be objective and frank. Pliny has been condemned as being always 'Greek' in his history. But so are Macaulay and Froude, English; Gibbon, a Catholic; and Wells, a socialist. Even the most renowned 'Christian'

historian, or 'White' historian, has failed to come out of either his church, or his skin for writing a history of evidential facts without the drawbacks of exaggera- tions, understatements or downright mis-statements. A new trend is in sight. A fresh wind blows An army of younger scholars is busy taking a closer look at the problems.

The Blanks of History. Like the histories of the Sumerians and Phoeni- cians another case of 'unknown' history refers to the Etruscans. "...men still debate who the Etruscans were, and when and whence they came .... Pedants love to disprove the accepted.... Most Greek and Roman historians took it for granted that the Etruscans had come from Asia Minor. Many elements in their religion, dress and art suggest an Asiatic origin...."

Durant makes a frank statement that goes deep into a historian's mind, and makes him think afresh if what we call 'classical' was not really 'modern' compared to the heritage that went into shaping and moulding the cultures of Greece and Rome.

Of the six thousand years of written history more than half of civi- lised history concerns the people in Western Asia, and obliquely to Egypt in part. From this (theatre of teaming human popula- tion) our own European and American (sic) culture derive by a continuous succession through the mediation of Crete and Greece and Rome-The "Aryans" did not establish any civilisation; they took it from Babylonia and Egypt (A conjecture when nothing of Sumer and Babylon is known yet). Greece did not begin civilisa- tion; it inherited far more civilisation than it began; it was the spoiled heir of three millenium of arts and sciences brought to its cities from the Near East by the fortunes of trade and war."

Substract from Greek what belonged to Mycenean, Egyptian, Cretan and the Ionian Isles and Asia Minor, what Greek culture remains?

So after more than 1500 years, the material elements of Sumerian civilisation perished, though its culture was transmitted through the cuneiform tablets, first to Babylonians, thence to Assyrians and Persian, and eventually to the Greeks, and to us.

Sumeria was to Babylonia, and Babylonia to Syria what Crete was to Greece, and Greece was to Rome: the first created civilisa- tion, and the second developed it to its height; the third inherited it, protected it, added little to it and transmitted it as a dying gift to the encompassing and victorious barbarians."

These 'barbarian'-ways had the last laugh. But all this could have been truly and honestly stated with regard to the history of Greece, Rome, and even that of later Europe, where the Vandals, Goths, and Hüns reduced traditions and cultures to a common pulp. Out of that awesome flux, evolved a mutually distrustful aggressive culture loaded with prejudice and suspicion.

Darkness over Europe. Ever since the Hans and the Goths took over the driving seat of European political life, despite the Imperial attempt to fasten and foist a superficial unity of 'Christian' life, no European province of people has trusted its sister province. Napoleon's idea of a 'Nationless' Europe did not survive his own time. The idealism of unity was beset with two nagging handicaps which have been gnawing at the very soul of Europe. Both these could be related to two arrogant and arbitrary points. Both of them appear to be examples of deep seated prejudice. Both of them attempted to cover their respective want of logic and perspective by a heated expression of pugnacity, a natural inclination for mutual recrimination born of mistrust.

These two points are: (a) an anti-Roman mistrust of the Northern and Asian races settled in Europe; (b) so-called religious and cultural distractions. Jew-baiting has been just one of the common pastimes of these people. But both these have blissfully been set aside by a third force of modern economical interest growing out of the super-industrialised areas of Europe. Not religion, not internationalism, but a much stronger, much forceful, much materialistic impetus and urge has compelled the modern European culture to appear as a united body. Otherwise they are as divided by their material interest as they always have been. The stage-managed and theatrical multi-nation organisations such as UNO, SEATO, NATO, Warsaw Pact are inspired to protect only one interest. Not religion, not culture, not even Man, but commercial interest and commercial interest alone. The spectre of capitalistic industrialisation has now united the society of entire mankind into two groups, the industrialised and the non-industrialised. Those who want to gain by commerce are bound together by their narrow self-interest against those who have to labour and produce, and then pay for that commercial output. The independent growth of the latter is a threat to the interests of the former. Thus what was European culture has been completely set aside by the new threat of commercial culture. The 'barbarian' culture in Europe had sown the seeds of mutual distrust of the so-called 'nations'; that 'national' or 'cultural' mistrust, today, has grown into the cynicism of the few industrialist, and commerce-motivated political

bullies, against an entire mass of popular opinion challenging it. Religion, and its hold on Europe, ever since the Roman times, has been very thin except for the years when a strong Inquisition, and an Imperial Pontificating arm kept the popular free opinion slavishly intimidated. Spiritualism had died out. The light of the soul had gone out. The Dark Age gave birth to a darker age.

Europe was cast into a century of gloom. Man lost faith in himself, in his essential growth, advance or even in survival. A dark age hovered. The feeble attempts of Christianity, together with the image of a Central Pontifical Empire alone remained as the dark remnant of a past monolithic order. This so-called religious power strove to retrieve the human material of Europe from receding into a state of boorish cynicism and fatricidal wars. A study of the social conditions of Europe from the third to the eleventh century reveals disconcerting facts, which had studi- ously been kept as secrets on grounds of profane traditions. Europe and Europe's degenerate society needed the panacea of Christ, and His minis- trations of Love. Whilst this Christianity was 'used' through a Pontifical order and tyranny, spiritual Europe covertly maintained those pagan tradi- tions which had a strange mystic esoteric hold on the orthodox mind. Europe, to accept Christ, has to accept Love, and understand Spirit more than Form. The true religion of central, Mediterranean and Eastern Europe, is still influenced by the mystic past which was brought to her by the Nordic Goths, Hûns, Mongols, and those gypsies who still function in Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania and Andulasia.

Europe needs Love, Europe needs it even now. For all these centuries of Christianity a religion essentially of peace, has not been able to teach Europe the intrinsic value of peace for the healthy growth of a brotherly human society. What Satan failed to achieve, what all the painted hell- horrors of the Middle Ages could not do, industrialisation and technology alone have succeeded in achieving. Industralisation and technology were to have been gifts and boons to the labouring and suffering man. Instead a greedy competitive, dog-eat-dog society commercialised all human emotions. Human brain power invented and introduced severely disruptive ideologies which instigated competitive trade, national pride and interest to an extent which was bound to foster the poison of expansiveness. As its irresistible correlate, almost naturally, an urge for domination has entered the area. Like blood thirsty gladiators, the nations, one behind the other, vie with each other in destructiveness; and another chapter in the history of man appears doomed to be submerged into an era of Dark Age. Once it had

happened in Babylon then it happened in Constantinople and Rome; and a third dark age threatens human culture for want of Love. Jerusalem is yet to be discovered by Europe.

All this is what Europe has brought about, single-handed. There was a time when Vandals and Goths paved the way for ushering the voice of the Christ; then the ancient Christians dared Europe's wrath, and at their personal peril attempted to lift a generation up. Now, despite Christianity, an age of neo-Goths and neo-Vandals, have engaged themselves in rampaging the European society in the name of commerce, peace and uniformity. What it has really achieved so far is that in the name of commerce it has embraced competition; in the name of peace, it has secured a military order; in the name of uniformity, it has pushed forward alignment. Europe has lost peace again; and the concomitant restlessness and fever is being spread by Europe throughout the human world under the deadly threat of nuclear weapons, bacterial and chemical warfare. Nothing has upset human good intentions so thoroughly as splitting the atom, and stepping on the Moon

But no such barbarians destroyed the civilisations of the Orient In this regard Dr. Durant's analogy appears to face a challenge. Europe's Roman-holiday was brought to dust by the irresistible youth of the Hans, and the Vandals; but the great Assyrio-Persian Empire was not destroyed by non-civilisation.

It was destroyed by cultured Greece; by a scourge of Greece, called Great by Europe, Alexander. This egotist, sick of mind, in attempting to image himself in the glory of the Persians, and bathe himself with the balm of divinity, debauched and died without having the energy of even naming a successor, much less of organising his indiscriminate conquests into an organised whole. He who fails to put himself to order cannot put to order his time, much less posterity. Compared to this scourge, the organisation of Genghis or Timur, stood the test of history longer and more creditably. None but Alexander realised that Greece had nothing superior to offer to the Orient of the time; trade, commerce, metallurgy, skill, morals, medicine, science, astronomy, religion, nothing whatsoever, this Macedonian had to offer to the East as superior to what contemporary Syria, Egypt, Sumer, Babylon, Persia or India had. One has just to picture how he treated the women of the house of Darius to realise the depressed and immoral impact he brought to the people whose civilisation, law and order, morals and trustworthiness was a model for millions Asia gave to distressed Europe Christ Jesus as

an ambassador of Eternal Peace and Love; Europe, since the days of sending Alexander, has been keeping up the traditions of the aggressive evangelist, and of the greedy conquistador with its hollow ministrations, unsupported by acts of love, charity and unselfish dealings.

The Jews in history have been the least oppressive and the most oppressed of nations. Many would not remember it now that these Semetic people, tied to their land and labour, peaceful and moral, religious and unassuming, were forced to live by usuary thanks only to Papal bulls. Through the steady incarcerations of the early Christian atrocities, and through the political disabilities imposed on them by so- called Christian monarchs in the name of religion, the Jews were forced to relinquish labour, land and trade. Usuary remained their only form of survival, outside of slavery leading to extermination. From the days of the Pharao to Hitler, Jews have remained pawns of fascists and imperialists. Hence they became bankers and real estate dealers. They are not usurers by choice. Usuary had been once condemnable; and Jews were the supposed scourge of the Christian society; today as bankers they are the most protected of peoples in the commercial world. All crimes could be condoned when done by a gangster force. Ethical judgment in commerce has changed the value of ethics. The Semites were great traders, and their skill in navigation was not ordinary. Until Muhammed, their religion was almost a mosaic of fascinating creeds and mystic practices, leading to a great super Father-Image. Their merchandise kept ports from Calicut and Surat to Sidon, Paphos and Memphis busy. Canneh, Aden, Basra, Tyre, Ninevah and Babylon were world markets, buzzing with their wares and wealth; and crammed with their ideas and opinions. Little was then heard of Tunis, Carthage, Brindisium, Rome or Caesarea.

Were they cousins of the Phoenicians, because they were not 'red'? They did not belong to the country of the palms. No one could say with. certainty that the Phoenicians and the Semites were the same people. On the contrary we have learnt from the evidence of Herodotus that their ancestors came from somewhere beyond the Persian Gulf, and the city of Tyre was founded by those ancestors; and this happened twenty-eight to thirty centuries before Christ! It is no longer a surmise. The date is corroborated through archaeological evidence. But the greatest catch in this amazing story lies in the fact that even these thirty centuries before when these 'foreigners' did settle in Mesopotamia, and founded' Tyre and Ninevah, even then they displayed a

high degree of civilisation. The final strata of this culture still awaits the touch of shovels and pick-axes.

Sem, Semite, Soma could refer to the same root. Soma is a very special rite in the Vedas. The word also means the Moon, which could mean the Moon-people. Vijñana Bhiksu in commenting on the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali makes it abundantly clear that the words Moon and Sun, as used in the context of the Yogic and mythological statements, denote people and not the planets so named (Vijñāna Bhiksu: Yoga Sutra). The Somas and the Devas had had to fight a bitter battle (Tarakamaya) on determining their respective rights on Budha or Mercury. The Indra and the Brhaspati-people laid their claims; and the Somas, assisted by the Sivas, the Bhrgus and Sukras resisted. Those who had the know- ledge of the Soma drink claimed the secrets of Mercury also. These latter, the Soma-Šivas were past masters in metallurgy, medicine, astrology and allied crafts, It makes us suspect some relation between these peoples. Scholars will yet have to trace out if such relations between the Semites, Jews, Phoenicians and Jews could be established. The point is moot. If the almost atavistic hatred amongst these people carried on to this day is en- tirely commercially based, or it has some religious and cultural bias also, may yet be found out.

Who, then, were they? Where was their home? Certainly some- where away from the Persian Gulf, from a country approachable by sea, and within a colonising distance from the mouths of the Euphratis and Tigris. They could not be the Aryans, for they were a navigating kind. They kept low before the horsemen. Where in the Indian Ocean area could this country be situated? Iran? Iran was approachable by land much more easily than by sea. The western coast of the Indian peninsula? There are evidences of the buried cities along the Indus, the Narmada, the Godavari, up to the lower reaches of the Ganges. But it is sure that the Sumerians (or the Syrians, or the Assyrians), who recall the Semetics were quite different from the original Semetics. Through centuries of close living, some closeness of their languages and manners might create for the historian an impression of similarities; but originally the red Phoenicians and the Syrians appear to have belonged to some other country. Old Herodotus nods in favour of this. There are some other ancient records-Berosus of Babylon and Socrates of Athens.

Gods of Sumer, and their religions are so similar. Phoenicia had many Gods. The chief deity of Byblos was a goddess Be'alat (the Lady of Byblos). She could have been the same goddess as the Egyptian Hathor, venerated on the banks of the Nile. (Ishtar, Astarte-Militta, Asherst-the Mother Goddess of no compare). The god with a human body and a lion's head is Ra, father of Ruti. A fourth divinity is Hay Tau, a prototype of Adonis, and adopted by the Egyptians as Osiris. Osiris and Hay Tau of Nega, a suburb of Byblos, perhaps, were honoured by the Egyptians as the names of both are found recorded in the Pyramids. Until the end of paganism a traditional story persisted throughout this region, a tradition respected by all Semetics, that the great God El, the Father of Years, lived near the confluence of the two rivers and the sea. He was known as Bull, Bull-El, Ba'al, the greatest God of Assyria. Ba'al Shapon, Lord of the North, Lord of Lebanon.

Underneath this name the real name of the god lay hidden. The real name was to have been revealed only to the initiate. His voice sounded like the clouds; he weilded thunderbolts, and he dispensed rain; (Parjanya, Indra and Jupiter of some other myths). His mother was Ashebat, who was also his consort. The aspect of a mother-consort again is peculiar to the myths of the Orient. Mot was yet another God, god of harvest; he was the son of El. This Mot, the son, and the god of harvest, was sacrificed for the pleasure of the Consort-Mother, and then was revived to life again.

The strain of a virgin-mother and Resurrection persists.

The strain is not accidental. There is nothing accidental in the chain of history except natural catastrophe under which all evidences lie low. The Jewish lores are not without the echoes of these strange gods. "The God of the Jew might have been invisible, but his religion was founded on civilisations thousands of years old. The ark of the Covenant is reminis cent of the portable houses of the Nile valley gods. A breath of magic wafted across from Egypt. The flood, and a belief in numerolgy remind us of Babylon. The Babylonian god Gilgamesh becomes Nimrod, and the winged bulls of the Assyrians gave the Hebrews (later the Christians) their cherubim. The legend of Paradise is reminiscent of Persia. We can recognise the Phoenician and Cannanite god Ba'al in the names of Saul's sons: Eshbaa, and Meribaa. The Syrian philistines who probably hailed from Crete, regarded the dove as divine, and we rediscover the fish, which was worshipped at Askalon, in the story of Jonah. The Semetic Armenian

revered the 'Mother of the Living', called 'Khavua' from the name (Hava in Arabic), 'Eva', appears to be derived.

Most of the rivers in Phoenicia had divine names, and were connected with the gods of the springs, Aleyin. Aleyin rode the clouds and com- manded the seven and the eight; Asherat of the Sea was the mother of the gods and the wife of Ba'al. Every year the gods Aleyin and Mot have to have a fight. This is a fight between the vegetation-god and the water, cultivation and the flood a point of perpetual agony in Meso- potamia. Mot is vanquished, and Aleyin is established on his own; and the event is celebrated. But then Ba'al and Aleyin fight, in which Ba'al had the advantage, but he fell like a bull (see Plate 34). The story goes on. Aleyin also dies and the Mother of the gods bear one body to the underworld and another to the Northern mountains.

Sex and Blood. Ba'al and Baralat are the chief two deities of the Phoeni- cians. Ba'al is the god, and Baralat is the goddess. In the land of their adoration no one uttered their real name, as the Israelites do not utter the name of their God. The Ball of Tyre was originally a solar God. But the most significant story of the mythology of the Phoenicians is the story of Adonis.

Adonis was born of a tree. His mother had turned herself to a tree. He was the direct descendant of Nega; and he replaced the vegetation gods of Aleyin and Mot (of Uragit poems) to Adonis. She entrusted him, secured in a box, to the goddess of the underworld, Persephone. Perse- phone, unable, like any woman, to resist curiosity, secretly opened the box,

and was charmed at once by the great beauty of the youth. She decided to have youth for herself, and refused to give him up. Dispute arose. The Lord of the gods decided that the youth shall divide his time of the year between the two goddesses. The same story makes Adonis fond of hunting. Aphrodite falls deeply in love with the young hunter. Adonis gets killed by a wild boar. The grief of Aphrodite has made many poets sing of this celestial romance.

In Byblos, in Phoenicia, the cult of Adonis was the most popular cult, and it occasioned the most hilarious and riotous festivals. Each city had its Chief God, Lord Ba'al; the God of fertility and plenty. Astarte was the Greek name for the Phoenician goddess Istar; at some places she was worshipped as a chaste woman, not inclined to marriage at all; at other places sex and sex alone could be offered to her; girls were

proud to offer their virginity at the altar of this Astarte. This amorous wanton is a parallel to Aphrodite, and Ashtar Milita. The similarities here get close; "...as Ishtar had loved Tammuz, so Astarte had loved Adonis, whose death through the thrust of the tusk of a boar was annually mourned at Byblos and Paphos with wailing and beating of the breast. Luckily Adonis rose from the dead as often as he died.

But it was to the terrible God Moloch to whom the Phoenicians offered living children. So intense and deep-seated was this urgency that when the Romans had attacked for the final destruction of Carthage, the Carthegians offered thousands of their noblest children as sacrifice, an act that the Romans had to repeat when Rome was similarly threatened. Sicily and Carthage, Babylon and Athens, might be chronologically and geographically distant, but in the holocaust of a religious feast all horizons shrink, and old gods howl, for expatiation through bathing in blood streams. Religion and superstition, superstition and cult are close neighbours and as close neighbours they become the unacknowledged agents of syncretic continuity. In the Mahabharata we hear of a village under the spell of a demon by the name of Baka (Bacchus, Baccus, ancestor of Moloch?) whose liking for human flesh was brought to a close by Bhima. Similar suppression of blood feasting cannibal rites is associated with feast of Hercules and Ulysses.

Thus in Syria we find Phoenicia repeated. Damascus and Babylon resemble in their glories and their horrors; in their morals and in their immorals; in their trades and in their passions.

Religious prostitution flourished throughout this region. Fertility was the chief deity, regarded as the Mother, the Great Mother. Her sexual commerce with her lover was the great incitement to all living things to go for the free creed of fertilising whatever was worthy of being fertilised. The unfertilised was barren, the cursed of the society. What today would be called orgies was as simple a rite of calling the spirit for self-abandonment, offering the body for flagellation and dismemberment, not to speak of disfigurement; carrying the soul to the utmost state of pain and joy, and pouring all for the Goddess of fertility, without whose favour Life would reach a dead-end. Such fervour bordered on madness, and formed the annual feature for such cities as Heirapolis of later days.

About this time of vernal equinox this festival of Astarte of Syria, Cybele of Phrygia, seeped down history, seeped down centuries, to re- appear as Bacchanalis in Greece, and as Saturnalie in Rome. (May Pole, All Fool's Day, or the Holi or Charak rites of India could never compare with these). Castrated, as well as naturally eunuch priests danc- ed nude at times; and of the eunuchs many had made an offering of their members in frenzied moments of abandonment; actually sometimes they themselves, and at times their male and female co-revellers, tore apart the genitals, and made a supreme sacrifice by offering them as special treats. These, of course, were to become the most celebrated priests in times to come. The dancers who were not carried off to that extreme limit, stopped at clashing, and beating themselves, crying, howling and merging into trances. In Persia and the Medes, generally, among the Semetics, sacrificing a part of the male member is still regarded as a vital doctrinaire function of the devout; and acts such as slashing, impairing, injuring self-chastising still receives the highest approbation as marks of ascetic self-denial and spiritual joy of pain to the people in Egypt, Sudan and Libya. Sir Richard Burton has a special tablet written on these prac tices. Echoes of such practices are found amongst certain religious sects in Sudan, in East Africa, amongst some Abyssinian and Somalian tribes, amongst the Nubians, and some of the sects in India generally grouped under Saivic followers, but in fact belonging to mystically inspired small groups tucked away from the main stream of Saivism. The Kanphattas, the Udaris, the Nathas, the Jogis, the Nagas, the Päiupatas, still practise on themselves such flagellations and physical tortures. The Shias during the Muharram lamentations undergo in open processional demonstrations similar tortures. Official lamentators are hired to augment funeral wailings and breast-beatings in areas influenced by Egyp tian and Syrian cultures. A strain of these rites is noticeable in this way under the Saivic umbrella even amongst the vast beach-party of Hindu rites, but the hard core of Hindu Saivism actually keeps itself a away from such exhibitions in and exorcism of erotic propensities. The rites connected with Ishtar, Inanna, Nana or Adonis go further.

When night came, and the darkness thickened, the tomb of Adonis was opened. A consecrated and ritualistically sacrificed youth was brought sacramentally to life; and an announcement made, in public to the devout that the dead had arisen; and the priest assured that all the devouts, so dead would be brought back to life again.

Emphasising on the influence of the Aphrodite cult, a very modern ob- server considers her as a living symbol in Cyprus, where Christianity of a sort abounds. "...the meaning of Aphrodite legend," the book claims, "had been misinterpreted by the historians."

She was a symbol…not of licence and seriousness, but of the dual nature of man-the proposition which lay at the heart of the ancient religions from which she had been derived....She belonged to a world of innocence outside the scope of the barren sensualities which are ascribed to her cult. She was an Indian.

The last sentence, as a tradition in Cyprus, holds significantly a key. A world of mysticism,regarding the attitude towards phallicism as opposed to Saivism, is explained by the last sentence-"She was an Indian." And because she was an Indian, therefore "She belonged to a world of innocence outside the scope of the barren sensualities," which bother the interpretations given by historians as well as the orthodox church. Durrell, who knew Cypriot traditional lores so well, knew what he was referring to.

Driving this point home the author continues:

Here in Cyprus one is aware, as in no other place, that Christianity is but a brilliant mosaic of half-truths. It is perhaps based upon some elaborate misunderstanding of the original message which the long boats of Asoka brought from the East (italics author's), a message grasped for a while in Syria and Phoenicia, but soon lost in the gabblings of the scholastics and the mystagogues, shivered into a million bright pieces under the fanaticism and self-seeking religious gymnasts. Here and there a moving spirit like Julian apprehends that the vital kernel had been lost, he did not know what; but for the most part the muddy river ran on, swallowing the rainbow.

And that rainbow-was what Gibbon called paganism, but what Durrell frowns at, and senses to be a frank, vital, realism of approach to supernature. He connects this with India, Phoenicia and Syria, and refers its regeneration in Julian's time when Julian "made a voluntary offering of his reason to Jupiter and Apollo... to the honour of Cybele, the mother of the gods, who required from her effeminate priests the bloody sacrifice so rashly performed by the madness of the Phrygian boy. The pious emperor condescends to relate the voyage of the goddess from the shores of Peragamus to the mouth of the Tiber." Gibbon condemns Julian for his addition to age-old Asian

religions where there was bloody sacrifice, the most licentious scepticism, Greek occultism, and freedom of interpretation of even the most licentious practices in the name of devotion. "The Lascivious form of a naked Venus was tortured into a discovery of some moral precept, of some physical truth; and the castration of Atys explained the revolution of the sun between the tropics...."

Ba'al, Marduk, Priapas, Atys and Adonis along with Cybele, Aphrodite, Demeter, Astarte and Isis, actually never left these shores. These continued, and through mysterious ways, continued to hold their vigorous sway in the strange mysteries of later-day religious rites and contents. Who could deny that the ancient assurances continue to flow to this day with undiminished vigour, and unquestioned assurance from a million priestly throats; and many more millions of the devout shed pious tears in exception of a divine resurrection. Change is so difficult a glory to claim for the mortals, who are eternally in search of an escape, offered by the easiest of exercises, namely, religious dogmas, and superstitious rituals.

Yet Man is not a creature so easily deceived. Self-deception casts its shadows forward; and the vainest of the mortals has to cringe before the shadows he casts. Side by side with vanglorious religious rites there are truly devout, the exclusively sublime free thinkers, the seedlings of future philosophy, whose function it is to rummage and explore their inner being, and bring peace and consolation through a silent and quiet devotion. True religion is the reflection of spiritual sublimity. Spiritual- ism redeems religions from becoming occultism.

However few, some of the holy men recognised a general divinity; and meditated on that divinity in silent awe and devotion, keeping themselves far from this madding crowd. They worshipped El or Ellu, the religious and spiritual antecedent of the Elahim of the Jews. But in the hilarity of paganism, and excitement of international orgies, devo- tion to abstractions was hardly regarded worthy of serious notice.

The excitement spread over other quarters. We have spoken of the Moon-deity, Astarte, the Aphrodite and Venus of later legends, and of the Sun deity, Ba'al. But the Ba'al of Syria, like Marduk, was a blood- thirsty deity. Astarte was fond of living-blood, streaming-blood, from warm bodies. Men and women ran amock and berserk through religious frenzy to pour this blood to their beloved Mother; sacrificial blood, spurting from lives killed, whose flesh could be eaten later on, thereby, they thought,

they put a portion of the God himself within the body. (Jesus knew this ritual very well when he was assuring his associates of the drinking of 'his' Blood and of the eating of 'his' Flesh.)

After the manner of the Phoenicians many mothers easily offered their children as sacrifices. Colchis was a priest; and Agememnon was a creature of his own times. The story of Abraham and Isaac tells the same tale. Abraham's hands are held, and Isaac is replaced by a lamb; but the altar has to be covered with blood. And it was. Fire was lit high, and living sacrifices were offered. At times, ceremonially, sacri-fices were expected to take the 'Fire Bath', and pass through the fire. Mesha, king of Moab, sacrificed by fire his eldest son; and on achieving the end, out of gratification, held a prayer of thanksgiving by having seven thousand Israelites slaughtered. Hinduism records the echoes too. In the Vedas we read the famous story of Sunahkepa's sacrifice; Naciketa's sacrifice; and of the sacrifices of the kings Ambariga, Somaka, Karna and Ahi and Mahi-Ravanas in the Puranas. The concept of the Mother Power as Chinna-Masta, Matangi, Dhumavati, Camunda, etc., established the blood-thirsty aspect of the same holy Mother who is also the Benign Protector. Jews were forbidden 'to make their children pass through the fire'. Obviously they would not have been forbidden, unless the practice prevailed. Ritualistic practices once prevailing, continue to prevail, although away from the indoctrined platforms, and flourish in the darkness of mystery-cults and mystic-rites. Failing this, they would still persist, with just ceremonial eye-wash changes of the facade alone. Thus, they no longer tear off their members, and become eunuchs; but they do sacrifice their fore-skins in ceremonial circumcision. "Through- out this region," writes Dr. Durant, "from the Sumerian days when the Amorites roamed the plains of Amurru (c.a. 2800 B.c.) to the times when the Jews fell with divine wrath upon the Cannanites, and Sargon of Assyria, and Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem (597 8.c.) the valley of the Jordan was drenched periodically with patricidal blood, and many Lords of Hosts rejoiced."""

It is in the face of the hardest of trials that man's faith is best adjudged. The sternest of reformative societies challenged by a mortal menace has been known to have become revivalists. The evidence of this is found in the history of the Carthagian wars when both Carthage and Rome sacrificed a whole generation of children and babies with the hope of expiating their wrongs to their ancient gods, whom they had once re- jected. Every Protestant movement has been accused by later times as revivalists; as every

socialistic movement has been accused later of revisionalism. Similarly, every imperialistic war, even when victorious, has pushed ahead the forces of democracy. In history of civilisation, recession of thinking and culture, if at all enforced, is only a temporary illusion. Deep within all changes man's weakness for rites and cults, man's propensity for blind faith, looms unnoticed, until a grave situation, threatens a mortal challenge of thorough annihilation, and brings the latent forces back to the surface for a reappraisal." Fear attests religious sympathies the most. Threat of extinction stoops to a compromise.

4. Babylon

As in Sumerian, so in Babylonian religion too similar patterns could be closely followed up. So open and uninhibited became the urge of this religious appeal in Babylon that in the world of the day the very name Babylon conjured up lurid and lewd images; and the women of Babylon symbolised free erotic dispensations; and all this proceeded from a religious belief, religious practice, and a custom intently associated with all that devout holiness and sacrifice could mean in man. At the back of this mode of interpretation of the divine grace and dispensation stood the solid array of a very formidable priesthood, in which combined the responsibili ties of the welfare of mankind both in this life as well as in the next. The kings of Babylon at a later stage combined in their role the double functions of secular and religious machinery. (We shall see that in the Tamil Deccan of India this characteristic of combining secular and religious responsibilities in the person of the King, assisted by a minister- priest used to prevail. In fact, the high respect that Brahmanism enjoys to this day in the Deccan is largely due to the influence the priests held over the reigning monarch. Hereditary Brahmanism, so well established in the Hindu Puranas, and Manu Samhita was not a social imperative in the Vedic times. Man was then judged by spiritual attainments and inner distinctions. Classification of human material had not reached the castification of social commandments.) Monarchism and priestism had a heyday in Babylon where priests had been the real monarchs. In fact, "It was fated that the merchants should make Babylon, and that priests should enjoy it." When Cyprus finally attacked Babylon, the anti- clericals actually opened the gates, and welcomed a more virile people to replace a degenerated epicurean lot of effeminates.

The gods and goddesses of Babylon are just the continuation of those described under Sumeria, only with certain changes of names. The king was the representative of the

great God Marduk, the bull or buffalo headed God, the ancestor of the Minotaur or of Minos of Crete, who was specially fond of virgins. He belonged to a class of legend found all over the Greek, Arabian and Indian myths. In the Hindu myths we hear of Mahiṣăsura of the Märkandeya Purana, who sought the virgin of the rocks, and met with his destruction; so did the Asuras Šumbha and Ni-sumbha of the same Purana, by seeking another virgin of the rocks. Compare the legends of Bakasura (Mahabharata), and Vrsäsura (Bhaga- vatam). The similarities of these legends, are disquietingly familiar to the student of myths and legends. In the Sakti-system all Tantras meet; and in Tantra meets the cross-currents of international spiritual mysticism.

Superstitions, priests and processions-these three words could cover almost entirely-the Babylonian approach to religion and life. Nowhere has life been so meticulously conducted by the signs and portents outside the individual. So great was the Babylonian's care for the movements of the stars that an entire science of almanac and astrology was developed and standardised. Priesthood subsisted on this, and held sway over the people. Fate was the all-powerful factor in life, to which the entire society submitted. Birds and their movements; calls from lizards, cock crows, intestines of sacrificial animals, directions towards which sacrificial flames blew, cats, dogs, sneezings, wailings, what not and what not, every- thing was detailed and set out with Newtonic alacrity, and guided towards one and only one purpose, to read man's future, to foretell, to prophecy. Witchcraft and sorcery were not very far from such attitudes in the mind. And the priests flourished; and shared their distinct ad- vantage with the kings. The priest of Babylon, like the Mediaeval Popes, were its commercial tycoons, money-lenders, real estate holders; and their power and property was envied even by Babylon's kings. Later, kings of power having noted this special advantage, took over from the foretelling priests the responsibilities of the headship, leaving to them only the spiritual part, which allowed them to foretell without having to share the burden of property. In this regard the Popes of Rome used to enjoy a distinct advantage over the Caesars.

This social system prevailed from age to age, civilisation to civilisation; this sharing of power between the magicians, priests, sorcerers, soothsayers on the one hand, and the conquerors, rulers, kings and emperors on the other. Some magic, whether black or white, flourished along the coasts of both the Arabian Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.

The priestly origin of Kingship was politely demonstrated and accepted at the procession of Marduk in Babylonia where the entire land belonged to Marduk. Thus the King was only a representative, a viceroy of the God Marduk; and any rebellion was to be regarded as a 'colossal impiety'. (Ownership of lands and real estates by temple deities poses a great problem for the socialistic government of India.) At the yearly festival the King accepted the crown from the priest, the crown of Marduk, to act as the God's viceroy. Those who know about Chandragupta Maurya and Harsa, those who have witnessed the processional progress of the great temple priest of the Hindu Deccan along with their deities riding on silver chariots, those who have observed the Corpus Christi procession of the custodian of the Vatican and other Catholic churches, those who have seen the gorgeous procession of the great Mahants (religious heads) of the Hindu orders during the 'Kumbha' fair, would appreciate that the Babylonian way of life, particularly of the fabulous priestly life, had left a brilliant tradition for a kind of spiritualists to follow. A great priestly state, with a splendid temple as the central hub of life, an extensive family of god's handy for any and every purpose, and a multitude of teeming population wallowing in fatalistic misery and intimidating servility provided the most fitting backdrop for a marvellous polytheism flourishing along with necromancy, witchcraft, sorcery, paede- rasty, prostitution and magic.

Superstition is the most fertile womb for delivering gods. There were as many as 65,000 gods in Babylon. The chief of these, however, were: Anu, the firmament; Shamash, the sun; Nannar, the moon and Bel or Ba'al, the earth. Of course, these remind us of the gods of Sumer. In Babylon all these gods gradually gave way to the great sun god Marduk, the Bel Marduk, who together with Ishtar formed the pair of father and mother deities supreme in the life of the Babylonians. (Mrdaka is a god mentioned in certain types of Hindu Yajñas, specially those done under Atharva Veda. Mrdaka is one of the names of Śiva.)

Localised deities as proprietors. In India even today towns are found dedicated to a ruling deity. In prayers Hindus still pay homage to the Sthana-Devata (the deity of the town). In the deep south even a few years back some ruling princes were supposed to be ruling their states as 'viceroys' of the presiding deity whose temple, sometimes, was as large and spacious as a palace, and where resided the chief priest whose position was in no way inferior to the 'viceroy'.

The similarities do not end here. Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian traits could be traced into the life, food, rites, architecture and social structures of the people. The gods and the myths retain disquieting records of some form of clashes in the hoary past. Such clashes were centred round conflicts which, because of their supposedly astronomical nature, remind of Babylonian and Sumerian traits. The most noted, and the most prolonged of these conflicts is known in the Rg Veda as (Tarakamaya) the Wars of the planets, later known in the Purana-myths as the war of the Devas with Taraka, the demon. Taraka (planet, star) reminds of Tärä, Sitärä, Esther: of the Assyrian-people, who were the Taraka-people. The fight was known to have taken place between the Suras and Asuras. There are grounds to believe that the Assyrians and the Asuras could be the same people. Kyttika, the constellation is the same as the Pleiades formed of six stars whose rites inaugurate the season of winter planting, 100 Uma as the Mother Sasthi offers six pairs of breasts for Kartika or the young bachelor (Kumāra) to suck. A goddess having many breasts and offering sucks was not unknown in Babylon.

In a later chapter we shall deal with the cult of Kartika more ela- borately. The legend of Taraka, the planet-people, will also be narrated later. But the Taraka rites refer to a Kumara, a young bachelor, beloved of the stars, who fought against the Asuras as a general of the Devas. He was born of the Mountain Maid (Parvati) known as Uma (Ammā) from a Union with Siva. But the Great Mother did not bear him in her Womb. Birth came as a defiance against not only of Taraka, but also against the indiscretions of Agni, i.e., some kind of fire-cult. He is the much adored Subrahmanyam or Kartikeya of the Saivas of the South India. He is the one who dominates the 'fowls', and reminds by so doing the zoomorphic bird-gods of Babylon, Egypt and particularly Assyria.

Do we see the connection between the Hindu virgin goddess Kanya Kumari, the Christian Virgin, and Istarte? Ashtarte? Ashtoreth? Ishtar? Isis? Ishi and Tarà of Tantra? Isäni of the Puranas? How could we escape, specially as we study the legends attached to these different deities? Flourishing in different climes, amongst different peoples, at different times, the far-off legends reverberate familiar echoes. The chants, the rites, the emphasis on blood-sacrifice, on the concept of resurrection, and the uses of symbolic sex-icons favour a substantiation.

Virgins and Temple-Prostitutes. The chants and the hymns of the Babylonians and the Sumerians could be the prototype for the later hymns of David, the great hymns of the Tamilian devotional sect. Some authorities believe firmly that these hymns did provide the form and the inspiration of the great hymns of the Old Testament,

These chants make Ishtar a deity in whom the virtues of the Egyptian Isis, the Grecian Aphrodite and the Roman Venus could be traced. But she also presided over the interesting custom which made Babylon the most notorious land of erotic extravaganza. She combined in her the double virtues of bounteous motherhood of Demeter, and the erotic abandonment of Aphrodite. "She was the goddess of war, as well as of love; of prostitutes as well as of mothers; she called herself a passionate courtesan; she was represented sometimes as a bearded bi-sexual deity, sometimes a nude female offering her breasts to suck; and though her worshippers repeatedly addressed her as the Virgin, the Holy Virgin, the Virgin Mother, this merely meant that her amours were free from all taints of wedlock." (Dr. Durant could have added the name of the Hindu Kumari, the Sikhi-Vahand, the Bird-riding lady of Tantra).

We get from Herodotus a glimpse of the sacrificial customs followed in Babylon for the appeasement and adoration of this supreme deity.

Every native woman is obliged, once in her life, to sit in the temple of Venus and have intercourse with some stranger. And many disdaining to mix with the rest, being proud on account of their wealth, come in covered carriages, and take up their stations at the temple with a train of numerous servants attending them. But the far greater part do this; many sit down in the temple of Venus wearing a crown of cord round their heads; some are continually coming in, some are going out. Passages marked out in straight lines lead in every direction through the women, along which strangers pass and make their choice, when a woman has seated herself she must not return home till some person has thrown a piece of silver into her lap, and lain with her outside the temple. He who throws the silver must say thus: I beseech the Goddess Mylitta to favour thee; for the Assyrians call Venus Mylitta. The silver may be ever so small, she will not reject it, inasmuch as it is not lawful for her to do so, for such silver is accounted as sacred. The woman follows the first man that throws, and refuses none. But when she has had intercourse, and absolved herself from obligation to the Goddess, she returns home; and after that time however great a sum you might give her, you will not gain possession of her. Those that are endowed with beauty and symmetry of shape are soon

set free but the deformed are detained a long time, from inability to satisfy the law, for some for a space of three or four years,

Was this jus-prime-noctis a relic of some primitive suspension of disbelief against a taboo concerning the shedding of blood, particularly vaginal blood, dreaded all over the world as accursed, as Dr. Frazer suggests? Was this sacrifice to the goddess as simple as it appears to be? Or was this profanation an indirect security that condoned licence enjoyed by temple priests? In other words, what had such sex-promiscuity to do with spiritual consummation, and abstract realisation of divine grace?

We shall never know. Mystic realisations are beyond the scope of just cold words, specially when such words are read torn from their appropriate atmosphere, mental orb and necessary initiation. All we have is evidence. All we have is names of authorities regarded and respected for their spiritual powers. Whereas Durant, Frazer, Jacques Abtiube Dulaure, Ryley-Scott and others have been viewing the subject from the points of view of a social historian, or an anthropologist, it is clear that this point of view, by itself, is not only inadequate, but positively perverting and harmful, because it does not encourage the full under standing that such a spiritual subject calls for. Except by minds which are spiritually far more equipped and trained than those of mere scholars, (for a subject of spiritualism calls for such inner experience as scholarship by itself cannot bestow) it is quite impossible for the inexperienced to judge it, specially by external features alone. Writing of poetry is an expression of experience; the critics of poetry, however competent, have not the experience of writing it. The joy of creative experience is unique. When we consult the evidence of the spiritualists themselves, specially of such spiritualists as have been held in high esteem, such as Lama Lompon Rinpoche, Lama Jsangyang Gyatso, Lama Gyalwa Rinpoche, Swami Visuddhananda, Sarvananda Agamvägis, etc., we are bound to pause and think, in spite of the noxious fact that much charlatantism is indulged under the cover of spiritual practices. Life's mystery would mislead quite a number. The mystery is revealed, if at all, only to a lucky few.

Cannibalistic Rites. We shall never know the deepest secrets that shroud the Orphic horrors of sex, blood, wine and meat (inclusive of human meat); but we know this to have been honoured throughout the ancient civilised world according to Dr. Graves, Dr. Frazer, Dr. Durant and a host of others. Slaying a male human victim,10s and distributing his flesh amongst the votaries, and scattering the entrails, blood and

powdered genitals as fertilizer, even partaking of it as a guarantee for assimilating its property, has been a time-sanctioned fertility ritual; and despite all Christian ministrations, and the age-old enactment of Constantine against sex orgies, "Even in modern Europe the figure of Death is sometime torn to pieces, and the fragments are then buried in the grounds to make the crops grow."10 Reports of ritualistic murders, even mass murders, continue bobbing up to the surface of the newspapers of Europe and America. In the post world war free society these cases appear to have grown, in frequency.

The tradition of Orphic practices of sex, lust and sacrifices of a victim, later replaced by a lamb, ("The lamb as a substitute for a man; the lamb he gives for his life."),107 had spread over a very vast area, vaster than we, today, in our narrow nationalistic and sectarian vision, could ever imagine. This is the area of our investigations; the area where the four-fifths of mankind lived; the area of the Mediterranean sea and the Indian Ocean, the area that covered the three continents, the area from which all religions sprang, the birth place of all our gods.

We can follow this tradition of limbing apart the victim in the story of Romulus, the first king of Rome, who was cut into pieces by the senators.

The traditional date of the death, the seventh day of July, was celebrated with certain curious rites. Again, a Greek legend told how Renthous, king of Thebes, and Licurgus, king of Thracian Edonians, opposed the vine-god Dionysus, and how the impious monarchs were rent to pieces, the one by frenzied Bacchanals, the other by horses. These Greek traditions could well be distorted reminiscences of the custom of sacrificing human beings, and specially divine kings, in the character of Dionysus, as god, who resembled Osiris in many points, and was said like him to have been torn limb from limb. We are told that in Chios men were rent to pieces as a sacrifice to Dionysus; and since they died the same death as their god, it is reasonable to suppose that they personated him. The story that the Thracian Orpheus was similarly torn limb from limb during the Bacchanals seems to indicate that he too perished in the character of the gods whose death he died. It is significant that the Thracian Licurgus, king of the Edonians, is said to have been put to death in order that the ground, which had ceased to be fruitful, might regain its fertility,

In his conquest of Mexico Prescott gives detailed description of human victim slain at the altar of the Sun God by the Aztecs. The only difference between the Eastern and the Western versions of this blood ritual appears. to be the absence of the sex Bacchanal in the 'brutes' of the Americas Ritualism was the very life-rhythm of the Babylonian worship; and devotion turned out to be worship of rituals and devotion to rituals; and life as such was entirely disenchanted about morality and ethics. A good man was not so important in society as an expert in sacrificial ritualism. Gods demanded sacrifices and shows; demonstrative adoration was not the primary duty of the single devotee, of the entire populace to supply the demands. Nothing was more important than the rites, the priests and his sacrifices. Lord Marduk and Lady Ishtar demanded sacrifice of blood, virginity, adornments, jewellery, but above all processions, bacchan- als, dramatisations of death and resurrection. (Note the subsequent Safi reactions against the excess of forms, Sufism a mystic product of the same land, shuns rites.)

For the public processions, at times, dramatic floats were arranged on chariots; representations of the gods and goddesses which were carried along for dramatic demonstrations seem to have, been modelled on smaller scales. From this practice came the custom of symbolic representations, because after the processions, the iconic deities or their images became too holy to be destroyed. Amulets and talismans were made of these relics which guarded over the destinies of the lucky who had them, or wore them on their persons. (Relic-adoration ran through Buddhism, Catholic- ism to our days.)

A Babylonian Myth. But the most interesting part of this drama of death and resurrection is contained in the subject matter in the myth itself.

When there was nothing as 'above', and nothing as 'below, there was Apsu (water) and Taimat (chaos); they 'mingled their waters', and Goddess Taimat as chaos attempted to confuse and destroy all, when Marduk slew her, and tore her into pieces; these he hung above and below; and the sky and the earth came into being. (In later myths we shall see that Uranus and Gaea, mother and son shall unite to produce creation, and of course the twelve Titans shall marry amongst themselves as brothers and sisters to assist creation and people the earth. No wonder that the Greeks of Egypt had taken recourse to this method when they wanted to contain the hagemony within their own race in Egypt.)

Marduk's blood, the blood of the slain, and the Mesopotamian clay, supplied the raw material for the manufacture of 'men', who later on so misbehaved that the disgusted god sent a flood, and destroyed the men. This was an action to be regretted later, as the greedy gods realised that without the aids of the men, the dainty food of the sacrificial fires would not be forthcoming. Hence they saved a pair by building an ark. It survived the flood, and the pair was safely perched on the peak of Nisir. A dove was sent out to reconnoitre; and land being in sight Shamash-naphistim, who thus survived, offered sacrifice, and the gods felt satisfied again.

In the Sumerian version of this story Ishtar and Tammuz are described as brother and sister; so is in the Hindu version, Manu and Satarupā. (They were, according to Aitareya Brähmana, Father and Daughter, though in a mystic scene and creation was incestuous. They were, according to Satapatha Brahmana, and Manu Samhita, brother and sister -incestuous again.) But the Babylonian version was most daring still, Ishtar, in the Babylonian story was at times a sister, and at times, a mother. But why bother? Did not the same trend percolate throughout later myths in the forms of Demeter, Persephone, Venus, Adonis and many more such? Satarâpă and Manu, Daksa and Aditi, Brahma and Sarasvati? Yama and Yamf?

Listen to this one as described by Dr. Durant:

Tammuz, son of the great god Ea is a shepherd pasturing his flock under the great tree Erida, when Ishtar, always insatiable, falls in love with him and chooses him to be the spouse of her youth. But Tammuz, like Adonis, is gored to death by a wild boar, and des- cends like all the dead into the subterranean hades, which the Baby- lonians called Aralu, and over which they set, as ruler, Ishtar's jealous sister Ereshkigal.

Ishtar casts aside her dignified exclusiveness, follows Tammuz to Aralu and prostrates herself before an unrelenting sister's wrath. Then comes the most symbolic part of this mystic myth, and one of the most beautiful pictures in mystic literature. "I weep for the men who have left their wives," says Ishtar and continues to plead before the gates of Aralu; "I weep for the wives torn from the embrace of their husbands... But none but the nude can enter the gates. That is what the tablets command.

Therefore at each successive gate through which Ishtar must pass, the keeper divests her of some garment or ornament: first her gown ther her earrings, then her neclace, then the ornaments from her bosom, then her many jewelled girdle, then the spangles

from her hands and feet, and lastly her loin cloth, and Ishtar, protesting, gracefully yields,

Of course, her sister Ereshkigal (means in Sumerian, 'love and copulate for mixing juices') having confronted this unadorned beauty without compare felt a smarting kick of jealous wrath, and sent through the beautiful body a hundred afflictions. Meanwhile on earth arts famished, love languished, vegetations withered.

We have seen exactly similar conditions flourishing in Sumer; and we shall observe conditions prevailing in the legends of Older Homer too.

(Do we recall Demeter, Prosperpine and Pluto? Do we recall Alcestis? Adonis? The Orphic cults?")

Of course Ereshkigal has to release her; and she does. But Ishtar is firm. She is not going without Tammuz, her lover. She wins. The seven gates are crossed by the lovers. Love wins over death, as it would in the legend of Savitri (The Spirit of the Sun) and Satyavan (The Spirit of Truth) recorded in the Hindu epic Mahabharata.

Symbolised Immortality. The involved symbolism has been times and again skilfully explained by scholars and Yogis. Śri Aurobindo has a whole poem, a great one, on the theme of Savitri. But to the people, for whom these legends were written, those dramatis personae, actually lived and died, and sincerely believed to live again. So real and ardent, so vivid and urgent, were these characters to them that millions over the centuries lived and died for them. Poets have sung of them; playwrites have composed plays. For thousands of years tears have been shed in sympathy with the rise and fall of these immortal characters. Such is the power of symbolism. Symbols crystallise, as the lamp does the Sun, the never-withering sentiments that make Man seek the mystery of the Eternal. The story of death and life told and retold in the form of the revival of the dead, enters even the latest of the times when millions speak, believe and fight for the Resurrection of the Lord, of the One who came back from the world of the dead, of the Lord who rose from the dead. Some legends, in this way, we cast away as legends and un-history; yet some others we cling to as faith, history and fact. From Time to Time the cosmic rhythm of Faith carries the same tale. Some we interpret as symbolism, some we reject as paganism. And old Time laughs. Truth blushes. Faith keeps quiet.

But, again, we find the Babylonians entrenched in the faith of personal immortality, which is quite a different matter from resurrection. They believed in Aralu, the land of the dead, cold, shivering, disintegrating with deadly torments, inclusive of leprosy; but a land which just acts as a re- formatory, a purgatory. This idea of immortality too, gave the corollary- idea of the lands of the dead, the world of the Pitrs, of the Menes, where await the spirit of the ancestors for their release through the good acts and sacrifices of their progenies. The pre-natal life had to relate some- where the post-natal life for making the Life cycle complete. Thales, Thebes, Greece, the Ionic isles, Egypt all were under the influence of this idea of immortality and transmigration in some form or the other. The Chinese and the Japanese too believed in this. The Hindu does. After all no faith is solitary; and no religion speaks for itself alone. In religion man realises his spiritual growth to maturity. Besides the grand symbol- ism of Life in Death, Death in Life that the legend bears as the throb in its heart, it suggests the sublime poetical truth about the relentless pursuit of Life, that running through the awning arches of cold death, seeks and ever seeks Love. Nothing is so real, so poignant, so thrilling with ardour and sympathy as the urge with which Love pursues Death, and stands naked before the Almighty-Cold, Almighty-Time. The very urgency was transformed by the Beauty of its sheer lonely sincerity. Life continues through Death.

And all this is not mere poetry. We shall see, when the time comes, in a later chapter, how through the system of Yoga, the science of Realising the Power that runs behind all motion in all the aspects of this Universe, and all Universes, through a dedicated course of meditation. The Realised speaks of the human consciousness; of how the self passes through the six stages until it meets the last, seventh state, where the Source, the Great Power, the Effulgent Purusa, the Self, the all pervading, all-effulgent Ocean of Consciousness envelops the naked self, denuded of all limits and bonds, of all descriptions and decorations, of all that could be added or subtracted. Saivism subsists on the two systems of Yoga and Samkhya. Hence the relevance of these legends to the principal subject matter of this book. The element of paganism in Saivism is but formal and superfluous.

There are stories of yet other peoples and of other civilisations to be unfolded in the course of reviewing the continuous stream of the religious adoration of a Mother Goddess whose veneration could be involved through blood sacrifices, sex offerings

and forms of promiscuity. These are different peoples with different languages and different cultural values; these are people who fought for their respective political, religious and commercial interests. But underneath all their differences this emphasis on blood and sex, and the presence of a Mother-image in their respective religions persists. And all these together, had been what is known as, Pagan religions, that flourished in the Levant, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea; and of which Aegean, Ionian, Greek and Roman myths are the grandchildren. There are good grounds to believe that all religions are protestant outgrowths of former religions, which yet live within the new religions, hid behind various rituals and symbols, as our ancestors still stir in their caves right within our blood, and within the desires that colour and warm that blood. This is so, not because of the anthropological reasons alone, but also because spiritually the inner contents of Paganism have been inviolably sacred and true, irresistible and unique.

In the course of our special study of rites and symbols of Saivism we shall discover how deep does the past dovetail into the present; how the Siva-Sakti-Tantra, aware of the materialistic rites, proves itself to be the only pragmatic way to liberation and peace. It sought no worldly power for personal utility. It sought peace on earth and joy for the Self.

Like a Chinese box our times are bedded layer by layer into the past.

Early religions are not too early to claim links with the modern ones. However, startling it may be, the pick-axes and shovels of archaeology have brought home the truth to us that our modern ways of thought and administration are not so modern after all.

5. Crete

The island of Crete is a stepping stone from Asia to Europe. Was this the very cradle of the phallic grandeur that in the East had reached the spiritual transfiguration of Saiva transcendentalism? Even fifty years back no one would have suspected this rather barren island to have contained, like the embyro of Mäyädevi, Devakit, or Mary of Nazareth?, so rich a treasure of antiquity as changed the cultural identity of the then civilised world. All along, Crete had been lumped together with the Greek civilisation because of the myths of Homer. These myths had been recorded at least four or five

hundred years after the incidents they describe. Modern mythologists read sense in these myths; and their recastings of history, together with finds of excavations, have confirmed old Homer's depictions as basically factual. Poets have remained suspects to historians. But new facts are being disgorged. Picks and shovels are engaged in writing history. Myths are breathing life; and traditions are yielding meaningful cultural heritage.

Indian myths mention an island of Artha (Crete) where Bulls are totems, and where the Axe (Paraiu) enjoys the honoured symbol of the waxing and waning of the Moon, which is an accepted Divinity of the Mother cult.

Homer speaks of sacrifice of bull in this Island. Athenians too had adopted a bull sacrifice, 'murder of the ox', bouphonia, fully described by Frazer: "The Ox was regarded not merely as a victim offered to a god, but is itself a sacred creature, the slaughter of which is a sacrilege, or murder." Varro says that in Attica slaughter of ox was regarded as a crime, as in the Hindu India since Manu.111 But the Hindus regard making the gift of a Bull (Vrsotsarga) a great rite for propitiating the dead.

These characteristics of the Minoan civilisation of Crete strongly suggest Saiva characteristics of a particular type. Names such as Crete, Knossos and Phaistos (cities in Crete) echo such Purana-names as Krtha, or Kiauna (A sea-girt-city, or place).

Relation between the Bull-ritual of Crete and Attica and Hindu India could be traced from such rites as the Vrgotsarga and Gomedha of Vedic India. Frescoes of the palace of Knossos reveal great scenes of the bull ritual. A Knossos seal pictures a Bull at a ritualistic platform (It conforms to the description given by Frazer of bull sacrifice referred to above). Another seal, a gem (Minoan) describes a goddess on a lion,

Mothers of Gautama Buddha; † Vasudeva Krana; Jesus Christ.

fully answering to the description of Śiva's consort Parvati (Maid of the Mount) Singha-Vahini, (Mother riding on a lion). Some seals of the Indus- valley Culture remind these seals of Crete both in their subjects, and in their artistic designs.

We have already noted the Indian mythological traditions112 speaking about an island, Krtha. We shall now take a closer look at some of these Purana-details, and compare the two sets of myths. In the Indian myths bulls were held in regard; and parafa (axe) was an accepted insignia. The stylized axe of the double blades signified the waxing

and waning of the moon. Spiritually this conveyed the metaphysical phenomenon of integration and disintegration. The creed of this island of Krtha had been the same as was followed by Ṛsi Bhrgu. He was associated with astronomy and astrology. Rama of Ayodhya, an Aryan, came into a clash with a descendant of Bhrgu whose name was Rama of the axe, or Paraku-Rama. There is an interesting legend associated with this Axe-Rama's clinging to the Axe, and his avenging the misdeeds of the Aryan kings who had humiliated his father and his creed. It was most probably symbolic of a fight between the Father creed and Mother creed. The incident merits further probe. At the moment we shall restrict our study to this island of Crete and to Krtha of the Indian myths.

That the island of Crete was the seat of an independent and homo- geneous civilisation and culture has been accepted only in recent times. In 1936 Sir Arthur Evans wrote his splendid six volume on the archaeo- logical finds in Crete. Since then a link between the Asian and the European civilisations has been regarded as an enigmatic possibility. Europe's legitimate pride in Greece prevented its scholars to acknowledge any debts of Greece to Asia or Oriental cultures. By and by the prejudice is being blown up. The antecedents of the Bible as revealed in the Dead Sea Scrolls and of the Greek culture, as revealed in the Oriental cultures, are no longer doubted. Scholarly prejudice is a type of intellectual servility leading to a great deal of false chauvinism and imperialistic obduracy. Fortunately the latest studies in comparative religion have done a good deal in eliminating this prejudicial approach.

A Comparative Date Chart. The layers and layers of finds, now revealed, span between them a period of 10,000 years of human history. Let us pause and try to measure the immensity of this archaeological discovery in the light of some of our 'knowledge' which, through making grooves into our thought-machine, has rendered us useless in receiving new knowledge, and accepting them in their immensely vast context. Our faiths are victims of our intellectual commitments. It seems blissfully more con- venient to cling to given traditions, than to embrace new challenges. Ease is a fascinatingly honeyed exercise. The siege of Troy which was an Asian city, and which had been culturally and materially far advanced than anything known to Europe at that time acted as the beginning of what was later to be known as Greek culture. Let us consider the dates with the hope of vivifying this vastness.

1. Seige of Troy-Circa 1200 B.C.

2. Herodotus, Europe's earliest historian-484-425 B.C.

3. Thucydides, historian of Athens 455 B.C.

Compare this with some dates in Indian history:

1. Indus Valley civilisation-3000 B.C. Circa.

2. Indian expedition of Antiochus III, King of Syria-2068 B.C.

3. Worship of Vedic deities in Mittani and Mithraism-1375 B.c. Circa.

4. Invasion by Cirus of (The Achemanian of Persia) Kapisa-558 B.C.

5. The Buddha's death-544 B.C.

6. Invasion of India by Alexander-327 B.C.

7. Asoka the Great-273-232 B.C.

A comparative estimate of these dates, together with the dates of the Egyptian monarchies, which are the most settled of these dates, shall fix our minds particularly on the period 2500 B.c. to 1200 B.C. when throughout the middle East, or throughout the so-called Oriental regions washed by the Arabian sea, Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, a great stream of cultural communication flowed steadily, and involved the Madhya Desa (the Medes), and the Madhya Sagara, (the Mediterranean Sea).

In considering the traditions of the civilisations that flourished in and around Greece, the European scholars, for reasons best known to them- selves often appear to fight shy of crossing over the sandy deserts of the East, and of progressing towards the Indus and the Kavery valleys. The umbilican gyrations of that ancient cultural world must have been agitating some central location away from these places where the earliest strata of civilisations are recognisable far in advance of a paleolithic culture. The origins of this culture must be located away from Egypt, Mediterranean or even the Medes. But historians doggedly attempt to contain this gradual development of so finished a culture within the borders of the European East.

The obliqueness of such prejudice springs from a superstitious emphasis on the so-called classics of the West, the Old Testament, Homer, Thucydides and Hesiod. A rigid adherence to these texts alone has narrowed vision, and handicapped scholarship. Facts

had got subverted by a lack of freedom in studying comparative myths and rituals. Recent finds, in archaeology, however, have shocked truth back to its place; and history is being reconstructed in the light of the latest facts. Yet, inferences are hard to be worked upon, and believed.

Scholars may do better by accepting that the modern trend of archaeo- logy really has been augered not by the so-called academicians, and scholars, but by the uninitiated, and hence, unprejudiced and open-minded adventurers who, having no scholarly bonds to keep them in check, just leaped ahead of scholarly prejudices. Wickenmann, Schliemann, Evans, Champollion, Carter, R. D. Banerji, Rawlinson, Smith, Wooley, Botha and a host of others had attempted with courage what the academicians would rather have allowed to rest with Homer, and Moses, and at the state of Noah-Flood-Dove-Fish legends.

History owes to a stumbling shepherd and an accidental interceder, the amazing discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which, despite the opinions of scholars, are still being obdurately resisted by interested parties to be accepted as the earliest known documents that connect the Essines to the ministration of John the Baptist, and the baptising sects of Jesus Christ. It is difficult for the dogmatist to come in the open, out of prejudiced chambers, and air the facts. Nothing is more dangerous to historical research as creating a stone-fence around academic premises, and then living within it. Believing in myths is less injurious to scholarship than building myths and living in them.

Now, there are no myths clinging to Crete. Or, it is more correct to say, now the myths cling around Crete more closely. Good old Homer's Minos, Ariadne and Theseus are all now coming into their own. But of that later on, and gradually. The myth has to be spelled out. Of all the myths this Cretan episode is the one that shall have to be re-read in the light of the Eastern myths, specially the Vedic and Hindu myths. Like Dr. Graves in his great work the White Goddess, or like Jane Ellen. Harrison in her work Themis, the stories of Minos, Minotaur and the Minoan cultures have to be studied against the light of its interpretative contents of comparative mythologies. Some future Hindu Dr. Graves shall have to undertake the difficult, but absorbing task of interpretating the Hindu myths in the light of the creeds and cults.

The civilisation of Crete, which draws its essence from the rich and varied culture of the third millennium n.c., the starting points of which are no longer traceable in the islands, was distinct from Egypt or Baby- lonia. Its highest stage was reached when the twelfth dynasty in Egypt was ruling. At its third, and the last stage, due to some sudden cataclasm, it was burnt down and totally destroyed. The ruins which were found out by Schliemann and Evans, evidence a civilisation contemporaneous with the eighteen Egyptian dynasty. The Minoan civilisation had in this way three periods. Crete forms thus a natural link with cyprus, between Asia, Europe and Africa. Consequently, it appears to be just fitting that the virgin Europa was carried away by the legendary Bull to this very island; and she was destined 'to marry' and get 'settled' here. Europa

got 'married' to the 'Bull-creed', and 'settled' with the new situation. From her progenies Greece was to benefit later; and again, from her close association with the Bull (an incident that was brought about by the peeved god of the Sea, Poseidon), she mothered a monstrous creature, a new cult. That new cult had to be destroyed by a Greek hero with the help of a practising female of the Island. It is a very significant legend.

"The legendary palaces of Knossos lie beneath my feet", exclaimed Schliemann, standing on a mound he was not destined to buy and unearth. This Knossos was the city where King Minos ruled. Who was this Minos? (Manyu in Sanskrt is an epithet of Siva, and Agni). There have been more than one Minos. But for our purpose they could be treated as one, the Minos-tradition. Zeus, that prolific gallant, who spread Hellenism over a wide area by planting seeds of both faith and culture, by 'impregnating' the females of the land, or by influencing the Mother Goddesses, carried the damsel Europa over to the lovely island of Crete, and the resulting children were Rhadamanthis and Sarpedon (Rudra-Mathana, Sarpada- hana??) Zeus himself was born, not in Greece, but in Cyprus. So the Cypriot Zeus carried Europa over to Crete and begot two children. In the meanwhile Europa was married to the king of Crete, Asterius. Asterius adopted the children. Poseidon was another god who was enamoured of the same Europa, who however did not much fancy the old, matted, fierce sea-god. He, displeased, cursed Europa to a madness of accepting a bull instead; and the result was another child, who, although known to the world as the son of Asterius, really turned out to be a monster, a human with a bull's head. (Clear indication of a cult.) He was the famous Minotaur, (Mino-Minos; Taur-Taurus, the bull, i.e., the Bull-cult of

Minos). (Manyu-s-Pati or Siva). This Minotaur, the monster, wanted to be pacified only through the offerings of human flesh, specially of maidens and of youths. After Greece was subjugated by the king of Crete, the Cretans forced the Greeks to send them seven youths and seven lasses every year (seven is a holy number in mystic cult) as sacrifice to Minotaur. Theseus the hero of Greece, offered himself as a sacrifice; and promised to kill the Minotaur, and save Greece from this humiliation. This he did. (Europa, once involved in the erotically inspired mystic blood rites of Cybele, Apollo and the Bull, wanted her spiritual freedom. She accepted Mithraism.)

The outrages of the Minotaur having become too oppressive, the Cretan monarch forced the Athenian captive-engineer Daedalus to construct the famous Labyrinth, in which the Minotaur was kept captive. The maze of the Labyrinth prevented the monster to reach out and spread his terror. As soon as Theseus reached Crete, the Princess Ariadne fell in love with him. She divulged the secret of the Labyrinth to her beloved, and by pairing a shock of locks from her father's forehead, by handing over a ball of thread to Theseus for guidance through the maze of the Labyrinth, and by giving out certain other 'secrets' she let down her own people, so that after the monster was destroyed (the cult is destroyed), Theseus could easily marry her. This he did; but he took care not to carry as wife to Athens so dangerous a woman (a Mother-cult) who could betray her own people to an enemy. She was left back in an island.

We are not interested with the legend of Theseus. But Crete interests -Crete and the religion of Crete. We see that in Crete the European influence came into a close association with the sacrificial worship, and with the Bull-worship. There was a Bull totem in Crete. There was human sacrifice in Crete. The pure European faiths and culture got mixed up with the Eastern faiths and culture in Crete. But the Bull-culture, the Bull-myth was not peculiar to Crete alone. Of that by and by.

According to Dr. W. G. de Burgh anthropological deities were un- known in the Cretan faith. It was under the Ptolemies of Egypt that

the habit of deifying the ruler became habitual. The old Egyptian Kings had been worshipped as incarnations of Ammon (Re). Even Alexander had been worshipped as God during his life. The practice quickly spread, e.g., among the Seleucids. In origin it was Hellenic, rather than Oriental. The Olympian religions, as we have seen, conceived the gods anthropomorphically, in a manner alien to the religions of the East.

Alexander took it from Egypt to the East, turned himself into a deity; the Seleucids continued it; and the Romans inherited it through Mithradates. The Seleucids gave it to the Parthians; from them the Kushanas; thence the Buddhists who deified the Bodhisattvas. Hindu deities were in the offing by then. Not Siva. Hindu Rama and Kṛṣṇa, though human beings, are worshipped as gods.

Dr. Lissener interprets the legend in a manner which again brings him to the same conclusion, that the Athenians, due to the sacrifices that Crete demanded, and due to the importance of the Bull-motif, avenged them- selves by destroying the Cretan culture altogether; and this victory of the Athenian over the Cretan culture is contained in the Minotaur myth.

Before his departure Heracles was magnificently honoured by the natives, and wishing to show his gratitude to the Cretans he cleansed the island of the wild beasts which infested it. This deed he accomplished for the glory of the Island, which, the myths relate, was both the birth place and the early home of Zeus.

This early anecdote, again, shows how there prevailed a type of creed in the island which ran contrary to the original Zeus (Mittani), or Jupiter, or Dyau-Pitr (of the Rg Veda and Zend Avesta) creed, and engaged itself with the animal cult of the Medes, and how Heracles (the Heracles-cult, the Sun-cult), attempted the superimposition of the sacrificial rites by a more refined deification.

Crete was the island of Europa's conversion and impregnation. Europa started a seeded carrier of culture from here. Here was Zeus himself born, Zeus who begot Aphrodite, and impregnated Europa. It is significant to remember that Aphrodite was born in Cyprus, another island near Crete. The Mother-Goddess and the Father-God vied for prominence in this way at the junction of the three cultures, Asian, African (Egyptian) and Athenian (or European). The excuse for this contract was commerce, and the means were provided by the human agencies, which flowed interminably, from times immemorial, through the Persian Gulf to the territories of the Red Sea water front, and beyond, to the Mediterranean.

"The Cretans were a Mediterranean race," writes Lissener, "they were a sea-fearing people and maintained commercial relations with Egypt, the Near East, and all the members with the Aegean and Mediterranean communities as far as Italy and Spain." There could never arise a "sudden" and "unconnected" race in Crete. A 'Cretan-race' is

an 'enforced' race. In reality, a race connotes more expansive and more thorough implication than could be contained in a small island like Crete. The Cretans are more a people than a 'race'.

The Cretans, as we know them, must have had antecedents; and the antecedents, according to the description supplied, remind one of the Phoenicians, who were known for their commercial prowess and adven- turous audacity. But it appears that due to a long history of isolation and insularity, these island-reserves added some novel features in the nature of their religion, which had been basically a Mother-cult. This could have been due to its connections with the Ionian isles and Anatolia. Through the centuries this cult had undergone some more changes, and was struggling to survive against the onslaughts of the powerful Father- cult of the Athenians. The shyness of the European historians to link these trends of the Mediterranean countries with countries to the further East is inexplicable. Or, is it explicable? It was a misfortune of historical research that European expansionism in the East had coincided with the oriental researches of European historians, who were to have supported the imperialistic theory of a 'superior white race'. "In the course of the third millenium there rose in the island of Crete a rich and varied civilisation, which spread in the Levant, over the islands with later off-shoots in North Syria, Sicily and the Western Mediterranean, and led to intercourse with Palestine and Egypt. It has been called Minoan after Minos (Satamanyuh?), the law-giver and friend of Zeus (Indra), 117 of Greek tradition, the memory of whose sovereignty of the seas has been preserved in the pages of Thucydides. The race that inhabited Crete in pre-Hellenic times was not Asiatic but Mediterranean (Italics author's), but belonging, in all probability to the dark, long-headed, short and slender stock that had its original home in North Africa. Crete is the natural link between Europe, Asia, and Africa, and became in time the centre of a powerful commercial and maritime empire."

That the ancient Greeks owed much of their cultural excellence to the non-Greeks, namely, Cretans, whoever they were, is evidenced by the same details. They owed their law to Licurgus; their engineering wonders to Daedalus, and above all their religion to Zeus. These were essentially Cretan personalities. Yet, scholars call the Cretans 'Mediterra- nean' and 'not Asiatic'.

To the open-minded, the phrase not Asiatic but Mediterranean has a very reserved meaning, because the entire Eastern sea-board of the Mediterra- nean, from the Suez to

the Black-Sea, 'is Asian' (if not Asiatic). If we reject this sea-board as being Asian, what else could mean Mediterranean? Such confusions are born of prejudicial preconceptions that breed as mental fungus, and render clear thinking impossible. Yet some historians suffer it. Is it because of their nationalistic and racialistic chauvinism?

"...the dark, long headed, short and slender stock" referred to above, again, does not speak of the Egyptians, or of the Semetic Arabs. Who were they? Obviously the entire region referred to, could now, after the discoveries made in Akkad, Syria, Assyria, Anatolia and Sumer, be linked with the race that had the highest maritime skill before the Romans and the Scandinavians, namely the Phoenicians, about whose real origin, again the European scholars feel unfortunately shaky, for they cannot be placed anywhere in Europe, that their sculptures, potteries, ornaments, cults, alphabets, maritime propensities could link these so-called different 'races' together, is being stubbornly denied and shoved aside. The admitted marginal differences are obvious; but these could have been the after- effects of changes which are inevitably due to geographical and time factors.

But the Mother-cults infuse the inevitable links. Besides the cult itself there is a string of fringe similarities which make one think: the matri- archal structure of their society, the forms of female dressing, exhibitionism of the female form, particularly of the inflated breast, the use of accessories of toilettes and the styles of the coiffures, the offerings of flesh, hymen, even genitals of men and bulls, ceremonial coitus, the influence of the priest-monarchs and of the priests, the importance of the fertility motif, the uses of astrological charts, and charms, esoteric chants and magical rites, the influence of the animal totems, the sculptural and mural themes, specially the potteries, together, across the centuries, reflect on a number of maritime cultures of the ancient world as of one link and class. The Thracian, the Trojan and the Anatolian traditions have to be regarded as of a piece. From Bul(1)-garia to Crete, Sicily, Spain, a Bull motivated culture prevailed so strongly that even today the same Bull-trend conti- nues in concealed forms, in art and life, as ritualistic forms of sacerdotal celebrations. The 600 clay tablets dug up accidentally by the American archaeologist Carl N. Belgen, at Pylos, together with the finds of clay tablets by the English, Alan Wace, in the 'House of the Wine merchant at Mycenee' (1300-1200 B.C.) only emphasise the point raised here. They are similar; and these similarities speak, on more than one count of a popular cultural link between the Bull of Knossos, the Bull of the Syrians and the Bull-

fight of Spain. We are interested in the Bull because Śiva is identified as 'the Bull-badged' (Vrsabha-dhvaja) God of gods; and because we trace the Bull motif directly up to the Indus Valley civilisation.

The Cretan Mother. The Cretan's most sacred deity was the Mother Goddess, Rhea. This name is used in the same pronunciation in the Puranas of the Hindus where an Asura, half-buffalo and half-man, was destroyed by a Mother Goddess, one of whose names is Hri (Tuam Śri Tuam Is-sari Tram Hri),11 The goddess was always portrayed in accompani- ment with a male deity, both in the child and maturer forms.

A Mother Goddess has to play the roles of the Madonna, Artemis, Gaea, Athene, Aphrodite and Venus at times. The Courtesan Goddess and the Fertility Goddess and the Mother Goddess are only emotional variations of the same motif, Mother, the Power, of whom we shall know in greater detail in a later chapter. We shall also learn that in Hindu Saivism, as Prakyti, the same feminine principle as the positive force becomes the inseparable consort, the alter-ego, of the Male counterpart Śiva, in whom togetherness becomes sublimely unique.

Dr. Graves is more categorical in this view, "Ancient Europe had no gods." Then whereform did the gods come? What was the source? He considers that the ancient religions in Europe came from the distant North and 'the East'. A study of Greek mythology should begin with a consideration of what political and religious systems in Europe existed before the arrival of Aryan invaders from the distant North and East. "The whole neolithic Europe," he thinks, "worshipped the cultish Mother."

The Delphic Omphalos-Icon, the Navi of the Sakti, the naval-boss, is just a white iconic image, a form which is spread throughout the matri- archally motivated societies. This icon took the form of the mound of white ashes, which helped the preservation of the holy fire without letting it go out. This conical heap-form has been confused as a phallic re- presentation. (Yet another case of self-projection of the obsessed. Had they had to preserve fire within ashes, as is done in these sanctuaries, they would realise that for preservation of fire in ashes the cone is the most effective shape.)

The celestial symbols of the goddess was the moon, as well as the sun, says Graves.... The three phases of the moon had given the idea of the three forms of the goddess,

with the three defined powers as revealed through the cycle of life. Mother earth germinating in plants, blooming and fruiting before dying for the year, again provides another three forms of the goddess. "She could later be conceived as yet another triad: the maiden of the upper air; the nymph of the earth, or sea; and the crone of the underworld-typified respectively by Selene, Aphrodite and Hacate." This, Dr. Graves thinks, gave rise to the mystic number three and the more mystic, magical, number nine, i.e., Three times Three.

The importance of the position of the priestess-monarch faded with the realisation of the importance of the role that the male seed played in the functional performance of coitus.

The triad referred to above by Dr. Graves conforms to the triad in the Sakti cult of the Hindus, which goes as follows:

Greek selene	Vedic Brahmani	Pauranic kumara (maid)	Tantric kaumari sakti	Rides Mayura Vahana (fowl)
Aphrodite	Vaisnavi	Ruvati (Matured)	Kausiki (parvati)	Simha-vahini (Lion)
Crone	Isani or Rudrani	Vraddha (Crone)	Camunda Dhumavati	Sava-vahana (corpse)

The twenty-eight days of the menstrual-cycle, meaning a month, fixed the original idea of the lunar cycle of a month. Raka, the full moon, and the Kuhů, the new moon, together make up the matrilineal month. Thirteen such months could make a year, with one month kept completely out of any ritual, being the month of the year's menstrual taboo, a fact that is still borne out by the Hindu observance of the festival (in the reverse sense of doing nothing) of Amburaci, when 'the Mother' menstruates (as in the Assam shrine of Kamakhya), and as had the tradition in many of the mystic shrines of the Levant and Greece.

Unfortunately the past of Crete will not speak direct to us yet, as its script still awaits to be deciphered. More unfortunately we know of them from others, some their enemies, some friends, and some, like Homer, who spoke of them at least 2000 years after, because between 5000 and 4000 B.c. migratory people came to settle there. They did not belong originally to Crete. "It does seem almost certain that most of the early migrants came from the East." To such observation we have to add some other facts:

(a) the powerful Caucasian people known as the Hittites had similar potteries and scripts; (b) that Egyptian courts received embassies from Crete; and (c) evidence of potteries establish Eastern connections stretching as far as Bengal. Cretan stone vessels introduced a new style in other Mediterranean countries. "Sinclair Hood suggests that at this time (2200 n.c.) there was a mass migration of people from Anatolia down the coast of Syria and Palestine towards Egypt, and in the resultant disturbances refugees crossed over to Crete and other Aegean islands." This explains eminence of the Trojan civilisation over Greece; and of the emergence of the seven savants of Greece from out of the Aegean isles which had always enjoyed the reputation of a wiser and an intellectually more advanced life than obtained on the mainland. To the Greeks the East had always been more 'enlightened'. Fashions, architecture, pottery, physical appearances, and above all certain regional characteristics relate the Cretans inescapably to the strange Phoenicians whose navigatory and commercial expansiveness carry them easily to the Babylonian, Iranian, Somalian and Ceylonese ports.

But to go back to the Mother Goddess. She was a queen of the animals, and of the mountains. A feminine Palupati, a Jagaddhatri, a Manasa, a Laksmi or a Parvati. This was an earth goddess; a fertility goddess. The Bull was the most treasured animal. Sacrificing a Bull was regarded as the highest form of sacrifice. The trident (Tri-Sal) was the most popular religious sign. The snake, the bull, the trident, the sacri- fice and fire-pits, all these together, together with a mother-goddess, living in compact with a Poseidon-like father figure, suggest inevitably the popularity of a form of religion which was akin to Saivism. It was the religion of the Deccanese from times immemorial. In the twentieth book of Homer we come across the line "in bulls does the earth shake in delight," the earth-shaker being Poseidon, the Sea-God. Šiva was Tripura-Hara, Pinaki, Rudra the fierce one who shook the worlds by his cries and yells. The skill of these people in dye, metals, specially in copper, bronze and gold, and pottery indicates strongly that these Cretans, the Phoenicians. and the Tamils have to have somewhere some affinity, historical or cultural, or both. All these people cultivate a taste for mammoth buildings, and lived in a close-knit unit known as a fortified city. Their taste for urbanity is remarkably similar; their attitude to women, remarkably frank.

"But the evidence is never monumental. Unlike their contemporaries in Egypt and Mesopotamia the Cretans built no great temples, and they raised no large statues of their deities," because most of their prayers, sacrifices, as of any awed by the supernatural, were carried on in the open, and around fire-pits, where a sacrificial platform alone represented the only structural dedication, 124 But we are forced to conclude that in considering the evolution and progress of iconism, phallicism and Lingam- worship (Saivism, that is) Anatolia, Sumeria and Babylon, Crete and Thrace, have some secret yet to be revealed. Symptomatically Crete or the isle of Artha, the home of the Bull, the birthplace of the god of the gods (Deva-Deva or Mahadeva), of the people with the Axe and the Trident (as their religious symbols) could not be quite different from the people who adored Šiva, the Mahadeva, the Trisula-pant, the Sula-pāṇi, the crescent-crested. (Šaši-Sekhara), the Axe-weilding, (Parasu-hasta), the serpent-loving and Kettle-drum-beating consort of the Mountain Maiden. who loved sacrifice in blood and fire, and who, as the consort of Pasupati, was herself fond of all animals, whose king was the lion.

6. Iran

A. SUMERIANS IN IRAN. The Persian antiquities reveal much more. The antiquities of Iran or Persia are continuous and varied; and these appertain to regions which maintained closer contacts with the Indian subcontinent. The Persian Gulf and the Red Sea were but the arms of the same Arabian sea across which a sturdy people raced in building ships whose sails were impregnated by the Magic Westerlies so much spoken of in the old documents.

The Story of this particular region of the world runs as far back as 7000 to 6000 B.c. The region (North Persia, Western Turkestan and the Arabian peninsula) was not as arid as it is today. Traces of a buzzing civilisation, now being gradually unearthed confirm a continuous com- merce of men, material and mind between the Deccan peninsula and the Mediterranean through the Red Sea and the Gulf. This civilisation, depicted through their customs, utensils, city-architecture and linguistic performance, was in every respect far above the barbaric, which, a few decades back Western historians would have led us to believe. Between the Euphratis and the Tigris, which in those days had different mouths, the Sumerians built their first cities. The Bible refers to their lost cities built along the Mediterranean coast. Between the millenia that had

swallowed so many and so much, the Sumerians must have undergone changes of their own names, and must have changed their habitats too, proving thereby their cultural and military superiority, their migratory propensities. Such a feature would be quite in consonance with our ideas regarding the Sumerians or Phoenicians, whichever one prefers to call them.

"These Sumerian people appear to have been a brownish people with prominent noses." Their writings, left on dried bricks, have been deciphered. They had city-states, the city being built around a Ziggerot, or Mandir, or Temple, the people living their life around the temple with customs and rituals of the temple intermingled with their daily life. "Its God and its priest-king claimed an authority from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea." The Sumerian writing helped develop the formation of alphabets. The way it spread, indicates the influence of Sumeria in Egypt, Greece and the Levant. Writing developed the idea of the Empire through the silent presence of the Emperor as borne out by his seal, a feature highly developed in the city states between Tyre, Nineva, Asur, Ur and Harappa, leading up to the mouth of the Narmada, Kavery, Godavari and the Ganges.

The Phoenicians, about whom we have spoken, and we shall know further, had been some of the first sea-going peoples, and their ships grew into big galleys. We have noted already that there has never been found a correct racial distinction between the various people referred by us as Semetic, the Phoenicians, the Syrians, the Minoans, and the Egyptians. This region had seen so many empires to rise and fall that any surmise on the distinctive features of their cultures and their racial features has remained an almost constant battling ground for scholars. And this confusion stands more confused by a peculiar similarity existing between the cune-formic tablets of clay, the pictorial papyrus and frescoes, and the mystically dumb and artistically eloquent bead, stone and metal seals invariably accompanied by the figures of some animal, bird, or both compact in one. This language unspoken mystifies all theories. But their love for buildings, splendour, sports and a full-life is common to all; equally common were their basic religious traits, ceremonial observances and legends. They were experts in the arts of turning metals to human and artistic use, and as builders of communications over the seas and lands they show redoubtable skill. It is the discovery of their skill in these departments that has blown up the theory of the 'Roman-arch' (Gothic- art or 'Classic-lines"). That art, that arch and those lines have now been traced

to antecedents away from European soil. (The underground arch in Mohenjo-daro for instance.)

It is, therefore, impossible not to link them, despite their wars, differ- ences, enmities and other bickerings; they belonged to a common set of people, much as the four sets of cards in one pack belong to one pack. Of all types of feuds blood-feuds could be the worst. Ask Agamemnon about it, or the Kauravas.

But the arteries of these civilisations are spread along the routes of communications between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, the Nile and the Euphrates, the Gulf and the Deccan and Ceylon.

The stories of the Bible run closely parallel to the Babylonian legends until Abraham. This 'Semite' patriarch was the leader of a nomadic peo- ple near 1600 a.c.17 The Cannanites could not penetrate into the strange Philistines the Phoenicians who ruled the land. They could only depend on the goodwill of these strange-people without which their life could be endangered. The Great David and Solomon appreciated the position, and learnt to live in amity. It was only through their wise decision to live at peace with their superiors that they could lead their people to the heights of splendour and glory. "It was based on a close alliance with the Phoeni- cian City of Tyre whose King Hiram seems to have been a man of very great intelligence and enterprise. He wished to secure a trade route to the Red Sea through the Hebrew Hill-Country. Normally Phoenician trade passed through the Red Sea via Egypt; but Egypt was in a state of profound disorder at this time.... A very considerable trade passed northwards and southwards through Jerusalem."128 (There is also a South Indian city named Salem. There are other places in the Deccan with 'Salem' as a part of the name.)

Because of the exaggerated notions that people have of Saul, David, Solomon and others a correct, proportionate, factual appreciation of these kings (local rulers of city states, really), becomes impossible when compared with contemporary monarchs under whose benign grace and patronage they existed as buffers. "Solomon's temple, if one works out the measurements, would go inside a small suburban church."129 After Hiram's death, Egypt became powerful, and the glory of Judah fell. The people who lived between Syria, Assyria and Babylon, fell to mutual wars, by 721 B.C. Israel was swept away by Assyria.

This captivity educated and civilised them, "The people who came back to Jerusalem at the command of Cyrus (the Emperor of the Medes) were a very different people in spirit and knowledge from those who had gone into captivity. They had learned civilisation." Inevitably, again the question poses itself for an answer: Who were these Phoeni- cians? These Assyrians? Who were they to have kept the Israelites of Judea, the Jews, so fully under their sway? We have seen how the history about this wonderful people is hesitant, if not silent. Historians, to make matters worse, refuse to cross the Arabian sea, and make a search. They refuse to go into the Päli and Sanskrt traditions.

Yet these people, the Phoenicians, survived the Aryan onslaughts. By the 3rd Century n.c. they succeeded in putting almost the entire 'Semetic' people out of cognisable existence, except the Jews. The Jews themselves were sent back in chains to build back the city of Jerusalem. "It is not so much the Jews who made the Bible, as the Bible which made the Jews" is a remark which calls for deep consideration. For 2500 years these people suffered oppression. But after these years the Jews appear to rise out of the ashes of the Phoenicians. "After the fall of Tyre, Sidon, Carthage, and the Spanish-Phoenician cities, the Phoenicians suddenly vanish from history; and as suddenly we find, not simply in Jerusalem but in Spain, Africa, Egypt, Arabia, the East, wherever the Phoenicians had set their feet, communities of Jews" have come into being. It is in this way that the seeds of the Sumerians and Egyptians spread along history. The People vanished. The book remained. And from the book the people appear to come back again.

The commerce of the Syrian ports with that of the Arabian Sea coasts through the Red Sea and Egypt was thus the chief interest of the Phoeni- cian kings, and the Assyrian kings. continuity of cults of Aphrodite, Marduk Astarte, Ba'al, Dionysus and Or- This commerce preserved the pheus-a cult in which several characteristics, later known as phallicism in general, displayed prominently. We have already noted them in the course of our Cretan chapter.

Rev. Dr. George Albert Cooke in his article on Phoenicia, contributed to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (14th Edition) calls the Phoenicians as "an early off-shoot of the Semetic stock", and again refers them to its Cannanite Branch. But he says again, "the Phoenicians themselves believed that they had migrated from an Eastern shore." This is most confusing. Obviously the beliefs of the Phoenician are based on the

Phoenician documents. Why these documents should be ignored, and why they should be connected with Shem, the eldest of the twelve sons of Noah, as has been done in that article, is not at all understandable.

The Tamil characteristics of Saivism, we have noted, have important similarities with the Phoenician and Assyrian temple civilisations. Even today the temple towns of South India, and the temple civilisations of Campa, Kamboj of the Mekong Valley culture, echo these similarities in unmistakable nuances, crescendos, overtures and symphonies. It calls for a lot of research for coming to definite conclusions. But echoes do murmur. The very structural similarities between the pyramids of Egypt, the temple-palaces of Ninevah, Assur, Tyre, Sidon, Nimrud, Ur, Babylon, and between the Seals of Assyria, Sumer, Akkad, Mohenjo- daro, Harappa, Kalibanyan and Lothal are very striking. Such similari- ties are found in other areas of artistic expressions as well, such as the several art-styles, and motifs discovered over the area, the metallurgic characteristics of the craft of these peoples, the popularity of zoomorphic gods and of animal totems found recorded on the finds. "The megalithic culture of South India has close similarities with the neolithic cultures of the Mediterranean." The South Indian peninsula was thus becoming more and more important as a land where the commerce of East and West met. Soon it would gain even greater importance when the Aryan culture too would mix with this.

Between modern Somalia and Abyssinia on the one hand and Iran on the other, Phoenician ships merrily rolled with fantastic merchandise for the ports of Aalana, Arsinda, Cylsma; Eridu, Ur, Babylon (Behů- valam?), Eritrea (Aitréya?), Sudan (Siv-dhäm?), Dibuti (Jiva-Bhûti?), Aden (Ady-an?), Muscot (Makshi-Kshetra?), Bandar, Om-an, Bushire (Bahusri?) Malaya, Java, Sumatra. Campă and Šakadvipa. From the Eastern archipelago to the Suez (Śiva-väsa?) and Babylon (Bahû- valam) these ships churned the ocean, and maintained a flourishing con- tact with Päriva (Persia) and Madhya-Desas (Medas), particularly well. The names Iran and Persia definitely remind scholars of the land of the Aryans and of the Päriva-Desa of the Puranas.

On one of the bas-reliefs on the stairways of the great palace of Darius at Parsepolis (Pärsva-nagara?) is carved a stately and sedate lion attacking a terrified bull on whose hind parts the king of the beasts has already planted his royal jaws. This is the end of the Bull-cult, from where the Lion-cult took over. The Lion is associated with Aryans

and Mithraism. It is the first of the signs of the Zodiac, and an eternal enemy of Taurus, the Bull. The Babylonian, Sumerian and Cretan epics were giving way to an altogether different epic, Jaya, of which the Mahabharata is but a fragment. The Puranas too were the outcome of the same tradi- tion. Then came other epics, the Talmud and the Old Testament. But in the carvings at Parsepolis one finds the first traces of these. The carvings are at certain places symbolic. In later Asokan pillars the sign of the bull and the sign of the lion would figure more triumphantly, and more logically. In the Sun-temple of Konarak the elephant (Buddhism- Hinayana) was being subdued by the Lion (Buddhistic Tantra Maha- yana).

The myths of Iran could be divided easily into two parts: the first relates in Mithraism; and the second to Zarathustra's Zend Avesta (Zoro- astrianism). The last of the Zoroastrians are now settled in India, and are known as the fire-worshipping Parsees, people from Persia, or Päriva Desa or Iran. 14 These had migrated over the centuries from the entire Persian empire harassed and exiled by religious wars and catastrophes. The Greek invasion and Islamic onslaughts are two of the most recent catastrophes from which these religious people sought refuge in India, about 2000 years back.

B. MITHRAISM. No discussion of true Iranian culture could be complete without a treatment of Mithraism and of the Zend Avesta and Zarathustra. The influence of these two religious movements both on Europe and Asia has been profound.

Mithraism traces its origin to the earliest of times, and with the spread of the Persian Empire the spread of Mithraism has been both pronounced and extensive. There is hardly any part of the civilised world which was not affected by Mithraism. Mithraism's spell continued up to the later days of the Roman Empire, where under different pretexts Mithraic cults and practices persisted side by side with the Orphic, Manichaeic and Cybelline cults. Some scholars believe that many of the (Bahusri?) Malaya, Java, Sumatra. Campă and Šakadvipa. From the Eastern archipelago to the Suez (Śiva-väsa?) and Babylon (Bahû- valam) these ships churned the ocean, and maintained a flourishing con- tact with Päriva (Persia) and Madhya-Desas (Medas), particularly well. The names Iran and Persia definitely remind scholars of the land of the Aryans and of the Päriva-Desa of the Puranas.

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Sun were the foundations of those Magi who, as the famous. sages from the East played so great a part of the birth of the son of Mary and Joseph. The same Magi, or the Maga-Brähmaṇas would introduce the Sun-temples and Sun-images in India, as Varaha Mihira (505-87) would say.

Dr. Durant says, "History is a book that must be started from the middle." Opinions are divided. They were of Indo-Aryan trainings and ways. And in all probability they had moved towards Western Asia from their happy habitat along the heavenly Caspian shores. This happened prior to a thousand years before Christ, five hundred before the Buddha, and eight hundred before the battle of Issus. At Ecabatana (Ekavartmana) their king Deioces (Deväsisa) founded his capital modern. Hamadan (Soma-Adhwan?), and started the dynasty known as the mighty dynasty of the Median (Madhya) kings, of whom Cyazeres (the Yaksa-s We are not Akşi-s and Ayuh-s of the Indian Puranas) was the first. concerned here with the historical part of this dynasty; but the religion they brought along with them resembled a fertility cult, attached to the worship of the Sun, and given to an elaborate system of priestcraft. This was the beginning of the end of the Mother cult. The cities built were centred around a temple life; and the most influential social codes emanated from the priests, the Magi, most of whose powers bordered on magic and sorcery.

In tracing the Mythological antecedents, and in discovering the secrets of the interrelation between cults and cults, between names, forms and ways, between gods, totems, rituals and other ecclesiastical phantasma- goria, it is of utmost importance to study this question of gradual migration of people, or ideas. A nation, or the religious forms of a nation, may be pushed by another nation, by an onslaught, which might inflict on the victim a cult, or a God. One of our most serious scholars on this subject, in an imaginary dialogue between the Syrian Theophilus and the Roman Paulus postulates, ... a constant emigration in ancient times, of tribes inhabiting the southern coasts of the Black Sea, a process that has indeed ceased only in the last century or two.... Every hundred years or so the fertile coastal land grew over-populated, and one tribe or another was necessarily sent away to seek fortune and make room for the rest. Or it may be that they were forced to move by pressure from the East, when wandering hordes from the plains of the Asia broke through the Caspian gates of the Caucasus mountains. Of these tribes some took the route southwards across Asia Minor, and ventured through Syria, and as far as Egypt. We have the authority of Herodotus for

this; and some took route west- wards across the Bosphorous and Thrace and into Greece, Italy and Gaul, and even, as I say, to Spain and Portugal. Some struggled south-east- wards into Chaldea into the Taurus mountains; some moved northwards into the Western shores of the Black Sea and then followed the Danube to Istria, continuing their march across Europe"...and Dr. Graves points out to this postulate about the motive of the migrations with a view to drawing the historian's attention, not to victories of empire and power, but to quieter, and more enduring victories of religious forms and culture. Similar views have been voiced by Wells. The great Phoeni- cians, as Semetics, according to him overwhelmed the civilisation for Gibralter to the China Seas. Keeping in mind the commercial ex- pansions referred to before, and the military adventures, it is not difficult to imagine how the myths of the East travelled and circulated throughout the Mediterranean world as far as Europe. Thanks to the victories of Pompeii in the Eastern front, as well as in Carthage, the Cappadocian shows taken from the Asian frontiers to Tunisian coasts carried with them the great cult of Mithra, a cult which was cultivated by Pythagoras and the followers of the saintly Appolnius of Tyana.

What was the cult; and what were its chief features?

Iran or Eran was the plateau inhabited by the Aryans who "without doubt came from southern Russia." But another opinion claims that the Medes who destroyed Assyria drew their origin from a people known as Amadai; Madai; Medes. "As Indo-Europeans they had probably come into Western Asia about a thousand years before Christ from the shores of the Caspian Sea.... The Medes appear to have wandered through the regions of Bokhara and Samarkand and to have migrated farther South.

The Medes gave to Persia their language, the Aryan language, a system of alphabets consisting of thirty-six characters and their extremely brave and conscientious code of social manners. All in all they were given to a faith which gave them and guided them through good conduct, fellow feeling, and the two great gifts of the truly civilised, kindness even to the vanquished, and appreciation of good qualites in others.

This is the people that brought Mithraism with them. These patri- archal herdsmen "worshipped an Indo-Aryan male trinity of Mittani of Asia Minor still remembered in 1400 n.c. subsequently called Zeus, Posei- don and Hades." This later Zeus, as we have noted in the section on Crete, was 'born' in Csete before he could have affairs with

maidens all over the Iberian Peninsula and the Ionean Isles for the purpose of propagation of his worship, the worship of the Zeus, God of Gods, and Jupiter of the Romans. It was an attempt to propagate a Father-God idea by vanquishing a Maiden-Goddess.

This paternal god was but the descendant of the Great Man-God Mithra, a Sun God, a He-God, and God that for the first time challenged the supremacy of the Mother Goddess. And quite understandably the cult of Mithra, in contradistinction with the sex-motivated and orgiastic Mother cult, remained for a very long time a moral and almost ascetic cult. Its totem was the Bull, which he killed, and whose blood alone gave him satisfaction. Bull worship and the Marduk cult had to be terminated. (Agni or fire is called both meda and iikki in Vedic rites; and one of the names of Siva is Mydaka.)

Mithra. The Mithra legend, at least the original legend and its trend, has been lost in the later Roman and Pythagorian Labyrinth of magical cults. From the extant sculptures alone the original pure legend could be reconstructed. The marvel of his being born from a rock was witnessed by some shepherds alone; they brought gifts and adored him; he covered his nudity with fig leaves, and partook of the figs for quelling his hunger. Dr. Graves and Dr. Frazer read in this 'figmentation' signs for further mystifi- cation, as the proverbial fig tree represents both fertility and immortality, the first through its many seeds, and the second through its five pointed leaf, a mystic sign of fire, dear to the Mother Goddess. The very first of his victories should have been the Sun, with whom, instead, he patches up so great a friendship that ever after he shared the chariot of the great Sun, Helios Apollo. In a later chapter on Hindu myths we shall have occasion to note that there are three different sets of myths regarding this challenge against the Sun on the part of infants born of celestial power. Case one refers to Mahavira, son of Anjana and the celestial Zephyr. He became a devotee of the Sun, whom he served in the form of Rama. Case two, referred to the twin birds Garuda and Arun. The latter became a charioteer of the Sun; whilst the former became the chariot of the Sun in the form of Visnu; the third case referred to two brothers, again birds, Jatayu and Sampāti. Both became devotees of the Sun.

After his encounter with the Sun, Mithra killed the Bull (see Plate 36) the Taurus. Now that the bull was killed, he, with the Sun, could get into the winter solstice, the time for

planting, growing and harvesting. Having killed the bull created by Ormazd, he killed the raven sent by the Sun. Through this act the Earth and the Heaven came into closer contact. Thus Mithra was responsible for Life on the Earth. Ahriman, his antagonist tried to spoil his creation by a drought but he undid his evil-design by hitting at a rock, and causing a stream to spring out, and thus save the earth from destruction. Then Ahriman sent a deluge; and Mithra fought it by getting pairs of lives saved in an arc. Drought and water failed; next came Fire; but yet nothing availed because the creatures were protected by Mithra. His work achieved, he was gloriously carried away in the brilliant chariot of the Sun to the region of the immortals by the side of the great Ormuzd.

This basic myth has undergone various changes down the course of the classic centuries before and after Christ; and in the process has contributed a part or the whole of the story to other religions. Such is the character of myths. They do not die because of their in-depth qualities. There has not yet been any new religion completely untouched by an old myth. The myth of Mithra lives in Hindu Myths in the name of Mihira, a name of the Sun or Visnu.

"True myths," says Dr. Graves, "can be defined as the reduction to narrative shorthand of ritual mime performed on public festivals."

Greek myths, and therefore most part of the European myths, are but what was imported from Crete, Egypt, Palestine, Phrygia, Babylon, India, the typical land area that lay between the huge land masses of Asia and Europe. In translating myths from their primitive language forms to nationally acceptable prose forms the greatest importance has to be paid to the original root-forms of names, linguistic specialities, tribal origin of myths, geographical environments, natural hazards, and incidental influences from similar myths of other countries and other peoples. A study of Greek mythology without a knowledge of the Asian mythologies and vice versa is an experience in futility.

The basic myth of Mithraism came to Egypt; and took up a mystic form. In the Roman world it got mixed up with the cult of Cybele, and became a highly specialised esoteric cult, to get entrance into which one had to practise severe rigours, known as the seven-degree-rigours. From the one extreme of being the most ascetic rites known to mankind Mithra- ism swung to the other extreme or orgies, sacrifices and blood baths.

The cults of Cybele and Attis, Apollo and Aphrodite got mixed up with the original Mithraism. These facets of later Mithraism shall be dealt with in the respective sections on Egypt and Rome. Such studies reveal facts which take even seasoned scholars by surprise. The cult of Dionysus was one such which surprised Dr. Graves, who had to entertain 'second thoughts"141 about it. The cult of Amanita muscaria, a mushroom, is present in most phallic cults, which get addicted to drugs for inducing the hallucinating effect of trance. In studying Saivism we shall note the place of drugs, specially of Dhatúra and Marijuana, and traceable to the Dyonisian cult. Turkey, which was a seat of this cult is still a known exporter of marijuana.

A highly specialised priesthood sprung up from this kind of Mithraism. The shepherd-messengers who had witnessed the emergence of Mithra, and had brought gifts to the first of the Gods, devised the system of adoring Mithra through laying out sacrificial and ritualistic codes which made some particular tribe of the Medes specialised in performing the adoration of Mithras through their gifts of the special knowledge. This vested a right on them which even the kings of Persia could not deny. They formed themselves into a priestly brotherhood known as the Magi, the wisemen, similar to the Brāhmaṇas of the Vedic rites, who wielded so much power that even politically it became unwise to ignore them. In the mountain- ous regions of Azerbaijan, a town so much extolled in the later epic of Shähnämä, in the Rustum legends, the Magi maintained a holy family of experts, who succeeded in keeping Mithraism for over centuries in its purest form. It continued in its original purity to subsist in the East, despite the onslaughts of the Parthians, the Greeks, the Scythians and the Islamic invasions and conversion. It maintained its original purity amongst the Parsees. It found place in changed form even in the myths of the Puranas because of its almost ascetic morals. The dates of those Purāṇas support the plausibility of such admittance.

It might prove of interest to some that in the northern area of Iran, Azerbaijan, Ecabatana, or Hamadan, along the Elburzrange, the Mithraic cults are still observed in a pure form. Under new names, as off-shoots of Islam, the spiritual core of Mithraism continued to influence the life and thoughts of the Sufi-mystics, Bahais and Ahmadias.

C. ZARATHUSTRA. The original Mithraism was further purified by a Magi, a priest of priests, a great wise man, who rose in Persia. His name was Zarathustra, again a man covered with legends, but leaving behind the reality of a book, the Zend Avesta.

Besides the teachings of Gautama Buddha civilisation of mankind does not know of a greater, more moral and simpler code of religio-social ethics based on pure reason and commonsense than what has been recorded in Zend Avesta, the book of Zarathustra. Greeks, like the Chinese, were master-craftsmen in reconstructing spelling of Eastern names to suit their tongues and alphabets. They spelt the name as Zoroaster. Of him we shall speak later.

To those who are well versed in the ancient Vedic language Mazda- ism, the religion of Zend Avesta, is nothing but Rg Veda on a different key. Although they are different books; and although Rg Veda is much more complex and elaborate, a comparative study of the two, specially of the gods and their rituals, leaves no doubt whatsoever that the peoples of the Zend, and the people of the Vedas, were, if not the same, at least very closely associated. Both were Aryans in origin, practice and culture. The Mittani records of Bogaz Koi show presence of the Rg Vedic gods amongst the people of the Medes and Persia.

The religion of classical Persia is very complex. The Assyro-Babylo- nian beliefs appear to have got syncretised with the Aryan faith, and the Vedic strains; but the constant changes that such syncretisations had to undergo during the course of the different monarchies must have created correlated complexes. In spite of everything, the basic emphasis on purity and morals in the Persian sacerdotal life was so insistent that, irrespective of the changes, the voices of Zarathustra prevailed. The people remained basically moral and elevated. This was the influence of the sublime personal conduct of Zarathustra himself.

Their chief rites embraced the cult of Fire. The grandeur and purity of this noble cult could even today be felt by visiting the Achaemedian Fire altars uncovered near Cyrus's capital of Pasargadae (6th cent. B.c.) (see Plate 32). No change has changed this direct ovation to Fire as the supreme God that proved vital to Life. Fire was not used as a medium for casting offerings, but Fire itself was the deity worshipped.

Preservation of Fire gave some of the Persian and the Sassanian kings the title Bratakara, (Vratakära?). The fire maker was known as the Magi, Herb-Red; the Fire-Chief. The actual ritual of fire was known as Homa (offerings in Fire), which included the making, offering and drinking of the juice of the divine herb Soma. Brahmanism in India still pays the same importance to Homa as Havana; although the preparation of

Soma is no longer known. Thus the cult of fire as practised in ancient Persia or Iran, i.e. the land of the Aryans, inevitably recall the practice of the Parsees of India of today, as well as of the Vedic rites of the Brähmaṉas, The rite of Homa, the divine ambrossia, the drink of the gods, of im- mortality in Aryans (i.e. Brāhmaṇical), Haoma or Soma was made of a mythical personage who could declare of himself in the following language: "Vivasvän was the first mortal in the corporeal world who prepared me. The fate which was imputed to him, and the grace he was awarded, were to have for a son Yima, the splendid, the good shepherd, the most glorious of those who were born, the sole mortal possessor of the solar eye, and because of his power to render men and beasts non-mortal, water and plants exempt from drying up, so that man could consume food preserved from all evil spells. In the kingdom of the potentate there was neither cold nor heat, old age nor death, nor envy which is the work of devas (demons)."

Vivasván is a Vedic personage; Vaivasvat his son too was a personage. His son was Manu the first Man. And homa, or Yajña started from him: this what the Vedas had to say. And this Vivasvän had a son Yama, a daughter Yami, and the two weilded great powers of justice and fairplay all over the living world. Thus we see the interrelation existing between the Persian Zend Avesta and the Rg Veda.

In the Cappadocian inscription found in Mittani (Bogaz Koi) a list of gods include complete Rg Vedic and Iranian deities; Mitra-Varuna, Indra, Nasatyas. Fourteen hundred years before Christ the people of Mittani of the upper Euphratis signed a bond of treaty with the Hittites under the name of these gods which naturally had been respected by both. A natural inference forces itself that there must have been a consistent link between the people of Anatolia, the Hittites, the people of Mittani, the Iranians and the Aryans of India, and this contact was traceable even four- teen hundred years before Christ. It is in the light of this continuity that we have to discuss Hinduism, Vedism, and our chief subject of enquiry, which could never be treated as an isolated phallic cult. Dionysus, Mithra, Bacchus one after the other had established a tradition, a forceful traditional cult. Saivism appears to have absorbed all of them into its pure sublimity.

Of course, the Pre-Zarathustra religion of Mithra was not forgotten. Mithra remained a great god; and animal sacrifices were made to him. In essence he was Light. Chaldean

astrology influenced the veneration of the following: (1) Hvare-Khshaeta (Barhiş manta of the Vedas, meaning the Sun); (2) Mah (the Moon: Candra-Mä of the Vedas). Candra is a name of the Moon in Vedas; but another name retains Mah or Ma as a suffix to Candra and coins the word Candra-Mã meaning the Moon); Anahita the planet Venus; (4) Tishtriya, the Dog star (Tvasta or Tavasty of the Vedas); (5) Ape (water), clearly the Mesopotamian Apsu and the Vedic Apas.

A reading of the Rg Veda Suktas makes the relation between the Diony- sus, Mithra, Candra, and Haoma (or Soma) story with Tvaştr, and his daughters an evident case of similar trends. In a later chapter we shall note how in the Tärakamaya or the War of the Planets (Battle between astrological 'star' people and the 'Sun' people) Atharvan, Atri, Angiras and a group of the Rsis (Magi) upheld the section which adored Siva. Saivism again became the shelter for the quarrelling parties. Siva drank the poison of a cultural ill-feeling, and brought all the age-old differences under the protection of the Great Mother, Sakti, who gave all equal rights, and equal spiritual opportunities.

But the Achaemenian kings gave the highest position to Mazda, the King of kings, who appealed less to the naturalistic gods, and projected the royal monarchical ascendance of the highest divinity. Mazda is etymologically associated with Medhya in Sanskrt, meaning sacrificial offering of meat (mead); also with Medha (Sanskrt), meaning Intellection and Memory; also with Mada (Sanskrit) meaning Ego or Intoxication. In any case scholars are willing to connect Mazda with some Vedic divin- ity. Ahura Mazda in this way connects the great god of the Asuras, the Asuras of the Vedas, with the Vedic Mada, Medha and Asura. It reveals a partition of the ways of one branch of the Aryans from another branch.

Ahura Mazda has been honoured with many bas-reliefs and many

formal representations; but scholars consider that he belongs more to metaphysics than to any physical representation. Like the law of eternal varieties of Descartes the universal law of Ahura Mazda known as Asha was a pure and divine spiritual law, free of all human weaknesses, and quite unlike the vedic laws.

And arose Zarathustra. He reconciled the Magi with the kings; Mithra with Mazda. Zarathustra's date according to Parsee traditions is 660-583 n.c., and his religion became orthodox in Persia much later, at least seven to eight centuries later. It goes to the great credit of Zarathustra's philosophy that for eight centuries his teachings had

been kept astir and alive without any seemingly secular force to protect it; and after eight centuries it had become a royal and influential religion.

The life of Zarathustra is a life replete with wonders and miracles. He was born to laughter, and not to cries as ordinary mortals are born. He lived a normal life and married. But from here on, his life and that of the Buddha have similarities. He left his home in search of wisdom from the wisest of men. To love and serve both destitute men and animals was held by him to be the highest mission of life. He offered his prayers to Fire which he liked to tend. Like Moses he went to a mountain and kept silence for seven years. There he experienced a revelation. From Vahu-mana (the Spirit of Mind and Wisdom: Atma-Jñäna as the Vedists would have termed it) he received his 'Experience'. A static Transfigura- tion made him believe that he had confronted Ahura Mazda Himself on the banks of the river Daiti (Azerbaijan in modern Geography). His wanderings took him to the eastern frontiers as far as Afghanistan. His extreme piety made him a great friend of man and beast, and a great master of things pertaining to earth, metal, plants and water. Angra Manyuu (or Agra Manyu meaning 'the foremost of anger and resentment', 'the envious destroyer', like Mara in the case of the Buddha), attempted to create 'trouble' for him by tempting him, in vain, as usual. Unsuccessful at the confront ation, Angra Manyu then broke through the North. He wanted to save the Asuras (another branch of the Devas, the Demons, the antigods), who were being fast eradicated by Zarathustra. But in spite of Angra Manyu's agitations, the cult of the Asuras, i.e., of the Assyrians, melted before the high moral preachings of Zarathustra. This indicates the gradual transformation of the bloody mysterious erotic oriental cults into a pious moral sustaining religion. Religion gained in spiritual depth. Ahura Mazda weilded the mortar and the cup (the words of the Avesta); and Angra Manyu was vanquished. We shall see the mortar and the same cup as MüŞala-Udükhala and Ajyasthäll in the hands of Siva, the tamer of Yajñas. Later on, with the conversion of Vishtaspa, king of Välhika (Modern Balkh), to Zoroastrianism, all the countries from Greece to India came to be influenced by the teachings of the Zend Avesta.

D. MITHRAISM AND MANICHAEISM. After the conquest of the Western parts of Asia by Rome the remnants of Mithraism had entered the main society of Rome and flourished as a mystic cult. Nero himself had come under its spell. A new Mithraism, influenced by the concepts of the Egyptian Isis and the Greek Cybeles, grew into a

Pythagorian cult. But side by side with this recensional Mithraism another cult came into vogue, and became the most serious challenger to Christianity. Today's Christianity contains within its fold the remnants of the cults of the Essenes, Attis, Mithra and Mani with the serious and moral tone of Zarathustra and Gautama Buddha. In form and spirit, in lores and legends, in traditions and observances, in ceremonies and sacerdotal responsibilities Christianity, specially the church, appear to owe much to these ancestors for its forms and dogmas, In fact, it is truer to say that the Christianity, as we know it to- day, is a logical growth of the ancient pagan religions. It was neither a protestant, nor a reformist phase. It is a natural state in a cycle of spiri- tual maturity, as fruits are of flowers, and seeds of fruits.

At the beginning of the Sassanian era in the reign of Sapor I (242 A.D.) Mani, a native of Babylonia, that meeting ground of the ancient anti- quities of the Southern India and Western Asia, of Buddhism and the Minoan Bull and Aphroditic cults, combined the Mazadian dualism with the gnostic tradition of the early Christians, specially of John the Baptist, and the Mandaeans of the Lower Euphrates. Mani assumed an interest- ing stand; and the Christian church having become alarmed at the growth of Manichaeism, denounced it as heretic. Mani declared his apostolate, and presented himself as the Christ-come-back. He was strictly Pauline in his metaphysics, thereby establishing a well-ordered hierarchy. The most praiseworthy part of this sect was its adherence to Zarathustra's noble simplicity; to the asceticism of Mithraism and of the Pythagorian sect; as well as to the compassion of the Buddha. The Mani- cult was, like the Cathar group of the Christian faith, highly regarded and praised for its continence and discipline; and one could imagine how spectacularly and tellingly this quiet and seriously ascetic cult could have influenced a civilisation tired and disgusted of the excesses and degenera- tions of the decaying Roman hedonism.

"Mani of Ctesiphon proclaimed himself a Messian sent upon earth by the True God to reform the religious and moral life of mankind. Borrow- ing from the Zend, Mithraism, Judaism, Buddhism, and Gnosticism Mani divided the world into rival realms of Darkness and Light; the earth be- longed to the kingdom of Darkness, and Satan had created man. Never- theless the angels of God had surreptitiously introduced some elements of light into humanity-mind, intelligence and reason. Even woman, says Mani, has in her some sparks of Light, but woman, as Satan's master- piece, is the chief agent for tempting man to sin. If a man will refrain from sex, idolatry and sorcery, and

lead an ascetic life, of vegetarianism and fasting, the elements of light in him will overcome his Satanic impulses, and lead him, like a kindly light, to salvation. After thirty years of successful preaching Mani was crucified at the suggestion of a Magian clergy, and his skin, stuffed with straw, was hung from one of Susa's gates."144

Another crucifixion. Another Oriental attempt to purify the deeds of man. And Islam was yet to be. The reaction against the excesses of the materialistic sacerdotal Magi-culture, of the erotic mysticism soaked in blood and wine, of the absolute disregard of the downtrodden by the worldly successful, of the grave immoral and corrupt system of crushing human voice and dignity, rings through the entire passage quoted above. Mani, like the Buddha, like Moses, like the Christ himself, rose against the excesses of a priestly privileged class which, in the name of God, ruled over the material destinies of nations already brought down to its lowest pass through ages of wars, lootage, pillage and carnage with, almost always, the connivance of the priests. Buddha's was regarded as an anti Brah- manic revolt; and the Brähmanas outlawed him, and called Buddhism a heresy. Zarathustra's was a revolt against the Magi; and Christ's was against the money-grabbers. In all these cases, inclusive of Mani, it was the same privileged class that had extended its political arm to strike, in the name of law, the ruthless blow for eliminating the popular opposition. They did it in the name of law and order, which only protected the interest of the high and mighty. But Martyrdom carried Manichaeism to a frenzied height; and it continued, without abating at all, even within the Christian church until the onslaught of Islam, and Genghis Khan. Christianity and Saivism of the Vira order of Vasava, claim precepts which Mani appeared to have attempted to put into practice, and resurrect spiri- tualism from a dominant priestism. We see that these attempts failed. The mundane in man seeks the immediate. Senses of possessiveness and power-lust always polarise the spiritual and the Satanic. The built-in craving for self-promotion undid all Mani's attempts.

We have so far patiently followed the histories of the different religious trends that characterised the Oriental-Regions from the times of prehistoric past to the times of Islam. The range covered had been as long as 3200 years. Of these the early Helladic years (2700-2100 B,c.) covered the early Minoan period and the period of the III dynasties of the Old King- dom in Egypt; when in Mesopotamia the early dynasties of Kish, Erch, Ur, Gudes and Zariku, and Ilushma of Assyria ruled.

The Middle and the late Helladic, Mycenian dynasties covered a period of 700 years (2000-1300 B.c.). This early, middle and late Mycenian period covered the reigns in Egypt of the XI to XVIII dynasties ending with Tutenkhaman. The empire of the Assyrian kings are still under investigations.

The earliest Assyrian Empire, historically ascertainable, started with 1380 B.c. when the Doric migrations had started in Greece, and when Ramesis II ruled Egypt. The Greek antiquities and Homer start in 800 n.c. This was contemporaneous with the XXI, XXII, XXIII, and XXIV dynasties of the Third Interlude in Egypt. It covers in Babylon the rule of Nebucchadnezzar; and a very significant period is covered by the dynasty of the sea-country, or the dynasty of Bassa.

The Bassus born of water spread a civilisation, which formed as the name suggests, a contact between countries across the seas. In Assyria during this period ruled Assurnasirpal, Tiglath Paila, Sargon, Senacherib, Essarhaddon and Assurbanipal. The Greeks had started their Persian wars; Thermopolae was about to be fought. Hesiod had finished his history; and Solon's great administration had just ended.

These cultures, these gods, these trends, this sweep of contiguous history are of immense significance to the development and growth of Hindu Saivism.

Relevance of Antiquities to Saivism. We have spent long over our study of the different religions of the Ancient World. Its relevance to our subject has to be realised against the background of (a) the constant rise and falls of the different cultures; suggesting (b) perpetually fluid situation regarding wholesale migrations in favour of finding a safer place; (c) the intense commercial activity which brought human frontiers closer and made spiritual frontiers more and more involved; and lastly, (d) the migration of gods and goddesses and ritualistic forms from one people to another, and one country to another. As and when we shall be studying Saivism in its different forms we shall discover that the ancient indigenous idea of Siva, besides absorbing the proto-austroloid phallicism of the tribes, also absorbed a number of other traits which happened to build up legends and traditions of an anthropomorphic Siva-lore having close parallelisms to some of the Greco-Oriental tales and gods. The two way trade had two-way movements of gods and their legends. Greco-Oriental phallicism and fertility-images, powerful as they were, failed to disturb the continuity of the poise and quietitude of the Hindu Saiva-metaphysics. A few external scars, left permanently as

reminders of this battle, did not succeed in changing the inner texture of Hindu Saivism.

The great age of Athens is found to coincide with the extension of the Persian empire over the entire Arabian peninsula and Egypt. This was the period when Cyrus I and II, Cambyses and Xaraxes are found ruling: and when Alexander is about to meet Darius III at Issus. By 330 m.c. the marvellous Hellenistic age could be said to have come to an end, bringing down with it the more marvellous glories of the fabulous Orient.

It is against this background that we propose to consider the gradual development of Saivism, as is known and practised today.

Antiquity of Saivism. Saivism in India had been 'flourishing' in 6th cent. a.c. (800 is Homer; 776 is the First Olympiad; and 480 is Thermo- polae); and the traditions of Saivism, i.e., the Tamilian Siddhantas, must have been in practice from 'times immemorial'. In fact, so far in Indian history no time has been known when Śiva-adoration was not practised.

The Vedas have references to Rudra and Siśnadeva; the Sukla Yajurveda has references to Siva worship and adoration; according to Sir John Marshall the people of Mohenjo-daro (c. 3000 B.c.) adored the Pasupati form of Śiva; the Svetasvatara Upanisad, the Satapatha Brah- mana and the Kausitaki Brāhmaṇa mention clearly Śiva worship. Ipura, a Vedic god has fought, according to the Yaj-Veda, his antagonists, the breakers of sacrificial vessels, at (or on the banks of) the Hararûpiya a city or a river, identified as Harappa, where Siva as well as phallic gods were worshipped. The people at Harappa lacked either the pure Vedic or the general Aryan characteristics.

All this carries the Śiva worship back to prehistoric times, although most of the canonical literature of Śaivism has grown within the active period between 1000 B.C. and 400 A.D. and most of this is found in a language much later than the Vedic Sanskrt.

This makes the study of the real Saivism an intensely interesting subject, particularly in the light of an integrational movement. The Tattiriya Samhita, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and specially the Atharva Veda stand out as critical records of a period of Hindu life when

the orthodox class was struggling against the admission of heterogeneous religions within the fold of pure Aryanism. We have placed enough facts to believe that a mass of people had been under a constant pressure to seek shelter in India. The outcome of this struggle has been far-reaching. A new Trinity grew up; a new way of worship, admitting of polytheism, magic and sorcery, priesthood and hereditary priestism and an attempt to re- introduce the Mother-cult came into evidence. Inclusion and assimilation of the native residents within the Aryan circle became irresistible. were being absorbed into the vast population of the land at a tremendous Aryans rate. Foreign-immigrants were being absorbed at a high rate. Social rhythm, religious tenets, and the gods had to undergo deep changes. This process of holding the gates of Aryanism open to the non-Aryans was carried through the Treta Yuga by Rama of Ayodhya, and through the Dväpara Yuga by Krsna of Dväraka. By denying this process of liberal admission of other peoples and other beliefs Hinduism, in contra- distinction with Aryanism, became at a later date inflexible like cast iron, both rigid, and brittle.

Before we come to the analysis of this aspect of Saivism, namely, its genius of receiving other trends and assimilating them into Hinduism, we shall finally take a glimpse of the last days of the Roman glory when due to foreign influx, and due to the extensive communications of a far flung empire, the metropolitan was raided by scores of cults and religious trends. We had occasion to refer to this feature before; now we take a closer look. The basic hold of democratic rights on the Roman mind, and the natural inclination of a materially prosperous and sceptic people to experiment with many religions, permitted all the eastern religious trends to lump up the Roman society into a jelly of libertinism. We shall study at a glance this theatre where many gods of many lands held their respective court, scene after scene, till the curtain was rung down by Alaric. Taking the Medes as the mid-point of a land-mass both the peninsulas of Italy and India became, as it were, receptacles where all these religions found their ultimate home. Whereas in Rome it let loose an age of susperstition, dogma and mystery, in India it came face to face with Sämkhya rationalisa- tion. The former under the garb of Christianity retained the mysteries and the dogmas. The latter followed into Saivic doctrines, survived as a challenge to the orthodox domination of the Vedas. Rome succumbed. India held on.

7. Rome

In Rome proper, religion and beliefs enjoyed a perfect holiday. The empire which like a leviathan stretched far and wide over the three continents brought to its metropolis a babel of tongues and a cross section of the ethnic patterns of the homo sapiens. Some came as political agents, some as job-seekers, some as artisans, some as fortune hunters; but most as traders from the far-flung corners and markets of curiosities and essentials of the empire. Quite a large part of the popula- tion, comprised of slaves, brought from different markets, and brought from various victories over various peoples, had in their tuin been enslaving the ideas of the degenerate Roman Bourgeoisie, who feared to lose, and of the desperate Roman proletariat, who having nothing to lose, adventured into novel ideas. To such, desperate remedies for boosting up a cynically morbid spirit, as were offered by practices of superstition, cult, magic and mysteries were welcome. The spirit of Rome became a play-thing in the hands of the soothsayers. The words of the soothsayers added fillip to the sagging courage of the bourgeosie, as well as to the greedy expectations of the proletariat.

No doubt in this cosmopolitan Rome the different faiths of the earth churned like re-agents in a crucible. With the freedom that the politicians of Rome preached, citizens were allowed to peruse their own faiths as long as these did not actively interfere with the traditional religion which the Romans had received from the Greeks. The only addition that they had made to the pagan gods of Greece was the custom of raising individuals of the mortal world to the status of divinity. Amongst these, Rome enlisted not only emperors and great matrons, but also concubines, courtesans and in one case even a horse.

Since the time of Carthagian Rome the most honoured and honourable of the Romans were active followers of stoicism. The aristocracy as well as the ruling class appeared to the religiously devout as a form of decency. Rome indulged in religion, but practised philosophy, specially stoicism. And by the time the materialistic civilisation of imperial aggrandisements and plenty had reached its apex, the very weight of the success was bending it down with a dropsy effected by excess. This crushing success of materialistic prosperity turned devotion into cynicism; traditions into banality, and decency into mediocrity. Roman forms had reached the road's end; and a change of direction was inevitable. Deprived of originality and genius, it took to depravity and degradation. The change began to corrode and destroy. Along with the pagan gods even philosophers were being torn down. Names of alien gods and cults were on the

lips of all. Rome's demise in spirit is a testimony to the fact that no religion could consist entirely on either imperial design or on dismal fatalism. Religion of eternal merit draws its spirit from philosophy, as from a universal faith in man's destiny with eternity. But Rome was superstitious. Soothsayers and fortune-tellers had a much more telling effect on credulity than logic, ethics or psychology. The people in tension cannot be at peace with themselves; and because they cannot be at peace with themselves, they cannot leave others in peace. Hedonism and materialism have to find militarism as a bad companion. Superstition thrives amongs: children of chance; and these Romans given to a life of perpetually imperialistic military idealism, fanned by a hypnotic spell of considering themselves as the chosen race of God, a superior race, were entirely in the hands of the god of chance. So inborn and sincere was the hold of superstition on Roman life that in the Punic wars both Carthage and Rome found themselves prostrated before a soothsaying group of religious men who demanded sacrifice of tens of thousands of their children.

Phallic Rites. Sacrifice of lives in atonement of unrequited crimes was in the Roman civilisation a common practice. The forum in every city. as the centre of life, contained the temples of most of the pagan deities: Jupiter at one, and Apollo on the other. The simple incident of a good- bye supper had to be mystified and stylised to make room for the mystic cult of 'PIX', an old Sumerian tradition. Persia's Mithra, Persia's Mani, and Persia's Mother continue to dominate the dogmas, the rites, the ceremonials and the deities or saints of the Catholic Christian church of Rome and Avignon, Byzentium and Cyprus.

Rome's life, inclusive of religion, had ancestral connection with Greece and further East, through Greece.

Despite Periclean scepticism, the common people could never give up their faith in religion. The common mind was not interested in the high minded Hellenistic philosophy, which at no time could be the property and solace of the worry-torn common man. What was philo- sophy to the intellectuals, was religion to the plebs. In a society like the Greeks, the plebs, the slaves, the ones deprived from citizenship, far out- numbered the aristocrats. Religion contained the one last promise of the fulfilment of this trodden human hope. Homer was taken literally as true; the after-life was taken to be a reality; and sacrifices meant for them regular investments in a worthwhile bank. In case of non-fulfilment, despite the sacrifices, therefore, some kind of justification

had to be sponsored. This vacuum was filled in by fatalism, a belief in laissez-faire in settling an individual's score with the unseen power, a strange way of equating action with destiny. Much of it was Greek in merit; much of it was weakness due to the want of a sense of reality in the analytical approach in the direction of the divine. Such a society would naturally pay a premium on priests, magicians, sooth-sayers and fortune-tellers.

The influence of the Egypto-Babylonian astrology also cast its spell on the Roman image. The charms of the Eleusian mysteries, the singu- larity and prestige of the Pythagorian doctrines, the extremely virile and forceful cults of Orpheus, spread like wild fire all over the Mediterranean coast; but the chief abode of the magic cults in the Roman world was Sicily. Mithraism and Stoicism are as different as plebians and aristocrats. And as even aristocratic births must assume the same channels and processes as those of the plebians, underneath all high pretences, even the Roman aristocracy, succumbed, as to a superstition, to the idea that in motherliness and blood-shedding for birth of new life all are equal; When types of religion ac- in pain did all pay the debts of the Mother. commodate the elite and the elect, in rejection of the accepted balance of a society, the rejects evolve their own gods and torms which express the aspirations of the trodden. Even the hungry must dream. Mithraism filled in this hunger for spirit. In Hinduism such plebian gods exist as Ganesa, Hanumana (Mahavira), Siva and the great Mother of the Mountains, the white Virgin, Uma-Haimavati, Gauri. The gods of the plebians became more powerful, more popular, and more profitable to priests.

Because of its accumulated wealth and power, the influence of the clergy continued to grow. The clergy enjoyed all powers over the society, mostly via the females, who hungered for home-safety at any price. The influence of the clergy on the women of the empire resulted in the spiritual conquest of Rome more by superstition than by philosophy; more by here- sy, than by metaphysics; more by bedside or hearth-side deities than by Whatever was true of the select Rome, was true of the pulpits and mass plebian Rome. It was a moral decay a-la-mode; a complex of bed-room- propriety and cabaret-impropriety.

The cults of Tammuz, of Adonais, of Dionysus infused into the minds of the people the ideas and ideals of a youthful sacrifice, a great death, and following that sacrificial death, a noble resurrection. Any religion in order to gain a hold on the people of Rome,

of the world under the Roman influence, had to build around this background for its survival, and had to contain most of it under strange dogmas which Jesus would be surprised to own as his. Much of it was contributed by Paul. The Christian church had been once based on the plebian grief. The idea of a youthful sacrifice followed by a resurrecting hope had been in vogue centuries before Christ. There was nothing new to it. In fact, nothing new could have ousted it.

Together with, and side by side with this idea of the ideal youth making a sacrifice of himself for the good of man, another stream of idea, as noted, came to influence the spiritual world of Rome. This was the age-old adherence to a great Mother-Goddess. We know this to have been highly developed as a form of Oriental Paganism, in which figured such deities as Tammuz, Adonais and Dionysus. The worship of the Cappadocian goddess Mã (Amma, Uma) quickly spread all over the Italian and Ionian peninsula. The priest of Mã have added a word to the English language. Because they lived in a Fanum (temple), they were known as fanatics. The frenzied dances they danced, during which they slashed and mutilated themselves, shed blood, and made frantic noises with loud beatings of drums and other noisy instruments. The excitement so caused added a special emotive purpose to the word fanatic. They loved mutilation, blood, noise, and declared themselves in communion with god; and in the frenzied state pronounced orders as gods do; and demanded obe- dience as gods alone could demand.

Everyday new deities were born in the Roman world. Each ruler vied with his predecessors to populate the altar with new gods. Modern canonisation is just a changed form of the old Roman practice of deifying the human beings. Like Lydia, Thrace, Phrygia and distant Babylon, the whole of North Africa and contiguous countries accepted the cult of the Mother. "Christian fathers were shocked to find so many parallels between their own religion and Mithraism."

The great goddess was Cybele, Nostra Dominica (our Lady). She was carried in a great procession (as is often done even now under other names and pretences) after days and nights of spiritual orgies. During the ceremonies wine and blood flowed in abundance, and openly and publicly men emasculated themselves in religious frenzy by tearing limbs, even vital limbs, considered to be of the utmost use and attraction to the females. Even saintly soul like Origen succumbed to this,147 Then the priests cried,

"Take courage, O mystics, the god is saved; and for you also will come salvation." Resurrection had taken place.

Durant says that the mysticism that entered the Christian cult of sacri- fice, blood and flesh (Eucharist) retains Hindu and Pythagorian in- fluence.149 We do not entirely agree with Durant.

Like Cybele and Attis in Thrace and Syria, the Mediterranean peoples also adored Isis and Osiris. Isis was represented holding a newly reborn Osiris in her hand. The Roman mass cried, "We have found Osiris again; Osiris resurrected in the arms of Isis, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Star of the Sea." The religion of Isis was followed in Egypt, Greece, and at later times in Sicily, Italy and in all parts of the empire, inclusive of the Germanic north, and Gaullish West. Even in London a temple of Isis has been unearthed.

The association of the spirit of the sow, and the taboo of pig, with the Eleusian Mysteries, founded by Eumolphus, has been obliquely preserved in Western and Eastern legends. The Tantra literature accepts the wor- ship of the spirit of the great Mother in the Sow as Varahi. In the rites which included purification, fast, penances there was provision for drama-plays too. The subject of the play invariably referred to Demeter, Persephone, Artemis, Cynthia, Delia, Luna, Phoebe, Selene, even Hecate on the one hand and Adonis, Endymion, Boar-hunt, death on the other. Then to the mysteries of bringing the dead to life brings in the climax.

It is easy to send into this pattern virgin worship, fertility cult, the cultic worship of the spirit of the Boar overcoming the moon-cult (Luna, Selene, Phoebe, Venus, Aphrodite- all suggest full moon), the worship of a un- sullied youth-god represented by fowls, peacocks, etc., being absorbed by Mother-worship and the final explanation of circumcision and its mysteries which Zehora covenanted with Abraham.

Polarisation of Mystic Religions

Now for the similarities of some of these features in Hinduism, we find that Siva absorbed the Moon Goddess, and held her forever as a mark on his head; that the virgin Uma, Amma, (Esther) won over Śiva; that the fowl-riding youthful god Skanda (the Wailer), the Fire Born (Agni- bhů), the Mystic Cave-dweller (Guha) was adopted by the Mother, as her child, because he was born of the 'seed' of Siva. The myths retain

hoary facts about the mysteries of ancient religions passing into the new. Saivism, Tantra, the Mother-Adoration and the Christian-Eucharist appear thus to be one of a piece. In Tantra all spiritual endeavours appear to have polarised. What is Mithraic is also Orphic, Dionysian, Cybelline, Saivic and Tantric.

Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it. The Greek mind, dying, came to a transmigrated life in the theology and liturgy of the church; the Greek language, having reigned for centuries over philosophy, became the vehicle for Christian literature and ritual; the Greek mysteries passed down into the impressive mystery of the Mass. Other pagan cultures contributed to the syncretist result.

Christianity's indebtedness to paganism enlists inter alia the following: the adoration of the Madonna-image (Egypt); mysticism (Eleusian) in Christian creed; monasticism (Buddhist-Stoics); worship of the Great Mother (Phrygia); the cult of Dionysus (Helas) along with crucifixion and resurrection; the dualism of Satan and God (Persia); the presence of Dark and Light forces; and the idea of the Eucharistic Man (Mithraism). "Christianity was the last great creation of the pagan world."

The pagan temples had been regularly attended by young virgins without whose tender hands the virile god Mithra, or the amorous goddesses of the sea, would not accept any offering. A high pontiff was the sole guide and preceptor of these virgins. Sacrifices were made daily, and daily the altars were bathed in blood, and the worshippers partook of the consecrated bread and wine, and rang bells in order to signify a successful end of a complete ritual.

Mithraism and Christian Morals

The basis of Mithraism, as already noted, was an insistence of high morality. Despite a compulsory training of strictest celibacy, the temptation of promiscuity entailed great restraint. A fall meant a disaster, in which case strict punishments were administered to the defaulters.

Does not Mithraism sound so close to what we accept as Christianity? The Christian fathers themselves felt more than surprised when they were to confront these inconvenient facts of history. There is one point to be strictly noticed, however. What has been so far discussed, relate only to the rites of the Christian church, and, partly, to the nativity of Jesus, a controversial subject, the end of which has not been seen yet.

But, besides the rites, and the legends affecting the birth of Jesus, the ministrations of Jesus remain unique and independent of these cults. Why, then, the two sets of rites are so similar is an open question. Perhaps they were accommodated, and a compromise was made to make the old live withinthe folds of the new. The church elders try to explain this as stratagems of Satan. Dr. Durant cautiously says, "Perhaps both absorbed the idea current in the religious air of the East." The East has always been too 'airy' for clerical history. The nativity, the Virgin, the Mother, the Sacrifice, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Eucharist, the Mass-all had their immediate predecessors. In the ritualistic orders and forms of the sacramental killing of the bull, which was performed for the purpose of expatiation and atonement, the devout experienced clear psychadellic visions that brought into focus the nuances of mysticism. But the Hindu Saiva stops here; and distinguishes between the pure Samkhyan Saivism, Vedantic Saivism, Trik Saivism on the one hand, and the Saivism of the Kapalas, the Aghoras, the Pasupatas and the Vamas on the other. The Mother-cult, the Eleusian mysteries and the Tantras form just the other branch of the same pagan forms of the Medes and Egypt. Of these later on, in the Mother and Siva all Tantras or rituals meet. Why not so? Is not Tantra after all a tradition?

The Mysteries

The 'Mysteries' in which the people of the Mediterranean were so much involved, actually were Cybelline in their origin, and as such belonged to the Parthian and Thessalian tradition. They had strictly canonised codes and courses of stages through which the initiate had to pass. Rigour was of the essence; and, at least at its initial stage, no one doubted its purity of purpose. Devouts, only of the stoutest determination and dedicated resolve, were admitted to the circle of the inner votaries. The ceremonials were conducted at five states: (1) Purification; (2) Sacrifice; (3) Initiation; (4) Revelation; and (5) Regeneration. The initiate had to take the initiation in a naked state, stand in a pit, and be bathed with the blood of the sacrificial animal, in most cases, a bull. The genitals, placed in the sacrificial vessel, were ceremonially offered to the deity, and the devotees partook of it later,143

That was Cybelline rite. And the Mithraic rites were not much different. If the Cybelline were somewhat loose in their rigours, the Mithraic ones were highly suited to the Stoic Rome, specially when the affluent Rome bored with its own success, was acquiring a spirit of cynical nonchalance which characterises any materialistic society

at its decadence. Rigourousness was, as it were, a reaction against gay abandon and pro- fligacy. Rome was getting tired of itself. The rites were known as Taurobolium14 (urga-utsarga or bull sacrifice) (see Plate 35).

The cult of Isis also required the initiate to follow strict codes. Here too the number of the rites limited itself to the same five. But the five here were: (1) Fasting; (2) Continence; (3) Prayer; (4) Immersion in holy water; and (5) the Final trance, Samadhi. Intimate records of the rites have been preserved; and some of the contemporaries speak highly of the ecstatic experience resulting from the observance of the rites. At Eleusis there were arrangements of confession of sin. 144 The sacrificial animal was, in this case, a pig, in the place of the Mithraic bull. At the Feast of Demeter plays representing the resurrection of Persephone were per- formed; and the priest assured the congregation of a rebirth into an eternal life. The tenets included such ideas as rebirth; soul's imprisonment releas- ed through a succession of lives, each one expatiating the sins and the short- comings of the impurities of actions and desires of previous ones. The released soul finally unites with Dionysus in an ecstatic merging of the two into one.

The ideas and rites cannot but remind the scholar of the influence of the Tantra tenets, transmitted, perhaps, through the preachings and prac- tice of Pythagoras. Communal feasts were featured most prominently in these cults. Blood flowed freely (Except in the case of the strict Pytha- gorians, as is the case with the later post-Buddha Vaisnavas). The sacri- fice of the bull, particularly, was considered to be very holy indeed. The food so consumed, by some mysterious process, was taken to be a medium of communion with god. Again, the idea of god-eating has been raising its obstinate head. When one eats the god, one feels the spirit of God to be inside one. Thereafter one cannot dare do wrong again.

Yer this was not all. The Romans were extremely susceptible to the trends and traits that reminded them of the stretch of their empire. The credulity of a peasant-military society, insecure about their future, and depending for the best part of their living and employment on foreign wars, made them hunger for any knowledge of the future. Life itself was a gamble; and like gamblers they sought of oracles, and entrails of sacrificial animals and a hundred other types of fortune tellings. No public place in the Mediterranean Rome was free from these hordes. The Orphic, Hermic, Pythagorian and Cybelline oracles and secret 'writ- ings' were sought by millions. Talisman,

kavaca, charms, specially written mystic words, alphabet sounds, diagrams enjoyed a field-day of trade.

A Roman temple of Isis or Cybele has to be described; and it were best described as the nerve centre of the community, and of the city it adorned. The life of the city actually radiated around the temple. Those acquainted with the description of the temple that Herod the Great had built, and Titus had destroyed, would know that the builders of such a temple had to bear in mind as much the relaxation of the public, as the adoration of the deity. A decadent and frustrated people hardly thinks of a father god. They want to weep. They want a shoulder to rest their brows on. For such a purpose not the father but the mother is more handy and reliable. These temples were, therefore, dedicated to Cybele and Isis, and the votaries include a majority of the weeping sex. No wonder that Christ and Christianity, in order to be accepted by the Roman world, had to pass through the dependable mother-concept that Mary and the Madonna offered. Whether this Mary has to be worshipped in the Virgin form, or in the Mother form, became another subject of controversy. It brought about a schism. The Mediterranean and Thracian church, given to the Great Mother, preferred the Mother form of Mary, the pregnant Mother, the Mother and the child; Rome, reacting against its own Cybellian excesses, opted for the Virgin, the Kumari-Kanya form of the Hindus. Rome went for forms of an imperialistic court- hierarchy, and of sophisticated etiquette, with elaborate mundane and empirical devices; but the Eastern church lived within the Greek spiritual content and Eleusian mysteries. The tradition from Thales and Socrates to Pythagoras could not just be wiped out. John was on the latter's side; Paul on the former's.

In all this exercise the Oriental mind percolating through the thousands of the Ionian isles is persistently noticeable. The Oriental religions reached the peninsula of Greece; from there, to Rome, and through Rome to that vast part of the world which had been dominated once by the Semetic Syrians and to some extent by the Nordic. These Semetic Syrians, or, and Phoenicians are closely mixed up in the still undetermined hoary past. It is clear that the influence of oriental religions on the religion of Europe is undeniable, though very often ignored, if not altogether denied. Attempts to suppress this have damaged the very cause they were supposed to serve. Truth is the pivot of an honest religion. Therefore it would be worthwhile now to enquire into the religious life of India during this period under discussion namely, 1200 n.c. to 400 A.D., roughly a

period of 1600 years. To call it smoothly Vedic is to side track the complexes to which the spiritual life of India had been exposed.

Influence of Phallicism on Modern Religions

The influence of primitive phallicism on later religions has been traced by all scholars of comparative religion. No religion, worth the name, is at all free from the primal life-force of sex, and its brutely real phallic form. This is as true today as it had been in the hoary past of the cave- society of man. This is as true of the most sophisticated religion of today, as it had been of the nature-religions of the fertility worshipper. Religion assumes the empirical form of rituals, and the spiritual form of metaphysi- cal probe into the infiniteness of man's capacity to enjoy the realisation of the limitless. The intensity of the transcendental delight almost isolates the subjectivity of the enjoyer; a description of his personal experience, or its admission in language, appears to the uninitiated as unrealistic as the Pythagorian theorem could be to the Maori hut-builder. There are indications in the ecstatic utterances of the Buddha, Jesus, St. Augustine, Aurobindo or Ramana Maharsi that in the innermost recesses of their personal being they had not only discovered the fountain head of eternal delight, but had also discovered the clues to arrive at it at will. The clusive reality of their transcendental experience remains mostly-beyond the understanding of the common man. When Aurobindo says in the essay of the Human Cycle that, "Religious forms and systems become effete and corrupt and have to be destroyed," religions concerning the spirit of man enters the forbidding area of mysticism. Yet to Aurobindo, or to his likes, this presented no mysticism at all. He warns,

But in its endeavour to get rid of the superstition and ignorance which have attached themselves to religious forms and symbols, intellectual reason unenlightened by spiritual knowledge tends to deny, and in so far as it can, to destroy, the truth and the experience which was contained in them.

Whilst these two limits of man's quest for reaching his ultimate purpose of life by overcoming the fear that life engenders are practically the two extremes, in between the two lies the area of the mysteries. The mysteries hold to a very high degree this element of 'fear'. It is through the exploita- tion and analysis of this fear, through putting this fear under a spiritual experimentation, that most of the ancient religions before Gautama Buddha came into being. Most of these religious experimentations

were carried in the area of the Medes and Mediterranean, where, for various historical reasons, cultures rose and fell in rapid succession. Thus we have seen the rise of many gods, many forms; and we confront many kinds of theological explanations for the 'oriental' bizarre and unearthly practices. But basically two traditions held good: one, the Vedic traditions of realised truths written down in later years; and the tradition of relating sex to life and holding this to special adoration and worship.

But there is yet a third aspect of this mystic problem. It is essen- tially a social or sociological problem. Is religion selective or com- munistic? Does it create an artificial class of mystic snobs, as against the simple proletariat? Does the system of religion yet again act as an arm of enjoying the fruits of labour without having to labour, and help maintain a privileged class? Has the problem of the emancipation become hazardous and taxing because of the fraudulence and snobbery introduced into its actual practice?

The oppressed, like blocked water, fights its way out. It has to break into a release. The religiously oppressed too sought to come out of this impossible imposition of double-standards of theological laws and practices. This expressed itself in two ways: one, iconoclastic rebellion which smashed the institutions, forms and establishments of such reli- gious tyranny; and two, metaphysical rationalisation through further investigations in spirit. To do this, is to feel free. Even a slave can think; and his freedom within the area of his thought-world is unlimited. One who is really free, accepts a wilful slavery of duty.

Hindu Saivism is the product of this last process. It had to try for sublimating a tyrannical situation into an area of freedom of soul. By thinking, rationalising, feeling and communicating, this particular form of the Hindu religion has kept itself away from the Vedic class-cons- ciousness, and established a strong proletariat method of worship, where religiousity is no special privilege of a caste. The traits of the Oriental religions again and again attempted to taint this Šaivic freedom, and tried to encumber the simple form by imposing elaborate rites and forms; but basically Saivism retained its nature of tribal simplicity. Śiva remained the soul of man kept in bondage. Šiva meant emancipation hereafter to the soul. Siva's way represents a class struggle. Is there a class- struggle in religion?

There is. The study of the ancient religions has made it clear that the ruling class, under the aegis of the priestly community, helped grow a privileged 'religious' class, who as

agents, worked between the common and the elite, the latter enjoying the fruits of labour of the former.

The answer to this was provided by Saivism. It was from the start a basic proto-austroloid concept rooted in accepting the elemental forms of matter, such as earth, water, fire, air and the universal atmosphere as objects worthy of veneration. It recognised the role of the mystery of procreation in maintaining the life-cycle. It also recognised the principles of creativity and the generative cycles in nature and man.

The sophisticated churchised society of man became crowded with sec- tarian law-givers; and these religious leaders confused simple facts by introducing complexes of ethics, and setting double-standards. The innate spiritual quest of man hungered for a divinity with the virtues of Contentment-Poise-Good (i.e., Sina), and of a total lack of the least sense of discrimination and distinction, and presence of the virtue of equality (i.e., Samkara). Such a divinity, they accepted, should be easy to please (Afutoga); and easier to be respected than all other man- made gods (Mahadeva; Devadeva). It was man's natural and primal de- mand of the spirit. In Saivism this quest found its eternal haven.

The phallic and the erotic have to be studied against this background of comparative estimate of Oriental, Western and Eastern forms of Phallicism. Only such a study could free minds of such inhibitions as restrict a free search and free conclusions. This demand of the soul must never be confused with demands of the body.

Once this is achieved, and achieved after a thorough study of the traditional, which has been uninterruptedly percolating into the religious thoughts of our own times, we are ready for studying those Hindu systems which attempt to rationalise the Sina-approach of the Hindu towards a divinity. The systems only expose the metaphysics of an existing mode of divination and adoration. Siva and Saivism given, then and then alone the systems came into being. Here lies the great antiquity of the Tantras and the Vedas.

We have, therefore, to study these Tantras and the Vedas and the Sys- tems of Saivism one by one. Of this study the great Tantra system comes first. Herein we receive our first initiation into the mysteries of the Great Mother, in whom the Father-concept merges only as a counter part, or consort.

Now to the Tantras and the Great Mother.

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4. Ivory Statue etc. from a
Cave at Lespugne. The Ephusian Artemis, an Io- nian deity reproduced from p. 110 of "The New Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology."

5. Katha Upanisad, 3:2: 3.

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(iii) History of Indian Ship- ping, R. K. Mukhri,

12. Cottrell, Leonard. Lost Worlds, p. 316.

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15. (i) Majumdar, Roy Chow- dhury and Dutta, op. cit.

(ii) Thapar, Dr. Promila. History of India.

9. Graves, Robert. The White Goddess, Harrison, Jane Ellen, Themis.

10. आगतम् पंचवत्क्रत् गतं च गिरिजानने ।
मतं च वासुदेवस्य
तस्मादागममुच्यते ॥

It is known as Agama be- cause it 'comes' from Śiva and goes to (the ear of) the Hill-Maid; but the principle (contained) belongs to Vasudeva.

11. (a) Lissener, Dr. I. The Living Past, p. 109.

(b) Ibid.

(c) Durant, Dr. Story of

(d) Ibid.

30. Bhagavat Gita, IV, 27: 30.

(a) Allegro, Dr. Hohn M. The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross.

(b) Graves, Dr. Robert. The Greek Myths.

32. नैनमूर्द्ध न तिर्यचं न मध्ये न परिग्रहात् ।
न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम, महद्–यशः ।।

Not above, not across, not in the middle has any one grasped Him. There is no likeness of Him whose name alone is Great Glory.

Svetasvatara Upanisad, IV: 19.

33. History of Indian Culture (R.K. 1.), Vol. I.

34. See diagrams Chapter 8.

(iii) Bhasham, Dr. History of India.

16. Radhakrishnan. An Idealist View of Life (George Allen Unwin), p. 88.

17. Mundaka Upanisad, 11, 2:9.

18. Taylor, Sir E. B. Primitive Culture.

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23. De Chardin, Pierre Teil- hard. Le Milieu Divine.

24. Jean, Sir James.

25. De Chardin. Ibid.

26. St. Paul. Corinthians, XII, 2:4.

27. De Chardin. Hymn of the Universe, 55.

28. Tagore, R. N. The Gitan- jali.

29. Compare in this connection - experiences of St. Augus- tine; St. Theresa; St. Bene- dict; Sheikh Saadi; Jalalud-din Rumi; Miräbäl; St. John on the Cross; Kabir, etc.

40. Durant. op. cit. III, pp. 178-9.

41. Compare Themis, Jane Harrison and White God- dess, Dr. Graves. Des Divinities Generatices, J. A. Dulaure, Sexual Symbolism, J. P. Knight and T. Right II.

42. Lissener Dr. Ivor. op. cit., Introductory Remarks.

43. Graves, Robert. The Greek Myths (Introduction).

44. Life of St. Theresa, ch. 29.

45. Brhadaranyka Upanisad.

46. Jaiminiya Upanisad-Brahmana, XXVI, 145.

35. (a) Those parts were known to the Greeks as Medes.

Observe Sanskrt equi-valents.

Medes, Madhya Desa. Persia, Parfoa Desa.

Iran-Arian or Aryan.

(b) See Cajorie, op. cit.

36. Barth, Dr. A. (Translated by J. Wood), Religions of India (Kegan Paul), p. 262.

37. Durant Will. The Story of Civilisation, III, p. 178.

38. Ivory statuesque from the cave at Les Pugne (Illustra- tion from p. 8 of Larousse, op. cit.).

39. Eleusian Artemis of Asia Minor, Ibid. p. 110.

57. Brahadaranyaka Upanisad (Radhakrishnan).

58. Frazer, Dr. J. G. Golden Bough. (abridged Macmillan), p. 7.

59. Names of Hindu Tantra Goddesses inserted by au-thor for comparison.

60. Durant, op. cit., p. 60.

61. Ibid., p. 61

62. Allegro. op. cit.

63. Graves, Dr. R. Greek Myths.

64. Cf. Frazer, op. cit. I, pp. 124, 125.

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70. Durant, op. cit. I, p. 128.

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49. Graves, Robert. The Greek Myths, I, p. 128.
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51. (a) Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, VI: 51; Ramayana-Valmiki, VII: 42.
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53. Ibid., 8 and 9. The passage from the Chandogya Upa- nizad is an evidence of the spiritual school. Brhada- ran yaka too has similar atti- tude.
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55. Ibid., pp. 290-91. Compare the sex life of great souls like Goethe and Tolstoy.
56. Ibid., p. 167.
84. Jastrow and Morris. Civilisa tion of Babylonia and Assyria, P. 101.
85. Durant, op. cit., III, p. 5.
86. Ibid., p. 116.
87. Cottrell, op. cit., p. 184.
88. Durant. op. cit., 1.
89. Lissener. Op. cit., 143.
90. Durant, op. cit., 1.
91. Durrel Augustine. Bitter Le mons, p. 171.
92. ibid.
93,Ibid.
94. Gibbon,Edward. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,XXIII.
95. Ibid.
96 Durant. op. cit., 1-297.
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73. Danielou, Allen. Hindu Poly- theism, pp. 274-75.
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75. Fragmentes. Empedocles, p. 17.
76. Harrison. "op. cit., p. 118.
77. Graves. Ibid., p. 143.
78. Berain, B. W. Gods, Graves and Scholars, p. 299.
78A. Durant, op. cit., 1, 294..
79. Lissener, op. cit., p. 105.
80. Cottrell. op. cit., p. 125.
81. Lissener, op. cit, p. 28.
82. Durant. op. cit., pp. 118-19.
83. Ibid., footnote.
104. Herodotus, 1, p. 199.
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(b) Graves, The White God-dess, pp. 124-5.
106. Frazer, Dr. J. G. The Golden Bough, (abridged), p. 499.
107. Durant, op. cit., I, pp. 238-9.
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109. Durant, op. cit., 1, pp. 238-9.
110. Ibid., p. 263.
111. Manu, X. 8: 108, 116.
112. Karma and Varaha Purana.
113. Sukra, a descendant of the Blagu-Angirasa is equivalent to the star Venus. As Aphrodite, she was born of Zeus, who is equivalent to Jupiter, or Brhaspati, or Angiras. Thus both Sukra and Venus are fathered by Angiras or Zeus. Classical

97. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 60-65.
98. Cottrell. Lest Worlds, p. 262.
99. Graves, op. cit., pp. 187, 385.
100. Larousse, op. cit., pp. 8, 37, 110.
101. (a) Durant. op. cit., p. 235. (b) Cottrell, op. cit., pp. 149. 51.
102. Durant. op. cit., p. 235.
103. There have been cases nar- rated in the Mahabharata of very honoured ladies of blood who have mothered children from different male sources without having to lose virginity. (Menaka, Rambha, Kunti, Matsya- gandha, etc.).
These ladies themselves came from families and tra- ditions not always entirely conventional in the strict. social sense of the Aryans. Instances of children born out of conventional wedlock are numerous in the epic and the Puranas. Cl. Raya- iringa, Kausika, Jämbuka, Valmiki, Vyasa, Gautama, Vasistha, Agastya, etc. (These names are taken from a similar reference in Vajra-Sucikopanizad).
118. de Burg. op. cit., pp. 36-37.
119. The Markandeya Candi, ch. 1.
120. Graves, Robert. Greek Myths, pp. 14-15.
121. Ibid.
122. Davidson, Marshall B. Lost World, Leonard Cott-rell's article on 'Crete', P. 258.
123. Ibid., pp. 260-61.
124. Wells, H. G. A Short History of India (Pelican), p. 47.
125. Ibid., p. 48.
126. Ibid.
Dictionary of Hindu Mythology, John Dawson.
114. The Mittani description records the names of Gods like Mitra and Varuna, equivalent to Apollo and Poseidon.
115. de Burg, Dr. W. G. Legacy of the Ancient World (Pelican). 195-96.
116. Diodorus Siculus, IV, 17.
117. Satamayakha, Satamanyu and
Indra are coterminous. 'Indra' was very friendly to Manyu or 'sacrifices'. Hindu Indra Hellenic Zeus.
137. Durant. Vol. I, p. 350.
138. Graves. The White Goddess, p. 62.
139. These events have their parallels in the three differ- ent Rg Vedic stories about Ravi and Arun; Indra and Vrtra, Manu and Min.
140. Graves. Greek Myths, p. 12.
141. Ibid., Foreword.
142. Vrata-Ritual and Kara Performer. Performers of rites.
Vratakara in Sanskrt.
Sarvada-Giver of everything.
143. Angra-could it have rela- tion with the Old Nordic word Angra? Ana', Old Nor- dic-Trouble; Narrow. (a) Durant. op cit., 1, 364. (b) Graves, Larousse. op. cit., p. 312.
144. Durant. op. cit., III, 603-6.
Rama of Ayodhya-admitted southern kings and Tribes to equality of social order. Krsna himself mar- ried into the tribe of Jam- (Bhima and Hi- dimba; Arjuna and Ulupi; Jaratkaru and Jaratkaru; Parasara and Matsya- gandha are all

127. Cambridge Ancient History, III: 347. Durant, op. cit., 1: 307.
128. Wells, op. cit., p. 86.
129. Wells. op. cit., p. 87..
130. Ibid., p. 71.
131. Wells. op. cit.
132. Cooke, Dr. G. A. "Semetic Languages" contributed to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th Edition.
133. Thapar, Dr. P. op. cit., p. 26.
134. Besides India where the Parsees number more than 100,000 there are Parsees in Fars, a Persian Province, and in small groups throughout Northern Persia, Ekabatana is still a home of queer religious sects who claim descent from quaint ancient traditions.
135. Graves. The White Goddess, p. 350.
136. Ourel, R. Mason and Morin, Louis, Larousse. op.
cit., pp. 309-319.
155. There are special Pilgrim- ages in the Hindu Calendar for confessionals; the most prominent of these has been one at Hinglaj, now in Baluchistan, in Pakistan. It was a Tantric centre of the Great Mother.
156. Isis: Iri is the Hindu God- dess, the alter-ego of Siva, whose similarity with Dicry- sus is remarkable.
157. Cybele-Sivali or Kali is the Dark Mystery Goddess of time, Sina's Counterpart, and worshipped all over the Siva-India.
158. Aurobindo. Human Cycle, p.177.
Aryan and non-Aryan Marriages. There are many more (See note, ante 82).
146. Durant, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 524.
147. Ibid., p. 615.
148. Ibid., p. 523.
149. Ibid., p. 525.
150. Halliday, W., Plutarch,
De Inside. Pagan Background of Early Christianity, p. 240.
151. Durant. op. cit., Vol. III, p. 595.
152. Later, on the significance of the 'Five', and the stages shall be noted while discus- sing Saivism proper.
153. Compare blood and flesh in connection with the Christian Communion. Was Jesus sub- stituting a horrid and grue- some practice by a calmer, neater and sublime one, and thereby glorifying an abomi- nable cult? Was he saying, "Give up using flesh and blood as you are used to do. These are crude. Love ani- mals. Love life. Our God calls for real sacrifice. Sac- rifice to alone, not to rejoice. Use simple unleavened bread as flesh; farm-brewed wine as blood. I am the lamb. I am the sacrifice. Use these as my blood, if blood thou must have; use this as the flesh, if flesh is a must for as solemn a rite." Was this what he meant? What else?
154. Tauro Bolium Tarus, The Bull or Vra (Sanskrt). Belium-Vali (Sanskrt) sac- Rifice of an animal. Amongst the Hindus Vrsa- utsarga has been an honour- ed rite for prayers, especially raised for the Peace of the Menes.

Chapter Three

The Mystic Mother

Western Erotic Traditions

I

THE BRIEF survey of the religious observances of the ancient orient has THE sufficiently revealed to us the dominating deities as well as the principal trends of the religious rites and doctrinaire canons that had influenced these ancient people. Similarities between these pagan religions, though separated by space and time, are clearly noticeable in spite of some superfluous differences. Most of these similarities relate to the character and conduct of the respective divinities, their forms, tastes and idiosyncra- sies. We have noted these religious practices in relation to no fewer than eight ancient nations spread over a period of about two thousand years of antiquity. Our attention has been drawn to trends excitingly involved in phallic observances, as well as in mystical rites. Orgiastic dances and processions, intemperate promiscuity, emasculating and hymenal sacrifices, sacerdotal fornications of virgins as a part of rites, matriarchal choice of offering womanhood as a form of pious gift, sacrifice of animal or at times even human lives, and treating the blood thereof as a sanctifying and elevating substance, flagellations, scourgings, etc. leading to death and to a hopeful resurrection, devotion to a fertility goddess, who inciden- tally, was an eternal 'Virgin', and earth-mother and the idea of a king- priest personality were some of the common

features detectable inter alia amongst these nations. Categorically speaking, Sumer, Babylon, Syria, Phoenicia and even Greece and Sicily indulged in these traits. Differences, if any, related more or less only to certain ways and means. Babylon, Syria and Sumer, however, had earned a special distinction in notoriety in contemporary references and travellers' records.

Whereas these traits distinguished pagan religions of Western Asia, the East in comparison revealed more sober traits. Iran, for example, makes us aware of the traces of such a change in the train of sexually excit ing and neurotically hallucinating practices. We note, for instance, the strict disciplinary codes of Mithraism. Mithraic worship, as it had been in vogue in Iran of antiquity, involved a good deal of ascetic sanctity, and enjoined a forbidding code of punishment for relapse into excesses in contravention of the established disciplinary codes. Along with this trend flourished, in the same Iran, the great Zarathustrian religion whose high moral code almost vies with the Vedic, Buddhist and Confucian characteristics. The zenith of this pious trend was reached by Menichae ism. It is notable that all these religions grew amongst the people not far removed from what is now known as the Orient, and what is generally called as the Near-East or Western Asia. The phallic traits which adhere to Saivism could be traced to the area just described, that is the Middle-East. Its spiritual growth had directly very little to do with the Oriental phallic trend, except perhaps in its utmost attempt to resist the escalation of the powerful temptations of these Oriental religions.

Saivism, that we know today and call Hindu, traces its link with Rudra of the Vedas, and of the Svetasvatara Upanisad. It has been native to the Indian soil.

But the Indian subcontinent has always been open to all kinds of influences from the Western areas of the Arabian Sea. India had had deep and sustained commercial ties with the countries along the Arabian Sea. By inference and proximity, this influence included the Ionian Isles, and Greece proper, as these two were exposed to the ideas and thoughts of the Indian peninsula.!

(1) In discussing the social and spatial imagination in Indian architec- ture Mr. Mulk Raj Anand refers to the almost prehistoric relation bet- ween India and these areas.

(2) So does Dr. Horian Cajorie in his History of Mathematics. "A priori it does not seem improbable that with the traffic of the merchandise there should be also an interchange of ideas. That communication of thought from the Hindus, to the

Alexandrians actually did take place is evident from the fact that certain theologic and philosophic teachings of the Manichacians, neo-Platonists, Gnostics show unmistakable likeness to Indian tenets "

(3) Excavations of Roman coins in the port towns of Southern India indicate a brisk and flourishing trade between the Far East, Mediterranean for nearly two hundred years during the fourth and fifth centuries. Alaric demanded for price, against sparing Rome from his wrath, three thousand pounds of Indian pepper.

(4) Batne in the Euphrates boasted of Indian wares in the market of its annual fair. China and Persia enjoyed great maritime commerce with the aid of Indian ports and Indian navy. Chinese missions coming to the cities of Western Asia booked their passages through Indian ships. Arabic annals are filled with the praises of Indian swords sold in the markets of Damascus and Baghdad. Modern Aden had been a centre of perfumeries from India.

The land and sea trade routes between Indian ports and the Oriental cities have thus been open for mutual trade from times immemorial. The Arabian Sea as a whole was the mare nastrum for the people of the Indian and Arabian peninsulas. Naturally the international cultural links so formed kept the peoples of this area in closer contact of ideas than could be easily expected and imagined nowadays.

Under the circumstances it would be wrong to presume that the power- ful religious trends that had swept over the Near-Eastern civilisations did not affect Indian thinking also. But it should be borne in mind that the religious life in India had been from the very beginning, based on virtuous living and pragmatic conduct. Indian life moved around a peaceful and contented family-unit. The religions of India accepted philosophy and metaphysics as the very foundation for a full and purposive living. Religiosity of the Indian mind, which adheres so much to a chain of rites and ceremonies, sacraments and festivals, has rarely succumbed to dog- matic doctrines. A religion that does not have to submit to doctrinaire authority needs to have to be fanatic, or to take recourse to atrocities of religious persecution. The mass mind depended more on wisdom than on learning, more on personal conscience than on primately 'bulls', more on peace than on dialectical dialogues, and finally, more on a harmony in diversity than on a forced order in compulsive uniformity.

As such the sensuous and erotically motivated religious feasts of the Orient could not find a ready haven in India, although the powerful trend of such religions did affect the thoughts of the peninsula. In the ultimate analysis of history these did leave indelible marks on the Indian system of life, thinking and worship. No nation could withstand the inroads of syncretical influences. These inevitable marks of foreign origin are trace- able like marks of old scars on a body that had to pass through many battles. A full study of the growth of Saivism must take into considera- tion these foreign traces and their influence on Hindu devotional forms. Then and then alone the primal bases of that Saivism, which has been one of sublimest treasures of the popular Indian spiritual life, shall have been revealed in its true perspective. In fact, despite the hard battle over these ancient centuries that Indian spiritualism had had to put up with these powerful foreign trends battering on the threshold of Indian culture, Indian Saivism has remained to this day a solid example of piety and devo-tion which in sublimity thought, purity of motive, and singular austerity of practices and rites, is hardly to be matched in world-spiritualism."

Chastening Effect of Eastern Religiosity

The process of chastening of objectionable foreign trends in religions is peculiarly characteristic of Hindu spirit of accommodation and tolerance. The more these alien forms attempted at getting a footing in Indian life, the more did they shed their sensuous emphasis, and erotic runaway excesses. The spiritual sensitiveness of a people bred on Vedic sublimity, Jainistic purism, Buddhistic realism, Vedäntic asceticism and Samkhya's analytical materialism, preserved the mystique of the Western Tantras of Delphi, Thebes, Paphos, the Nile and of Pythagoras, without bothering with the external rites, motifs and displays that had been a craze with a people made for excitement, exhibitionism and carnal excesses. They stored the grains and winnowed the chaff. Any materialistic advance often leads to spiritual decay. India too had had to pass through similar threats to her spiritualism. But even in material prosperity, somehow, India succeeded in keeping her values intact. The inroads of certain phallic trends that persist in the substrata in Hindu spiritual life reminds the student of history of these patches of Hindu material prosperity when alien trends made India a home. The new excitement allowed imbalance to enter and afford an excuse for spiritual degeneration. But, fortunately, conservative traditions ran deeper roots; and

the millions, remaining poor, found peace and contentment in conservative traditional life. Conservatism is the armour of Achilles, that proves effective at a time of conflict.

It is indeed remarkable to observe that in their easterly movements

"It comes to my mind that two distinct festivals in India remind one of the inroad of these 'oriental-passions into the Indian cultural life. One of them is Holi or Phagwa. With its legend of Ram-Sacrifice in Fire (Plus sacrifice of new crop and burning of a crone) Holi distinctly reminds one of Babylonian traditions. It is remarkable that Falguni as a star is associated with Káma and Rati, Hindu coun- terparts of Cupid, Venus and Psyche, or Adonis and Venus. And this festival is observed in Falgun; the red colour is known as Falgu, and the festival is known as Fag or Fagua. But there is no mention of this in the Bhagavatam or Viṣnu Puranam. It is the most erotic and most plebian of the Hindu festivals, and it continues over several days. The Fadjia' festival of Muharram, equally plebian, is accompanied with much band-playing, self-immolation, flagellation, inflictions of wounds on self, frenzied yells and rhythmic lamentations, reminding one of the proces- sions taken out at the death of Adonis in Egypt, Iraq and Babylon. It is observed amongst the Iranian version of Islam, the Shiah-s, who, significantly belong to the area of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Iran, firm seats for Adonis and Mithra cults, and for long traditional foes of the Arabs.

these Oriental mystic religions progressively assumed a more and more chaste and spiritual character. As if by some magical influence the orgi- astic observances were subdued to restraint. This could not be said about the Western progress of these Oriental faiths. The more these moved towards the West, from Iran to Thrace, from Thrace to Cappadocea, from Cappadocea to Greece, Crete, Rome and finally to Sicily, the more phallic and erotic became their forms. Mysticism has the capacity to suffer a shipload of hypocrisy and charlatantism.

Mithraism as practised in the Rome of Nero or Caligula was quite different from the Mithraism of the Iran of Artaxaraxes (250 B.C.). When Pythagoras wanted to introduce some sobering changes into the newly introduced Eastern cult of Mithraism, he was hunted down and chased until he sought escape in self-immolation. Christian practices in the West appear to lack at times in that depth of spiritualism with which the Eastern minority cherishes it.

Failure of the Church in Europe

Such metamorphosis of thought moots a cultural enquiry. Why must the spiritualism of the East get invariably carnalised in the Western forms of religion; and why does hedonism and materialism inevitably corrupt the religious practices of the West. It appears, as it were that the fateful legacy of the military ideals of Greece and Rome later evolved into a brute pride of Europe's nationalistic chauvinism. The pristine commercial leadership of Egypt, Venice, Florence and Rome led Europe to a delectable greed for power, and to an unquenchable hunger for material affluence. This selfish and narrow trend developed into a cynical philosophy of accumulation, with indiscriminate means of grab, loot, plunder, murder and rapine. The ideals of Vulcan, Nestor, Mars, or of Alexander, Sulla, Caesar and Augustus had supplanted the human ideals of Minerva or Gaeia, Socrates or Plato. The pride of race appears to The materialistic ideals of the West have deluged the love of man. remain materialistic to-date; and science and commerce have so far only succeeded in aiding and abetting that hedonism in the achievement of an obvious material success. Religion in the West, getting involved in politics, produced the virus of power; mysticism too, degenerated into sex and nocturnal seances; and the commercial arteries of the Mediterranean fed and built up Europe on the whole as one deluded self-eulogising community given to the baneful undertakings of colonialism and exploitation achieved through agressive militarism. In the dictionary of the West the word man as applied to Europe, appears to mean one thing; 'man' elsewhere means another; America atom-bombed Asia, not Europe. Deaths in Ireland react differently from deaths in Biafra, Vietnam or Bangladesh.

By denying peace out of Europe, peace in Europe has so far remained the most sought for commodity. Europe has no peace. Religion has failed a continent of men and centuries of mind. Religion as interpreted in the Western life, yielded no place whatsoever to philosophy; indeed, at times, a mystic tradition attempted a breakthrough; but it was studiously kept away by the orthodox, who often found it amusing to taunt, ostracise, even persecute a philosopher. Royal patronage of philosophers became fashionable sophistry after the great Protestant schism in Europe. Even in the heyday of Greek philosophy, philosophy and religion re- mained two different pursuits for both intellectuals and masses. The Christian church detests philosophers.

It is not true, however, to suggest that there has not been in the West any protest in favour of the true religious forms, or in favour of humanism and moral discipline. Throughout the history of the religious movements of the West, the cry for Reformation has been as insistent as the fires and swords of persecution have been busy. Reforms have tended to become reformatories; a swing to extreme asceticisms reached neuro-pathological dimensions to the disgust and hatred of the common populace. The form of simple love and mutual toleration remained unachieved under a man-dominated set of rules and regulations.

The fetish of 'Organisation' drew more zeal than the spirit of under- standing and accommodation. God and man were caught up in a maze of dialectics and dogmas. The harrowing persecution of the Jews by the Christians, of the reformists by the Orthodox church, of the Cathars by the Catholics, of the Bachhs by the Spanish Inquisition, beats any tale of cruelty in the East or West. Pride detests tolerance; and greed blinds reason. Religion has often been misused as a handful of dust thrown in the eyes of credulous innocence for the convenience of the greedy and the wealthy.

Sages of the spirit raised their voices in vain. Moses, Elijah, Eloysha, and Jesus; St. Francis, St. Augustine, St. Benedict and St. Catherine, Rolland, Russell, Schwitzer and Roerich; scores upon scores of thinkers, cried in vain for the establishment of true love and peace. But the plead- ings of the thinkers did not fit in with the Western concept of organisation. There were hardly any scope for personal spiritual growth. The cancer of cynicism and urbanity was caused, as has been noted, by a greed for material covetousness. To such, life is an existence for the body's comfort and delight. In its service, inescapably, an amassed personal wealth was needed. Whatever fetched money-selling slaves, selling girls, selling drugs, selling smut literature, degenerating films, keeping brothels, running gambling dens-became highly prized commercial enterprises. The money-loving organisational church preached platitudes, and con- doned immoral practices. It has been commercial tradition in the West to sell spiritual discretions for monetary profits.

Religion, like any other institution, was just an institution run by well- paid priests and their conclaves. As long as the devout shared his earnings with the church, the world would spin, and heaven could stay cool. Henry Morgan, the notorious pirate, fed the Jamaican Church with glittering gold. Church as such was just one of the wings of the

grand Mammon-adoring social life. 'Good people' go to church; and by 'going' to church they suggest to belong to the good people. This was the accep- ted norm.

The members of the clerical organisation were no exceptions. Sacer- dotal moralism insisted on conformity to dogmas. Moralism's life began and ended within those dogmas. And the great lady, known as the church, lady like, demanded absolute submission to authority, which was indulgently granted by the practical wealthy, the cynical tyrant, as well as the pious humble, the poor, the humiliated. The church was an imposingly impersonal "she", suitably defiant of every tenet of ethics except her own dogmas, forms and interpretations. The challenging demands of sacerdotal moralism required rigid conformity to clerical rules. But to the people, most of the time, such demands ceased to be operative when compromises and adjustments could be purchased by the defaulting wealthy. It was a sad submission of personal and spiritual principles to hedonistic comforts and sensuous excesses. Civil norms of culture eulogised the life of a voluptuary, and idolised it in every possible way.

In contrast, spiritualism or moral values were scoffed at as intellectual aberrations of dreamers. Naturally, against this background, spiritualism wasted itself in the West. The sentence "It is easier for camel to pass through the eye of a needle," etc., holds good to this day; good for the individual, and good for a nation. Wealth and Christian principles are contradictions in spirit.

A sudden realisation of a spiritual vacuum has led men and women from time to time to cry for a change. The Christian faith in a 'second coming, (shared also by some Islamic sects) somehow succeeded in pushing such urges for a true spiritual fulfilment conveniently under the carpet. But the society at large watches with mute pain and despondence, the unseemly growth of cynical disregard for all codes of conduct, the decay of the individual's responsibility and moral discipline, the want of ethical content in our daily life. Arrogance, intolerance, partisanship, group and national interest leading to bigotry and fanaticism raise their ugly head, and mar the beauty of living, the rhythm of peace and contentment, which could be achieved only by cultivating a philosophically oriented integra- tion of personal life and mass life.

But despite the horror which such wreckless hedonism created, the people generally, beyond crying for a spiritual life of contentment and glory, has not been able to achieve much. Self-evaluation has been decaying atom by atom. The connection

between religion and equity, love and peace, has rarely been in sight in the practical living of the life in the West. This has been the main tragedy of the great West, whose intellectual advance is as wonderful in its achievements of the matter, as it is deplorable in its failures of the spirit. The West avoided to live religion with that ease and simplicity, which makes religion a source for profound freedom and relaxation in the East. Legality of form and trends tends only to impose rigidity to power-packed institutions; obser- vances of form and trends, as parts of life, create traditions. Religion, as it has been understood in the West has been yet another bondage imposed on man's spirit. Instead of encouraging freedom it has encouraged the wreckers of freedom. Religion which emancipates and removes dis- tinction, detests class. The metamorphosis of religion has been one of the baffling problems of the philosophic mind. Here lies the difference between religion and Dharma. Religion clings to dogmas, and dis- courages philosophy; Dharma discourages dogma and embraces philosophy. The irony of Western religions emerges from the apprehension of its philosophers. Religion enslaves; philosophy emancipates. Even the philosophy and dialectics of Marx when appreciated in depth, leads to a religious faith, with humanity as its only god.

The history of the Christian church is littered with the ashes of persecution. Devout souls, who had the honest courage to protest against the salvery of conscience to man-made rules in the name of God, faced gruesome ends in the hands of Christian pontifice acting through political interest.

The persecutions of Hess or Jerome had kept half the continent in a state of fervour. The Spanish doings in Holland, Mexico, Peru, and the entire southern part of the world, took time to be fully revealed in their excesses of barbarity. Similar had been the fate in Europe of the Cathars, the Fuggers, the Anapaptists, the Bachhs, and the Huguenots. Between 1300 and 1564 over two hundred years, unthinkable horrors were inflicted in Europe for the extermination of the Jews. Nazi Germany had only been taking advantage of a well-set tradition. Hitler was exploiting a situation well laid out by the Theodocian Code (439); Council of Orleans (518); Council of Avignon (1209); Council of Lateran (1215), etc; and by such monarchs as Louis VII, Phillip the Fair, Frede- rick II, Catherine the Great. Jews have been killed by the thousands over the long years of Christianity's progress. Today, Europe, in its efforts to atone for its antizionistic history, together with a Jew-influenced America, in the interest of bullion-

peace, and commercial superiority, has succeeded through political means to turn the Arabs against the Jews; whom they favour for help. As a community, the Jews are the wealthiest. Basically, the policy is a continuation of the sinful practice of preserving one religion by destroying others through political obduracy and commer- cial interest.

Such horrors in the name of God and religion were by and large un- known in the Eastern religions. Islam has often been dubbed and accused for atrocities. But barring the Hun and Mongol people's advances barr- ing the military spread of the have-nots of Central Asia, Islam as Islam, compared to the Christian way of living has been much more civilised. According to Gibbon and Dr. Durant, by nature and practice, the Islamic East as against the Christian Europe of the time, proved to be more humane, civilised, chivalrous and trustworthy.

The Moslem powers, once tolerant of religious diversity, had been made intolerant by attacks....Moslem civilisation proved itself superior to the Christian in refinement, comfort, education and war.... It (The Crusade) had blunted its spirit by conquering not Moslem Jerusalem, but Christian Byzentium..., in general, the discovery by the Crusaders, that the followers of another faith could be as civilised humans and trustworthy as themselves, if not more so, must have set some minds adrift, and contributed to the weakening of orthodox belief.5

(Has not the much publicised horrors of the so-called Viet-Nam people back-fired in almost the same way, and convinced the Western public mind, through the facts revealed by the released prisoners, of the great injustice done to a simple people by a power-mad mass of aliens?)

The progress of religion through the West has more or less left a "Waste Land" bemoaned by T. S. Eliot awaiting, perhaps, a second coming. This may not be due to any inherent weakness of the Christian content of the religion followed. A lot could be said about the post-Roman philosophy of life in Europe, and about the post-Renaissance morals, which in fact, were responsible for the dehumanisation and de-spiritualisa- tion of the Christian faith. Eversince the rise of commercial houses in the Mediterranean sea, during the Roman and the Mediaeval period, commercial success has held the rise of spiritual success in the West at ransom. Since the 19th century colonialism got intensified with the scientific growth of mechanical and atomic power, greed for power for commercial superiority has become an obsession which completely

eclipses the spirit of man. Spiritualism in Europe, since the Greeks, never be- came a way of life. Thus a materialist view of life, a false sense of nationalism and national pride, and glorification of urbanised living, with all its consequences, was more responsible for the growth of hedonistic cynicism, which corrodes the soul of the West despite the supreme teachings of Jesus.

In contrast, the Christians of the South East Asian countries, inclusive of those in India, are spiritually more sincere and religiously more devout. The influence of a Buddhist and Hindu social life has made them keep theirs on an even kneel. Buddhism is proverbially mild; so has been Hindusim. Thus Christianity in the East, even Islam, retained their respective spiritual content. Outside Arabia, India retains some of the most revered, and most frequented pilgrimages of the Islamic faith; and despite the much publicised riotous living in India, these pilgrimages of Islam, as those of Christianity, have never been molested. It has to be admitted to the credit of the East, and of Hinduism specially that whatever spiritual thought came to change it, got changed, because of the Hindu's catholicity.

The basis of religiosity is virtue; the basis of church is form. In any full, healthy, purposive and effective religion virtue, of course, super- sedes knowledge. The divine recognises virtue above knowledge. Virtuous ignorance is divine simplicity; knowledge lacking in virtue is mere pedantry, and could be horribly satanic.

Thus saints always revealed the same dimensions of Truth and Reality. The world of saints has amazingly remained a world of harmony and fullness. It is so because the Divine Realisation in itself is a binding force; it is an integrating spirit out of which has grown the best in the mystic. The best in any religion appears to enter the emancipated area of mysticism.

The materialistic philosophy of Saivism has ever and ever been living and growing in the closest neighbourhood of Mysticism. The very symbol of Saivism, the letter and sound 'AUM', is a mystic formula.

Tantra survives on mysticism. The Universal Mother, in Tantra, became mystically the consort of Śiva. She was the Mother; He was the Father. She was Prakrti; he was the Purusa. She was the Nada; He was the Bindu. She was the Sakti; He was the Siva. The two are 'two' like the food and its taste, the sight and the light; the air and the sound; fire and its heat; articulation and idea; word and meaning; 'the moon and the

moonlight'; long before the Vedas were known, this concept of the Mother, a moving dynamic force behind the mute mystery of life, had been worshipped by a set of dark inhabitants of India. These were the Mother-worshipping Tantra adorers; the matriarchs.

II

The Indigenous Indians

The religion that was practised in India before 2500 B.C. was akin to something as revealed by the Sindh Valley civilisations. But this civilisa- tion was later on superimposed by the Vedic civilisation. There is, therefore, an understandable possibility of a rivalry between the two. This could either lead to occasional wars, and possible annihilation; or, to an integration of the two civilisations. Such syncretism would not be altogether unexpected in the presence of a persistent challenge from an indigenous civilisation continuing to exist side by side with that of the conquerors. Scholars are of the opinion that the Sindh Valley civilisa- tion was ousted by the Vedic people. Whilst this could be so, the Aryan civilisation did not all at once spread throughout the peninsula. 8 Continued traces of a pre-Aryan civilisation of the Harappan type have been discovered throughout the Indian peninsula. It is difficult to admit that the later Hindu civilisation had grown entirely out of the Vedas, without dominant links with the life they had been dominating. It would be a wilful indulgence in romantic wishfulness to claim that the Hinduism of the day is all Vedic and little Hindu; the fact could be just the opposite.

But who had been the actual natives of the peninsula and of the Gangetic valley? Whilst the Gangetic valley was coming into contact with Vedism, and while the indigenous people of the valley were being either absorbed into the fold, or chased away to the forests and to the hills, the Deccan itself remained for a long while free from the Aryan pressure. In an arresting study of the aboriginal inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent on the basis of religion Dr. S. K. Chatterji em- phasises the great influence of the Tamils over the Siva concept so dear to the Indians. Šiva's admission as Rudra, as has already, been noted, was for the first time found recorded in Svetāśvatara Upanisad. This indicates strongly that Śiva was absorbed later in the Hindu pantheon.

Dr. S. S. Sarkar, lecturer in anthropology, in the University of Calcutta, employs the cephalic index in determining the racial disposition of the aboriginals in studying the incoming race movements in India. The highest percentage of the Indian inhabitants today comprises of the Doliocephalic and Mesocephalic people. These are the ones related to the Aryans.

The balance, generally called the austroloids, belong, more or less, to the strain of the Veddas of Ceylon, and the other strains bearing great similarities with the natives of Australia.11 The Veddas and the Indo-Aryans, through mutual contact, form more or less the major part of the population of the caste Hindus of the subcontinent. Sarkar quotes Buxton in support of his theory of the aboriginals being chased into the forest and hill regions of India. He further supports for a fact that amongst the higher castes of Deccan a great number came from the Iranian stock of Mesocephalic races. We had occasion to refer again and again to the periodical migrations from the Persian Gulf and Red Sea regions, forced by political and commercial upheavals.

On the basis of such anthropological and philological evidence, it is easy to confirm close and continuous contacts between Iran and India, existing even during the Vedic times. Were these contacts merely com- mercial or cultural? Commercial contacts are understandable. But there should be other weighty reasons for justifying a torrential mass exodus from Central Asia and Iran to the Indian peninsula. Without justifying such an exodus it would be gravely hypothetical to justify a gradual mixture of the races, with those characteristic conservative taboos which all minority immigrants love to impose on their people in a vain hope of race preservation. History speaks of vast human movements from the Central part of Asia during the 200 years preceding and following the Christian era.

Further back, the Vedas too suggest race movements resulting from wars between the Vedics and the non-Vedics. The Indus Valley exca- vations followed by similar excavations all over India exposes the remains of similar civilisation, and shows one, the existence over the entire sub- continent of a race different from the Aryans; and two, the sudden devas- tations that they had faced forcing them to abandon their hearths and homes. Lastly, the evidence of the language movements of the South also proves that Tamil as script was a sister of the Brahmi, but as a language was related to some languages current in the Red Sea regions.1 These reasons inevitably suggest a sudden exodus from the West and North of Asia to South, and this South involved the

regions where the Sumerian and Iranian cultures had been colonised for some time. What could be the cause for this sudden and major exodus?

The earliest religious evidence in India based on Archaeological facts refer to the excavations at Mohenjo-daro, and to the sites of sister civilisa tion discovered at many other places, inclusive of the Deccan. But the Vedic evidence refers to an 'immemorial past'. Such a human move- ment could be even earlier than the Central Asian movement of the first century B.C. and A.D.; earlier than the Harappan civilisation too. The Vedic evidence confirms a probability. The Vedas refer to the long fight to the Devas with the non-Devas, a fact related by orientalists to the struggle for power between the Aryans of the North and the non- Aryan people of the coastal settlements. Besides a number of minor clashes, some based on personal feuds (such as Tvasta-Indra-Vytra; Hiranyakya-Hiranyekelipa-Prahlade-Virocana-Bali-Visa) there are two sectional wars involving the two sets of people. One is known as the 'War of the Ten Kings'; and the other as the 'War of the Planets'. Spiri- tual and astronomical explanations have been attempted to make the wars appear as allegorical or symbolic or both. But the very image of war proves the causes of clashes a thing of reality which had to have a historical basis. In the Mahabharata we find echoes of these wars which had taken place in times grown hoary with age.

The actual Vedic time, or the time of the Bharata War describing the struggle for power, must have been earlier than the date when the Vedas were 'compiled', or the Mahabharata was 'recorded'. According to Lassen, Dahman, Sorensen and Hopkins, the existing epic of the Mahabharata could not be dated prior to 400 B.c. The Ur-Mahabharata has 8000 stanzas. It could reasonably be imagined that most of the inter-polations were enforced by the changes in a dynamic society. One of these factors was clearly the advent and spread of Buddhism, and the subsequent cult of Ahimsa, which changed the thought patterns and living standards of the Vedic society. The syncretisation of the two, at the end of the Buddhist times, resulted in the growth of Vaisnavism, which so much reflects the personal and the emotional in man's dedication to the divine. An enthusiastic and passionate approach to gods brought within the limits of a family relation resulted in a religious fervour hitherto unknown.

Apart from Buddhism the rule of the foreign Kushans, and the incorporation of the forms and fancies of the Central Asian and Scythian life, as well as the influence of the Parthians and the Greeks of Gändhära and Bactria brought in other changes. The most

remarkable of these changes was the introduction of sculptored images into Vedic and Buddhist life. A sudden upsurge of energy burst into construction of temples, and writing of a number of philosophical and religious treatises. For the first time Gods and Goddesses were established in the Purāṇas. The Mahabharata is filled with these efforts of mediation, recapitulation, re-interpretations and re-approachments. The symptoms of a cultural synthesis spreading over centuries are recorded in the body of the Maha- bharata. The Sakti and Māheśvara cults are found and mentioned herein for the first time. If Harappa is traceable to the Sumerians, the Purana-Hinduism is traceable to Mithra, Maga, Gandhara and the Central Asian peoples.

The Early Siva Sources

Of course this view does not go unchallenged. But no one doubts the fact that the present form of the great epic has undergone many changes, and that the changes could not have been later than the Fifth century A.D. But the possibility of the changes are indicated within the latest rendition of the epic. By its own evidence the original Mahabharata itself was a part of the greater epic 'Jaya'; and Vyasa, its writer, had taught only a part of this Jaya to his disciples. Vaisampayana had recited it at the Naga-Sacrifice of Janmejaya. The latest recitation was done by Sauti in the Naimiṣa hermitage. It is remarkable, however, for purposes of our enquiry, "that the epic remained for sometime in the exclusive possession of the Bhargavas (Bhrgu-progenies) as their close literary preserve." The Bhargavas thus took from the Sûtas, the Bharata, and gave back the Mahabharata as the common property of all, which still retained its traditional association with Vyasa. Sukhtankar held the view that "all attempts to explain it (i.e., the Mahabharata) merely as an evolute of some hypothetical epic nucleus are examples of wasted ingenuity....Bhrgus," he added, "have, to all appearances, swallowed up the epic nucleus such as it was, and digested it completely; and it would be a hazardous venture now to reconstruct the lost Ksatriya ballad of love and war."

The contribution of the Bhrgus and their involvement in the formation of the most important treatises on post-Buddhist Hinduism is of special significance to the study of the growth and expansion of Saivism. The annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (pp. 1-76) contains a paper on the Bhrgus and the Bharata. We also learn that the writer and compiler of the Manu-Dharmasastra has been a Bhrgu, although Manu

has been mentioned to have been its 'Dictator'. It is not therefore, un- expected that the Anusasana Parvam of the Mahabharata much of the Manu-Law has been incorporated.

All that has been said above happened within a period which Karl Jasper calls the Axial era, an era when throughout the ancient world there appeared, as if prompted by some unseen power, a galaxy of intellec- tuals who contributed to the human thought some of its greatest treasures. Simultaneously and independently in Greece, China and India, questions against traditional systems of thinking were being raised, and intellectual challenges had to be answered, thus setting quite new dimensions to known ideas and beliefs. This change particularly seethed within the vast region of Sumer, Babylon, Iran and contiguous civilisations. Greece too was disturbed. The challenges of the Macedonian youth ravishing through all the ancient civilisations, tested old faiths and forms. No wonder that at this time the Vedic life of India too had to recast its ideological tenets.

This emphasis on the ideological link of the ancient Vedic thoughts with the later Iranian and Phoenician thoughts has its own base. This base is traceable through the authorship of some of the post-Vedic treatises. These are the Mahabharata, the Manava-Dharmasastra and the heritage of the Bhrgus generally, but of Angirasa in particular. Angirasa has been one of the seven Prajapatis (patriarchs?) celebrated by Hindu astronomers, immortalised through the constellation of the seven stars, the Great Bear. Of this one has been Angirasa. He, together with his descendant Bhrgu, has been responsible for certain treatises since regarded as treasures of Hindu thought. The chief of these are the Manu Samhita, (which is the chief book on Hindu Code), the Mahabharata and the Astrological treatise known as the Bhrgu-samhita.

(Bhrgu had differences with the God Visnu, who had not paid the Rşi the homage due to him. Bhrgu was worshipper of Siva; Bhrgu's progeny was Rşi Sukra, himself a teacher to the enemies of the Devas, and a great partisan, whose power had to be challenged by Visnu himself. Bhrgu's disciple Parasurama opposed Rama who had to restrain the way of the anti-Vedic Rşi. It is clear from such incidents that the sedate Vedic way of life had been receiving challenges brewing from within the Vedic traditions and peoples.)

The Vedic way of society and life was challenged by the revolutionary ideas of the Buddha. The incidents described in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahabharata must have

taken place much before the age of the Buddha. The epic was popular enough to have demanded continuous additions and alterations throughout a period of five to seven hundred years. From the epics as well as from the Upanisads and the Brahmanas the earlier Vedic life could be adjudged in full view. We see here a continuous process of struggle between the Vedic civilisation; and (a) an alien (the Dasyu) civilisation; and (b) an Asura (or Rākṣasa) civilisation that posed great threat to Yajña. One of these was non-Aryan; the other appears to be a schismic protestant break-away section of the Aryans. We notice Rudras being transformed into the later Śivas against the background of the struggles. The Vedic Rudra has not been given the same respect as the gods Indra, Varuna, Aśvini, Vayu, etc. The Rg Veda accepts Rudra very grudgingly, as a god of tears. He causes pain. Rudra appears to have been a taboo, as Rudra and Rudriyas are asked to get away from the Vedic Yajñas. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa Rudra has been mentioned only once in connection with a prayer that Rudra may keep himself away from the Yajñas. Rudra has not been given any share of the offerings in the fire. His share, as a god of tears, is allocated outside the residential quarters in or near the cremation grounds. He is as it were Theoi Apopompaioi (ignored deity) of the Vedas,

But in the epic Mahabharata the situation becomes different. There Šiva is not only mentioned respectfully, but the Pandavas are asked to appease him by special prayers. He is no longer the god of tears; he is the remover of tears, bestower of happiness. But it is very doubtful if at all these texts have not been apocryphal annexations. We find mention of Pasupati, a typical name which had brought out so much ire and scorn The Early Siva Sources 217 from the Aryan Vedic texts. The Vedas used pašu (animal) in sacrifices. Naturally, Pasupati the protector of animals, would stand in their way of life. Recitations to Siva's greatness in the epics indicate the great change Siva had undergone in the meanwhile in the post-Vedic society. But the Siva accepted by the new society does not appear to be quite the same plebian, cremation-ground-hugging Rudra Pasupati of Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Rudra had been honourably admitted to the Deva pantheon as Mahadeva God of all the gods. Many legends have been related in the epics regarding the change of attitude to Siva.

Besides the Brahmanas and the Mahabharata, Śiva has also been mentioned in the Ramayana in connection with the Ravana-cult; and we see Rama in the Tuddha-

Kandam paying homage to Siva. Scholars are very cautious about admitting these passages as being genuinely original. But the fact stands that necessity had forced these inclusions in the epics.

The book on which the Saiva philosophy leans most is the Svetāśvatara Upanisad. According to Dr. Radhakrishnan the date of this Upanisad should be between the 8th and 7th cent. B.c.14 But this Upanisad is clearly reflective of certain heretical controversies that had been disturbing the even rhythm of the society. According to Swami Ghanananda of the R. K. Vedānta Centre, London, the heresies that confronted the writer of the Śvetvasvatara Upanisad originated partly, from some Vedic schisms, partly from some Jainistic ideas. That at this stage within the Vedic circle itself heretical jarrings had been creating some disturbances, could be traced from such passages as: "There is no Indra" (Rg Veda VIII: 89.3); Rg Veda (II:12) refers to a current disbelief; the followers of the Veda have been described as "selfish prattling priests that go about self-deluded" (Rg Veda X: 82) "Such knowledge (Vedic) is fit for demons only; its reward would last so long as the sense pleasure lasted; it upsets sacred books, and should not be acquired." The hymn to faith (Rg Veda X: 151.5).... indirectly points to those whose faith must have declined, and who did not believe in gods, or in singing hymns to them.1 The Svetasvatara Upanisad itself tries its best, just as the Gita does, to reconcile conflicting ideas bordering atheism. But this is the first reference to Saivism in the ancient literature of the Hindus, and as such is of tremendous significance to this study.

The first of the Puranas in which Śaivism has been fully dealt with is the Vayu Purana. The word linga has been first used in the Svetasvatara Upanisad in the sense of mark or index.

Na tasya kascit patirasti loke

Na ceşită naiva ca tasya Lingam (VI: 9.)

"Of Him there is no master in the world; no ruler; nor is He (detectable by) any mark or sign... " "His form cannot be seen, none sees him with eyes; those who realise him as abiding in mind and heart become immortal. Some approach you in fear, and pronounce you as unborn. O Rudra, may your gracious aspect protect me ever and ever. (Ibid., IV: 20-21).

Along with 'Lingam', the word 'Yoni' too occurs many a time in this Upanisad; and every time the meaning of the word changes, never meaning at any time a phallic import.

Some Significant Dates in Migrations

The Minoan civilisation (3000 B.c.) with its knowledge of the uses of bronze and copper was in many ways similar to the civilisation of Sumer. And it also carried broad characteristics reminding of the civilisations that flourished in the pre-Aryan finds in Harappa. The first known settle- ment of Troy was 2870. After the fall of Troy bronze was found in Cyprus (1200 B.C.). The pressure of the Aryans in India was in full blast up to 1600 B.C. The Bharata war took place when the Aryans had been just settling and the Kali Yuga had not started. In 1375 B.C. Aryan deities are worshipped in Mittani. Immediately after (1100), the Achae- ans were taking hold of Greece, and Troy fell (1183). Greece was in real trouble. The Dorians were driving them out; and the Persians were pres- sing them from the East. This accounts for the great Greek migration to Ionia where Homer lived and wrote his epics (840 B.C.). The Vedas which had been known long before this date, but which could not be compiled until about this time gave way to the Brāhmaṇas and the Upanisads; between 900 and 800 B.c. the Indian epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahabharata were being written in their original form. Thus the period, the first millenium B.C., specially its first half, had been intellectually a very significant time for the Aryans. It was this period (842-840 B.C.) which saw the rise of the Seven Wise Men of Greece.

What was the reason that despite this intellectual fervour, which denotes a comparative peaceful and prosperous time, a compelling exodus took place to force immigration in a large scale from the West to the East of the Arabian Sea? This must have been due to war and foreign attacks resulting in overwhelming defeats that endangered cultural heritage. Important families, and their standard bearers and camp- followers hurried out for covers amongst peoples and in a country already known to them.

Thus we watch over a great historical putsch. The Achaeans and Dorians were pushing the Greeks; the Assyrians were occupying Egypt and Iran; the immigrating Greeks from Anatolia and the Ionian isles were in their turn being chased by the Persians; and the Sumerian population hugging the coast lands of the Eastern Mediterranean had

been seeking quieter place for settlement, away from the strange onrush from the Doric and Thracian North.

Such significant deviations could not be either ignored, or left to assumptions. Changes in traditions have causes; and the deeper and purer the traditions, the stronger and more persistent the causes. Rudra as Śiva is not found in the Vedas, Rudra of the Vedas, and Siva of the Purāṇas are admittedly two concepts. Further studies would reveal that even the Siva concept took two channels, one Siddhäntic, and the other Tantric. Before we come to discuss these changes, it would be relevant to make enquiries into the causes for the changes. This would require the student to dive into the dates and find out what had been happening in and out of the Vedic fold, in the contiguous areas of this cradle of cultures that called for such metamorphosis in religious traditions and thoughts.

Mention had been made of the Greeks before, those Greeks who after Alexander, had colonised in vast parts of Eastern and Central Asia. The clash between these Greeks and the locals, as well as with the Central Asian tribes and Tibeto-Mongolian hordes, were compelling causes that brought about changes into subsequent socio-religious thoughts and practices.

III

Samkhya Yoga: Vedanta

These movements must have, in course of centuries, not only dis- turbed the internal poise of the Indian life, but also brought many new ideas.

One of the most important ideas brought was the idea of the Great Mother Goddess, and the coordinate base of the great temple civilisation. The importance of Istar and Isis, of Marduk and Ba'al as deities, and of the practices associated with these, could not have been unknown to India. In the light of our knowledge about the contacts that prevailed, it was but natural that these gradually influenced the indigenous forms and patterns of worship.

The whole of India had not been Vedic. A majority of the people was under the influence of the tribal gods-the great Mother and her Consort. The whole of the Indian population did not comprise of the Aryans. We have noted that the majority belonged

to the race marked by anthropologists as the Dravids, and by inference to the Tamils also.

The life and practices of these indigenous people of the subcontinent differed significantly from the Aryans. Side by side with the Vedic insurgence traces of non-Vedic thoughts are found blossoming in natural glory. By emphasising analysis as different from intuition this indigenous school reminds one of what was later known as the Samkhya system of Kapila, most probably a non-Aryan. (Kapila, like Patanjali of the Yoga system, is described as a dark person.)

Side by side with Samkhya, the Yoga philosophy also is regarded to be independent of the Vedas. Today both the Samkhya and Yoga sys- tems are rightfully regarded as genuine 'Hindu' systems. The archaeo- logical, literary and cultural evidence of the far South and Ceylon, of Campa and Java, show the importance that the Tamils paid to Kapila and Patanjali, the Rsis known as the founders of Samkhya and Yoga respectively. Samkhya speaks of the Great Prakrti and Purusa. Tantra accepts Prakrti as the Great Mother, Puruşa as Mahākāla, and Yoga followers accept Puruşa as Siva, the Great Yogi. These are today en- shrined as the treasured systems of Hindu life and thought. A real study of Saivism demands a study of Samkhya's Puruşa, Tantra's Mother, and Yoga's Siva. We propose to devote some time over this study, consi-dered essential for having a real insight into the subject of Saivism.

The Vedanta school of philosophy, the most valued of the Hindu systems of philosophy is not as ancient as the Samkhya or the Yoga. Whilst the Vedanta is the most adored of them all, because of its spiritual depth and intellectual, subtle refinement, the Samkhya's influence on the daily life of the Hindus is much more pronounced. The Samkhya supports the Hindu form of worship of the One in many forms. The Vedanta collects the multi-formed divinities into the singleness of Om or Brahman. Yoga comes next to Samkhya in popular appeal. The Hindu philosophy appeals to the non-Hindu chiefly through the Vedanta and the Yoga. But within India, Sämkhya is very popular. Both the Svetasvatara Upanisad and the Bhagavat Gitä are treatises written in favour of synthesising these apparently divergent systems.

Samkhya is supposed to be a materialist philosophy. The description is often resented by some. But this is true. In so far as Samkhya enquires into the Supreme Truth through the analysis of the world of mate- rial events, the description is meaningful.

But it is not materialist in the sense as the Marxian dialectics are. Its subject is transcendentalism; but its approach is analytical. It carries its analysis to the final substance of matter only to declare that there is something beyond the mere objective apparancy of Matter. It changes form and acquires properties and distinctions due to the exercise of a mystic power. Thus a subjectivity is introduced into the origin and nature of objects, and their relation to Mind. It analyses the creative elements, and what we call 'nature' This very approach, which intellectually is Sämkhya, is theologically the basis of Prakrti, the Great Mother; and of Puruşa, her alter-ego, counter- part, Šiva. The traditions of Tantra is accepted into the Hindu fold through the presence of the Mother.

The Samkhya philosophy attempts to analyse the riddle of life, and the world within which life functions, through a classified analysis of the constitutes and evolutes of the world of Matter. It is primarily for this reason that this philosophy is called materialist. But it would be wrong to suppose that the Samkhya for this reason alone is a materialist philosophy, because finally it attempts to set aside the curtains of the mystery called 'Life' and hopes for achieving Happiness and Peace. It refers to the Divine only obtusely, accepting it as a way to describe the Eternity of Life and its function. Divinity as an authoritarian concept is absent in Sämkhya.

It contains and refers to the most ancient system of human thinking. Very strong reasons are forwarded in support of the view that Sämkhya as a system is older than the Vedas. At any rate it appears to be in- dependent of the Vedic. The Yoga system of Patanjali is closely correlated with this analytical materialism of Samkhya in which the Divine as a Person is absent; but the transcendence of Eternal Joy, as Impersonal, is present. Doubt and ignorance is sorrow; sorrow is caused by fear and uncertainty; an objective understanding through a process of analysis of the things that exist, is the best process of solving the riddle of life. Joy is the immediate achievement of this process; because eternal joy issues from complete understanding and knowledge, which alone drives doubts and fears.

Yoga' is a system that deals psychologically with the steps of the various strata of the mind, and of controlling them. The faculties of understanding and knowledge subsist on a perfect control over the mind. The entire philosophy of Yoga has been devoted to this single question: how to achieve full control over the mind. Yoga recognises the

body only in its innate relation to the mind. One cannot survive meaningfully without the other. The one disturbed, the other is bound to be disturbed. The body is a fact. Its well-being could be emotionally described as 'to be a happy'. Happiness means and assumes a perfect state of the function- ing of the body-machine without the least disturbance, or complexity or resistance of the mind. All physical disturbances discharge toxins that disbalance metabolism in the endocrine system; the endocrine system is intricately, though imperceptibly, correlated with the nerves; and equi- poise in the system of the nerves control the balance of the personality; and personality is the sum total of emotional actions and reactions.

The Two Non-Aryan Systems

Thus the fitness of the body has been held by Yoga to be of the highest importance. Through an active participation in this system one attains divine bliss, a state of balanced joy. This joy is impersonally-personal, and is effortlessly contributory to the happiness of all. The Yoga system of Patanjali thus describes the methods and means of keeping the body fit as a prerequisite for keeping the mind fit. This system recognises the different strata of the mind. It recognises a system of seven strata of the human mind that pervades ultimately the cosmic and the universal mind. As such this ancient system probes very deep into the knowledge now known as psychology and psycho-analysis, which meets, really, the border- land of what Yoga commands.

It is not difficult to see how both the systems could be deplored, even derided as mystic lugubriousness on some vague abstractions. It has also been derided as 'speculative'. But the mystic remains mystic till un- ravelled; and who would deny that most of us live a life the meaning of which remains for us hidden in the shadows of a deep mystery. Most of us suffer from the absurd strain of this position, namely, that we are called upon to function in a life, the purpose of which remains a closed secret to us. To have it to function to the best satisfactory state of the body-machine is also regarded by some to be the first serious objective of life. Further investigations regarding quo vadis is considered by them as impractical polemics. But the mystery surrounds the mind, for the body has also a mind. The deeper this ignorance about this mystery, the deeper grows our unhappiness, which we want to strive to grasp, but find so elusive. As a result we want to forget; we want to drown our frustration in hasty actions, speed, drugs and excitement, which in its chain causes- the body to get more toxic, which in turn, increases our unhappiness. The world is unhappy due to its refusal to listen to this

analytical pro- cess of gaining control over the mind, a process which we dub as being mystic, only to cover our innate incapacity and cowardice. Such deli- berate neglect could succeed up to a point; but who could be hiding from his own self?

There is reason to suppose that these two systems, Samkhya and Yoga, are atheistic and unorthodox. Both are significantly claimed as non- Vedic because of their complete independence of a sublime hypothesis, an Almighty Super Power and its Benign Influence. Both the systems shun from an inevitable submission to blind prayer, showy priests and complicated rituals. No wonder that many call the systems godless. At least they prescribe none. By a strange incidence at least two of the three authors were reputed to bear a skin darker than the fair-skinned Aryans! It is significant that the Marxian concept of materialism which had evolved a Marxian concept of Economic independence for all as equals in a productive society also base its revolutionary dialectics and militant methods quite clear of any divine intervention. Students of Samkhya and Yoga would neither be surprised by the Marxian theory of funda- mental social equilibrium, nor would they hesitate to accept the virtues of socialism. They too would be able to see through the virtues of the commune-based society of equal opportunities, and classlessness. In fact, both Sämkhya and Vedanta rationally advocate a society without class privileges. Classification of ideas for analysis of a subject does not condone classification of human society for purposes of distribution of privileges. The difference comes when Samkhya claims mental equipoise as imperative to mental peace, and personal happiness. Both Vedänta and Samkhya aim at obtaining a personal peace as means to serve mankind in any and every department. Both claim that economic equality and social classlessness achieved, something more is yet to be achieved; that is the conquest of happiness. But the two are so interrelated as the one cannot be dissociated from the other without causing injury to both.

Anyone known to the life-rhythm of such great leaders of mankind as Marx, Lenin, Ho Chi Minh, Mao Tse Tung, would admit their faith in profound peace and tranquillity in their personal life; their self-control and discipline, almost Sämkhyan self-dedication and active urgent pursuit, of which they have remained past masters amaze even their de- tractors. They looked death in the face, and fear had become their slave. To deny divinity, and fatalism is not so imbecile a defect of human character and human spirit

as to deny the innate need of man to regard another as a man as absolutely one's own equal. This is the acid test of a Yogi.

But the society which the Vedic leaders had finally organised denied these fundamentals, and was emphatically insistent on classification, and superiority of a racial character, subtly implying thereby a right to special privileges. If required, the Vedic society would not hesitate to impose these privileges on another society even by force of arms. It projected a shocking contrast between the Vedic concept of life and society, and the Samkhyan concept of the Yogi. When the Vedic godsfight, they fight for retaining special powers, and imposing special rights, but when Siva fights, he does so to deny special rights, and bring in equality in defence of the proletariat.

The final controversy could be thus defined as a show-down between the theistic Vedas and the atheistic Samkhya and Yoga. And it is signi- ficant that the South of the Indian subcontinent has been claimed to be the original home of these two systems. The people amongst whom these systems evolved, and who fostered and nursed these systems were the Drávidas who made one cause in this regard with the Tamils. And by their internal evidence both the Samkhya and Yoga systems make it clear that the systems enunciated had been inherited as cultural heritage from ancient masters. The reference to Púrva Sari-s (past-masters), and to Gurus in the Agama texts signify that the two systems related to an even more antiquated tradition.

This antiquity is almost immemorial and impenetrable; and it could possibly predate Mohenjo-daro culture.

Therefore we have to conclude that a culture of antiquity more remote than that of the Aryan Veda, or Zend Avesta, had been in existence, independent of the Vedas. The beginnings of this culture are found traceable in South India and Kashmir.

IV

The Tamils

The history of the Tamils, as far as it has been studied, hangs back to a past remoter than the Vedas and the Mohenjo-daro civilisation. The tradition that the Sämkhya system and the Yoga system are strictly speak- ing non-Aryan and non-Vedic in origin, also indicates the same conclu- sions that the two systems had their origin amongst the people who were the original inhabitants of the Southern peninsula, known as the

Deccan,19 The people, known as the Veddas, and the Tamils, together, make up the major population except in the immigrants borne by the East-West trade- winds, 19

Who were these Tamils? The question is as open as the other ques tions already referred to in the previous chapter. The root word Tamil tends towards the s and Tamril. Tamra in Sanskṛt means copper, and Tamril means copperish, as Phoenicia means reddish; and together with the fact that the sea which connected these people with the Indian Ocean was known as the Red Sea, tempt the inference that the presence of the taint of red in Tamil, Red Sea and Phoenicia could hold a tale of significance. Is not Saivism connected with the word lohit, lauhitya, rohit, sona, all meaning red? The Saivas use vermillion as a special mark.

Could it be that the Tamils and the Phoenicians have been the same. people? There are various cultural similarities which include trade, metallurgical interests, experience in dyeing, shipping and maritime endeavours, urbanic tastes, genius for building ports, developing markets, planning cities, matriarchal social systems, etc. The commercial interests of these people extended to almost a monopoly of silk, spices, ivory, pearls and trades in metals and dyes. The similarities in social and religious institutions too are deeply engaging. For a proper investigation into this aspect of the question one has to have an objective disposition and complete mastery over such languages as Aramaic, Hebrew, Ancient Tamil and Phoenician. The key perhaps lies in the alphabets discovered in Sumer, Mesopotamia, Crete and Mohenjo-daro. Till these are deciphered, the amazing similarities of these red people who cover up the shores of the European, African and Indian oceans would remain to us one of the pro- foundest mysteries in human history.

Were the Tamils natives of the peninsula? None knows. But the name Tamilnadu or the land of the Tamils which denote the southernmost part of the Indian peninsula indicates that the Tamils considered this part to be their land of origin. But it is true that the Tamils had to come into clash with various aborigines of the hinterland. That there were more than one type of ethnic culture-groups living in this section of the huge peninsula has been accepted by almost all the anthropologists.

We have already mentioned the cranial inferences drawn by anthropologists in this regard. For further appreciation of this problem one has to bear in mind the topographical formation of this peninsula which is a plateau, steeply rising along the

western border and gradually slanting towards the Eastern shores, carrying all waters of this shed from the West to the East. Except the two northernmost rivers of the Deccan plateau, the Narbada and the Tapti, which flow through rough ravines, the great rivers of the south, the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krsna and the Kavery flow into the Bay of Bengal to the East. The fertile river valleys are on this side. The Tamil civilisation hugs along the sea coast principal- ly, and avoids the hinterland, which, though rich in mineral, is mostly a forest-bound tract. These jungle-tracts have been abodes of tribes, and are still preserved in parts as perennial homes for these tribes. This analysis and description does not debar the natural mixtures of the peoples and their cultures which are the consequences of inevitable syncretism; but by and large, all historians and anthropologists seem to agree that in the Deccan peninsula the purely Tamil culture had to fend for itself against the indigenous tribal cultures.

The earliest gods of these indigenous people as of all indigenous people appeared to be nature-totems, and fertility divinities. The most popular form of gods in the south were stone rocks, river valleys, menacing animals like the serpent and the elephant, the tigers and the apes. The Tamils, on the contrary, evolved from out of the various forms, totems and nature- deities a sublimer concept of a god of oneness. This god had an abstract quality. He was popular as Sinan, the word in Tamil (Chivan) meaning the Red-One. Around this Samkhya Size-concept, a pretty bulk of litera- ture in the form of legends and Purana allegories developed. Through the centuries the Tamils evolved a vast treasure-house of emotional psalms, chronicles, manuals and narratives which found their respective places in later epics. But the significant contribution of this synthesis of the tribal stone-worship and more sophisticated ideology of monistic metaphysics is known as the Saiva Siddhanta, the Principles of the Siva- concept. The Saiva Siddhanta is the greatest contribution of the Southern mind; and it is the inevitable evolute of such philosophic systems and traditions as are treated in the systems of Samkhya and Yoga.

Patriarchal Ascendency

The emergence of Samkhya, Yoga and the Siddhantas signifies a patriarchal superimposition on a system matriarchally bound.

It has already been noted that the human society at the beginning had been matriarchal. In such a society the chief function of the female was equated with the chief function

of the earth, namely reproduction. Fertility as a living force, a mystic phenomenon, a wonder of wonders, was held in awe, and divined into a series of lores, totems and fervent rituals. The chief who sat at the head of such rituals had been a female.

The secret link between the male's seed and female's egg remained undiscovered over a long time. Then the male was wanted only as func- tionary, an instrument; and in actual sacrifices his young vitality was con- sidered to be the chief offering for the delight of the Mother Deity. We have noted the traditional sacrifice of a young man in annual festivals of the Orient. This is the theme of the Dionysian, Orphic and Adonis cults to which reference has already been made.

The study and the influence of this Mother-Deity, the Great Mother, the White Goddess, was held supreme. Because this Devi, Deity, the Mother, over-ruled all other unseen forces of life, and because around her an entire library of lores, legends and mysteries grew up in almost all human languages all over the ancient world, a collection of the lores, known as Cabalas, Cybelline literature," has been recorded as Tantra in the Indo- Aryan tradition of Sanskrt. They are also known as Agamas, i.e., Truth that 'came from' the male partner to the female deity. Parti- cularly the texts of these lores and rites, in all languages, invariably speak of one thing, viz., the entire text is not available, part of it has been lost!

Tantra means link, yarns, 'thread' that binds, hold things together, from age to age, from people to people. These are the real mysteries. The Cybelline, Orphean, Thessalian, Delphic, Eleusian, Colchean, Capa- docian, Egyptian, Tibetan, Mongolian, Mionian and a hundred other systems could be linked to the system of Tantra, where the great Mother rules.

The three aspects of the Great Mother are the Virgin (Artemis-Kumari), the young eternal Maid (Aphrodite-Uma or Abja) and the Crone (Caronis, betrayer of Apollo, Dhimarati) of the Mediterranean group.

The same Mother in the Tantra Agama and Nigama is known as the power, the Sakti, Uma of the Tamils, Ma of the ancients, who worshipped the Great Mother. She is different from Sri (Ceres), the Goddess of har- vest, plenty and Beauty. "It would appear," says Dr. S. K. Chatterji, "that the conceptions which are most characteristically Hindu are very largely derived from the non-Aryan world."

My feelings are that the mystic Tantra world is a vast ocean of unbounded experience in which none 'derives from none.

This Sakti has her own tradition. It is a long and evergrowing tradition. It has run side by side with its counterpart, the Sina-tradition, which together, as Prakrti and PuruŞa, forms the basic principles of Sämkhya. But theories by themselves do not bring human solace to the bereaved man, neither do they mean anything to the fun seeker in life. For that, understanding through analysis is essential. A sort of self- projection, a mother-figure or a father-figure often assists in regarding self-confidence by sublimating the ego. The egoist is an unidentified sick, who suffers without being able to admit it. He is lonely. He lacks companionship. In such a case a projected figure contributes by providing the missing motivation and companionship. The devout is not lonely. An egoist cannot be devout. For our daily human pattern of life we are in need of a deity that could be humanly conceived, humanly understood and approached. Hence the Sina-concept emerges as a symbolised abstract known as the Lingam.

V

Beginning of Abstract Thinking

To accept god in terms of human needs and emotions is to invent a source of support against the unpredictability of the unknown. This has caused the primitive human to design god in the shape of natural pheno- mena, sometimes in an exaggerated form. So to them, God was a Super- Man, a Super-Mother, a Super-Thunder, a Super-Bull, a counteractive source of support, or provider, a Sublime Superlative.

But this characteristically simple and child-like approach could appeal to the basic civilisation of the primitive man alone. With his gradual coming into his mental being man began to ask about the nature of God. Man began to think. To think is to argue; to fall into the revolving circuit of Cause and Effect.

What is this creation due to? How came the creation? What is man? What has been the primal cause? "Who sends the mind to wander afar? Who first sends life to set out on its journey? Who urges us to speak? What Spirit behind the eyes and the ears makes them see and hear?"

"Whence does life rise? How does it come to the body? How does it leave the body?" "Wherefrom all these worlds came ?"

Naturally, man composed his god in terms of those threats which endangered his life, and which he found it hard to surmount. These were nature's frowns: storm, flood, earthquake, famine, death; or ferocious animals and poisonous reptiles. But man's mind advanced. He shaped God in terms of man. He removed from his god all such things he disliked, and added to him all such things he admired and coveted. God became a paragon of man's most wishful thinking; the most powerful, the most beautiful, the most bountiful, and so on. God was a super-superlative. Thus for the world of man he had to be a superlative man.

Intellectual thinkers laughed at such inventions. Zenophanes (576- "....if oxen or 480 B.C.) of Ionia for instance, bemocked this idea.. horses or lions had hands, and produce works of art as men do, horses would paint the forms of God like horses, and oxen like oxen, and make their bodies in the image of several kinds....The Ethiopians make their gods black and snub-nosed; the Thracians say theirs have blue eyes and red hair...." In our times we have seen similar transformations of the Buddha and Jesus in Japan, China, Tibet, Indo-China, Ceylon, Egypt India, Afghanistan, Bactria and Syria, where the cranial peculiarities of the Buddha or Christ have undergone local changes as those of nose, eyes, hair and brows. The same idea has provoked satirists like Swift and Shaw write 'Gulliver's Travels' and 'A Black Girl in Search of God'. Europeans love to paint Jesus who was an Israelite in the shape of a blond Eurasian; at times strong like a Roman, at times imposing like a Scandina- vian, again frail and sad as a girl in eternal widowhood.

But the quest for knowing the cause of all the causes made men think. Of such thoughts is philosophy shaped. What had been theology, occult and magic gradually gave way to the searching enquiries of metaphysics. Man ceased to shape gods. Man stood before the immense problems: 'Of what is creation made? And by what? or by whom?' Imagination gave way to premises of thinking. Romanticism set out in search of Real- ism. To describe the Real became the Ideal of human thinking.

To have conceived of a spiritual universe apart from the physical one has been a sublime achievement of human thought. Man's quest for peace and happiness led man to seek moral values and spiritual contents; the values of self-discipline and meditative self-quest and self-analysis.

The Greek Thinkers 229 It is a mystery that man has ultimately to find out his own nature and cravings from within himself, by a process of introversion and deep reflection.

He has to become his own companion. The Svetasvatara Upanisad asks at the outset: "What is the cause of Creation?" This has been the supreme quest of the Seekers of Truth. How are we? Whence are we? In what and by what sustained? What is the Ultimate? Who dispense joy and suffering? The creator is there, like fire in woods; and through friction alone perceptibility is recognised. It had been; is and shall be. It is the mystic secret in the heart of things. Knowing this nothing further needs knowing. This supreme mystery is 'I'. All other things may be doubted; but the doubter is the Real. The Subject is the Real; not the Object. "I am" is the ultimate in consciousness. The universal spirit of consciousness is also the Eternal. The Devi Bhagavatam says: The cessation is also aware of the principle of consciousness. It has never been, nor can ever be, witnessed by any one. If it is seen, then the witness himself remains as an embodiment of that consciousness.

It is peculiar to all thinkers to speculate on this subject: Nature of God. In India theological speculation, free from all human control and authoritarianism has gone round a full circle from the primitive supersti tions to ritualistic polytheism, ultimately running into the subtlest state of metaphysical sublimation. This is the religion of India where thinking precedes following, and following leads to further thought and meditation; where religion is life, and life, religion. Hindu has always the right to think, to question, to probe. Even at the cost of speculation, he cannot give up this right. He would not be a Hindu if he did.

The Greek Thinkers

Besides the Hindus, others thought on this subject. How close great thinkers think on subjects of eternal value may be judged by the study of Greek metaphysicians whose thoughts on systems of theology and meta- physics bear significant similarities with their Hindu counterparts.

The Greeks have been great masters of subtle thinking. Europe is indebted for all times to Greek thought for everything in human achievement in the realm of art and philosophy. These Greeks and the Indian thinkers had amazingly been cousins in spirit.

Most of them answered the question of the ultimate Godhead as did the 'many gods' of the Vedas.

Homer's Oceans, gave way to 'Water' of Thales (612 m.c.). But Aneximander (546 B.c.) took the original substance to Heat. "Into that from which beings take their rise," says Aneximander, "they pass away once more, as ordained, for they make separation and satisfaction to one another for their injustice according to the ordering of time." In Greek life and philosophy this idea of justice, cosmic as well as human, played a significant part; and through the Greeks it came to Rome, and thence to the entire West. Then it passed on to the Christians, in whose view divine justice was tempered by an emphasis on forgiveness, love and grace. Jesus forgives and loves. This is emphatically stated. But does God? Perhaps; but God's love, let us not forget, could also be expressed through the painful sacrifice of a son.

The Christian idea of 'Sin, Fall and Redemption' is an atonement of the Aneximandrian warning about Destiny, Nemesis and Causation. This was Justice to which even Gods were subject. Thus these gods could not be primal. Water or Fire could be primal, because they have opposites like drought and coolness. Air is cold, water is moist, fire is hot. "If any one of them were Infinite, the others would cease to be by this time." The primal, therefore, "must be neutral in this cosmic strife." Aneximander, full of scientific curiosity, also indicates the concept of 'evo- lution'. He imagines the Primal to be Eternal, Infinite, and without any limiting specification. (The same as Svetavatara). From "This' came the idea of opposites, and of friction. Such frictional evolute is 'Water' of Thales. From moisture came creation, and the first lives were fish, from which other lives evolved. (Varuna was the first god of the Vedas, transplanted by Indra, god of sun and clouds combined.)

In any case Aneximander has the distinction of carrying the Western mind for the first time from limited imaginations to infinite sublimity. He was strong on one point: he found out that the ephemeral sensuous world could not have been capable of divining the eternal and the limitless, which must be a concept of the transcendental. In one shot the cause was spirited away by Aneximander from the world of speculation to the world of meditation and realisation. This was indeed a significant progress in Western thought. Aneximenes on the other hand, decided air to be the fundamental substance. "The soul is air; fire is verified air; when condensed, air becomes first water, then earth, and finally stone .... He thought that the earth was like a round table and that air

compasses everything. Just as our soul, being air, holds us together, so do breath and air encompass the whole world. It seems that the world breathes."

But even the air could not be the primal cause of the material universe. The third book of Kena Upanisad laughs at these conjectures. It shows that neither Agni (heat), nor Vayu (air), nor Indra (rain) was the ultimate truth. Brahman the One Eternal is supreme. He who knows Brahman is the man of supreme knowledge.

Then appeared a genius of intellect to Western philosophy, who remains to this day a mystery. Many think if he were a person, or many persons.

Little is known about Pythagoras except what we can find from his extensive school of followers, who have come down to our times. Pytha- goras and his philosophy of fundamental figure in mathematics, is of very special importance to our enquiry about Siva, Sakti, the mystery of the triangles, of the esoteric numbers, above all to the Samkhya system of Indian philosophy which in many respects appear to be relevant to the Siva Siddhantas. Be it not at all suggested that one owed to the other. The comparative study is designed to focus the unitariness of human thinking in fundamental subjects. International intellectual approval adds support to subjective theories by the proof of verification. Pythagorean life and philosophy peculiarly runs parallel to Siva saints, and to the life of John the Baptist.

Pythagoras is one of the most interesting and puzzling of the philo- sophers. A mixture of magic and mathematics, mind and superstition. His stature and reputation amongst his contemporaries had been very great. Russell describes him as a combination of Einstein and Mrs. Eddy. He headed a religious order, and was respected as a 'Guru', so that more than him, his tradition was revered by the great and noble following it attracted. The Pythagorean tradition is more known to us than his antecedents, about which we know so little. Of all the Greek-philosophers inclusive of Socrates and Aristotle, he appears to be the most Indian, the most Hindu and the most Saiva of all. He was a vegetarian, and a wor- shipper of ritualistic fire sacrifice; he preferred nightly esoteric seances to demonstrative ritualistic excesses. In him the intellect and the mind, the sensitive delights of mathematics, the love for mystery and the quest for the sublime found a common sustainer. He was the most emotive of the cynics, and the most cynical of the impassioned.

He settled in Croton, and founded the famous Pythagorean school. This was not merely an academy for the teaching of philosophy, mathe- matics, and natural science, but it was a brotherhood, the members of which were united for life. This brotherhood had to adhere to special observances approaching peculiarity. They were forbidden to divulge the discoveries and doctrines of their school. Hence we are obliged to speak of the Pythagorean as a body, and find it difficult to determine to whom each particular discovery is to be ascribed. The Pythagorean them- selves (like the sect of Vyasa) were in the habit of referring every discovery back to the great founder of the sect. 30

Because of his name which meant "the mouthpiece of the Python" (oracle at Delphi) many took him to be an 'avatara' of Apollo. He visited Arabia, Syria, Phoenicia, Chaldes, Egypt and India in search of truth. He taught males and females under strictest discipline bordering monastic purity. His 'esoteric' students were spiritually initiated into a companionship which aimed at 'experiencing' the truth. His acute sensi- tiveness added to his knowledge of mathematics, helped him in arriving at certain musical discoveries which led to the development of string instruments which were played by plucking. He spoke of the 'music of spheres', which we do not hear always. Patanjali speaks of the sound Om and Tantra speaks of Nada as the Cosmic Music of Spirit's infinity. Thales and the Milesians enquired into matter; Pythagoras enquired into form, and established the soothing and relaxing effects of music on harassed and strained nerves. We shall note that Abhinava Gupta of Kashmir wrote a splendid treatise on sound, or 'Music of the Spheres'. Expression of philosophy into mathematical form was not, therefore, peculiarly Spinoza-ic; Pythagoras had explored it before; and even before Pythagoras the Samkhya system proposed to discover truth through an analysis of numbers. "The only basic and lasting aspect of a thing is its numerical relationship to the composite parts"-sounds today as an electronic fundamental.

Pythagoras, as a mystic, had to speak of the Soul. In this he was to a great extent influenced by the near Eastern thoughts, specially Indian and Egyptian. The Soul is a composite of feeling, intuition and reason; of which feeling and intuition rest in heart; but reason has brain as its seat. Man alone has reason, and could claim immortality through libera- tion. The purpose of life is to gain liberation.

There it is. Pythagoras breathed the Hindu breath. For this he had to have an antecedent. This could not be traced in the Mediterranean Greek mind. His inferences

breathe the air of the cosmic fervour of the Vedantin and the Samkhya-Yogins of India. These were not 'two' different ways. "The seer sees Sämkhya and Yoga as one," says Krsna in the Gita. He believed that after death the soul undergoes a period of purgation in Hades (Pitr-Loka); then it returns to earth and enters a new body in a chain of transmigration that can be ended only by a completely virtuous life.. We catch again a glimpse of the trade in ideas that bound sixth century Greece, Africa and Asia when we reflect that this idea of metempsychosis had at one and the same time been capturing the imagination of India, of the Orphic cult in Greece, and of philosophical school in Italy. "We feel the hot breath of Hindu pessimism mingling, in the ethics of Pythagoras, with the clear, bright idea of Plato and Vedantins."

He speaks of the 'wheel of birth', just as a Hindu or a Buddhist would, and seeks release from it. He believes in the three kinds of beings, as the Samkhya philosopher would say about the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. He saw God as the unbroken, indivisible totality in which all fractionals, all individuality was united. Samkarācārya's Mäyä, and 'illusion' of Pythagoras, had that subtle difference which, because of its subtlety, could in a haste be regarded as one and the same. But Pythagoras took the world as a phase, a transition, that only helps in keeping the true light of God, i.e. reality, away and hidden. In this he significantly recalls Brhadaranyaka Upanisad (IV: 4-10-11). World to him is a 'turbid medium' which only disturbs the otherwise crystal-clear light of Heavenly knowledge. If there were any intellectual mystic behaving with a super-stitious dogmatism, Pythagoras was the one. His order believed, like the Saivas, in equality of (spiritual) status, possession, responsibility and efforts.

His belief in numbers significantly recalls Samkhya. The word "Samkhya' is a derivative of the word Samkhya, which means numbers.

For his way of thinking world was to be considered as a totality. There is a principle on which the world is based, as a unit. Thereafter he splits it into the principles of constitutes and evolutes, nature and mate- rial. The two are subdivided into many, until the famous triangle of figures known as 'Tetractys of the Decad becomes a Pythagorean symbol. The triangular nature of the Tetractys of the Decad' recalls the esoteric triangles of the Sakti cult. With the base of the 'many' at the top ulti- mately converging into the one at the bottom, it signifies one system of human efforts to meet realisation; and with the supreme One at the apex manifested into the manifold forms

of the world at the base, it signifies another system of human efforts to reach realisation. The dual-way system had been differently treated in Hindu esoterism: Anuloma-Viloma; Japa and Ajapä: Yoni and Siva; Prakyti and Purusa; KṢetra and KṢetri, etc. This dually-linked concept of creation and consciousness is contained in the celebrated Sri Yantra (q.v.) in which both the triangles are locked up in an subjective embrace. Hindu iconographical representations of Tantric deities, and Buddhist Vajrayana icons, represent the same ideas of mixed triangles, iconically and aniconically. It is the idea contained in the Tetractys of the Decad' of Pythagoras.

When we recall that Greek paganism believed in Polytheism, this em phasis on One and only One by Pythagoras appears to have been quite revolutionary. Yet by its analysis of the Tetractys of the Decad' it also provided an explanation to the manifestations of the One into many. In this too Pythagoras shows a surprising affinity to the Vedic hymn, "In many forms manifested the One"; "Ripam ripen prati ripen abhara", "The Real is One; but the knower knows the One by many names". (Ekah sat viprah bahudha vadanti.)

Thus in his emphasis on numbers, preference for austerity, concepts of a totality as Creation, wheel of birth, Tetractys of the Decad', his refer ence to the Pitrs; to soul and immortality, of his insistence on Monism and his adoration of music's influence on the peace of mind Pythagoras and Saivism reach a quite close norm.

(N.B. The Greeks often changed Sanskrt names to suit their alphabe-tic and lingophonic demands. Indus from Sindhu, Taxila from TakṢasilā, Hydaspes from Satadru, Ganges from Ganga or Sandrakotus from Chandragupta are a few examples. Considering the above I have very serious doubts if Pythagoras is the name of an individual or a group dedicated to a form of ritualistic esotericism, mainly inclined to Tantra and Vama-way Saivism, which has much in common with the Dionysian and Orphic cults. There is amongst the Saivas of India a sect known as the Aghoras. The sect was non-Vedic and was akin to the Nagas. 'Pyth' or python means Niga or Ajagara, both associated with an esoteric sect. 'Aghora' signifies a sect given to certain types of non-Vedic rites. Could the Pythagoreans mean these Näga-Aghoras? This could be just a surmise. I leave it to the philologist and specialist; but close similarities tempt me to infer Pythagoras in the light of the Naga-Aghoras. (cf. the construc- tion of Hyd-aspes from Sata-drů).

The system of Xenophanes, like Vedanta, raised its voice against this support by Pythagoras of the many forms. Xenophanes, like Samkara, the Hindu, remains the supreme unorthodox rebel of Greek polytheism. Permenides carried this Xenophenian idea of a single God yet further, and refused to call it God. He called it 'Being', just 'that which is'. It recalls the Hindu philosophic contention "Tat-Sat' (That 'is')," Ways (of Realising Truth) could only be two: the true way or the false way. Truth could be reached by the True-way alone. Truth or the Real 'is'. We cannot think of "Is not": negative thinking is an unreality; therefore, there has to be a Being, some 'Is'. This exposition of the eter- nal, unalterable 'Being' has been the contribution of Permenides.

This tendency of identification of the outer empirical self with some- thing inner, and with some Power or Source which transcends all limited consciousness was not peculiar to Xenophanes or Permenides. Great thinkers who claimed to have 'realised', all over the world, and all along historical time have been supplying us with evidence of similar experience through an amazingly identical substance of statements. We cannot resist from recording some of these utterances.

(a) "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (St. Paul);

(b) "Your Self is a copy made in the image of God. Seek in yourself all that you desire to know." (Jalál-ud-din Rumi);

(c) "He forgets himself;

he is no longer conscious of his selfhood;

he disappears,

and loses himself in God,

and becomes one spirit with him."

(The German Dominican, the Blessed Henry Suso);

(d) "He is in himself; is to be with God, without intermediary."

(Raysbroock).

But the most characteristic way in which this ideal of "Thou art That," or "I am He" has been announced comes from a woman saint.

"If there is a union of all the faculties, I say, then the Soul cannot make it known, even if it wants to-while actually in union I mean. If it can, then it is no union. It is plain enough what union is; in Union two separate things become one." (St. Theresa of Avila).

Zeno, another great name in Greek philosophy, as the disciple of Permenides, carried the idea of One yet to further subtleties. "Were Achilles to compete in a race with a tortoise, and were the tortoise allowed to precede him by a few steps, never would Achilles be able to outrun the tortoise" was the extreme illustration of his speculative analysis. Collection of several units presupposes manliness. 'One' cannot be sub-divided; one is without magnitude. A collection of several 'without magnitude' cannot give magnitude. Fallacious as these strange state- ments appear to be, fundamentally they are provocative. Zeno's depth of search, at one time both shocked and trained the Greek mind. Zeno was very original in thought as well as in expression. A scholar of the Spanda school of Pratyabhijna-Saivism would adore Xenophanes and Zeno as pure Saivic philosophers born in Greece.

Thus Zeno has been the great advocate of the Static, which conveys the same subjective idea as of Säksi (witness). Niväsa (Resort), Sthāna or Sthānu (State).

The famous Hindu Märga or 'the way' known as the Prasthana Märga is an accepted way of Saiva monks. In contradistinction with this there is the other way of motion (gati), or Energy, known as the Praretti Marga (the way of involvement with natural 'inborn' tendencies). This theory of motion includes the eternal and perpetual motion of life's integration and disintegration, as well as the individual's natural (Sha-Bhava-Guna) The importance of prakṛti and sa-bhava-guna has tendencies. been pointed both in the Gita and the Yoga system of Patanjali. But Heraclitus, the Greek, too speaks of the importance in spiritual life of the individual of the influence of this natural motion which contributes to of motives behind actions. Europeans who generally credit presence the Greeks with originality regarding the inventions of most of the accredited postulates in metaphysics, had been till recent times quite uninformed about Hindu, Arab and Chinese thoughts. It is true that almost all the important theories about Western metaphysics appear to have their origin in the Ionian islands and Thrace. The imaginative inventiveness of the people of these parts in abstract matters can hardly be too highly praised. What Heraclitus had postulated, Bergson has developed in the

Europe of our times. In fact, Bergson took the cudgel against Zeno, and set the grand postulate-"A motion is made out of what is moving, but not out of motions." But Russell, like the Nigama thinkers, considered Bergson's argument as "mere play of words." In fact, Bergson's complete submission to motion condemns being to action for the sake of action, eternally. It is acceptance of Destiny with conscious submission of will or effort. It is submission of the stag to the python of the mouse to the cat. It does not enjoy any redeeming freshness through a sublimatingvision, or anyself-realising determination of the will which supports the individual. Otherwise, in the Hindu concept of Sakti this has always come up; and we shall hear more of it.

But those to whom action, if it is to be of any value, must be inspired by some vision, by the imaginative fore-shadowing of a world less painful, less unjust, less full of strife than the world of our everyday life, those, in a word, whose action is full of contem-plation, will find in this philosophy, nothing of what they seek, and will not regret that there is no reason to think it true.36"

The systems of Tantra and Saivism which deal with the static and dynamic aspects of inaction and action, of determinism and free-will, as a two-in-one, provide a solution through a subjective synthesis based on Samkhya. Since our subject is designed to discover the basis of Śaivism the attempts of the Greek philosophers in coming to grips with the mysteries of life and creation bear relevance to our quest.

This partial reference to the Greek philosophers, obviously considered redundant, is justified by the two facts:

(1) the trend of mystery and the growth of the Dionysus-cult in Thrace and Ionia; and

(2) the conflict between the Milesian culture and Athenic culture which indicated an Eastern link of the phallic sacrifices prevalent in Asia Minor, Crete, and the Hittite cultures. Both have direct bearings on the supposed phallic traits in Saivism.

We shall return to this again when we discuss the subject of the Great Mother. It is admitted on all hands that what is roundly known as the Greek-culture, Greek theology, eschaetology, mythology has been formed out of a variety of conflicting religions practised in and around the Mediterranean East, and was influenced by the various people who, having settled in Greece, wave after wave, helped the Greeks to form a rather fluxy religion. We must continue to bear in mind that in the evolution of

Greek thinking Ionia and Ionians had played a great role. In fact, the celebrated 'Seven Wise Men' of Greece came out of the Aegean and the Ionian islands which formed a part of Asia until such times when, due to the combined pressures of the Northern races and the Eastern Persians, the Greeks fled their land, and migrated to these Asian pockets of peace and culture. In fact, these parts grew into flourishing colonies. What more favourable grounds could be expected for a syncretic admixture of many gods!

The various types of religions that had heralded, and even coexisted with Greek Paganism, and which, in a way, found shelter in its elaborate structure-Delphic, Orphic, Cybelline and Eleusian mysteries, the cults of Cybele, Venus, Mithra and Astarte; the orgies and the sacrificial frenzied maenadic dances inspired by Pan, Satyrs, Aphrodite, Bacchus, Artemis, involved the Greeks through the now forgotten civilisations of the Levant, the Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Iran. Unredeemed and un- abashed phallicism had completely supplanted a pure fertility cult. Particularly, these involved the Sumerians, Phoenicians and the Semetics, as well as the Egyptians. While discussing generally a people as 'the Greeks', one must not forget that this mother of nations, the Greece we imagine, included the Sporades isles, Crete, Caria, Lyria, Lydia, Phrygis, Mysia, and above all the coastland from Miletus to Troy and from Megidda to Ras Shamra. Thrace and the Ionian isles were the richest Greek countries. These parts could be called Greek only in the sense that any colonised part of the world could be called Roman or English by virtue of occupation and colonisation. These lands show as much signs of Greek colonisation as of Phoenician and Iranian, Egyptian and Syrian colonies. As such their ways of life and thought were intricately mingled with the ways of life of the peoples who lived beyond the Red Sea and with whom, as we have noted before, they had close relations.

In studying Śaivism apropos of Phallicism, therefore, it would be a rewarding exercise to study and relate the Greek mind with that of those people who lived beyond the Red Sea, and with whom undoubtedly they had more than mere commercial relation..

The more one delves into the Greek and the Oriental past, the more one gets convinced that in order to study the phallic the study of the cultures that flourished here, has to be undertaken. It would then reveal the whole truth in its historical perspective.

Mileasian philosophers emphasised on the perpetuity and endless changes in the total structure of creation. Change was the very basis of forms. Form is change: change is

form. But Heraclitus maintained motion to be the primal substance, the name of the substance being fire, or heat. The nature of heat is inherent in opposite motion-creating friction. From Heat moisture; from moisture earth; and then from earth to moisture, and from moisture to heat, back. This two-way cyclic evolution creates the friction that is inherent in the primal substance, heat. This friction is conducted and sustained by a principle, differently called, Logos, Justice, Destiny-perhaps even nearing the connotation of God.37

Thus Heraclitus and Permenides stand as contrary exponents of mobility and immobility. Heraclitus, by advocating immortality, reminds of 'Sthanu' or, Siva.

But exclusively regarded, the fundamentals of either could compound the entirety of Truth. The world is an effect of the perpetuity of the two complementaries, the two opposites of motion and stillness. In fact, Peace or Sublimation, Joy or Quiescence is an evolute of this turbine function of the opposites. The world is a sum total of opposites. Peace lies in striking a balance between the opposites. Even in 'stillness' activity functions from within. Stillness must be actively still. Passive stillness is a state without potentiality. This 'stillness' is Śiva. 'Lingam', a stone- pebble is symbolic of this 'stillness' of perfect balance.

The Bhagavat Gitä synthesises conflicting metaphysical opinions by emphasising on disciplining the mind for striking this balance through meditation, and application to life. Elimination of the opposites, as enjoined by the stoics, being an impossible absurdity, sublimation through balance alone could keep active life on the positive way. The realisation of a counter balancing power in all human concepts (which being human, are found to be incomplete, limited and fractional), is the realisation of the existence of the One in many.

In the realisation of this freedom lies the embodied joy that man seeks. "Within its deep infinity I saw ingathered, and bound by love in one volume, the scattered leaves of the Universe," says Dante. Man, the finite, nurses his longing for the Infinite. The deeper the longing, the more acute and impelling the restlessness.

There is a law that holds the stars together, and pulls towards a central force. The planets move; the stars bubble out of the streams of the nebulae; the millions of unknown suns burn the void, absorb darkness, and create moisture; the tiniest sound created by the stir of the down of a thistle, by the fall of an acorn on the desolate

mountain path, by the chirping of a cicade, the whispers of the sea floating amidst the grey miles of beach-bordering casuarinas-nay, even the inarticulate voice of the mute suffering of an infant's stare, find synthesis in one limitless law of balance and peace. The Infinite writes its own epics in a sublime rhythm that bursts into the poetry of the atoms and the stars. The life that binds an atom to an atom, a voice to a voice, a fragrance to a fragrance, a twinkle to a twinkle, binds my soul to a Soul universal, which is the finale of all synthesis. The sun alone shows the sun; love alone shows love; and this feeble spirit, which we hardly bother to recognise, in the final analysis, reveals our ultimate relation to the inner Spirit of all Creation. Things pass away; Spirit holds on. The Chimera is temporary; but there hangs somewhere Eternity, a sure Goal. Man achieves his highest in joy by realising this Eternal in all things and motions.

In this ecstatic delight alone opposites vanish. The unbounding joy of metaphysics is not contained by the logician's hair-splitting 'Premises, or by the speculator's 'if's and 'but's'. The joy of metaphysics is to trans- cend the physical, and delight in such transcendental realisations as could reduce all thoughts, meditations, even worship to mere switch-boards of some cosmic mechanism. "There is a Spirit which is mind and life, light and truth and vast spaces. He contains all work and desires and all per- fumes and all tastes. He enfolds the whole universe, and in silence is loving to all." Spiritual experience alone is true delight.

Away from all these contradictions, conflicts, contraries and opposites, away from destiny, nemesis and many many gods with the many many rituals, emerged Empedocles, Democritus and Anaxagoras. Empedocles, particularly, discovered some principles contributory to the growth of science.

Since Śiva and the Mother Energy, Śiva and Bhúta (Matter) are closely correlated concepts, matter in both science and metaphysics would prove relevant to our study of Saivism. Śaivic mysteries enjoin mind to come to grips with the nature and scope of matter, and its relation to Eternity and Joy.

That air as a seperate substance was discovered by Empedocles. So was the principle of centrifugal force, at least in one instance. He knew of sex in plants. He admitted to the theory of survival of the fittest. Astronomy, medicine, cosmology-Empedocles touched and developed all these branches of knowledge.

He spoke of the golden age of love, and of the wise men who could see 'everything of all things." "In the golden age, men worshipped Aphrodite, but the altars did not reek with bull's blood." All in all in him Orphism and Pythagoreanism displayed a great fervour, and in him philosophy became scientific. His originality "consists in the doctrine of the four elements, and in the use of the two principles, love and strife" in explaining 'change'.

The atomic fundamentalism of Democritus delved into the Illiatic doctrine of realism. In this theory of realism there had to exist the sense of void or space (Junya). Movement presupposes space to move 'in'. The lonely and One 'Real' of Permenides was materially approach- ed by him. This originated the atomic idea which broke through the "four" of Empedocles. Empedoclean and Democretan doctrines clashed. The clash became more and more complex; finally, the nature of atoms had to be analysed. Primary qualities and secondary qualities reflected individual sensitive approach, but did not reflect essential nature of atoms. This engendered the greatest controversy in Western philosophy. Atoms cover space. They have interpolar-attractions due to which they tur bulate into forms, each originating qualities of its own. The property of selective attraction is innate in the atoms. The entire world of events is sustained by an inscrutable discipline and order (Rita).

In discussing Kanada's VaiseŞikä System, which is a close evolute of Samkhya, and which has in many respects sustained the Saivic systems of metaphysics, we shall have opportunity to delve into this aspect of the atomic foundation of creation. The theory of Void or Space reminds of the Natha-pantha (Saivas), and of the Buddhistic theory of Sunya-Vada.

To Anaxagoras Western metaphysics owes the idea of the Cosmic Mind, and idea similar to the concept of Caitanya, or Bhima or the Cosmic Con- sciousness, which in the volitional form of Will inspires the world of Tantra- Sakti, Anaxogoras accepted generally the Empedoclean stand of con- traries and elements, as well as the Democretan precept of atomic forms with primary and secondary qualities. He accepted that creation is evolved out of integration and disintegration of contrary forces working through atomic bodies. But to contain them within the four-earth, moisture, heat and air-appeared to him as irrational and improbable. Evolutes are innumerable, heaps and heaps of them, all inert and will- less, awaiting a stirring.

These are the 'seeds' transformed into the 'thing' of the cognised world. He disclaimed void, and challenged ele- ments of absolute purity. He regarded mind (mous) as a substance. It enters all living things; without it a thing is dead. In everything there is something of everything except mind. Mind is infinite and all powerful, self-ruled and pure-in-itself. All things have opposites, but not mind. By distinguishing between the dull, inert, immobile objects from mobile, conscious and will-ed objects Anaxagoras introduced a system of thinking with mind and will as central pieces, which in later times proved revo- lutionary.

Then came the age of the Sophists. In Hinduism there are abnegated sects of perfect recluses. These have for their ideal the example of Śiva, the great all-in-all, owning nothing, not even a will of one's own. Natu- rally, these abnegated Sannyasins (Holy men who have set aside 'all' for attaining perfection) are often confused with the Sophists. It is a human weakness to collate the unknown with the known, and attempt indenti- fication by unconsciously attributing qualities not exactly existent.

So far metaphysics had been dealing with creation and the world. "Who sends the mind to wander afar? Who first drives life to start on its journey? Who impels us to utter these words?" asks Kena Upanisad.

Chandogya replies, "There is a Spirit which is mind and life, light and truth, and vast spaces. He contains all works and desires and all per- fumes and all tastes. He enfolds the whole universe, and in silence` is loving all." Here is Permenides and Anaxagoras all compact.

The Sophists propounded questions as the Kena asked. But they had no belief in metaphysical world outside the sensuous perceptions? Even concepts are related to individual human sensitiveness, and as such, store within the inevitable limitations of indvidiuals. No! Not concept, not speculation, not the mere outward other-worldliness, but man and man alone provided the subject for the Sophists. Sophistication, urbanisation and artificial complexities became thus synonymous in the sense that these lack in human feelings and norms.

Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy has referred to the cult of Sahaja in India. The Sahaja sect believes in man and man alone, and lives as Vairagias (detached), Bawuls, (demented), mendicants, strolling and tramping along the dusty paths of the great Indian plains. "Above all man! Nothing beyond that!" has been their cry. These Sahaj-iyas and the

Sannyasins, the Darvishas and the Faqirs collate more with the core of Saivism in many respects than other sects. In fact, many of them openly classify them as Śiva-sects.

But they are not Sophists or Cynics. Šaivism is too humanly passio- nate, too intimately involved in life's passions, to become cynical or sophi- sticated. Śaivic saints adore man. They are involved in the common man, his pain, grief, loneliness and frustrations.

Sophism suddenly changed the centre of emphasis from 'concepts' to 'man', to the human usefulness, human needs, human success, human failures. It is in a way the precursor of materialism and hedonism. Protagoras, Georgias and Prodicus are the fathers of Sophism.

They were strolling teachers, ever on their errand, on their way. They lived well, meant well; taught well and found value in a life of fame, wealth, influence and skill. To train man to the fitness of life's demand was their chief aim. They considered 'today' and the 'present' to be of greater meaningfulness than the 'tomorrow' or the 'future".

But the man they made their subject was a split entity. It was man who belonged helplessly to his immediate environs; man who was engaged in self-projection; and man who wanted his mental expanse to cover the universe, seeking delight through planting himself in many. It was a case of colonising the other selves; not of unifying them and humanising all into one Self. One was the personal individuality, and the other was the abstract impersonal universality. The personal is limited by demands of circumstances; the universal is conscious of a higher knowledge. The personal's joy is realised through sense-media; the universal's joy is realised through supersense, that crystallises abstract knowledge. The stoics did not believe in the idealistic existence or substance of the real and beautiful. They cultivated faith in the man that feels, suffers, fights and achieves. Reality is that which could be used; beauty is that which the senses could actually enjoy, and good is that which is profitable, exploit-able. Nothing is universally real or good or beautiful, unless it referred to the universal man.

This was a fundamental difference well expounded in the yoga system where the gross and subtle personalities have been well defined; where senses indriyas and their functions (Tanmätras) have been separated as phenomena of limited and unlimited, temporary and eternal, changing and non-changing values. Yoga reaches for the

universal self which is symbolised by Šiva, a concept of Eternal Reality. The sophists, by emphasising the immediate and the limited as reality, couraged hedonism and Epicureanism which had a baneful effect on human society and happi- ness. This was a dangerous trend for limiting man within a narrow self. It passed a threat to the development of man's ambition, hope, and perpetual happiness free from the limitations of the body.

The Sophists found a fitting reply from Socrates, the happiest man who became famous without having to write a single line. He too, like the Sophists, pooh-poohed the useless controversy about determining the nature of creation; but unlike the Sophists he emphasised on the necessity of discovering man's ultimate good. Man, not creation, was his centre of study. In this he fell in line with the Sophists. But the man that Socrates understood was not a skin-packed sensuousness of demands alone. Man, for him, lived even beyond his physical-limit. The universality of man's idealism was more real than the personality of man's realistic reactions. The subjective man had a deeper impact than the objective machine called man.

Sensations are mere openings to senses which perceive into the truth of things, and lead to perfection of knowledge. Some generally perceived knowledge leads through a logical process of elimination to a precisely defined particularisation. Sophists found their position reversed, because this method opened the gates of transcendental realisation, and set per- ception above sensuous knowledge. Theorems and abstractions began to be valued more than skills and executions. Knowledge is not an end by itself. Knowledge leads to virtue. Virtue alone distinguishes a man from a man. Realisation of perfect virtue is the most effective guarantee against vicious actions. Socrates thus identified realisation and virtue; truth and beauty; 'Satyam' and 'Sivam'.

What then is Good? According to Sophists whatever is useful for prosperity and progress is good, a peculiarly hedonistic view of materialism. Socrates stood against this crudeness. Good for him was elevating. Through good the mind feels more free, and less fettered; more expansive and less narrowed. To feel the personal in the impersonal, the infinite in the finite, the one in the many is good. Virtue helps good to progress. That which regresses good is evil. In other words for Socrates a thing of "beauty is truth, truth, beauty." Virtue itself is happy. This essentially underlies all concepts of Siva, as we shall see later. The pecu- liar nature of this concept of good consisted in the novel postulate that total and true good must also contain the quality of

disintegration as a virtue. Real virtue in Saivism lies in equating perfectly both creation and annihilation, integration and disintegration, without the least worry about those changes which the material metamorphosis of objects has to undergo without affecting the spirit. Socrates, Plato and Vedanta are in this sense as close as eye and its wink. Vedanta and Śaivism are correlated like the fire and its heat.

Socratic theory of idealism and virtue led to the speculative indiffe- rence of the cynics. But Plato bridged this unethical gulf with his broad and noble expansiveness.

Plato expressed his gratitude for the four favours he received from God; He was born as the supreme animal, a man; he was born amongst the best of men, a Greek; he was born in the greatest of the Greek cities, Athens; and he was a student of the greatest Athenian, Socrates. The ultimate objective of philosophy, for Plato, was to discover and ascertain the nature of true knowledge.

But what is truth? What is the subject of knowledge? The real subject?

Opinion is not knowledge; neither information. Both depend on extreneous factors and, therefore, subject to unending changes.

Heraclitus talked of the change. The world is nothing but objects whirled and churned everlastingly from change to change. But Socrates had arrived at the method of general and specific enunciations giving per- fect shape to ideas. Plato intuitively grasped the Socratic method to be the most rational and firm. His celebrated theory of ideas is an ela- borate projection of the Socratic stand.

All objects have a general common property. Its common presence in several objects causes a group-classification. A species is classified from a genus by the presence of this common trait. Individual differences fail to touch the innate ubstance of a classification. The term horse is an idea to which horses fit in; but they do not, because the future-horses, which too are expected to fit in, would never reach the idea of the perfect horse which as a pure idea is merely reflected in possible achievements, but never really reached. Ideas are more real than reality.

What is the matrix of idea? Could this be ascertained? Perhaps not. Existence has two modes: one, the physical existence in the everyday world. But it is subject to change, as the world is everchanging. Another mode of existence concerns our world of ideas,

the chief property of which is unalterability, perfection, eternity. Ideas relate to definite properties, and so, are real; and the real is an idea.

The Brahman

This is the Brahman of the Upanisad.

"The Spirit, without moving is swifter than the mind. Senses cannot reach him. He is ever beyond them. Standing still he overtakes those who run. To the ocean of his being the spirit of life leads the stream of action.

"He moves, and he moves not. He is far, and he is near. He is within all, he is outside all.

"Who sees all beings in his own self, and his own self in all beings what delusion and what sorrow can ever be near him?

"The Spirit filled all with radiance. He is incorporeal and invulnerable, pure and untouched by evil. He is the supreme seer, and untouched by evil. He is the supreme seer and thinker, immanent and transcendent. He placed all things in the path of Eternity."

"He is self-luminous and more subtle than the smallest; but in him rests all the worlds, and their beings. He is the everlasting Brahman, and he is life and word and mind. He is truth and life immortal. He is the goal to be aimed at; attain that goal, O my Son!

"He who knows all and sees all, and whose glory the universe shows, dwells as the divine city of Brahman, in the region of the human heart. He becomes mind, and drives on the body and life; draws power from food and finds peace in the heart. There the wise find him as joy and life eternal.

"And when he is seen in his immanence and transcendence, then the ties that have bound around the heart are unloosened, the doubts of the mind vanish, and the law of Karman works no more."

Every concept by its nature is an abstraction. So is an idea. The creator creates from the idea that is his and his alone. No inventions of man could compute its unfathomable potentiality; no sense could com- prehend its maximus. It out-probables all probables, and is an eternal wonder. But a super-sense, an extra-active supersensed mind related to the cosmic-intelligence alone could conceive of the Idea innate in a

concept. The super-sensory faculties could realise it, but words fail to describe it. All that is, all that fills the world-stage, the things, the objects, the actions, the words, sound, taste, anything encompassable by perception, sensation, all of them are but 'attempts' at giving form to the pure, incorruptible, eternal Idea of the thing-in-itself, which, alas, would never reach the stage of reality. "All words and the mind come back defeated, not achieving the least."

From my heart comes out and dances

the image of my own desire.

The gleaming vision flits on.

I try to clasp it firmly, it eludes me

and leads me astray.

I seek what I cannot get,

I get what I do not seek.

Ideas are contained by three characteristics. All Idea is Unitary, alone, companionless, double-less. Non-duality is its first character. (Advaita'-in Sanskrt. 'Advaita' of Vedanta shall engage our attention in a later chapter.) Men may come and men may go but what goes on forever is the Idea of Humanity. The perfect Ideal Man is yet to come. When he comes, Ideas are homed.

But Idea cannot die. Subjectivity is inherent in mind, and outlasts the mind itself. In proportion to the degree of awareness of the con- scious state subjectivity becomes active or inactive; but even in an inactive state subjectivity does not die. Idea is immortal. It is eternal and immutable. Satyam-Sivam-Advaitam, says the Upanisad (Reality-Peace- Oneness). This is the second characteristic.

Mutability is inevitable in objects, which contains property other than the object. Anything foreign to the object-in-itelf prevents the object from remaining absolute and single. Its unity, then, is disturbed by 'duality'. Presence of any duality causes mutation, i.e., imperfection, corrosion, decay, change. Idea is incorruptible, changeless and eternal. It could be imperfect; vague; unconscious; but it cannot get mixed up. It has to come, when it comes, as an idea. (This is the theory of Impurities, mala, as discussed both by Vasugupta in Pratyabhijna-Saivism, and by Vasava in Vira-Šaivism, discussed

later. Mala means dirt, impurity, foreign presence. Nirmala is perfect in unit, free from 'some-other-ness', whole in wholesomeness alone). Thus single- ness, eternity and immortality are the three characteristics of Plato's Idea.

Plato, however, reaches his sublimest in the transcendental concept of God. To the deists this is God. To the Saivaites this is Sivam, a neutral concept of total selfless good. Through that goodness alone all goal is inspired. As the sun by brightening up itself brightens and warms up all around it, and as nothing is or could be outside the sun's influence, so is the world of Ideas; all good is inspired by the only God. Tasya bhasa saruamidam vibhāti (vivified is all this by His effulgence alone)."

But how could man deal with this abstracted lugubriousness about Ideas? Since man is man due to this flesh and bone frame, and the sensitive responses to his environs, the worldly man never feels to be alone. He is helplessly crowded. He is a limit amongst the limited. He is a bundle of considerations and adjustments. Life is a chain of adjust-ments of actions and reactions. The law of association with the environs, desires, aspirations, hopes, frustration, schemings, sensations, instincts, inhibitions, obsessions, etc., etc. keeps man earth-bound ever and ever. He exists in relation to these symptoms of existence.

Man's ultimate aim is to win this loneliness; to be Vivikta" (solitary); detached, "When should I find myself complete in myself?" asks Tagore." There is something within man that calls for another type of fulfilment; another type of happiness. That is not attainable through the medium of flesh. Body is bound. In the body the unbound soul pines. Body's attraction is to the body; the world's to the world; but the soul's attraction is to the Soul; the spirit's to the spirit the eternal's to eternity; the incorruptible joy's to the incorruptible joy. The Real gravitates to the Real. The relative would relate to the environs. The absolute remains apart, and draws all spirit to be one with the absolute. Soul, unlike the body that moves downward, moves towards a lighter ethereal direction, seeking elevation and further elevation; Light and more Light. We understand the world; but we reason the soul, and contemplate its being. "Understanding is the kind of intellect that we use in mathematics; it is inferior to reason in that it uses hypothesis which cannot test" (Plato).

The soul is like an eye: When resting upon that on which truth and being shine, the soul perceives and understands, and is radiant with intelligence; but when turned

towards the twilight of becoming and perishing, then she has opinions only, and goes blinking about, and is first of one opinion then of another, and seems to have no intelligence.... Now what imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the knower is what I would have you term the idea of good, and this you will deem to be the cause of science.... The good is not essence, but far exceeds essences (Plato).

Science without Plato has naturally become achievement without Good!

Let us remember that the word 'Siva' means Good. "Säntam, Šivam, Advaitam" (the Tranquil; the Fair; the One without a second). It presupposes what Plato had to expound long after the days of the Upanisads. Now the historians are inclined to link Plato with Eastern concepts.

With all his intelligence the conquest of the Absolute Idea for the man in flesh remained an impossibility in the Western metaphysics. The path of analysis led to understanding. But to reach the transcendental delight of the realisation of the Absolute through understanding requires other types of discipline, which are beyond metaphysics; beyond mere speculation. The Greeks had no Patañjali. The Greeks did not culti- vate Yoga. The Greeks were athletes. Divine delight is attained through Yoga as taught by the rigorous discipline of Kapila and Patanjali, the two seers from whom the Saivaites received their training. Here the East realised what the West had given up. Yoga lifted the petrified Western fertility-phallus-cult into what is regarded as Saivism, an essentially spiritual practice.

The East says that God is attainable through sublimating emotions, a process that the stoics got perverted, and the cynics got decomposed. The immanence of Power or Sakti is perceptible through pure Good of form, i.e., Śiva. The Idea of the one-in-two and two-in-one of the 'Spirit-of- form' is endowed with both qualitative as well as quantitative limits, iconically described as Śiva-Sakti. An urgent appeal from the Soul seeks to understand the mystery. Attempt to understand provokes Will and Motion; this releases energy. The Will's initiative 'to be' emerges as a Being. The final aim of spiritual pursuit of man is the attainment of this Absolute Good (Siva) by breaking through the mystery. Man has been eternally drawn towards this mystery. From the Buddha to the modern man the problem of this mystery is to make happiness a Reality.

Whilst the thinking man has been busy rationalising the spiritual quest of the soul, the common man keeps busy with his religious forms, and esoteric mystical rites. From

one end to the other, in the human world, divinity is adored. It is adored as Idea or as Form; adoration of something beyond his own physical limits serves man with a scope for release. Men survive in body; live in ideals; execute in form. Of this the most popular form has been projection of a mother-figure. Man, a helpless child, projects his helplessness and adores the Mother, the Mys terious Divine. Father-god, where worshipped, is adored as the 'consort of the Mother. She prefers to be called a Virgin, the Eternal Virgin having many children, or annual children. The legends of Ceres and Proserpine, Venus and Astarte, Laksmi and Parvati, and many others provide records of such strains. The Mother has to remain a virgin. There is no doubt, whatsoever that, in the phallic form of mysticism this Mountain Maid, (Pärvati), Great Mother (Jagadamba), White Goddess (Sveta-Isvart) had an immemorial tradition, the tradition of Tantra, Agama and Nigama.

It considering religion in all its aspects it is not enough to deal with either its metaphysical, or its cult forms alone. There is a social aspect of religion, as there is also a personal aspect. Adoration of all the pleasant life-giving natural phenomena as the Mother is an emotive expression of mass gratitude.

VI

The Mother

We are still trying to track down human attempt to answer, "How was the Universe conceived? Whence the Soul? How came Creation?" And we found the Greek thought following a course, arriving at the concept of Soul, Idea, Energy and Oneness. But the Greeks, despite their acumen in analytical comprehension could not lift the postulates above the stage of speculation. They did not indicate the 'system' by which man could attain the realisation of Reality. They stopped at disci- plining the body, and spun out an athletic culture. How to make the Ideal Real remained a mystery. These mysteries by themselves remained in the West at the cult level, disassociated from Life, and Life's mystic-func- tion, i.e., Dharma. It misled the basis of Dharma, and evolved religion. Naturally, it came out to be a religion without an answer to the Realities of Life. As a result, the Ideal that is Life's that which could be attained by an individual through adopting a system failed the Greek world of metaphysics. In the West religion and philosophy ever remained at loggerheads as antagonists. Philosophy continued to

speculate, and Religion continued to tract cult-functions. In Hinduism religion absorbed metaphysics, and metaphysics complemented and conducted Dharma.

Power, or Śakti was no mystery to the investigating 'Hindu' Yogis, They practised. They found a 'Way'. Rg Veda said, "I have known the Great Real, the Radiant Glow beyond darkness. Know it and be immortal. 1148 There is no other way for peace." The 'Way' was known and attained, mapped and graded out. This gave a spiritual direction to everything that the 'Hindu' lived for, and lived with. It became the 'Hindu's way of life'. Not a ceremonial form;-it became his part of living, his life-principles, his Dharma. It was his sustenance; his supreme duty to himself, his-self, to life in general and to Man in particular. The supreme delight of the Hindu rests in his faith that he knows the 'Way'. He does not worship the Way, because there is no dogmatic way. It is to be 'his' way. He has to discover his way. He is free to be himself.

The mystery of Sakti, the mystery of life in matter, became a divine obsession. Unlike the Greeks, the Hindus welcome their philosophers into their Dharma, and life in general. Whereas in the West philoso- phers and the popular deities, the encyclopaedists and the Church, measured strength as adversaries, in India every philosopher, in quest of the Divine Truth, belonged to Dharma. Religion was philosophy, philosophy, religion. This trend blossomed into the great Bhagavat Gitā and continued blossoming. The later Purānas, the Santi and the Anusasana cantos of the Mahabharata, Buddhism, Jainism, remain harvests from this blossom. Despite the thousand gods and the millions of temples and pilgrimages, the compact Hindu-body remains supremely unconcerned about dialectical schisms and subtleties in philosophy. Eventually these diverse forms lead to and mean Oneness, and diverse Hindu sects live in this unity in diversity. There are, and have been, schism in the Hindu family. But the supreme unconcern of the Hindu for the dialectical polemics of the contending metaphysicians in preference to actual practice in daily life, and his equally supreme regard for Life and Peace, enables him to ride all storms rather easily. Even a major schism, such as Buddhism, got passed over. Every Hindu is part-Veda and part-Buddha. There is no dogmatic bar.

Yet, intellectually as well as historically, it would not at all prove difficult to find pagan gods and practices, as well as some of the pagan philosophical speculations quartered within cherished Hindu lores and rites recalling startling similarities between

the two. This is natural. Naturally based cults, such as fertility-cults, become common for the human world. Thus it is expected in all religions at least some sections to appear basically similar. There is a G.C.M. in all cultures.

The survey of the Western myths, and of the Western philosophy becomes significant for the study of phallicism both in Saivism, and in its iconical forms. The area, which was influenced by Thracian and Greek traditions, nursed as Mystery what people called necromancy, sorcery and magic. In the Christian world thousands perished at the stake, because of following the mysteries. In the East the same traditions flourished unhindered. This is the great tradition of Tantra which accept- ed Saivism as its alter-ego. Tantra has its root deeply set in the cult of the Great Mother; and Siva as its counterpart provided its Father Image, alter-ego.

Thus Tantricism and Saivism, like two eyes converging into a single sublimated third eye, form the basis of the Hindu life. It is also the basis for the effusive emotional content in the Hindu religion, which in contradistinction with the Vedic Jñana and Yajña, has given to it the personal element of Bhakti (devotion).

The Great Mother, the Power, the Sakti, the Consort of Śiva, the Adibhata (Primal Being), Sandtani (Eternal Spirit) claims our first attention.

The quest for Happiness is a quest for fulfilment. The unfulfilled is not happy. The ability to fulfil springs from the source of all Power. This is Sakti; or the alter-ego of Siva. Generally people call it God. We have seen that in the primal stage of human invocation to the unseen, this Power was accepted as the feminine; the Mother, the Great Source, Yoni, the Matrix from whence life springs.

Condemnation of Sex Function

The role of the male in procreation not being originally suspected, the female alone was regarded as the more important person in the mystery of birth; and the part of the body from where life was observed issuing forth, held for the unsuspecting a profound mystery. Naturally this mysterious source was obligingly covered with gratuitious adoration. It was the adorable limb. Thus started the adoration of what we regard as phallic-what we regard, and spurn at, as primitive, obscene and crude. Looking back at a social phenomenon from the standpoint of present tendencies and aspirations, is often the cause of much of our misapprehensions and misconceptions. A proper estimation

of the adora- tive part in phallic worship has been obstructed and obscured by our own self-projection. The modern man, specially the new urban man of a slum-ridden industrial society, accustomed to commercial motivation, views the phallic worship as adoration of the sex-act, and deification of the sex-pleasure. The ancient man took this act in his stride.

For him this release was a function. Life had taught him that; and nature had provided him with a thousand examples. He found nothing in it to be held as ugly. Since man hid himself behind clothes, masonries, restrictions, privileges, sex-act became more and more subject to oppor- tunities, more and more a status-symbol, more and more a privileged gluttony of the home and the harem. This perfectly natural obli-. gation was decried by Church. Then, and thereafter adoration of sex became subconsciously related to the restricted consummation of the sex-act itself. Its excesses and consequent degenerating influences induced the moral-guardians of society to sound grave warnings. Sex gradually became associated with morality. Sex organs were declared immoral. Worship or adoration of sex organ became sacrilegious immoral- ity. What had been regarded as adoration of Mystery was interpreted as adulation of lust. What is, and had been, a spiritual quest for the solu- tion of the meaning and purpose of life, and its esoteric symbolism, was derided as mere vulgar obscurity. The indecent in the phallic is the con- tribution of the after-thought of man; it is the complexed man who needs freedom the most, whose obsessed sick opinion refuses to learn the true nature of the phallic. Yet it is so vibrant, real and inescapable. In fact, the obsession against the phallic betrays our own crudeness and venery. To the phallic form, birth and blood are close associates. Hence blood and sacrifice became ritualistic necessities for phallic cults. Life is fond of iron and protein. To iron and protein, and to the source of light and warmth run our natural prayers. The image of the Mother was soon identified with the image of the earth; and of the Father with the sky and the sun as the earliest records in Egypt, Sumer, Crete and Thrace show. This is so in the Vedas, the Puranas and in the classical epics of Greece and Rome, only with a little variation.

The Pre-Vedic Mother and the Three Forms

In the pre-Vedic pre-historic India too, the Mother had been the central figure of adoration. The traditional names of the Mother through- out the history and pre-history of the practised cult of Sakti, have been various; but all of them relate her to the primitives, to the non-Vedics, to the tribes who lived in forests, specially in the hills.

Spiritual faith is exclusively a human phenomenon. And this faith has guided the will of man to be channelled along two distinct streams. One stream follows the ways of nature; and worships those aspects of nature. which directly affect the problems of food, sex and shelter, the other stream could be called as the sophisticated stream of the urbanised lot. Once the direct demands of living are satisfactorily fulfilled, and once a sense of sufficiency guarantees security, this second stream of urbanised lot seeks the cult of celebration, dance, song and music. Then the associated feastings gather shape under a centralised guidance which is essential for a group life.

The first may be termed as the way of Life, the way of the Mother, Durga, Gaea; and the second, the way of Rasa, of the Consort, of Rädhä, or of Aphrodite. Conjugality, neither sex, nor eroticism, is the feature of the latter; adoration is the feature of the former.

The first stream gradually became personal, private, secret, occult and spiritual. Peace gained as a result of security as its moving force; and this peace, successfully counteracted against fears engendered by forces inimical to the security of that peace." Spiritual quest of man is the development of his personal anxiety to survive the physical. Spirit to man is an extension of his physical state. In cultivating this stream, man gradually tends to be secretive, private, introverted. Here his guide, if he accepts one, has to participate in his intimate emotional life. He selects and adopts a Guru, a spiritual and moral preceptor. In man's spiritual voyage God is the goal; his own efforts, the craft-but the Guru is the captain.

Extroversion is the mainstay of the second stream. It admits of per- missiveness; it grows in groups and flocks, and satisfies the herding instinct of man. An open participation and reciprocity on a carnal plane explodes, and exaggerates the dramatic and the emotive in man, which could reach the high fever-heat of blazing excitement leading to the ecstatic behaviour peculiar to a frenzied state of mind. Leadership here belongs to the equivalent of a priest who by imposing a code of behaviour conducts forms of discipline which later on grows into rites. Religious rites have mystic feminine ancestry, descending on gorgeous masculine overlordship,

To these two channels converged the lesser tributaries that contained local faiths, group-loyalties, tribe-legends and village-gods. In getting so assimilated, the sectional trends got merged in the character of the principal and dominant stream, to which they

also contribute their own colour and form. Thus, in course of time, the mainstreams become the reservoir of many trends.

The idea of the Great Mother established itself as the custodian of similar local faiths and forms. From one end to the other of the primitive human society the Mother has been adored; yet 'she' has not always been the same Mother. As we have already noticed before, she had a (i) virgin form, (ii) a youthful form, and (iii) a crone form. These are: (i) Kumari, Selene; (ii) the Tunati, Aphrodite; (iii) the Vriddha, Hecate, or Brahmani, Vaisnavi and Isäni of the Puranas.

In earlier Greek myths, however, the sun, yielding precedence to the moon, which inspires the greater superstitious fear, does not grow dimmer as the year wanes; and is credited with the power to grant or deny water to the fields. The moon's three phases of new, full and old recalled the matriarch's three phases: the maiden, the nymph (nubile woman), and the crone. Then, since the sun's annual course similarly recalled the rise and decline, three annual forms emerge: Spring, the maiden; Summer, the nymph; and Winter, the crone. The Solar cycle became identified with seasonal changes in animal and plant life; and thus with Mother Earth, who, at the beginning of the vegetative year produces only leaves and buds; then flowers and fruits; and at last, ceases to bear, until the next spring. sun. She could later be conceived as yet another triad; the maiden of the upper air, the nymph of the earth or sea, the crone of the underworld-typified respectively by Selene, Aphrodite and Hecate. This mystical analogy fostered the sacredness of the number Three, and the Moon Goddess became enlarged to nine when each of the three persons maiden, nymph and crone, appeared in triad to demonstrate her divinity. Her devoters never quite forgot that there were not three goddesses, but one goddess; though, by classical times, Arcadian Stymphalus was one of the few remaining shrines where they all bore the same name Hera.

Amma-Uma and Tantra

The universally accepted form of address for this goddess was Mother which denoted a 'relation', an emotive attitude of the devotees to the creative aspect of nature. She was the Amma of the Austries: Ummu or Umma of the Sumerians; or Um of the Accadians or Uma of the Dravidians of India All mean Mother. (In Sumerian, Amma meant 'possessor of fecundity's Specially when we are warned that 'Uma is not a Sanskrt word, we feel that the worship of the Mother was universal to all mankind irrespective

of many other distinctions. A coin of the Indian Saka emperor Huviska bears the representation of a goddess named Omme. Saptalati Candi of Märkandeya Purana mentions Ambika Guld- Rapini, the Cave-formed Mother. It sounds Eleusian (The Mother of the mystic form).

When the various local and tribal channels get mixed up with the main channels, like Uma mixing up with other Samkrt words, or the worship of the Virgin in the worship of the Hindu Kumari, or the Christian Mary, the phonetical similarity of Mari, Mary and Kumari, appears to be very remarkable. Mixed up with the virgin worship, as in Tantric rites, it becomes difficult to identify the original matriarchal forms from the later streams.

So many tribal concepts have got mixed up with the main Vedic stream of Sakti (Deck-Sukta and Ratri-Sukta) that the legends of the goddess in Sanskrt classi2cal records, when read together, present an unsurmountable obstacle in tracing out the original Vedic concept about the Mother. She gave to Indra the Mystic knowledge about the Real Brahman.

Names of the Mother

An examination of the very names of the Mother indicate the tribal origin of the Sakti and Tantra cults. Certain factors stand clearly out however. The Devi (goddess) who is the Mother, has the mountain as her favoured abode. She loves to take shape of streams and plants, and favours animals, particularly the lion,, not entirely disliking the Great Bird. The names, Parvati, Girija, Sikharini, Haimanati-denote origin in Mountain, the Himalayas being her favourite haunt. The clos- ing hymn of the daily Gapatri prayer has a concept which specifically says: "O Devi, you originated from the Northern peaks; then you came to stay- on earth and on the mountain peaks. Now you may go as you like. Farewell. Such is the directive of Brahma."

But, as Candi, Kali, Karali, Camunda, Chinna-Masta, Rudrani, she is fierce and terrible. As Mangala, Durga, Sind, Ambika, Abhay she is the bestower of peace, sweetness, protection and love. As the consort- spirit of a male counterpart which characteristically is static by nature, she is Tivari, Bhavani, mrdani. She is the universal spirit as Samani, Sina and Rudra. Her name Ca-munda shows her relation with the Mundar, a prominent tribe in India; Gauri means white. It reminds one of the White Goddess; who has been celebrated at Delphi with her White icon, the Omphales, which

later became very popular throughout the Mediterranean countries. Dakini is derived from Dak, a Tibetan Sectarian Tantra. Šakini too is derived from the word Saka, meaning the Scythian hordes who originated amongst the barbarian of Central Asia. Bhramari (spirit of the 'Beetle or Bee') (see Plate 31) reminds one of the Great Egyptian symbol and deity of the Beetle. In Candi Bhrämari has been sung of as a form of the Devi. Sankhini is derived from the profession of deep-sea fishing whereby certain tribes collected shells and conchs (Conch- Sonkh-Sankhini), and commerced in articles manufactured from conch, Sankh. Sankhini is derived from Sankha. It means a conch; it also means 'bones' specially 'the human bone'. As such she was the spirit of the cremation grounds, specially of the cemeteries, where burials offered more scope to the presence of skeleton. This spirit was adored also by the people who 'buried' their dead without following crematory rites. She is also Saila-Putri, the daughter of king Sela; Katyayani, daughter of Rsi Katya (or belonging to the tribe Katya); Janhavi, daughter of Rsi Janhu Kumari of the Vindhya hills; Kauliki of the Kusika tribes of Laddakh. Peri- plus of Erythrean Sea speaks of a town, Komara as the southern-most province of the Indian peninsula. The deity of this 'Komara' is a Devi, named Kumari, the virgin, who, like Aphrodite, loves to bathe in the Eastern and Western Sea of what we know today as Cape Comorin. The southern-most cape of India still has an ancient temple of the virgin maid, Kanya-Kumari. Kumari the virgin is worshipped in many Tantric centres like Kalighat and Kamakhyä. Names such as Manasă, Sasthi, Sitala, Baiuli, Subucuni, Kamakhya, Jalandhari, etc. signify local or clan deities revered by certain people at certain places. But Sarasvati, Śri, Radha, Laksmi, Jagaddhatri, Anna-purna, etc., are definitely derived forms of the central concept of Sakti, or Mahasakti, the Mother. Behind these names lie mute the history of the mixture of many tributary streams of tribal or local forms into the main- stream of the Mother.

She is eternal in the form of the World-Movement; all is saturated by her. Yet I have been told variously about her taking shapes and forms. Her coming into being is always caused by a necessity to act on behalf of the Devas, the people inspired by good spirit.

She, immanates for the success of the good spirit. It explains the Mother as the central Will, the Cosmic Consciousness, the Cosmic Power, that is the Creative Force, although manifested in many forms and many names.

We have already mentioned about the two channels of ideas regarding esoteric practices. One of these leads to the exercise of meditative self- realisation; and another to the group ecstasy leading to frenzied delight.

This could be stated in another way yet. The worshipper needs an object to worship. In his love and adoration he sees himself, the transitory. as an inferior-kneeling, begging and expecting favours. But there is another approach whereby he does not need an object to worship outside himself. He does not need either love, or adoration, or submission. His way, then does not have to be emotive. He remains subjective; meditative; spiritual. He reflects, understands and knows. He is a contemplator of the abstract.

Forms of Worship

Thus worship too takes two main channels: (1) objective worship; (2) subjective meditation. The motive force of the first, in Hindu terms, is Bhakti and the second, Jnana. The enquiries of the anthropologists and the historians are mainly objective. Their method has to follow data, evidence, records, names, forms, etc., and then relate them to human behaviour and function. For them religion is an expression of human behaviour. But the philosopher considers otherwise. He recognises the inevitable and irresistible claim of man's inherent spirit which strives to secure liberation from the bondage of flesh, and attain the eternal bliss of transcendental joy realised through cosmic consciousness. His aim is to see the one in the many; to feel his self in all, and realise thereby the *All-Self' Cosmic. The spiritualists avoid the learning which interests anthropologists or historians. For them both the ways are godly and relevant.

Tantra

Naturally, the cult of the Mother in all ages and peoples has taken these two distinct forms. The tradition of this quest is known as Tantra, which means 'link', 'strand' or 'order'. Tantra too has followed the two forms. The objective form of images are various and confusing. Yet a link, a strain of uniformity runs through all of them. This is the philo- sophic or the metaphysical part of Tantra. Iconographical representa- tions as well as anthropomorphical images are equally celebrated in Tantra, a subject which has for its central theme an Idea known as 'the Great Mother', and the mysteries associated with her adoration. The forms developed through the ages and amongst the peoples of the cross section of the entire history of mankind. But all of them evolve out

of the much-ignored local forms known to obscure tribes and proletariat societies. Tantric forms preserve both past history and geographical peculiarities.

call of the Great Mother is universal and eternal. There is no human society, ancient or modern, in which the cult of the Great Mother has failed to subsist. Tantra in this way encompasses the Mediterranean countries, the Caucasus, the Black Forest, Ireland, Scandinavia, the Urals, China, Mongolia, Mesopotamia, Mexico, Yucatan, Peru, the South Sea islands,-wheresoever human beings have been subject to life, sex, food, terror and struggle for existence, the mysterious powers of the Great Mother have somehow been sought after. Tantra, as a subject, provides in some mysterious way some guidance, like the ancient mar- iners' maps, through the high seas of esoteric knowledge.

The esoteric literature of Tantra (the Mother-literature of all ages and times) is vast and various It is not only that the Vedic, or the Buddhistic or the Semetic, or the Cabalistic, or the Eleusinian is included in it, it is much more than that. It is as old as human behaviour; as futuristic as human aspirations. It is as universal as food and sex; as personal as liberation and love. Its varied nature has compelled scholars to name it variously as cults, paths and rites. Man needs rites; God needs the soul's call. Man needs religion; religion needs God; God needs Truth.

Tantras, being pre-eminently ways of practical realisation, have necessarily to bear reference to the diverse characters and compe- tencies of different aspirants and seekers, and have, accordingly. designed the framework of their theory and practice suitably to actual conditions prevailing, and also evolving stages and states. in the soul's journey towards its chosen ends and values.

VII

The Mother for the Latins

The Latins worshipped the Great Goddess with intense fervour and devotion. Ovid, writing poetically of the origin of Roman festivals tells a muddled story about her in Fausti. There she is described as the mistress of the two headed Jenus. She is the protectress of children against witches.

Dr. Graves quotes from a twelfth century Latin herbal the following prayer:

Earth, divine goddess, Mother Nature, who dost generate all things and bringest forth ever anew the sun which thou hast given to the nations; Guardian of skyd and sea, and of all gods and powers; through thy influence all nature is hushed, and sinks to sleep....when it pleases thee thou sendest forth the glad daylight and nurturest life with thine eternal surety; and when the spirit of man passes to thee it returns; Thou indeed are rightly named Great Mother of the Godsk: Victory is in thine divine name. Thou art the source of strength of the peoples and gods; without thee nothing can be made perfect; thou are mighty, Queen of Gods; Goddess, I adore thee as divine; I invoke thy name; vouch-sale to grant that which I ask of thee, so shall I return thanks to thy godhead, with faith that is due....

The words used bring back to a Hindu mind the Sanskrt equivalents with which the Devi, Goddess, has often been described and addressed. These are: (a) Prakyti, (b) Prasati, Jaganmäta, (e) Savitri, (d) Divya, (e) Varuna (Tava-yoni-r-apwantah-samudre), (f) Mahaiakti, (g) Maha- nidra, (h) Jaga-j-Jyotih, (1) Jagad-dhatri, (3) Sthiti-samhara-karin, (k) Aditi, (1) Vijaya, (m) Dewa-gana-kakti-camdha-marti: (n) Mahadevi.

William Addlington's translation of Apeuleus 'Golden Ass' contains the following invocation of the goddess from Lucius when he was sunk in the dark dejection of misery and frustration. Here, too, the triple as pects of the goddess, as worshipped at Moeltra, are suggested as White Raiser, Red Resper and Dark Winnower of the grain. The triple aspect to the Sun-spirit 'Gayatri', the holiest Vedic chant, is comparable to this: the Red Brahmani (elsewhere described as white Saramati) of the rising sun; the blue Vaignari of the noon-sun (elsewhere Red Laksml); and the dark Rudrani of the setting sun (elsewhere Dhumavati-the dark-smoky- crone with a winnow in her hand, and followed by crones i.e., crows).

About the first watch of night, when as I had slept my first sleep, I awaked with sudden fear and saw the moon shining bright as she is at the full, and seeming as though she leaped out of the sea. Then I thought with myself that this was the most secret time, when the goddess had the most puissance and force, considering that only all beasts, private and tame, wild and savage, be made strong by her light and godhead, but also things intimate and without life, and I considered that all bodies in the heaven, the earth and the seas, be by her increasing motions increased, and by her diminishing motions diminished; then as weary of all my cruel fortunes and calamity I found good hope and sovereign remedy, though it were very late, to be delivered of my misery, by

invocation and prayer to the excellent beauty of the powerful goddess. Wherefore shaking off my drowsy sleep I arose with a joyful face, and moved by a great affection to purify myself, I plunged my head seven times into the water of the sea; which number seven is convenable and agreeable to holy and divine things, as the wise and worthy sage Pythagoras hath declared. Then very lively and joyfully, though with a weeping countenance, 1 made this oration to the puissant goddess:

'O blessed Queen of Heaven, whether thou be the Dame Ceres which art the original and motherly source of all fruitful things on the earth, who after finding of thy daughter Proserpine, through the great joy which thou didst presently conceive, did utterly take away and abolish the food of them old time, and scorn, and madest the barren and unfruitful land of Eleusis to be ploughed and sown, and now givest men a more better and milder food; or whether thou be the celestial Venus, who, at the beginning of the world, didst couple together male to female with an engendered love, and did so make an eternal propagation of human kind, being now worshipped within the isle temples of the isle Paphos; or whether thou be the sister of the God Phoebus, who has saved so many people by lightening and lessening with thy medicines the pangs of travail and art now adored at the sacred places of Ephesus; or whether thou be called the terrible Proserpine by rea- son of the deadly howlings which thou yieldest, that has power with triple face to stop and put away the invasion of hags and ghosts which appear into man, and keep them down in the closures of the earth by thy feminine light; thou which nourishest all seeds of the world by thy damp heat, giving thy changing light according to the wanderings, near or far, from the sun; by whatsoever name or fashion or shape it is lawful to call upon thee, I pray thee to end my great travail and misery and raise up my fallen hopes, and deliver me from the wretched fortune which so long time pursued me. Grant peace and rest, if it pleases thee, to my adversities, for I have endured enough labour and peril.....

When I had entered this oration, discovering my plaints to the goddess, I fortuned to fall again asleep upon the same bed; and by and by (for my eyes were but newly closed) appeared to me from the midst to the sea a divine and venerable face, worshipped even of the gods themselves. Then little by little I seemed to see the whole figure of her body, bright and mounting out of the sea and standing before me; wherefore I purpose to describe her divine semblance, if the poverty of my human

speech will suffer me, or the divine power give me a power of eloquence rich enough to express it.

First she had a great abundance of hair, flowing and curling, dispersed and scattered about her divine neck, on the crown of her head she bore many garlands interlaced with flowers, and in the middle of her forehead there was plain circle in the fashion of a mirror or rather resembling the moon by the light it gave forth: and this was borne up on either side by serpents that seemed to rise from the furrows of the earth, and above it were blades of corn set out. Her vestment was of finest linen yielding diverse colours, somewhere white and shin- ing, somewhere yellow like crocus flowers, somewhere rosy red, somewhere flaming; and (which troubled my sight and spirit sore) her cloak was utterly dark and obscure covered with shining black, and being wrapped round her from under her left arm to her right shoulder, in manner of the shield, part of it fell down, pleated in most subtle fashion to the skirts of her garment so that the welts appeared comely. Here and there upon the edge thereof, and throughout its surface stars glimpsed, and in the middle of them was placed the moon in mid month, which shone, like a flame of fire and round about the whole length of the border of that goodly robe was a crown or garland wreathing unbroken, made with all flowers and all fruits. Things quite diverse did she hear; for in her right hand she had a timbrel of brass (sistrum), a flat piece of metal carved in manner of a girdle, wherein passed not many rods through the periphery of it; and when with her arms she moved these triple chords, they gave forth a shrill and clear sound.

In her left hand she bore a cup of gold, like unto a boat, upon the handle whereof, in the upper part, which is best seen, an asp lifted up his head with a wide-swelling throat. Her ideriferous feet were, covered with shoes interlaced and wrought with victorious palm. The divine shape, breathing out the pleasant spice of fertile Arabic disdained not with her holy voice to utter these words to me:

'Behold Lucius I am come; thy weeping and prayer have moved me to succour thee; I am she that is the natural mother of all things", the mistress and governess of all the elements", the initial progeny of the worlde, chief of the powers divined, queen of all that are in Helle, the principal of them that dwell in Heaven', mani- fested alones, and under one order of all the gods and goddesses (deorum dearum-que facies uniforms) At my will the planets of the sky, the wholesome winds of the seal, and the lamentable silences of hell be disposed, my name, my divinity is adored through- out the world, in

diverse manners, in variable customs, and by many names. For the Phrygians that are the first of all men, call me Mother of the Godsm, at Pessinus; the Athenians which are spring from their own soil, Cicripian Minerva; the Cyprians, which bear arrows, Diotynian Diana; the Sicillians which speak three tongues, Infernal Proserpine; the Eleusians, their ancient Goddess Ceres; some June, other Bellona, other Hecate, other Rhamnusie, and principally both sort of Ethiopians, which dwell in the Orient and are enlightened by the morning rays of the sun", and the Egyptians which are excellent in all kind of ancient doctrines, and by their proper ceremonies accustomed to worship me, do call me by the true name, Queen IsisP. Behold I am come to take pity of thy fortunes and turbulation; behold I am present to favour and aid theer; leave off thy weeping and lamentation, put away all thy sorrow, for behold the healthful day which is ordained by my providence.

(In the Therme Museum of Rome a terracotta goddess fully represent the attributes. She has been described as Demeter. In Heraklian Museum figures unearthed from Knossos represent "Great Earth Mother of fertility" of the Eastern Mediterranean-c. 600 B.c.)

Compare with the above revelation by the Mother the other revelation in the Rg Veda (X-125. 1-8)..

I roam with the Rudras (the principles of life), with the Vasus (material spheres of existence), the Adityas (cosmic principles), the Visvadevas (the different gods of the universe). I am the sup port for Indra, the Mighty: Agni, the Fire-god; Mitra-Varuna, the twin gods of Water and Heat; the Asvins (the horse faced Diaskauroi). I am the base of the Soma drink which flows from between the pair of stones; I am the intrinair sight of Tvastr, he artisan; of Pusan, the nourisher of Bhaga, the wealth-giver.

I am the one who bestows to the performer of sacrifices the boon for his act, (although) he offers it to all the gods. I am the King dom, the giver of wealth, the intelligence in things. I am the fore- most in all rituals, the gods have seen me all over in various parts and things; the range of my sphere is wide and I dwell in everything The food that you eat, the objects you see, all come from me, I am the Breath, and I am the Sound. All heard words are alive through me Ignore me, and you are destroyed, listen with care what I declare. I am the delight in humans and divine equally. I make a man feared or great, seer or wise, as one wishes. Rudra's (Spirit of Integration and Disintegration)

great how (of Samhara, destruction) do I weild and draw for destroying the hordes that annihilate knowledge. I fight for the people enter the upper space as well as the watery world. From there do I proceed to the universal manifestation. By touching the sky with my body I stand to blow the winds and crest the worlds. My great power exceeds the limits of the sky or the world.

Fundamentally the two descriptions of the Mother, their range of in- fluence is the same. The concept of Sakti remains all over the world the same.

In the Hindu sources, like the Märkandeya, the Brahma-Vaivarta, the Kurma and the Garuda Puranas, particularly in the Devi Bhagavatam, the Devi has been described under many names, some of which as we have noted already, relate her clearly with countries far away from India. Sakambhari (the Lady of the Tree) relates her to the Scythians like Sakini: Bhramari (the Beetle) relates her to Egypt and Phrygia; Värähi and Narasinghi relate her to Assyria and Babylon; Uma, Durga, Kalika, Hri, Mätangi, Bagala, Dhumavati etc., distinctly remind scholars of similar goddesses connected with foreign myths and mysteries. There are Upanisada written to describe the all pervading importance of the Dei. In Kall-Upanisad, and Tärä-Upanisad worship of the Goddess is ad- vocated as the central principle of Life and Samsara. She has been identi- cal with Brahman, the Immense Supreme unqualified Principle underlying the manifest and unmanifest universe."

VIII

The One Becoming Many

The Idea that is Sakti, the Positive, or the Mother-Power, was dear to the Orient. At every step of the ancient religions the Mother in different names and expressions remains supreme. But only in the Indian myths She has been identified with the great Cosmic Unity. In Markandeya Purana the Devi herself is made to explain that her various manifestations do not mean that there are many mothers: "In this Universe I am the only One. Who then is my second? Look wretch, all my manifestations are gone into me, and are no more."

The ideas of microcosm become One in the concept of the Devi, the Mother, the Sakti. The One is expressed in many.

Wonderful legends in Tantra, as well as in the allied Puranas relate how the many come from the one. The one in which the Great Mother was fanned into fifty-one sections has been related in a later chapter. Apart from that we find that Maha Vidya, the Supreme knowledge, the Secret of the Mother had had to assume ten different forms to assist the Yogis, who due to their respective temperament, aptitude and environ- mental training found one of the forms more suited for contemplation than the other. In Märkandeya Candi there is mention of 'Nava Durga' the nine Durga's.

The idea of the One becoming many, and many becoming One as sung in the Puranas is no doubt a traditional sequence of Samkhya's enun- ciations of Prakrti. But this subsequent Aryanised representation must not make us forget about the aboriginal, tribal, non-Aryan genesis of the Mother-power whose chief abode were the mountains, valleys, dales and caves. There are tribes in Assam and Bengal, Nepal and Orissa who still reserve the rights of supplying fire in Tantric rites, and these are the people whose participation enliven the Sakti-rites into festive occasions for dances and hymns. In the Sakti-temples of the South India preponderance and importance of tribes as chief participants is cleverly kept under cover by Brahmanical interests. There are Tantric rites which could not be performed without the participation of various categories of people consi- dered out of Vedic castes.

This cover is easily supplied by legendary tales about the Great-Mother assuming many forms. Of course, each mount, dale, river, forest has its special Mother-deity.

India or Hinduism is no exception to such adoration of the local female saints. Under different names the Mother is still adored throughout the long mountainous chain of the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Iberian group, the Caucasus, the Himalayan chain covering Iran, Tibet, Indo-China, Malaya up to the China sea. This holds true also of the Mediterranean rock isles of Corsica, Sicily, Crete, Cyprus, etc. But the fact is that the adoration of the Virgin, the Vestal girls (nuns), as well as the local female deities and saints are writ large all over the religious almanacs and annual festivals popular throughout the old world. Kumari-Paja, worshipping a live-virgin, is a venerable adoration that is still in vogue.

Of these the mysterious Kali or Kalika, the black goddess, has been very popular to the Indian Yogis. But the legends of Sati, daughter of the patriarch Daksa, an aristocratic Aryan, and of the daughter of the hills, Parvati, are equally popular. We notice in these

legends the two distinct streams of the idea of the goddess: one, the tribal or non-Aryan Kali (Black), and the other, the Aryan (Fair) Gauri, (White) respectively.

Many non-Aryan and alien, but always proletarian names such as: Sabari, Lohini, Nagini, Šakini, Dakini, Tarakola, Kola-rata, Kolambika, Ugra- canda, Canda, Candanati, Gandhari, Vajrayogini are now familar to the Hindus. Thanks to their incorporation in the Tantra. We have already taken note of some other names referring to alien peoples and alien countries. Buddhism was responsible for Tantric expansion beyond the borders of India, and amongst a hundred non-Aryan, non-Indian people. The trade routes of Babylon, Sumer, Israel, Judea, Egypt and Aegean ex- changed Tantric goddesses and cults along with other wares. As trade and commerce exchange hands, ideas too do exchange. The Greco- Oriental area provided a vantage ground for such exchanges. The gradual emergence of the human mind from the savage and the barbaric to such sophisticated systems of thought as Vedic spiritualism, Mithraic discipline, and Greek rationalism influenced the tribal occultism also to be crystallised into definite systems of theology and mysticism. Gradually, enlightened by his inner light, man came to submit that the source of all power, inclusive of the power of creation, is but one and no more. Spiritually it brought a man nearer to another; and between spiritually inspired individuals all barriers of time, language and local distances proved to be of no real consequence. Prophets are kindred souls; but their followers differ.

Anthropologists claim that the Aryans and non-Aryans fundamentally differed in their attitude to the Father God, or the Mother Goddess, the latter being the driving force of the non-Aryans. That this tendency is caused by a matriarchally regulated society is to look at the telescope from the wrong end. Because of the primitive adoration of the Earth as the food giver, and of the rains as the main inducer of food, and because of the female's contribution to agriculture which subsidised to a great extent the hazards of hunting and fishing, women naturally led the society as the multiplier of Life, as well as the force on which subsistence of life largely depended. Agriculture and home-building, crafts and art, as we know, principally functioned through female-labour.

The Fire Pits

The leadership of the female was nowhere more marked than in the field of spiritual guidance and ritualistic leadership. The female was the fire-producer. Hers was the

hearth. She was the chosen one for guarding the sacred fire where she led as the chief priestess. On the vigilance of the female, on her purity, austerity and dedication the maintenance of the fire depends.

Thus shrines of the Mother were maintained by priestesses. The Delphic shrine was no exception. Most of the mystic shrines had their quota of female inmates to serve as protectors of the flame, the sacred fire. The mother-shrines in Tantra have their Bhairavis. The Christian church maintains the pagan practice of Vestal Virgins through their dedi- cated system of nunnery. A comparative study of the rites of Vestal and Church Virgins 'married' for life to the Fire, and later, to Jesus, as a re- placement a deep probing study into their initiations, duties, observa- tions and privileges, leaves no doubt that the worship of the Great Mother has not decayed at all.

It still reigns wherever religion is followed. The possible exceptions are such Father-imaged religions as Judaism and Islam. Indications of the persistence of the female-image in worship is the use of the pit. It is dug into the earth. Here is fire placed. It is the womb, the yoni, the garbha, which is kept heated, and into which butter is poured, or blood is offered, or flesh, or grains Kunda or pit is used as symbol of the abode of Life-Fire. Śiva is placed in the kunda or pit, where water is poured, not butter, not fire. Šiva is a compact concept of air, heat, wind, earth and ether all bound in one. To consider Šiva as phallic is to consider water as fire. Anything pit-like or cylindrical or cave-like has demanded a symbolic veneration as an abode of the Mother. When the dead is buried, the child of the Mother is returned to the Mother. The image is as irresistible as thecharms of sublimepoetry.The shrines of most of the cano- nised bodies of saints, are placed within the bowels of the mother earth, and are reached by a subterranean passage-way where a serpent symbol is generally present. Talk of Eleusis or St. Peters, Värähi or Jvälämukhi, Visno-Devi or Hinglaj, or the hundred dales and caves in Anatolia, Aegean. isles, Cyprus, Sicily or the Pyrenees, the dale, valley, cave, pit symbol is. inescapable.

One of the most characteristic signs of the worship of the Fire-pit is the adoration of ashes. The secrets of the Delphic Eleusian rites were covered with the ash symbols. The Thracian, Colchian and Capadocian women smeared their faces with ash, and bore on their bodies serpents as pets. (Remember the wives of Agamemnon and Philip, father of Alexander?) The stories of Helen and Clytemnestra illustrate this point. The

ash decoration was a mark of honour and devotion. The Siva-worshippers in India consider the ash from the fire-pit, as blessings from Lord Siva. The Delphic Omphalos Yob is a mound shaped in the Linga form, but made entirely of ash collected from the pit (as in the shrine of Siva-Kanci).

Similarities of the adoration of ash and omphalos are found in the Šiva-worshippers of India. The White Goddess, the white-faced one, the ash smeared one are echoed in the names of the Mother in Hindu lores. Gauri is the white one. The Mother is Kundanana, Jasmine-faced, or Atasivarna, the pale-yellow-coloured. She is Dhavala white as a snow-line (Tusara-härä). Poets sing of Himakara-kiranava-data-varna (white as lunar beams).1 The Jangama sect of Saivas, followers of Vasava, wear the Lingam, or omphallic-emblem on their body as honour, the body being turned into a temple, and becoming thereby a constant reminder of the involved responsibilities of a walking shrine.

Thus, civilisation received the tradition of maintaining fire in the Fire-pits from the females. No wonder Tantra and the Fire cult is mainly female. This need not be confused with the Vedic homa. The latter did not encourage the former's fertility motif; or those rites which demand- ed sacrifice of life, animals and man, drinking and occult unions.

Vestal Virgins

Fire and the hearth-cult gave to the Roman society the great institution of the Vestal Virgin. Virgins were honoured because of the female's supposed potency of her first and last menstruations. A study of the Bible and of the births of (Gen. 17) Isaac; (I: Sam: i) Samuel, and above all of Jesus, leaves no doubt about this belief. In the Mahabharata we hear of a perpetual virgin (Kunti) who gave birth to four sons of whom the first and the last were greatest warriors. The problem of virginity and mother- hood, going hand in hand, need not confuse those who knew the nature of the great divine Aphrodite, and her likes in the Hindu myths: Urvasi. Menaka, Rambha, etc. This was 'sacred virginity".

It will be appreciated that this sacred virginity attributed some- what incongruously to goddesses, who spend most of their mythical lives, leaping in and out of beds with gods and mortals, is not primarily, or even essentially, bound to having intact hymens.

Their virginity lay in the power of their wombs to produce offsprings whose excellence derived from menstrual blood was perpetually most powerful.

The Roman version of the hearth-cult demonstrates certain fea- tures which are probably more primitive than the Greek. The central features of the Vesta worship was the maintenance of the ever-burning sacred fire by virgins called Vestal.... They dressed as brides indicative of their virginity.... The girls were released from parental control when they were admitted to the sacred office of Vestal, but thereafter came under the charge of the high priest, the Pontifex Maximum.... Discipline was severe. If a Vestal neglected to maintain the sacred fire...she was beaten. If she lost her virginity, she was walled up in an underground tomb to die-or be rescued by the direct intervention of the goddess whom she had betrayed (A clever clause for saving erring daughters of the privileged nobility).

At the time of the Roman New Year, our Eastertide, a ceremony of extinguishing and relighting the sacred fire was enacted. The church strikes 'New Fire' from a flint; the Vestal used a fire- drill boring into a block of wood, an invention attributed to Hermes, with whom the Hearth Goddess was associated.

The use of the fire-drill was not peculiar to the Delphic rites. All Tantric rites pay importance to the invocation of fire from trees. The proverbial Ash Tree and the associated rites spread all over Europe through Celtic rites. The Easter rites of the Christian world, the Passover rites of the Jews, the ceremonies of Ash Wednesday, Easter Monday, Resurrec- tion, all are associated with the adoration of fire, the ash tree, of the fertility goddess, her menstrual period and of a blood sacrifice. There is no relation between the Omphalos-ash and the ash-tree. But this tree is known to be very effective as reservoir of flame because of which the drilling block and pole are made out of this and similar highly combustible resinous wood, willow being another.

India has a fruit known as ash-apple or Bel, or Vilva. The Vilva plant is adored as the abode of the Mountain Maid. The drilling-blocks (arani). and the yoke to which the sacrificial bull is tied, are madeout of the same wood. The fire is invoked at night before the rites when the worship of the goddess starts with an invocation. This raising of the fire (a symbolisation of making the spiritual consciousness 'to awake', or to put conscious power on alert) is known as Bodhana. The actual ritualistic. hymn addresses the Ash-apple-tree as 'Abode of the Mother of the Mountains, who was born on the

peaks of Sri-mountain'. Thus Śri, as we have noted, was known to the West as Ceres, whose abode was Delphos and the Caucasian range. There is a Sri-range in India. This was the abode of Ceres, or Sri. This range is now known as Mallikarjuna hills on the river Krishna. But the esoteric implication of 'Sri Saila' refers to the 'peak' or 'apex' formed of the triangle in the celebrated Śri-diagram. (q.v.). This apex is the matrix of the Power of the Mother, the Yoni of Sakti. The Indian Sakti is not phallic, neither related to fertility. To relate it so, is to relate Shakespeare to an ape or Amoeba.

The idea that this fire itself is Devi could be traced to tribal adoration of fire in cold mountainous regions. But no Vedic view supports accept- ing Fire as the Devi. Mundaka Upanisad (I: 2:4) mentions the Fire- These names are feminine in gender. But they are not the divinity. Fire becomes the Devi, the Goddess, in the Devi Puranas, a treatise which attempts to reintroduce the Vedic Yajña forms in the shape of Tantric rituals. In the Durga-Puja, current in Northern India, Fire-worship occupies a secondary importance; but at some pilgrimages, such as Juälämukhi, in Hoshiarpur (Punjab, India), or Hinglaj in Baluchistan, Fire-pits and natural Volcanic or Gas eruptions are given primary importance as the pit of the Devi. Such pits are strewn all over the mountainous regions of India,

The sacredness of fire is not peculiar to the Hindus. It is not peculiar to Tantra or Veda. Jews adore fire. All Śakti shrines preserve fire. Yogis preserve fire. The sacredness of fire and its association with Śakti has been primarily substantiated; and its importance is recognised in the Christian church where under the direction of Pontifical attendance virgins even now perform rituals little known to others. This is in accord- ance with the rituals in the Delphic shrine, in the Vestal shrines, in the Tantric Seances, in the mysteries all over the world. An entire family of Ṛri known as Angiras (Agni-Angi are phonetically similar). There are many legends attached to Angiras. He introduced the fire worship when the Sun was the only deity honoured. Thus Sun for the sky, lightening for the mid air, and fire for the earth, became the three aspects of Agni, according to the Vedas and later, Purāṇas.

To the primitive man earth's fertility conveyed some esoterical mystic significance. Adoration of the sex organs as procreative apparatus was at no time considered anything but proper, loyal, gratitudinous and honest. At no time was it associated with vulgar venery, obscene lust or cheap eroticism. Next to the adoration of fertility of the

earth, consi- dered as the Great Mother, was the adoration of the symbol of the Mother's fecundity, the actual point of veneration. Apart from these two, fire was the next preservative form of the mother. It was the living Mother herself. The fire pit was the most sacred place on earth. Ash was the adoring symbol. Omphilos was the supreme symbol under which the flames lingered for a new invocation. The Sakti cult included all these symbols.

The Vedic Sakti

The emphasis so far of the matriarchal Šakti cult, the adoration of the Great Mother and of the Mysteries associated with the Orphic, Delphic and Cybelline cults, has been on matriarchy, which has been traced from the barbarian and the primitive times to tribal society. It would be erroneous to consider this emphasis as final or exclusive. Side by side with the primeval society a type of adoration for the Mother was not entirely absent in the Vedas.

The Aryans were highly patriarchal. In spite of the opinion of many Western Aryalogists, a preponderance of matriarchy in the tribes living around the Black Sea, in the Asia Minor and on the lower banks of the Danube, could not be denied. But the patriarchial Vedas are not quite silent about the goddess. Signs of matriarchy are traceable in the Vedas, the Aranyakas and the Upanisads where men in society were known by the names of their mothers. As such, actual references to the Devi, the goddess, is found in Yajur Veda. Atharva Veda and some of the Brahmanas and Aranyakas. Moreover all Aryans were not bound to be Vedic Aryans. There are reasons to believe that most of those who knew. Rg Veda in the earliest days had notheard of Atharvan-practices whichmight not have been entirely acceptable to the Rsi-s of the Rg Veda.

The Aryans divided and subdivided themselves into many sects. Some accepted the unlimited transcendent concept of 'Aditi', the eternal spirit; some accepted the limited facts of the universe, the transient glories of life, the concept of 'Diti', the temporal form. The Adityas or Suras or Devas, who were the progenies of Aditi, were as much Aryans as the progenies of Diti, the Daityas, the Asuras or the Dänavas, who always fought for their materialistic convictions. The first ones were purely Vedic; yet these themselves believed in a Devi, Mother, as is evidenced from their invocation to the Devi in Märkandeya Purana for helping them against the Asuras, Madhu and Kaitava;

the Asura, Mahisa, and against, the Daityas-Sumbha and Niśumbha. But we must also bear in mind that RȘi Angiras, known as the originator of Fire as God, had three sons; Utathya, Brhaspati and Märkandeya of whom the first and the last were given to Tantric rites.

This means that Angiras, original adorer of fire (Rg 1.31: 1.2) had two of his sons who followed the ways of the Fire-worshipping Rsis: Bhrgu, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu. The materialist Sämkhya principles had their Aryan advocates who became the Aryan forebears of Saivism and Tantra.

The Vedic literature has two hymns, the Devi Hymn and the Rätri Hymn that sing of the Mother. The great Gayatri Hymn is a hymnal raised to the power inherent in the highly adorable and beneficent sun. Gayatri is a Devi-Mantra.

Proto-Austroloid Śakti

The goddess has been worshipped in the Pagan world as Rhea, Cybele, Esther, Ceres, Isis, Aphrodite, Demeter, most of whom were adored by Aryans also. The Mycenean goddess riding a lion, the Minean mistress of animals, the Cretan Mother goddess, the Mittite seal depicting a goddess on a lion, the Assuro-Babylonian Ishtar riding a lion, depict the one, single theme through immemorial ages. The image of Astarte, the naked Syrian goddess on a horse back is found depicted on an astrakhan from Thebes. An ivory-lid found at Ras-Shamra depicts a goddess resembling the Asian Laksmi with Aegean frankness. Thus we see that the primitive phallic Mother, the arch goddess of fertility, becomes acceptable under many names to the sophisticated Aryans and their camp followers. This clearly gives us reason to think that apart from the primitives the worship of the Mother featured as a common trend amongst the Aryans and non-Aryans alike.

The Mother in India

In India the worship of the Mother has been traced from the most ancient times. But its sphere of influence mostly lay along the Himalayan region inclusive of Tibet; and in the hills and forests of the Southern peninsula. (We have noted how the Vilva tree was associated with the Sri-Saila mountains of the South.) From the Himalayas it influenced such states as Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim where the most popular and the most venerated form of rites is known as Vajra-yana. Assam and Bengal are great centres of

Tantra, as is Kashmir, Himachal, Kangra and the Gorkha-land, where the Tantra-mystics Matsyendranath and Gorakhnath have left back a glorious heritage of highly esoteric Tantric rites. Tra- ditionally the special Chin-acar (the Chinese-way) Tantra prevalent in Kamrup and Assam originated along the upper streams of the Brahma-putra.

Of the many forms of spiritual quest and Sadhana, Tantra-Sadhana, specially figuring around Käll and Tärä, has been as ancient as the most ancient traditions of spiritual India. The original Tantra-way got mixed up with the Buddha-ways and evolved new modes in the Tantra-system; but still later the Buddha ways themselves got absorbed into the Great Hindu fold where both traditions filled in as in one body, with no distinctive features detectable to the ordinary eye.

The Sahaja-cult mentioned before is one of the many branches into which the ancient Buddha-Hindu tripartite ways found full expression. Nätha and Sahaja are both Vedic and esoteric, and both are popular in the Eastern part of India as forms of noble mysticism. The Nathas have a Saivic emphasis; whereas the Sahajas feel as Vaisnavas would. Both are "Vairagi', detached mendicants, taken to the open road. Both sects hold an unattached life to be an ideal for spiritual success. For a further proof of Tantra's extra-territorial connections mention may be made of the presiding deities of the celebrated Six-lotus System of the Tantric Yoga.

Knndalini

The Yoga system of Patanjali makes reference to what in Tantra is known as Kundalini, the sleeping Serpent of Consciousness. It could be fully evoked by a certain type of practice of Sadhana. This 'awakening of the Kundalini Serpent', as it is called, has to pass through six different stages. The stages are marked by Lotus symbols or Wheel symbols. The six lotuses are the Mülädhära, Svadhisthäna, Manipura, Viśuddha, Anahata, Ajñā; and after Ajña, the last, the final thousand-petalled lotus known as Sahasrara is reached. This is the seat of Cit, Viśuddha-cit, the awakening of which contributes to the Yogi the Power over Cosmic Consciousness. (The central point of the skull has the soft spot covered by a membrane, where Visnu, or the Power of Super-consciousness lies asleep). This is the junction of Parital bones with the Frontal bone, and is known as Anterior Fontanel. From the Anterior to the Posterior Fontanel lies the great region of Sahasrara, the abode of Cit, Complete Awareness.

This is the 'Matrix' of Creative faculty of Consciousness. To the Sadhaka this is 'Toni'; and the personal Being, the Sarfra, is the Linga. Call it phallic, if taste so suits. But the Toni and Linga to the Tantra-Sadhaka are technical terms to signify the Matrix of Conscious- ness, and its instrumental cause, the Body. The shape of the Fontanel joint is naturally (); and the entire erect body of a human is shaped as I.. Thus the signs () and I are used as indices, or Lingams.

Now, these six Lotus-stages have their six ruling deities. For (1) Muladhara; (2) Svadhisthāna; (3) Manipura; (4) Visuddha; (5) Ana- hata; (6) Ajñā; the respective deities are named as: (1) Śakini; (2) Räkini (3) Lakini; (4) Käkini; (5) Däkini; and (6) Häkini. None of these names has any relation to Sanskrt language or Indian Goddesses. Dakini comes from the Tibetan Dak as we have noted already. Dakini must have been the spirit of high knowledge in Tibetan Tantra. Lakini and Hakini are known as Goddesses in Bhutan. Śakini we have noted had connections with the Sakas, or the Scythians. The whereabouts of Rakini and Käkini are not known. But Raka and Kuhů denote respectively full and new moons. As such these two might mean the spirit of the Moon-Goddess at two of her extreme phases. Kaka is associated also with the crow, which is associated with the crone form of the goddess. It might mean the power of the crone. She is black, and a spirit of the new moon. Rākā, or Rakini is the spirit of the full moon. 'Mantras' or the chants and the 'Japas', or the mystical 'gem' letters that devotees mutter on rosaries, in Śakti-cult are often derived from non-Sanskrt languages, although efforts have been made by scholars to explain or interpret them as if these were really Sanskrt. Some of these are double-mutterings, the significance of which is not known. The great Buddhistic Yogi philo- sopher Asangi's opinion is that significance of these unrevealed sound- systems lies in their muteness and remoteness. Such sound-filled mantras are peculiar to the Atharvan. Naturally one is tempted to infer that these sounds could be the remnants of some pre-Aryan language now entirely forgotten.

We have already noted the two streams in which the power of the Mother was classified. One was the Mother in her benign form as, Demeter, Proserpine, Dharitri, Jagaddhatri, Laksmi, Gaea or Rhea. The Mexicans called her Flalli-flalli. She is the moon-goddess. The White Goddess, Gauri. As Moon she has a power over growing

food, and thus for providing for the living world. She is the spirit of the herbal world, and as such of the soma herb also.

The other one is exclusively a spirit of the mountains, riding a lion, killing the demons. This is the famous Uma, often claimed as the Ammä or Amû of the Babylonian and Sumerian tradition. She is the Greek, Athane, a transformation from the Hindu Parvati or Sailaja, transformed into the consort of Śiva who himself prefers the mountain as his abode.

Sex: Coitus and Sadhana

Excavations in Mohenjo-daro have revealed that the people were worshippers of Goddesses of fertility, probably of the earth. But the Vedas too are eloquent of the earth mother. She is Dyau-Matar, the one-in-two and two-in-one deity combining the sky and the earth. As Aditi she is the mother of the Devas and the planets, she is the matrix. It reminds us of the Egyptian Papyrus of Tamoniu of the twenty-first dynasty (1102-952 B.C.), where, Gab, the earth God tries to reach his wife and twin-sister Nut, after being separated from her on the orders of Ra (see Plate 23). In Tantra, Prakrti is active. Puruşa is not.

The quality of being divine appears in that in which there is most energy. It is only when attributeless, shapeless, motionless substratum becomes charged through by the great Energy, that the centres of limitless energies, that the Universe, can be created, maintained and destroyed. Without energy, Siva, the Lord of Sleep, is unable to create or destroy; He is, then, as powerless as a corpse. The divinity of divinity rests upon Energy.

"The quiescent aspect of Śiva is by definition, inert....Activity is the nature of Nature (Prakṛti). For this reason is the female form represented in esoteric sexual union figures as an active partner riding above (Viparita) the male. When the Devi is shown as the active power over and above the lying Śiva (see Plates 24, 25) it also represents the liberating aspect of the mother."

In the Daksina-Kalika hymns this aspect of the Mother is eloquently described (Sava-hydi maha-kala-surata-prasaktām). "Engaged in coitus on the great Time's chest" (Rati-rasa-mahananda niratam). "Engaged in the ecstatic delight of coitus." Even the worshipper himself is asked to be "merged in the joy of coitus" whilst worshipping

(Sayamapi ratānanda- nirate....sa syat smara harah). In order to win over the flesh-call for sex-engagements, the Sadhaka, or the devoted practitioner reaches beyond tempation (of sex). The image of coitus is symbolic of the union of the personal self with the universal Self. It is a union of the personal self with the Cosmic Self; of Time with Eternity (This moves; Eternity is still).

This is mystic language at its height. But the tradition of using sex- language in Sakti worship reminds one of the phallic ancestry of the Mother cult. Mind is corrupt. Spirit is pure. Mind images the reflections of the self's make up, taste, traditions, environment. Today in an entirely impermissive, but corrupt society, built up with fraudulent dogmas, taboos and conservative hypocricies, it is unimaginable to think of a time of sex- permissiveness without sex-licence. At a stage the symbolism was taken literally for the use of the dilletante.

The author's experience of the tribal lives in India and South America makes him bold to say that in tribal society life is permissive, but sex is never used as licentiously as the 'civilised' do in the so-called advanced societies.

We call ourselves civilised according to a code of behaviour fixed by us. But these people who lived in the past and were mystified by the won- ders of sex, stood in an awesome grand regard for its mysteries. They not only worshipped it, but in their hymns, praises, icons and images they expressed themselves without any inhibition. Such expressions, appear, naturally, to us as excessive indecency; but to their way of life it was entirely easy, natural and regular to accept sex as a matter of fact. Inhibited thoughts cast their images and auto-suggestions. Hence such expressions must cause trouble to us. As we face such uninhibited expressions, we get catapulted, as it were into a prohibited arena filled with famished, feline animals, and fanged poisonous serpents that gnaw at our past thoughts, repressions, hallucinations and second personalities. Such expressions pull up our hidden selves to light and expose them in their utter and poor nudity. The lowest drawers of our mental cup-boards, pulled hard and violently, get suddenly unhinged from the rusty grip of their dirty past; and covertly stored secrets fly out, and fall scattered to our bewildering embarrassment. We prefer to shove our dirty secrets under our mind's carpet, so that we could appear clean.

Rev. Dr. Verier Elwin has written a number of books on the lives of the aborigines of India. President Kenyatta of Kenya has written on his own tribes. Readers may feel

consoled and convinced that languages of sex habits, sex postures and practices as have been used by the tribals they describe, are as easy as consulting the latest score of a cricket test, or discussing the weather. In countries where the people go absolutely naked to their markets, to their political meetings, to cast votes for their future governments, to religious places, the language too is not required to put on elaborate dresses. Such words do not raise in their open minds waves of high-strung sensationalism. They are not taboos. They only indicate their phallic traditions; they do not reflect their sex licentious ness Four-lettered words do not enjoy any prized secrecy amongst them. Sex is not sold in their civilisations. The tribal society has no prostitute, who, together with the harem, and the red-light establish- ments, is an invention of the civilised alone. The relaxing side to a highly tensioned commercial-traveller, or a business-manager, is now formally being offered the soothing company of call-girls through open advertisements.

Therefore when we find the Tantra hymns, the Tantra rituals, clad again and again in terms signifying such sex-charged words as Rati, Ramana, (union or coitus), Virya (potency of semen), Toni (matrix or embryo), Linga (index or phallus), we hold at once the subject a suspect. That is so far as our mental make up is concerned. The traditions of regarding the Mother as a grand expression of the creative spirit is ancient, holy and entirely spiritual. This kind of language makes Tantra mystical, and makes it imperative to have our Gurus to explain the mystic esotericism. To take language literally, and then use it to suit and support carnal hunger is the height of spiritual cynicism.

Japa and Ajapa

Otherwise the entire subject becomes confusing, misleading. Plainly read, the language of the hymns appears to sing of eros at its nakedest and crudest. But other lights soon descend as one realises that the word viparita does not indicate the reverse posture of coitus between male and female, but something else, something that is technical and mystic. The Mantra for Japa (the words for muttering), has to be muttered (perhaps on the beads) both ways: i.e., from (1) A to Z, and again from (2) Z to A. The second sequence is known as Viparita (opposite); and in the spiritual union also (as described by St. Theresa of Avilon) this two-way con- centration stirs the soul. The Kashmir Saivism calls this 'stir', spanda. Sakti descends on Śiva; Power descends on Matter;

Consciousness descends on Being, and transcends the soul to experience the Thrill of Peace. This is the Peak, the Zenith of Viparita.

In the context of Tantric Yoga, therefore, reverse-coitus signifies: (a) muttering of Mantras in the reverse order; (b) muttering and inhaling; (e) doing Ajapa-Sadhand; and (d) experiencing the delight of Conscious-ness descending on and flooding the Being. In the worship of Kali, or any Sakti, Mantras and Nyasas (body purification, joint by joint and limb by limb) have to be chanted reciting the alphabets both ways with case, and condition the power of meditation to be concentrated on the abstract. The process of inhaling along with the regular order of the Mantra, and exhaling with the reverse order, are respectively known as Japa and Ajapa. And this has been esoterically described in the mystic language as coitus regular, and coitus-reverse; or Union-current and Union-anti-current. It has been variously illustrated in forms of chants, mutterings, images, mudras, Yantras (diagrammatic representations), and even in hymnal literatures. It describes the union between the perso- nal egocentric self with the cosmic impersonal Self.

Thus alone could be effected the most intimate contact of the Mind and the Conscious Self, which leads to ecstasy. The true meaning of the mystic line quoted above from the hymn on Kall thus would mean: "If with a cons- tantly settled and balanced mind, your mantra is chanted in the reverse order while meditating...." It does not end here. The language leads on and on along this exciting way of erotic symbolism. Naturally, the self taught charla- tan, uninitiated by a Guru, could take advantage of this, or even get misled, and indulge in acts which are far removed from the mystical intentions. Tantra is mystical; and should not be dared in practice without a Guru. Thus the triangle which as delta offers the diagram of the Three-Guna- Moulded Prakrti, or Nature, or the Mother as expressed through the world of things born of Her, has been in Tantra called Toni (Matrix: the Source), Kusuma-dhanugo mandiram, or Bija-Kupam. Of course, the dictionary meaning of the phrases would lead to the vaginal source and no other. The brute cannot use the subtle and the spiritual, and we need not bother about them. The famous Sri-Yantra (q.v.) is a celebrated illustra- tion of this two-way meditation described in Tantra.

We had been quoting exclusively from the Dakṣinā Kālikā Hymn. But there are other hymns using the same imagery again and again, i.e., Power seeking release and

expression, and in its own initiative activising the otherwise inert Matter into creation of Beings. This is Nature's inherent characteristic. In mystic terms the Pinda (inert lump), re- presented by a clay or stone lump, or a dot, or an immobile aniconic Lingam, is activised by the circulating or cycling Sakti, the rotating Power (the Fiery-circle around the Lingam, and known as the Gauri Pattam). Together, the Näda and the Bindu, or the Yoni and the Lingam evolute the Being. This Being is indicated by a triangle, because as a Being, as a Thing that has come to Be, it has three phases: (i) to appear; (ii) to develop and reach maturity; and (iii) to disintegrate and disappear. The Being has its innate Prakyti, which inherits the three Gunas: (i) Sattva, or balanced poise; (ii) Rajas, or passionate efforts, and (iii) Tamas, effort-lessness, or inertia. These, apart from Matter, are the triple consti- tuents of the Being. In the world of Time-cycle, or Samsara too, the Being has three states: Sppi, (integration) Sthiti (development to maturity) and Pralaya (disintegration). Thus as Mudra, o diagrammatic message, the sets of triangles, double triangles, copulated triangles, circles and dots, the esoteric significance of imaged couplings appear again and again in the Tantras.

The phallic has been worshipped; the phallic is being worshipped. But that does not justify interpreting even triangles and circles as phallic expressions, unless the interpreter is psychiatrically incapacitated to look into straight things in a straight way. But we are treating here Tantra and spiritualism, which calls for healthy minds and honest efforts.

IX

Forms of the Mother

Tantra delights in mysticism. Tantra uses the mystic language purposively and deliberately. For instance, the great Pracanda-Candika hymn says:

In the naval (centre of creation) there is a solar sphere, scarlet red, with a ruddy face charming beyond compare, and within the sphere itself I see, I see, Thy great Triangle (within the evolute constituent I realise the presence of the three Gunas); and still within that Triangle in the reverse-contact-posture the brilliant power of Creation, the Great All-Power Matron is bathed in her own effulgence as sparkling and dazzling as a galaxied nest of ten million young suns. She is the Solar Brilliance in form.$7

Phrases like 'triangle', the 'reverse posture' mislead deliberately the charlatan, who delights in being misled. The orthodox Tantric says, "... not to the agnostic, or to the cynic, or to the indisciplined shall this knowledge be given."

Hymns on Sakti are clear on this aspect of the freedom of Sakti over Šiva-the inert lump, Matter. Lord Rutherford, who considers each atom to be a solar system in miniature, has clearly defined the role of electron as the activising, energising party, almost tempting the proton to come to an embrace whereby Being could not only be formed, but also be attributed with individuality and character. Things with 'names' and Individual Nature thus evolve. Nature in laying any matter should be composite of the tripartite tendency interacting within themselves, and giving the Being its individual character. The innate in the Being aspires to reach its destined pure state; but such aspirations are always set to confusion by matter's own inertia; a refusal 'to become anything mort than what it is. Energy on the contrary, is aspiring; and aspiration is energy. It is Šakti's Prapanca; i.e., Manifestation and Expression of Šakti; it is a 'drive'; and an 'inspiring' 'subliming,' 'upthrust' towards becoming what it 'is', by attaining its State, by discarding all that it is not.

This is the role of Sakti, pure Sakti, Para-Sakti, Nirguna-Sakti on Prakrti, or nature of any matter. This inner tension agitates the Being. This agitated state is the mystic raja; where the perpetual struggle of the flesh between inertia, and Will-to-Be provokes a spanda, a thrill, an excite- ment, leading to feelings, emotions, cravings, nerves, psychic-factors that split asunder one mind into many, one character into many.

The inert state, Tamas, or Siva, the sleeping One, is challenged into awakening by the electric charge of Sattva which when inspired by will, sublimates, clears up Consciousness from obstacles and inertia. The state of tension between the two is Rajas, or the middle state of Prakrti's evolution. This middle state, by its exciting discharge of red-heat, attracts, detracts, tempts pure Consciousness with possibilities of sense perceptions, which, however, are limited in themselves. Being limited, these sense percep- tions interfere with the mind's realisation of the unlimited Cosmic.

Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, the three Gunas together is Prakyti. It has been referred to a number of times as "the Three" in the Mother-cult, or Tantra, in every part of the world's cultures, wherever the Mother has been, and still is worshipped. The 'delta' or the 'triangle' is a diagram- matic expression of this concept.

The Maid, the Youth and the Crone (Selene, Aphrodite and Hecate), Kumari, Vaisnavi and Isani have been referred to again and again. The Dhumavati Hymn starts with the following invocation.

The Great Mother, the goddess of the three worlds, goddess of all goddesses, Kalika, who as virgin in the dawn turns the rosary of beads unbloomed: who in the mid-of-day and mid-night as the pleasant-eyed blooming maturity seduces, who, with breasts fallen and hanging, carries a rosary of skulls- may bless us.

Another hymn emphatically states that the Mother is worshipped by Brahma, Visṇu and Isana, as well as by the great Yogis who know their selves.70

Tantra

The great Mother has been the mystic subject of the hymns, and generally of Tantra throughout the world. Kasikäytti derives the meaning of Tantra from the verb 'to spread. It is spread indeed over the whole human world. Tantra is Agama, or Revelation; and Śruti is Nigama, or Tradition. It is classed with the Vedas on account of its antiquity, as well as for its extensive sphere of influence. The six Amnayas clearly indicate the geographical extension of Tantra. The cult of the great Mother, which is not, as has been suggested, just an exercise in lust, mummery and superstition, might have died elsewhere or gone underground as magic and necromancy; but in India Tantra has been fostered with as much eclat as the Vedas. Irrespective of its actual place of origin, the Hindu thought has devoted itself to the research of the mysteries of Tantra with sublime devotion, and not a little sacrifice. Its universality enjoined on the Hindus the task of assimilating and accommodating the Tantra systems of all the cultures from China to Egypt, and from Scandinavia, Ireland to the South sea islands. The African and the Mexican Tantras find their respective echoes in many of the obscure references. That the Tantra and the Veda today, together, support the Hindu culture as a whole, is known by the fact that the Mother-way has been termed as the Left way, or the Vama way, implying the Veda way to be the Dakṣina, or the Right way. We shall learn further on that of the three forms that the Fire-cult assumed, one was known specially as the Daksina Agni, the fire pits of the Right-men.

The Tantra way accepts the Mother, power, or the activising dominant factor in Creation. This has been illustrated in certain Egyptian papyrus, in the Tibetan images,

in the Mahäkäla-image adored in Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan, as well as in such hymns as the Karpûra Manjari, Mahäkäli, etc. In imaging the Sadasiva concept too, Sakti has been known to be placed in the dominant role.

The Earth-Mother

Mahi-yang vistirna, says the Rg Veda (I: 164: 33), meaning 'wide is this Earth'.

Like children unto the laps of the parents, this footless, motionless Space with planets hold in its womb the footed ones who could move about. Save us from high default, O Dyävä Prthivi. ...I am enriched by knowledge so I sing the best praises of Dyävä Prthivi. My parents protect me from failings worthy of de- nouncements. Keep me near them. Sustain me with things that bring contentment,

Vedic Rsis offered sacrifices to this mother, a mother imbibed with tenderness and softness, emotion and charm, and the spirit of protection and sustenance. They described space and expanse with generous compliments and hailed them to be the cause of such earthly qualities as fertility, colours, sound, variety and changefulness. Such hymns naturally inspire a great love and solemn regard for the divinised mother earth. To love is to respect; to respect is to worship.

She is not our Mother for our life alone. What about the dead? She receives in her cool embrace all her children after their run through the hot fever of life. "Go!" says the Rg Veda, to the dead, "to the wide expansive Mother Earth, to the shapely and all embracing. O Earth, Mother, cause the dead no more harassment; keep their state uplifted. Admit the dead to your most attractive gifts of plenty. Cover the dead closely and nearest to you, as does the mother with her skirt her child."70

The Sky is the father, and his semen is the rain. In this poetry the Vedas and the Oriental and Mediterranean myths find equal solace. Aeschylus in Denides says:

The pure Sky yearns with love to wound the Earth,

The loving Earth yearns likewise to be wed,

And from the heavenly bridegroom showers descend

Upon the bride who brings forth for mankind

The grazing cattle and Demeter's corn,

With precious moistures ripening the fruit.

St. Theresa consummates the Lord's union with her. He pours his contents in her, flooding her, like Rain!

The idea has been Vedic in image and content:

I am the sky; you, the earth;

I cast the seeds, and you mix your moisture;

So do we two generate lives.

The concept is universally true in the nature of the worship of Sakti. This sky-earth concept is but prototyping the father-mother figure, or the Siva-Sakti concept of Tantra. This is not phallic. This is natural, and if at all anything, only poetic and beautiful. The basic suggestions of carnalism, eroticism and vulgarity associated with the crude, rude and obscene phallic do not apply in this spiritual concept represented by Jagatah Pitarau Parvati Paramejvarau (the Universal parent, Parvati and ParmeŚvara), 70

Prthivi, the Mother

The vedic concept of Aditi, with unlimited power turned out to be Aditi, wife of Daksa Prajapati of the Hindu myths. Again Aditi has been mentioned amongst the daughters of Daksa. This late Aditi became later Sati, whose choice of the plebian Siva as her spouse had incensed the aristocratic Aryan father to fury, which led to a revolutionary confrontation. Aditi, the mother, had married Siva, the Father.

Atharva Veda has a psalm to Prthivi (Earth). It is a pretty and long psalm; but it refers to the Aryan expansion, the search of arable land, and it contains the virtues of mobility and migrations. The factual contents of the psalm are as surprising as the degree of its poetic excellence. It has been inspired by a spirit of soft, tender, filial, motherly effusiveness of undisguised affection for a spirit of protecting security. This Prthivi Sükta (Earth-psalm) breathes through and through an air of nascent naturalism which we treasure to this day.

When the poet Välmiki had pictured Sitä, wife of Rama, in the Rāmāyaṇa, he ascribed to the Mother Earth the dignity and divinity with- out depriving her of her natural warmth and humanity. This glorification of Mother Earth reaches its zenith in the Ramayana in the last canto, where Sitä herself chants a prayer to her Mother, Mother Earth, and implores her to receive her into her bosom, and shelter her from the humiliating harassment for which even her all-powerful husband had no answer. "She," says the poet Välmiki, "abandoned alone in the forest, by the king's cruel order, fell on the dew-damped forest trace; and lying streched on the bare earth, she looked like a propless vine fallen from her support. Aye, she became a part of Nature herself."

The greatest of the modern minds in India, Rabindranath Tagore, has sung to Mother Earth in one of his most mature odes, 'Vasundhara'. He sings of the everchanging Mother's fertile and fascinating features, of her alluring and sustaining kaleiodoscopic changes from season to season, and from longitude to longitude. Her cold unconcern for what happens. to her children is matched by her devoted attention to the duties of the cycles of births and deaths. The shortness of her memory, the flimsiness of her concern are as baffling as the depths of her fully identifying em- braces. It is amazing to reflect how poets from the early times of the Vedas, Valmiki, Homer and Vyasa, to Keats, Swinburn and Tagore delight in giving form to the abstractions of Nature, and raise them pedestals of vibrant responses.

It would indeed not be a laboured thought to imagine that the concep- tion of Sitä as the daughter of Mother Earth, of Uma as the Virgin of the Mount, of Autumn as the Maid of the Season, of Proserpine and Demeter, had had their respective fount of inspiration from even such earlier tradi- tions as the Prthivi Sükta of Atharva Veda provides for the Hindu goddess. The devout everyday would wear, as a solemn mark of purity, loyalty, dedication and honour, on his head, a common clay-mark; and while wearing the mark would chant:

Plate 1. Phallic monoliths : Sidamo, Southern Abyssinia.

Plate 2. Carved monoliths : Cross rivers, southern Nigeria.

Plate 3. Osiris taking the phallic oath.

Plate 4. 'Jack of Hilton'.

Plate 5. Ceremonial worship of Priapus.

Plate 6. Three symbols illustrating phallic worship in ancient Egypt, and a phallic house-sign in Pompeii.

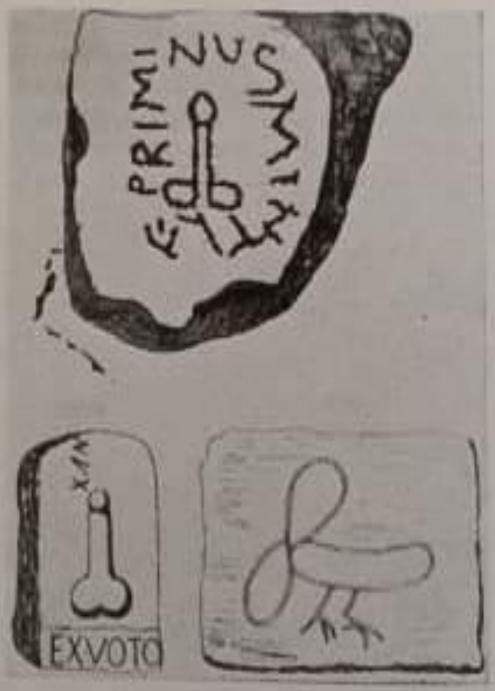

Plate 7. Phallic monuments found in Scotland

Plate 8. (a) The Mudrus from Phoenicia; (b) Muidhr of INIS-Murry; (c) Pillar-stone at the hill of Tara.

Plate 9. More ancient Irish Sheelah-na-Gigs.

Plate 9B. Egyptian black Nut

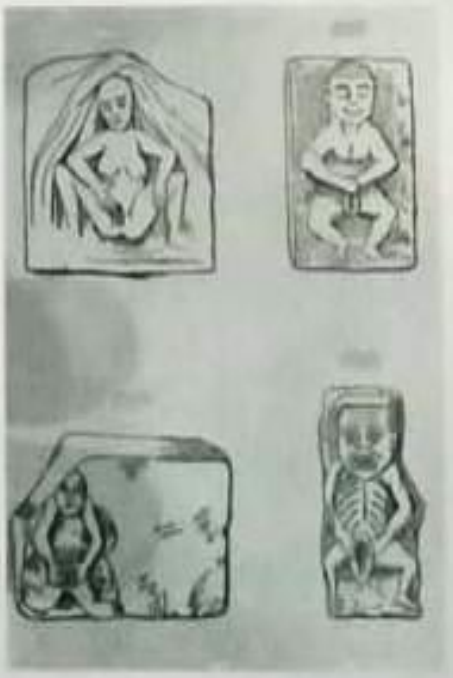

Plate 9A. Ancient Irish Sheelah-na-Gigs

Plate 10. Paraśurāmeśvara Liṅgam: Gudimallam, polished sandstone, 1st century A.D

Plate 11. Elephanta Śiva temple: Sanctuary of the liṅgam

Plate 12. Paśupati (?) figure. Indus Valley civilization, 3000-1500 B.C.

Plate 13. God Cernunnos: He holds in one hand a torc (collar) (Pâśa ?) and in the other a ram-headed serpent; he is surrounded by various animals.

Plate 14. Astarte, the naked Syrian goddess: Part Aegean and part Asian.

Plate 15. The Goddess Ishtar: Terracotta of Sumerian period, Louvre.

Plate 16. The Ephesian Artemis: An Ionian deity, confused as a Greek deity.

Plate 17. The goddess Ishtar, 'The Lady of Battles' riding on a lion: on her headdress, she wears a star.

Plate 18. Figure probably of the priestess of the Great Mother of the Eastern Mediterranean, from the Palace Knossos, 1600 B.C.

Plate 19. Ivory statuette. Cave of Les Rideaux at Lespugue, Hte Caronne connected with fertility magic.

Plate 20. Head of Demeter with ear attributes. Sheaves of corn, poppies and snakes.

Plate 21. Europa on the bull. Archaic metope of Selinus.

Plate 22. Tellus Mater, with air and water: An earth goddess of fecundity. Here she is portrayed holding two children while fruit, flowers, plants and corn fill her lap and grow beside her.

Protect me at every step O Mother, who is as much trampled by horses and crushed by chariots, as also perpetually wheeled by the Sun. Mother, you protect men, cattle and the fields. Rescued by the Boar, you had been shaped into form by the thousand arms of the great cultivator of all, the Sun, whilst I only des ecrate you (by my ways of life). Proetet Mother, save me.

Laksmi: Śri: Durga

The Aitareya Brahmana sings of the Mother as Laksmi and Śri (Ceres and Demeter). In the South of India extant images of Visnu in the boar form (the Solar Boar) are seen to bear two of the Prakrtis, Śri (Ceres, culture) and Laksmi (Demeter, deity of the corn-wealth) as his consorts. Mother Earth herself, once rescued by the sun to be restored with the ability to bear, had assumed these two separate forms. Under Tibetan influence the two changed names to Bhi and Nila. But underlying all these local and historical changes of names the Gayatri concept of Sakti as the power-imminent of Visnu, the sun, holds, true and good. Power is solar. Visnu-Sakti is the only Sakti. There is no other. The forms, according to necessity and uses, are differently viewed and adored; but the Adya Sakti (primal power) is the power of fecundity and propagation, of acceleration, multiplication and dynamism. In Candi of the Märkandeya Purana the Power has clearly been stated as adhara-bhara mahi, earth the resort of all. Similar references in the Puranas (Kalika-Purana, Visnu-Purana, Agni-Purana, Bhagavata Purana), the Earth has been described as a Mother Deity confronting an Asura.

But in these Puranas a remarkable reference deserves attention. The Mother says in the XI-chapter of the Candi that she has names like Rakta- dantika, Šatakel, Sakambhari, Durga, Bhima and Bhramari. We know from Vaikṛtaka-Rahasya and Prädhänikä Rahasya that Raktadan- tika and Satakel have Chinese-Tibetan antecedents. Durga denotes a very difficult process, almost unsurmountable, of Tantric spiritualism, which at certain stages pose destructions looking in the face. Her challeng ing stand against the fierce obstructions gives her the name, Bhima. In the Himalayan life and conditions such hazards are not unnatural. The name Śakambhari, like the name Šakini, reminds one of the Scythians of central Asia, whose connections with Asia-Minor and Anatolia have been historically established. Sakambhari could also mean the presiding deity of vegetations or Šaka. But the name Bhramari compromises The word Bhramara, derivatively means, "the the scholar the most. insect which twirls, cycles, goes round and round with a buzzing noise all the time"-that is the earth, or the power of cyclic life. Bhramara is the name of the beetle-like insect (also known as the common black bee that loves nectar but does not collect it). Perhaps the name was given because of the peculiar circumambulating flights of the insect, its habit of digging up the earth, as well as the buzzing noise it makes while on flight. The name of the deity and the habits of the particular bee could be thus closely associated. (1) From Egyptian records we

find a Scarab-deity by the name of Khapri, who pushes the sun from day to night and vice versa. He symbolised the idea of renewal of life, and the continuity of existence. (2) A fine representation of Bhramara or Khapri is found on a frescoe of Tuthmosis III who is found pouring libations to God Amen. In that frescoe the deity Bhramara or Khapri appears twice along with the sun. (3) An inlaid golden pectoral of a middle Kingdom Princess displays amongst the hawks and serpents very promi- nently an amulet in the shape of a beetle playing with a red sun. (4) One of Tutenkhamen's bracelets too display the same beetle-sun motif (see Plate 31).

The examples could easily be multiplied. The fact is that the worship of the Mother, Sakti, Power has been universal amongst the pre-Aryan; and its impact could not have escaped the Aryans totally as much as they were given to a patriarchally motivated culture. Sakti after being Araynised was represented as a more spiritualised, stylised and sophis- ticated goddess bountiful to the priests. The legends of (q.v.) Viśvä- mitra and the Gayatri hymn, Brahma and Sarasvati, Agni and Svähä, Daksa and Sati indicate that the acceptance of the deity as a goddess did not pass through smooth waters. Both in the Devi Bhagavatam and Märkandeya Purana the emergence of the Devi in form was in effect a joint effort of all the Vedic and non-Vedic gods in exile who when con- fronted by the distress caused by the Asuras were made to realise the importance of invoking the Power. This Power had been all the while with them; but She had remained unfathomed, unrealised and undis- covered, in fact neglected and disowned. It was due to only Šiva's pressure and Brahma's Conscious wisdom that the proud Devas were compelled to accept and involve the powers of the Mother. The hymns of the Märkandeya Purana Candi amply illustrates the fact that the Devas emphasised the inescapable truth that the Mother Power is the only active Power working through all manifested expressions of life, and through all the unmanifested loops and inter-loops of such subjective powers as consciousness, urge, fecundity and creativity. Scores upon scores of treatises known as Tantras, Agamas, Nigamas, Cybelline Cabalas, Delphic literature, Orphic and Eleusinian hymnology and rites the mys teries of the Druids etc., etc., could be cited as evidence to this universal acceptance of the of the Mother. Tantra is the oldest document powers of man's daring drives into the unfathomable area of the mysteries of Life and Death.

Ambika

Vaisampayana Samhita mentions Ambika as sister of Rudra. So is she mentioned in Taittiriya Upanisad. In Pradhānika Rahasyam Rudra has been mentioned as the one who with Gauri had entered the egg of creation. (Bibheda bhagavan Rudra-s-tad Gaurya saha viryavan). Ambikä receives oblations amongst the Devas along with Rudra. But Satapatha Brahmanae at different places mentions Ambika, a follower of Rudra, as his sister, as well as wife. (Is it, or could it be, an influence of the Egyptian sanction of a brother-sister marriage?) Reminding us of the Mediterranean Artemis, Demeter, Proserpine (otherwise known as Cora or Kore) Ambika has also been mentioned as Šarat, or Autumn. Keats sings of this spirit. The worship of the deity as the Šarat-season has been enjoined in the Candi, or where the adoration of a bunch of plants and herbs, as well as of the young shooting seedlings of crops is considered as the holy of holies. This has been tied to a great festival known as Durga Puja, when Durga symbolises as deity of the Asuras, and reminds of the Mother's affectionate gesture to leave her Mountain abode and visits her folks near the river valleys.

Cora or Kore reminds us of Kali and Karali of the Mundaka Upani- sad, and associated with some fire-cult. But the tenderest form of Sarat is, of course, the same Durga we had been speaking of. This great Motherly deity, popular in the lower Gangetic basin, is worshipped along with her entire family, as a family-deity, during the September-October months. Again, this is not peculiar to the Hindus. A bas-relief from Ara Pacis or, altar of peace, erected on the Campus Martius between 13 and 9 8.c. shows a remarkable similarity between the Mother-figure of the Särda Durgă, (see Plate 22) and the Tellus Mater who as goddess of fecundity protected fruitfulness, and watched over family and children. Both the images have two sons and two daughters on either side of the Mother with their respective pet animals and birds. The Sarat puja is specially emphatic on the invocation and adoration of plants.

Uma (1)

Like Parvati, Durga and Ambika, there is another name of Sakti. This is Uma. We have noted before that this word definitely has no Vedic root, despite its use in the Upanisads. Attempts have always been made, as in Kalika Purāṇa, Varaha Purana, as by Kalidasa in the Kumara- sambhava to adduce some semblance of meaningfulness to the word; but such attempts remain unsupported by linguistic or philological corroboration. What the Varaha Purana, says elaborately, the Brha- daranyaka says in

short: "The One could not play alone. He craved for company, and took the form of a couple, which separated into two. So came male and female." But Uma remained unexplained. Some attempts to call it a form of A-u-m, Om or Ma sound as profane and parodic. Nothing certain could be said except that the term Uma has always been associated with a Mountain Maid, a goddess of the hills, and worshipped throughout the world.

In this connection we refer to the translation of the celebrated Devi-Hymn of the Atharvan. The Hindus base their Tantra and Devi on this Atharva Vedic hymn. It is of special importance in following up the Henotheism of the Hindus. It is significant in the sense that Sakti signifies really a life-movement, energy; it connotes a perpetual self-dynamised electric discharge that is inherent in magnetism, as well as in ether, as force of attraction, cohesion, mobilisation, integration sonic communication and Will; and all of this and more, even in their opposite functionalism. This is Sakti, the Primordial Power. Not that we receive herein any mother concept, but the idea of the Brahman, the Viral, as a positive female force has been expounded in the Devi Sûkta, which we have already quoted in full before.

This was composed and sung by Vak, the daughter of the RŞi Ambhrn; Vak herself has been described as a Brahma-Vadini, that is a revealer, an announcer of the profound truth received; the correspondent of Brahma. She was a self-realised soul. Here she spoke as one who had a message to deliver. Her language was the language of Truth announcing of itself, only through the language of Vak, the daughter of the RŞi Ambhen.

The supreme importance of the hymn lies in the fact that the basic concept of what in later times has grown into the Sakti form of the mysteries has been discovered in the Vedas also. As such this particular hymn, as well as the following one (Ratri Sakta: Rg Veda: 10: 127) known as the hymn of the night are of great importance to the worshippers of the Mother within the Hindu pantheon. For the worship of Sakti, these are Vedic documents.

She, the night, arrived on many a land, and observed as she arrived. All wore a beauty: the unrearthly (beauty) covered all, high or low: she removed the dark tamas; by (her inner) light (darkness by knowledge). She who comes, drives the dawn, and darkness is dispelled. Like birds on trees at night, let us enjoy and rest through the approach h of

night, who may bless us. The villages are asleep: asleep are the footed ones: so are the winged ones. The seekers of grace, as well as the vultures, are (equally) asleep with equal happiness. Night, O night, keep the bison and the tiger (the food and the destroyer) apart. Keep the stealthy away, and become unto us, then, easy to be passed through. The black taint inherent in every object is present before me. Oh dawn, dispel all that, which like bad debts, keep me encumbered. O daughter of the firmament, allow me to invoke you by approaching you as I do a milch cow. We shall win, O night: accept our prayers.

prayers

There are other prayers to the night in the Rg Veda: Sukla Yajur Veda; in Atharva Veda." Night has been favoured by the mystics, Pythagorians, Aghories and Buddhists as their favourite period for p and concentration. Sakti worship is generally a night-worship. Satur- nalia and Bacchanalias are for night. Mysteries and occult, Rasa-Lila. Kartika-Subrahmanya rites, Cakra-Sadhana are all dedicated to nocturnal worship.

Perhaps psycho-analysis could offer explanations as to why the myste- ries and nocturnalism found sympathetic responses in the spiritual seeker. That could be the reason why the Vedic invocation to the night was regarded as the holy of holies by the Sakta worshippers. The nights of the full or new moons bear special importance and significance to the spiritualists of a type. Those who followed Aphrodite at Paphos, Cybele in Sicily, Marduk and Ba'al in Asia Minor and Minos, Apollo in Delphos, Astarte in Sumer, Isis in Egypt, down to the Magi, the metho- dists, the adventists of our times, all prefer the dark night as their pre- ferred period of meditation. These are all on the path of the Tantrics.

Kali (1)

In the Lilagama Tantra Devi asks about the origin of the adoration of Kalf at night, and Mahadeva keeps mum; but the female has her ways and she insisted on receiving a reply when Śiva warned that the revelation of the secret could upset the universe, and bring in chaos. She still insis ted; and assured by a Cosmic voice Mahadeva proceeded to take the risk. The secret was related when the world was thrown into a total darkness. 15

He related that the adoration of energy in the dark form has been as ancient as chaos had been; and the adoration is still symbolised in the worship the devotees offer to the dark energy on the Dipavali new-moon night in the Kartik month. Reference to the lamp-decorated dark-night worship of the Mother in Babylon is traceable to the Greek and Phoe- nician documents, running down to the times of the later Romans,

The Uma-Mahesvara system of the Tantric Yoga and adoration, as described in the Yogini-Tantra, admits of sacrifice, wine, blood and flesh.

She looks like a hill of kohl: Lives on cremation grounds: Red- ged stray-tressed, looking fierce in her skeletal form, her pupils born like Amber-flame; she holds in her left hand a wine filled cup, and in her right a newly severed dripping human head....

The adoration itself suggests many unconventional rites, of which the adoration of a young female of the outcaste undertaker-girl (Ucchista- Candalini), and who perhaps is' no longer a virgin denotes austric lean- ings of this particular rite. There, in the actual worship (Půja), the Lilagama Tantra prescribes that Asuras, Paiupatas and Saivas could offer worship one after the other respectively, in that order. The pride of place is given to the Asuras; this makes us suspect of its origin amongst the Aryan heretics. Its conclusion of several types of worshippers force us to infer its popularity amongst the Aryans as well as the non- Aryans."

In one of the Brahmanas" the goddess as Night has been worshipped as a virgin who is decorated with feathers, and armed with a sling. This very form of the goddess Night has been referred to in the Devi" and Märkandeya Puranas,

The secret about this preference for night in Tantric form of Sadhana (spiritual efforts) lies in such synonyms of the Devi as Kala-Ratri, Maha-Ratri, Moha-Ratri and Tamasi:

This again calls for some more explanations.

What happens to the world, or for that matter, to the universe at the Let us accept end of a total cataclasm, Mahapralaya, as it is called? after all that disintegration is the ultimate end of all integrated bodies. The universe too is just a cosmic body formed out of chaos; and when the time comes in chaos would this end, before it is on the path of cosmic evolution again. What happens in between? This would be the Night!

At the coming of the day all manifested bodies come forth from the unmanifested, and at the coming of the night these merge into the same unmanifested, making all a night.... These very multitude of existences arise again and again, and merge into a flux helplessly at the coming of the night....

Avyakta, the unmanifested, in the language of the spiritualist is called Prakṛti, nature, the mother, the great womb, worshipped from Delphos near the Parnassus to Kamarúpa, on the heights of the Eastern Himala- yas. Avyakta, the unmanifested, is also the eternity, the Great Time- stream. Hence she is also called Kali or Mahakali. Avyakta is the mysterious unknown, unpredictable flux, and is the blanketted potentiality of the 'be-coming', which is not yet 'come'. Hence she is a mystery; unknown, dark, Tamasi. This tamo-guna-mayi is the dark-mother, Kali.

Smoke, night, so also the dark half of the month, the six months of the southern solstice then going forth, the Yogi takes to the lunar-way, and returns.

Hence prayers to Night and during Night; for Prakrti emerges from the cosmic Night, and is the coveted object of knowledge to the spiritualists. It appears that the importance of the Lunar rites, the Moon-way of the Puranas, the Moon traditions, the Candra-Vamia (heritage), the Dark Path-all emerged out of the concept of the stand-still time which pauses between pralaya and rapi (chaos and cosmos cataclysmic annihi- lation of forms and evolutionary beginnings). The wheel of Time re- volving one way (East-West) takes a turn, as it were, and starts moving the other way (West-East). In doing so, for the change in momentum, there must exist a fraction of time-unit for the course to change, and make a fresh start.

This would be the same as the pause between inhalation and exhala- tion; between a word and a word; between thinking and expressing. This Still-Time is Prakrti's abode. "She is expressedly inexpressible, because she resides in the fraction of utterance (as between one Om and another Om, between closing of the lips at M and opening of the lips at 0),"

The great Unknown's cosmic still pause is but Creation's Night. No form, no sound, no breath, no name, no emotion, no change the formless, qualityless, distinctionless Nirupadhika Sakti, Suddha Maya, Absolute Energy, Nirguna-guna. The Spirit stirs itself, and plays with itself (Atma-krida-rata), splits itself, and drinks its own self in many streams (Atma rata: Atma-bhakty: Chinna-maita). She is Absolute Caitanya:

Consciousness at its Somatic state. This is Night par-excellence; Tamas par-excellence. The Devi, with the skin of the dead flux wrapped all about her, with the sleeping Time laid flat at her feet (as a Sava), and unborn Time emerging slowly the gradual expressions beginning symbolised by the Crescent Moon on her head, stands darkly eager and poised, and prompts and goads the Sadhakas to get rid of identity and get merged in the unnamed flux, only to be re-emerged as a newly created being, as living embodiment of conscious-urge bathed in the knowledge of the Cosmic. From Darkness to Light, from Ignorance to Realisation, from the world-Consciousness to the Cosmic Consciousness. This is tamaso ma jyotirgamaya (lead me to light from darkness).

This explains Sakti's influence on darkness, blackness, night and sleep. This way is easier, because the Mother is kind; the Mother is forgiving. But this is also a way of no return. As long as the Mother is seen as Mother, alone distinct from Father, knowledge remains in- complete; the Cosmic gets fractioned by Limit. It is when she is visioned in a union of togetherness, Mother dynamically locked in and with the sleeping Father, aroused from his stillness-it is when these two no longer remain two, but make the illuminating Reality emerge as an over- whelming Experience of the Totality of the Brahman, that Liberation des-cends, Total liberation is total happiness; perfect contentment. The Brahman is Real; and Realisation is Non-dual (Satyam janam advaitam Brakma).

The highest meditative form of Sakti, however, is Savitri, the solar energy, chanted in the sublimely glorious Gayatri verse dear to all Hindus, but a taboo to the Sûdras. This only indicates how dangerous and difficult should be the practice of the Sakti form of meditation to those who are spiritually totally opaque, cynical and inert. These are the Sadras, who should never attempt to practice directly the abstract without first undergoing the processes which could wash away their Tamas, and arouse their Rajas and Sattva to a receptive alertness. Visvamitra had received this only when he had been cured entirely of his Tamas, and had attained his Sattva-Self. The Vedas do not mention Savitri as a separate Devi; but post-Vedic literature, traditionally, has given a reveren- tial form to Savitri, a transformation of the Vedic Sarasvati and Gayatri. She now rides, not a Swan as Sarasvati does, but a lion, although for a change she also uses the Swan and the Bull. But the lion remains her most favoured vehicle. We have noted already that a lion-riding goddess was known also to Babylon, Sumer and Anatolia.

Of the post-Vedic literature the Kena Upanisad is the earliest to mention Umd by the name where Indra asks of Uma "a golden lady heavily ornamented" about the mysteries of a Yaksa. Thus Indra happened to be the first amongst the Devas to have experienced Devi Uma. We find the combination of Uma and Indra also in the Atharva Veda. Keeping in mind our investigations regarding the Atharvans and Angira this information becomes significant.

Who is in lion, tiger, snakes and fire, in Brahman and the Sun, who gave birth to Indra, who is full of wealth and brilliant with energy! May she appear before us. She who is in the elephant and in the Leopard, who is aglow with guld, who is in the waters, the cattle and the males, and who gave birth to Indra. She who is in the chariots, in the dices, in the prowess of the bull, who is in the winds, the storms and the poteers of Varuna, and who gave birth to Indra.... She who is in the princes, the kettle drums, the speed of the horse and the howls of men. and who gave birth to Indra....

Uma (2)

The connection between Indra and Uma in both the texts has a significance. The feud between the Devas and the Asuras, the Aditi- people and the Diti-people was finally disposed of by the test of Brahma- Vidya, the sublime knowledge of the Supreme. But once this superiority was established, the victors started getting spoilt with vanity. This, again, was a mistake. Hence they were put to a further test. A Being challenged all of them to overcome a straw. The wind could not blow it; the Fire-god could not burn it; the Water-god could not drown it,... and so on. At last Indra, the King of the gods, was sent for. Only he of all the gods had the knowledge of Brahma-Vidya. A similar version has been recorded in a later text: Sri Devathars-Sirga Upanisad. But this appears to be a parody of the former genuine text.

Uma, the golden lady, is also the Mountain Maid of the Himalayas. She had always been worshipped on the hills, this legend, thus helps to synchronise the two streams of culture into one. In the Brahman, in the knowledge of Brahma Vidya, the proto-austroloid, traditional tribal, non-Aryan and Aryan cults and forms get aboded. This is Tantra.

In the Bala-Kända of the Valmiki Ramayana we find that the Moun- tain king Himalaya has two daughters, Uma, and Mena. Elsewhere Mená and, or, Menaka becomes Uma's or Pärvati's Mother, and Hima- laya's wife. It is not known if Mená has

any relation with the Minoan cult of the Bull. But both Menã and Umá are hill-adored forms of the Mother, and none has really any root connection in the Sanskrt language. Sayana, the celebrated commentator of the Vedas, uses the word Uma for explaining the word Soma, the drink (as the drink associated with Uma). But he makes no attempt to explain the word Uma. Even though his explanation was made use of by other scholars (Mahidhara and Bhaskara Miśra), the dumb word by its dumbness implies thoughts too close to some non-Vedic, non-Sanskrt origin.

Valmiki's Mena has two daughters, Ganga and Uma. Ganga was bestowed for the good of the Devas, and Uma was espoused to Rudra. The Anusasana Parvam of the Mahabharata refers to Uma in seven verses. The legend there, too, conveys a significant meaning. Young Uma's pranks made her play with Siva, whose eyes she closed with her tender palms from his back, thus throwing the universe to a total con- fusion of darkness of which the young lady was not aware. But the kind Lord was. Her play need not cause the universe any confusion. The Good Lord, out of His Grace, shot forth from his forehead yet another stream of Light, which illumined the confused universe without disturbing the young wife in her funny games. The implication of the legend is important for us. The Siva worship which appeared to have been all dark and confused because of the involvement of the hilly tribal Sakti rites, and which had thrown the Aryan world in an imbalance, as the Uma Maheśvara rites appear to have done, became quite clear through the Grace of Siva's inner power which allowed a sublimated enlighten- ment to descend on what had hitherto been a darksome mystic cult.

Growing curious by now, the inquisitive Uma now enquires, why the third Eye? And then, why at all the fur faces? (The Maheivara emphasis is too loud.) These questions pour and pour from Uma's mouth. This should not have been so, because as Sakti she should have known all. The conflict is significant, and indicates that between the Agamic thoughts the Nigamic thoughts, the Samkhyan analysis and such querries, there happened to exist some unchartered space. This could have had some non-Vedic lineage.

But the Uma-Maheivara chapters in the Mahabharata are said to have been added later. Such attempts, made to honour and accommo- date syncretism, have allowed the size of the great epic to grow beyond proportions. As the various nations, sub-nations,

religious modes and alien rites converged on the Peninsular India, demanding adjustments in the cultural rhythms of the land, such additions to a widely accepted and respected treatile became inevitable. The authors of these legends got the Agamas wedded to the Vedas, the mountains wedded to the rivers, the rivers wedded to the plains, the nomad deities wedded to the Vedic deities through well knitted legends which form a treasure house of information to us. References to the wedding of Sakti and Siva and the gradual transformation of the Rudra into the Linga and MaheŚvara, Pasupata and Näkulisa cults appear time and again in the Epic.

The Uma concept, as noted already, fits in with the concept of the Mountain Maid, who is called variously as Girija, Parvati, Sikharini, Sailaja, Haimanat etc. She is fond of animals, specially of lion. Through- out Western Asia, Crete, Cyprus, Egypt, Sicily, and far away in the Ger- manic and Celtic Europe the Goddess, the Mother, as we have seen, has been popular and effective. The Minoans, we had occasion to have observed, adored the Great Mother.

This goddess seems to have been a concept very similar to that of Cybele, worshipped in Asia Minor, and we shall find traces of like beliefs in the Mediterranean regions generally. Figures of this goddess were not often made though representations of her occur on the seals."

Our studies so far of the Anatolian, Theban and Greek religious forms have made us acquainted with the popularity of the goddess. Rhea, Cybele, Esthar, Astarte, Aphrodite, Isis, Demeter, Venus, etc., remind us of Tantric names of Hri, Kala, Kali, Tara, lii, Dyau-Mata, Aditi, Sara- wati, Urvali, Matangi, Dhumavati, etc. Bull, lion, elephant, tiger, crow, vulture, peacock, cock, beetle, owl, awan, boar or snow, lizard are fauna with which the goddess is associated, both in the West and East. Further enquiries in the field of flora would reveal more and more affinities. The rites, despite their mysticism, would appear to belong to the same blood-strain.

Later poetic literature which grew in India since the third and fourth century of the Christian Era saw the substitution of the universal Uma concept by a peculiarly Indian domesticated form of a motherly house-holding deity. She is not alone. She is with Siva. Thus Šiva, the Father with Parvati, the Mother, who together with Nandi, Bhragi Jaya, Vijaya, Laksmi, Ganeia, Kartikeya and Sarasvati composes a good size family. This latter concept inspired poets and devotees to sing of the Mother in a variety of

emotional nuances. Profound metaphysical and Yogic principles underlie the symbolism of these figures and these concepts. Great legends were written to cover the mystic profundity of the principles involved. The fierce Käll or Ca-munda (see Plate 25) of the hill tribes, the repellent Chinna-masta, (see Plate 24) the awful Dhumavati all were accommodated within the charming and loveable Parvati, Uma, and Durga. The distant lion-riding hill-maid came to be accepted as the Hindu's own family-member, the Mother of their heart and hearth. The distinct and specialised Tantra became the sweet legends of every- day Purana. The Tantric way demanded the vigilant and austere super- vision of the Guru; but the humane Puränas made it easy for all to share in the glories of the Goddess through emotional involvement.

Other Mother Forms: Savitri and Sati

Besides the forms of Kumari, the Virgin, and of the Mountain Maid, there are several other popular forms of the Goddess adored by the Tantrics, and later by the Pauränics. Of these the legend of Sati, the un- fortunate daughter of Daksa Prajapati leads all others in popularity. Except the legend of Savitri and Satyavan (another great legend in profound symbolism, enunciated in the noble work entitled Savitri by Sri Aurobindo) and that of Sitä and Rama of Ayodhya, no other legend has been as dear to the people as the one depicting the self-sacrifice of Sati for the honour of her beloved Siva.

The legend has many recessions. But Sati, daughter of Daksa, had always been awarded a special care to uphold the Aryan ideals to die for the cause of the principles of Truth and Justice, even at the price of material advantage, social privilege, or life itself. As such the Sati- recension appears to have been earlier than the Uma-tradition. Sati made a sacrifice of herself to make her proud Aryan father accept the non-Aryan, tribe-adored (Gana-Deva) Śiva, the Lord of the Yaksas, Siddhas, Gandharvas and Apsaras. But the same Sati, later as Uma, reincarnated to espouse the same Śiva, when the Aryan Devas had to intervene and seek Šiva's favour in vanquishing the Asura Taraka, one of the Siva-leaders of the time, who belonged to the Tantric people who adored Siva, Tantra and the cult of the Mother. The pair known as Siva-Gauri, or Siva-Parvati, eversince then, has remained the most popular deities of the Hindu pantheon. The total silence in the Vedas and Puranas of Sati's sacrifice instead of weakening the basis of the tradition, rather strengthens it, because what survives in tradition (Tantra) has more ancient and deeper roots than recorded legends. Daksa himself has been

described in the Samkhyāyana Brahmana as a Mountain-child. It appears that the legend of Sati is founded on a syncretical attempt at making Rudra the Vedic God equivalent to Siva the proletariat Gana and tribal god. But of that later on.

Two Channels in Saivism

This makes one suspect of the continuity of Saivism along two channels: one, the Rudra channel, which had the Vedas in its support; and the second, the Siva channel, drawing its chief support from the Agamas, Nigamas and Tantra. This might have been the root out of which sprang the different Saiva systems, principally, the Northern Kashmir monistic Saivism; and the Southern, the Samkhya-Saivism of the Agama Bhakti tradition. There are exceptions, as all generalisations have; but by and large Saivism in India has been found to have flown along the Tantric and the Vedantic channels..

One of the recensions belongs to the Rudra-Šiva, Pärvati-Uma tradition, which supplies human characters to a highly emotive drama which opens up hidden springs of our emotions. We laugh and weep with the gods, as these appear to suffer and celebrate as much as we in flesh do.

The other one runs along a more bitter, horrifying, forbidding and ghastly course. Here Siva is the stern Kala, Samhära, Pralaya-deva. It is as Käla that He is the One-in-two and the Two-in-One; the One who is neither man, nor woman, but both; the One who plays on Life and Death with the same indifference as a mad man would go on swinging his hand-drum without having any preference for a particular side of the drum. He is the central piece of the traditions of Sanmukham, the Fowl- god; and the god of Night-revellers; the god of the cremation-grounds; the Yogi who seeks poison, drugs, drinks and music; the materialist who adores the craftsmen, metallurgists, carpenters, potters, peasants, culti- vators, medicine men and undertakers. He is worshipped not in the anthropomorphic image of the husband-wife, father-mother, as the other stream prefers, but in the symbolic Linga form, which is more abstract, and much more mystic and profound. He loves Virgin maids, and is reputed to have even obliged as a spouse a few of the South Indian Virgin devotees, who have subsequently been beatified as great saints classed with Virgin deities. Several magnificent temples of South India commemorate the spiritual weddings of these maids with Lord Siva, the Kalyana Sundara. These temples celebrate these events on special days, and recall in

dramatic legends the exploits of the brave girls, who re- mind us of similar legends running through the western traditions of Zeus- Dionysus, Marduk-Ba'al and Apollo. A series of mystic rituals has gradually grown into a form not unassimilable to the traditions of the Vedic Purānas and the Epics.

The first of these channels conforms to the popular Devi-puja of which Šiva is an integral part. The second subscribes to the mystic Tantra Acara in which symbolic chants, symbolic diagrams, symbolic icons, as well as some of the methods of unconventional yogic practices acquire rather prominent roles. (Cf. the Oriental religions where a 'He'-god com- merced with 'virgins' for conferring his blessings. Cf. Minataur, Marduk Ba'al, Pan and later Zues, Apollo, the Roman Virgins, and the Catholic Nuns.) The first one is a Sattva-Rajas motivated worship, better described as Dakṣina-form; but the second one is a Tamas-Rajas moti- vated worship, popularly known as the Väma-form. Kāli, the goddess stands between the two extreme forms of Parvati and Tärä. The Puranas sing of forms such as Kalyana Murti Śiva-Gauri, Śiva-Parvati; the Eternal Deities of 'togetherness', of Integration and Crystallisation, but projected as a humanely domesticated motif. The Tantras sing of the Bhairavas, the Ugra-Taras, the Pracanda-candikas. They could only come as close as Uma-Maheśvara; or Šiva-Kali. But as Matangi, Chinna-mastā, Dhùamvati, Nila-Sarasvati etc. the Tantras recall their undomesticated Smasana-loving (dwellers of cremation grounds), counterparts such as Batuka, Bhairava, Khatvänga-vara-dhäraka, Maha-Käla, etc. These last delight in special mystic rites, Cinācāra, which includes the Kaula Five M-s of the Laya-Karma (q. v.).

About the origin of the Daksa-Sati legend the following recension could supply a guide-line to further enquiries.

In a Yajña known as Parvati Dakşa the Yajña pit itself is known as Daksa-Tanaya (Expert-daughter or the Spiri. of the dexterous); and the special fire invoked at the pit is named as Mahadeva. The Dakşa-legend, elaborated in the Puranas, and Satî's marriage described therein, could be an extension of this Vedic (Atharvan) rites. That Viṣṇu himself had run away from the Yajña destroyed by Śiva in the form of a boar has been mentioned in the Mahabharata. It has been stated there that Visnu left his disguise, and agreed to come into his own by leaving his boar (varaha) form only on

receiving a personal assurance from Śiva. This explains the transition of the Western Boar-cult into the later Vaisnavism which had already been one of the most popular forms of Pauranic traditions which the Veda loving Aryans had been busily practising.

This could be another of those syncretic legends which record the synthesis of the Vedas and the Vedic practices which the various immigrant cults which the Hindus of India had to accommodate. The Boar-cult could have introduced degeneration to the Vedic forms. That alien cult was chased away. The Saiva forms assured the incorporation of the Boar-people within the body of Vaisnavism. In other words the traits of some of the oriental cults were given shelter in some of the Saiva Vämä rites. The presence of Varahî as Sakti in Tantra justifies the above connection. The Vaisnava Puranas speak of Varaha as an incarnation of Visnu, along with the Narasingha-incarnation, associating both of them within one generation of the two brothers, Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakasipu. Both were Asuras. Narasingha and Varaha have been found to be popular names used by the Assyrians and Iranians.

Different Puränas in different ways speak of Sati, the daughter of Dakṣa. Visnu, Padma and Garuda Puranas mention Śati as one of the. twenty-four daughters of Dakṣa. These were married to Bhava, Vanhi the seven Ṛsis and the Pitrs. It is not difficult to trace in these legends the clever attempt to preserve the truth about the Vedic Yajna known as Parvati Dakṣa, in which the pit had the distinctive name of Dakṣa-tanayā. The evolution of the later day Hindu Brähmanism owes much to the skil- ful synthesis of the Vedic and non-Vedic faiths, as well as of some.cults. "In the history of the conflict of the two, and their subsequent synthesis the importance of Daksa-Yajña-legend is indeed great."

The legend's importance has been recorded by its narration in several Purānas,88 as well as in a number of later texts. In spite of all this fanfare Sati as Mother has not been worshipped in India. That does not mean that she has not been adored. In fact she has been pierced into 52 parts, and on each one of them, known as a Pitha (the consecrated seat of the Mother), a sanctuary has been built, where Tantric Sadhana has been practised eversince. But most of these forms related to the Vämā forms of Tantra Acara, known generally as Cinäcära, meaning thereby the forms current in the Mongoloid Central Asian rites.

Sati is the feminine gender of Sat, which means the Reality. Because Reality is a concept of the immaculate, incorruptible, eternal and the unchangeable Idea of the Immense, it has to be formless and sexless. This is the reason why neither Sat nor Sati is worshipped in form. Sat, known as Bhava in form, is worshipped in the form of Siva, a form which is devised both iconically and anthropomorphically for assisting the Sadhakas in their pursuit. Thus Sat's alter-ego Sati has no form, and enjoys no temple-worship. But she is worshipped as the re-incarnated Parvati, Bhavani and Durga. But Sati herself is Brahmaika Svarupa (the spirit of the Oneness of the Brahman). The feminine concept of Brahman was being introduced for acceptance by those who offered elaborate rites for the propitiation of such deities as Karali, Käli, Cămundä, Durgā, Tärä, Mätangi, Bagala- mukhi, etc., etc.

The form in which the Mother is most popularly worshipped is the lion- riding, buffalo-killing ten armed goddess Durga. In her accepted form she is, as usual, the consort of Śiva, the bull-riding, half-nude, moon-crown- ed god of gods. In connection with our study of the goddess Durgā several excavated relics draw our attention. We shall enlist them one by one, and try to give pen pictures of each of these archaeological finds:

1. A stele from Arslan Tash, 8th cent. B.C. describes a thunder-trident bearing male, riding a bull.

2. A 2250 B.C. Sumerian cylinder-seal describes a mountain-goddess accompanied by a lion and a hawk (eagle?). She is being worshipped by the Rising sun emerging out of the Eastern Mountains. (Kumāri, the Virgin form of the Goddess, is Šikhi-Vahana, i.e., riding a fowl, a peacock; Skanda is Kumara, a bachelor deity riding a peacock.)"

3. Hammurabi frescoe from Mari in the context of a religious scene depicts woman-faced winged lions with bulls for sacrifice. The central scene is dominated by a lion-riding goddess fully armed for an imminent battle.

4. An Assyrian cylinder in Bibilotheque Nationale shows a deity bearing an axe, and riding a bull. He is accompanied by a goddess.

5. An 8th cent. B.C. stele from Tell Ahmar shows goddess Ishtar riding a lion. She is called 'the Lady of Battles' (Ranada, Rana-rangini of Tantra). (see Plate 17).

6. A 13th cent. B.C. relic from the rock shrine of Yazilikaya shows the goddess riding lions, and accompanied by other gods.

7. A remarkable iconic relief in symbolic and anthropomorphic forms of a goddess, with icons of the crescent and the circle. (The crescent icon is the Ardha-Matra sign; and the circle is the celebrated icon of Nada and Bindu, a typified icon of Śiva and Sakti.) There is also an icon of the sign of 8, which could be the familiar 'drum', because there is also the icon of the trident. The stele was found at Dougga, in Tunis, near the site of ancient Carthage, a city of pride to the Phoenicians (see Plate 33). (The protective Deity of Ravana's Lanka too was a Goddess).96 (see Plate 25).

8. A remarkable statute in terracotta of the Homerian Europa riding the bull and leaving Crete to go to other countries. Found at Tanagra. (see Plate 21).

The lion-riding goddess, at times killing a bull or a buffalo, has also been called Kausiki (cf. Kuśika, name of Visvamitra; or the Khasa people). Whilst Durga killed the Buffalo demon, Kausiki killed Šumbha and Ni- śumbha. She was famed for her physical beauty, "Such beauty none had in the world ever seen." " She could possibly have been the deity of the Kusika tribe of Laddakh (or could it be the Khas?) and known as Kausiki (See notes). But she, in Märkandeya Purana, has also been called an evolute of the Great Mother, as Kali-Camundā. Once the Devi becomes fair and beautiful, and is called Kausiki; again she becomes black and terrible, and is called Kāli. The name Durga denotes that she was the protecting deity of the forty-five cities, a fact supported in Devi Purana, Devi Bhagavatam and Harivamsa, 100 (That the Devi had had a non-Aryan source is indicated by the favour with which the Devi protects the fortifying and urbanising city-lovers, such as the Asuras had been. Yet she has been noticed to have been the chief Power, along with Śiva himself, to have brought down upon the Asuras her wrath, perhaps because of the excesses these urbane civilisations indulged in.)

Esoterically the word Durga (Fort) has another spiritual meaning; and the Devi (Himacala-kṛtāśraya) one who congealed in herself the Powers of all the gods, and who accommodated herself in the Himalayas, could really mean the Tantric Sikharini (Peak-spirit), Vindhyaçala-Nivasini (the spirit-firm that pierces through), or, Acala (firm). In all these cases the recondite mystic and occult implications are significantly

applicable to the word Fort (Durga), from which the 'Spirit of Durga', or Durga, the fighting Goddess emerges.

It is a fact that the ancient Uma, traceable to the Akkads, and the Sumers, to the Dravids and the Hittites, has somewhat been pushed back by the emergence of this benevolent family-goddess Durga, who is found as the saving grace in both the Epics. But I attract the notice of scholars to the plaque, unearthed at the site of Carthage (Tunis) bearing the Devi icon and form, and the name 'Dougga' given to the town demolished. Candi mentions demolishment of a Durga. But it is difficult to trace exactly the process through which Umā as a mother-deity became a uni- versally accepted Devi of the people. In other words the legend of Sati's re-incarnation into Parvati, Durga and her many many forms now assumes a new significance, specially in view of the fact that a mountain deity, otherwise not even taken into cognisance by the Devas, was invoked by all the gods, and approached for favour in suppressing the victimising might of the Asuras.

Valmiki's Rāmāyaṇa does not mention Durga; but the tradition that Rama invoked Durga for victory over Ravana is popular; and full-blooded dramatic legends abound in the language-versions of the epics. In the Mahabharata King Yudhisthira invoked Durga in Virāta Parvam; again, in the Bhisma Parvam, before the actual war; at Krsna's advice Arjuna invoked Durgā. But the Devi of Yudhisthira, and the Devi of Arjuna differ in description, motif, emphasis and character. Yudhisthira's Devi being more war-like, nomadic, darksome; Arjuna's being more abstract and sublime. Arjuna uses the significant name Hri, which sounds as Rhea of the Greeks, and Hri, of the Tibetan Tantra. Yudhisthira, therefore, is more anthropomorphic and Pauranic whilst Arjuna is much more Tantric. Was it due to Krsna's intervention? Khila-Harivamsa too has a Devi. She is not as Brāhmaṇical as the other two above referred to. Harivamsa's Durga is a deity adored by tribes of Śavaras, Pulindas and barbarians. The reason for this appears to be obvious. It took some time before the proud Aryans of the nobility could be publicly induced to observe the Tantric forms. It took still more time to mention the tribes, and the other non-Hindus as co-partners in the worship of the Devi. Therefore, the previous two references must have been added much later than even the addition of Harivamsa to the main body of the Mahabharata. The latest Poona edition

of the Epic does not honour the invocations of Durga by either Yudhisthira or Arjuna even by inclusion.

We also find that Amma, Ammu, Ummi or Uma has indeed an old pre- historic tradition as a central Power that agitates and energises mute matter. This old deity was closely connected with fertility and matri- archy, propagation of life and livelihood, disintegration and the cycles of creation. Her emergence as a household Mother-deity must have taken some time, and some travelling. Uma's, as we know, was not a fighting weapon-weilding image. She was, of course, the limitless beautiful golden and decorated Haimavati of the Kena Upanisṣad. She was also the consort of Śiva. From this change emerges finally the homely figure of the Mother of sons and daughters, as depicted in the bas-relief from ara pacis referred to before; as well as Tantra's famous demon-killing buffalo-destroying, multi-handed Daśabhuja, Mahiṣamardini Durgā of the Eastern India, as of the whole of the Hindu world. (Of course, the lion-riding goddess has four, eight, ten or a thousand hands, as the Yogis might divine her.)

It could, therefore, be concluded that the two dominant forms of the Goddess are the benign Uma or Durga; and the terrible Camunda or Kali. These represent two distinct channels of thought about the Mother, the two channels referred to at the very start of this chapter. The tribal mountain and valley loving, sophisticated, homely goddess; the warring, black blood drinking plebian goddess, and the abounding, fulfilling, protective Mother-image. The Assyrian darksome deity of horror as found in the concepts of Crone, Cybele, Circe, Kabala, the mystic Lady of the nightly sacrifices of blood, dance, fire, drinks, sex and frolic; or the fairer goddesses of the Ionian and the Greeks like Selene, Demeter, Rhea, who loved children, matrimony, hearth, motherliness, harvest-dances plenty, joy, family-life, cattle and adoration of domesticity. The former Kāli, the latter Durga signify the Mystic and the Pauranic, the esoter and the adorative ways of worship of the Mother.

Outside of these two is a strictly symbolic deity, hundred per cent Tantric like Tara, Bagala, Matangi, Tripuresvari or Chinna-masta. Candi, the angry one, is provoked to fury in defending the Good from vandalism of the evil forces. "In this way whenever the forces of the materialistically minded demons shall obstruct (the path of the Good) I shall appear and destroy the inimical."101 This Candi owns such names as Ambika, Sakambhari, Gauri, Katyayani, Kausiki Kali and Camuṇḍā, but not the sweeter aspect

of Uma or Durgā. (Candi's Durga is the killer of a demon known as Durga not the great Mother worshipped at every home.) Moreover she has no parentage, as she has no father, no mother. She is the congealed evanescence of the spiritual entity of each and single aspect of Nature's formative powers. She is the crystallised effulgent energy radiat- ng from the microcosm of beings in the cosmic emanence of macrocosmic Power; she is apart from all, yet all in all; the one and the only one whose magic alone sets the world as the unreal-Real, and the real-Unreal. She is energy in matter, and matter in energy. She is the substance and the catalysis; she is the genesis and the cataclysm. But we find that, whereas Candi has studiously avoided her associate role with Śiva, Durgā or Uma has remained a close associate of Śiva. Though Kala gave Candi a Danda (club), and the weilder of Pinaka (Rudra) gave her Śûla (stance), yet she had been the source of Power for both Kala (time), and Rudra (fierce). When the 'many' gods, singly or combinedly, fail to combat the forces of evil, she alone withdraws into her the powers of the manifested 'many', and as the Central and Only Source of Power successfully combats evil, and redeems the balance of Creation.

But she is closer to the creative force of the Sun. The Sun (Visnu) who is the source of the power, is her own spirit form. "Thou art the Vaisnavi Sakti, the Power without limit."10 (She is the formative power- eternal, latent and potent, within the cataclysmic state of total annihila- tion.... As all go to 'sleep', she is still the power in the sleeping Visnu; she is in the flux, the illusory charm of the shape of things,103 The the potency flux has no Will. It is not dead. It is; yet it is not, because even 'to be' necessitates the potency of being; it is the will, the urge, in an inert state. Inertia is energy in a negative form. The flux has it sleeping. The 'longing' of the 'space' (Brahman) awakens and electrifies. Will stirs, consciousness radiates; wave-lengths of energy graduate forms, beings, shapes, lives, properties, distinctions, classifications, and individualities. Wills conflict; conflicts clash; clashes spring more energy; the world cycle moves. Good and bad war. Life propagates. Yet amidst all this seem- ingly bubbling stir of life looms the potential and inevitable inertia which has to dawn in course of millions of years, when amidst a seeming nothing- ness, amidst a stillness of Kalanidra (Sleeping-time) the properties of Sound and Sense shall linger in the Supreme Power, the Sakti, the Mother.

"Your great sword cuts into two the black buffalo (the inertia of Tamas)."104 This poetic statement of Tagore is corroborated by the great grammarian annotator

Sayanācārya, who in explaining the word Mahiṣa (buffalo) 105 has used it in the sense of Great, Super. He also has accepted elsewhere in the sense of 'animal'. The Asura power devastated by the Devi must have been a great power, but it was animal-power, materially vanglorious, tyrannically anti-ethical. Her care for the ultimate Good alone destroyed the forces of Evil; it was represented, anthropomorphically, by the Devi destroying the Mahiṣa; Tamas, Evil, had assumed a zoomor- phic form. The earliest carving of this form in Udayagiri of Central India is dated 388 A.D. (Candragupta II).

The antecedents of the war-loving, lion-riding goddess have been variously noted in the different stone, metal terracotta reliefs, and in frescoes eversince the times of Sumer. She appears to have been well known in the Oriental as well as in the Mediterranean regions. Gradually the cult of the Goddess is discovered to be popular, and expanding in the whole of Asia, and then overflowing into the European cultures as well. Dr. S. B. Das Gupta holds the view that, "The basic truth about the image of the Devi Mahiṣamardini (the buffalo-killing goddess) is the victory over the non-Khmer people by the Mediterranean people."10 That, again, steers our enquiry to other fields.

The Khmers and the Devi

The Khmers are the natives of Kamboja, modern Cambodia. Their chief antagonists, the Anams, belong to a Sino-Tibetan family of people.

Many believe these Khmers to be basically Austric, like the Indian Koles and Mundās. But these are highly influenced by the Tibetan and the Chinese (of the south).... Most of the inhabitants of Cochin-China are Khmers. In the prehistoric times these were inhabiting the Gangetic valley, and had spread up to Australia. The Dravidas of India, and the incoming Aryans, by their constant attacks, made them get contained within the land- mass spreading between Malaya and Indo-China. Anthropologists call this great human race as Austro-Asiatic, of which the Khmers of Cambodia is just a branch,

(We have noted Sumer in the eastern part of the Indian ocean. We hear of Khmer. As the name Campã gave its people the name Cham, a name used to denote some people of modern Indo-China, so the word Khmer could suggest the word K-mer-, or Kumeru, a land-mass of the Western Indian Ocean. The Puranas always refer to the two extreme

residences of people, Sumeru of the North, and Kumeru of the South. The Indian navigators would know that the sea voyages to Sumer from India had to sail for the North, whereas those for Camboja, Khmer or Kumeru had to be directed towards the South. I am painfully aware of the fact that by suggesting a possibility of this connection between Sumer and Sumeru, and Khmer and Kumeru, I am exposing myself to being laughed at by experts, but I can hardly resist doing so when I find that Indian names, such as Kamboja, Panduranga, Malaya do occur profusely in naming colonies in the far-eastern peninsula.)

These facts later on would help us in shedding light on the presence of Saivic trends in Australasia, South-sea isles, the Aztec and the Maya cultures. The word Maya itself, apart from the dominant 'snake-motif' used in all religious buildings, as well as the fact of designing the architec- tural trend of these buildings in the famed style of the Pyramids and Ziggaruts, which dominate the ancient buildings from Egypt to Angkorvat and Angkor Thom, confirm a great possibility of the expansion of a central culture both East and West. This central culture had, of course, been dominated by the concept of Śiva and Sakti, Uma-Maheśvara, Śiva-Gauri. The navigational skill, the commercial interests and the later political trends as emphasised by Dr. Bagchi, and also recorded in some Chinese texts, leave no doubt, whatsoever, that from before the times of Ptolemy, Indian ships carried on a reasonably brisk commercial relation with the Eastern peninsular land-mass of the Indian ocean and Bay of Bengal. The Chinese records mention Eastern ports with such Indian names as Gambu (Jambu), Visunga, Tangan, Ila-vardhan, Tamal, Pungam, Ganga, Panduranga, etc., etc.... The records of Indian antiquities abound in these areas between the first and the seventh century of the Christian Era. The Sakti Samhitas too, together with the Tantra texts, are the products of this time. Kashmir-Šaivism should be dated between the 7th and the 8th centuries. Those of the Tantra-Saiva records, popular in the South, are too scattered and disorganised to be referred to any particular period. These are based on the ever-astir, ever-renewed traditions. But the Bengal and Assam treatises, compared to the Pañcarātra Samhita and Kashmir Šaivism appear to be more recent (10th and 11th cent.). By that time civilisations of Campã and Khmer were already at a decline.

Between the period of the 6th and 11th centuries Tantra-treatises at- tained their gradual finalisation. The Tibetan, Sanskrt and Päli texts reveal simultaneous acceptance of the universal cult of the Goddess. This very cult gradually developed

into a special form of spiritual aspira- tion with an elaborate system of metaphysical thoughts. Saiva metaphysi- cal traditions wedded to the Sakti metaphysical traditions formed, together, a vital and vibrant link between the aspirations and spiritual attainments of Man. Neither Buddhism, nor Islam, nor Christianity has been able to stand completely outside the pale of its influence. The Sakti-Śiva philosophy based primarily on the Prakṛti-Puruşa Tattva of Samkhya is finally traceable within, practically, every form of spiritual investigation with which all religions ultimately must concern themselves. Mysticism is the ultimate in Faith.

Śiva's Role in Tantra

The most important developments in the rites of Śiva or Sakti during this period is the acceptance and emergence of the image motif of the Mother and her consort as a family of anthropomorphic deities. This is not to say that the same ideas do not have their iconic or aniconic representations; but the glory of the Mother, as we have noted already, was most spectacularly translated in stones and bronzes, frescoes and reliefs, in shields and seals, in both zoomorphic and anthropomorphic interpretations. The glory of this sculptural homage paid by the inspired devouts are to this day monumented in the fantastic treasures of arts of all times from Karnak, Memphis and Amarna to Parthenon and Delphos; from Ur, Babylon, Kish, Sippar to Ellora, Elephanta, Martand, Maha- balipuram, Khmer and Jävä; from the Mekong to the lakes of Taxcoco and Chalco. Temple life became an accepted form of living; and the Sumerian, Babylonian, Delphian, Cretan, Ionian forms of temple- centred city-life buzzed around a gigantic structure, which, like congealed dreams of Titans, pushed back the sky with their demoniac forms. Even the legendary might of the bloody jaws of Time have failed to reduce these age-old structures to such dusts as could not live up and narrate a legend long since silenced. Like the proverbial Sphinx and the Salamander, even in ashes, they continue to correspond and intimate.

Siva's role in the Mahişamardini psalm of Candi, or indeed in the entire Candi has been rather insignificant. He too, like the rest of the Devas, appears to have been not a little harassed by the indiscretions of his own simple boons to the Asuras and Danavas. He too prays for assistance from the Power. In the Sumbha-Nisumbha episode there occurs a significant line: "Carry all these Devis to give battle; and out of your love for me go and kill the Asura." Then the Devi employs Šiva himself, as a female spirit, to

be her messenger. (Through Saivism perhaps the Sakti-cult was first pushed amongst the Asuras; but this they spurned; they preferred to keep to their own Sakti-Tantra-way.) The Siva-spirited female-form was known as Siva-Dúti. The interdependence of Saivism and Saktism has been fully indicated in this part of the legend. Sakti's conveyor is Siva, and Siva's conveyor is Sakti. Esoterically speaking, too, there is no 'worship' complete as long as the sexual images do not converge into One plus-minus, male-female, positive-negative Idea.

It was Saivism that attempted to interpret the true nature of Śaktism. or Tantricism. The objectionable and horrifying rites of Tantric occult and mystic rites underwent a thorough reinvestigation and readjustment before it could be rehabilitated and revalued as traditional Hindu form. Sakti is the earliest of worshipped spirits. It reminds us of the postulate we had set at the start of the chapter that the Mother-cult was a prehistoric cult which had all sections of the primal human society fascinated. So- ciety at its start was matriarchal.

Creativity is not material; it is a spiritual talent. Without it, matter remains uninspired, inept, inert, 'it-in-itself". Phallicism, being basically carnal and erotic, differs from Saivism and Śaktism in this adoration of the creative urge as an incentive to sublimation. Through the Grace and Joy of Creativity alone Man reaches his ultimate in the Sublime. What he creates is a part of his soul. Art is soul's extension; art is the continuity of Life on its wings to the Infinite. Creation, thus, is a synthesis of the changing world-flux with its many theses. In other words Matter fills, but Spirit lifts. Matter obstructs; but Spirit constructs. Matter adds; but Spirit synthesises. Śiva is there; but Sakti makes It do what It does. Śiva the Form functions, thanks to Sakti, the Will, the Consciousness, the Urge.

"Materials as materials," says Tagore, "are savage, they are solitary; they are ready to hurt one another. They are like our individual impulses seeking the unlimited freedom of wilfulness. Left to them- selves they are destructive. But directly an ideal of unity raises its banner in their centre, it brings these rebellious forces under its sway, and creation is revealed."108 The throb of this ideal unity is provided by the power of Will. Will-power is Śakti's expression in life.

Indian Śaktism makes Sakti either dependent on Śiva, where Śiva becomes the Ultimate Reality; or Siva and Sakti as consorts are made to be interdependent for any function. Alone, this creativity, indeed its very process in a world of functions, becomes redundant. Active aspirants in Tantra offer worship to each as two in togetherness, and call it ramala, pair-worship. (Note the worship of Rama and Sita, as Sita- Rama; Krsna and Radha, as Radha-Krsna; Gauri and Hara, as Hara-Gauri, or Sakti and Siva, as Siva-Sakti. In the last two there is a Male Yamala; as in the others there is a Female Yamala. Šakti comes as Śiva's alter ego; and in the case of the other two, Sakti has been the moving force. The Sri-Cakra is the sublimest symbolisation of this organised Tamala- pairing.)

There is still a third recension of Śaktism, the Para-Śaktism, whereby Sakti is the supreme Reality, and no other. She becomes the Brahman of the Upanisads. In the Candi-hymn she has been called the Goddess of all the Gods, 100 the paramount of all superiors, the par-excellence of all expressions, the Parama-Iivari.110 That Immanent Grace is indeed the Paramount. She herself declares "I am the One. Who then is the second to me? Behold then thou wicked, all my manifestations now do disappear into me." It is the wicked who calls the many as many. It is Tamasa-jana; ignorant-knowledge, pseudo-knowledge, knowledge that confuses and misleads.

Narayani

Subsequently to Candi the Mother developed into the Self-dependent One, the Svatantra. The Upanisad says, "There he played alone;" or, again, "you play in your own way." She herself became the Three: Kumari, Brahmani; Kamala or Vaisnavi, the Youth or Yuvati; and Kali or Šivani, the Brddha; the Sattviki; the Rajasi, and the Tamasi (Selene, Aphrodite and Crone). She became Maha Sarasvati; Maha Laksmi and Maha Kali.

The self-dependence of the Spirit of things, or of the Cosmic Conscious- ness of Will, however one might prefer to term it, proceeds from the Solar Energy itself. This fact was never forgotten. The totality of a synthesis- ing power was known as Maya-Tá, the engrossed attachment to objects outside of Self through senses and their reactions. This is Maya, an involvement in forms of things, which exist in a preferably transitory state. The transition of things does not deter men from adducingtothose things the value of permanence. This self-induced delusion forms the heart of the world-charm. It is Maya

in operation; it is Maya's gift to create an inherent attractiveness for all created things; and the possession of each of them becomes the driving force of human or Life's activity. If some of the things are rejects in one's calendar, the same objects fascinate others who would even court death and challenge destruction for them. There is nothing, thanks to Mäyä, as a reject in Absolute.

This Maya, the Solar Maya is known as Vignu-Maya. Creation, Change and Delusion are its characteristics (as the legends of the frequent disguises by Visnu indicate; e.g., the delusion created by Visnu at the Churning of the Ocean by captivating Siva in the disguise of a seductive female; or the changes that Sakti brought upon herself in the Ten Maha- vidya forms.

This is the Rajo-Guna Visnu-Sakti. All along the Candi it is Visnu- Maya, and not Śiva-Maya; the former has been eulogised, never the latter. The later hymn of Candi, known as the Näräyani hymn has a refrain Narayani namostu te' (Bow to Thee O Mother, the Solar Power emerg- ing into expression).

This, not the nomadic, tribal, austric trend, which man has been worshipping since the paleolithic days, has given to Sakti and Tantra its Aryan stamp. Sakti's acceptance as a Devi for the Hindus come as Visṇu Maya,and not Šiva Maya; Visnu-Sakti, not Śiva-Sakti. The entire Sakti-Siva cult was elevated thus to the Sakti-Siva philosophy, or Saivist Metaphysics, through the elevation of tribal, magical, paleolithic cult-objects into the Visnu-Maya; it was a highly complex application of the Samkhya philosophy to an austric cult. This has been regarded as the greatest and the most sublime contribution of the Hindu Tantra to the world-thought. Those who, depending on historically extended forms and facets, consider Tantricism and Saivism as extensions of the crude phallicism of the Mediterranean stamp, have to take into consideration this significant transformation of attitude. This has been recorded in the most revered texts for the Tantrics, namely, the Saptasati Candi of the Märkandeya Purana, which certainly is a treatise composed later than many of the Agamas and Tantras. This again is the reason why the bold and illustrative Pañcaratra Samhitas are so valued by the Vaisnavas and the Saktas equally. This is the reason why the mystics consider the Radha and the Kali cults as facets of the same Sadhana in the Rajas and the Tamas ways. This is the reason why the most celebrated of the Vaisnavas and Saiva saints such as Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya, Ramanuja, Tulsi dása, Kabir on the one hand, and Vämä,

Ramakrishna, Tailänga Swami on the other are revered as spiritualists of the highest order. They have followed the Tantra-way in their personal and intimate Sadhana. Raghupati Rāma himself, along with Krsna Vasudeva, is considered to be effective Tantrics; not to speak of Balarama, Parasurama, Buddha, or Samkarācārya. No great Vaisnava can help adopting the basic way of invoking Sakti into his Kundalini-Cakra, and enlightening his Conscious Caitanya.

From the time historical humans became deified and worshipped, deities went by pairs, with a female go between: Rama had Lakṣmaṇa with Sitä as a female third. Rama, the Sattva, was Visnu's prototype, and an embodiment of the Vedas; Laksmana was the prototype of the Tantric Nägas; Kṛṣṇa, like Rama, was Vedic, but Balarama, again was Näga prototype, and Täntric. Sita was the uniting Prakrti between Sattva and Tamas; as Visakha (i.e., Radha, or Subhadra) was the Sakti prototype, who united as Prakrti the two extreme prototypes into a single conformity. Jagannatha, Balarama and Subhadra, the three deities of the temple of Puri Jagannatha, stand as a classic example of this mystery. Tantra and Veda together were held on the same spiritual altar through the intervention of Sakti. The Candi itself is a book related to Savarni Manu. And Savarna is supposed to be the consort of the Sun. Candi thus is a Sun-cult treatise (like the Gayatri mantra) supporting Visṇu Maya, and confirming Tantra's relation with the Aryan people. This is very significant in the history of the Mother, the Great Goddess in the Hindu fold; it was progress without transgressing the bounds of the Vedas. Šiva and Sakti, as the Hindus know them, and adore them, thus form together a compact team of two-in-one and one-in-two, symbolis- ing the Spirit of the Eternal Mother, who is accepted as energy of the Sun.

Sri Sri Satyadeva's famous book Sadhana Samara, popular in Tantric Bengal, explains the mother's confrontation of the Asuras as processes, steps and graduations of achievements in esoteric practices. The Asura- theme in Candi, for Satyadeva, exposes the various struggle that the Yogi, the seeker of the Absolute, has to undergo, whilst attaining his aim. Mahiṣa and Taraka, both the Asuras, were overcome by the intervention of the Power from the Mother. The Latter was vanquished by the six-Mothers congealed into one child, the Skanda, the Roarer, which is a synonym of the name 'Rudra'. As a creation of both Siva and Umā, as aided by Fire, Skanda proved to

be too strong for the mighty Asura congregation. Agni, Sakti and Siva together, three-in-one is Skanda.

But in all these legends and their interpretations the Mother remains the Mother; a loving, protecting, graceful figure, at times alone, at times as a consort of the benevolent Śiva.

Kali (2)

From our studies so far we should have known by now Kali, the Dark Mother. We have quoted the Lilägama Tantra in this regard. We take up the subject again for a final in-depth study and for drawing separately a historical progress of the Kali-concept of the Devi. This Kali-idea has been noted as the Crone; the Tamasa in form; the Dark and Killing aspect of Time. She is depicted as the blood-thirsty, sabre-slashing, deadly, cremational Lady in the nude form who terrifies any and every- body. Fierce and terrible is annihilation. Niyti, a Vedic deity too has been as dark and fierce. We hear of her in the Aitareya and Satapatha Brahmanas. "That Tamas was black; so was Nirrti."115 "Nirrti is Ghora (thick dark and fiercely mysterious)." She has in her hand a noose.117 This noose robs animals of liberty; this is the noose of Maya; and she knows how to bind, and how to set free: free in body through death, and free in soul, through liberation of the spirit. The description of Nirrti reminds us of the existence of a similar deity current amongst the prehistoric ancient civilisations of the oriental pantheon. We find a noose-weilding fierce deity both in male and female forms, both in India and in their Oriental prototypes.

We have already quoted the Hymn of the Night (Ratri Sukta), and men- tioned Kala-Ratri, Maharatri etc. These have been further associated with honorifics such a Daruna (Fierce) and Moha Ratri (deluding darkness). Yet beyond this night, "You are knowledge, marked with Consciousness."

We have referred to the seven names of Kali as the names of the seven flames. This verse in Mundaka Upanisad, incidentally, records for the first time the name of Käll as a deity.

In no Vedic source is Kali mentioned in relation to a Mother-concept. The Mahabharata first speaks of Kali in the popular sense; but one is to be assured that these are not later additions. By the time of the Guptas Kali must have been a people's

Mother. The name Kalidasa, as has been mentioned, suggests it. The poet has also mentioned Käll as a deity who follows Šiva. Later literary records mention Kälf and Candi freely. She does not favour the caste-system; on the contrary she has special favours to offer to the lowest in the caste ladder, with whom she even indulges in drinks and meat. Märkandeya Candi mentions Camunda, who today, is admitted as a completely different deity from Käli.

Both Tara and Camunda are referred to as the traditional deities from the 'Northern hills'. They are popular amongst the Savaras, Kolas, Mundas and Pulindas. But Käli herself has been adored as the Mother. Her benevolence is recognised because she destroys the evil; but she always bestows forgiveness, and protection as one of her four hands assures the devotee by the assuring posture, Abhaya Mudra. Another presents the bestowing posture, though the other two are those of a fierce killer.

That the dark Kali, and the fair Gauri, became synthesised as aspects of the Mother is indicated in the Candi, when Kausiki turned black, and became Kalika.118 But again while killing Canda and Munda," she came out of herself in the form of a sabre-armed, noose-trapping Devi (Kali-Karala-Vadana Viniṣkräntäsipasini),

She enjoys a full description there, one of the most picturesque in the Candi.

Looking strange and fierce in her skeletal garments: garlanded by human skulls, and skirted by tiger-skin, emaciated and bony, she looks horrible with wide open jaws, the tongue lolling and dripping (in blood). She fiercely looks through her skull-sunk blood-shot eyes; and makes all sides reverberate with her terrifying yells.. 101

The description has nothing common with the Vedic Kāli which is but a sacrificial flame. It may be difficult to identify the two, but it is not difficult to appreciate the implication of a synthesis of the Vedic with the non-Vedic. The emergence of the Sakti-philosophy out of the cult of the Mother illustrates the greatness of the Hindu approach.

Apart from his evolution of the Mother-concept, which connects a Camunda deity with a Kali, a tribal Mother with a Vedic flame spirit, we note another technique with which this spirit of synthesis has been glori-fied. This is to allow a Siva-form at the feet of the Sakti. This Šiva is Lifeless, since the energy form of the Dark Mysterious Mother has left the static matter-form. Such matter, deprived of energy could not be alive. This

Siva, without Sakti is without Life. Sana-rüpi Mahakala hydayopari jamasthitam, is an Agama description. (Staying firm on the heart of the apparent lifeless body of the supreme Deva.) But it is difficult to accept this imaging description in view of what we find just after one line. "She is engaged in a reverse coitus with the Spirit of the Eternal Time (Maha- kāla)." It suggests that the one stretched at her feet is indeed not a corpse. The sleeping is not dead. Time in its stillness is yet dynamic. Much discussion by both scholars and the Reverse Realisers has gone to explain the Kali image, and establish the image as a synthesis between the Vedic and the tribal; but we have to rely on the latter, who as the Tantric Yogis actually made little of the Vedic restrictions of caste and Asrama.

Mahakala swallows forms of life; but Life itself as Sakti continues. Because of Kalana (swallowing) he is known as Mahäkäla. But Kali is the Spirit that Swallows, and makes Mahākāla perform the seemingly material disintegration. As such she is Käll. This is the supreme Mystery; a dark Mystery; knowledge covered by ignorance. Its resurrec- tion from the deep strata of layers and layers of complexes in the mind makes it not only dark, but also fierce.

She is the fierce, blood-stained one; she is skirted with human-hands; and uses dead babies as car drops. She is also the full-bosomed long- tressed beauty of the three worlds flooding the atmosphere with her brilliance, matching the glow of a rising sun. She is horror, fear and terror; yelling mad; yet, she is sukha-prasanna-vadana (beaming with the glow of ultimate ecstasy), viparita rata-turd (begone with the exquisite pleasure of a reverse coitus); smera-nana saroruha (and wearing a counte- nance as fresh and blooming as a lotus newly open),

Kali the power of destruction has thus a dual aspect. She is from the point of view of finite existence, the fearful destroyer of all that exists. As such she is known as the power of Time, and her main counterpart known as Kala, in cosmology is called Rudra, the Lord of Tears, or Bhairava, the Wrathful, in the religious scriptures. But when all is destroyed, and the power of Time is appeased, the true nature of the eternal time is limitless joy, an eternal peace. In this sense Kali is known as the trans- cendent Night (Maha-Rätri) or as the Power of Ether, Parvati. Her counterpart is known as the auspicious Lord of Sleep (Siva), or the Abode of Joy (Sambhu),1

The Asta Marti-Siva (Siva the eight-formed) also known as Artädhärä (abode of eight) has his counterparts in Sakti: Brahmi, Saivi, Vaisnavi, Varahi, Narasinghi, Kumari, Aindri and Camunda 14 Siva's AŞtamurti forms are: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Sun, Moon, and the sacrificing Priest,

The word Siva derived from the root verb sin means the Lord of Sleep. In Śiva all goes to sleep, to be awakened by the touch of Sakti. In between rests the transcendent cosmic immensity, the auyakta, the un- manifest state of being. The night-hymn of Rg Veda mentions the two. divinities of this state of sleep. "One (is) experienced by all the spheres," says Karapatri in his article on Devi Tattva quoted by Danielou, "and in relation to which all activities come daily to rest."

We, with our common eye, view the image of Käli as ugly, fierce, almost barbaric; yet this very image has moved tender hearts like Rama- prasada, Ramakrishna and Sister Nivedita; stout and noble savants like. Agambägila Krsunanda of Navadvip, Yogi Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda. The fierceness in the aspect is as deliberate as the erotic images of the language which adore and invoke the Mother. The dead body, the decayed and decaying on the cremation ground, the dogs and the jackals (sa-lomasthi-purita), the bone-hair-scattered environment, the darksome stillness, where the smell of the burning flesh alone brings in the message, the fiery drink, the erotic motif, contribute, inter alia, to a tamasic Yoga in which nakedness and dead bodies are equally viewed as mere fuel cast in the all consuming flames of Time. The living is also a dying mass only approaching death, and all universe, all that is manifest is but grist rushing towards a Time-annihilated state, after which shall dawn the transcendental sleep of the Cosmos. All that is manifest rests in Kali. In her, all distinctions disappear. She is the Final; the Ultimate. This is the reason she is black, which assists the Yogi to con- ceive of the Nirguna and Nirakära abstract (Attributeless and shapeless). The mark of the crescent on her forehead marks her out as the source-of the Truth about Immortality. (What shall I do with that which does not get me Immortality?) But her primal organs of sight are the sun and the moon. Her third eye, Fire, came later, and implied her conformity with the Yajñas. She uses them to watch over this Time- spanned Creation. Blood, the symbol of disintegration, anti-life, anti-warmth, symbolises her chief function, i.c., withdrawing all manifestations into her. She is the totality of creation and destruction, of being and un- being. Her palms are lifted up in a protective gesture to rid her devotees of fear, as well as in the gesture of

blessings. The four hands imply the principal four directions involving both Time and Space. It identifies a complete cycle of Time as well as a complete comprehension of Space. She is the fulfilment of dominance over all that exists. But though She induces fear, She is Abhaya, the spirit of fearlessness. The knowledge that all existence exists in her, gives man ultimate peace. This is the meaning of the hand that bears the gesture of fearlessness. Yet another hand holds the sword. It symbolises the function of Time. (Kalo acchati muñcatyauh), as time passes, so decays longevity which is deter- mined fixed within a given time says Samkara. The severed head as a trophy, reminds the ultimate fate that awaits the manifest.

But this might depress the weak. The worship of Sakti is not for the weak. It is for the 'vira', the strong. To realise her is to conquer all fear, all depression. She is the Smera-vadana, the one with a joyous smile on her lips. So she extends her fourth hand in the gesture of bestowing a grant. She bestows the knowledge of total function of Being. Pleasures in time are transient. The joy of immortality is attainable through the realisation of perfect cosmic fullness. This fullness is Sakti, the Power. The power of Time alone is perfect and Eternal. She guarantees this knowledge, and assures total bliss. Death means life, and Life means Death, in a cyclic order of eternally evoluting process, which properly read, relieves man of pain and sorrow. The fifty alphabets of the Tantric language speak by various arrangements this Truth beyond all speech. (Yato vaca nivartante apräpya manasà saha),129 All utterance about her is fractional. To speak of Life and Death through language is futile. This has to be realised. Only then could one realise that the cycle of death and life is an external Reality in Time. Hence, as a reminder of death in life, and life in death, this garland of skulls hangs around her neck. The skirt that covers her is made of fifty severed hands, a number tallying with the number of the alphabets of which language as an expression of the unmanifest, and sublime realisation is made.

Atma ramana (Self's enjoyment with the Self), Atma Rati (Self's union with the Self) is the nature of the Ultimate. She is both the Cause and the Caused. She is the Great Hypothesis. Rädhä plays with herself. This is Lila; this is Joy, as the infant baby plays with her own hand, or the kitten with her own tail. Sublime consummation of ecstasy knows no second. Joy is absolutely self-contained. "The Ultimate thought to be manifest. He created himself into many, and entered all he created. He entered and created opposites; manifest and unmanifest; limited and unlimited; abode and non-

abode, conscious and dull; Truth and un-Truth."130 She is thus the Pure, Entire, Unabashed Truth, and nothing but the Truth. She is space, was in Space; and all forms are but the transitory play-world's temporary bubbles arising from and merging in the Space from where they spring forth wave after wave. She is thus the uncovered Truth; the naked Space in its entirety. Hence her dark nudity, covered but scantily by such lifeless inadequate showpieces as Language and letters spells a mystic charm over the aspirant.

The Universe is Rajas. Its aspirations are in Sattva. But its ultimate is sleep; sleep, the great cosmic night, the all-absorbing utter darkness of Tamas. Red lotuses, red hibiscuses, red oleanders,... red, red, red, Sindoor, Blood, the Flames, all indicate the redness of Rajas. She delights in red. But she makes no mistake in receiving all her delights against the background of the cremation grounds (masanasthe talpe), because who but She the Adya Sakti, Adibhůta, Para-Jñana knows that the finality of this Raja-world lies in the great Tamas of total annihilation, the final resurrection of the dust to the dust, of matter to matter. Life is a dream between a sleep and a sleep; but what a sweet and splendid dream it is; provided we could make it glow through our efforts, Sakti. This Life provides the Cup of the Body; and we drink and drink, and get drunk. This drink of the sublime and transcendental knowledge about the Ultimate, intoxicates, as only spiritual, or even intellectual intoxication is capable of doing, and transcends the temporary to the eternal. The drink intoxi- cates, as Life, though temporary, does and deludes. And she dances on the dead-asleep Śiva's body-mass as the dynamic moving force which shoots forth creations of universes like shooting stars and planets through the unfathomed dark Space throughout the eons that have been and shall have to be. The spirit of Motherliness is Eternity in Love.

The Vedas speak of Night (Ratri) and of articulate speech (Vak), and supply to Tantra the excuse to regard the power in the Sun as the moving energy, Sakti, which becomes the dominant deity of Tantra. The fertility Mother-goddess was being sung as the Solar Energy, the Vaisnavi-Sakti, the Narayani. Tantric forms and norms thus synthesised with Vedic concepts; and Hinduism emerged eventually as a grand synthesis.

Tantra and Syncretism

Tantra had independent traditions. It was primal, universal, and anthropologically traditional amongst the aboriginal world of tribes. In contradistinction, the Vedas

insisted on class, which was based on the four Varnas. The Vedas did not belong to the Asuras, Yaksas, Kinnaras, Ganas, Guhyakas, Siddhas, Pulindas, Gandharvas, Šavaras, Šakas, Hûnas, etc., etc., all of whom were held in derision by the class-conscious Vedic Aryans.

The Vedas accepted Indra or Visṇu as their chief. This was the Sun. Next to the sun was Agni, Fire. The schism over the precedence of Agni over the Sun, was the cause of the conflict between the Suras and the Asuras.

As the schism continued, a compromise had to be arrived at. In the Oriental regions where the Mother was the chief deity, no compromise on substituting her was acceptable. This was so because of the emphasis laid in these regions over material riches and personal power, which no one was ready to relinquish in favour of some spiritual moon-light chase. Ritualism and monarchy were held synonymous. The head of the state and the head of the religious organisation were often packed into the same person. Until the days of the Jews, the Romans, the Christians and Islam the insistence over a single form over another, together with an Imperialistic view of world domination in the interest of material possessiveness, dominated the minds of these regions, and influenced their political behaviour. The imperial holiday in the West was first broken through the incarcerations and sacrifices of the Encyclopaedists of the 18th Cent. Europe. But the clever process of spiritual involvement in mundane politics in the subvert interest of material Power is still conti- nuing without any solution in sight. Spiritualism in the West has been totally segregated from its material life. The man of the world and the man of spirit are two individuals, and are at war. The Western soul cries still like Ruth in alien wastelands. The modern man, as a result, is a split personality, and a victim of destructive tensions. Because of their mad pursuits after commercial gains, which they call prosperity, and material superiority, because of their adoration of mechanical might as means of domination, they have lost the world of Spirit, and have been thriving for the last hundred years in an anti-spirit disregard for spiri- tual values and ethics. Tense-living has become the hallmark of urbanity and prosperity. Whither Peace? Whither happiness?

But the East has disregarded material prosperity as the only means of happiness, and tolerated arrogant onslaught of foreign origin with a paci- fism which has only now been gradually emerging as a force of nobler and higher dimensions. From China to

India the entire South-Eastern Asia has paid greater attention to peace, toleration, adjustment and com- promise. A philosophical view of life's continuity emboldens it to face with equanimity sudden atrocious interference from nations whose values for human respect is overshadowed by the value they attach to selfish acquisitiveness. The smile of the Buddha has symbolically been more effective than the so-called 'sword-of-Islam'. The eternally sad face of the noble-hearted Christ stands in strange pathological contrast with serenely illumined Buddha. Christ's sacrifice has been belied by the hedonistic mammonism of the Western civilisations. East is the land of Hope and Peace, despite patches of ginger-nations tailored into existence by Western Power-schemes.

Zoroastrianism, Taoism, Manichacism, Buddhism, Essineism, Rosi- crucianism somehow or the other derived their respective spirit from the people who preferred plying their lives along the spiritual glory of uni- versal oneness of spirit as enunciated in the Vedas, and as reflected in the Hindu systems of Vedanta and Samkhya.

The growth of science has eliminated human borders. The world we live in has forced on us the duties of greater neighbourliness. A sense of involvement activises the thought of those who organise the shape of the society to come. We are called upon to be ready either to live at peace, or perish entirely. The world of tomorrow does not apprehend the curse of a super-power emerging as the ruling totalitarian, and regimenting the human soul to live in an isolated peace. Such a situation has been rendered possible with a view to acquire totalitarian leadership of a na- tionalistic ideology. Peace and Sense would dawn when thickness of the night of darkness gets cracked to pieces under the colossal weight of ignor- ance and selfish greed.

Man has to learn to live in peace, or perish. There is no third way. The conflict in South-East Asia amply demonstrated the consequences of attrition in a modern world. Presence of foreign and unwholesome philosophy like the presence of foreign and unwholesome virtues disturbs the native balance in the body of a peace loving people.

In other words man has to recognise the necessity of honouring the Spirit of Man, the Religion of Man, the Son of Man's relation with the Mother figure of Eternity. Man must learn that his life-cycle is chained inscrutably with Eternity, and the cult of serving limited time by selfish pursuit leads to a total annihilation. The warnings of the Upanisads have to be heeded. No war has been fought where the youth has not

perished. Eat, gorge, vomit, waste; but save the seeds. Cynicism to the future of youth is what chill is to the womb.

The voice of living in peace, the spirit of togetherness, is at the basis of the Idea of Saivism. Šaivism retained the traits of phallicism in as much as it accommodated the Western 'Oriental Traits' of dominant

religious thrusts. Saivism accepted Tantras with the Vedas; the plebs with the aristocrats; the Man with the clan; the traits of phallic religions with the clean moral codes of ascetic behaviour and the spiritual content of esoteric practices. Tantra's mainstay has been the Mother-figure. The Primal fertility cult as projected through the worship of the Mother, was intimately inlaid into the primal pattern of Saivism. We shall learn of this gradually as we proceed.

So many nations, so many cultures had got mixed in the peninsular India from times immemorial, that the spirit of India, the Spirit of Hinduism had to be trained along the lines of a world-culture, a universal Humanism. The Mind of India was traditionally trained for this. This is demonstrated in her elaborate philosophic systems. Side by side with the caste restrictions imposed by a Vedic society transformed by Brahmani- cal intolerance, Hindu saints have been propagating endlessly the message of toleration, brotherhood, equality. The Gitä itself stands as the supreme example of this toleration so does the systems of Samkhya, the Vedanta and the Yoga.

We have seen the Oriental religions and their phallic traits. We have taken a bird's eye view of the Greek philosophers. We have seen that the Greek mind, sharp in its analytical approach to deeper metaphysical funda-mentals, failed in linking religion with philosophy. This was so, I believe, because they failed to 'Live' their religion; in other words they failed to make religion a Dharma, a substantial way of living the life as one was expected to live for the good of all. Who does not know of the position of slaves and plebs in the Greek social system? Of the Greek militantism against the non-Greeks, called the barbarians? Life to be lived must become the vehicle for a common good; because Good is total, personal Good retains no meaningfulness unless seen as a single wave in the general current of the ocean of Life. This is the inner implication of Dharma, which means and demands that religion and philosophy both must find home and substance in the practices of life. This the Greeks failed to do. As a result, religion in the West became irretrievably enmeshed in idolatry and ritualism. It became a battle

ground for dogmas and rites. The Spirit of Religion, and the Spirit of Man have been in conflict eversince the times of the Imperial Romans. But in the Indian subcontinent philo- sophy was studiously applied to Spirit, and Spirit to Dharma. The typical Hindu questions his Guru, questions his God. The basis of Hindu- Dharma was Darkana, or the training in 'how to see' into things, how to take a look at the nature of Eternal Truths. Reason, not faith, is the basis of Dharma.

The Spirit of Darkana, the Indian Philosophical Systems, is traditionally divided into six divisions. We shall take a look at the six; but we shall deal with Vedanta and Sämkhya more closely, as these two provided the Hindu with those grounds because of which they could unite in Tantra the Idea of Siva. We have seen how the ancient tribal fertility cult evolved the cult of the Mother, and how the universal tribal mother of the fertility cults was also recognised by Tantra. But now we have to study Śiva's role in Tantra as a separate Idea. For this we have to study first the fix systems of Hindu Philosophy.

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18. एक सांख्यं च योगं च
-Gità V: 5. Also see Ibid., III, 3.
19. Allchin, op. cit., pp. 42-3, and 96.
20. There are other references of Tamra in Sanskrt with ten-dentious import; e.g., Tamra Parni is a river in Malaya, and was known for pearl fishery exploited by the Tamils. Tamra-Duipa is an island where the Tamras had colonised and this is Ceylon; Tamra which means copper, and, by in- ference, bell-metal reminds of Phoenician development. The Tamils too are found as masters of copper and bronze.
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28. Russel, B. History of Western Philosophy, p. 59.
29.Ibid., p. 47.
30. Cajorie, op. cit.
51. Kumari: Re-Veda-Yuta: Brahma Rapa.
Virgin: Rg Veda in hand, bBrahma in form.
Yuvati: Yajur Veda: Vinu-rupa.
Young woman: Yajur Veda
in hand, Visnu in form. Vrddha: Siva Rapa: Sama
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55. Kena Up, IV: 1; 11: 12 and 41.
56. उत्तरे शिखरे जाता भूम्यां

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47. Ibid., pp. 146-7.

48. Yajur Veda, XXXI: 18.

49. Patanjali, Yoga Sutra, 129.

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60. Devi Bhāgarata, V: 16-19.

61. Graves, Robert. White God- dess.

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63. Karapatri Sri Bhagavati Tattva-Siddhānta, V, 1944- 5/160.

64. Woodroff, Serpent Power (with Alterations).

65. Kalika, Right Way: Daksinā Kalika.

66. समः सुस्थीभूतो जपति विपरीतो यदि सदा । विन्चित्यां त्वां ध्यायन्नतिशय महाकालसुरताम् ।।

Hymn of Daksina Kali by Mahākāla.

67. नाभी शुद्धसरोजवक्त्रविलसद्द्बन्धूक–पुष्पारुणम् ।

भास्वद् भास्करमण्डलं तदुदरे तज्ज्योतिचक्रं महत् ।। तन्मध्ये विपरीतमैथुनरता प्रद्युम्न तत् कामिनी ।

पृष्ठस्थं तरुणार्क कोटि विलसत् तेजः स्वरूपां शिवाम् । –Pracanda-Candika Stotram.

68. इदंते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय ना चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां बाणासमनुज्ञाता गच्छ देवि यथेच्छ्या ।।

Thee, Lady, born in the Northern peaks, on earth living in mountains, please go as bidden by Brahma wherever Thee will,

Yajur Veda Sandhya.

57, Candi, 1: 57-58.

58. Graves, Robert, White God- dess, p. 73.

59. Apeuleu's "Golden Ass', Translation by William Ad- dlington. Lucius Apeuleu's prayer uses epithets, honori-fics and descriptions of the Mother which correspond with similar epithets, hono-rifics and descriptions of the Mother in the Vedas and Puranas. Compare-

(a) Praniti; (b) Prakyti; (c) Adibhita; (d) Maha-Sakti; (e) Rauravi Nirgti and Tami; (1) Mahadevi; (g) Eka: Devi Bhagvatam (1) V: 8: 13 (ii) X: 4; (h) (i) Märkandeya Candi, I: 57-58 (ii) Devi Bhagavatam: V: 8: 28; 57- 60; 43-44. Sarvadeva-Sariraja;

(i) अहं रुद्रेभिर्वसुभिश्चराम्यह–मादित्यैरुतविश्वदेवैः । –Re Veda, X: 125: 3. () Vapavi and Varuni; (k) Vilvanandya; (1) Devi Bh (i) V, 34:59. (ii) IX, 1:146. (iii) चिकीषी प्रथमा यज्ञियानाम् ।

-Rg Veda, X-125;

(m) Sura Mata, Deva-Matā, Veda Mata (n) See Durga- Sahasranāma; (o) Gayatri Dhyana; (p) Trani, It, (q) Karunamayi; (r) Kxpāmayi.

योऽभ्यसूयति ।।
Gita, XVIII: 67.

69. प्रातर्यास्यात् कुमारी कुसुमकलिकया जापमाला जपन्ती । मध्यान्हे प्रौढ़रूपा विकसितवदना सन्ध्यायां बुद्धरूपा गलितकुचयुगा मुण्डमालां वहन्ती । सा देवी देवदेवी त्रिभुवनजननी
कालिका पातुरस्मान् ॥
Protect us Lady Kalika, Goddess of the gods, Mother-matrix of the three worlds: she as the Virgin, in mornings, read the rosary of young buds; she at noon assumes her matured full- bloomed aspect, and at night looks with pleasant eyes; she again, at the time when the two lights meet assumes the form of an old lady, with drooping breasts, and carries (around her neck) a garland of severed heads.
Urdhāmnāya: Dhamduati Stotram.

76. अंजनाद्रिनिभा देवीं श्मशानालयवासिनीम् ।
रक्तनेत्रां मुक्तकेशी शुष्कमांसातिभैरवां ।।
पिगाक्षी वामहस्तेन मद्यपूर्णां समंजर्क |
सद्यः कृत्त–शिरो दक्षहस्तेन ददती शिवम् ॥
70. Pracanda Candika Stotram, V. (a) Cf. Rg Veda I, 185:2 and 10; (b) Ibid., V, 18:10-11; (c) Kalidasa Raghuvamsam 1:1; (d) Narayana Upaniṣad: (e) op. cit., V, 3:9; (f) Sarat Kale Maha-puja kriyate ya ca vargiki. -Märkandeya Candi.

71. स वै नैवरेमे तस्मादेकाकी न रमते स द्वितीयमैच्छत् ।
स हैतावानास यथा स्त्रीपुमांसौ संपरिष्वक्तो ॥
He could not be happy by
Himself. One cannot play.
He sought a second....
-Brhadaranyaka: I: 4: 3.
72. Rg Veda, I, 35:1.
73. Sukla Yajur Veda, 34:32
74.. Atharva Veda, XIX: 47: 1-2; XIX: 49: 1, 4, 8.

75. न वदामि न वदामि न वदामि महेश्वरि ।
प्रश्नेन मम मृत्युः स्यात् यदि मुत्युंजयोप्यहम् ।।
Oh Thou Great Lady, I am not going to say, no, never, because this question (if answered) shall kill me even if I am the conquerer of Death. - Quoted in Syamar-cana Nirupanam.
83. (a) Ardha Matra Sthita Nitya Ta-Nuccarya Vilesatah, -Markandeya Candi: 1-66.
(b) Woodroffe: Sakti and Sakta: 985-86.

84. स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे

The Devi looks like a hill of antimony; she lives in the crematory grounds. She is red-eyed; loose-tressed, fier- cely emaciated; cat-eyed, and holds in her left hand a drink-vessel; the right hand holding a new lopped human head, still bestows Grace.

- Smasana-Kali-Dhyanam.

77. अर्द्धरात्र्यां मुहूर्ते च मया चंन्द्रेण पूजिता ।
ततो मुहूर्ते संपूज्य
वीरेणाप्यसुरेण च ।।
तताया: पशवः स्यात् शेवाः शेषाः प्रकीरिताः ।
स्वायम्भूवेन मनुना मर्त्यं तेन प्रपूजिताः ॥

In the mid-night she is and worshipped by me Indra; then by the strong and the Asuras; then the pašus are offered, finalised by the Saivas. This form has been introduced by Svämbhuva Manu on earth.

-Lilagama-Tantra.

78. Syama Vidhana-Brahmana, 3:8:2.

79. Devi Purána

Brahma Mayatmika Ratrih Paramesalayatmika.

The night is the abode of Great Lord, filled with Brahma-Māyā.

or Divasoham Vararohe raj- ni tvam nigadyase.

I am the day, Pleasant One; you are the night.

स्वीयमाजगाम, बहूशोभमानामुमा हैमवतीम् । In the sky there appeared the well-ornamented golden Lady Uma.

-Kena Upanisad, 3:12.

85. 1. सिंहे व्याघ्रे उत वा प्रदको त्विषिरग्नौ ब्रह्मणे सूर्ये या इन्द्र या देवी शुभगा यजान सा नो सेतु वर्चसा संविधाना । 1

2. या हस्तिनि द्वीपिनि या हिरण्ये त्विषिरप्सु गोसूय पुरुषेषु या देवी शुभगा यजान स

3. रथे अक्षु सृसधास्य वाते वाते पर्जन्ये वरुणस्य शुष्मे इन्द्र या देवी शुभगा यजान सा

4. राजन्ये दुन्दुभावया तस्यमश्वस्य वाजे पुरुषस्य मायो इन्द्रं या देवी शुभगा यजान सा –Atharva Veda, VI: 38: 1-4.

86. Harold Peake and Herbert John. Priests and Kings, pp. 109-10.

(a) M. Bh. I. (6/1), speaks of a Yakṣa raping Pouloma, Bhrgu's wife in the form of a Boar.

(b) Again Visnu as a Boar salvaged Earth from a deluge.

-Visnupurana, 1-4.

87. Das Gupta, Dr. Sasibhushan. Bharatiya Sakti Sadhand O Sakta Sahitya, p. 44. (Author's translation from Bengali text).

or - Sinivali, Kuhu-3-caiva Raka Cendumati Tatha. The dark night, the night before the dark night and the full-moon night.

— Devi Purana, Ch. 127.

80. Markandeya Candi, 1: 70-78.

81. Gita, VIII: 18-19.

82. धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासाः दक्षिणायनम् ।

तव प्रयातागच्छन्ति ब्रह्म

ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ।

The ones who are Realised, still fall back if they happen to depart in smoke, night, the dark fortnight or the six months of the southern solstice.

Gita, VIII: 25.

91.Ibid., p. 54.

92. Davidson. Marshall B.(Horizon Book) Lost Worlds,pp. 62-3.

93.Larousse op. cit.

Boar.

94.Ibid., p. 63.

95.Ibid., p. 81.

96.Ibid., p. 67.

97.अतीव सुमनोहरा ।

नैव तादृक् क्वचिद्रूपं दृष्टं

केनचिदुत्तमम् ।

-Candi, V: 90-91.

98. Ramase Devi Durgeşu: Devi Purana, 83: 63.

Cf. The Phoenician 'Mother', town Dougga ex- cavated near Tunis).

99. Devi Bhagavatam, III: 24: 5-6.

88. Varaha Purana, Chapter 21; Brahmanda Purana, Chapter 31; Brahma Purana, Chapters 34 and 109.

89. (i) Camunda-Tantra men- tions the 10 names of the goddess popularly known as her ten forms in sympathetic balance against the ten Avataras of Vinu:

(1) Kali (2) Tärä (3) Mahavidya Sodaši (4) Bhuvaneswari (5) Bhai- ravi (6) Chinnamastä (7)(Ca-Vidya) Dhama- vati (8) (Tatha) Bagala (9) Siddhavidya (Ca) Matangi (10) Kamala (Tmika).

(ii) Mahabhagavata Purana

(iii) Kubjika Tantra.

(iv) Narada-Pañca Ratra.

(v) Todala Tantra.

(vi) Maha Nirvana Tantra.

(vii) Brhad-Dharma Purana.

90. Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology, p. 53.

101. इत्थं यदा यदा वाधा दानवोत्था भविष्यति ।

तदा तदावतीर्याहं करिष्याम्परि – संशयम् ।।

Whenever thus demon-cala-mities shall overwhelm, I shall descend and destroy the counter-forces. -Candi, XI: 55.

102. Team Vaisnavi Šakti-r-ananta pirya: Ibid., XI: 5.

103. तन्नात्र विस्मयः कार्यो योगनिद्रा जगत्पतेः ।

महामाया हरेश्चैतत्तया सम्मोहाते जगत् ॥

100. Durge Durga-Parakrama, Khila Harivamia, 120: 35. I attract the notice of scho- lars to the plaque unearthed at the site of Carthage (Tunis) bearing the Devi icon, and form, and the name Dougga- given to the town demolished. Candi mentioned demolishment of Durga, the Asura.

115.Satapatha Brahmana, VII:2:7.

116.Ibid., VII: 2:11

117.Aitareya Brahmana, IV: 17.

118.Candi, V: 88.

119.Canda-the Asura meaning 'fierce' is comparable with
the name of the goddess "Candi"; so is Munda, with Ca-Munda.

120.Candi, VII: 6.

121.Ibid., VII: 7-8.

122. Daksina-Kalika-Dhyana:
-Tantrasarah.

123.Danielou. op. cit., p. 279.

124.ब्रह्म शैवी वैष्णवी च वाराही कीमायेंन्द्रीच चामुण्डा Rudrayamala.

125. जलं वहिस्तथा यष्टा सूर्य चन्द्रमसी
तथा।
आकाशं वायुरवनी मूर्तयोऽष्टी
Quoted by V. S. Apte in his Sanskrit-English Dictionary.

Wonder not at the sleeping state of the Lord. It is the way of the all pervading Maya, through which the world is kept in a state of spell (as it were).
-Ibid., I: 54.

104. Tomar-khadga andhar mahiṣe dukhan karilo katia. -R. N. Tagore. Sancayitä, 'Suprabhat', p. 455.

105. Rg Veda, VIII: 12: 8.

106. Das Gupta, Dr. Sasibhushan.
op. cit., p. 54.

107. Bagchi, Dr. P. C. Bharat-o- Indo-Chin, p. 11 (Bengali) (V. B.).

108. Tagore, R. N. Creative Unity p. 7.

109. Candi, I: 58.

110.Ibid., I: 82.

111.Ibid., IV: 9.

112. Ibid., X: 5.

113.(a) Byhadaranyaka, 1: 4: 3.
(b) Devi Bhagavatam, 1:2:5.

114.Ibid., 1: 7:45.

126. Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, II: 4: 3.

127. सूर्यचन्द्रमसौ धाता पथा पूर्वमकल्पयत्
Rg Veda-Puruṣa-Sikta.

128.Samkarācārya, Pajjhatika.

129.Taittiriya Upanisad, II: 9.

130. Ibid., II: 6.

Chapter Four

Religion and the Hindu Systems

I

Religion and Philosophy

MYSTERY, RITUALISM expectations of supernatural assistance in an un-predictable life formed the basis of popular religions. A religion to be popularly acceptable has to be popularly understood. Human under- standing becomes concerned when it gets related to life's demands and necessities. Life demands protection from adversities and misfortunes: bestial, human, natural-even supernatural. Calamities, against which reason offers no explanation, skill finds no names, were referred to some mysterious unnamed, unnamable spirit. Man naturally sought to pacify it, and in some cases even to please it, if possible. Prayers were composed to flatter; sacrifices were offered to propitiate its generous benevolence. Spectacular monuments and places were raised out of human sweat and labour not only to perpetuate its superior dignity, but also to keep faith assured under a bondage of awe and splendour.

Thus does religion captivate the imagination of the mass. It gains in popularity. Rites, gods and temples become, in this way, parts of existence. Superstition, faith and belief are as significant features of popular religions as the awe they provoke through pomp and splendour. Often these create mysteries, which men seek to get explained, but dare not make an approach. In this way an authority gradually emerges as oracular. Popular religions depend on respective authorities.

But with the growth of general refinement in human society, the traditional crude forms gave way to subtle enquiries. Man found that food, sex and security alone failed to supply all that he needed. Man felt that be existed beyond the narrow limits of his animal existence; that he lived also in a world within and beyond himself; he felt; he dreamed; and he thought. He had an imagining sensitive being. His final satisfaction closely related to an inner self which found little expression in the day-to-day routine of life; in the mere struggle for existence.

He thought of this inner being; his second being; his Self; his Soul; the heaven in him; the hell in him.

Gradually he became aware of this second self, stalking him, shadowing him, keeping in wait for his weaker and tenderer moments. The common man fluctuates in his sensitiveness. The difference between personalities and individuals is mostly caused by the differences in sensitiveness. In proportion to the degree of awareness an individual delights or suffers. The capacity of individual participation in pain or pleasure is determined by the acute alertness of a built-in mechanism of sensitiveness. This constitutes his other being, his good or evil being, within his apparent existence as being. Man is flesh in form; subtle in spirit.

Delight and Pain in Creativity

When he delighted, he created; and then he created delight. Creation under pain, stress and mortification is charged with evil, something that darkens delight. Things of art and beauty are creations of delight, i.c, Anandam, a term synonymously used for the Divine. Such creations breathe sublimity. Things created under pain of duress radiate painfulness, and block delight. Real suffering is uncreative, or miscreative. When a poet turns suffering into a poem, he creates sympathy, not joy. Even whilst in pain the very idea of giving expression to it affords the victim with a sense of relief, which gives him a release from unbearable pain. The divine skill of crystallising pain into a pearl of creative beauty also attributes to the author the genius of looking at all feelings as a gift from above. The artist is a sublime traveller to eternity. Research and enquiry could discover how evil emerges from some poignantly painful experiences. Such pain is not creative. It is destructive. Such minds, instead of creating, spreads devastation; yet for a while, even this succeeds in securing approval of man's inner self. Since the happy seer, infused with joy, views evil itself as a sufferer, it is divine to understand, forgive and offer love.

Religion and Loneliness

The discovery of this inner self made this type of man an individual quite distinct from the ordinary. He is a thinker. His religion is not satisfied with mere prayers, rituals and sacrifices. His god cannot be appeased through these forms. He is prompted to settle with himself in his loneliness to come to an understanding with what he believes. True religion of the self is discovered in loneliness. What one thinks by himself is his personal religion.

From the beginning and throughout the history of the vitalisa- tion of matter we see the progressive growth of what is in fact psychism within more and more complex and interiorised organic systems (living supermolecules). Millions of years before the birth of Man, the animal felt, discovered and knew, but its consciousness remained simple and direct. Only man upon this earth, completing the circles of knowledge in the depths of himself, knows that he knows.... In short, sharply sundered by critical surface of transformation from the layers of organised matter in which it exists, the human does indeed represent, at the heart (or summit) of life, a core of 'Hyper-psychised' cosmic substance, perfectly defined, and instantly recognisable by its growing, pervasive power of reasoned auto-evolution which, so far as we knew it, is unique in possessing.. .... It seems that Man's urge towards something ahead of him cannot achieve its full fruition except by combining with another and still more fundamental aspira- tion-One from above, urging him towards someone.

Teilhard's 'Someone' is the Grand Hypothesis of devout soul inspired by faith, and distinguished by grace. The system of Sämkhya, or that of Spinoza, or of the Greeks might not agree with our author's urge towards "Someone', some experience which presupposes, as if, a personal existence. But Teilhard is specifically clear about the progress of human search for religion from external forms and practices of psychic and spiritual substance to be experienced within. Knowledge of God was sublimated into an experience in the Divine. This is also the Hindu view.

Our physical life realises its growing meaning through a widening freedom in its relationship with the physical world, and this gives it a greater happiness than the mere pleasure of satisfied needs. We became aware of a profound meaning of our own self at the consciousness of some ideal perfection, some truth, beautiful or majestic, which gives us an inner sense of completeness, a heighten- ed sense of our own reality.

This gradual discovery of Man within the man, a Self within the Being, produced a class of men we call 'philosophers', the Jñänins, the Yogins, or the Däršanikas as they are called in Sanskrt. These philosophers faced with courage the challenge of enquiry inherent in a man's religious self. They enquire into the purpose, aim and the ultimate objective of life, and all its components, all its surroundings. They pro- posed to enquire into the Seer; into his faculty of Seeing and the Seen.

The Hindu philosopher held his own world and his own self into one. crucible. He enquired into the human faculties, the human experiences, the human objectives;-in a word, the Indian philosopher tried to solve the mystery of death and the riddle of life. What is truth? What is Happiness?

The Western religions, up to a certain date, had answered the demands of the earlier and the primitive religions, which prostrated before protective angels by way of a thousand rituals. In the search for these religions in the chapters gone by, we have gone into past and present, East and West. But the primitive religions changed considerably after the Greek mind began to grow in influence. The impact of the Greek philosophers on the primitive religions of the orient was not conducive to an unified progress of religion and philosophy. "The philosophers insisting on the understanding and rationality and challenging faith and superstitions, were regarded as inimical to religious fervour." This conflict between religion and philosophy provided, in the West, a perpetual area of resistance and discord. Unfortunately this discord has extended, on the one hand, a vast void of godless cynicism; and on the other, a massive arrogant dogmatism about an emotional attitude towards faith and its healing power. Spiritualism, as such, due to this staggering confrontation, suffers from neglect.

As a result, a morbid misanthropy, a degenerating dehumanising despondence has been frosting away the blossoms of a generation disillusioned and frustrated. This is not peculiar to our century alone. Such fogs of despair have clouded out the light of hope and knowledge again and again. Forces of matter and reason have come out in all their might to smother the light of understanding and liberal thinking, liberty of body, and freedom of conscience. The speciality of this darkness in the noon of human prosperity lies in the sinister skill, and efficient organisation with which the forces of might and selfish aggrandisement have conspired to put out the light of human understanding, fellow-feeling and equality of opportunity. It is all due to a totally cynical indifference to the plight of the human soul and body, pronouncedly exhibited by power-crazy political gansterism, and fear-stricken, but empty chauvinism. The Spirit of Man, the Essence of Love is on trial. An abyssmal helplessness appears to have darkened the Future of Man. Hope and Aspiration have been blinded by the chaos that man himself has left loose through his age- long endeavour to live by a double standard, namely religion for all, but God for none. Morals and values have been preached incessantly from the pulpit; but these appear to be meant for the deprived alone. The moneyed live

above ethical demands. They flourish, or are condoned to be flourishing in heartless selfishness, greed and lust of all sorts. Hunger is tallied against greed, starvation against gluttony; misery against luxury and distress against tyranny. Labour, and fruits of labour are so imbalancedly distributed as to render the concept of a just God untenable. Active efforts for enforcing a just system, a just society is condemned as being revolutionary. Reason and faith are in conflict; power and privilege are in conflict; religion and God are in conflict. What man knows is in conflict with what he attempts to realise. Religion, specially in the affluent society, has failed to answer the inner hunger of the growing man. The future has lost its faith in the past, the unborn has lost faith in the born; youth takes their age to be a sheer bluff.

The distance created by the Greek philosophers between religion and thinking was unknown to the Asian Mind. With the growth of the Vedas and the Upanisads, Man's metaphysical enquiries penetrated the sublime. Man created his own God out of his capacity to understand; and attempted through reasoned steps to bridge the gulf between the world of senses, and the eternity of realisation.

The Greek Mind too aspired and enquired. It, too, penetrated into the eternally absorbing, and sublimely engaging world of Ideas. But its pre- occupation with the objects of ephemeral success forced its religious self to remain unattached to the metaphysical postulates.

The Vedic Hindus were different. For them Life was just a means to realise something noble, greater, sublimer than Life: the Transcendental Reality, knowledge or, or experience of which alone is bliss or eternal happiness, unmolested, untarnished joy. It wrenches Immortality out of the very bloody jaws of mortality. Religion of the Vedas and of the Upanisads, carried life to a life beyond; carried existence to an eternal state; established realisation above knowledge; spiritualism above empiric- ism. In the Vedantic or Upanisadic Dharma, Life is real, but the world is not; Truth is real, but facts are not; Joy is real but what senses seek are condemned as roots of sorrow and delusion. In fact the concepts of a Reality (which never changed), and those of Actuality (which is perpetually transitory) were finally and subtly distinguished.

Thus religion and philosophy became interlaced in the thoughts of the Hindu. For a Hindu his own religion is his personal possession, personal enquiry, personal bliss. He admits of guides and fellow travellers; but he is not fettered by a mass-mind, or by

dogmatic limitations, or by regi- mented codes. He could experiment without interference; and he does not hesitate to dip into religions even outside his own fold. Nothing is regarded 'outside' for the spiritual enquiry of the Hindu. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had practised in his own life all the major religious ways, each of which he had actually practised. So did Kabir, Nanak and many others. A Hindu readily admits that there are prophets for all ages and all conditions of human growth; yet no one has fundamentally contradicted another in explaining the nature of the godhead. His world, therefore, stretches beyond the sensuous apprehension; even beyond intellectual comprehension.

The rudimentary Hebrew view of an Apocalypse disturbed vitally and irrevocably the Western view of a correct cosmology which could form the basis of an understandable Western religion. The expected paradise of the Hebrews made the Christians design a purgatory. With the growth of a sensible intellectual opposition attempts were made to strengthen this absurdity by additional ramifications and realistic decorations bordering maniacal suggestions of sadism. The Reformation challenged and repudiated it; but the Protestants are not yet accepted as Christians who could escape purgatory at all. At least this is the view of some of the dogmatic Christian churches.

Existentialism and Hinduism

The Hindu philosophy does not admit of such irreverence to rationality. The cosmology of the Hindu philosophers does not stop at the world as it is; because the world as it is, is just a fraction of the Reality, a shell to the life in the seed. The shell, the seeds, the kernel can be 'seen'; but not the Reality, which is the Life-Force. The world as we see, is a construc- tion of the mind. The mind is a construction of the senses. The senses are aware because of consciousness, which is no part of the world-being. Yet in the substratum of all this, enveloping all, there subsists a unity which, because the senses fail to perceive its totality, gets broken into as many splintered images as the mind could conceive of. Our animal senses hold the world together; yet mind cannot see, feel, or sense the together- Modern physical re- ness as one whole by any of its animal senses. searches refer to this distance between the apprehension and compre- hension of the World. "The hypothesis that consciousness is Soi Generis and this particular temporal experience is an event in a series which extend beyond it in both directions, is an hypothesis which research into consciousness tends to establish."

Persons aware of the basic levels of existentialism would agree that what the existentialists try to point out so laboriously is a fundamental Vedantic postulate.

When Kierkegaard insists that the existent individual is first of all definitely related to himself, he is speaking of 'Thou art that', a celebrated aphorism of the Upanisad. Similar aphorisms abound in the Upanisad: I am It: I am All. All these suggest the individual's relationship with the Infinite. In this relationship of the Infinite with the finite, the individual's chief enquiry is focussed on a discovery of its exact nature apropos of the supernature: what the person is; what is it destined to be. Life reflects this relationship. But Life is not It. It transcends life, and goes beyond the facts. Man is destined to discover the infinite possibility of his true Nature. Thus the individual, like time, is not merely what he is. He is perpetually a Becoming. He faces a task, a challenge, 'to become". "Atman is not to be attained by dogmas and declarations," says the Upanisad. It is attainable only when Man is in tune with the Essence of Becoming in Time. Kiekegaard says, "One is not a Christian, one be- comes a Christian." The Hindu says that Hinduism is a resolution in Becoming. But He says, as in Aitareya Samhita, "Good is in effort. Never tarry. Move from on to on." The Existentialist's individual is so inspired that he is impassioned with a zeal to realise that in his own incarnation the infinite itself is contained in finite form. This is typically Hindu in concept. All incarnations are but substantial images of the Infinite Potential. To become One with the Infinite is the passionate quest of the Hindu. He is, thus, involved in and out with every atom, even in the subtlest state. "Existentialism's first move is to make every man aware of what he is, and to make the full responsibility of this existence rest on him. The individual chooses and makes himself; on the other hand, it is impossible for man to transcend human subjectivity." The vintage is Vedantic; only the labels have been new.

With a difference: whilst Vedänta goes on to elaborate, and illustrate the necessary training of the mind for grasping fully this awareness and the knowledge of the self; whilst by doing so, Vedänta confers on the initiate self-searcher the ultimate prize of Peace, the Existentialist does not do anything of the sort. The typical analytical mind of the West questions, enquires, and analyses. This fundamental want in the process of synthesis leaves in the Western mind the vacuum filled in by Agnosticism, materialism and scepticism. The Western philosopher is an intellectual; the Hindu philosopher is a

spiritualist. Intellect to him is an instrument of deliberations. The Eastern mind, on the contrary considers synthesis to be a duty after having fully analysed a subject; and by going thus a full circle, arrives at the 'peaceful' poise and contentment that all true religions must seek.

Psychology and Hinduism

From times immemorial the psyche formed an important part in the Hindu's search for supreme knowledge. The dharma of the Hindus borrows largely from Samkhya and Yoga, which "the real seer sees as one and the same system." """Children not the wise, speak of Samkhya and Yoga as different." Western forms of religion had very little to do with the study of the individual, much less the study of the mind, as an essential part of spiritual quest. Both psychology and psycho-physiology were ignored by the Western religions. "Western religions neglected psychology and psycho-physiology. Its conception of Deity fluctuating between a humanised Jehovah (the loving Father of Jesus Christ) and a trinity in which an anthropomorphised Logos mediates between man and the absolute Judge-God, takes Christianity's one praxis to be simple petitionary prayers, "n The same holds true of Islam; though sects in Islam, like those amongst the early Christians, as influenced by the Eastern Buddhistic emphasis on Yoga (and allied asceticism), leaned towards a path of self discovery through the discipline and training of the mind. Study and training of the mind was regarded as a vital step for self-realisation, leading to God realisation. Generally in the contents and practices of the Western religions the psychical approach was not only lacking, it was condemned. and severely penalised with psychiatric ruthlessness.

But meditation (Toga) has been traditionally a Hindu system. The Buddha (known also as Jinalta or Daka-Balah) was a Yogi. Šiva has been the paramount Yogi. The aides of Sakti are known as Yogini-s, Siddha-Vidyas. Krsna was known as Togeivara.14 Control over the seven strata of Mind has been regarded to be a prerequisite of yogic experience. The Kapila (Samkhya) and Patanjali (Yoga) traditions have proposed elaborate steps laid down in detail for attaining liberation, for the experience of the Real. The Yoga system has been laid down in a com- pact and precise form in the Gitä.

But this kind of fundamental analysis of mind, which is the basis of Yoga, could not be permitted in religions of faith and dogma. Enquiry is a taboo in proselytising churches. Burdened and restricted by a defective world concept, encumbered by the lack of the

knowledge of psychology, disallowed to face any encounter of the mind with the Self leading to a personal enquiry of Truth, Western religions soon developed narrowness of dogma. Intolerance and penalisation robbed these religions of a spiritual lustre. Its possessive propensity and power-lust soon sent it on the War led to defensive. It became afraid; and spread fear and war. tyranny, tyranny to fear; fear to rebellion, rebellion to war again. Religion became involved in the political order. As a result, today as never before, Western civilisation misses the spiritual courage to face the realities of the Real; and this has caused a vast emptiness in its life, and in its purpose of life. This emptiness has exposed the want of a vital faith in its religious organisations and institutions. Tons of money are being pumped into its body to revitalise its spirit which had long been lost to man; hundreds of thousands of our job-hungry generations are being paid for carrying on professionally the Messianic duties through a rigid mechanism of skilful propaganda; modern science, and gimmickry of all sorts are being put to the service of trading the simple and noble words of Jesus; but the emptiness is sounding more and more hollow; and the subsequent failure of purpose is making the vain attempt more and more ludicrous. Christianity has become empty of its spirit, because of its readi ness to be used for political purposes and commercial success.

The crux of the matter is that the world is fortunately not composed of a regimented type of intelligence. The cerebral capacity of man makes individuals essentially different. Any religion that ignores the classifica- tion of the human capacity into naturally different depths of awareness, has to be pedantically square-jawed, dogmatically intolerant, psychologi- cally morbid and spiritually empty. This is quite expected.

Religions that create worlds, super-worlds and subworlds should also classify human capabilities, specially spiritual capabilities. Qualities such as enquiry, scepticism, urgency, intelligence, devotion, love, service, faith are essential in men and, in essence, these must cause differences in the strata of human capacity. Dr. Sheldon classifies man on the path of the inexpressible ultimate, into three categories: Cerebro-tonic; Viscero- tonic and Soma-tonic, almost echoing the Samkhya's division of Gunas (Essential faculty) into Sattea, Rajas and Tamar. The vintage the same; only the labels are different.

The physical state of man is but the shell of the egg. He has to burst this and set himself out, and claim his share of the sun. It is in the infinite expanse of cosmic consciousness that he has to be borne again. All men become sooner or later, for a while at least, aware of a call from the unknown world of the beyond. Remember John Keats' famous phrase, "huge cloudy symbols of high romance', or 'the fair creatures of an hour?", or Wordsworth's 'trailing clouds of glory? Hidden in these phrases, one could almost feel the anguished soul attempting to break into its own. "Out of the day and night, a joy has taken flight." The soul wants to go "anywhere anywhere, out of the world!" The soul feels to liberate itself from the physical container suspended between the various walls of time and space, of macrocosm and microcosm, of molecules and atoms, will and destiny. But the Real in him is much more than what could be measured. He becomes aware of his involvement with the Infinite His Real Self is immeasurable. He attains to this reality by the process of Yoga which disciplines his physical shell, his mechanical reflexes, and his psychic being into a single rhythmic whole.

Classification of Spiritual Quest

The process of Yoga is open to all, irrespective of the alertness or dullness of faculties. Awareness is individual, and stratified from person to person. Individuality is psychical, not mathematical. Not the mere three types (distinguished by the three Gunas) above referred to; in fact, many millions of stages might lie between a seeker and a Seeker. But the psychic potential of man has been disciplined, and classified into three main modes. Šiva as the emblem of this Yoga, or Siva-in-Yoga, has been conceived through these three processes, and for the benefit of the seeker is applicable to the three modes of personalities.

Aldous Huxley in his essay on Religion and Temperament points out in a quotation from Walter Hilton, an English mind of the fourteenth century, that the need for classification in subjects of spiritual quest was not an invention of the modern mind. Monk Hilton refers to four categories of 'gifts that are given to us of God'. By exercising the innate talent temperamentally owned by man, he can 'save' himself. (Innate talent Prakyti, of which the three Gunas are the constitutes.) "Some by bodily works and deeds of mercy; some by great bodily penance; some by sorrow and weeping for the sins of their lifetime; some by preaching and teaching; some by divine graces and gifts of devotion shall be saved and come to bliss."

The Gita is explicit:

He who thus knows soul (Puruşă) and nature (Prakrti) together with modes, though he acts in different ways, is not born again, By meditation some perceive the Self in the self by the self; others by the path of knowledge, and still others by the path of work. He who sees that all actions are done by nature, and likewise that the self is not the doer, he verily sees.15

The emphasis of man's innate nature as reflected by his conduct, and choice of the way of life, as well as of the way of the life Beyond has been a fundamental contribution of the Hindu thought.

"The faith of man, born of their nature, is of three kinds: of light, of fire, and of darkness;1 (good, passionate, and dull)." Hear now of these. The faith of a man follows his nature, Arjuna. Man is made of faith; as his faith is, so he is." (How existentialistic in spirit!)

"Good men worship the gods; the passionate the demigods and the demons, and the others (who are) dull, worship the spirits and ghosts."

The believer's belief conducts his worship. His evidence is the only evidence regarding his experience. This is incontrovertible, and ultimate. To question his statement is to question his truth, his sincerity. In other words, to question this is to declare him to be a fraud. This, obviously would be wrong; wrong in the sense that the human critic from a human plane would pretend to adjudicate an experience which is beyond the human plane.

"We have the age-long tradition in our country," says Tagore, "as I have already stated, that through the process of Yoga a man can transcend the utmost bounds of his humanity and find himself in a pure state of consciousness of his undivided unity with Para- Brahman. There is none who has the right to contradict this belief; for it is a matter of direct experience and not of logic. While accepting their testimony as true, let us at the same time have faith in the testimony of others who have felt a profound love, which is the intense feeling of union, for a Being, who comprehends in himself all things that are human in knowledge, will and action. And he is God, who is not merely a sum total of facts, but the goal that lies immensely beyond all that is comprised in the past and the present."

This supports the absolute necessity of classifying human spiritual potentiality. Which of us, the fellow-seekers, is equipped to what degree for reading this ultimate goal of the union? Are we potentially all of one type? How to distinguish and classify? Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the three spiritual modes categorised in Samkhya. But in terms of modern psycho-physiology too, this classification has been done. The ancient medical classification of humours, though accepted universally in the treatment of physical ailments, lacked the spiritual content we are concerned with. Then the astrologists propounded to classify men in planetary terms. This too lacked the basic mode in temperamental content which guided the destiny of human aspiration. Sheldon's classification comes very near to the system of Kapila although his approach is physiological. What he calls the Soma-tonic man reminds the Tamasic man of Samkhya concerned with the physical plane alone: such a person delights to stay as he is. He is a picture of inertia, an admirer of laissez faire. Somatic, the Sleeping, the seeker of wilful dark- ness, the inert, dull, passive is Tamas (darkness), who adores Avidya, the knowledge that leads to denser darkness and retards, blocks and seals progress. He reminds the reader of Kumbhakarna, the brother of Ravana in the Rāmāyaṇa.

Its opposite is the Cerebro-tonic man. His characteristic forte is his cerebral power. He thinks, considers, feels, distinguishes, selects and decides. He enjoys the goal, the process, the achievement, all of which stand clear to him. He draws out of himself his maximum which is his inner essence of being. He spiritualises experiences; sublimates facts and appears to be following a mystic path. He is the ideal man; the individual who lives a subjective existence in an objective world. Samkhya calls him Sättvic, full of the pure, essential impersonal personality. In the Rāmāyaṇa Rāma himself represents this type.

The Viscero-tonic person hangs between the two extremes described. His efforts are directed to reach the sublime. But his desires and resolves are always in conflict. He feels himself too much in relation to others, so that he never experiences the absolute subjectivity which, however, is his goal. He is too sensitive to ignore the joys offered by sensuousness, although he understands that all sense-enjoyments are limited to time, and therefore provokes memory, and increases the sorrow of unfulfilment.

He is the epitome of conflict. He is Rajas, as Sämkhya would classify. Ravana, in the Rāmāyaṇa, represents the eternal state of conflict between 'ought' and 'naught'.

But all these three classes seek a better life in terms of eternity, perpetuity and liberation. This aspiration, viz., to be something more than what one is, is common to all men. Their respective personal religion has to be conducive to this aspiration. This would essentially be the particular individual's Dharma, specially noted in the Gita as Soa-dharma, the inherent personal way of the essence. The strong, athletic, muscular Somatic person lusts for power; belligerency of the Somatic troubles him, as well as others. The Cerebro-tonic prefers an introverted privacy where- by he could exercise his sensitiveness, and use his agoraphobia to enjoy his liberated existence free from codes, dogmas and routines. The fat, self-indulgent, slow mass of existence drawn by the Viscero-tonic sensuous glutton laughs, enjoys, and dissipates in a community-life, and aspires to eat more, sleep more, feel more and waste more. That is his Sea-dharma which he accepts to be his heaven.

A popular religion must accommodate and appeal to all these three types. The ideal of religion is to provide for all these temperamental individuals. The type that loves the baby Christ or the baby Krsna is not the type that loves Christ, the chastiser of the money lenders, the friend of Mary of Magdala, the centre-figure of the community of the twelve; he does not, similarly, love the Krsna of the Gopis, or the Kṛṣṇa who led the Yadavas, or the Krsna of the Kurukşettra battle. Religious love is so formed as to contain all the different urges of idealism fully expressed through a fixation sublimely figured through symbolic legends of spiritual import. Jesus Christ, the spiritualist at baptism, the subduer of temptation, or Krsna of the Gita and Kṛṣṇa, the World teacher (Jagat Guru), or Christ on the Cross and Krsna in his last Samadhi (after) being struck by the chance arrow) convey great transcendental messages to the ascetically minded subjective lover of seclusion.

Christianity, specially early Christianity, and the Eastern Orthodox- Christianity, had the essential mystic elements of presenting a psychological yearning. Yet, it lacked in that depth of metaphysical content which is the special feature of Hinduism. In spite of the great variety of ritualistic forms in the structural elaboration of Hinduism, and in spite of the variety of mystic practices found in Hinduism, it is perhaps the only religion known to man where every philosophy and religion, enquiry and faith, reason

and emotion found a common ground for exercise. Śaivism as a religion, developed outside the society of the Varnas and Asramas. It contained within it various non-Aryan traits also. By remaining free from the Brahmanical restrictions, it offered a grand proletariat amphi- theatre the gift of a system of consummate cultivation of spiritual quest.

Amidst a vast population it carried through a variety of mystic experiments, each apparently contradicting the other. Yet in Hinduism all this mixed as grist in a mill. The resultant product still remained both divine and spiritual, sublime and transcendental. This, probably is due to the staying effect of the mind of the Hindu which is deeply rooted in the teachings of the Vedas and the Upanisads. A Hindu's reliance on these is almost atavistic, so that the Hindu, turned Christian or Moslem, differs in spiritual content from converts from other faiths. Traditional Hinduism is unique in its tolerance.

Therefore, it is essential for the study of the evolution of Saivism to study the different systems of thought in Hindu classical metaphysics. The Vedas had a team of Gods. That should have satisfied all emotional and intellectual needs. Why then again a Siva? Why did the Rudra of the Veda not suffice? If Siva could not have been accepted in the Vedic circles as a Daksina-Murti, a Kalyana-Sundara Father-figure, one asks, how, ever, could he occupy such an important place later on? How did Śiva and phallicism get confused? How did the voluptuous Kalyana-Sundara image, the homely Siva-Parvati image, the terrible Rudra-Pinakapāṇi-image and the ascetic Dandin Käpälika image constitute one Siva concept. This should now engage our enquiry.

The traditional Hindu attitude towards the mystery of life and death has been spiritual. Because of its very long history, uninterruptedly going back to the prehistoric past, and because of the admission within its fold of a variety of opinions, trends, forms and people, the outer structure of Hinduism, like the architecture of a cathedral, a gopuram or a Ziggurat, displays a number of turrets and minarets. When most of the other forms of religion have now been forgotten as active practices, Hinduism persists; and in it persist all those forms covertly. In short, the entire old world, then known to the commercial traders and religious travellers, contributed to the extensive and gigantic growth of the grand Hindu system, a fact which causes much wonder to the scholars of antiquity, theology and sociology. Despite these historical divergences and varieties,

existing within the vast Hindu-body, all distinctive features are able to converge into one focal point. It conveys a singleness of purpose. This focal point leads to obtaining a spiritual contact. This purpose is a spiritual purpose. Here dogma bows to spirit, form bows to sublimity and social distinctions and restrictions merge into the sea of the spirit personified in the life of a Sannyasin. Casteism, religious sectarian- ism, intellectual chauvinism, political overtones, historical influences, social handicaps actually get splattered against the monolithic Hindu body like bullets against a granite rock. Throughout history, the different onslaughts on the Hindu monolith have undoubtedly left certain scars on the surface, but the spirit of the structures breathes uninterruptedly its inner nobleness. The secret lies in the intense regard India traditionally preserves for spiritualism. Religion and religious forms, like garments, are customarily worn by the Hindus; like garments these are varied in material, cuts, colour and designs. They classify the people in accord- ance with the climate demands of history as well as of geography. As varieties of food and dress ultimately lead to the making of a single personality even so, underlying the codes, signs, dogmas, strictures of formal sects and practices, the singleness of religiosity inspires the people of the land known as India, where Hinduism is accepted just as a way of life. Religiosity is more important to these peoples, than religion. As awareness of the Human-Spirit and its singleness of some cosmic conscious- ness, that could lead to transcendental delights, keeps the Hindu spirit up, despite the multifarious forms and symbolisms, most of which are quite as inane to him as to the non-Hindu. A Hindu, in this respect, is happy in his cynical disregard for the multiple forms of rites, which he follows more as a decorum to discipline than for anything else. When time comes, he would stand clear of all of these trappings. Indeed he hopefully awaits such times. He is deeply rooted in the conviction that there is a spirit, a more-than-human Spirit which inspires and conducts, disposes and maintains, the functionalism of all feelings happy or unhappy. He knows that sorrow, pain and suffering as feelings, are inevitable in life; yet life is worthwhile for the man of spirit because of its uncertainties. In Hinduism, thus, religion and discipline, form and faith, social restric- tions and philosophic freedom find a common ground. The mediaeval autocratic impositions of social disabilities, are constantly under challenge from spiritual personalities.

Philosophy and Sacrifice

Hindus traditionally try to live the philosophy of their elders and accept religion only as philosophy's corollary. Philosophers in Hinduism have been regarded great religious saints. Emancipation, not heaven, being the Hindu's ultimate aim, he realises that without a philosophic training of the mind, mere religion is empty vanity. The Western view that philosophy is mere casuistry, does not hold good for Eastern philosophy which is directed towards the endeavours of attaining and experiencing a sublime order of peace and tranquillity.

The extreme example in this regard is that of Kapila, the sage who gave the system of Samkhya, and about whom we know so little. But we do know that in his system the place of divinity, worship, prayer and religion has been almost nil. So is the case of Gautama Buddha, about whom we know so much. He too challenged, not the Vedas, as is commonly understood, but the impositions of sacrificial rituals which give the Brahmanas a special position for dominating society. In any case his system too did not require a divine being to be appeased. Yet in religious India numberless memorials have been raised for the adora- tion of Kapila and Buddha, as both of them were Saints in spirit; both of them guided men towards his destined freedom. Contradictions of theories did not deprive them of the glory of saintliness.

Time and again we have referred to the migratory movements of the Vedic people; and time and again we shall have to refer to this most pronouncing feature of the history of the development of the Hindu thoughts. These migratory settlements, like all migratory settlements, raised a variety of social, political, as well as religious conflicts. Naturally the mind of the society would stand divided between purism and tradi- tions on the one side, and liberalism and accommodation on the other. The principal issue that again and again comes to a head, involves the place of sacrifices, a spiritual (Karma) rite, and the place of meditative Upasana or prayer. The aim of either was Self-Illumination, or Liberation. That this topic raises a host of conflicting issues appears evidently clear from the Gitä.

Having expounded the supreme aim and purpose of a godly being in its second chapter, immediately in the third chapter Gita raises the issue of Karma, i.e., religious practices with material benefits as motives.22 Gitä mocks at the Vedic stand on Heaven as a reward of sacrifice. A new interpretation of Karma and sacrifices is given in this chapter, and in the fourth. There sacrifice (Tajña) has been variously explained, and a statement has been made that sacrifice performed without any inner knowledge, i.e.,

with subservience to mere ritualism, is not of much help. knowledge might not be easy; it is never a ready-made affair. In that case love, regard and humility for attaining knowledge and for the human guide who assists in knowing becomes helpful.

Kṛṣṇa quotes the way of the Janakas who upheld the ritualistic sacrifices; he also admitted again that rites are the most effective means for keeping the mass well organised. He warns against speaking flippant- ly against rites.27 But throughout the Gita there continues an overtone of the stand that transcendental meditation as a means of liberation has the certain stamp of finality; whereas the joy derived from sacrificial rites or physical abnegation is attached to ego and the time-sense." It is contrary to perfect liberation. If all this appears too complex, Gitä suggests, "Love Me; follow Me; rely on Me."

By mentioning the Janakas by name Gitä illustrates the range of this we do know that in his system the place of divinity, worship, prayer and religion has been almost nil. So is the case of Gautama Buddha, about whom we know so much. He too challenged, not the Vedas, as is commonly understood, but the impositions of sacrificial rituals which give the Brahmanas a special position for dominating society. In any case his system too did not require a divine being to be appeased. Yet in religious India numberless memorials have been raised for the adora- tion of Kapila and Buddha, as both of them were Saints in spirit; both of them guided men towards his destined freedom. Contradictions of theories did not deprive them of the glory of saintliness.

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Śiva worship gained tribal acceptance. The tribal Šiva and the Vedic Rudra were finally identified. When this happened, Śaivism reached its sublime height. In fact, there are on record a number of legends to this effect, narrated both in the Epics, and the Puranas, and referred vaguely also in the Vedas; all of these legends relate to this subject of fusion after a period of controversy. For instance, Daksa's 'Sacrifice'; the Indra- Brhaspati-Feud, of which as corollary, we have the legends of Tvaşti, Viśvarůpa, Vṛtra and Dadhici." There are many more legends describ- ing the synthetic fusion of Saivism to be essentially a Hindu contribution despite its connections with tribalism. The chain comes down uninter- rupted, but what we receive as Śaivism today is a gift of the Siddhantas and the Agamas. It was no longer phallic or erotic. Hindu Saivism had discarded phallicism and orgies which characterised the religions of the proto-austroloids and of the cultures of the Greco-Mediterranean regions. It had cut through these Western cults of Isis, Apollo, Atys and Astarte. It cut out the rites of sex, blood, wine and the excesses of passion. These traits are not entirely absent from Indian cult families, yet; but Saivism as it is popularly

accepted and practised, as the homage to the supreme Mahadeva, is altogether a Hindu contribution. This fusion in time reach- ed the sublime apex of the Siva-concept, which was philosophically estab- lished through metaphysical justification. It was provided by the systems of Samkhya and Yoga. These we shall study now.

II

The Antecedents of Samkhya

The concept of PuruŞa and Prakrti has its vague reference in the Rg Veda. The Upanisads, taken together, are replete with realistic and idealistic observations. There are Upanisads strongly leaning to the Samkhya conclusions. The SvetäŚvatara Upanisad (VI-13) mentions Samkhya specifically. But the elements of Samkhya are even older than the Svetasvatara Upanisad. Dr. Radhakrishnan rejects Dr. Jacobi's view that Samkhya is a development of an early materialistic school. Sam- khya's germination took place in the Vedic soil because it sprouted in the Upanisads. Samkhya is replete with pre-Buddhistic thoughts. In the Mahabharata, specially in Anugitä, Sämkhya way of thought has found voice. Manu has an oblique reference to Samkhya views on creation, the three sources of knowledge and the Gunas.

The antiquity of Samkhya is indisputable. It is remarkable that most of the works on Sämkhya have been done in Southern India, though Sam- khya's influence on Kashmir system of Saivism also has been immense. This shows that Sämkhya's eminence had been accepted throughout India, side by side with the Yoga system. Kapila is said to have taught in Vara- nasi; and the lower Gangetic delta lands claim that Kapila had his Asrama at the confluence of the Ganges and the sea. Thus from, Ceylon to Bengal, to Varanasi, to Kashmir, both in the Tamil-land and in the Aryavarta, Kapila was regarded as a phenomenal thinker. Gitä admits him as the greatest of those who experienced the Real (Siddhas). The combination of Yoga and Samkhya became too dominant a force for Buddhism which succumbed under their pressure, and emerged as neo- Hinduism. To this latter world belonged the Saivism of Emperor Harsha-Vardhana and the Southern Kings.

Development of Saivism and Vaisnavism finally eliminated Buddhism from India. Samkhya, Yoga and Vedänta systems played a great part in achieving this favour of a new Brahamanical system. After the Buddhist revolution in society the new Brahmanical order expectedly developed the signs of reactionary restrictions. "Varna'

underwent strict regimentations, and became the Jati-Vyavasthä, the Caste-system. It was rigid and repressive, as much as it denied rights to individuals condemned as 'untouchables'. The very basis of Saivism and Buddhism was thus eliminated by the Brähmaṇical dominance supported by political autocracy. The cult of Sakti sprang up as a corollary, and thrived side- by-side with Saivism. It could be safely stated that the development of the Saiva Agamas in the South of India was principally responsible for the decay of Buddhism in that part. Like Buddhism Sakti and Śiva orders opened way to all in respect of caste disabilities. Šiva temples be- came the popular meeting places of the proletariat and the plebeian.

The conceptual bases of Hindu systems of thought, such as Vedanta, and specially Samkhya, support the principal idea contained in Śaivism. Without comprehending the concepts of Puruṣa, Prakrti and the three Gunas, it would be impossible to comprehend Saivism and its true light. The concept of Siva and Sakti became more clear with Samkhya's explanation of Puruṣa and Prakṛti; and it is a happy coincidence that the Vedic Kashmir in the North of India accepted and made use of the orthodox principles as expounded in the Samkhya system, an admittedly Southern development. Saivism cannot be understood without the materialistic and pragmatic empiricism of Sämkhya, and without Vedanta's idealism. Vedänta philosophy, which is supposed to be more akin to the Upanisads, grew as a rival to Sämkhya, although it was Samkhya, and not the monistic Vedanta, which could justify to some extent what scholars term as Henotheism in the Vedas. But the Samkhya as well as the Vedanta both happily blended into the concept of 'Śiva, the non-dual' (Sivan Advaitam) and into the Oneness of Śiva and Sakti.

Beside these two points justifying this survey, there is another reason for dealing with the Samkhya-system rather elaborately. This is of historical importance.

Kapila

The comparative dates of the growth of Samkhya, the spread of Buddh- ism in Central Asia, the introduction of the Iranian deities in India and the rise of the Upanisads are important for our studies. Exact dates are not determinable; but approximate dates have been arrived at from numismatic and archaeological evidences. The name of Kasyapa, Matanga, Asvaghosha, Nagarjuna and the Buddhist Council of Kaniṣka, the Ven Chi

(Kushan) chief, who conquered Kashmir and the Punjab, are of importance in this connection.

Although Kapila's age is unknown, we become aware of his antiquity through certain references. Krsna's eulogy of Kapila as the greatest of the Siddhas has been referred to in the Gita. The adoration of the Ganges, in the Ramayana mentions Kapila's wrath against the clan of Sagara which had brought about a phenomenal change in Hindu culture. The Ganges became the most holy stream for the Hindus. The Tamil-land had high regard for Kapila, and his statue has been found carved and worshipped from Prayaga in the north to as far south as Ceylon.

In connection with the early education of Gautama Buddha Mrs. Rhys Davis mentions Samkhya to have been first taught by Kapila at Mathura and Taxila.

This remark of Mrs. Rhys Davis appears to reject Kapila's claim to have been a resident of the Deccan. But the conflict is not entirely irreconcil- able. It is true that Mathura is in North India; but Kapila himself need not have belonged to Mathura. His system must have been well known in such important centres as Taxila and Mathura. We shall see that Patanjali's Yoga-system too was known from pre-Aryan times.

The antiquity of both Kapila and Samkhya must have been earlier than the Arab immigration into India, because the non-Aryan migrations predate the Aryans.

Kapila is called Adi-Vidvan by the Vyasa-Commentary on Patanjali's Yoga-System. The same source mentions that Kapila handed his know- ledge to Asûri, who passed it on to his disciple Pañcasikha. In the Puranas he has been called 'Son of Brahma', avatara of Visṇu; avatara of Agni; besides being called the son of Kardama Prajapati and Devahûti (Bhagavatam). Association with Asuri, Pañcasikha and Agni makes him close to the cult of Skanda and Uma. The remarkable feature of these traditional details is Kapila's dominant association with the South and the Ocean hugging mercantile lands, as well as with the people who were given to Agni or Fire-worship. He has been described as of dark feature.

Kapila, Asuri and PañcaŚikha are mentioned in a Verse on offering ritualistic water to the dead (Tarpana) along with Sanaka, Sanatkumara- Sanandana and Sanatana, who are celebrated Pauränic Rsis and who have been mentioned by Gaurapada in his work on Samkhya. The claim that Kapila, an incarnation of Agni (a favourite God of the

Homa-Aryans, the Ahura-Mazda people of Persia) is also an incarnation of Visnu, indicates how the Dravidian systems were getting synthesised with the Aryan systems. It emphasises the emergence of a school of neo-Aryans which admitted and accommodated non-Vedic forms into its fold.

The actual treatise of Kapila is not traceable. The three basic works on Samkhya, viz., Samkhya-Kärikä, Sämkhya Pravacana Sûtra and Tattva-Kaumudî are not accepted as Kapila's own compositions. Waber thinks that Samkhya is pre-Aryan and the most ancient of the In- dian systems, unless challenged by a close rival, Patanjali, and his Yoga system.

If the Census Report for 1931 (India) by Dr. J. H. Hutton and the findings of Dr. R. K. Mukherji on the immigrations in prehistoric India have to be relied on,37 and if the commercial, art and religious connec- tions between Sumer and Sindh are taken into account, it could safely be said that both Samkhya and Yoga as 'Systems' have been recognised by our traditional scholars since prehistoric times and, therefore, precedes the Aryan immigrations within North Indian valleys, 38 In the Bhagavata Purana Kapila is found explaining Samkhya to his mother Devahuti, although the Bhāgavata Purāṇa itself has been considered as a late composition. This tradition of relating Kapila to Devahûti and Kardama speaks of times much more ancient than the Aryan immigration.

The Upanisad refers to the principal findings of the Samkhyan analysis. Katha (XIII: 10-11); Svetasvatara (I: 4-5; 1: 10; IV: 13) Maitrayani Upanisads clearly mention Puruşa, Prakṛti, Indriyas, Bhútas, Tanmatras, Guṇas etc., etc. These terms are purely Samkhyan.

Samkhya and Buddhism

Samkhya does not bother with God (Isvara), a creator, or any force outside of creation. Thus Sämkhya is considered to be atheistic (Nirtsvara). But since it does not challenge theism, neither does it attempt to disprove God, it is best described as a method of relating life to the innate human tendencies of urge and determinism. Samkhya is primarily aware of the element of suffering in life. Suffering degenerates the urge of progress. It engenders pessimism. Samkhya proposes to rectify this sad, and basically erroneous event. So it analyses and classifies suffering into mental material and

accidental sections. Having classified suffering, it suggests methods to overcome it. Samkhya's aim is to set life free from the vice of suffering. Freedom from suffering, not heaven, which Sämkhya ignores with supreme disregard, is the aim of Samkhya.

Samkhya, appears to have provided the theme to Buddha's agony, and the practical way in which Buddha tried to counteract the problem of suffering, Samkhya suggests the steps of discipline, practice and salvation. In this method of solving the problem of suffering the Buddha comes very close to the Yoga system also. Thus the Buddha, and before him the Jains, came quite close to the postulates and methods of Samkhya and Yoga, both of which, contrary to the ritualistic offerings of sacrifice as suggested in the Vedas prescribe understanding analysis, effort, discipline and use of life, purposively, as means to achieve peace and happiness. Did not Silenus, the Greek philosopher, suggest the two supreme methods of overcoming suffering? Not to be born; or if already born, not to continue with life! Self-annihilation was an accepted Greek, Roman, and still is a Japanese custom, held in honour. Self-annihilation continues to be one of the most popular way of ending life amongst the Jainas. But Samkhya believes in the fullness of living; fullness of knowledge; fullness of discipline and fullness of living the life in the face of perfect awareness as to life's meaning and purpose. Samkhya differs from Buddhism and Stoicism in its positive reliance on the understanding of life. Schopenhauer suggested, like the Buddha, that a life without desire is a life without suffering. But a life without desire cannot and will not create. That leads to total destruction, and nihilism. This negative approach is not Sämkhya's. Samkhya is positive, practical and idealistic. Hence it is best termed as materialistic, because its principal knowledge centres around matter: the action and reactions of matter, and its principles. Matter in Samkhya leads to thinking of spiritual idealism.

The world we are in, and which is around us had been inherent in Prakrti. Prakrti is the manifest world inclusive of its movements, progress and regress. Nothing 'is' without 'having been'. Prakrti is, thus, the germinal cosmic state of the world; and to that state inevitably the world is destined to rotate back. (This induces poets to image Prakṛti as a perpetual virgin.) Yet nothing 'ends'. From change to change, through a chain of evolutes and reactions the one principle emerges into many; and following this process of 'change' it comes back to its nascent 'state' (Sämkhya Sutra,I: 121). "Annihilation is a change in causation."40 We cannot comprehend or apprehend the past states as

states; but the. Yogis, who are in full control of their spirit, are sensitive to all the states, past or future

The Mechanics of Samkhya

Samkhya, deals with the mechanics of argument, and analyses the nature and bases of causality of proof. These are three: (a) experience, (b) inference, and (c) authority. Experience is accountable by the senses as well as by the mind. Effects are potentially inherent in the cause. All effects are actually 'changes'. Milk to cream is not the same change as gold to ornaments. 'Pariṇāma' or the changed state may change the flower into fruit or the paint into a picture, or the timber into a table; or a child into an old man. "Change is taking place everywhere, and at every moment. We cannot twice step into the same stream. All things and states, outward or inward are subject to this law of change."4 From this inevitability of change in the Material existence the mind of man develops a sense of causality, a relation between antecedents and consequences. Kapila's views must have been familiar to the Greeks, specially to Zeno.43

But Samkhya's concept of Prakrti (generally mistranslated as Nature) is not only a unique contribution to the human mind, it is a concept on which the celebrated Saiva metaphysics of Sakti nipata and spanda largely rest. It is the concept of Prakrti with which Sämkhya principally deals. Śaivism is its subsequent thinking. Through the subtleties of Prakrti Vedic Hinduism appeared to have admitted Tantra into its religious and spiritual thinking. The Purānas record this happy fusion. Prakrti gradually attained the status of the Brahman; and as such strengthened the basic understanding of Siva-Sakti-vada. Tantra makes the difference between Prakrti and Mûla Prakrti, as between Jiva and Śiva. We shall know of these by and by.

The principle of causality induces the inference that the manifest springs as a consequence of an antecedent even through the unmanifest. The Avyakta (unmanifest state) is Prakyti. By various arguments Sämkhya (with regard to the Prakrti) arrives at the postulate that nothing finite and individual can be the source of the immense; that even individuality has a pervasive characteristic, and nothing exist in an exclusive, air-tight, compartmental unit; that behind the fact of change and development an active principle is at work; and that the principle must be much larger than the change itself; that effect and cause must differ to force the in- ference that this finite and conditioned state is its own cause; and lastly, the obvious unity of this manifested world must lie in

an all-pervading unmanifested cause. World is a continuity in which the lowest and the highest are just united in a gradual chain. This grade and this change from the lowest to the highest sounds, familiarly as Darwinian; but let us not jump to seemingly simple similarities. Such over-simplifications are deceptive. Darwin's is a theory of evolution. It is a biological postulate. Life given, Darwin gets engaged to the 'lowest' and the highest forms of life. The subject of Samkhya is more fundamental. In it matter, energy, urge, being, growth, mind decay and annihilation of a material state are included: as are included the functions, expressions, repressions and sublimation of feelings. It analyses the causes of sorrow, sufferings, happiness and ecstasy. It indicates the ultimate purpose of life; and suggests the means of achieving it. The world is also contained within this chain of realities.

Therefore the world is a parinām̐a (consequence); an emanence of parinām̐a. Nothing comes from Nothing. Something has to come from Something. The chain is thus established. Manifest is; therefore, it 'is' from something, a Principle, a Cause which is Prakṛti. The ultimate Cause holds in its 'womb' the potential manifest-world. (Gita calls this Mahad-Brahma, the womb which generates the manifest (Sambhavah sarva bhûtänam. The coming into being of all elements).

"While every effect is cause, Prakrti has no cause."45 Prakrti is a causeless state of urging potency, and awaiting an opportunity to become".

Prakṛti, Pradhana, Brahma-maya, Mahad-Brahma, Mahat, Adya-Sakti are some of the synonyms used in relation to this concept. Pradhana suggests the positive intiative stimulus acting as the Primal Cause to the very first effect, or sequence. Which running into a series of consequences becomes manifest as Matter. Brahma is that which 'Grows', expands. Maya limits, restricts, measures and narrows. Mām̐yām̐ relates and binds.

Mahad-Brahma is the super-force of change from growth, in which 'decay' is also just an anticipation of growth.

Adya-Sakti is the Primal-Energy (Abstract and unmanifest). All these are vitally important in understanding Hindu Saivism which unites the concepts of the Cause and the Caused, and in which Ancient East's concept of the Great Mother, the Great Generative Source of Life was so successfully accommodated and absorbed. 'Lingam',

is the Named- object in the caused Being; 'Yoni' is the self-evident uncaused Cause which is the 'Source' of the Lingam. (See fig. p. 894)

Prehistoric emphasis on the phenomenon of fertility, which dominated, and still continues to dominate, oriental religious practices, as well as the practices of those historical religions which sprang from them, was derived from the nature of phenomenal beings. As a result, the phallic cult, which had become a ruling passion of the Oriental and the Mediterranean religions, did not develop into a metaphysical system which aimed at solving the mystery of life. It just replaced the phallic form of worship by a symbolised expression of the cause-effect chain of the manifested world. As a result the phallic, phallicism and sex have become an obsession, from which the practices of the Western culture are not yet free. It has become a part of their religion to see phallic in the least suggestive trend. Religion to be real and effective must encourage freedom of thought, i.e., philosophy, which encourages metaphysics.

Thus the Purusa in Samkhya cannot be conceived by some as a con- sorted second to Prakṛti, and as an abstraction of intellectual and spiritual ideas. Consorting and coupling is suggestive of phallic imageries and sex practices. The apperceptive mass of experience obsessed by the strong trait of phallicism promptly equates the consorting of Purusa and Prakrti as copulation of the Male and Female. In fact, at the state of Puruṣa and Prakṛti no idea of sexual organisms, no biological concept crosses the mind of the Sämkhya-Yogin. Puruṣa and Prakrti in Śaivic parlance are known as Siva and Sakti, and stand beyond the pale of phenomenal manifested sex.

Prakrti is non-Self, unmanifest and unlimited and unfettered by any limited qualities. This is not the case with the Self, which is Puruṣa, which from the beginning is imbued with knowledge and purpose.

Samkhya Karika-Bhasya is explicit about this:

The products are caused, while Prakrti is uncaused; products are dependent whilst Prakrti is independent; the products are many in number, limited in space and time, while Prakrti is one, all pervading and eternal. The products are the signs from which we infer the source. Prakṛti can never perish, and so it could never be created. An intelligent principle cannot be the material out of which the inanimate world is formed.

Spirit cannot be trans- formed into matter. Besides, agency belongs not to Purusa, or the soul, but to ahamkara or self-sense which is itself a product."

The attempt of Samkhya to relate the multiplicity of our heterogeneous and common experience, which appears to us as chaotic, loose and un- defined, to a singleness of substance, is a significant contribution of human endeavour for explaining the world, and life. This does not compel us to become poor specialists; nor does it drive our emotion to hobble in a befogged servility to religious devotion. Prakṛti of Samkhya is not 'matter' as we know or accept it. Purusa cannot produce Prakyti or Prakrti cannot produce Puruşa, thinks Sämkhya. Evolution moves towards a defined purpose. It is neither whimsical nor accidental, nor spasmodic. Prakyti, as Sämkhya admits it, is not a material substance nor a conscious entity. It evolutes not only the elemental world, but also the psychical. In describing Prakrti Dr. Radhakrishnan uses a revealing phrase: Prakrti is the "symbol of the never-resting active world-stress." It goes on acting. There is no blue-print plan; there is no scheme; there is no explanation. It is its own explanation. It is its own joy. Because it is purposive, evolution without cessation, it appears as the ever-receding horizon that challenges the adventurer of the spirit to dare the Beyond.

Prakyti is "that which never is, nor is not; that which exists and does not exist; that in which there is not non-existence, the unmanifest; without any specific mark; the central background of all."47

Satkaryavāda

Satkāryavāda is an important Samkhya theory which affects Kash- mir Saivism intensively. The basis of Satkäryavada is laid in this per- petually receding and evoluting concept of Prakrti. Satkaryavāda says that a thing is produced (through the evolution of the Gunas): but not created. The question of a creator, therefore, does not arise. This is also a Samkhya stand. In discussing and understanding fully what Saivism means to the Hindus, a basic comprehension about the Samkhya system becomes imperative in consequence. Yet the entire system in its detailed intricacy may both prove useful for the discussion at hand. But aspects of the Samkhya system have to be taken well in hand for comparing the Sämkhya idea with those of the Greeks, and with the pronounced phallic practices of the Oriental religions.

Gitä says Gunah Prakyti Sambhavah: (i.e.) "Gunas spring from Prakrti." Anandagiri says, "The Gunas 'are' the primary constituents of nature, and are bases of all substances." Their emergence is dependent on Purusa. The limitations imposed on the individual characteristics of things and lives are conditioned by the presence of the Gunas; Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and are best described in the Gitä.

Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are inherent in Prakyti, and cling to objects as 'qualities'. (Balanced and harmonious, whilst at the state of Prakṛti; in any state other than the Prakrti, they get imbalanced. This state of imbalance is what causes a projection, an expression, or manifestation. In the balanced state the three Gunas, together constitutes Prakyti.) This stand causes a subtle difference of Samkhya's idea and the idea of the three states of Dr. Sheldon referred to before, which classifies but does not claim an integrated source.

The Three Gunas

Gunas integrate a body and adhere to it. They conduct the body.

The Three Gunas 343 Sattva is at peace, and transparent. So that it clings, and acts through joy and knowledge. (The spirit universal is the acme of this transparent power. So is the Soul spiritual, which knows nothing as contrary. The happy and contented Ego knows, realises, and expresses its absolute nature by saying "I am that", or "Thou art that".)

Desire is the motive force of Rajas, it acts through thirst, and seeks relish. Naturally this binds to a sense of plurality and multiplicity. Ego gets attached and more attached even as it acts.

Tamas deludes, as it is born of lack of sense, and acts through an opaque consciousness. It expresses itself through heedlessness, laziness and sleep. Sattva leads to happiness; Rajas to action; and Tamas, rul- ing the inner power of discrimination, attaches to heedlessness. When Sattva predominates, Rajas and Tamas are kept subdued; similarly when Rajas predominates, Sattva and Tamas (are kept subdued): and when Tamas predominates Sattva and Rajas (are subdued). Sattva is dominant when every 'gate' (sense perception) of the body is illumined and receives knowledge (of the absolute). Rajas is dominant when the entire per- sonality hunger for achievement through actions leading to fulfilment of desires. Tamas is predominant

when the being is weighed down by sloth, inertia, heedlessness and delusion (both externally and internally).

The being experiencing death when Sattva is predominant, attains the spheres of the knowers of spirit. When Rajas is predominant, attains the sphere of action; and when Tamas is predominant, attains the world of delusion."

This shows that Sämkhya means Prakṛti to be a state of balance amongst these three Gunas. Imbalance of the three creates evolutes which are substances, each of which manifests the state of imbalance which limits one object or substance as distinct from another. Thus 'Guna' itself is a substance, as Vaiseşika states.

Modern physics agrees that atoms or substances are the primal shape of matter of which the universe is made. Protons and electrons are electrically charged to express themselves into atoms. Electrons and protons are continuously activised in a field where their actions and reactions discharge radio-active energy. Some scientists explain the radiation of solar energy to be responsible for such commuting activities and chained reactions amongst the electrons and protons. If this be the case, , it is logical to assume that a time, eventually, is bound to come when this activity between electrons and protons would cease, because of the exhaustion or extermination of one or the other. Is this not total extinc- tion of form, and known as Pralaya (cataclysmic deluge), Cosmos going to Chaos? Yet during Pralaya, too, energy subsists, and is known as praiti. Hence the preta-(bodyless spirit in search of location) state after the demise of the body-form has been conceived by those who enquire into the 'life after death'. Whenever, and if, the positive and negative electrons, and protons evolve out of energy's ever-creative urge then alone a new creation would spring up..

The Puranas speak about many Pralayas (deluge leading to chaos) and Srafis (Creations). They also speak of simultaneous activities for Pralaya and or fi in different spheres of the vastness, known as the outer space. In no way, according to Samkhya, the Gunas could get mixed up. The three react on each other, but could never become one. Reaction ceases whenever they hit a neutralising balance; then the state so reached is a state of peace.

We are aware of the Gunas, and aware of how they react; but we are not aware of their 'formal character'. it is of a Sublime nature, which becomes cognisable only after attaining a state that 'Lumes' or becomes luminous, at a 'Sub' state. It becomes clear to

us only in imperception and awareness; and it is beyond description. "The sublime form of the Gunas are beyond human reach. That what could be seen is, as it were, illusive."

The Gunas cannot mix and become one; but the Gunas desire to over- come and predominate; and the appearance of one means the propor- tionate disappearance of the other two. They are, however, constant companions. The counterpart of Rajas is Sattva, and that of Sattva is Rajas; but Tamas claims as its counterpart both Rajas and Tamas. When and how they unite is not determinable. Each phenomenon is composed of mass, energy and an intelligible essence. Nothing in the comprehensible world exists without these three Gunas of which only one is free of dependence or weight. This one is Sattva; its opposite is mass, weight, inertia, perpetual dependence. This is Tamas, naturally. It is an obstruction both to conscious reflection, and a load to activity. Yet the intelligent stuff and the inert stuff (Sattva and Tamas) are similar in one respect; both are helpless in urging creations of the new. Both assist creation, though none wills it. Will is the characteristic of Rajas. It urges, and inspires Praiti already mentioned before. Rajas declares war against inertia, and activates. It supplies the necessary energy to fulfil its urge.

Unless this fact is fully absorbed, the very basis of Lingam and Yoni, as divined in Saivism, shall never be appreciated. Because of the mis- leading similarities seen between phallicism and Saivism, and the misuse of such superfluous similarities, and because of the natural depravity of those who live for a sensuous, amorous, smuttish life, certain traces of phallicism current in alien ritualisms and tribal cults are deliberately exaggerated. The pure and spiritual import of Saivism becomes exposed to a deliberate debasement. Again, in the name of religion, and under the naive pretence of purism, a lot of propagandist books are being com-mercialised where the writers pretend to know as much of Hinduism or Saivism as Dame Gossip knew of the Virgin and Her child.

For the ordinary devout, images generally stop at the limited message they convey in terms of secular interests and material gains. God is good because he 'gives' this, or 'cures' that; goddess 'y' is better because, her records of 'doing' this for 'z', or of conferring on 'Mrs. Q' the benefit of a child when all hopes had been abandoned. Such guarantees (?) and assurances (?) are contrary to the soul's search for peace and liberation, which comes only from a proper understanding of the objective, the object,

the approach, the method, and the lay-out of the rationale on which the firmness of faith and efforts depends. "A Sattvic sacrifice, performed in accordance with ritualistic directives has to be a sacrifice in itself, without expectations of any gains."

Realisation of transcendental knowledge awards liberation from the limited scope of material limitedness, as well as that of images. To the liberated, images become living. Then the limited becomes unlimited; person becomes imperson; concrete becomes abstract; the joy of self- realisation overflows, and covers everything, every feeling. He finds the same spirit saturating every form of existence.

Šaivism symbolises this process of attaining transcendental sublimation through devotion concentrated upon abstract rationales as represented by the Saivic icons. It develops stages of sublimation through devo- tional practices.

True, impersonal and unmotivated devotion in worship releases the Mind from the bonds of emotion. Freedom from emotional pangs alone permits a proper enjoyment of emotion.

Such liberation has been lacking. Truth has seen many enemies. But truth does not die. Śaivism persists as a sublime and spiritual practice amongst the austere Hindu spiritualists and saints, because of its effective- ness in keeping emotional, and even carnal, disturbances under a sub- limated control. It turns the urge of Rajas towards the sublime heights of Sattva.

Things, each and every phenomenon, has for their start an atom or atoms, which are evolutes of Electrons and Protons. The Gunas are subtler than these. Gunas are immaterial. Atoms and their constitutes are material after all. Electrons and Protons and their counteractions are assumptions based on observation, inference and reason. This is what we try to contact through our faculty of meditative comtemplation. Hindu seers insist that the atoms themselves are subjects to the subtle Gunas; and the electrons and protons too have their own share of the Gunas which are subtler substance. This we call as the 'nature' of proton, or of electron, or of an atom.

Discrimination is an evolute of imbalance of the Gunas in the material body of the electro-magnetic atoms, which never follow a given method of mixing, or proportioning, or defining, or accepting, or rejecting their respective combinations. If there is any method, it has not been discovered yet. Mutations are unpredictable; so is

the balancing of the Gunas. To say that mutability is unpredictable is to say that the subtle balanc- ing of Gunas is a phenomenon, the operations of which are clouded in mystery to material science. Whereas the protons and electrons are the "Bhútas' or astral 'bodies' that take shape into matter, the Gunas consti- tute the subtle aspirations in the bodies, and confer on them individual 'character': 'potentiality': personality. The point of cause, and the point of motive, in the cycle of existence, start and end at the same point in a circle. The space within the circumference is the sea of consciousness.

Material constitutes differ from one another in transparency of intel- lection, aspiration and spiritualism. In accordance with this difference a thing or being is Sättvic, or Tamasic. Intellect, Conscious-Self Mind, Apprehension, Desire or Emotion, all and each of them enjoy its own share of the Gunas; and according to the presence of Sattva or Tamas is nearer or further from peace and joy Anandam.

While discussing the concept of Puruga we shall note that Puruga is the only substance evoluted from Gunas, because Puruga is the counter of Prakyti. As such what 'is' in Prakyti, 'is not' in Puruça.

Samkhya has not regarded atoms as either eternal or immutable. Motion, immotion and spirit alone are eternal and immutable.

Discrimination is the nature of 'things' or evolutes. An indiscriminate state of a thing is 'Suddha-sattva'; 'Being in its-primal state. (Sat is derived from the verb-root 'sas' which in English means 'to be';'-toa' means '-ism': sal-teaman abstract state of the essence or spirit of the thing. Plato's Ideal could be compared). Sattva should mean, therefore, Essential State of a thing without any interference from any 'Otherness' inclusive of Gunas.

Simply speaking, Sattua free from the Gunas, is pure Sattva, or Suddha Sattva. This is a state; and must not be confused with the Sattva Guna, which as Guna is always present in a 'thing' along with the other two Gunas. In other words whereas the Gunas do not have any existence, except as inherent discriminating traits, of the units of the name-world Sattva is an essential state by itself, and is known as Suddha-Sattva (Imma- culate Positive).

In discussing Vira Saivism we shall have need for using the concept of Suddha-Sattva, along with Sattva as a Guna. Things as things are urgeless. Urge is invoked by Rajas.

Once urged, motion becomes a factor. Unless an immobile factor obstructs, motion, once invoked in an object, is perpetual. Perpetuity is the nature of motion. Its stoppage comes from the world of inertia. Unaffected by inertia motion would be hypothetically perpetual.

Rajas urges Tamas; but confuses Sattva. So in all objects, of which the world is made, energy exists in three states: emergence, progress, and lack of progress. What is true to the material world. is also true of the spiritual world. Knowledge, for instance is self-emerging; but it prompts growth through cultivation, or decay through inertia. These three principles are interrelated by a reaching process of gradual obstruction.

Mass and Energy in this process become manifest to our sense as individual and distinct phenomenon. Mass is perceptible to senses; but whilst being perceived by the senses, the forms suffer from the dis- ability of limit and confusion. To our inner senses ideas as things are total, limitless and clear. The things themselves always fail to reach this totality. The inner senses are abstract and are equipped to conceive abstractions, which for them are more sustaining than concrete forms. Revelation grants a clearer insight than exposition. The lack of stability of the mind could be eliminated by the use of the inner senses which are beyond the reach of the mind as the centre of a storm is; no winds could suffer this centre.

Purusa and Prakṛti

The relation of Siva and Sakti is closely comparable to Samkhya's idea of Purusa and Prakrti. In the XIII chapter of the Gita a body has been termed as 'KŞetra', or 'The Field', the soul has been termed as "Ketrajna', or 'The Knower', and the evoluting factor of energy, known as Prakyti is known as the 'KŞetr' or the worker in the field.

Prakrti is unconscious activity, and Purusa is inacuve con- sciousness. The body is called the field in which events happen all growth, decline and death take place in it. The conscious princi- ple, inactive and detached, which lies in all active states as witness, is the knower of the field.... The witness is not the indivi- dual embodied mind but the cosmic consciousness for which the whole cosmos is the object. It is calm and eternal and does not need the use of the senses and the mind to its witnessing.

Ksetrajna is the supreme lord, not an object of the world. He is in all fields, differentiated by the limiting conditions, from Brahma, the creator, to a tuft of grass

though he is himself devoid of all limitations and incapable of defination by category. The immutable consciousness is spoken as cognizer only figuratively (upacarat),

This does not agree with the materialists who maintain that all things, inclusive of the mental phenomena, spring from matter. Neither soul nor mind escapes matter as a primary abode. Apparently Samkhya appears to deny the existence of anything beside matter. Sämkhya appears to explain all evolutes through the Gunas and Prakyti.

This is but an ostensible view. Sämkhya admits of another category of substance beyond the reach of the Gunas. This category is known as Purusa. "He who sleeps (Vie) in the Puri (Home Body) is Purusa. Infinite and innumerable are the Purusa-s. This is not the 'Soul' of Vedanta. Soul is the abode of Sat-Cit and Anandam (Reality-Conscious- ness and Ecstasy) but Sämkhya's PuruŞa is unqualified. Joy is inherent in Prakyti; not in PuruŞa.

PuruŞa

PuruŞa has no active part to play. Action is intrinsic to Prakyti. If purusa appears to reflect any consciousness, it is because Prakrti with her Gunas stimulates Puruga. A crystal when approached by a light, is vivified by its colour; but with the disappearance of the light, the crystal remains unimpassioned and opaque, with its original lack-lustre anti- vivification. Waves of opposites, conflict and clash; resultant complexes reflect on PuruŞa without causing its fundamentals to change. It is animated, stimulated, made to act and react, reflect and deflect. But it itself does not change. It has no evolute. This concept brings to the mind the concept of empirical-self and transcendental-self as defined by Kant. Samkhya too, recognises these two roles of the self: one, the personal self, with ego as its evolutes; and the other, the Purusa, the unqualified, immaculate positive. The first claims Prakrti as its origin; the second is pure consciousness and independent. Ego is characterised by its lack of consciousness; that it appears to be conscious, is due to its close contact with Puruga's consciousness.

Western philosophers have laboured much on considering the material source of Mind. This does not agree with Samkhya's stand. Sämkhya considers mind, intelligence and ego as unconscious evolutes: Conscious behaviour, Samkhya says, is the immediate irresistive effect of the Union of the unconscious Prakrti with the Conscious Purusa, without the impact of this union consciousness as a power would remain blinded. This

union is not one of identity. The two remain as two. Yet either is affected by either's respective qualities, as 'the light and the crystal' or 'the moon and the moonlight' as analogies demonstrate.

Prakrti

Prakyti, on the other hand, is an abode of the three Gunas; it is con- scious, only because it is in contact with the PuruŞa; it is dynamic. The origin of creation has been argued in two ways; one is the atomic beginn ing known as Arambhavada: and the other emphasises on evolutes (Pari- namarada). The first is mainly substantial; the second is evolutionary.

The second admits of changes growing out of changes, and evolving a complex world where the manifested manifoldness is nothing but conse quential. The latter one agrees with Samkhya. The diversity of charac- ter does not obliterate the fundamental unity that we perceive. Samkhya thus depends more on intellectual reason than on perceptual facts and inferences. Prakrti is the cause: PuruŞa is the caused. Evolutes emerge with inherent complexes and imbalances planted in the very beings. The first Cause appearing in physical universe constitutes the progressive complexes.

Complexes are consequences of the imbalance of the three Gunas. The three are not only distinct, or different, but also counteracting and antagonistic. But the antagonism does not preclude harmony; in fact, this harmony has to be brought about; and it constitutes a challenge to the perfect seeker. Thus the physical universe revolves and evolves, sub- ject to its physical laws; but its apparent contradictions do not deter the Yogi or the Wise man from wresting the ultimate harmony of a Single Reality pervading all The Cosmic is a whole (the Brahman).

As the fundamental idea of gold is based on a variety of golden orna- ments, so the fundamental idea of a single Prakrti is derived from the phenomenal Gunas. No Gunas, no Prakyti. The Cosmic Gunas rest in Prakrti in a state of perfect equilibrium, but with the contact of PuruŞa they get activised, and evolve into physical entities along with Gunas in them, but reacting in an imbalanced state, which in turn evolves com- plexes and varieties. The three become many and innumerable, as the limited figures on the dice evolute innumerable moves in the game by being thrown again and again; and as

evolutes from the same game various complexes shoot up; and catastrophic changes in life, property, history and culture follow.

Then there is in this Prakyti the inherent faculty of motion, dynamism change. Nothing but the Puruga is static. Puruşa, like Time, appears to be changing but does not change. Since Prakrti is changing, and because our perceptions are effective from within the Prakṛti, we feel Puruşa or Time to change, although it is static. The trees seen through the window of a fast-moving car appears to race, not the occupant of the car. The tree we see is moving 'within', although it looks still. This book looks still, but forces of disintegration function and operate the moment the book had reached the final shape and category of a book. Any further progress from the zenith, means a downward motion in any direction. There is nothing still or static. This is Parināmavāda of Samkhya, of which Prakrti is the vibrant cause.

The mechanism of Experience in Sämkhya depends on Prakṛti, and her dynamism. Things that are out of myself are animated, mostly by Tamas, that which is within myself is animated, mostly by Sattva. Envy, Jealousy, Doubt, Confusion actually are secondary evolutes. The primary evolute of the inner-Self, that feels and acts with discretion, is Antah- karana, or a constitute of mind, intelligence and ego (Mana, Buddhi and Ahamkara). These could be tainted and corrupted by alien reactionary forces; but in its true nature the active spiritual force, we call conscience, is the effect of Antahkarana's operations which reflect pure Sattva Guna.

It is a part of the man as long as he lives, and affects him hereafter. It is an essential part of his true self, his subtle being, his Linga Sarira.

The Universe emanates from Puruşa because of Prakrti's active role within the former. It is Ultimate; Independent; Versatile and Natu- ralistic. Thus it is called Paratpara, Svairini, Prasati and Sea-bhaud. (Away from Beyond; Adultress; Procreative and Self-willed).

This analysis of the nature of Prakrti and Puruşa is essential for a correct comprehension of the subjectivity underlying the icon of Siva as Lingam, and Sakti as Yoni, or that of the image of Ardha-nari-ioara, the half-man-half-woman, Hermaphroditic representation of Hara and (Uma) Parvati. Šiva and Uma form a couple (Mithuna): and out of this cosmic Mithuna (Mithunata-coupleness; often

confused with copulation or Maithuna) the universe has evolved. Yet Uma, otherwise described as the Mountain-Maid, or Parvati, the consort of Siva, even in the Purana-legends, has been the eternal virgin who never bore a child of her own body, because she was no 'body'. If this is properly imaged, understood and realised then, and only then, the mystery underlying the Hindu concept of 'Reincarnation' shall be followed. That which has no carnal existence, does not have to assume a body-state in being re-incarnated. But of that later. (Compare with this the Hermaphrodite statuary spread all over the European museums inclusive of a famous one in the Louvre.)

The Erotic Forms in Indian Temples

Another point projects out of this mystic concept of the cosmic couple and the cosmic union. It concerns the concept of Parama-rati of the pard- mithuna. The Siva and Visnu temples in ancient India abounded with erotic (?) representations in sculptures of the super-abundant, utterly disinhibited, voluptuous self-effacing joy of the body's raptures and adora- tion. The figures exhibit the solar functions of fecundity and eros. (Eros in the Hindu myth is not the progeny of Venus, but of the Sun; i.e. Visṇu). Cultivation and propagation of all forms of lives is mysteriously connected with a 'thrill' (spanda). This urge and thrill stimulate and electrify all lives from the plant and the crustacea to the reptiles and animals, in- clusive of man. In approach, character and challenge these representa- tions are quite different from the phallic representations current in the Oriental religions, and covertly surviving in the Christian church-rites.

A comparison between the temple-architecture of Konarak, Bhuvanes- wara, Ellora, Puri, Khajuraho and the phallic sculptures carved on the Christian churches of Cirencestu, Herefordshire, Irish Shelah-na-gigs, (see Plates 7, 8, 9, 9A, 9B) and on other mediaeval churches spread all over Europe makes the point clear.

Such representations of the joy of creation was itself a joyous pursuit in a world of ideas where sex was not taboo, or birth was no sin. It was featured in a society where ethical behaviour related more to considera- tions of the other one's feelings and susceptibilities than to a mad race for possessiveness. It did not feature in Saiva temples alone. Tantric Uma-Maheśvara, Pasupata temples as well as the temples of the Sun, or the temples of the anthropomorphic Visnu image of the Sun (similar to the Apollo or Mithraic temples), featured these images. We are ashamed of this today because we have grown accustomed to hypocrisy.

The artistic carving on the outer walls of the temples appeal to the sense of aesthetics, and to that peace of mind which is derived from such qualities as proportion, balance, flexibility of movement, freshness and rhythm. The crude phallic representations of the Mediterranean cults make a rude fetish of the phallus and of the vulva with their carnal func- tions rudely underlined. The Sanskrt word 'Lingam', as we shall later study, means to phallus only figuratively; and the word 'Yoni' means vulva, womb, uterus in the same secondary way. The etymological meanings of these words convey really abstractions in the logical process of naming of evolutes. We have noted this before.

This does not entirely preclude or apologise for the actual presence of phallicism in Indian religious practices. There are phallic practices still brewing within cults accommodated within the expansive family of Hinduism. India with its large percentage of Austric inhabitants, and exposed to the Oriental cults from the West and the Mongoloid cults from the North, naturally provides a hot-bed of phallic insurgence, much of which still survive lustily within the little known world of the Indian tribes. Together with its presence, there exists a menace too. This, more than anything else, has actually prompted a class of writers to spread more confusion through irresponsible and vague observations and opinions gathered from lamentably inadequate uninitiated, but darkly inhibited sources. Those of the Western authors who delight in humiliating any pattern of life other than a so-called advanced (sic) or Christian life, often open a vitriolic broadside against Hinduism and its practices. And in doing so, they often project the Western phallic mind in viewing Hindu rituals and forms.

This may be inevitable. But such attitudinous comments, instead of clearing an issue, only add more confusion to what is already a subject of mysticism. Forms after forms to which Greeks, Romans, Gauls, Goths, Hûns, Franks, Celts and Vikings have been exposed, still happen to survive in Western churches. When minds trained in and accustomed to these forms (conveniently protected under the garb of some ancient form of mysticism) actually confront similar signs and forms, inevitably, by a pro- cess of easy identification and simplification, the two get equated. And here lies the great danger.

The only way to overcome such a blunder is to acquire first a reliable hold on the metaphysical backgrounds of what is known and practised as Saivism. The fear of the phallic acts as a complex in those who find this to be a blind submission to idolatry, and an excuse to dissipate freely in the indulgent philosophy of the eros. Such fear had

made the Vedas and the Hindus condemn the idolatrous and dissipating practices of phallicism, which had hit the border-lands and the sea-coasts of the Indian peninsula. The earlier Pasupata-Nakulisa, Kālāmukha and the degenerated Jaina forms met with the most vociferous, even militant, opposition of the Śaivaites. Śiva had been the emblem of purity and sublimation. Śiva meant getting above the physical handicaps. Śiva had been worshipped as the epitome of austerity and transcendental Yoga. The legend about the austerity of Uma in achieving Śiva as Her mate must provide with an evidence and an example.

Atman

In explaining the nature of self two points have to be carefully emphasis- ed. First, that the Purusa or the Subject-Consciousness is not a product (not produced from any other before it. It is It.)

Atman 'is'. What is the body? It is just an aggregrate of the severals. Many named objects conglomerated into a perceptible and accepted whole is a body. And, within every Body certain functions, and characteristics are inherent; this is due to the Gunas. This is not true of the Atman, which is not a 'body'. It 'is'; and in being what it is, it is character- less, bodyless, causeless and functionless, unless influenced by Prakṛti. The Body like a boat, is an aggregrate of several limbs and parts. But there must be someone to 'Sail' by it; else it might not be a boat at all. A floating object is a boat when it sails or is capable of sailing something else in it. This Body has to be enlivened by Consciousness which makes the Body something more than the Body. This is the Being in the Body. This is the Atman, the Jiva, a ray from the Cosmic Atman, the Para-mätman. It just is; and nothing more.

The second point is that the Self, apart from Intelligence (Buddha), functions through consolidating experiences into a single whole. This consolidation would be impossible without the Self.

This "Self is defined as pure spirit, different from the Body, or Prakrti.

If it were liable to change, knowledge would be impossible. As its charac- ter is consciousness, it helps to bring the products of the revolutionary chain into self-consciousness. It illuminates the whole sphere of thought and feeling. Puruşa's nature

of unfailing light does not change. It is present in dreamless sleep, as well as states of waking and dreaming, which are the modifications of Buddhi. So, Puruşa exists, though it is neither cause, nor effect."

This is a kind of subject-object duality (same as imaged in the Siva- Sakti figure). The world of opposites belongs to Buddhi, or intelligence, and is reactive; in other words it is the producer of further chains of counter-effects.

Puruşa is animated by consciousness but is not the state of bliss which presupposes a feeling and a feeler. As a dual-state, therefore, a state of bliss cannot adhere to Puruşa. Pain-pleasure, more-less, feeler-felt, etc., imply a duality of subject-object, which is quite alien to the stillness of Puruşa, and quite innate in the conscious urges of Prakṛti, Samkhya's Puruşa is emancipated consciousness, not cognisable within any kind of limit, measurement, time or place. Limits create the unhappiness of desire; limits create sorrow. Misery does not belong to the soul. Purusa's freedom from all ties, all Gunas, distinguishes it from Prakṛti.

Selves are many. Each experience is a self-unit in itself. Any difference is created by Prakrti; hence distinguishing experiences create multiplicity, comparison, desire, sorrow, etc. and evolve from Prakrti and the Gunas. (These are known to the Hindus as Devatas, gods; to Śaivaites as the celestial family.) To experience Unity is to liberate the self. Mon- ism therefore boils down to experiencing the oneness of the Essential Ex- perience; and then realise the Conscious Puruşa acting through Prakrti as Śiva.

The Conjugal Cause

Thus the Atman of the Upanisad, the Om of the Sound, the Siva of the ritualists, is but the Puruşa of Samkhya. Any similarity drawn between this fundamental search of the concept of the metaphysical abstraction known as the Reality on the one hand, and the popular phallic explana- tion of Lingam and Yoni as phallus and vulva on the other, is calculated to provoke and demoralise a sublime system of spiritual thinking. Saivism stands on this own merit. It is sheer charlatantism to equate this profound system with a rude cult.

Gitä clearly states "Prakrti is my womb; and I cast seed in it...."58 Prakyti and Puruşa as the 'Mother' (Source) and 'Father' (Origin) produce creation. In other words the

physical Universe is an evolute of the princi- ple of eternal and transcendental contact between Puruşa and Prakyti.

But is not Prakrti the 'Nature'? And as Nature is it not the nature of God too? Thus God became both Mother and Father in one. Upanisad asks-"Thou art the male, the female Thou; the virgin, or the young bachelor; thou art the multi-faced life, as well as life's decay; thou (again) stroll in old age with the aid of a weak stick."59

The Supreme is the Seminal Reason of the world. All beings result from the impregnation of matter through Logoi Supermatikoi or Animating souls. Through them God carries out his work in the World. These seeds of the Logos are the ideal forms which mould the gross world of matter into beings. The ideas, the patterns of things to be, are all in God. Every possibility of manifestation had its root in a corresponding possibility in the unmanifest, wherein it subsists, as in its eternal cause, of which the manifestation is an explicit affirmation. God has an eternal vision of creation in all its details.60

This sounds close to the Greeks in idealism; yet the Greeks could not get out of the duality of the thinker and the thought; of idea itself and the matter that formed out of the ideas. They failed to break through this world of dualism. The normal world of ours evolves out of Idea and Form, both working in togetherness. Our love for God is projected from within us in reaching this oneness seen in separate contents. One of the drawbacks of the analytical mind is that it reaches a chaotic end where ideas break into innumerable streams of scepticism, as a river does at the deltaic bogs and swamp. Till these crystallise into solid realities, they remain unproductive beds of ill-health. Unless the analytical minds find out a synthesising unity, mere analysis fragments the sense of totality. Even the power of Love, the greatest expression of the synthesising force, however sincere or devoted it might be, when exposed to be anatomised, as psycho-analysis attempts to do, is des- tined to lead to the negative forces of cynicism and scepticism. The power of Love as a beacon to the spiritual realisation of the One into the many is an achievement in synthesis.

This, in short, accounts for the failure of the materialistically analytical mind of the West, which classifies to distinguish; but fails to unify for ab- sorption and Love. Religion, culture, life and peace of the analyser suffers from a lack of integrity. It works like the eager mechanical mind which could break into pieces a computorised

device without having the ability to put them together. Such a mind enquires, finds out; but fails to build up joy as a unit. It analyses religion, but misses God. It crosses, recrosses and meticulously maps out the desert sands of scepticism, doubts, agnosticism without ever reaching the banks of the luscious river- valley of creativity, Love and spiritual sublimity. God may be transcen- dental, and beyond our human nature, yet the human soul is capable of reaching the depths and climbing the heights of this joy, the Divine joy, that is Śivam. Such joy realised by the soul is a direct expression of God.

The Fiery Lingam

In a legend of the Vayu Purana" Brahma, the Creator of the manifest world, went together with Visnu, the vivifying power behind life growth, to go in search of the limit of this joy that is Śivam. They returned un- fulfilled. Both ought to have confessed that the Effulgent Vivification of the great Pillar of oneness crystallised in the concept of Sivam could not be comprehended by Life's or matter's limits, which characterise the manifest world. It was a challenge. The Sublime Real's limits were to be compre- hended and measured in Time and Space. This is an absurdity. The perceptible manifest cannot reach the limitless; the power that gradually, grows and evolves life, too, fails to measure the limit of the Real which is unlimited. The challenge was tempting; and it mislead even the greats. But the Lord of the Manifest fought shy of admitting his limitations; too weak to face the truth, he (Brahmä) lied to the effect that the unmanifest after all, has a limit; and that he has seen it. The Lord of Life's Power of Growth, Visnu that is, knew better. The secret of Growth was known to him. He, the Lord of the Wheel, the vivifier, knows that decay is also a form of Growth. It is an anticipation of Growth. He said that joy, or its forms, have no limit whatsoever. The Immense is unlimited. In Hindu legends and iconography this idealism, has been expressed in a Lingam, in an abstract language of stone. This sublime idea has often been subjected to ribaldism and obscenity by incompetent narrations in inadequate language by motivated writers. The key board for playing on this louty Rabelaistic ribaldry at the cost of Hindu metaphysics was the word Lingam, which means 'Subtle', Symbolic.

Later, while discussing the worship of the Lingam, we shall elaborate this aspect from Lingopasana Rahasya and Śiva Purana. All the authori- ties emphatically insist that the

basis of the adoration of the Lingam under- lines an appreciation of the concepts of Siva and Sakti as Puruşa and Prakrti of the Samkhya. "He who adores the Linga (Subtle) knowing it to be the First Cause, the matrix of consciousness, the substance of the universe, is closer to me (Siva) than any other being."

Else the study of such fundamental concepts as Puruşa and Prakṛti, of Samkhya; Siva and Sakti, of Tantra; Sat-Cit-Anandam, of Vedanta, introduces the enquirer into the mystery of Siva. This is not the mysticism of the Eleusians, the Pythagoreans, the Cybellines and the Dionysians; this is not the phallic practices of cults and occults ranged from the prehistoric tribal times to the times of Tyre, Nineva, Babylon, Knossos, Paphos and the Pharaos. Let not the Proto-Indo-Mediterranean forms mislead us. Let no preconceived prejudices influence the independent study of Saivism.

Samkhya is not our subject. The antiquity of Samkhya, the concepts of Puruşa and Prakṛti and the concept of the Samkhya dialectics on the origin and decay of the manifested world-pageant has been an area of enquiry for our appreciation of the concept of Lingam and Yoni as used in Saivism. It is more than worthwhile to note this aspect of the problem. The fact is that phallicism has been in force within the proto-austroloid aborigines, and the indegenous peoples of India. Yet it is also a fact that the Oriental phallic religions were not granted a berth in the orthodox forms of Hinduism. How were these prevented? The answer lies in the study of the Samkhya; hence the relevance. Yet before we close this issue, a further survey of some other aspects of Samkhya could be rewarding.

Mahat and the 25 Tattvas

The idea of Mahat (the five elementary physical bodies of earth, water, heat, air and ether) is one of these. Sämkhya too holds on to an evolu- tionary theory. It is an evolution of spiritualism of the conscious purpose of the manifested world of beings, distinct from the Darwinian evolutionary theory of biological life. Puruşa, Prakṛti, the Gunas, together, produce evolutes. A quiet state of these evolutes is known as Pralaya, the flux-state of perfect sleep, inaction; the quiet of non-being. Agitation arouses it to Srsti, to the creative process. Gradual evolution of Prakṛti-Puruşa-Guna- Ahamkara-Buddhi and Mind get processed into the being of the manifested world-"The Pralaya or the sleeping state of the conscious-unconscious is provoked to agitation by the Gunas

in Prakṛti." The agitation awakens, but does not change. The potentiality of the grand oak lies asleep in the humble acorn. It is not Vikära. It is not clay becoming a pot. No interfering agency from out of the acorn actually turns it into what had not been conserved in its very elements and nature. It is what it was to be. This is not fatalism. The process is positive; and infallibly chalked out.

So Prakyti evolutes to Mahat, Ahamkara and the Five subtle evolutes of the formal elements known respectively as Tanmatras and Bhutas. So, Prakyti, to Mahat, to Ahamkara, to Tanmätra, each of which is the effect of a previous cause, which itself is an effect of another cause, is but graded states of evolutes. The sixteen evolutes that follow these are fully Vikytis, i.e., Formal-evolutions. The first seven are Prakyti-Vikyti, evolutes 'within' Prakrti itself. The first seven are conceptual; the others are perceptual.

This has been arranged as follows:

1 Purusa	**2. Prakrti**
(inert without Guna)	**(Urge with Gunas)**
(Abstract and Personal discriminatory variants)	2 Prakriti
3. Buddhi (Intellect)	10. Manas Mind
4. Ahamkara (Ego or self-sense)	11. Senses-Five (x)
5-9. Tanmatras	16-20. Organs of action Five (y)
5. Sound Ether	21-25. Gross elements Five (z)
6. Touch Air	
7. Form or Colour-Heat	
8. Taste Water	
9. Smell-Earth	

(x) Eye-Ear-Nose-Tongue-Skin.

(y) Tongue; Hands; Feet; Anus; Procreative organ.

(z) Earth; Water; Heat (Fire); Air; Ether.

supreme, blackening out all enlightenment; where apathy and sloth puts action to sleep. Tamas is represented by Black. It is a state not of the Dead, but of 'poten- tiality asleep'. This is the inert flux to which forms recoil after dis- integration. It is the Laya or Pralaya state. It signifies the supreme fact that Quiet is not Inert; Peace is not a dead-end. Death too harbours Life.

Thus, for each evolute emanating out of Prakyti, there inevitably exists a part of Puruşa, and a part of Prakyti; that is to say, a Conscious part is always ready to lead to the pure state of enlightened tranquil trans- parency of vision, together with a part of Prakrti which is always delighting in tossing the manifest into the whirls of the unmanifested agitativeness, called the Mind. As the pivotal mechanism controlling the personality of the Being, Mind leads and misleads towards sleep and darkness, or transparency and peace. In other words the Functional Being is not the Thinking Being; Conscious Self is not the Active self. One could be active even in a state of perfect stillness; a machine could be very active without being conscious at all. Let the activity of a person be taken as a positive proof of his Conscious Enlightenment. Let not a leader's influence be misjudged as progress of the people, or even of its unity. Let not the Power or the audacious pomp of a nation be taken for its vital and conscious superiority as peaceful contentment. Hunger, both of body and of soul, could starve and send beings to sleep; or could force multitudes to active struggle for existence. Being's own will, thus, determines its course, and helps rectify both past actions (of previous forms and lives)," and future progress. A full and vivacious conscious tranquil state (free from mechanical obligations) is the ultimate goal of Beings.

Thus, Puruşa and Prakṛti, together, evolute a state of discriminating faculties starting with intellect (Buddhi) on the one hand, and ending with perceptual sensations, such as Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell, all of which relate to the sense of 'I' or 'My', which is the intermediary evolute of Aham, the Self-sense. This opens up the vast and interminable forest of a person's emotional being. It is crowded with reaction and counter-actions, such as discrimination, selections, rejections, love, envy, jealousy, desire, frustration, doubt, suspicions, malice, treachery, and consequential sufferings and happiness. The human world of emotions is limited, cramped and short-lived. This last set of reactions and counter- reactions creates a field of perpetual restlessness, an abstract mechanism, known as Mind.

Sense-organs are five. Together, these develop what is known as the Mind, which acts in relation to the active world composed of the gross elements, brought to us through the five active organs. Mind synthesises the sense organs into a clear perception. Without the media of these five organs, the gross elements and the active organs, the five senses, to- gether, cannot form what is known as the Mind, which is synthesised per- ception.

Thus, it could be simplified by saying that Samkhya's Puruşa is religion's Śiva; and Samkhya's Prakrti is religion's Sakti. Samkhya's evolution is the world's procreative function. Šiva-Sakti could easily be equated by the unthinking novitiate, or by a process of naively simplifying empiricism as a Male-Female coital relation. This possibility lies at the root of the popular misconception that Saivism is phallic. Let me repeat, much that persists as phallic is covered by the excuse of Śiva and Saiva, There are Saivas and Saivas; but what is pure Saivism is an independent metaphysical system blossomed into a religious form.

Phallicism exists, and has been existing ever since, universally and unmistakenly. In India, precisely for the reasons given above, absor- tion of phallicism has been effected through Siva's grace.

The adoration of the phallic is innate, real, dominant and compelling In man. The Source of Life demands scrutiny, care and awe. Sex is a tremendous force. To deny it is to deny light from day. Whether a forc ed denial, or hypocritical repression, or living burial of this force is good for social health and cultural spirit is a moot question. Phallicism has been accredited with the glory of religious fervour, in practically all parts of the world, in all ages and in all religions. This is a fact. No longer moot.

It is also a fact that in India phallic religious forms were condemned. Pure Saivism was cultivated on a plane which even remotely entertained no phallic aberrations. The idea that Siva is pure Sublime.

III

The Yoga System

Patanjali has been the earliest exponent of Yoga. His system has been described in four sections:

(1) Samadhipada = meditative absorption;

(2) Sadhanapada = the means of attaining Samadhi;

(3) Vibhutipada = the resultant super-normal powers attainable through Samadhi;

(4) Kaivalyapada = the exposition of the nature of liberation.

Patanjali himself calls his system an Anusasana (Anu-past; Sasana- directive. Directions coming down from traditions), which suggests an earlier tradition of Yoga. Gita too speaks of this tradition (Euam prampară- praptam). The system must have been very ancient. Gitä further says, "This ancient Yoga system was lost for a good number of years. But I, Kṛṣṇa, am telling you."

The date of Patanjali has not been conclusively fixed; but the second century B.C. is the latest date fixed for Patanjali's systematised version."

The Yoga system and the Samkhya system are almost in agreement about determining the nature of creation, its sources and the subsequent evolute. The Samkhya system speaks of twenty-five Tattvas (principles);

but Yoga adds to it a twenty-sixth Tattva, and calls the odd one, Itvara. What Samkhya calls Mahat (i.e., Puruşa, with the Guna-enmeshed Prakrti reflected on it) is called Citta in Yoga. And Yoga's aim is to control the self-willed Citta from getting on its own way of running into the unmend- ing cycles of sequences and consequences, effects from causes, and causes from effects, thus getting encoiled ever and ever perpetually and be- wilderingly. The control of Citta's self-willed progress leads to liberation, which is the aim of Yoga.

But for this one difference the Samkhya ideas and Yoga principles are identically the same in most of the categories. The Puruşa of Samkhya also evolutes individual reflection, i.e., Purusas or Souls. There are in- numerable individuals reflecting the permutation and combination and the variations thereof, in action, reaction and interaction of the various evolutes. Starting from Mahat, Prakṛti develops in two parallel move- ments. One of them moves along the mentally aware path of Ahamkara (Ego), Manas (Mind), the five senses of congnition (Jnanendriyas) and the five limbs of action (Karmendriyas). The other moves along the Tanmātras (functions of senses), and the Gross Bhútas (The physical elements).

Vyasa in his commentary speaks of the apprehension of Mahat in Rûpa-Linga, (subtle but cognisable form) so that the state of Prakyti, prior to the Mahat-state, had been A-Linga or Non-Linga" (too subtle to be cognised, although comprehended). To suppose, therefore, in metaphysical context, the Linga to be a physical organ is profanity. It connotes the emergence of the unapperceptive into apperceptive, or the unmanifest and the unformed into form. The most popular Śiva icon is a dot at the centre of a circle. Like all icons it has its own interpretation. The dot signifies emergence out of the circle of flux and abstractions of matter or being; it is just a plastic representation of the metaphysical concept of emergence of individual identity out of an indeterminate flux of movement. A Tibetan Lamaic scroll paints the dark Prakyti delivering a grown up Śiva-form. The body's head is hanging down. It is half delivered. This symbolises the emergence of the Material world from out of the unmanifest (dark) Prakṛti.

In its Non-Linga state the unmanifest (Avyakta) is neither Perfect nor Imperfect; but Mahat is just a state of Perfect-Imperfect.

Asmita and Citta

The emergence of the name-world out of the nameless field of perpetual activity is by itself a cosmic phenomenon, a Ṛta (law). The play of Puruşa and Prakyti is not a play of two, or of one; but it is an interplay of One-in- Two and Two-in-One. This interplay is charged with awareness, which is vivified by Cit as Asmi-ta. (Asmi may be translated literally as 'I am'; Asmita is thus the property of self-awareness unrelated to anything outside the 'I'. Asmita, thus, in the Yoga system is a term charged with a techni- cality peculiar to Yoga, and not known to Samkhya. It is, as it were an inward consciousness, which helps reveal the utmost recesses of conscious- ness, inclusive of those strata of consciousness of which we are yet to be aware of. Awareness of the Tanmätras by the Self is due to the functional- ism of Asmita.

Ego differs from Asmita. Whereas Asmita is an absolutely uncorrupted state of fullness of self-awareness, ego is influenced by related objects and interests; and in consequence expresses itself as pride and vanity. 'I-ness' becomes 'I am'; or, the pure awareness of 'T' degenerates into a gross sense of 'My'. Ego 'relates' 'T' to 'Non-l' and creates reactions; Asmita does not relate at all. It is conscious of self. It is self-complete.

In Yoga Purusa is the witness; Prakṛti is the subject to be witnessed. So Puruşa of Yoga is the epitome of perfection, having no evolute. When intelligence itself evolutes into a variety of feelings, Puruşa only becomes aware by the reflections of Prakṛti on it. Thus although it derives the re- sults of intelligence, it remains unaffected by the changes in the evolutes.

Pure crystals have no hue of their own. They look colourful at the approach of colours. In association with red, it is red; with blue, it is blue. The change so brought about, is due to approaches foreign to it. It is just aware of the changes. Changes occur, of which the crystal as the mirror is just a dumb witness. Intelligence deals with the 'known' and 'unknown'. Puruşa is knowledge itself; not even the known. Its knowledge is independent of otherness. Light shows others; and by so doing reveals its effulgence; but things lighted do not affect the light at all. Water's liquidity does not depend on the object that gets sunk in it.

Puruşa and Buddhi (intelligence, awareness) are inherently one, except when Citta intervenes. When Citta is under control, Purusa's awareness remains smooth. Here comes the importance of eliminating Mind, in order to realise Puruşa in its perfect state. Awareness and Intelligence fluctuates. Puruşa, subject to changes in such awareness, also reflects the consequences of the change. Hence its liberation from interference, from causes, or from change, is always desirable.

Aim of Yoga

Intelligence is the hand-maid of Puruşa, and is saturated with the three Gunas. The presence of the Gunas in Intelligence leaves Puruşa itself unaffected. This might sound mysterious; and this is not only the mystery of Yoga, it is also the mystery of life. This life is much harassed with pain, sorrow, shocks and disappointments; it is filled with tensions, strains, struggles and failures; yet mysteriously, life clings to life, and hopes for happiness; even calls it happy. Thus, joy is a pursuit, an aim that life seeks, but life does not know the way of freeing joy from the tentacles of the octopus known as suffering. Life is a constitute of pain-pleasure pleasure-pain. To liberate Life from pain is the aim of Yoga. In the Yogic language Puruşa is both involved and uninvolved; aware but un- affected; contaminated with change, but is not subject to change. To liberate Puruşa of the fluctuating elements of Prakrti, Guna and Buddhi, therefore,

would be an achievement worthy of pursuit. Yoga offers the analysis, the code, the steps of exercise of this achievement, and leads to success (Siddhi). Whereas Samkhya is a system to be absorbed by pure intellection, Yoga demands practical exercise. Samkhya correctly appeals to the brain; Yoga's appeal is to the spirit; Sämkhya is meta- physical, Yoga is psychoanalytical; Samkhya corrects intellect, Yoga corrects emotion; Samkhya's steps are arithmetical, Yoga's steps are prag- matical and pathological.

Ignorance of the true nature of things causes desire and the like, which are the bases of pain and suffering in the world. The question of the origin of ignorance is meaningless in view of the beginninglessness of the world. Even in pralayas the individual cities of Puruşa return to Prakrti and lie within it, together with their own Avidyas, and at the time of each new creation or evolution of the world these are created anew, with such changes as are due to the individual Avidyas. These latter, manifest themselves in the Cittas as 'Klešas' or afflictions, which again lead to the Karmasaya, Jati, Ayus and Bhoga. Yoga accounts for creation by the agencies of God and Avidya. Through the force of the latter the ever-revolving energy of Prakrti transforms itself into modifications as the mental and material world: while God, though remaining outside the pale of Prakrti, removes the obstructions offered by the latter. Avidya is unintelligent and so is not conscious of the desires of the innumerable Puruşas; God is the intelligence adjusting the modifications of Prakrti to the end of the Purusas. The Jiva is found to be involved in matter, and this constitutes his fall from his purity and innocence,

Therefore Purusa has to be isolated from Prakrti in order to ensure the enjoyment of a pure state of beatitude, in its native innocence. The conflicting emotions play in the arena known as Citta (the area of mind) which has to be mastered through a process of analysis. Self-analysis is the surest way to neutralise the restlessness of the mind.

The Mahat of Samkhya is the Citta of Yoga. It is the first evolute of Prakrti. Intelligence, ego and mind, together, means Citta. Of these, Intelligence is Sättvic; ego is Rajasic, and mind, the seat of Avidyas, is Tamasic. (In a previous chapter we have discussed the Gunas: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.) Elimination of Tamas and Rajas leaves Sattva free; therefore elimination of ego and mind is essential for the liberation of pure Buddhi. Presence of Rajas and Tamas keep Buddhi, or Sattva, blurred. Yoga helps in

overcoming Rajas and Tamas. The Isvara in the Jiva comes fully to its own when Buddhi, free from Rajas and Tamas, shines.

The emotional reactions on Citta created by the presence of any object, or phenomenon is communicated through the sensory nerves and the sense- organs. What the sense organs experience, reacts on Citta. Through this, Citta is persuaded or dissuaded. The force released by this reaction is known as Vritti (inherent nature), which as a word, like Citta, is very significant for Yoga.

Pramana: Avidya: Smrti: Pratyabhija

Knowledge derived from Evidence is acceptable. An evidence could be:

(a) witnessed, when it is known as PratyakṢa-Pramana; (b) it could be gained by inference, when it is known as Anumana; or (c) it could be tradi- tional or authoritative, when it is known as Agama. When knowledge runs contrary to evidence and yet held on to, it is called Avidya, which is false-knowledge. Experience once gained is never lost. Stored expe- rience is Smrti or memory. As different from tradition, Smrti is personal, depending on personal experience. An experience which re- minds of a previous experience of like-nature, and helps thereby in its quicker comprehension, is known as Pratyabhijña. Although a mind in a state of sleep does not collect any experience as evidence, yet the Citta, which is liberated from Rajas and Tamas, and which being only pure Sattva, by keeping enlightened at every state (even the sleep-state), becomes aware of things and experiences, otherwise beyond the experience of the common man. In the dreamland liberated consciousness becomes aware of events happening beyond the sleep state. That prophecies come true is indicated by yogic authorities. Ordinary sleep, in a common Citta, darkened by Tamas, becomes a perfect state of peace for a Yogi, whose Citta charged with Sattva. "What is night for all beings is the time for waking for the Yogi.

There is another type of experience where a lot of flowery language is used to convey nonsense. The redundance of such nonsense, in spite of the high-sounding phrases, becomes obvious through previous know- ledge. Phrases like the horn of a hare, or the feet of a serpent, or the dusts of light, although catchy in sound are empty in sense, and signify nothing. Many a time, because of the eagerness to exercise a dominating point in argument, hollowness of substance gets covered by such high sounding inane phrases. Under the heading of 'evidence and facts' Patanjali cautions against such

Pedagogues. Simple points of fact, even though subtle and sensitive, should be, and could be explained by simple methods and simple phrases. Such control of language and arrangement of thoughts is indicative of an intellectual discipline which synchronises with the straightforwardness of language.

Vidya: A-vidya: Miracles

If Vidya is the process of the knowledge that leads to realisation and liberation, and is indicative of Sattva, Avidya is that which runs contrary, and is loaded with confusion, or Tamas. As long as the mind is over- come by Avidya, the perpetuity of life in Samsara (the cyclic order of life and death) will persist. Patanjali believes that from our present ten- dencies we become aware of the life that we had had to pass through.71 As long as mind is not free from Avidya, the cycle of cause (hetu) and consequence (phala) shall persist.

Often is the Yogi confused with the magician. Acts that are regarded as supernatural and magical, are expected of a Yogi. Miracles fall under this category of expectations. Mankind, in order to be convinced of the spiritual clear-sightedness and wisdom of a Yogic seer, expects of him some suggestive miracles as proofs of his genuineness. There is no saint, prophet or Yogi, accepted by mankind, with whose life miraculous inci- dents have not been attached. In the Catholic church conferring saint- hood on persons, even now, depends a great deal on performances regarded as miraculous. Canonisation depends on a complex process of enquiry by the unbeatified. The extraordinary or the spiritual is judged by the common and the mundane. This is a paradox indeed. But so is man's vanity that he inflates his ego by undergoing such empty pursuits. Reli- gion, liberation, peace and salvation have thus got unfortunately mixed up, to the joy of charlatans, and to a sad submission to credulousness.

It is a fact that in books of spiritual authority references to super- normal acts have often been made. The soul in transcendental beatitude (samadhi) acquires unlimited power over the limitations imposed by matter: the material body, the material world, and the material laws that conduct their operations. The Buddha, aware of the gifts of Samadhi, as well as the eagerness of the common man to witness the supernormal acts from a Yogi spurned such expectations and demonstrations. Exhibition of power is the sign of the weak.

Tapasya

Tapasya is the discipline of the body, and of the mind for acquiring freedom from the bonds casts over man by his material existence. The steps of the Tapas, when well exercised, lead towards his goal stage by Yoga-Miracles 365 stage. Each stage is perfect in itself, and becomes a step towards climbing higher. Krsna in the Gita says- "Even a little of this Dhrama (Tapas= Yoga) is helpful in rescuing from great fears. In following this Dharma no obstruction prevails; neither is there any total loss of efforts."""" Even when the highest Samadhi remains unattained, the very practice of the subordinate stages acts on the development of competence. The effects improve the man. Prajñāloka, or the Light of Wisdom, is attained through Samadhi which is the ultimate prize of Samyama, or controlled discipline of the body and vice versa.

Our five senses are limited to the material world. For travelling higher, we are to transcend the gross, as well as the aids to the gross mechanism. We climb higher in spirit by shedding weight. Intuition as supersensitive faculty is sharpened by the exercise of self-control (Samyama). Similarly, Yogic exercises assist physical fitness, mental fitness and faculties like mobility, immobility, fortitude, freedom from reflexes, freedom from organic demands, etc. Thus free from reflexes the Yogi acquires the sharply sensitive power of hyperaesthesia, which extends unlimitedly the scope of the functions of powers of ordinary senses. Thus sharpened in sensitive awareness, the given minds could be extended to feel itself operating in other times on different lives, or even in the minds of others. The Yogî attained an altitude beyond Time. The fourth dimension too, like the other three, offered by the world around, drops out. Mind becomes a liberated functionalism operating without physical handicaps, or mental reactions. A Yogî not only could read the mind of another, but also project his own mind into another.

Yoga-Miracles

These are not miracles, magics or supernatural phenomena. These are perfectly natural; they appear to be supernormal since the nor- mal mind, does not care to cultivate them. We take that to be a 'norm' which comes within our perceptible comprehension. But is it true to say that all of us have the same power of comprehension; or could we com- prehend all? Is there something beyond our 'normal' comprehension? Do we need special efforts to cultivate special powers of comprehension? Are there special phenomena beyond the pale of our 'normal' powers? Only then we could submit to the

humble fact that what we call 'normal' is in fact a degree of everyday secular convenience. There are things of special nature, super-nature that call for our super-faculties.

Time' for instance is incomprehensible in its totality. Yet we could overcome 'normal' obstructions that prevent us from comprehending 'Time'. Time-altitude gained, the past-present-future distinctions disappear, and the Yogi floats in a stream of super-time, i.e., eternity.

He becomes a seer. He, as it were, had acquired a pair of super-normal binoculars or microscopes. He could see the distantest distant, or the minutest minute. Transmission of one's mind, beyond one's time, even of one's faculties of perception without the aid of the gross body is just possible. This would be, indeed, against the materio-physical laws of electrodynamism of the magnetic field. But this is so. This is so because the Yogi's undertakings and discipline have been aimed at attaining power over and above these physical laws. Else he could not be a Yogi. He must transcend matter, and be aware of the spirit above. Matter would be of no concern to him at all. Space would be. Time does not concern him; Eternity does. Reaction has no hold on him; only Will, pure Will alone, is the Power he has mastered. It is no mystery. It is practical and perfectly under- standable. "First prove that sugar is sweet, and salt is not, then shall I believe or accept it," is a type of lazy reasoning. The proof is in the eating. There is not, and cannot be any other way. It is knowledge by experience (pratyaks-avagamam). The Yogi is his own authority, source, because the knowledge is personal and subjective; and none can prove it. There is no method. This, of course, could open scope to a crop of selfish imposters to have the credulous at their mercy. Credulity gives scope to the imposters.

Nothing is obscure to a Yogi. The Yogi is above the magician; above the savant; above men of action.74 The world of the cosmic is known to him as clear as the palm of his own hand. He who discerns the distinc- tion between the self and the non-self, gains omniscience and authority over all states of existence.75 This knowledge does bot appear all on a sudden. We are warned about its approach through the gradual increase of our sensitive and intuitive faculties. The faculty of comprehension appears to be charged, as it were, with a discerning light, known in the Yogic language as Pratibha. Vibhuti (Supernormal powers) has always been considered as a hindrance to Yoga and Samadhi. The desire of attracting popular notice, and of impressing public opinion

through a display of Yogic Vibhuti (miracles) betrays immaturity and noviceness. The maturer genuine Yogis of quality scorn to be demonstrators. But to the Yogis, for their facilities in the Yogic life, these Vibhutis are of immense value, although they neither look for these, nor are eager to display their powers. If the Yogi contains the Vibhutis within him, he ascends higher states, if he uses them for mundane 'benefits', he actually misuses them, and suffers degeneration spiritually. This is the reason why magic and miracles never testify the true Yogis. This is the reason why those who adhere to the demonstrative Yogi, usually get disappointed at the end.

The Yogic powers, as already stated, are not contrary to nature. There is a nature which is beyond our 'natural' ability to comprehend.

In the world of this cosmic nature, which for the common mundane sensuous senses is regarded as super-nature, the Yogin's acts appear to be perfectly natural, synchronising with the cosmic rhythms. So between Yogis and Yogis miracles mean nothing. All their correspondence and communications float quite naturally in perfect freedom, in a sea of libera- tion as it were. Thus the cosmic supplants the physical; the cosmic laws remain beyond the intelligence of the physical law. The Yoga Bhasya says, this perfect state is attainable through four factors: Ausadhi (drugs), Mantra (spells), Tapas (rigorous discipline) and Samadhi (the ultimate transcendental beatitude of concentration).

Let us discuss the four methods of inducing the objectivity of the mind which is known as a Yogic condition. The first of this is Ausadhi, herbs, i.e., drugs. There are a number of them, from arsenic, cocain to Dhat- úra, Ganjā and Bhang. The Yogis do use them to counter body condi- tions and climatic conditions. They never prescribe it as an escape, or a 'kick'. These are not used as habit forming addiction, which could be entering into a new bondage.

Mantra is chanting a given sound-chain with a given import. Its chanting alone is useless. To chant is to realise the underlying meaning and scope of the sound. It helps mental projection, and brings in con- centration. In accordance with the personal defect, want, need, capacity and scope this chant and the words that constitute the chant must differ. The guide (Guru) in this case is the one to diagnose the need of the indi- vidual, and prescribe the appropriate Mantra. The word Mantra literally means 'that which liberates the mind'.

Tapas has been discussed. It involves physical discipline, mental practice and pervades the entire functional area of the individual's physical and mental existence. To exercise and bring it under control is Tapas. It takes, usually, a long time to get into the reflexes, the rigours, that iron out the complexes of the mind, and the demands of the body. Tapas involves hunger, food, sleep, excretory habits, running into the minutest details of choice of company, kinds of beds, kinds of postures, choice of food and drink, hours of study, exercise and service, etc., etc.

Samadhi is the real thing. It is the 'Perfect Attainment'. The mind concentrated into the soul is neutralised into nothingness; and the faculty of awareness appears as steady as the flame of a lamp in windless darkness.

Everyone needs not undergo the same rigours over the same period. In accordance with Präktana and Samskäras, i.e., innate qualities attained through past 'Karmas', some attain Siddhi (perfection, success) and Samadhi (transcendental peace) sooner than others. These are endowed with a more sensitive psyche. Such born-psychics enjoy an earlier start, like seeded players in a tournament, over other aspirants of less accepted abilities.

One word in caution. In recent years, aspirants, out of their eagerness to attain to the spiritual ecstasy of sublimation, have been taking recourse to drugs and narcotics. This is not entirely new. In the oriental religions, and associated orgiastic seances, uses of drugs, narcotics and alcohol were quite frequent, indiscriminate and popular. Under the garb of Tantra and Yoga, the tradition of practices described to be meant for transcendental meditation have been preserved in association with the uses of narcotics. In the post-war social structure, where urban hunt for psychic solace has driven the youth to the escapists delight, degenerative use of drugs under the guidance of professional "Yogis has posed socio- economic problems. Such indulgences should not be associated with Saivism, or with any religion. Narcotic psychodellism need not be con- fused with spiritual ecstasy. Narcotic reaction need not be confused with mental poise and peace. The Yogic peace of mind is creative of sublime joy, which radiates health, energy and peace; contrarily the drugged or intoxicated psychodellic hallucinations leave the mind dis- tracted, morbid and utterly crestfallen. One is an expression, the other, a depression. One leads to eternal life; the other leads to suicide.

In the twenty-third aphorism of Patanjali's Yoga use of drug has indeed been recommended, but not at the cost of or as an alternative to, disci- pline and control. In tribal societies where drugs and hallucinating cult- rites go hand in hand, stones in phallic forms are used as an accepted form of fertility-cult worship. These are often confused as emblems of Saivic representations. These tribals naturally, indulge in various kinds of intoxicants. Although some of these forms pass as Śiva-adoration, actual Śaivism, based on Saiva Siddhantas make a fetish of self-control. Natur- ally, these latter Śaivic rites, keep meticulously clear of the faintest suggestion of drugs. In recommending drugs as effective, in inducing Yoga trance, Patanjali was presaging the Sufi, the Delphic and Iranian mysteries. Some of our modern intellectuals (Aldous Huxley, William Jones, De Quincy) recommend the use of drugs, narcotics and al- cohol for inducing mystic experience of ecstatic delight, which, of course, miss the abiding positive glory of the beatification attainable through Astanga Yoga.

Astanga Yoga

Astanga means 'the eight-limbs'. Astänga Yoga has eight limbs' or eight different sections which together make Yoga what it is. These eight are (1) Yama; (2) Niyama; (3) Asana; (4) Präṇāyāma; (5) Pratyāhāra; (6) Dharaṇā; (7) Dhyana; and (8) Samadhi. What actually are these?

I. Yama

1. Ahimsa. Yama is combined effect of the five acquired moral controls of Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacarya and Aparigraha. Gitä has a pair of verses on the concept of Ahimsa which for its exactness and rationality is indeed a piece of gem.

He who sees that the Lord of all is the same in all, the immortal is in all mortals, sees indeed the truth. When a man sees god in others, as well as in himself, same and equal, he cannot hurt any without hurting his own self. The highest state is his (who realises this)."

Swami Vivekananda said that in these two verses the spirit of the ethics of the Gitä has been most fully expressed. Swami Madhusudana Saras- vatî too calls these two verses, and indeed the sixth chapter to be the cream of the Yoga system as propounded in the Gita by Krsna, the Lord of Yoga. Ahimsa is thus, not merely abstention from 'killing'; it is much more, and much deeper. Not to cause 'hurt'. 'Non-killing' is an easier

abstention when compared to 'non-hurting'. Under circumstances killing becomes not only a virtue, but abstention from killing could become a positive crime. Both Rāma and Kṛṣṇa had been master-killers. But killing without hurting or being hurt, killing with extreme objectivity and impersonality, is impossible without acquiring the state of Yogic functionalism of absolute non-attachment.

2. Satya. Satya is the prince of virtues. It means to say what is meant, and to mean what is said. It is a kind of uninhibited simplicity where speech-control acquires the simple innocence of nude, uncovered expres- sion of what one feels without any emotional back-lash or ulterior interest. It is facing the Reality, the living principle of non-change. It is more than a vow. It is being unalterable, firm and sure. Such a state of mind could be acquired through the control over tongue and speech, and through gaining the secret of striking a harmony between action and speech. The Yogi must face the conflict between Satya and Ahimsā. These are often in conflict; or often it appears to be so. It is a confron- tation with a situation where speech might appear to be in conflict with the principle of non-hurt. Perfect Ahimsa reduces all conflicts to peace. And perfect Satya shall never ultimately hurt. The mystery of striking a happy note between the two is acquired through his virtue of detached interest in all things alike.

3. Asteya. Asteya is a virtue that relieves the mind of all desires and covetousness. Success over Asteya is to gain a mastery over all treasures, say the Yoga-sûtra of Patanjali. The Yogi accepts it for a fact that the person without desire is the emperor of the three worlds. "Lucky is the one who has nothing but a loin-cover."""" Because the Yogi has not personal desire or attachment, in India he is adoringly called 'Maharaj', king of kings; the Yoga he masters is known as Raja-Yoga, the King of Yogas.

4. Brahmacarya. Brahmacarya means a perfect and supreme control over sensuousness. Each and every sense has to be mastered (not paralysed, benumbed or killed); particularly to keep the libido under full control. The mysterious attraction of the opposite sexes, the tempta- tion for the thrill of discharging the vital fluid, disengages the mind from all kinds of firm resolves. Greed and sex are the two forces that over- whelm our physical existence, and assure our physical continuity. These are neither vicious, nor harmful. These are natural in nature's scheme. Obstruction to these raise us to the white-hotpitch of anger or passion. Hence to be bound to these, namely, Sex,

Anger and Greed, is to be deprived of liberation for the spiritual life.78 Anger and Peace are contradictory. The spiritual must be quite opposite to the physical. The physical 'is'; whereas, the spiritual is only inferred. The physical is a fact; the spiritual is the truth. The pressure of fact chokes the Truth. Here is the challenge. Hence to be liberated in the spiritual, is to be freed from the physical bondage for which the passions of anger, greed and sex prove to be the most knotty bonds. Yoga is the only power which arms the Yogi with that will which is sufficiently sharp to cut through these bonds.

5. Aparigraha. Aparigraha is the last of the Yamas. This is to avoid meticulously anything, yes anything, the least, the most insignificant thing, when that 'least' is more than 'enough'. Sin's abode is in that which is more than enough. Enough is enough to the virtuous. Excess is Devil's weight. To reach light, travel light. Not to know what is enough is the deadly ignorance. To learn what is enough, and to be able to contain the self within that limit is Aparigraha. The Buddha begged for food everyday, but always accepted cooked food only, so that in 'collecting' food he would not 'collect' more for future storage. Providence alone provides. Attempt to collect to provide is to enter into a vicious circle. The Vaisnavas practise this control through an exercise called Madhukari; that is the way of the black-bees, which, unlike the honey bees, drink, but do not store. The Yogi might accept a meal; but the particular single meal alone. To have more is to invite attachment for what is stored; that leads to anxiety for its protection; further, it leads to remorse at any possible loss. Each of these upsets the equilibrium of emotions; and Yoga's chief aim is to maintain this equilibrium. Not to amass; not to collect; not to store are virtues to a Yogi. Get just enough, and remain free. This freedom leads to liberation. To consider nothing as indispensable is to cultivate the power of considering this physical existence too, as not being indispensable. Mind then is seen at rest. Anxiety is at an end. Existence gradually becomes mental, then spiritual. Living in mind without Body leads to the vision that sees through Time and Space, because the mental plane extends beyond the limits of physical existence. Enjoyment that depends on accessories or attachments is an obstacle to the Yogi's progress. Having food is unavoidable; but to go for the taste in food, is to form the desire for a taste and indulge the mind.

11. Niyama

Of the eight limbs' of Yoga, under Yama; we have dealt with the five sections of Yama. The next 'limb' in order, is niyama which, again is subdivided into five sections: Šauca; Santosa; Tapas; Svädhyāya and Iivara-pranidhana.

1. Sauca. For the benefit of the soul, the actual state of the body is important. The state of the body depends on enviornmental cleanliness and mental state. Thus in Yoga the body as a necessary apparatus has to be attended to, and kept functioning. Its health, its cleanliness, its food, its environs, all are to be looked after and maintained meticulously clean. Cleanliness is of supreme value to feeling liberated.

Feeling clean helps the maintenance of mental cleanliness, thought cleanliness, motive cleanliness. In speech, in action, in behaviour, in motive, in every respect, wherever a student of Yoga is engaged in an effort, internally and externally, he must maintain absolute cleanliness.

2. Santosa. Santosa is contentment of mind at receiving whatever comes in its easy way. Contentment and discontentment are caused from desire. Desire, like flame spreads from a small start to a total con- flagration. It swallows up years of preservations in no time. Not to desire is to cultivate the habit of Santosa, which is itself a Yoga.

3. Tapas. Tapas Is to reach beyond the world of contraries. It enjoins austerity on the novice. Practice of strict austerity leads to limiting want to a minimum. Limiting want leads to gradual non-dependence on external things. The austere is not cruel or harsh. He is just limiting his needs to suit his absolute independence. He is trying to bring his speech, breath, mind and body within discipline. What is that disci- pline? Just to limit our want within our need; just a stop at 'enough'. The Yogis must feel free to speak of freedom. He can do so when he hinnelf is free from want.

4. Svadhyaya. Svadhyaya is a study of the authorities, together with the practice of Om. Scholarly discrimination and insight help as inspira- tion for deeper knowledge and clearer understanding. Authorities check mistakes, and create confidence. Practice of Om permits the mind to soar gradually to a state when totality comes within easy grasp. The sublime comprehension that varieties are fractional expressions of a single unit, dawns on the true Yogl, who transcends the plane of appearances and reaches the realm of Reality.

5. Tinara pranidhana. Patanjali, the master, after discussing the sub- jective experience of Reality and the gradual process by which this could be attained, remarks that this particular process might prove difficult for ordinary minds to concentrate on. For such helpless ones (who are keen to experience, despite mental checks to attain it) Patanjali suggests that they should concentrate on something more tangible than the mere sub- jective idea. The objectivity of the thing could assist to a great degree the process of knowledge and Realisation.

This objective content could be Sound, Smell, Taste, Form or Touch, which are qualities of Form. This could be called Isvara. We shall see that under dharana and dhyana Patanjali insist on this Išvara(self's emer- gence into the Reality of a tangibile subjective idea). It could assume any shape in accordance with the concentrative efforts and concentrative facility of the individual concerned. The individual is an individual because of his own distinctive personal traits and interests. To weigh these interests, and to settle on some tangible form in conformity with this interest or that, is something imperative, before the exercise of con- centration actually starts. To hit upon this formal object is not easy. A Guru's guidance could be of immense value. This particular object that images the interest of the individual is the individuals' livara. It is for the time being his God.

Patanjali advises that for the deluded, his Isvara could be of great assistance. He could then concentrate on this Iávara, and attain the Subjective gradually, through the assistance of this Iévara and Concen-tration.

Smell at times could assist in concentrating all apperceptive mass to a point, by the law of association. This could assist. Similarly one could have more concentration through music or any other sound; or the taste of something could send the mind at once to a concentred state. The commonest form of images, icons, and even traditional pictures, or plants and herbs, open-valleys, river-sides, caves and dells, all limited and objective in themselves, could assist the seeker in attaining that concentred state which he does not find easy to attain ordinarily. Great artists and sculptors, musicians and writers devote all their lives to their aim denying all facilities rejecting normal life, fighting against challenging odds, just to attain the subjective joy in their creations. They seek something intangible through the tangible. Their concentration is induced by their interests. This interest taking form is the subjective Isvara taking shape. Beatitude descends from Isvara, for Iivara is Beatification.

Hence Patanjali's focus on interests, and objects, representative of those interests, appears to be quite relevant.

It is under this category that images and icons could be fully justified in Yogic process. The commonest objectives used are the lamp, and the Mantra, that is, chanting syllables loaded with meaningful esoteric import. Patanjali says that the sound-image well understood, and repeated with singleness of mind, does for the seeker what he seeks through concentration. He mentions that the sound which images the Infinity in the chaotic as well as the cosmic states, the sound image which conveys Time and Space in their singularity and totality, the sound-image which projects and contains the dynamism underlying emergence, integration, disintegration and dissolution in single form, is the sublime syllable Om. Repetition of Om is a convenient and effective way to attain transcendental beati- tude (Samadhi). To serve one such image of sight, sound, taste, form or smell is indeed very helpful for the seer to see what he wants to see or find. This is Isvara Pranidhana (to devote onself to Isvara).

III. Asana

Asana is the third requirement of the Yogi. Most Yoga schools emphasise on these postural exercises, and call it by the entirely misleading term of Yoga, which as a subject of practice engages a much wider span, and far deeper significance than mere acrobatics. Asanas mean 'seating postures'. As a bed is not sleep, as cutlery or food is not appetite, so Asana is not Yoga. The Yogi for his exercise and penance, for Pränäyāma and Dhyana has to sit for long hours, days, months, even years. Such sustained claims on the powers of endurance of body expects super normal trainings about postures. The exercises prescribed under the Asanas help keep the body-machine and the finer nerve-mechanism, subtler than a computer, in a proper working condition. Asanas have also been pre- scribed to control bodily ailments and mental obsessions and passions. It is not necessary here to go into the details of the Asana posture.

IV. Pranayama

Pranayama, the fourth stage of Yoga is the control of the inner breath, inhalation, exhalation; and through this process to keep the entire Nystem, particularly the various air pockets and air functions of the body in order. As the bellows of any musical instrument, where control of air plays the vital part, is of utmost importance for the enjoyment of the subt- lest music, so is this Prana,-Breath, of supreme importance to

the Yogi. Prāṇāyāma assists concentration. The Rhythmic equilibrium effected by breath control eases up the reflexes of the body-machine, so that freed of the reflexes, the breathing personality, or the self, ventures with ease into the regions of transcendental experience. Peace and stability are the effects of complete liberation from the demands of physical and neurotic reflexes. Between inhalation and exhalation, as between changes in the swings, in the pendulum, there is an infinitesimal fraction of a moment of poise. The longer the Poise-duration, the longer the distance between inhalation and exhalation. This automatically lengthens the period of the poised, or upheld breath (Kumbhaka) between inhalation and exhalation. The more the hold-back, the longer the duration for the body to stay clear of the need of having connection with the world outside it. Thus the supreme state of 'Self-in-Self', of peace, is attained. The suspension of breath releases consciousness to attain the coveted transcendence or Samadhi. Without breath-control this is almost impossible. The more breath is disconnected from the exterior, the more intensely could the inner faculties play their part by remaining suspended, and thereby seeking a sublime peace into the inner self without any hike or hitch. Präṇāyāma thus helps to remove the cover of the body-sheath, so that the sublime effulgence of transcendence bathes the total self without let or hindrance.

V. Pratyahāra

Pratyähära signifies the disconnection of the sense-organs from the sense-objects; of course, this liberation from the tyranny of the senses is attainable through Präṇāyāma. But the control over will is the best form of Pratyahāra. Ignorance alone is responsible for keeping the self sub- jugated to the bondage of senses. Many mistake Pratyahāra for denega- tion and repression. Real Pratyähära is an exercise. It is taking a deeper counsel with the mind regarding how much the sense-organs are exactly needed for our inner comprehension. Freedom from the external sense- organs assists in releasing progressively, proportionately, the potential power of the inner Tanmätric apprehensions "When sense-organs at will could be withdrawn, as the tortoise withdraws the limbs (within his shell), we call it a firm and wise state."7

VI. Dharana

Dharana is to conceive or grasp an image within the mind. Concepts are the results of sense coming into contact with things outside; these could also be results of ideas or images reflecting within the inner faculties of the mind. The outer senses receive impressions of external objects, and form discriminating, defining concepts, opinions and ideas. But appre- hension of perceptions involves the super-senses (Tanmätras). Tanmatras denote the functions of sense-organs without external aid of the senses. In other words seeing with eyes closed would be a Tanmätra-experience. This is symbolised by the third-eye in the Hindu icons, or the single eye of the Tibetan icons. The concepts sensed by the inner-appreciations are known as Dharands, ideas crystallised into an understanding, i.e., concepts vivified intellectually.

Sensations from external impacts, and feeling for the internal impacts equally aid Dharanã. The Yoga system informs that the impact of one Dharana is on the Mind, and is by nature emotional; and that of another is on the brain, and is intellectual, or spiritual.

In the Tantra system this very question of Dharanã evolves the generally familiar stages of 'the six-lotuses' (Padma) or 'the six wheels' (Cakras). This is no place to give a full account of the mystique of the Cakras known as Kundalini Yoga.

Yoga also distinguishes between purely objective concepts, which are mental or sensuous concepts, and subjective, or spiritual concepts. But for our discussion such details are unnecessary. These are being men- tioned to show that the Yoga as a system has gone so deep into what is known as psycho-analysis that the main subject of achieving total peace through the knowledge of Self no longer appears to be speculative. Yoga is skill: Yoga calls for craft." "The physical Being kept detached from sense organs and sense-subjects ultimately subsists on detachment; then it is that this Being tastes this sweetness without the sweets, and experiences the Ultimate."

VII. Dhyana

Dhyana is concentration over the objective, as the 'bulls eye' is to the archer. Out of the many Dharanas the one chosen by the Yogi becomes the object of his Dhyana. This choice is personal, temperamental, selective through Guna. Each Yogi must hold on to 'his' Dharana, and set it to 'his' Dhyana. At the stage of this fixing of attention the fixer and the fixed remain two, with this difference that in the fixer's mind the fixer alone remains dominant. The more the Fixed is dominating, the more the fixer is eliminating.

The more the aim itself receives the attention, the more the aim is likely to achieve the 'bull's eye' (which is achieved when in the aimer's world there appears to be nothing left except the bull's eye). The more the aimer gets lost into it, the more he gets merged, Dhyana leads to merging, perfect concentration.

VIII. Samadhi

Samadhi, the eighth stage, differs from Dhyana in this that here the fixer and the fixed become identified through the total obliteration of all objectivity. Duality ceases; Asmitā ceases. It is the supreme subjective state. The meditator and the meditated; or the knower and the known; or the archer's concentration and the arrow's aim become one and only one. It is incorporeal thrill of the Liberated Peace. It is Beatitude, transcendental consciousness. Concepts becoming steady and firm confer success to Dhyana. Samadhi is the deeper state to which Dhyana leads. It is the much popularised Bliss, in which the only feeling is one of ecstasy, Anandam.

Even the object of Dhyana fades into joy.

The person in Samadhi cannot come back and describe his feeling. As pure abstraction or pure subjectivity, feeling remains mute. It is unbo- died, independent, beyond description (Anirvacaniya).

One point must be remembered, however. Samadhi in Yoga means development of the many-sided splendour of feeling into one sharp sub- jective feeling. This is the realisation of totality in its most abstract form. This is the ecstatic state so many times referred to by the mystics of all ages; the early Christians, the Vaisnavas, the Sufis, the Tao.

Many times it has happened: Lifted out of the body into myself; becoming external to all other things and self-concentrated; beholding a marvellous beauty; then, more than ever assured of community with the loftiest order; enacting the noblest life, acquiring identity with the divine; stationing within 'It' by having attained that activity; poised above whatsoever in the intellectual is less than the Supreme: yet there comes in the moment of descent from intellection.

Whatever pleasures we may get from our emotions I do not think I can equal those moments of silent peace which are glimpses of the joy of Paradise. Desire and fear, grief, or anxiety are no more. We live in a life of supreme region of our own being;

pure consciousness. One feel, an inner harmony free from the slightest agitation or tension. In those moments the state of the soul is solemn, perhaps akin to its condition beyond the grave. It is happiness as free from desire and struggle, and who simply adores in fullness of joy. We cannot find words to express this experience, because our language can only describe particular and definite conditions of Life. They have no words to express this silent contemplation, this heavenly quietness, this ocean of peace which both reflects the heavens above, and is master of its own vast depth. Things return to their first principle, while memories become dreams of memories. The soul is then pure being and no longer feels the separation from the whole. It is conscious of the universal life and at that moment is a centre of communion with God. It has nothing, and it lacks nothing; a return to oneness, to the full- ness of things,

The Gitä is clear about the objective-subject of Samadhi:

When a man knows this, he transcends death. It is Brahman, beginningless, supreme: beyond what is, and beyond what is not. It has many limbs, many heads, many eyes, mouths, many and everywhere, seeing all, hearing all. He is in all. He is. The light of Consciousness comes to Him through infinite powers of perception, and yet he is above all these powers. He is beyond all, and yet he sustains all. He is beyond this world of matter, and yet he has joy in this world. He sees all, he is invisible. He is far, He is near. He moves and moves not; he is within all, and outside all. He is one in all, although he appears as many. He supports all beings. Destruction is His: Creation is His. Light of all lights it is He that is beyond darkness. Vision, end of vision, reached by vision, it is He, dwelling in all."

In our own century we hear from Teilhard de Chardin the language of this total disappearance of the sensuous world in the state of Samadhi:

If we are ever to reach-you matter, we must, having first esta- blished contact with the totality of all that lives and moves here below, come little closer to feel that the individual shapes of all we have laid hold on are melting away in our hands, until finally we are at grips with the single essence of all substances and all unions.

Similar passages from the experienced, although reveal nothing in tangible language, signify a certain stage when the experiencer's being had been totally electrified with a sublime feeling-in-itself vivifying his world of cognition and inner experience.

This, of course, is a high state of mystic delight. Yet the partici- pation in the ecstasy, the thrill, the joy of the mystic, of the old Christian, of the Vaisnava is not exactly Patanjali's prognosis. According to Patan- jali, Samadhi is an experience devoid of any such feeling which could be recorded in emotive language. Tato vaca nivartante apräpya manasa saha, says the Upanisad. Words baffled, reverse back, and cannot express. Inadequacy of language beggars all description. 'Don't ask, I know; ask, I know not,' says Vidyapati, the Vaisnava. Patanjali's Yoga is cal- culative and intellectual; analytically synthetic and synthetically analytic. It has nothing to do with the overtone of joyous experience and joy evoked by the languages of the Christians, or Vaisnava mystic. He is rather akin to the Jain way of Samadhi. The ultimate Reality of Patanjali's Yoga is Experience, but not Ecstasy, as the Vedanta or Upanisad says, Ananda ripam (Ecstasy in form) or Sacchidananda. Patanjali would not suffer feeling. No emotion; no Asmita. Even ecstasy or joy is a motive, an aim, a mark of longing. Be 'it'. Nothing more.

The application of Dhyana, Dharana and Samadhi, together, is known is Samyama, which when matured, leads to the Ultimate Realisa- tion; Samadhi-Prajña,-realisation in the Abstract; knowing knowledge itself.

Samadhi-Prajna (Transcendental Knowledgeability and Consummation)

To understand Samadhi Prajna we have to understand the gradual states through which mind has to pass before Samadhi-Prajna is attained. There are five distinct 'states' indicative of the progress to the final state of actual consummation of the knowledge of the transcending Bliss, the Experience.

1. At the outset mind is torn between a thousand attractions and detractions, during which attention, if at all attained, is momentary.

2. At the second stage this fluctuating attention becomes attracted to a point due to emotive interest. Longing for a dear friend gives one such bemused state of attention. The classical example is found in Kalidasa's play Sakuntala, where the absorbed heroine did not listen to a caller, who angered, cursed her, while she had been quite oblivious of the happenings. The first state in Yoga is known as kripta (mad or demen- ted): and the second is known as matha (Bemused).

3. The third state is rikgipta (Distracted). Here the mind is restless. Now it is resting, now not, as is the case of a devoted mother, now praying to God, as a picture of devotion; now carried beside herself in unbearable sorrow. Sincerity in either case is unquestioned. But peace is far and distant.

4. The fourth state of eldgra, literally means a 'pointed state of mind', when attention has been focussed as a hunter's on his mark, to the fly- point and the target. Here the power of understanding secures the advantage of stillness. It is no longer restless as in the third state.

5. In the fifth pratyaya-nirodha state alone the mind is 'itself", without any other thing to detract it, not even the feeling of 'I-ness'. Here Consciousness, becomes 'Itself. Nothing 'is' conscious. It is Consciousness.

This state is described in the Upanisad:

Bhidyate hydayagranthi chindyante sarva samsayah

Ariyante sarua karmani tasmin deste paravare

(The Knot of the heart is severed; all doubts are dispelled; and his deeds close up; once He the most High and the most Low is seen at once)."

Asmita

When man experiences Reality, when Reality comprehends Reality, I becomes 1. It becomes It, the Experienced and the Experience lose distinction; all non-reality is outgrown and sub-merged; all contraries vanish. Even the chain of sequences and consequences, actions and reactions, cease to cause disturbance. With this change in nature all that binds Reality to non-Reality ceases to be. He lives in the great comfort in the discovery that loneliness is never lonely. He reaches his Jerusalem; his Vaikuntha. (Compare the Songs of Solomon and the Marriage of the Lamb in the book Revelation in the Bible.)

With the effulgent experience of the Unrelated Absolute man feels 'I am'. This 'Am-ness' is called Asmita. (Asmi in Sanskrt means 'I am', and armi-ta literally would mean 'I-am-ness'.) This feeling is entirely satisfying, and causes the thrill of fulfilment. But in Asmita or 'I-ness', there is yet the touch of 'I'; and this too in itself presents some-thing as an obstruction to the feeling of 'It-in-It", Reality in Reality, without any

'otherness'. Here language stops. Pronouns stop. Nouns stop. The state is called hush, silence, unspoken, unmanifest: (avyakta) beyond the manifest. This cannot be subject of Dhyana. It is a face to face experience. It is Joy in Joy, Self in Self. It is a psychic state known as Rtambhara-Prajñā".

Isvara, Samkhya and Yoga

Thus in Samkhya, the idea of the Divine Reality becomes unique. Samkhya, we have seen does not talk of Iivara in the sense of God. Samkhya, which admits of Puruşa and Prakrti is called a Dualistic (Deaita) Philosophy. But Yoga is not without Inara. We have studied the Tivara of Yoga little before. Yoga's God shapes himself in the image of the seeker's choice. It is a point of concentration, an Idea to be dedicated to; an image endearingly identified with the craving of the seeker. The experience of 'It-in-It' renders the Yogic concept of Ivara worthy of study, and in the context of Saivism this knowledge becomes all the more imperative and significant. God becomes distinguished from the Holy Ghost, Siva contains both the ideas in one. Siva is both God and the Ghost; Tivara and Brahman: Dhyana and Samadhi. Ṛtambhara-Prajna alone realises Siva in Śiva.

God is known to man as the Creator. In other words this power of creation awards God with his title to godliness. But in Samkhya creation is a becoming. No outside agent is required to create what is created. Creation created itself. Creation, according to Sämkhya, is the effect of imbalance of the three primal Gunas; and this imbalance is the effect of Prakrti's contact with Purusa. Thus this phenomenon as a whole could be called the liuara-ta of lsvara, the creativeness of the Creator, who is God. Such a God is self-evident and inherent in creation, and requires no other proof. Patanjali admits of God, or Iivara in this sense, but does not attempt to prove it. Sämkhya which admits the Vedas, or the traditional authority, as one of the three basic evidences, does not admit that the Vedas contain the proof for God. But scholars think that Patanjali, unlike Samkhya, through Yoga, attained realisation, and called this realised bliss as Isvara, and placed it as the twenty-sixth Tattva, the most eminent and the greatest, "yotisam-api-taj-jyoti-s-tamasah param- ucyate" (the greatest light amongst lights beyond all darkness) says the Gitä." We have quoted already Gita's description of this Experience (XIII: 12-17).

There appears to be a significant and fundamental difference between the Samkhyan and Yogic approaches to God (Iivara). Samkhya's Iivara is an object of proof and analysis. Yoga does not bother to prove. Yoga leads to Experience. Experiencing Reality is Yoga's ultimate motive. Go; start; climb; experience, and now come and say, "I have known; experienced; but it is silent. I cannot describe that which baffles description. In order to understand that, you have to understand the pro- found language of silence."

Svetasvatara Upanisad, which along with the Vayu Purana has been mentioned to be the source book for Saivism, speaks of God in similar language. The concept of Siva in Hindu Saivism derives its spiritual substance, as well as support, from this special concept of the Godhead. Samkhya's PuruŞa, Patanjali's Tivara and Vedanta's Brahman to the Saiva-worshipper convey the same emotive import, as the Siva of Tantra, Inspite of the fact that the Western and Oriental forms of phallicism succeeded in making a serious impact on the Hindu forms, and attempted to make inroads into forms of Saivism, the basic Siva image, is provided by the Dhyana and Dharanã stages of the Yogi. It is justified by what the Gitä speaks of the divine concept. "Patanjali proves the omniscience of God by means of continuity which must have an upper limit. Omniscience admits of degrees of excellence. It gradually increases in proportion to the degree to which the matter stuff (Tamas) which covers the pure essence (Sattva) is removed. When the germ of omniscience reaches its height of perfection we get the omniscient God."

Yoga does not admit of God as a Creator because God as a conscious creator willingly could not have created pain and confusion.

Spiritual proofs, according to Patanjali, are circular in approach and prove really nothing. Thus the God of Patanjali has to remain a mystic concept; this mysticism could be cleared only through experience, and never through linguistic acrobatics. God who helps sinners along their gradual march of recovery, Himself should be subjected to the march. If the toiling souls are subjected to Samsara, so shall be God. But the essence of all essences, the perfect Sattva, is and must be above such sub- jections. God must be freedom itself. God's manifestations evolve out of Prakrti's association. Out of His great mercy, He, watching the series of the manifested, and the trials of the souls in suffering, keeps Himself ready for stretching His essential steadying force of

Sattva; but the effort to reach this Sattva-state in its perfection must come from within the Seeker. At the end of creation, when the time for the great dissolution reaches, when Prakrti relapses into its unmanifested state, God awaits for the next phase of creation. Isvara is ever ready to assist. Prakrti sleeps; Isvara withdraws. Prakṛti, like light after darkness, shines again; Iśvara at once starts his mission of aiding those who call for assistance. 'Aum' is the mystic syllable representing this process; and chanting of A-U-M aids Dhyana and Dharana leading to Samadhi. Om symbolises in articulated form the inarticulate concept of Isvara.

Kapila, eager and anxious to help fellow-seekers, out of his mercy, instructed Samkhya to Asuri, whilst he himself was in a state of trance. So does Isvara, pure essence, act for the Good of the created, without any personal feeling or bondage. Isvara is thus the Guru, the Teacher, before all the teachers. Kapila got the Truth from Him, and from Kapila the rest. Thus Isvara is knowledge, knower and known for all times and for all creations. Creations fade out and evolve. Isvara is the constant unaffected immutable factor.

Lingam and Yoni

How close is Patanjali's concept of Isvara to Siva, will have to be fully discussed in a later chapter on the branches of Saivic philosophy. We have noted that the Linga-symbol of Śiva actually symbolises the Samkhyan concept of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. In the Western books where Hindu Phallic traits have found their way, Lingam has been invariably treated as the phallus. In the context of Indian thought on the contrary, the word Lingam never evokes the idea of a genital organ, or for the matter any organism at all. We have noted this already; but here we mention some more examples of the use of the word Lingam in Sanskrt.

In Linga-rupa, Linga-sarira, Linga means subile, as opposite to Sthila which means gross. In grammar Linga means gender, index. Dictionary, or Abhidhana, proposes for its function nama-linga anusasanam, that is to say, to set down directives of fixing nomenclature to experiences and things, and the method of affixing genders to them. In the Gitä, Linga has been used in the sense of 'Sign', 'Index'. Patanjali has used the word Linga several times (I: 45; 11: 19). Nowhere has it been used in the sense of a gross limb of the body of man. 'Linga' has been used in the sense of a 'symptom of disease'; a means of proof in evidence; the middle term of a syllogism in Logic. It has at a later

stage been used to denote an image that represents God. It is an iconic representation of the Siva concept. Its connotation as phallus is a secondary meaning attributed through suggestive form. To translate Lingam as phallus, and on that basis to call Saivism phallic, is miscarriage of intellectual responsibility.

Similarly the root meaning of Yoni is Matrix, nave of the nebula, out of which stars continue to emerge. It is a mine, an abode, a family, or a zoological genus. Its meaning as a female genital organ is derived only in the sense of Womb.

The point could be illustrated from a thousand pre-Purana usages. The Puranas too have used the words in a special sense not always meaning genital organs exclusively. We refer to only two instances which we have come across within the course of our text so far: (1) The first is referred to Ref. No. 20 of Chapter One where we quote the Upanisadic line Tapaso va-pyalingat. Here Linga means wearing of religious sign, or religious or sectarian classification, (2) The second illustration refers to Ref. No. 28 of Chapter One where we quote the Smrti. There too (Na Lingam dharma karanam) Lingam has been used in the sense of religions distinctive mark.

The word 'Lingam' has been first used by Patanjali as a technical term. Objects, general or particular, are but Lingas, and have Lingas. The manifest (Vyakta) Mahat is Linga; and the unmanifest (Avyakta) is A-linga. Linga and A-linga are the differing states of the mutually interacting Gunas. Whatever evolutes from PuruŞa at the touch of Prakrti is Linga, and has Gunas. The way the manifest springs out of the unmanifest has not been dealt with by Patanjali; but Kapila does it, because it is a material approach. Yajnavalkya Samhita, following the Samkhya, says that the world manifested out of the unmanifest Atman, and so the whole creation is permeated by the Atman.

Samadhi and Asmita

Whilst in Samadhi, the Realised alone realises the nature of the PuruŞa, which is beyond any description. Freedom from suffering and doubts, and a full knowledge of the mystery of all mysteries is the result of this Realisation. But it is doubtful if the Realiser and the Realised face each other as the lamp and the light, or as a book and a scholar, or as I and You, i.e., the Realised and the Realiser. Knowledge is mute." Naturally, in a state like this the concept of Devotion, Devotee and Devoted cannot be established without a certain amount of vagueness, if not fallacy.

Conclusion

Generally criticism is levelled against both Yoga and Samkhya for being morbid and depressing. It is said that by proposing for its chief aim the discovery of the means of removing suffering from life, Indian philosophy gets loaded with pessimism and misanthropy. Yoga and Samkhya are supposed to have contributed to this morbid attitude.

This is only partially true and, therefore, dangerously misleading. The relation between philosophy and Life should be meaningful, purposive, and so naturally, fundamental. It is the nature of the Indian mind to be analytically probing until the fundamental and the rudimental are arrived at. In working up gradually final bases, the process of analysis becomes helpful, but that is not all. Indian philosophical systems revert also to a synthesising process of viewing the cosmic as a whole. Not by mere organisation and systematisation is truth arrived at; Truth lies in realisation. A heap of facts and information could work as mere data; the principles formed on the basis of these, then, must indicate an active process; and then those principles by indicating the way of progress and spiritual realisation, completes the role of the Indian philosophical system.

From Diogenes to the Taoists, from Rousseau and Tolstoy to Sri Aurobindo, Hesse and Sartre, philosophers of all times have spoken of the discovery of sheer joy in the self as a relief, a joy independent of the material opportunities abounding around. It is a sublime sense of consciousness of direction without words. But Schopenhauer's craving for Hindu thought has been responsible for a morbid introduction of the Hindu philosophy to Europe. His dislike for Christanity, and preference for Hinduism, and specially for Buddhism spread fast amongst Europe's artists and writers. The philosophers of Europe remained suspicious of Schopenhauer's urging views. The reticence of those philosophers on the one hand, and the respectful adoption of the Schopenhaurean views by the creative mind on the other, gave rise to the misleading idea, that the Hindu view of life bears some kinship to the darkly, sombre, Germanic mind, which protested against the gay Catholicism of Rome, specially against the Renaissance Rome, when the Christian organisation had reached its zenith. Schopenhauer's emphasis on Will again and again reminded the scholars of the Tantra-Power of Sakti. A study of Kant, Plato and the Upanisads helps to balance the unmitigated view of Schopenhaurean suffering. As a true pessimist Schopenhauer

viewed Will as a metaphysical fundamental; but he also viewed the Power of Will as a force of Destiny which crushes down every human effort-like a steam-roller. The works of Thomas Hardy, Henrik Ibsen, Knut Hamsun, Mark Sudermann, Stephen Zweig, Herman Hemingway, etc., are cited as those influenced by Schopenhauerian Pessimism.

This is contrary to the spirit of Yoga; contrary to the spirit of the Upanisads; contrary to a firm faith in the nature of Reality. Those of the spiritualists, who sublimate suffering, are also submissive to a Spirit of Grace. Schopenhauer missed this embalming living Spirit of Grace. Buddha too had missed it. But what Buddha had missed in Grace, he compensated by dedication to compassion. He believed in the milk of compassion. Schopenhauer missed both; and viewed Will as a cruel tyrant waiting on no human justification.

And this evil of pessimism in Schopenhauer is traced by most European scholars to Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism. An unfounded bias against Hinduism was fanned by the Church. The ennobling passages of the Vedanta, the great lessons of the concept of Sacchidananada the concept of joy, as announced in Ampta-tattva (Knowledge of Immortality) contained in the line: Ananda rupam amṛtam yad vibhāti (Joy is the embodiment of the effulgence of immortality). This message as also the one contained in Anandat-khalviamani bhutani jayante (The manifest expresses itself out of sheer Joy), were not publicised until Bergson and Rolland spoke. The impact of the poems of Tagore (Gitanjali) on the European mind was phenomenal. The gigantic machinery of Christian publicity, quite angry with Scho- penhauer and his influence amongst the contemporary thinkers, writers and artists, blamed the Hindu thought for injecting morbid pessimism. Even Goethe's Faust was associated with interpretation of evil, will, destiny, and the eventual failure of intellect. When, like Milton in Paradise Regained, Goethe too decided to retrace his steps in the second part of Faust, he brought to his freedom of art the stifling disgrace of forced did- acticism. Hardy, bending under the same pressure, had to taste the humiliation of adding chapters of 'reconcilement' to his great work of art, the Return of the Native. Schopenhauer called his dog Atman, kept a bronze Buddha in his study. His regard for Spinoza gave him his insight into Will, which conformed with the fundamental virtue in divine will. Tantra's 'Iccha-Śakti', or Will Power, is a Power Divine, which later was elaborated by Sri Aurobindo. Whereas in the Will of Tantra the aspect of Grace is always present, the Will of Schopenhaur

illogically sees only the Tamas in it, without appreciating Power's genius for inspiring the forces of Sattva. Power is the reservoir of all the three Gunas, not one. This truth Schopenhauer missed, perhaps because he reached for no Guru. It is understandable, therefore, why Schopenhauer interpreted the cosmic will as wicked, and called it a source of suffering. One is tempted to believe that a sense of frustration in his personal life must have clouded his mind; and his adventures with the Upanisad, and the Hindu philosophy, remained an incomplete intellectual outing in search of a dilattante's dream.

Sadhana and Yoga which, together, constitutes the practical know- how of Hindu philosophy, remained beyond the efforts of this intellectual scholar. He is an object-lesson of a Hindu disciple without a Guru's guidance. He was a speculator, a 'Tärkik' (scholarship given to debate, argument and theoretical rationalism without an objective grasp of life); but not a Yogi, an Anubhavi (Experiencer). Naturally he slumped into a gospel of resignation. He believed in the mystics; but did not have faith in their contemplative application. He has conviction in his intellec- tual casuistry. That Beatific Experience, which alone successfully trans- forms knowledge into an experience of Good and Beauty, remained un- achieved by him, because he had Europe's intellect without India's train- ing of Yoga and Samadhi. To Europe, therefore, Indian philosophy remained both speculative and pessimistic, until very recent times when a battalion of dedicated scholars of comparative religions flung open some hitherto little focussed parts of the oldest of religions, and its logistics. The rationality of the Hindu view of life, and the relevance of Hindu religion with Life's quests and demands, challenges and achievements, are only now being gradually exposed.

In one form or another the doctrine that will is paramount has been held by many modern philosophers, notably Nietzsche, Berg- son, James and Dewey. It has, moreover, acquired a vogue out- side the circles of professional philosophers. And in proportion as will has gone up, knowledge has gone down."

As it must. Knowledge without experience must remain speculative and lack the force of conviction. This the Yogis have. Here lives the positivity of Indian philosophy which ridicules mere scholarship and adores the tradition of Guru and practice (sadhand).

Sorrow is a fundamental substance in Life; but so is Joy. Both are inevitable, and both are momentary. Both are imminent and both are transitory. Both are effectual reactions from given situations outside the feeler. They lack permanency. Agreeable reactions induce joy; disagreeable reactions induce pain. But all reactions are transitory, and lack in depth and independence. Eternity of joy is never induced by transitory reactions. Joy that is transitory has, of course, the end in pain. Joy is joy only in eternity. Indian philosophy positively guides the mind of man towards this. By fully making the mind aware of the nature of suffering and Joy, Indian philosophy prescribes the method of winning eternal joy. Whilst Sämkhya does the first, Yoga indicates the second; Samkhya announces suffering as the principle share of life; but Yoga shows the positive way of overcoming this suffering, and attain that blissful state which is called Santam (Tranquil), Sivam (Good) and Advaitam (one-total). Sämkhya emphasises on understanding, analysis and appreciation; and provides a perfect answer to the feeling of pain and tragedy. Yoga emphasises on directing the will to a region of total positive joy. By the Yogic process, the devotee fills his being with so much Joy as leaves no room for suffering at all. Filled with this power of Śivam- Advaitam the Yogi radiates Joy, and brings the much needed and more sought for tranquillity and peace to the suffering multitude. The complex neurotic nature of our technocratic civilisation, suffering from tensions, finds its relief in Yoga.

Siva (and Saivism) is conceived as the highest model of the practical Yogi. Šivatam vrajet (Go the way of becoming Śiva-in spirit) is one of the ideal blessings that the Siva-people seek. The three-in-one relation of Deity-Devotion-Devotee, for experienced Yogis, is the way of Bhakti and Devotion. It is the way for experiencing Bliss by dedication, and by for- getting the I-ness. Sadhana along this system enjoins ceremonial rites, Půjā, Ārati, songs, chants, service and self-effacement. Yoga and Samkhya are contrary to 'effacement'. Together the systems lead to Asmita, prior to the stage of the knowledge of experience of the Absolute. The most effective way of attaining Asmita through Dhyana and Dharana lies through imaging understanding into 'an object of devotion'. This object is not fixed. It is to be shaped by an individual's imagination. That which is most suited to the individual's aspirations and abilities is 'His' special image. It is his secret. Of all the images, Śiva as an image happens to be the least restrictive, and the most universal. Šivata is a greater aspiration than Siva.

IV

Vedanta: God and Theological Need

When Leibniz was speaking of 'Philosophia Perennis' he was meaning a divine Reality that encompasses every phenomenon mankind could comprehend. The Divine Reality presents a challenge to man's know- ledge and feeling. Had this been mere speculation, the most advanced and the most sensitive minds of the ancient and modern world could not have joyfully and willfully kept themselves engaged in its quest peren- nially. Philosophy is the result of man's enquiring into the mystique of life. The enquiry settled on a hypothesis like Mind, which offered man the opportunity to produce a postulate to concentrate on, and get himself trained in the imperative fact of having to live this life. By 'mind' man means a rather undefined vague area where the reactions from direct sensations, as from recollections of such sensations, explode a series of chained reactions which result in emotive feelings of pleasure or pain.

It is part-abstract and psychological, and part-chemistry and biological. As such control of mind is of primary importance for ensuring and regu- lating peace of the conscious self. Such control calls for a dedicated training. Such a training involves a practical system of education of body and spirit based on psychology and psycho-analysis. Man's primary enquiries are settled around two vital feelings: one of joy; the other of suffering. One he seeks to increase and secure everlastingly; the other he wants to avoid and, if possible eliminate for all times. This in itself demands a certain mental training affecting mental control. We have noted that the Yoga as a system proposes for its goal a guarantee for this control. Yoga as a system acquaints man with the mechanics, the know- how and the justification for peace.

One of the factors that aids this control, as we have seen, is Dhyana; and Dhyana demands Dharaṇā: concentration on a certain objective with a clear idealistic vision about a certain subject that never suffers, never fails. "Thought takes an image-form when it wishes to be intuitive, when it wants to ground its affirmations on the vision of an object." Vivified by such efforts the will in man takes the living form most sought for. To see it, feel it, possess it becomes a passion. Before the reality of that passion the entire universe with its objectivity loses identity. The sub- jectivity of the conscious will alone moving on, moves on and on, until all becomes a vast sea of joyous peace, fulfilment of being. Such sub- jective idealism should be necessarily beyond the reach

of Time and beyond the scope of any limit whatsoever. The Ideal of an Eternal Source of sheer joy (of 'Sacchidanandam") is man's ultimate hope. This is God, or the sublimest attribute of Godliness.

"No man should worship a deity till he becomes the deity;" till his subjective will is identified with the reality of the Ideal conceived, till a harmonious resonance with his inner personality is established. Whatever God or spirit be, has to be in the very image of an individual's innermost longing. Ged in Reality is the God the mind shapes, longs for and realises as one's own. All power and will of the Cosmic can be imagined by man only in terms of the world he nurses within.

This gives us theology; and theology gives rituals, sacraments, prayers and a series of systems projecting a series of deities which really projects more of our own mental craving, than the divinities themselves. Adher- ence to such mentally projected divinities, and dedicating our concen- tration on these divine characters afford partially our peace of mind, or what we accept as peace.

To know fully is to be at the threshold of peace. To know in fraction is to sleep in a bed of thorns. The ignorant has no peace. The idiot has the peace of the dead. Tension and anxiety are the mental evolutes of the disturbed mind; and mind is much disturbed due to uncertainty of knowledge, which results from ignorance. Perfect ignorance causes dull inactivity, which is not peace, but a kind of spiritual stupor. The perfect mind at peace often is mistaken as the sleeping or the dead mind, as the cases of Yogis like Jada Bharata95, or Vama the mad, could illustrate. Knowledge changes the nature of the Knower; and the Knower, in turn changes the nature of those around him. His personal attainment thus becomes the beacon for the ignorant suffering souls. Yoga prescribes a system by which man could liberate his immediate being into a newer world. Yoga reveals the unidentified beings from within the yogi's self. He discovers ever-new dimensions; travels to and beyond ever-new horizons, so that his developed personal pragmatism sublimates into a universal cosmic knowledge. It gives him hold over new worlds, and it strengthens him with unusual powers. He comes to know of many more worlds, and realises the power of Man could achieve things ordinarily considered to be impossible. But beware of the revelations of Faith; for these are the antics of the sick. Real Power is more than Siddhi (miracle). It gives character to Yoga, as does depth give character to the sea.

Authenticity of Experience: the Four Types

Academic philosophy, compared to sensitive experience, has to appear speculative and hypothetical. The best logic must play the second fiddle to actual experience. In the world of spirit literacy has very little scope. Indeed pendantry and erudition often halt the progress of spirit. We have knowledge of illiterate spiritualists, who speak with the authority of experience, which the literate academician or professional philosophers lack. The Idea of Reality and the tests or experience of the Real are fundamentally different in spirit. Sämkhya analyses knowledge, and the subject to be known; Yoga trains the initiate novice along the path of analytical discipline of the mind and guides him finally to knowledge. But there must be a third series of records from those who Experienced. Reported experience is always inadequate; but despite its inadequacy it builds up confidence by a ring of authority. Validity of substance is enjoined by the veracity of the reporting mind that experienced; and veracity is conclusively proved by the identity of feelings of the experienced, described by a number of persons, describing at different times in widely separated countries, amongst completely different people of different eras and cultures. Yet what they describe is so strikingly similar. Hence by inference the credibility of the utterances of the Yogis gains unquestionable authenticity.

But to the purely academic minds, or to the pedantic philosophers, who, lacking in experience, speculate and stray around, such evidence find little cognisance. There is a second group who through an over- emphasis on empirical application of knowledge, looks for a practically surer path. These, like the Buddha, the Christ and Confucius, leave be- hind a tradition of service and empirical application. Their credibility declares their authenticity by an appeal to emotional acceptance. More or less their way cuts through the conflicting morals of good and bad, and what they often prescribe is usually regarded as paths of austerity, rather than of enjoyment. Austerity demands some credibility even from the degenerate. The third category of speculators actually adopts the stern path of Yoga, and practises the rigid exercises of knowing to realise, and realise to live, as well as to guide life. As their subject is a Self-search it is bound to be rather abstract. These are the spiritualists. Unlike the second category, who were the mere moralists, cutting their way through a negative growth of swampy mangroves and marshland bushes of temptations and moral foibles, these are serious spiritualists who speak of their transcendental experience of the Sublime Reality. These last en-

lighten the mind and carry it above the struggling currents of the centuries to a world of freedom. There is yet a fourth category of these men who devote their lives to the quest for the meaning of life. They assume the spirit or perfect innocence and find the world to be but a plaything of transitory pleasure and pains. They accept everything in its totality, and negate nothing. They are in bliss; they experience nothing but joy; they, like Permenides, Plotinus and Plato, conceive of the One in which con- flicts of opposites remain quiet: they live in the naked simplicity of the eternal childhood of innocent delights, which like the taste of the juice of a fruit, is unfailing and uncommunicable because it is unrelated and absolute. These devout mystics say that they find their deities in Love and Adoration for 'him', and as they play and sing with this Subject- Object, as they come into a closer identity, they find their spirit elevated. Then they realise their own lives and the entire existence to have become a dedication to the Reality.

'I am not doing any work,' thinks the man who is in harmony with the Supreme, with the Real. He sees the Real as he sees, hears, smells, touches, eats, walks, sleeps, breathes, talks, grasps, relaxes, nay even as he (as much as) closes and opens his eyes, he keeps reminding himself, 'Not the Self alone; offer whatever you do, offer all. Throw off entirely the relative-bonds. Act, act on be- half of thy Love. No sin could stain the acts of the one dedicated to Brahman, as no stains could touch the lotus surrounded by water',

I worship Thee and Thee alone, O Śambhu, as I keep myself busy in all the acts I have to be engaged in my daily life in the world.

Thou art my Soul; my Mind is Thy Consort, the Daughter of the mountains; my breaths Thy attendants; my body is Thy temple; my senses, as they feed, feed but with Thou all that the world has to offer; and my sleep is the Samadhi I enter into, within Thee. All that I speak are but Thy chants; I sing Thy name; and with each step I take in my walk, I just go around and around Thee in circumambulation. (My entire life is an offering to you).

Oneness of Reality

This oneness with God or Ultimate Reality, this perfection of Union, identity of one with the 'All' is the message of Vedanta which is yet another system of Hindu thinking. This is the maturest and the most-tried of the systems from which the religious systems

of dedication, adoration and Love evolve, and conduct the world of Hindu worship. Thou art that Svetaketu' is the final answer to a celebrated passage in the Upanisad.

So this Oneness of Reality exists despite the variety of rites and forms which engage the seeker until he realises the underlying truth of oneness. The Upanisads speak of this one; even when speaking of the rites, speaking of gods, Upanisads do not miss to underline that the Truth, the Reality the Supreme is but One. Manifestations are many, but the Eternal Real is unmanifest and One. One, without a second. The system of metaphy- sics which proposed for itself a study of the Upanisads, and then establish the fundamentals of Oneness is known as Vedänta. It is not Sämkhya, because it is not analytical of the Material Cause; and it is different from Yoga because its appeal is more to the Intellect than to the Mind. Vedanta, like Samkhya and Yoga, offers a basic preparation for a full compreliension of Saivism.

Vedanta: Its Sections

The word Vedanta actually means the End of the Vedas. Post-Script of the Vedic system. The Vedas are to be studied in three strains or streams: (1) Karmakanda, or the rituals; (2) Upasana-Kanda, or the hymnals; and the last, (~) Jnana-Kanda, or the metaphysical knowledge. This divi- sion is also true for the Upanisads. Vedanta could be stated to mean the Jnana-Kanda of the Upanisads. Hence Vedanta as a separate system of philosophical thinking leans heavily on the Upanisads of which one hundred and eight are supposed to be orthodox. But besides the 108 there are many other Upanisads. The number exceeds two hundred. The earliest of them appeared at a time called by Karl Jasper as the Axial Era, i.e., 800 to 300 B.C. It was a period, as has already been noted, known for intellectual and religious enquiry from one end of China to the other end of Greece. Naturally the middle area had to bear the brunt of this great agitation that had electrified man's inner being and outer mode of living.

Spread of the Upanisads

The Upanisads, some of the important ones, being pre-Buddhist, in- fluenced Buddhism, and through Buddhism influenced Greater India, Tibet, China, Japan, Korea, Ceylon, Malaya, the islands of the Southern Seas. In the West "the tracks of Indian thought may be traced far into central Asia, where buried in the sands of the deserts, were found Indian Texts, "

The search for Reality, the Truth, has been the quest of the Upanisads: so it has been for the Vedanta. That there is something Real waiting to be realised; "something which is a remote possibility, and yet the greatest of present facts; something that gives meaning to all that passes, and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach,"101 has been admitted by thinkers of note, ancient or modern. The poet sings:

Everlastingly illusive,

Everlastingly flitting-

Yet, it calls, and calls, and ever calls,

Through signs and potents, tender and subtle..

This universality of a human quest keeps the Upanisads far above the bondage of religions. Vedänta is more than theology. Christianity needs Vedanta;103 so does Buddhism; and perhaps Islam. Islamic philo- sophers from Avicenna, Jalal-uddin Rumi to Muhammed Iqbal, specially the Sufis, are filled with the Vedantic spirit. In the Upanisads we find man's search for a metaphysical explanation of the realities of the world- phenomenon wedded to a passionate outburst for an acute longing to reach Truth and Light.

Vyasa's Sariraka Sutra and Commentators

Vedanta moulds the Upanisadic approach into a system of thinking; and Maharşi Vädarāyaṇa knitted the system in 555 aphorisms, then termed his treatise as Brahma-Sutra, which "indicates the way to Brahma", the sublime knowledge of the transcendental Being. Another name for Brahma-Sutra, or Vedanta Sutra is Śäriraka Sutra. This body is the recipient of contrary feelings, which make Life what it is. The system of Vedanta analyses the interplay of the actions and reactions of emotions and feelings, which agitate the body, and cause it to suffer or to enjoy.

Hence the physical state is but an obstruction to the realisation of the transcendental joy which alone is Joy in Eternity, and Existence in Im- mortality. Since the subject is 'From Body to Being', the name of the sys- tem is Sariraka, 'Pertaining to Sarira or the body'.

Most of the aphorisms are painfully tiny, composed of a few letters, sometimes not more than 3 or 4. This has opened up a wide scope of conflicting interpretations. It is almost impossible for a layman to grasp the meanings of these aphorisms without the aid of authentic commentaries.

The Brahma-Sutra, as noted before, is accepted as the composition of Maharşi Vädarayana, who is supposed to be the Veda-Vyasa Krina- Doaipayana, the composer of the Mahabharata. The Gitä also refers to the Brahma-Sutra. But Jaimini the composer of the Mimänsä system of Hindu philosophy had a preceptor named Vyasa. And Jaiminî, the au- thor of Mimänsä, has been mentioned in the Brahma-Sutra several times. Jaimini and Vadarāyaṇa both are also found engaged in polemical debates on their respectively contradicting theories, which violates the Indian traditional relation expected to exist between a Guru and his disciple. Such a conflict is apparently unlikely. Unlikely, but not im- possible, specially in an intellectual area. At the same time the authority of the Vedanta is traditionally attributed to Vyasa, Vädarāyaṇa; and this has not been seriously challenged. Considering all this, 500 a.c. could be a safe date for the actual systematisation of the Brahma-Sutra, though the Upanisads, which are the source books for Vedanta, must be much older still. Thus it accounts for the fact that up to 200 B.C. the Sutra itself was being handled in different areas in different recensions.

Because of its aphoristic nature of composition, the commentaries have become much more important to later scholars. But due to sectarian interests these commentaries differed. Today, scholars satisfy themselves by studying several of the principal commentaries.

The chief commentators on Brahma-Sutra are the following. Samkara, Ramanuja, Nimbärka and Madhava. Following the Samkara tradition, other commentaries were written by his disciples: Ananda Giri's 'Nyaya Nirnaya', Govindananda's 'Ratna Prabha' and Vacaspati Misra's 'Bhamati". These are the celebrated commentaries. Sureśvarācārya, and Padmapāda have been Samkara's direct disciples of great intellectual power. They also wrote commentaries along the lines of Samkara. Of the later Vedanta-treatises Vidyaranya's Pañcadasi is a universally read and appreciated book. The last great book, and according to many, the finest book on the subject is Madhusudana Sarasvati's Advaita-Siddhi.

Thus the existing literature on the Vedanta system forms a library by itself. But the modern scholar is recommended these four: Samkara, Bhamati, Pañcadasi and Advaita-Siddhi.

Brahma-Sutra itself is written in four chapters and sixteen sections.

We shall try to have a glimpse. But before that we have to pass through a little diversion, and have a look at the three other Hindu systems of metaphysics.

What does the Vedanta system, as propounded by Vädarayana in the Brahma-Sutra, propose to establish?

The first line or the first aphorism goes, "After this the enquiry re- garding Brahma." This construction at the very opening presupposes that the Brahma-Sutra as a system is 'after' something. The question, therefore, is, 'after what? There are two explanations. For proper appreciation of the answer the relation of Vedänta to the Mimänsä- system of Jaimini has to be understood. What is, then, the Mimänsä- system? Let us touch them before we come back to Vedanta, which concerns us the most.

The Vaisesika

Besides the systems of Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta, there are three more systems: VaiścŞika, Nyaya and Mimänsä. The treatise of the seer Kanada, named Vaisesika, is the longest of the six Hindu philosophic sys- tems. It has been so greatly influenced by ritualistic Buddhism and Jainism that Sämkara ridicules this system as 'Half-nihilistic'. The Vaise- sika explains the phenomenon of the 'World', without evincing much care for Isvara, or any other form of transcendentalism. "It is best described as a first step to make tender-minded children understand what the world is. It introduces the virgin minds into the mystery of creation. It does not deal with abstruse metaphysical propositions like 'Nature of Isvara', the way the world evolved, etc. The beginners, specially when young, are not generally bothered with these metaphysical obscurities. But MaharŞi Kanada anticipates future enquiries; and through a proper analysis of the nature of things, helps to prepare an inquisitive mind for receiving the explanations. It is inevitable that alert minds would question. Kanāda, in anticipation of such questions, builds up the answers from an elementary stage. Kanada's method is simple and direct. But the commentators on the Vaiściska have so commented on this simple approach of Kanäda as to include the subject of Isvara also. They have evidences from

the Vedas in support of the points raised. The opinions of such commentators are also taken to be parts of the VaiśeŞika system; and Vedänta actually contradicts (not VaiseŞika proper but) the opinions of these commenta- tors."104

Vaisesika is analytical. Synthesis is not its forte. It is an exclusive treatise on the system of distinguishing material objects into genus and species, and the subsequent classifications of objects with their functions, evolutes, genesis and consequence. In the process of analysing the material world VaišeŞika reaches up to atom as the final form of matter. This very peculiar atomic approach makes Dr. Radhakrishnan assert that VaiseŞika must have evolved about the time of Mahavira and the Buddha (6th century B.c.), both of whom discuss atom.

The 370 aphoristic Sutras of the VaiseŞika-system of Kanāda are divided into ten chapters. These describe the six formal elements; then proceed to describe all concepts as 'things' except the concept of Atman and Manas, which form the subject matter of the third chapter, together with the topics of 'sensation' and 'inference'. The fourth chapter deals with the 'eternal' and 'transitory' qualities of things. The fifth deals with (a) 'Karma' (Ritualistic and Vedic); (b) the nature of happiness and of suffering; (c) Yogic application for transcendental knowledge and liberation. The sixth chapter deals with good conduct, and the Vedic rites. The seventh deals with some fundamental ideas regarding propor- tion, number, measures, distinctions, characteristics, etc. The last three chapters are devoted to experience, knowledge, inference, causation as the aids to gaining full comprehension of subjects.

It has already been mentioned that besides analysing the physical creation up to atom VaišeŞika, actually does not bother about God or transcendence. As such, except for rituals, we have very little to do with VaiseŞika in connection with Saivism. But we must bear in mind that the people who had spent so much time and intellectual energy to distinguish matter and matter, body and body, being and being, taking elaborate notice of function, property, mechanics and ethics of the substances could not have been so bemused as to worship wooden, brazen and stone images in blind superstitious belief. Indeed any idea of worshipping the phallic forms as mysterious sources of spiritual transcendentalism could not have been native to them. This contradiction compels us to study the phallic in Śaivism very cautiously.

Nyaya

The Nyaya system is closely related to the VaiseŞika as the Samkhya is to the Yoga. Nyaya, as the basis of logical understanding, could be said to have provided the 'mechanics' of understanding that which the Vaise- Şika proposes to explain. Both are aids for the beginner. The study of both equips the future of a philosophy-scholar with basic techniques of organising and marshalling such methods as syllogisms, arguments, ana- lysis and inference; after this, Nyaya further probes into subjects like doubts, memory, fallacy, function and contradictions; lastly, it delves into further metaphysical subjects like Isvara and Liberation. Nyaya, or Logic (inductive and deductive) chastens human rationalism to an extent which disabuses mind of any type of blind faith or belief. It makes nonsense of common theology. Brains nursed by this system are not ex- pected to be involved in such primitive cults as phallicism. Yet Gautama, the author of Nyaya, and following Gautama his disciples, had not been entirely without theistic practices. Saivism's theology, therefore, must have been something more metaphysical than the purely physical approach of phallicism.

Mimänsä

Whereas both the Vailesika and the Nyaya systems deal with the mechanics of intellection, Mimänsä as a system is completely different. Its subject is the Vedas, and the rites and ceremonies which evolve from the Vedas as means for liberation. Yajña, Homa, rites for acquiring more and more power, and supremacy of the Brahmanical literature, form the special orbits for Mimänsä. The sacrificial Brahmanas, the religious preceptors, the Ṛsis, the Recitors of Vedic recensions, interpretations, the way by which rites act for enhancement of spirit, become involved and more involved in Mimänsä. It is a compendium for the priests who, as the master interpreters of the Vedas, direct the rites. Even in offering worship the Hindus were careful not to transgress the rules of logical understanding and ethical justification.

Vedanta (Contd.)

Unlike these, the Vedanta shows the way to liberation through a process of introspection, comprehension and subjective analysis. Both Mimänsä and Vedanta deal with salvation as explained in the Vedas. As such both could be termed as wings of one and the same subject. Because of its objectivity Mimänsä of Jaimini is called the first

part of Mimänsä, or Půrva Mimänsä; and because of its subjective approach, the Vedanta of Vadarayana is known as Uttara Mimänsä (ie., Later- Mimänsä or Post-Mimänsä). The former depends on Karma, and accepts the Vedas as authority; the latter depends on Jñana and accepts the same Vedas (particularly the Upanisads) as authority. Mimänsä calls on the Brahmanas for its support; Vedanta calls on the Upanisads for its support. Both the Brahmanas and the Upanisads being accepted as prac- tical anthologies of the vast Vedic literature, are included under the orthodox systems.

[(a) Brahma or Brahman-The all pervasive Spirit; (b) Brahma-a Pauranic Deity; (c) Brahmanas-Vedic ritualistic treatises; and (d) Brähmaṇa-the highest of the four vargas distinguished by his spiritual knowledge.]

The first four aphorisms of Vedanta have induced the commentators to produce a library of comments and explanations. The first of these says: "After this, the enquiry regarding the Brahman." After what? After the enquirer has equipped himself with Vaišeşika, Nyaya and Mimänsä. Covertly the suggestion is that mere mechanics, techniques, skill in rites and powers to attain 'heaven' (as proposed in Vailesika and Mimänsä) are not equivalent to liberation, which comes only from self- realisation. Yet at the same time the aphorism suggests that for under- standing the Vedanta system and its subjectivity, the objective systems of Mimansa, Vaiseşika and Nyaya have to be known. The second aphorism states that Brahma is the source of the processes of birth, growth and decay. The third one says that knowledge about the Brahman can be acquired from scriptural authorities alone. There is no other way. 199 And the fourth aphorism states that the subject of all the Vedantas (Upa- nisads) is Brahman,108

Known as Catuhiatri-these four aphorisms, like four corner stones, uphold the entire structure of Vedänta. Naturally the commentators have spared no labour in firmly establishing these first four aphorisms.

The whole of the second section (Pada) of the first chapter of the Brahma-Sutra has been devoted to the advocacy in favour of the monistic theory of Brahman. It quotes a number of sentences from the Upanisads, and builds up the fundamentals of Vedänta on monism. All through, the Vedic authorities (Śrutis) speak in favour of monism. The Gita is quoted in the 6th aphorism. Things are many, but the One, the Spirit, is in all;

and the same One is manifest into many. Hence plurality is formal, not fundamental, neither intensely spiritual. He is in the world, yet He is not the world; yet it is He who conducts the World, that is the Atman, the Brahman, the Amṛtam. Sentences have been freely quoted from the Brhadaranyaka and Chandogya Upanisads, as well as from such theories as Dahara and Utkramana.

This has been more elaborately dealt with in the third section. The Dahara-theory of the voyage of the soul after death, as described in Chan- dogya, ultimately ends in the Brahman concept, as does Sämkhya, which, although speaking of Prakrti, does not really contradict the actual finality of Oneness. The Devas have rights in acquiring this Brahma Vidya, for their own spiritual benefit; but the Südras who, by nature, gravitate towards Tamas or (the gross), and who thereby remain deprived of the Vedic knowledge, become automatically debarred from the Brahma Vidyä, which is relevant only for those who feel inspired towards Sattva, or spirituality. Thus, the disability imposed is not to be misconstrued as a social handicap, but to be recognised as a spiritual incapacity. Of course, here we are speaking of the Vedantic stand.

The 'caste system' of the Hindus is a perversion of the original Vedic basis of Varna-classification. Varna (classification) was, as already noted, distinguished on the Guna (Sattva-Rajas-Tamas) and Karma (Prarabdha Sancita-Naimittika).

Thus Sattra classifies the spiritual; Tamas, the dull, inert. These are individual evaluation of characteristic, and not acquired through here- ditary rights. Rajas, which spreads over an area of agitation, classifies a Sattva-Tamas mixture; one or the other of the two dominates, thus giving two more middle Varnas.

The Prakṛti of Samkhya is but a subtlety of the formed body; nothing individually different from Puruṣa. The Katha,100 as well as the Svetasva- tara Upanisads, 110 which speak of Ajam ekah, really mean the three forms of power emanating from the One. The 'five into five' tattvas of the Brhadaranyaka too does not finally contradict Oneness. The 'twenty-five' tattvas of Samkhya, or the 'twenty-seven' of the Upanisads,111 are but arithmetical enumeration for easy comprehension. This does not prove that maniness is final. This section fully explains the so-called duality of the Jiva and the Atman.

The second chapter of the Brahma-Sutra devotes itself in contradicting all the possible stands against monism. In doing this, the relation bet- ween the Brahman and the World, and the implication of the annihilated state of existence have been described. It goes on to decide on four more problems. What is the nature of the Atman? What are its functions? How those functions operate through the body? And the relation between Karma and the influence of the Atman and Karma. These four enquiries with their replies engage the topics of this chapter.

Samkhya is not the finality of knowledge; for that matter neither is Yoga. These are just the Smrtis or traditions; and as traditions they are often contradictory to Manu or Vyasa two of the celebrated law-givers. Sämkhya, of course, talks of Pradhana, which is Vedic; but besides Pradhana, the other principles propounded by Sämkhya are not Vedic. (This, eventually as we shall note, would bear a telling effect on the development of Saivism.)

Brahman is conscious. The world is not. Naturally the two must be regarded as opposites. If so, is it sensible to say that the one evolved out of the other?

This stand of Samkhya is laughed at by Brahma-Sutra. The living Puruşa is Conscious; that is not to say that hair and nails grown from body (of the Puruşa) are conscious too. When a pot is shattered, then the clay of which the pot is made retains no potness of the pot, except the quality of the clay. This world is from the Brahman. When this creation goes out of existence, the attributes of the creation too disappear; what remains is the Brahman.

Truth is not realised through arguments, Learning and casuistry fail to realise Truth. It must be experienced. Arguments and reasonings, as aids to understanding are but techniques for formulating a theory. The joy of realisation cannot be argued. By emphasising realisa- tion Vädarayana slightingly suggests the emptiness and inadequacy of Nyaya, Yoga and Samkhya, which deals in what are considered by Vyasa as mere mechanisms. The world is but a museum of names, a library of labels. These do not succeed in doing away with the Truth of Reality lying at the bottom of the nomenclatural plurality. The dirt or clay could give shapes to things as dolls, carts pots and huts. When in a barren wilderness a whole city springs up, does the mass weight of the area increase? Or when cities lie wrecked by earthquakes, does the mass weight get decreased? As soon as shape disappears, what remains is the earthiness of

the earth. Destroy the world. The nature of the world goes. What remains is the one Cause. In that cause lies the effect, latent as potentiality. In that cause sleeps the future worlds, as does the mighty banyan lie in that tiny seed. This indestructible totality in eter- nity is Brahman, the One. The World-manifest lies asleep in the Cause-unmanifest. This 'lying, sleeping' gives meaning to the term Siva, which means 'the sleeping one'. The manifest is in the unmanifest.115 The unmanifest is the Real and True. The manifest is limited in space and time. To this extent the temporary and the unreal emerges from the Eternal and the Real.

Brahman and Jiva

The Unmanifest Real is the Brahman.11 The manifest with name, contains Brahman in it; it is also in the Brahman. Its distinctive name is Jiva. The Brahman in the manifest is Jiva. Indeed the Śruti (Vedic traditions) differentiates between the Brahman and Jiva. This is but superficial. Ultimately Jiva has been covered by the Brahman. This superficiality has been taken to be the real evaluation on the basis of two types of argument. One, in this phenomenon of cosmos emerging from chaos, order emerging from Cause, no elemental ingredients were present as starting material. No material ingredient, no material, caused the world, the chaos, the cosmos, the order, the change. Two, milk curdles; gold becomes a medal. What becomes of the world? If the whole Brahman, like gold, is the world, then Brahman as Brahman ceases to be, even temporarily; because Brahman takes the shape of an ornament, or ornaments. Both these stands would be un-Vedic.

This position is inane. The Brahma-Sutra says, gold remains gold even when shaped as ornaments. The curd and milk both change shape and function without losing the ultimate property as food. Brahman remains unaffected by phenomenal changes. Man destroys his own shape and place, and often feelings of realities, in dreams; but such dream-changes do not change man. Similarly phenomenal changes do not affect or change the eternal mature of the Brahman. inces Sruti says that Iivara (Brahman) is the source and abode of Power, all powers are innate in Isvara. He fulfils no motive of His in mani- festing creation, for He is motiveless and self-filled. The phases of opposites, imbalances, pleasure-pain are not His phases; but those of the interactions of the very Gunas and Karmas that emanate out of the created, which are but the creations of His moods of sporting with His own Self. This Happy-Joy is eternal in Him because the

cycle or the current of Creation is perpetual and eternal. Hence the action and inter-action of Karma too is perpetual. Karma evolves from the propulsion of the chained reactions of apparent, latent or motive power discharged as action. The immediate manifested reaction in question could be the carrier of the immediate step, plus the residual reaction of bygone actions, or mere chained reflexes. The common idea of equating Fate or Destiny with Karma is erroneous. It involves eschatology by inference, remotely: (see Dahara and Utkramana in Chandogya) but it is not meant to be eschatological always. Karma is accountable to cause and effect. Unaccountability is the chief characteristic of Fate.

Cosmogony

The theory of creation in Vedänta puts Brahman as the Eternal beginning, the Logos, or the Om-sound. Thence the space; from space, air; from air, Agni (fire or heat); from Agni, water; from water, the earth. From these five evolve what is accepted as intelligence and mind. This arrangement more or less is approved of in the Chandogya, the Brhad- aranyaka and the Taittiriya Upanisads. All knowledge is acquired when the Branman is known.120 What is Real remains unchanged. Atman is Real. From this, ether, air, fire, water and earth evolute in a cyclic order; a reverse of this cycle causes the creation to fold back. This is Pralaya, the total and absolute disintegration of the name-world. The 'No-name-world' is the Brahman.

Jiva

In reality Jiva itself is beyond birth or death as it is neither integrated nor disintegrated, which is not the case with the bodies. The Atman being eternal, Jiva, the conscious-self that 'knows' is also eternal. The Vedas speak of the theories of 'Utkramana' and 'Agamana' referred to in Chandogya. This obviously does not relate to the Eternal and the Unlimited, the Cosmic and the Omnipresent. Hence Jiva, which chooses the body as a temporary field, must be not only a phase of the Cosmic Self, but also much smaller, even subtler, than the atom.11 A drop of perfume could fill an area with fragrance, similarly the presence of this Jiva electrifies the entire being with consciousness. The Self's abode is the 'heart'; the seat of feeling, the pivot of life, of perceptual reactivity. It is there, like the burning incense in the sanctum sanctorum, pervading the entire temple with its fragrance. For smelling the flower one may not have to reach the body of the flower. Atman could be reached, realised by

contemplation or otherwise. This Atman is conscious, but is not consciousness, as the flower is fragrant, but not the fragrance."" Samkara says, however, that this Jiva, under the influence of intelligence, is subject to the knowledge of the contraries; in reality Jiva and Brahman, like the wave and the sea, are not at all more than One. The Oneness remains undisturbed by the plurality of beings, Atman and feelings. When a Yogin means liberation, he means the Realisation of the truth, that the Jiva and the Brahman is one and the same.12

Intelligent consciousness gives Jiva its characteristic name, and due so this name, acting as a shell, Jiva is supposed to be different from Brahman. Real knowledge breaks through the shell, and knows that Brahman and Jiva are inseparably one and the same. The sex potentiality in an infant, although symbolically present, remains unaware of actual possibilities. A stage of deep-sleep causes a temporary and apparent state of non-existence of conscious intelligence. Yet the potential intelli- gence, remains intact, although unrealised. Such dormancy is in the nature of intelligence, which plays always an undetectable role. Hence the Mind has a name in Sanskrt, antah-karana (one that acts from within). Intelligence is the supreme characteristic of the Mind (antah-karana).

Jiva functions. We have recognised one of these functions, and called it the Mind. Through the activity of the mind Jiva permeates the entire being 14 But as the master of the least conscious action Jiva is not always conscious of its own good. It is subject to the gloom of gross- matter or Tamas. These periods of gloom and doldrums affect Jiva, not the Intelligence. Intelligence is by definition discriminating, compre- hending and selective. Jiva's resting into transcendental peace, or 'Samadhi', is the unaffected play of Intelligence, and the results, thereof are enjoyed by Jiva, not by the intelligence. Hence the Master is Jiva, not intelligence; the enjoyer or the sufferer is Jiva, not intelligence. In- telligence affects Jiva, and it acts. 15 For the conduct of intelligence, and of Jiva thereby, the Sastras enjoin special acts of discipline. The inter-relation between rituals, sacraments, yajñas and the like, on the one hand, and perfecting Intelligence on the other, is like cleansing the glasses of a pair of spectacles from time to time, or cleansing a mirror, or keeping the ball bearings well-oiled and groomed, or wiping the wind-shield of an automobile. Vedic Karmas discipline the Jiva; and Jiva disciplined, sharpens intelligence. Such Karmas by affecting Jiva assists its Sancita (invested, accrued) results (Phala).

The Upanisads describe Brahman and Jiva as one and the same; yet they insist that the one is total, and the other is not. Brahma-Sutra deals with this, and offers explanation. The Purusa-Sukta says that the manifest universe is but a quarter of the unmanifest (Padosya Visva Bhutani Tripadasyämptam Divi);17 and the Gita (Mamaivangio Jivaloke Jivabhutah) says, "The manifest in the manifest-world is but My fraction." These support the stand of the Brahma-Sutra.

It may be so. But if Jiva has experience of suffering and joy, why is Brahman free of this? Ask the wave, why its coming to being and breaking to non-being does not affect the ocean. Ask the sky why the various formations of the clouds leave it unaffected. Ask the cold dust of this earth why it receives the tears of the bereaved, of the joyous, and the blood of the new born and the murdered with equal unconcern. The elephant's unconcern about the weight of the fly speaks of its vastness. Brahman means vastness, Transcendence; beyond all. Hence to feel or to experience, or to react is not his. It must belong to a smaller identity. This is Jiva. Brahman's totality is all absorbing, all encompas- sing. Had it been possessed of a feeling for separateness, it would not be what it is. The chink makes the sunlight look jagged, but the sun- light is what it is beyond the limit of that chink.

Since Jiva is affected by intelligence and discretion, Jiva's action results in consequential experience-chains, or Karma. Since the same Jiva cannot-reside in many bodies, no Jiva can share the Karma of another. Karma has to be experienced by Jiva in one body; if the duration of a body proves too narrow for absorbing all Karma, then Jiva has to wait and take other bodies. A particular body proving insufficient for mitigating all the back-lashes of Karma, has to assume further bodies. The reflected sun may shake in the water in one bucket; but it may not shake in another adjacent bucket; if the Karma of the bucket, namely the state of poise in the contained water, does not counte- nance it.10 Here Vedänta strikes at Samkhya which calls the Jiva-Puruşa to be both plural, and all pervading. Therefore, according to Samkhya, one Jiva should bear witness for the Karma of another, and then bear the brunt of the resultant consequences. But Jiva does not bear it. It should. 'Why then it does not'; remains unexplained in Sämkhya? Vedänta, by distinguishing the two as fractions of the whole, appears to be more consistent. Somehow it makes sense. Sämkhya leaves a query.

Prana

The spirit of Prana, or the Life-breath, like the five gross elements has been one of the created entities in Brahma-Sutra, 131 It is different from mere 'air'. It is not what fills the being. It is more than just mechanism. Prana is charged with awareness and belongs to the Cosmic Prana. Breath is functional as the air in the furnace-bellow; it is Prana, the breath, to keep the body functioning, and 'alive'.

It is the medium of the Life-property. Präna has immediate effects on moods of depression, or reflection, or elation. Prana has relation with vitality. Like vitamin in food, Prana is more vital than either breath or air. Its control has immediate effect on faculties of awareness and living. This life-breath has been categorised into eleven ways, functioning indifferently, distinctly and with varying aptitude, through the faculties of the mind, the five sensory organs, and the five active organs. The life-spirit is composed of subtle substances, and is beyond human apprehension or perception when it leaves, at the end, the different functional limbs of the body, one by one. 'Prana' or the Life-spirit, is active; but remains as an automatic reflex, i.e., emotionally unaffected. Mind acts in the five functions of sight, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting; so does 'Prana' function in five distinct ways: Präṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Udâna and Vyana.13 Fire, air and water being mixed proportionally constitute all forms. This three- fold functions of the Mind, the Pranas and the Bhútas (Fire, Air, Water) evolve the obvious name-world. The five Pranas indicate the inter- relation between Air, Water and Heat within the functional limits of the body.

Life and Death: Pañcagni: Dahara

Brahma-Sutra speaks elaborately of the life after Death. In the chapter on Pravahana and Svetaketu in the Chandogya Upanisad the subject has been described as follows: ritualistic offerings of water move the subtle bodies to enjoy the spiritual state. At the end of this state the subtle bodies are assimilated into the clouds, which descend as water and enter crops. Food eventually becomes semen; and semen is dropped in the heat that the female egg offers. This generates the embryo. At each of the five states Heat is essential. The progressing substance is always falling from heat to more heat. Generally, the common language also describes the biological condition of the female as 'one in heat'. The progressing substance gradually enters the mass of heated clouds, then the heated earth; then to the heated crop and then, lastly, to the heated male and the heated female. This is the Pañcagni-Vidya or the mystery of the Five-Flames.

Naturally, many would feel interested to no more. I refer them to the Sariraka Sutra-III, Section I; and to the Chandogya Upanisad V: 3. Here I could only attempt to give a brief summary. Offerings after death, specially water, reaches the heavens, the source from which all moisture emerges. This is technically called Candra-Loka, the world of the Moon (which is never to be confused with the physical moon, the planet). From the special area heat turns into moisture. So this area gets the moisture of offerings after death. The prayers attribute a motive to this course. Hence there is an emphasis on 'Sraddha', i.c., a devotional appeal and its purity. Then this specialised moisture passes time in the space. The length of time so passed depends on the individual's spiritual status or Gunas. This spatial moisture descends through the absorbing clouds, and gradually meets the heat of earth; then it enters food. Food now descends into the heat of the body and becomes semen; semen des- cends in the heat of the womb. From heat to heat it traces its progressive course. Water is the container of the qualities of earth, moisture and heat. These retain the quality of Prána. Prana's awareness adds motive to the progress of water. As it takes its descending course, it retains a portion of its original Präna motive, although most of it was spent in the Candra-Loka. (This does not, as is commonly believed, mean the sphere of the Moon.) Thus prayers, devotions, social service and good actions involuntarily affect Prana which finally conducts the course of Life after death; for it is obvious that Life does not die; as, heat becomes absent, but does not die; water disappears, but does not die. In other words states which appear seemingly to have 'ended', do not really end. They continue their progress by assuming other states. Change from state to state is the function of Prána, and is in nature. Change is not Death. Thus good actions result in a good state; bad in bad. Ethical actions come back to ethical state; non-ethical to miserable one. Words like Samyamana,

Naraka, Yama-Loka are synonymous with Hell. This is a state of dull dark suffering for Prana; the Prana progresses, from body to body and variously suffers or enjoys, in accordance with ethical or non-ethical motive force.

Those who deserve Candra-Loka, ascend that state, only to rotate back. No rest to them until they reach the Deva-Loka or Pity-Loka. The Deva- Way leads to the 'water-cloud-rain-crop-food-semen-womb-birth' cycle. In between the rest period is Candra-Loka where the next course of moisture begins. This is known as the mystery of the Five

Flames. (rain-earth- man-semen-womb). The mystery of the Five Flames leads to the know- ledge of Dahara.

In short, Jiva is subject to the subtleties of the functions of mind, sensation and form. Hence the future of Jiva could be affected by the Karmas functioned not only by him, when he was in body, but also by those who are in body, and are in a position to assist. Self-acts, when good, are enjoyed in the subtle state; when not, have to be paid for, atoned for, because of which descending into another body is unavoidable. Good acts attain the path known as the lunar path, which, although descending, assists in a progressive evaluation towards the final liberation from the tyranny of birth. Thus one is known as Pity-Yana, the way of those who have been 'sent-off' to be back again; and the other is known as 'Deva- Yana', or the way of Spiritual Assimilation. Rites and Yajñas assist the Pity-Yana: but for the Deva-Tana, or the attainment of Brahman, one's own efforts alone would suffice.

This kind of emphasis on 'efforts' of the self rather than on the results of rites alone influenced the entire area of worship in Hinduism, which sharply distinguishes between self-merging meditation and glamurous rites. In classifying types of Saivism this fact bears a great importance.

The last part of the second chapter of Brahma-Sutra deals with the vexed subject of animal-sacrifice. Animal-sacrifice is not a general ritual. It is a very special rite. When enjoined upon to perform such a rite, it must be the only recourse; and then has to be done, without any sense of impurity or hesitation, and in a specially flawless manner as far as the ritualistic injunctions are concerned. But the good of the rite is shared by the victim as much as by the performer of the rite. Brahma-Sutra compares the rite with a surgical operation at a time of extreme distress. Such blood-shed does not affect the surgeon's sense of duty. He remains unaffected, unmoved.

The Brahman

The most important view of Vedanta reflects on the nature of the Brahman. Is the Brahman Absolute or Relative? Whilst Samkara

finds the Brahman as Absolute, according to the Brahma-Sutra, Ramanuja does not find so; he qualifies the Brahma-Sutra. Ramanuja insists that the Brahman is stainless,

imminent, immortal, free, yet at the same time he longs for the Truth; and is the abode of all the qualities.

Vädarayana believes that the power of creation belongs to the pure, stainless Brahman, even as heat belongs to fire. Brahman for its own sport develops into the world without undergoing the least change and without ceasing to be itself. Vädarayana does not care to explain how this is possible. He does not even say, as Rämänuja and others urge, that Brahman has wonderful powers by which even the inconceivable might be achieved. He invites our attention to the apparently contradictory statements contained in the Śruti, and warns us that we have no right to question the authority or the Śruti. From a philosophical point of view this answer is unsatisfactory, 14

The last sentence quoted above gives the view of Dr. Radhakrishnan on this contradiction, or should one say on the pragmatic silence of Vädarayana garding how simultaneously the Brahman could be itself, and also the creation, Samkara stands firm, and says that the Brahman does not change. Brahman is the Ultimate Reality; that the Brahman being Brahman is the knower, the known and the knowledge. This is the ultimate mystery about his greatness. Rämänuja, the Bhakta, the Adorer, the Devotee, cuts himself out of the confusion by saying "the im- possible is possible with God." So said the Vedas; in fact, all realised utterances assert with feeling. The Seers realise; the logicians argue. The latter elaborate on the mechanics; on logic, proof and polemics. But the Vedic RṢi felt, realised and stated. These statements were recorded. Their transcendental knowledge should be more dependable even when our logic fails to comprehend. Logic, alas, cannot comprehend; to comprehend is to be one with the subjectivity of Truth.

The Brahman in the Upanisads is both manifest and unmanifest; yet again the same Upanisad warns 'not this'; 'not that". Samkara ex- plains that by 'not that'. Upanisad means that the Brahman cannot be both manifest and unmanifest. But in Dhyana the Brahman becomes Dharana; and the abstract all embracing Brahman, having been conceived by the limited, is grasped as qualified and limited. Such success (in Dhyana) in the realisation of the limitless within a limited form also leads to complete liberation. Water has no colour or shape, but the container gives it both. This shape or colour is both a fact and an illusion. This is Ramanuja's Qualified-monistic-Brahman.

There is no Jiva without Brahman. Jiva and Brahman are identical. Hence it stands to reason that to the orthodox Saivaite, Brahman is Šiva, and Siva is Brahman; and only in this sense the great Samkara could be called a Šaiva. This Šaiva, the one identified with Brahman, is the symbolic Siva, consort of Mäyä, Mahat or Prakyti. Śaivism as practised in the South of India, depending on this concept of an imminent Brahman, as explained by Ramanuja's commentary leading to Bhakti, developed into the great Saivic Bhakti cult which shall be discussed in detail under Šaiva Siddhanta.

Śruti says there is nothing outside the Brahman. This shows the greatness of Brahman. Brahman is the distributor of the results proceed- ing from Karma, which includes worship, and which the Brahma-Sutra deals with in the third section of the third chapter. The nature of Brahman, the freedom from sin or virtue after death, the difference bet- ween 'the body and Jiva' are discussed one after the other.

The Vedas prescribe the form of offering prayers. The Atman, for prayers, would be conceived as an all powerful, volitional light.

Brahman is the truth, and resides between the eyes. It is the solar glow. To be devoted to this glow leads to liberation. The liberated is beyond vice or virtue. After death the stream known as viraja (non-Abode) has to be crossed. But all cannot cross it. All do not assume the Deva-Yana. Those who go by the Deva-Yana include the worshippers of qualified Brahman. The consequences of Karma are borne by Jiva, not by Isvara, although they share the results of the joy of the good act. Brhadaranyaka identifies the Self with the abstract Brahman,140 What is known as the 'space of the heart' is Brahman. Consciousness is not a characteristic of body, although body senses it. Consciousness could be enjoyed even outside the physical state. Lamp is required to see an object in darkness. This does not mean that the lamp is a characteristic of the object, or of darkness. We need worship. But worship is not the only way to liberation. Any kind of dedicated concentration leads to liberation, and the liberated has no need for worship.

Jaimini in Mimänsä asserts that the purpose of the Vedas is to instruct on worship and on Yajña. The knowledge of the Brahman is necessary for Yajña; but Yajña cannot be avoided because one has knowledge of the Vedas. The wise need not give up worship.141 Isvara is superior to Jiva, says Vadarayana. Even heaven becomes secondary to the knowledge of Isvara. To know Isvara is a method to realise him. The

realised indeed may continue offering Yajñas like Janaka and Kekayaraja; but there is also another way. They may as well renounce all worship, rites, etc. and accept Sannyasa, the way of the total recluse.142 Sannyasa as the fourth state is not an imperative state, although it has been defined as the last of the four Asramas. To have been defined is not to have been prescribed. Those who do not belong to the four Asramas, have full rights to acquire Brahma Vidya and liberation. Manu says that Japa alone leads to liberation.143 Japa, fasting and charity cleanses the mind from receiving knowledge; but the Asramas help acquisition of knowledge with ease. A sannyasi cannot retrace his steps to a previous Asrama. Such a retrogradation is heinous.

The last section of Vädarayana's Brahma-Sutra prescribes the way of Sadhana, and its results. The Atman has to be worshipped not as Brahman's index or symbol. Atman is Brahman. The image of Visnu, which is symbolic, may be worshipped in place of the Atman; but to realise the Atman is to realise Brahman.

Meditate while seated firmly like a rock. Meditate on the Atman and realise Brahman. (In this connection recall Patanjali's prescription to the weak-minded and strong-minded seekers.) Patanjali conforms to Vädarāyaṇa regarding the meditation of the strong-willed. He classifies them as "naturally inspired with the unembodied nature of the Cause of creation. But for the ones who are not so strong in abstract and subjective concentration, he prescribes faith, energy, memory, then meditation and discernment. And to those driven by an irresistible flood of impetuous longing such complete concentration through a complete dedication becomes easier. Gitä also approves of this; for focussing the qualities of faith, energy and memory, the adoption of an 'objective' becomes helpful. Such an objective in the sound form is Om, provided one was trained in the mystic purport of the sound Om known as Pranava, the living chant; but this objective could also be a shaped one: a sign, a linga, an icon, a lamp, a picture, a statue, a special place with a special atmosphere, all of which could be spurned at as idolatry, or accepted as living assistance and guide to further beyond. This is the mystic secret of worship of forms by the Hindus. The realised need no further worship. All resultant sequences of Karma reach and end with Realisation.144

Rites and worship are for discipline, purification and knowledge. Knowledge leads to realisation. (Note that it only leads to knowledge not realisation.) The Realised is liberated; and the liberated is free from rites. At times we perform rites which are

mysteriously vague to us; but by performing them diligently we arrive at the same results. The mysterious does not remain mysterious to the seeker. It explains itself with realisation. But it explains only to him not to others. He, in turn, cannot explain the Realised to others. It is anirvacaniya (inexpressible): avangmanasa gocara (beyond the icon of mind or speech). Logos is silent. God of the Jews cannot be touched by the tongue; he cannot be pronounced. Brahman is anucchiffam (untouched by tongue).

Death

Then is explained the process of final decay of mind, body and func- tions, known as death, and how it gradually operates in a way which leaves the conscious self free from 'death'. The senses of a dying person get gradually disconnected from the 'outer' world; they recede into the Mind. The mind fails to function externally, having had lost its relating connec- tions with objects. It functions in the subjects, however (memory and uninhibited reflexes of memory), and withdraws to Prana, the vital breath. Prana as a function now clings to the cause of this individual Prana, the identity, the Jiva. Now the Jiva has to leave the heap of decay. As it does, it carries Prana along with it. The Jiva's identity, like water to water, heat to heat, air to air, gets gradually mixed up with the five gross elements. Bhúta to Bhúta. Once in the Bhúta-world, it takes the route to ascend to the Matrix of the Bhúta, and adopts either the Deva, or the Pitr-Yana, as explained before. At first there is one stream; then it gets divided. The Jivas are classified, and take to the stream which is compatible with their efforts. These efforts radiate from the energy acquired through Karma performed in a previous body. Some Jivas take to Deva-Yana, and attain release; some take to Pitr-Yana, and take birth again, in order to spend out the momentum of those misguiding desires which had kept their life pattern in a famished desirous rhythm.

After death the subtle forms of the five elements retain the Jiva which leaves the body when cast in fire. The fire destroys the frame, the cage, not Jiva. (This is the reason why the material frame is prescribed to be turned to ashes. It helps the Mind and Prána to proceed to the respec- tive journey along Deva or Pitr-Yana without any tempting keep back.) The heat of a living body is derived from the subtle absorption of the elements. When the subtle leave as Prana, heat too leaves the body. But the knower of the Brahman does not have to cast his Prana and Jiva outside his body. His Prana and Jiva reach absorption in Brahman even whilst within the body, and avoid all further stress.

Many worship Brahman in qualified images. Since they are absorbed in the single thought, the area of the body nearer the heart is more agitated, and reflect a flushed tint due to tension. The last thoughts, the heartful desires, determine the way the Jiva is going to receive its progress towards the next likely life. The Jiva leaves the body in different ways, according to the spiritual status attained. The man of Brahman-realisation is not at all hampered by these conditions. For him liberation is immediate and total. The image worshippers do not attain direct liberation; they enjoy liberation through, or in accompaniment of the deity they adore. Christianity believes Jesus to be the Medium through whom alone libera- tion is possible. The believers in images find themselves emotionally involved. The liberated is spiritual. He is in a state of idealistic abstrac- tion. Jiva and Brahman become perfectly identified. The liberated has knowledge of time and space; but the knowledge is not binding. This detached involvement with the world around gives the liberated souls the special powers of goodness and enlightenment. (Study, under Bhakti, the concepts of Särůpya, Samipya, Salokya and Säyujya.)

Vadarayana's Brahma-Sutra, of which the above is just a résumé, is the strictest monistic view of Indian philosophy. He meticulously avoids polytheistic interpretation of creation. The Brahman is indeterminate intelligence, and determinate Personal Lord according to Vädarayana. He makes no attempt to reconcile the two, probably because he was aware of the innate nature of knowledge which could be reached both by reason and intuitive force. This subtle room left for accommodating the emo- tively attached souls along with the rational rigidity and stern monism of the purely subjective souls makes Hinduism what it is-a liberal way of life where religion becomes a natural inner contentment.

The world-drama is ever changing and fluctuating; it is impermanent; Brahman is not. Brahman is True, Real, Changeless and Eternal. How the changing flux could come out of the changeless form and how such a cause could result in such an effect; has been the subject of the subtlest metaphysical discussion since Vädarayana. The immediate challenge has been offered by Jaimini. Brahman develops the universe, himself remain- ing transcendent. The mystery is so far insoluble through argument. Only the realised know the solution; they are at peace; and they say that not by argument and knowledge could this be finally understood.145

So thought the Saivas. Some of them like Samkara, have been abstractionists, monists; while some others, like Madhusudana Sarasvati, Ramanuja, Nimbärka, Ramakrishna, Caitanya, remain deists. As we enter into the Saiva metaphysics we shall notice the influence of Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta on Saivism which was native to India, as different from phallicism, which was not, at least an accepted form of recognised theology. We are gradually coming to realise that behind Saivism and its symbolic icons, as well behind its anthropomorphic forms, a whole school of spiri- tual thought has been rationally exercised. It is far removed from the fertility cults, or phallic forms. The confusion that exists is due to (a) the presence of some external similarities, which are merely obvious, but not real; and (b) the ignorance about the eschatology and cosmogony of Hindu metaphysics, of which Saivism is an emotive expression. Some aspects of alien religious trends, now confused with what is known as Sai- vism, came from elsewhere to India, and entered the general Hindu body. But such intrusions into the main Hindu thought have met with the strongest denouncements.

This will be clear with the exposition of Saiva philosophy. We conclude our study of Vedanta with a long quotation from an article of Krishnaswamy Aiyar contributed to "The Cultural Heritage of India" (Vol. III, p. 236)

The reader who has so far followed the Vedantic reasoning will readily perceive that the question of a cause never arises with regard to Maya or Avidya. Maya is a theoretical concession to the Avidya-ridden soul to satisfy its craving for an explanation of the world, and Avidya or ignorance must always be traced to the absence of enquiry. The order of evolution is fixed and immutable: first Avidya or ignorance, and then intellection. Causation cannot precede ignorance, for it presupposes intellection. Knowledge is the implacable foe of ignorance which it completely destroys. There is an impression that Vedanta is mysticism and that the latter is the culmination of its teaching. The two, however, are widely and distinctly apart. The Upanisads no doubt deal with the Upasanas and meditations which aim at the experience of mystic oneness and the ecstasy resulting from it. This is evi- dently meant for those who avoid discussion and reasoning. In the Vedanta the rational portion stands out more prominently, and the methodology is based on it. The distinction between the two is radical and far-reaching. Mysticism seeks private experience by conscious effort, while the Vedantic reason builds on universal

experience, although truth cannot be drawn from special experience, however rare; for the latter are not within the lives of all. Vedänta aims at knowledge of truth; mysticism at ecstasy.

In contemplating life we seem to be spectators of a strange drama, a play of shadows in the shape of states enacted before us. The actors and the scenes are ourselves transmitted, without the least loss of our integrity. So long as we take the shadow for subs- tance, we are merged in joys and sorrow, in birth and death. When we remember it is but shadow and that reality can cast no shadow, the play now known to be an illusion deceives us no more, and the states rolling and unrolling before us fool us no longer. We are left to admire the greatness of Brahman, which can project such scenes, and withdraw them into Itself, leaving no trace behind.

V

Monism and Dualism

Centuries have gone by; the controversy regarding monism, dualism and polytheism does not appear to be at an end; spiritually the sects have continued to differ, and form more and still more sects. For the layman, empirically conscious of the world of facts, but spiritually far removed from Truth, it has been a baffling experience. He wonders why there should be so much controversy, so many sects, regarding one fundamental Reality, God. The growing cynical indifference to any- thing religious could be traced to this baffling controversy. Each sect claims to have inspired saints to support its stand. And the common man notices that saints in the intellectually austere order of the rigid monism of Samkara have been as numerous as those in the emotionally vibrant order of Ramanuja's Bhakti. Both, however, adopt the system of Yogic discipline, and both happen to be aware of the fact that "Samkhya and Yoga are one in the eyes of the seer." There are the Saivas who contemplate on Siva as the emblem of sheer monism; as there are the others who accept him as a personal God. One says, "Cidananda rupah Šivoham Sivoham" (I am the Siva in form, the Conscious and the Happy), and is on the path of Samkara's monism. Another sings in ecstatic delight of the devotee: Bhaja Govindam, bhaja Govindam, Govindam bhaja mudhamate' (pray fool, pray and chant Govinda-Govinda); or

I defy a killer's thrust

Of javelin dript with gory blood;

I defy the charms of maidens

Who with sweetly smiles beflood:

But I dread those clumsy souls

Deprived of that Divine Grace

Which melts the heart, and captivates

The inmost Spirit's deep embrace.

This is the path of Ramanuja. Šamkara could handle the abstract, and concentrate: he advocated monism. Ramanuja, on the other hand, thought of the emotionally charged populace, and had to suggest a path for them.

Tantra too is monism. This system advocates the abstract Śakti (Power) to the primal Cause of the caused. The same Sakti, to others, appears as a living personal religion of the Mother. There have been great monist saints like Tailanga Swami, Bhaskarānanda Swami, Ramana Maharşi. All of them were great realised Yogis. On the other hand, there have been saints like Rûpa Gosvāmi, Sanatana Gosvāmi, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Krisnananda Agama Vagis and Rşi Auro- bindo, all of whom were devoted to a personal godhead. Differences of these convictions appear as mere casuistry and debate when we consider the supreme spiritual individuality of these Yogis. Intellectually and perhaps academically, they do differ: but the difference ends with the actual experience. Madhusudana Sarasvati, one of the most honoured of the Vedäntists, held in high esteem by all scholars, inclusive of Dr. Radhakrishnan, considers this difference of impersonal monism and personal deism; and finally has to say, "If the Yogins under the influence of disciplinary Dhyana succeed in enjoying the vision of a formless, limit- less, characterless Light, let them! My mind, indeed, runs after the blue form of the one who plays his flute on the banks of the Yamuna. To watch Him is to fill the sense of vision."147

Whence a Personal God?

This question of concentration through a personal god, or through an impersonal god has created more controversy in theology than any other single factor. It has created

sects in religion. Without a personal God there cannot be rites, chants and prayers, priests, congregation; and given an impersonal God, few if at all any, of the distressed in the world, could even gather the courage to submit and dedicate. Emphasis on the impersonal God deprives the priestly order of their privileged role. Battles have been fought over this issue; and understandably so. An impersonal God-concept militates against the entire structure of temple- church organisation.

Samkara's chief contribution lies in establishing Monism through his commentary of the Vedanta Sûtra. But was he motivated only by spiri- tual requirements? A doubt arises, as we picture him against the his- torical background of Buddhism, and the religious chaos existing in India after a total degeneration and disintegration of the Vedic society. This was not particularly solved by the emergence of a heterogeneous social upheaval caused by the pressures from alien cultures to which Buddhism had exposed the Greater India. The South of India, Kashmir, the Pun- jab and a large part of the Gangetic plains were exposed to the Central Asian Oriental and Mediterranean cultures, inclusive of the Greek culture. Samkara's interpretation of the Brahma-Sutra must have been, to a very large extent, guided by such influences which he wanted to eradicate, and supplant by a neo-Buddhistic order. He must have realised the im- possibility of turning the wheels of time back to the Tapovana-culture of the Vedas. The Greeks, the Buddhists, the Scythians and the Huns had seen to the ushering of a new age, from where there was no historical turning back. No Vedic-age was again coming back; no Varṇāśrama- culture could survive purely on the basis of natural-aptitude and spiritual tests of Guna and Karma. The metaphysical import of the Gunas was gradually reduced to mean nothing deeper than the empirical 'qualities'; even worse; 'qualities' as Gunas were added to hereditary 'Karmas', which came to mean hereditary professional privileges. Castes became rigid. The society suffering from a sagging ennui fell a victim to Sûnya-vāda (Nihilism), Nästika-vāda (Atheism) and to the most degenerate type of Tantra-forms. Idolatry had taken a full toll of religious ethics; priest craft had dominated under its pretences all normal inspiration of the devout; the urge of devotion was transformed into instinctive fear. The moral evil of idolatry, namely, fanaticism and fear, authority and domination, ignorance and superstition interpreted worship in terms of desire and covetousness. Even the values of sacrifice and submission became polluted by self-elation, self-adulation, and self-indulgence. In setting up Gods who could fit into man's own greedy demands, man

disintegrated within himself both morally and spiritually. Lastly, under the pressure of materialism, all measurements of transcendental joy, which alone gives peace, got irretrievably upset. The very purpose of worship had been placed under a strain.

Religion cannot be allowed to be totally eclipsed in society either by logic or intellection, or by crude superstition. Man needs religion of some kind. As long as man thinks, Man shall need a religion. As long as Man has a need for the Soul, Man shall need food for that Soul. This is his religion. Too far right or too far left; too much conservation or too much freedom; too much reservation of privileges, or too much promiscuity, any opinion pursued rigidly becomes a part of the personality, a part of the Spirit in Man. This becomes his religion. To follow the courage of conviction is to follow a religion. Whatever, however it is, it has to be his religion. True religion of an individual is the result of his self-discovery. Man has to find out the nature of his craving, and then the appropriate means of how to satisfy the craving. That is his religion. As a man has his religion, so a society, a people, too, has its own religion. Imposed religions have the ill fate of becoming both dogmatic and authoritarian. It is not difficult to remain ignorant for a whole life- time spent in religious pursuits. What is then to be done? The answer is the golden mean; to arrive at the centre and to hold the balance. Inner peace is a nerve-state; and it calls for a neuro-psychic approach for eli- minating nervous tension. To hit an equipoise is to get peace. To strive for arriving at this balance is to strive for a spiritual understanding of the self with the world. This is the inner and innate religion of man, which every individual needs; more so now than ever.

Religious beliefs and practices are certainly not the only factors determining the behaviour of a given society. But no less certainly, they are among the determining factors. At least to some extent, the collective conduct of a nation is a test of the religion prevailing within it, a criterion by which we may legitimately judge the doctrinal validity of that religion and its practical efficiency in help- ing individuals to advance towards the goal of human existence.148

Samkara's Social Role

Samkara was trying to replace the anti-Vedic doctrinal Buddhist society by the spirit of the ancient Tapovana society, anti-urban, and anti-materialistic, a world remotely away from the crowd. Such chilling negation called for a very high order of spiritualism,

which Samkara sought in the spirit of the Upanisads. No other system of thinking exposes the power of human cerebral faculties to such a sensitive degree of relent- This he found had been less intellectual compactness and relevance. enjoined by the Vedanta, the Brahma-Sutra of Vadarayana. In inter- preting this Sutra he meant to cover every possible objection by the Kapa- likas, Buddhists and the Vama-Margis (Dissident, degenerate anti-Vedists). Hence he propounded Maya, which answered much of what in Buddhism went for Sunya-vada (Nihilism), and the philosophy of suffering. He intellectually and spiritually emphasised monism or Advaita in order to destroy the last attempts of the Näthas, the Käpälikas, the Bhairavas and the PaŞandins, the strange sects who had sprung their special rituals on Hinduism, and had turned the society into a motley-minded pantomime. The Pasupatas had spread a moral havoc in the name of Guru, worship, mystic rites and power. He answered them.

In metaphysical depth and rational fineness of logical power Samkara's skill is even now unmatched. Through expert handling he completes an unassailable structure, tiers upon tiers, until the supreme tower of monism reaches the heights, and demands awe and veneration.

But is it fated that man must gain himself, and his confidence through servile adoration alone? Wonderment is not a very friendly aid to the forma- tion of confidence. Unless one feels free to mix as equal, the taste of freedom remains incomplete. Religion and God must train the individual to enjoy. Through religion the divine must appear to get closer. Man must discover some value from within to enable him to justify his craving for association with the godhead. If we harbour a disdain for the world, and for all that it means, if we constantly feel the pressure of regarding everything as misplaced, incorrect and illusory, if we learn to undervalue the little whiffs and patches of joy that life and nature have to offer, we become either cynics or hypocrites. Samkara's attitude to the Real, or Brahman, insists on man to develop indifference as a virtue. How many would really grow to accept that suffering comes to an end only by running away from it; or from its hypothetical causes? How many would cling to such means of gaining by escaping? The world is a mirage, an illusion and a supposed state of mind induced by mind is the only Real state: such a bleak and arid view of life could not be swallowed by all. All that is dark and dreary in life proceeds from our actions; and the way to make life, even individual life, happy, must call for some more positive approach, than just to exercise to learn how to forget about everything, and renounce. This does not

appear to be a very practical and accept- able solution. To the common mind the monist idea indeed was just too abstract. It was a towering intellectual edifice, but too empty; an efful- gent intellectual luminary, but too bright to keep us from blindness.

Samkara's indifference leads to renouncement (Sannyasa). This was quite different from the principle of positive involvement as advocated by Krsna. Šamkara and the Gitä both, as well as the Upanisad, pointed to one great message. All are expressions emanated from one source. Through all, therefore, there breathes the same spirit. This total-Spirit, this concept of Totality is God. All this is God. There is nothing out- side of God. So far so good. Samkara, the Gita and the Upanisads agree on this. But at the next stage, where a method to attain this truth is being suggested, Samkara says, 'renounce and take to the roads; live under the trees; subsist on alms". He appears to divide the society into two parts: Bhika and the Bhiksukar, i.e., the alms-givers, and the alms-eaters.

The bridge for this relation is supposed to be a spiritual quest. The influence of the Buddhist image of a Sramana and a Sramana (Monks and Nuns) is too intensive to be ignored. Śamkara does not, like St. Augus tine, or St. Benedict, advice the mendicants to live in a brotherhood of active participation in labour for self-sufficiency. He, conveniently, presupposes a class of producers, who would supply the recluses with the means of keeping the body and the soul together. The labour and the working class, as well as the bourgeoisie were taken for granted by Samkara's way of life. This made Samkara's renunciated class, as that of Buddha's, a privileged class. Krsna would have none of it. The Hindu society, without being filled with involved, participating spiritual leaders like the Vasisthas and the Gautamas, became an easy home for mendi- cants, idlers and beggars. Begging idolised is laziness justified. The germ of later degeneration and hypocrisy lay in this negativised attitude fostered by the slogan of Mäyä on the one hand, and of abnegation on the other. Actual Hinduism of the Vedas says, "Act constantly. Action is superior to non-action." The Indra-Rohita dialogue in Aitareya Brahmana records some of the noblest lines on the superiority of an active life of purposeful labour, and denouncement of an inactive renounc- ed life.10 The Yogi need not be a lazy loon. No religion should encourage beggarliness; true religion helps remove it and win dignity of labour.

In contrast to Samkara, Gitä advocates involvement. Because all are of One God, therefore fundamentally all are of one seed; one Logos. To be able to notice this oneness is to reach the spiritual detachment of Sanata, equality, which, to be true and sincere, must grow from a refusal to admit shortcomings and disabilities as real. Hate the sin and not the sinner; the Kingdom of Heaven is within us: and similar observations which denote complete involvement, actually proceed from this positive participation with and concern in life. A totality of involvement naturally assists the growth of the philosophy of service and detachment. Service with selfish motives reduces its spiritual contribution. Man's redemption from fleshly limitations is to be acquired from man's total dedication for serving man out of such limitations. The snobbery of regarding artisans workers, craftsmen as 'inferior' is non-Vedic, non-Rama, non-Krsna, and therefore un-Hindu; and symptomatic of the materialistic opportunism of a feudalistic society, of which Samkara has been, like the Buddha, a mouthpiece.

Thus whilst Samkara's detachment leads to renunciation, Gita's detach- ment is an evolute of involvement. It is on this basis that many suspect Samkara to be a Buddhist in disguise; whereas the Gitä remains the sheet anchor, the most complete compendium, of the Hindu view of life.

In order to avoid such misunderstanding Samkara assumes a deist's attitude in his approach to daily forms of Upäsanǎ (worship). Apart from a large collection of hymns popularised in his name (but many of which have been traced to other authors like Vidyaranya) and dedicate to gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, apart from his participating very actively and directly in the crematory rites of his mother, Samkara has been a devotee of Siva and the Siva-ideal. This fact shows how mistaken it is to confuse Saivism and Siva-linga adoration with phallic idolatry. A Saiva dualist is a dualist in name alone.

Advaita Saivism and Ramanuja's Theism

This makes Samkara condescend to indicate a form of theism which took shape in Advaita Saivism. It guarantees peace, theology, rites and forms, yet stores the basic metaphysical tenets intact. How could a monist compromise with theism is often a puzzle confronted by the intellectual who spurns religion not so much for any personal

benefit as far the satis- faction of his sense of vain superiority. Plato in Tinaeus answers this.

If then, amid many opinions about the Gods and the generation of the universe, we are not able in every respect to render all our ideas consistent with each other and precisely accurate, no one need be surprised. Enough if we are able to give an account which is no less likely than another: for we must remember that you who speak, and you who judge of what I say, are mortal men so that on these subjects we should be satisfied with a likely story and demand nothing more.

If we depend entirely on Samkara, we get into the conflict between intuition and reason, emotion and intellect, instinct and asceticism. To attempt to arrive at a final solution of all the problems that the Uni- verse sets for the human mind is neither necessary, nor possible; but it is quite enough to know why and how our problems start. Having known this, and keeping in mind the human limitations of intellectual judge- ment, it should be accepted by a normal mind as sufficiently rewarding to be able to work within the limits of the problems set, and offer a few relieving suggestions. The final say is silence. Words are impediments to the unity of knowledge.

Ramanuja, on the other hand, took note of the chimera-like intellec- tion of Samkara's spiritualism. The philosophical Šamkara has less adhe- rents than the empirical Ramanuja who, through his support of qualified theism, without ignoring the Oneness of the Universal spirit, attributes to it a tangible form. If there is suffering, there is God who feels with us, and is even ready to show us a way out. This is consoling, sustaining.

This gives not only depth, but also content to religion.

Ramanuja's authority too, like Samkara's, was the Veda. But Samkara's voice had the ring of authority, the authority of the Realised. He speaks boldly:

"In half a couplet shall I declare," says Samkara, "what has taken a million of volumes to say: Brahman is true. The world is not. The soul is Brahman and nothing else."

Ramanuja would not dare struggle against such finalists. Rāmānuja, the devotee, considered modest submissiveness as godly virtue. He says:

I know that Janakinatha (Rama) and Srinatha (Viṣnu) are one and the same as the Paramatman (the Brahman); yet, my all in all is the lotus-eyed Rama.15

Samkara holds on to the Vivarta-vada his: theory of apparent-error, or illusion; Rāmānuja refutes this by his Parinama-vada, the theory of evolution. Ramanuja's Brahman is one, but he is the God, the Creator of the World which is his Sportive expression of Joy. Samkara's Brahman though One, functions in two capacities, as of higher and lower status.

Rationality of Theism

Under 'Bhakti' we have discussed the basis of Ramanuja's stand- point. The new West has been absorbing the Hindu under an emotive pressure of frustration and delusion, and faces its own society with a threat of exposure and disintegration. The people who are rushing to embrace solace from pots and drugs are also those who affect to have 'understood' the Hindu approach to deism. This cultish sycophancy does not hold much genuine metaphysical promise. The transcendence so experienced is more chemical than spiritual. The claimed extra-sensory state is induced by hallucinating self-projection. A babel of ill-assorted sound recitals could induce mysmeric self-abandonment, but need not be confused with transcendental peace. It is delirium, not ecstasy. Many like Rudolph Otta, would brush aside the tremendous impact of Bhakti as a new and separate religion; "but it should be seen as something which is very much at the heart of the total expression of the Hindu faith."

Rāmānuja fills the heart of the famished; Śamkara electrifies the in- tellect of the polemist and the dialectician. The universities lift Samkara up as a master unequalled; the man of the street bows at the feet of the great 'Lover of God' whose words ring with sympathy and hope. "There are followers of Samkara who would insist that there is as much room in Samkara's school, as in any other, for genuine devotion to God. Śamkara's position, it is claimed is indeed Advaita, in opposition to dualism; but it is not rigorously monistic, and certainly not pantheistic. The difficulty with Samkara's interpretation, from the standpoint of the theist, lies in his description of the two levels of thought. At a certain level man subject to the deceptive power named Mäyä, may ascribe to the world a personal God. Then Isvara the living god-principle is worshipped under such names as Visnu, Šiva, etc., but when the same man attains a higher level of vision, piercing through all that is illusory he will know that the only reality is

Brahman, Nirguna Brahman-spaceless, timeless, eternal, not to be conceived in terms of This in space or time, or That in space or

time."

The ways of the Vedäntists differ. But they reach the same result. Kant says that "Our experience supplies us only with the modes of the Unconditioned as presented under the condition of our consciousness." Subsequent metaphysicians also tend to favour his view. Objective representations or subjective forms, and beings, considered as Gods, or incarnations of the Divine Spirit, are not, and never could be, the Ultimate Reality, of which the manifest is but an expression Such representations and images are concepts congealed into shape, and assist the devotee in aiming a total submission of his ego and vanity. Ethically, the value of a total submission and final reliance attains for the devotee a release from tensions and personal-limitations. The conscious-self that feels bur- dened, imprisoned, restricted and chased, seeks an outlet for release and emancipation. Mind, filled with all kinds of new and unknown desires, find in such dedication its complete surrender. It desires that which God accepts; and God accepts that which mind contains and offers totally. The only power that supersedes ego, and contacts Mind in its remotest quarters, thereby exposing it to the Light and Sight of God, is the power of dedication, for which dualism works as a half-way house. "The highest theism is only a glorified anthropomorphism; but we cannot do without it. The heart of man hungers for a God of love, grace and mercy." "165

The Hindu theists and the Hindu Vedäntists are fundamentally agreed upon the nature of God's immanence. They are keenly aware of the subjectivity of the Immense as described in the eleventh chapter of the Gitä; but they indulge in a seemingly sportive acceptance of a personal God, who could be called a father, a mother, a friend. It is a pleasant feeling to relate the self to one so intimate, sure and intelligent, yet abound- ing. This obliqueness that stands as a veil between our consciousness and the Reality comes, according to Samkara, from Avidya (false knowledge), which leads to 'Andham Tamah', i.e., the darkest ignorance, also called Maya-Mayatä, the substance that veils all experiences as in a cloud of dust, "which surrounds knowledge as does the foetal liquid surround the foetus in the embryo."

Oneness with God

There are religious sects which shrink from the irreverence of identi- fying the self with the transcendence of a personal or immanent God. This is understandable, as their own mind creates a God who is beyond approach. It makes rather an audacious claim to announce before God, "I am what Thou art; Thou art the Self; I am the Self; Thou art Śiva; I am Šiva; Thou art the Real and the True; I am Real and True." But Dr. Max Müller says that it is but "the old Eleatic argument carried out consistently; that is, there is but one Infinite, or One God, the Soul also in its true essence can be nothing but God." But we have noted how Patanjali ascribes such 'ego-centric' claims to Oneness as Asmita, and suggests that the ultimate stage lies even beyond, where even Asmita is cast aside. The early Christians believed in similar identities. This was not so in early Christian-centuries. Remembering the words of Christ, "Iin them and Thou in me, that they be made perfect in One." Anthanasius declared, "He the Logos or the word of God, became man that we might become God." Many Christians adore the thought that the Father and the Son are both of a piece and equal.

Xenophanes, we have seen, insists that the One and All is Intelligent. Sextus says, "Xenophanes held that All was One and that God was congeni- tal with all things."

Permanides also echoes the Upanisadic Vedänta. "With him the con- cept of the One Being has become entirely metaphysical. It is no longer God in the ordinary sense of the word as little as the Highest Brahman is God, though whatever there is real in God, is the Highest Brahman."

Islam's Allah is chiefly a God of Power, a transcendent, but an extremely personal God. He is beyond approach. Even the Sufis, some of them, dare not admit of the Oneness of the human and divine natures. The Prophet of Islam insisted on the devouts to think of the Karuna or, the mercies of God, rather than of the godhead itself. His services are received by the soul cleansed of 'dirt' (of 'the veil and the fluid' of the Gita; of 'the ignorance of Avidya' of the Upanisads; of 'the Maya' of Samkara).

If a mirror reflects not, of what use is it?

Knowest thou why the mirror reflects not?

Because the rust has not been scoured from its face.

If it were purified from all rust and defilement,

It would reflect the shining of the Sun of God,100

Yet not God Himself. None can even see Him. None could even look at His image; That is Islam. This is also the age-old Judaism. Maimani- des, the celebrated Rabbi, has to say the following regarding the stern Judaic stand about this Oneness: "It would be extremely difficult for us to find in any language, whatsoever, words adequate to this subject, and we can only employ inadequate language. In our endeavour to show that God does not include a plurality, we can only say that He is 'One', although 'one' and 'many' are both terms which serve to distinguish quantity. We, therefore, make the subject clearer, and show to the understanding, the way of truth by saying that He is one, but does not possess the attribute of unity."

Rabbi Hanina said, "That seal of the Holy One, praised be He, is truth. (In Hebrew the word for truth is spelt with three letters; the first, the middle and the last letter of the alphabet). Rash Lakish said, Truth (Emet) is spelled with the first, middle and last letters of the alphabet to teach that "I am first, I am last and besides me there is no God." (Isa, 44:6) I am First, for I received nothing from another; and besides me there is no other God, for I have no partner. And with the last I am He (Isa, 41: 4) I shall never transmit my sovereignty to another.

But personal God has been of great sustenance to the devout; to the pure in spirit; to the repentant and the not too pure, of which largely the world is made. Very few have the capacity to derive peace and consolation through presentation themselves to the transcendental evane- scence of an abstract Oneness, however, Real and Logical. Ramanuja's interpretation of the same One helps in such a situation. A personal God is entirely filling to a famished heart. When monists decide to pray, weep, beg, supplicate, to their One God, they too enter into a rela- tion of I and You; and it binds the supplicant and the Lord together. A mental person becomes alive, and responds to 'I-ness'.

Samkara and Ramanuja

Samkara's contribution was not novel or revolutionary. He just revitalised and vivified a forgotten past enshrined in the Upanisads. Across the vista of twelve centuries, and without rhetorics of his transcendental idealism, without the emotional impact of the grand pacons of his intellectual symphony, without the least concern for the shady murmurs of dogmatic rif-raffs, the quiet dignity of his unruffled reasoning grants the

inquisitive and the scholar a special privilege of obtaining an accredited passport to the company of a spiritual aristocracy-yet unmatched by any other single exercise in the world of philosophical thinkers of today or yesterday. The tranquil, pacific and smooth manner of his systematic incision into the undergrowth of speculation on the one hand, and superstition on the other, both of which had rendered the progress of spiritual life in India hazardous and baffling, is even today a model of authority with tolerance which is expected only from one who has returned from a voyage to the Infinite. It is, therefore, through his dedicated efforts that the vast resources of the Hindu metaphysics got circulated amongst the masses, which adopted Saivism as an expression of Monistic theism, which became at once the fountain of spiritual inspiration, and which served as a bulwark against religious decay. Vedanta and Saivism have become synonymous due to Samkara's practical adoption of the monistic rites, as these obtain in the principal four Samkara-centres: Sringeri, Puri, Dwaraka and Hardwar.

Samkara's stand is incontrovertible. It followed its sublime stillness as its own prize. The long journey comes to an end. Liberation is an arrival. But in Ramanuja the concept of spiritual experience is a continuous process of evaluation. Never could the personal self become the Cosmic Self, which is Beyond all calculations and experiences of the limited human resources (Yo buddheh paratastu sah-Gita). Neither Samkara, nor Kant has accepted a separate identity of the personal self, which, both of them regard as a mere Scholastic theory of substance, intellectually justifiable, but spiritually hollow. Ramanuja's concept of the identical entity running into Eternity, parallel to or simultaneous with the Para Brahman Saccidanandam, is regarded as untenable to Samkara's way of thinking. The relation between the 'continual development' and the 'identical essence of the self' remains indeed a mystery in Rāmānuja: yet his theories of Love and Grace depend on this mystery. Love is mystic, mysticism is love. Without an element of mystery the involvement of love would lose its interestingness; and would thereby forego the engrossingly concentrative devotion of the Mind, which by nature is fluctuating and unsettled. Reason understands; Love thrills. Reason achieves liberation Moksa; mystery achieves Love, Ecstasy, Sayujya (union). Love re- mains a mystery; its way of fulfilment and redemption too are mystic. Hegel admits the possibility of a persistent process of identity through difference. The entire Vaisnava Bhakti-cult depends on this. "In another life I shall be

the son of Nanda, and make you my Radha,"161 says the mystic Radha. "My eyes shed tears; my mind feels drunk in your spirit; each of my limbs thirst for the touch with each of yours."162 These ecstatic utterances by Bengal's mystics remind one of similar lines from St. Theresa, or St. John on the Cross.

But Samkara's quiet way has nothing to do with such deep attachment which agitate and excite. His reading of the Vedanta sternly abrogates emotional nonsense. The Visiṣṭādvaita (Qualified) monism of Ramanuja could lead to a thrill, to a Grand-Passion; but never does it mean that peace and sublime relaxation of which Om is the sound-symbol, and Sivam-Advaitam is the object-symbol. 'Sivoham' (I-am-Siva) leads to a final poise of a centre of a number of concentric circles. Were this gay tramp of an eternal traveller, Jivätma, to transport from body to body, without being affected by suspended consciousness, past memories, etc., then these bodies would have very little to do with consciousness or memory, unless men were reduced to abstract monads-in which case monads would have to be granted attibutes of consciousness and memory, which could be reasonably doubted. This simple Jîvätma existing in each individual must be the source also of the individuality. Remember Dahara, Utkramana and Pancagni? If so, then the Jîvätman must be related to something in which identities are lost into one experience of a total unity.

Śamkara and Ramanuja are the two great thinkers of the Vedanta, and the least qualities of each were the defects of the other. Samkara's apparently arid logic made his system unattractive and unpopular, religiously; Ramanuja's beautiful stories of the other world, which he narrates with the confidence of one who had personally assisted at the nativity of the world, carry no conviction. Samkara's devastating dialectic, which traces all-God, man and the world-to one ultimate conscious- ness, produces not a little curling of the lips amongst the followers of Rāmānuja. Samkara's followers doted on the Master; and by out-doing him in his highly subjective logic and intellectual asceticism almost brought his doctrine perilously near atheistic mentalism. The followers of Ramanuja moved with as much Olympian assurance through the chambers of the Divine Mind as Milton through the halls of heaven. Yet Rāmānuja had the greatness of a religious genius. Ideas flowed on him from various sources, the Upanisads and the Agamas, the Puranas and the Prabandham, and he responded to them all with same side of his religious nature. All their different elements are held

together in the indefinable unity of religious experience. The philosophic spirit was strong in Ramanuja, so too, was his religious need. He tries his best to reconcile the demands of the religious feeling with claims of logical thinking. If he did not succeed in the attempt to give us a systematic and self-contained philosophy of religion it should not surprise us. Much more remarkable is the deep earnestness and the hard logic with which he conceived the problem, and laboured to bridge the yawning gulf between apparently conflicting claims of religion and philosophy. A thin intellect with no depth of soul may be blind to the wonders of God's ways, and may have offered us a seemingly simple solution. Not as Rāmānuja who gives us the best type of monotheism con- ceivable, inset with touches of immanentism.163

VI

(A) Hindu Polytheism and Śiva

When the One is Many

The one without colour appears by the manifold application of his power in many colours; thereby he fulfils his purpose. May the Being of Splendour, in Whom the world dissolves and from whom it rises, grant us a clear understanding.

He is Agni, the Lord of Fire, and He is the sun, the wind and the moon. He is the seed, the Immense Being. He is the Lord of Progeny.

You are woman; and you are a man,

You are the youth, and the maiden,

And the old man tattering with staff.

You are born again facing all directions.

You are the blue-fly, and red-eyed parrot,

The cloud pregnant with lightening.

You are the seasons and the seas;

The beginningless, the Abiding Lord,

from whom the Spheres are born.

The fourth chapter of the Svetāśvatara Upanisad opens with this remarkable verse which has provided thousands with mystic inspiration and information down the ages. Men are naturally bothered with the queries like, "How came this variegated multifarious, kaleidoscopic universe with limitless lives, forms and complexes? Has it an end? A purpose? What is the end? What is the purpose? Why life ?"

Svetasvatara Answers

And out of such turbulent questions, and their insistence is philosophy made. For man who thinks must think; and thought is a monster which is perpetually greedy to know more and yet more, so much so that at one stage man asks: "What is that knowledge which when known makes known all that is to be known?"164

The answer to this profound question uses a simple language.

"Two are the kinds of knowledge," says the seer, "the higher and the lower. "165 All the Vedas, grammar, astrology, metrics, rituals and phonetics are of the lower order. Higher is the knowledge by which one apprehends the underlying source of all beings, all knowledge. The spider, out of itself, extracts its strands and builds a web for itself, and withdraws it again within itself, as it suits his purpose; so is the world of ever-changing unreliability drawn out of the Brahman which alone is the doer, the deed, and the doing.166

Not only do the Upanisads consider all stated knowledge, inclusive of the Vedas, as of a lower category than apprehended experience, even the later RṢis state the same thing. "The Vedas do not really offer the Real (Knowledge); because in the Vedas veda (knowledge) is not. The Vedas are indeed the Veda when the Supreme is known."167

Why then this polytheism?

Because, perhaps, the Hindu mind had not only to contend with a hoary traditional heritage, but also because that tradition had uninter- ruptedly flowed through a vast area of the ancient world over a number of centuries, amongst, and notwithstanding a variety of people, a variety of forms and a variety of culture. It was the Indo-Aryan tradition, of which the Vedas alone remain as the earliest evidence; and together with the Vedas, as their uninterrupted inheritors, Hinduism provides a living evidence. The Accadian, Egyptian, Greek, Phoenician, Sumerian, Babylonian, and very specially, the Persian traditions rumble with the distant faint echoes recorded in the Vedas, and in the

vast treasure-house of the Hindu myths. When the Vedist reads the Torah and the Talmud, and the Jew does the reverse, he feels to suspect that, though distant, the two are cousins, or have been so. A reading of the Dead-Sea Scrolls, of the Rosicrusian and Essine literature and parts of the Vedas and the Upanisads could be revealing in this context.

A tradition that has come down across ages and ages of rites and forms cannot contain itself within strict monism. Like a forest left to grow over centuries, such a tradition is bound to contain within it a variety of forms, and a variety of gods. The only way to eradicate such a growth was to burn the who: place down and establish monism through a bloody ho- locaust, as has been attempted (mostly ineffectually) amongst many people over the ages. The Upanisadic Hindu would not accept such methods. It was against the Hindu grain to superimpose Gods as a mission in spiritual undertakings. The spirit of tolerance and accommodation in the Hindu resulted in a flourishing polytheism amongst the Hindus despite the sublime Idea of Monism that the Hindu adores.

Inadequacy of Philosophy

Philosophy records the answers given by man to quieten the challenge of knowing what this world is, and where does he stand with regard to the mystery of life and death. It offers a map, however unreliable, for man's journey from the known to the unknown; from the world-manifest to the cosmos-unmanifest.

To be able to hold on to a tangible authority for the sufferings that man has to bear, and life is threatened with, is a source of great relief and confidence, even if it is like a straw to a drowning man. The God-Idea, in itself, stimulates confidence. Most of our distresses could be cured by a wholesome realisation of self-confidence. The time gained to offer a struggle, is time lost to our adversary.

Religion which gives us gods, actually provides us with means to struggle with the problems of life, and gain in self-confidence. Whether God saves or not, could be stated only by the Realised; but the sceptic and the cynic would remain unaffected by declarations from such Realised, who perhaps in their own eyes, would be passed off as mentally unsound. God might save; might not; but religion does; because it is the only psycho- logical answer provided to the distressed mass, a majority of which does not have the advantage (or disadvantage) of intellectual aptitude and polemi- cal

pertinacity. A majority of such, through religion, and particularly through the gods, help themselves in gaining some amount of self- confidence, and fight the issues of life without getting scared. Religion has proved to be of great use in providing a focal point of aspirations to man It has acted as a great-binding force.

Religion is Opium

This is not exactly the same as what Marx describes as 'opium' which dulls the human feeling of distress. Certainly world today, compared to the time of Marx enjoys a far greater degree of socialism and equality (mostly due to the revolutionary protests inaugurated by Marxian thoughts); but to imagine that in a world of perfect socialism mental dis- orders, psychological aberrations such as insomnia, tension, depressive conditions through bad health, bereavements, lack of self-expression, sense of envy or injustice, suffering through incurable diseases, and finally cases of crime, perversions, maladjustments giving grounds for fear, greed, show of power, could be eradicated, is at best a wilful indulgence in hopeful surmise. Man as man will differ in personality. Some would inevitably remain victims of maladjustments, lack of personality, imbecility and fear of insecurity. A society of perfectly balanced men cannot be ordered into being. Religion fills the gap between the perfect and the imperfect; the Realised and the searcher. Religious contentment fills the discontented spiritually and induces him to a process of self-search and self-analysis.

It disciplines a mind suffering from unrest. Such disturbed souls would always need help, much as the common diseased would. One of the easiest of means through which help could be reached to such tormented beings lies through religion. Nothing is a panacea for all ailments; neither is religion. The ablest system, the most organised government fail to bring peace and harmony to all. Pogroms and purges have been organised in the socialistic states; gas-chambers and concentration camps in the fascist states; inquisitions on holy regimes, and ghettoes in democracies.

Peace to all cannot be an organisational achievement. Peace cannot be dictated or imposed. It is too intimate to admit of external forces. Im- position of peace is not, and cannot be the aim of any system; not even of a spiritual system. In religious organisations, much in the same way, prayer, fasting, meditation, which are recommended as corrective, reformatory or neutralising are not fool-proof. Religion's effectiveness depends on sincere self-discipline. And in religion god or gods are, and

have to be, a common factor. Religions accepted, gods have to be accommodated. If one god-idea is not found filling, polytheism shall have to be sanctioned, as a means. Polytheism is a psychological necessity. It hurts logic, but it heals the mind. The reflections of a polymental society with varieties of hopes, failures, aspirations, diseases and complexes, call for a polytheistic support. Most of us have our faith, loyalty, aspirations, any way, fragmented and pluralised.

If opium is poison, it is also medicine. He who makes food of medicine is mentally deficient. He who forces opium on others with ulterior motives is a murderer. History is filled with such murderers. Those who force religion, gods and superstitions on society with ulterior motives of material exploitations, are, naturally, spiritual murderers. Crimes and criminals shall have to remain as man's family members, as opium shall have to find place in the drug-stores for the good of the sick. As such religion too has its healthy side for the elevation of man's moral tones, and spiritual content-ment. That some people apply, or sell religion in overdose, with eyes on ulterior motives is the innate hazard of the game of living. Elimination of religion from life and society with a view to eliminate the fraudulent in religion, is likely to create a vacuum against law of atmosphere. This is neither healthy, nor possible. Dictatorship has proved itself in history to be made of too brittle a stuff when clashing with man's innate spiritual needs. So great is this need that even clay-gods suffice to bring more solace and peace to a suffering individual; and at times of real need such gods, to a great extent, answer a devoutly religious temperament. It takes the godly to understand the language of God. God may be a creation of man's aspirations; but aspirations made tangible are often sources of that mental poise, from where the agonised and the frustrated gain new courage and prepare for another round of the fight. Religion and gods have their moral and spiritual efficacy, without which life would be poorer and weaker.

Polytheism

The common man cannot even think of the Unmanifest.

The charm, and draw of the manifest Nature, specially, brought out the best in man; and he tried to share in Nature's joy and sing. And Nature is a many spangled wonder, a many-mansioned mystery, a many-voiced dream singer. We adore her many variations. Imagine Nature as One Monoli- thic flat chunk of consistency. What would,

then, punish life more, or put life to a more rigorous test? No, we, and Life, need this variety, this many- splendoured fascination. The seeds of polytheism lie hidden within the kaleidoscopic variety of the immediate world we visualise, we live in. Polytheism is the natural expression of man's gratitude and homage for the variety of gifts life accepts from a mysterious source with hidden powers. Else how could the Vedas sing of Dawn, for instance with Keats- like abundance and plasticity, Tagore-like sensuousness and vivification.

She, the young damsel, shines bright,

And stirs creatures in every limb.

Fire-like she consumes the flesh of being;

She chases dismal darkness away.

Her white mantle, bright and brilliant

Shines all around, and the far distance too;

The many splendoured lovely robe, golden and red,

Guides the day she brings, the Mother, to the cows,

The lady of holiness, eye of the gods,

You lead your white charger, fair and fast

The beams sparkle; and transparence shines;

The wonderous lady of treasure,

Come, Oh come to the world (below).

Dawn, and shower wealth upon wealth,

And chase away the evil doer from us;

Spread out the pastures, free from evil

And pour riches, bountiful and profuse,

Drive the envious; and rouse the melodist.

Pour thine lively beams O Goddess, O Dawn,

And make our days longer

Grant us food from your precious store house,

And bring us bounties in cows, horses and chariots.

Maid of the skies, noble of birth,

O Dawn, sung in hymnals by the mighty Vasisthas.168

Side by side with this clear call for the wonderment in variety of the manifested expressions, lurked the doubt, "Does man really know the beginning, the end, the cause of the beginning and of the end? Could knowledge comprehend the mystery?"

Then was not unmanifest, nor manifest.

No realm, no sky, no air, nothing beyond.

What covered? Where? What sheltered?

Was water there, the unfathomed deep water? .....

Darkness was there!

Darkness concealed in darkness!

All this but indiscriminate chaos, avid and formless.

The power of warmth evolved the unit.

Then rose Desire, the Primal Force,

The Primal Germ, the Seed-Spirit;

Sages who searched within

Discovered, then, the Existent,

Bound in Kinship with the Non-Existent.

Where was the Line-Dividing?

How far did it extend?

What was above it?

What below?

The Germinating Power,

Mighty, free and irresistible

Was here-

And there was Energy.

Who knows? Who knows? Who could declare?

Whence all this? How born the Creation?

How and whence?

Aye! Gods are later than all this!

Who knows them? Whence the first came to being?

He, the First;-did he spring from it? or did he not?

Whose is the eye controlling the earth and the heaven?

He, may indeed know!

Or, does He? Perhaps He too knows not.169

Symbols and Ideas

Ideas call for expression however abstract. Sound found expression, and became letters; ideas found expression, became words. Joy found expression, became creation

in colour, painting, music. Jealousy, anger, hunger, war all found expression. Each found a form.

This did not exhaust man's world of ideas. There were more abstract, more mysterious, but not less insistent ideas. These too had to be expressed. A system of equivalences had to be found out. This system had to be cautiously precise; sparingly pithy; preciously pretty: this had to be symbolic. And symbols express abstruse abstraction. Symbols are the crystallised forms of ideas. Symbols express the most in the least. Words do not only occupy a length of space or breath, but could mislead and confuse. Words limit. Symbols sanction freedom. Hence, plastic symbols. Through constant consorting the plastic symbols assume intimacy and familiarity. Thus acceptance becomes easy. Gradually pure abstract symbolisms get equated with emotional dialogues, and get charged with overtones of mental nuances. The first basis of such equivalence between mental reactions and symbolic expressions was advanced by the ever-changing panorama of Nature, the Guna-mayi Prakṛti the Mighty Mother-Power, with phases of the three modes, known as Gunas, ovulating into the millions of forms with which our world of consciousness is crowded.

The One indiscriminate indeterminate by the exercise of Power manifolds for mysterious purposes....170

Mantra: Yantra: Om

Nature, Prakṛti, symbolises this Reality of the One. In similar fashion Prakrti symbolises the One unmanifest in Her myriad manifest forms; Jîva symbolises the 'expression' of Brahman: every expressed manifestation, earth, sky, water, fire, air, colour, sound, taste, nay, even the mental faculties of joy or sorrow, good or bad, the entire world of manifestations, each and every phase, has its prototype; some spirit symbolised in a proto- type form. The Hindu, in mythological terms, calls these expressions as Mantra, Yantra, or Murti.

Mantra, like Om, is a sound-symbol. There are many such, each ex- pressing a distinct idea. 'Yantra', like the cross, the triangle, the Swastika or the Śrî is a geometrical or diagrammatical linear expression of some idea. Mûrti are three dimensional figures of either abstract icons, or of zoomorphic, or anthropomorphic forms. Whatever it is, in every case, each represents an idea, and each is associated with a divine will of which

the form is but a human expression of adoration for consorting with the divine. Patanjali has boldly stated that such adoptions assist in trans- cendental experience.

All religions all religious philosophies, are ultimately attempts at finding out the nature of the perceptible world and of ourselves who perceive it, the process of world's manifestation, and the purpose of life, so that we may discover the means of fulfilling our destiny. All mythologies are ways of representing transcendent or superhuman stages of Being conceived as deities or perceived as symbols.

Some ancient Hindu sage discovered that, through the diversity of our faculties and of our senses, and according to the postulates or methods we are ready to accept, we can now find different channels through which to conduct our investigations into the extra-sensorial world.171

The 'three dimensional Murtis' which are supposed to image our Ideas, yet aspire for a Fourth Dimension. This fourth reveals a spiritual conti- nent where all Ideas become a Reality. Man's persistent endeavours at- tempt to craft and curve these ideas to form. These are the Mûrtis. In Patanjali this has been called as Dhyana and Dharaṇā. Dhyana provides a complete conceptual form of the categories and attributes of a given ideal- istic aspiration. Dhyana is engaged in concentrating on the 'Idea-image' of the exact nature of what man seeks. Of such stuff is a Hindu image made. Enthroned in the sanctuary of Faith, this Idea receives the soul's submission. When this idea, in the set form, begins to breathe as a com- panionate self, when this idea vibrates within consciousness and becomes a part of the living self, then apprehension becomes complete, and becomes the seeker's Dharaṇā. Dharana conceives and forms; Dhyana con- centrates and lays the seed. In a hundred myths this mystic fact has been noted as laying the divine seed in a Mother of Divine-birth. (Mary- Jesus, Anjana-Hanuman, Pṛthivî-Sîtā, etc.)

Human faculties being limited, cannot conceive of the transcen- dental Reality. In Samadhi alone is the Idea realised. The Yoga system trains the mind to attain this Samadhi, a state of transcendental peace. The Samkhya system analyses and confirms its nature and state; and the Vedanta system proves that its transcendence is such as is beyond the pale of human faculty: yet man has to accept the challenge, and endeavour. Thus the role of Grace has been sought for, and the path of devotion has been discovered.

Sages have followed this path of Upasana or Bhakti, of worship and sacrifices of 'Puja' and 'Arca'. Hindu polytheism does not ignore the Reality of transcendental monism. On the contrary it applies the polytheistic assistance as an effective means of self-discovery through the application of emotional wealth. The Vedic people were aware of this strength and weakness of human aspiration and endeavour. Man's limitations must not perpetually rule him out of his birth-right of entering into the mysteries of the unlimited.

The Vedic Ṛṣis were aware of this polytheistic emotion of man.

They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, The spiritual Bird Gaḍutman. The Real is One. The sages describe (the One) as Agni, Yama and Matariśvan.172

He is Agni; Aditya; Vayu; Candramā

Sukra; Brahma; Apa and Prajapati

He is Dhātā (Creator): Vidhātā (Ordainer);

He is the source of Energy and Motion;

He is the Leader.

He is Aryamā; he is Varuna; he is

Rudra; he is Mahadeva;

He is Agni, he is Sûrya

He is Maha-yama.174

Polytheism is based on a psychological necessity of the human world. This is not peculiar to the Hindus. Cultures which could safely be traced back to the Indo-Aryan stock although separated by both time and distance, exhibit features of polytheism. Prayers, offering of sacrifices, begging for this or that favour, appear in most of the ancient religions. In days of the Brāhmaṇas these sacrifices and prayers gained an over- whelming influence. Only during the later days of the Upanisads devotees appear

to have striven for a transcendental deity. The extreme end of this progress towards monism appear to emerge through Jainism and Buddhism, which led the mind towards nihilism and cynicism. Such features of the progress of religious quest of man were peculiar to both India and Greece, where despite Socrates and Plato, the gods reigned in the Pantheon. So in India, despite the Vedanta, the Yajñas and the Devas persisted, and still persist. Sporadic anti-priest or anti-caste move- ments have not been wanting; but most of these ended as reformist move- ments, a storm over a sea, leaving the natural aspirations bloody, but unbowed. Reformist movements ended with social reforms. Buddha, Jesus, Martin Luther King, Gandhi, you and I, god and priests, float in time. Actually the popularity of polytheism persists in the entire Indo-Aryan world despite the Quakers, the Sûfists, the Buddhists and the Samājists of the Aryan and Brahma stamps. The Semetics have been exceptions. They had historical reasons to adopt an unrelenting attitude.

Comparative study of mythology and the study of human movements in anthropological researches force us to accept the common origin of the many cultures now separated by language, religion, dress, food, and above all by an enforced chauvinism known artificially as Nationalism. But the names and functions of gods, forms and rites, of the urge and method of consulting astrology for guidance of destiny, of the assumedly important roles played by priestly interventions, altogether prove that a common polytheistic hierarchy, even a few common gods, formed the core of this group of the homo sapiens. Many of the Egyptian, Oriental and classical gods appear in the Hindu Purāṇas under changed names and habits. Who borrows from whom is not important; that these were com- mon reveal artistic nuances of identity of human aspirations, and quest for fulfilment. The balance is chauvinism.

(B) Vedic Gods

The Vedic people were also 'people'; naturally, they too were men, subject to all types of human aspirations. As such we find in the Vedas too the propensity for polytheism. Naturally, gods in the Vedas are many. Yāska (800 B.C.), the author of the 'Nirukta', in his commentary on the Vedas, accepts three main Deities: Indra, Agni and Sûrya. He also accepts Vayu (Air), but only as a form of Indra, the Lord of the skies. Agni or fire by nature ruled the earth; Vayu (Air) or Indra (Cloud) ruled the atmosphere. Sun of course was different. Sun was supreme, un- approachable; nearest yet farthest; the

centre of all that life accepts as the source. Sûrya, or the Sun (also known as Visnu) was the Lord of the Heaven. All gods or deities in this way could be classified into these three categories. Agni, the Lord of the earth, for instance, under many names, like Bṛhaspati, Jataveda, Homa, Vaiśvānara, Uşarbudha, Mrdaka, is worshipped and invoked for different purposes. Yäska explains that the same person, in accordance with the work he was engaged in, could be called a cook, a teacher, an artisan, or a husband, a brother, a father; so Agni the only one, the chief, is worshipped in assumed subtitles. This is more or less obvious, e.g., fire in life is seen to be in action for good and bad, inside or outside home.

This explanation is not always accepted. The priests who are interest- ed in establishing multiple names of multiple gods for multiple purposes insist that each name means an individual deity.

Yet a third group followed the Vedic dictum of Ekah sat viprah bahudha vadanti. (Reality is one. The sacrificing priests give them different names). Exactly this was the position of Moses when he found his people indulging in the worship of the Calf.

Similar supports from scriptural texts are forthcoming when other dedicated monistic religions find themselves involved in saint worship. Man is man everywhere; and the highway of spiritual craving has got to cross at times the by-passes of the emotional being. The extremes, therefore, are constituted of the two opinions: (1) The priestly group of polytheists, for whose purposes, it becomes obvious that wishes being many, gods must be many, differing in nature, form, motive and demands. As one wishes, so one images and sings the suitable prayer. The same prayer cannot satisfy a mother seeking recovery of a sick child; a woman seeking a baby; a farmer seeking rains or a king seeking victory. Wishes differing, spirit and mood must differ, and god must image into the shape the spirit of the prayer demands. (2) The other extreme is held by the monists. These are the metaphysicists, the mystics, the self-realisers whose opinions have evolved into the Vedanta. Gaurapada, Samkara, Bhaskarānanda Sarasvatî, Madhusudana Sarasvati, etc. remain its memorable standard bearers. Hinduism being a non-doctrinaire religion retains both the forms within it; but leads the mind to monism all the time.

Nirukta of course speaks of the three gods.175

Rg Veda itself admits of these three176; but elsewhere the same source speaks of the eleven lokas, each having three deities. This gives the famous and popular 33 deities of Hinduism, which are mentioned as 330,000,000 gods of the Hindu pantheon!

A psalm of the Rg Veda gives us the number 3339.177

Rg Veda is not a composition by a single author. The psalms have been culled from different experiences by different realisers over the ages; naturally the RṢis are many. Such differences of opinions have, therefore, to be viewed with relaxed equanimity. These are opinions of Realisers who experienced the truth either in solitude like St. Francis, Emerson or Einstein, or in the variegated expressions of the One into the billions of features of delight and sorrow, which inspired Ramanuja, Ramakrishna or Tagore. Myths derive their justification from the opi- nions of the Realisers and merrily sing the beautiful verses and the thousands of lores about the three hundred and thirty three million deities. We have discussed this under Dhyana and Dharaṇā. Gîtā says, if there is devotional sincerity, irrespective of the form of the divinity which is adored, god's blessings always pour.

The Rsis of the Veda were realisers. "RṢi is the one who spoke it (the psalm)," says Nirukta. Each psalm mentions the author's name, the name of the metre and the Deity for whom it was written. The Deities of psalms later became identified as a god, although originally the 'subject' of the psalm was its deity. "Rsi is the author of the psalm; and the subject he speaks of is the deity."

The 330,000,000 Deities

The word Deva is derived from the root-verb Div which means 'to glow, to shine'. The Devas must have been the celestial shining bodies, sky, sun, moon, stars, and by inference, fire. These have been the primary deities. Although Indra, Parjanya or Marut do not actually shine, yet their emergence from the skies, and their immediate relation with life's preservation make the RṢis sing of them too, as deities. Indra is derived from the verb 'Ind' ('to rain'); and "Thunder' of course was the sign of its great power. Parjanya is rain itself. Vayu is the wind, and its relation with the clouds was imaged as Indra riding the horses of Vayu, clouds riding on the winds and being carried to the lands where showers pour in torrents. Thus:

Ind = To rain +Ra=Indra= The rain giver

Rud= To cry + Ra =Rudra=The crying ones (peal of thunder nursed by the air)

Asu= To be + Ra = Asura= Spiritual, living.

The crying ones (peal of thunder nursed by the air) = Spiritual, living.

Agni (fire) means that which 'leads' all sacrifices; without which sacri- fices could not be performed. 'Ignus', 'Ignis', Ogni are words in Latin and Slav, meaning fire. Of the deities Agni is the chief, as a general is amongst the soldiers. Agni and Rudra are first mentioned as Vedic deities, though later they are seen as adversaries; yet later, they get mixed up. As the permanent index of this synthesis a later god Skanda, or Kartikeya claimed great regard from Saivic people. 179 But of that later on.

The gradual development of these devatās or deities in the Vedas calls for an intensive study. The first set of verses (Sûkta) has Agni as its deity; but the next has Indra, Vayu, Mitra-Varuna. Besides these, in the ird Sûkta we find Aśvinis and Viśvadeva. The fourth has a new one Marut, the winds, which is always mentioned in plural numbers. The thirteen Sûkta mentions Agni as a deity. Agni has been praised in 12 verses in 12 forms. The fourteenth Sûkta mentions a number of deities: Viśvedevah, Indra, Vayu, Agni, Mitra, Brhaspati, Pûşa, Bhaga, Aditya and the Marut-s. Sayanācārya, the celebrated commentator of the Vedas, explains various deities of the fifteenth Sûkta as the 'seasons'.

The numbers increase. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa however, attempts a classification, which explains the number 33. Adityas are 12; Rudras are 11 and Vasus are eight. Dyava and Pṛthivî make up the 33.180

Aditya is a very important word. It is a word related to Aditi, Diti, Daitya, as well as to the so-called English word Deity./Dit, the root verb, means to tie, to limit. A-dit, is limitless, free, endless, eternal. Aditi means, Eternity. Diti is its opposite, the limited, the time-serving, the mortal. Those who are spiritually attached to the limitless spirit eternal, are the Adityas. Deity, thus is limited in concept. That is not to say it is useless. Some of us cannot see further than the immediate. That does not discredit us for all the time. This is a drawback; but not a defect. We should all try to gain our sense, and expand our vision. This is to bank on our efforts. We could strive. To strive is to be on

the path of spirit. The deities being understood, the deities themselves would point out their limits; and lead to the limitless one. This is quite cogent and sound.

The material world inclusive of the celestial bodies such as the sun, the moon, the planets, etc. are evolutes of eternity. That Aditi has been regarded in the myths as the 'mother of the Devas' has its basis here. Indra is her son, and Kasyapa is his father. What truth lies behind this sweet fable of the myths? Aditi is the endless process of creation, the Crea- tive Energy, the Mother, the Prakṛti, the Eternity (Gaea and Athne). Actively she has been described as "the element which sustains, and is sustained by the Adityas. This conception, owing to the character of what it embraces, had not in the Vedas been carried out into a definite personi- fication."181 Aditi "is in reality the earliest name invented to express the Infinite; not the Infinite (in concept, which gradually came to be accepted) as the result of a long process of abstract reasoning, but the visible Infinite, visible by the naked eye, the endless expanse beyond the earth, beyond the clouds, beyond the sky."182 Aditi has been identified with the earth as the Mother; not the physical anthropomorphic form wor- shipped later on as Kalî, Durga or Jagaddhatrî, but the Power, he Sakti. Sayana confirms this abstract concept of Aditi when he says Aditi is the 'indivisible space' (Akhandaniyam bhumim); and Diti in contrast, suggests the 'limited forms of the evolutes' thereof (Khanditam prajadikām).

Kasyapa-Kacchapa-Kurma (Tortoise) are synonyms, and mean a tortoise in its current popular sense. Kurma is derived from the root VK 'to act', 'to do'. Thus is the name Kûrma explained. Prajapati assumed the form and created. What was created was what he 'did'. Since he 'did', he was the Kurma, the doer. 'Kasyapa' too (Kacchapa) was the 'doer', the Kûrma. So the popular Hindu saying, all lives are Kasyapa's progenies,

Indra too was certainly an evolute of the infinite; as the Rain and the cloud he has a form, a character and functions. This explains the later myths regarding Kasyapa, Aditi, the tortoise incarnation, Indra, the King of the heavens, and the associated legends. Basically, underlying the names certain phenomena have been described.

But to regard Aditi and Kasyapa as the representations of Prakrti and Puruşa of Samkhya would be anachronistic, because the Samkhya system is post-Vedic. It is more likely that the Vedic classifications had assisted Kapila to evolve the principles of Puruşa and Prakṛti.

The Vedas conceived of the One Real; but explained that the same Real expressed itself into many forms. From this explanation later mythologies webbed their splendid pattern of anthropomorphic gods who loved, fought, quarrelled, suffered just as humans do. In the seventh chapter of the Nirukta, Yäska has discussed the forms of the Vedic deities. He has discussed that some think of them as anthropomorphic, and specify the food and drink preferred by each of them; he describes their special decorations, weapons, rides and other preferences. There are others who consider them as purely spiritual, even poetically insubstantial, except for the concepts in which they exist. Their disappearances reflect on the human world; so to regard them as constituted of human forms would be making nature more intimate. That is what Ruskin called a 'Pathetic-fallacy'.

There is a third view which synthesises the two extremes and strikes a compromise. The natural phenomena altogether could never be regarded as living creatures; yet each of them becomes real and expressive to us in different shapes and forms, having different characters and functions. The way these phenomena contribute to life is quite distinct and different.

To regard the earth as a female, the sun as male, the rains as the procreative liquid is as true as any poet would easily and gladly approve of. Of such thought is Pathetic-fallacy made. A poet writes about the Fire asking for food, as if he is hungry; about the Earth crying for her misfortune under oppressive torture under a tyrant, as if she as a lady needs protection from tyranny; or about the Goddess of Beauty, emerging out of the waves of the ocean bathed in the rays of the moon. The pictures are too sensitive to be ignored. There hangs in all expressions of Beauty a spiritual appeal.

Dawn's carousals with the Sun under the mysterious shades of mists and fogs; the sudden lust of the lord of the underworld to carry away the beautiful spring-maid during her autumn maturity; the longing wails of the bereaved mother-earth for the dear-departed year by year, have provided great poets with themes to produce sensitive immortal works of art. Nature-poets have breathed life into stones, rivers and forests in which even the dew drops hanging on tips of grass-blades, the flitting colours of the busy butterfly, the chirps of the ciacada and the humming of the bee-hives have been recorded fully and sensitively. Of course, be- sides these vivified nature-deities another class of abstract deities exists in the verses of those Rsis, who, having realised the presence of the One Indivisible Spirit moving in all things, raised prayers of praises for

the cow that gave the milk, for the pot in which the butter was churned, for the ladle, the altar, the woods, the rope, the knife, the grass which were used for the holy sacrifice. That which was useful was noteworthy, praiseworthy and worthy of a psalm. Many of these gods are common in Indo-Europeans and Indo-Iranian cultures. Let us look at instances:

	Sanskrit	Other Languages
1.	Deva	Deus (Latin); Devos (Celtic); Tivas (Scandinavian); Divas (Lithuanian)
2.	Dyna-pitar	Seus-Pater (Greek); Deispeter or Jupiter (Latin)
3.	Parjanya	Perkunos (Lithuanian)
4.	Asuins, twins of Saranyu and Dyau, and lover of surya, (daughter of surya, the sun)*	Discouri (Greek twins), related to Helena (Helena Saranyu, philologi- cally similar; expert in horse-riding). (Saranyu-legend as later narrated relates to Horse, Mare, racing, etc.).
5.	Mitra	Mithra: Mimira-indo Iranian (mihira)
6.	Varuna	Ouranos Greek ahura-mazda indo iranian
7.	Aryama	Airyama Ind-ir.
8.	Vivasuan	Vivanhant ind.-ir.
9.	Rajna	Rima ind.-ir.
10.	Rajna	Rasma ind.-ir.
11.	Soma	Haoma ind.-ir.

*The legend Saranyu-Vivasvan-Yama-and-Yamî, and the birth of the Asvins can be traced to the Greek myths as well as to Avesta. The legend of Yama and Yamî particularly reminds of the legend of Adam and Eve. "See legends".

In his Greek Myths Robert Graves, for reason of similarities in concepts of mutual gods (Tlaloe in the case of Mexico, and Dionysus in the case of Eastern Europe), infers contact between Europe and Central America. (Of course, we have shown connections between Europe and Asia, particularly India.) Had Dr. Graves taken trouble to go deeper into the Sivalores of the Hindu myths, or the Indra-lores of the Vedas, similarities of characteristics would have led him to believe contacts between Asiatic religions and European myths. Chimera, Sphinx, Unicorn, Garuda, Dragon, and like legendary creatures only now, in the light of new- archaeology and philological

evidences, are beginning to assume some anthropological and cultural significance. Neither the mysteries, nor the religions, nor the gods appear today to the scholar as mythical as to have no meaning at all, or as powerful as the religions make them to be. Both mysteries and religions have emerged in the light of the latest archaeologi- cal finds as meaningful, purposeful and significant for a new interpreta- tion of the human mind and spirit. Religions of peoples reflect their social images.

Demand for Many Gods

Whenever religion puts its spiritual values above the mystic ones, gods come to suffer. Against spiritual quest multiplicity of gods becomes redundant, and the singularity of the Spirit emerges as supreme. Indiscriminate proliferation of informative knowledge in the name of education, rather paradoxically, has kept minds away from understanding the spirit behind a multiplicity of gods. Those who still believe in such gods as Apollo, Minerva, the White Goddess, Sarasvati, Visṇu, Marduk or Esther, those who take Pelops, Oenone, Ulysses, Hercules, Zeus, Indra, Parjanya, Śiva, Durgā, Gaṇeśa, Kālî, etc., seriously, are regarded 'not so educated'. The 'modern scientific' man feels embarrassed to own devotion to 'gods'. He shuns, because he does not know; he does not know because such knowledge is primitively designed. Ignorance in this field acts as a justi- fication of advancement. Keeping away from such knowledge is a pass- port to be accepted as progressively oriented. The spiritual significance of such works as the Talmud, the Bible, the Koran, the Upanisad, the Vedanta and the Yoga could not be denied at all. But a total rejection of rites, particularly of religious rites, as primitive is a reflection of understanding induced by snobbish vanity for education. Churches that dogmatically reject polytheism fail to accept the clandestine and round- about forms in which popular fascination for polytheism continues its undying progress. Human aspirations are at first materially motivated before being spiritually inspired. Hindu reformists, under the influence of Western sceptics and cynics of materialistic bends, in their eagerness to effect social reforms, have haughtily rejected religious admission of many gods. The trend received further pressures from communistic philosophers preaching a total rejection of both church and gods. Spirit has been rejected in preference to Matter; the Inner Man has been rejected, in preference to the outer shell, that is the body, the home, the society.

But the call for spiritualism is not something about which the cultiva- tion of materialistic philosophy could do anything, except dictatorially suffocating it out of existence. As long as man is, hunger for spirit shall be. Polytheism or any theism is not the effect of any special demand on the part of the gods. Even pantheism is not the effect of any of Nature's phenomenon asking for homage or prayers. There must be something innate, fundamental, instinctive in man that helps man express his own inner self through worship and prayers. If gods were invented in answer to such demands, so was art, poetry, love, culinary wonders, gardening, architecture, ballet, violine and love for dogs. These only point to an irresistible fact, that the soul of man hungers for sublimating its existential drudgery, and reach an ideal world. There must be some area in the minds of Ho-Chi-Minh, Mao-Tse-Tung, Pablo Niruda where the language of dialectical prose proved inadequate to bring out the full stature of the inner man, due to which these full-blooded political and militant freedom-fighters have been celebrated writers of the most sensitive poetry. Einstein had his violine; Omar Khayyam, the mathematician, had his 'Rubbi'; Prime Minister Heath has his orchestral interludes. Children of dust must not be deprived of their luxury of dreams. This is not to run behind an escape. It is the innate craving of the soul of man to aspire. Inflamed by spiritual inspiration man stakes time, money, comfort, even much tempting material advantages to achieve the land of his dream. Were man to abandon this instinctive call for some spiritual integrity, he would be left with a vacuum; as in nature all vacuum has to be filled in with something, the hunger for reaching the sublime region of an ideal state of universal joy will have to be stuffed with withered barren frustration, leading to drug, drudgery and despotism, or to creation of gods, who, through imposing their ideals, keephuman efforts within the bounds of social participation, and spiritual optimism. These gods could either symbolise certain ideals, or could be imaged as political leaders, commercial magnates, film-producers who fascinate ambition, or cast spell on human thinking for a given time. Gods are not necessitated by the demands of gods, but by the intensive craving of man, and his soul. Man has to kneel before something. If good is not found, he kneels before bad.

A total rejection of the ancient could prove to be a form of spiritual iconoclasm. It would be fanatical and tyrannical. Education develops understanding; understanding adds to patience; patience contributes to the supreme virtue of tolerance.

No social change could be of lasting effect by rejecting tolerance and introducing a fanatic disregard for institutional practices entirely. An age-old regimentation is likely to keep proper appreciation bemused. To take religion for granted is to get submerged in a spiritual stupor. To be religious is to be on a path of constant self-search.

Known scholars like Dr. Graves, unknown scholars like Upendranath Biswas,184 have worked considerably on the subject of interpretations of Myths, Legends, Gods and Goddesses, and have found the wisdom of making a special study of these in reconstructing ancient history and society inclusive of the history of the aspiration of the human spirit.

Is God 'Many', 'One' or 'Zero'?

God is beyond numbers. Yet, God, as we know and say, is One. As three, four, ten, thousand are evolutes of the same One, all later additions or increases, in reality refer to the same One, the infinitely big. In Reality there is neither big, nor small, nor even one. Zero is the image or reflection of the Infinity, as it actually does as 'Sûnya' in certain Indian thoughts. Orthodox Hinduism holds and explains: "The nature of Māyā (manifested Life-sport) is represented by the number One."185 But if God could be One, God plus God being still God; two or three or any number has to be One. Hence Sûnya's (zero's) neutrality alone best images the sublimest impersonation named God. The manifested multiplicity of the divinities does not, in this way, interfere with the unity of the single divine. Hinduism says, even 'One' limits God. Zero as a positive presence alone represents God. As the coefficient of an algebraic number saturates all that the number might mean, so God as a positive coefficient is entirely involved in each and one of us, up to the least particle. So the varieties of the manifested world of ours, with its varieties of names, ultimately refer to a single Cause of all causes. Plurality could be referred to a position where all numbers cease to exist. Non-duality is the very essence of the unmanifest. With the manifest emerging from the unmanifest, soon as the name-world starts, the Essence does not evaporate. Every container must contain something; if nothing else, at least the containing capacity of the container, without which it would not be named 'a container'.

"Existence is multiplicity. That which is not multiple does not exist. We may conceive of an underlying, all-pervading continuum, but it remains shapeless, without quality,

impersonal, non-existent."186 But all these epithets are not applicable to the world we live in, using the language we do.

Thus the deities we speak of in our polytheistic language of adoration, represent nothing but the same casual energy, which is known as Adya- Sakti, the Primal-Power of which the subtle as well as the visible worlds are the evolutes. The transcendental perception of pure consciousness remains undisturbed by the sensory perception which classify, qualify, vivify and multiply. It is true that the perception of the Real becomes confused by the varieties of form; nonetheless underlying all confusion, the transcendental Reality remains undisturbed, for our pure consciousness to experience.

Supreme knowledge is aware of the Oneness of the One despite its presence in many forms and lives. Those who speak of Duality, do not visualise Reality. The wind that blowing through the different holes of the flute creating different notes remains but the same wind; so remains the Paramätman. (One, although evoluted in multiple-forms.) The variety of forms is induced by a chain of cause and effects, actions and reactions, and remains at variance as long as Avidya (ignorance regarding Reality) troubles. Once the ignorance regarding differences of body and body is removed, this Avidya does not stay.187

Somehow the polytheistic approach to the nature of Reality has been held under a shade. Monotheism has been held in higher intellectual (even spiritual) favour. In fact, this controversy reflects more generally, the battle of the layman against the priestly religious order. God as a subject has become a spectacular intellectual pastime even for those who exhibit a sad want of godliness in them. The fact is, for the truly religious, experience and conduct, sincere devotion and sympathetic action, is more important than intellectual polemics or spectacular controversies. Atheists are denounced by polytheists; polytheists are denounced by monotheists; monotheists are denounced by those who say even One is a limiting number; and the Unmanifest Power unlimited. Zero alone could express this indefinite positive Idea. But the common man would have none of it. He does not understand it. He needs religion and religion breeds many gods and many forms.

Divine ecstasy could be reached in terms of a formal divinity even before the sublime experiences of a formless ecstasy of silence could be reached. Looking at the variety of expressions of the one single spirit, naturally, mind sought to discover the excellence

of the forms seen. The innate quality and form of the expressions of Nature and Life-abounding, made man seek the maximum in each form. The spirit of this maximum in each form, with its individual characteristics, helped man to image and constitute the deities of each. Thus Joy in Life and Terror in Death; happiness for Day, and mystery for Night; the sun with its diurnal and annual courses; the moon with its phases; the seasons; the natural primal forms such as air, water, fire, heat, earth or ether, each assumed divine dimensions. Varieties of human emotions and aspirations made man to lean on a variety of gods, each representing some aspect of human mind and its cravings.

Patron Saints

Yet out of the unending streams of gods that the polytheists imaged from age to age, and people to people, some responded to certain common trends. This accounts for gods of similar descriptions and habits amongst peoples, considerably separated by time and space. Even these poly- theists held on to a principal saint. Columbus named cities, ports, towns, countries, islands, after the patron saints for the day, the month, or a town in Spain, or whatever the almanac indicated. Wars by Pizzaros of the old world, Napoleons of the New world were fought in the name of patron saints. In the different parts of India local Hindus hold on to a chief deity of their respective locality. Islamic countries and Islamic people maintain with pride specially sanctified haloed grounds, where the dusts of saints are laid to rest. This is true of Buddhism, Taoism, even of the tribal religions. This is true of walls, wells and mounds in Israel, and specially of Jerusalem.

This is true also of the individual polytheist who adores his 'Ista- Devata'. This is essentially, and intimately 'his own'; this is the deity whose ways and means are complementarily meaningful and fulfilling to him as an individual. As an individual, one is an evolute of imbalance of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. His conscious self, unconscious subconscious, supra-conscious awareness (Bodha), his incompleteness, his longings, frustrations, ultimate goal, his abilities-disabilities stature, limitations, weak points, are all parts of his personality, his character, his individualism. Instead of their being his, he appears to be more theirs. Is he not con- trolled and propelled by them? He is not his. He belongs to them. He needs some higher power and guide, master and lover, benefactor and chastiser, outside himself to lead him from ignorance to realisation, from darkness to light. He goes to his Guru, who makes a study of his

real being; probes into his spiritual resources; and selects for him a sympathetic deity; to contemplate and serve this deity would earn for him divine sym- pathy and grace, charity and friendliness. This special deity alone, his deity, could assist him in getting out of the fragmented and tortured self that he is, and become this true self.

Ista-Devata

This Ista is 'his' god, his friend, his lover, his guide, as is the personal Christ to the millions, over and above the impersonal Father or the Ghost. Thus the equivalence of the deity, selected and accepted, conducts the wor- shipper along a route spiritually conducive to his inner personality. The distinctive power, whatever its form, springs from the same total Self, the One Reality. Through the Grace of this special One he aspires to reach the realisation of the Universal One.

Thus the way of the polytheist is the way along a multi-peaked moun- tain range for getting to the topmost. His aim, the point, the zero, the Atman, the Brahman-once attained, every grain of sand becomes charged with the same One; every life of the living appears vibrated by the same One; and from the farthest star in the tropical sky to the infinitesimal amoebic growth in the deepest ocean, he feels the presence of the grand unity of a single sublime Reality. The further the climber climbs, spiri- tually, the lesser in number grows the plurality of the peaks. His efforts and steps are marked by symbolic milestones. His passions, emotions, aspirations and weaknesses are congealed into forms. These are the many icons and the many gods that crowd the Hindu temples. It is indeed an amazingly confusing spectacle to peoples who under the metaphysical spell of Oneness hesitate to fully appreciate the Hindu stand on many gods. It is not much difficult for the uninspired to take an abstracted God-idea for granted. Indoctrination and doctrinaire fear is taken for devotion; a cynical conformity of sheer form, and decency, is taken for discipline and regularity, even for religiosity. Unprepared to meet a challenge, the indoctrinated makes a fetish of monism, and chauvinistically claims to belong to a superior class of theological adherents. He boasts of One Brahman, One Zehova, One God or One Allah. But it has been noted that these monist-religions haveplagued the world with wars and enforced conversions, much suffering and bloodshed, and finally failed to practise toleration and accommodation.

The Hindu polytheist is invariably meek and modest. He accepts and accommodates. He has a god to love, and he loves him, sings to him, offers him his best, shares with him, and requests him for the strength of mind to lead him from maniness to oneness: His logic could be defective; but his peace is profound. His Guru has given him what is 'his' god, essentially his alter-ego. He lives to grow with this Iṣṭa-Devata, his wished for divinity. He makes his progress with his god. He sees around many gods of many people with many ideas. He accepts some, rejects others, and chants his mantras, exchanges ritualistic ceremonies, visits pilgrimages, but never does he give up the way the Guru has directed.

In this way he moves up to his goal of singleness. After the entire day's arduous exercise with a hundred mental and occupational pursuits, the man in him retires, and looks for his own home, which is the focal point of all his activities. His faith in the Guru remains firm. The firmness guides him to his purpose. The Hindu who worships many gods to reach to an Absolute Oneness is spiritually a believer in co-existence and secular- ity. He finishes his commerce with the many, and retires to the One that stays in his own Home.

The monotheist has no such advantage. He follows his 'reason' which is a poor panacea for emotional imbalances. Modern psychiatry follows the path of analysis, and prescribes correlated supplementary, and anti- dotal behaviour-patterns as corrective to inner complexes. No wonder this fails. Analysis is a helpful method of understanding. But its failure is total unless followed up by a process of synthesis, which supersedes under-standing, and reaches sympathy. Love and understanding are the most effective synthesising reagents. Analysis of mental complexes is the panacea for all emotional imbalances. Such love cannot be induced by reasoning. Hence the failure of reason devoid of feeling; of the mono- theist's correctness and rigidity, devoid of a polytheist's co-existential per- missiveness and secularity. What would have happened to the basic metaphysics of Christianity without the emotional factor of Christ? Who would have held on to the Holy-Ghost or to the Logos, or the Word, and seek redemption? Without the idea of Love, which was so dear to Jesus, how could men dare approach any Divine Justice?

The mysticism of the early Christians was a definite hindrance to the proselytizing expansion of the popular Christian faith. The teachings of the Darvishes, the Faquirs

and the Sufis could not have brought to the folds of Islam its teeming faithfuls. Abstract faiths call for more substantial content to be popular. The content of religion in order to be popular must close its eye to metaphysics. The Trinity, in essence, accepts the need for a polytheistic dispensation; and Christ, in essence accepts the supreme role of Love. Else the abstract mysticism of the Holy Ghost and Logos evokes very little interest for the man of the street. A God-love leads to Love-God; and Love-God leads to man-love. This secret of polytheism undeniably assists and aids the emotionally upset. The idea of the Trinity has built up in millions of sickly minds the courage to survive, supplicate and to go out in the service of the ailing humanity with the power of love and confidence.

The more the monotheist loses his balance in attaining his objective, the more he consults his reason; and his successive frustrations hit him hard until he recoils into a frozen rigidity. From too much of adherence of reasoning he becomes an advocate; advocacy tempts him to proselytize; proselytizing is a feature of the monotheist, for whom there could be no room for un-reason. He is a victim of his impatience and conservatism, which leaves no room, for the accommodation of and sympathy for the normally deluded. The polytheists arrange assiduously for making this room; and ultimately lead the seeker to the views initially he would never own. Thus with love and charity, understanding and sympathy, he gradually, hopes to lead an emotionally excited mind along the path of humble pliability and cooperation. He leads them out of the wilderness of dour and dreary reason, and experiences at least the satisfaction of having assisted. The path of such personal dedication to personal ailments and failings through Love is known as the 'way of Love', or the Bhakti Märga (also known as Prema Marga).

The Three Margas

'Marga' or 'Way' are three: (1) Jñäna-Marga, the way of reasoning, understanding and 'knowing'; (2) Karma-Märga, the way of acting (accord- ing to Jñana); and lastly, (3) Bhakti-Märga, the way of Love and Adoration. The three 'ways' have been explained in the Gîtä. Jñana has been held very high in the Gîtä. 'Nothing here is as perfect (free from imperfections) as Jñana.'188 The ultimate Peace is soon reached by attaining Jñana.189 Immediately again, Gîtā, speaks highly of Karma: But Karma's way is mysteriously involved; 190 "Even the intellectuals are confused about the distinctions

between what constitutes Karma, and what A-karma;"191 "The actual man of total-action shall see action in inaction, and inaction in action;"192 "Real action is purified by 'the fire of Jñana 193 Karma with- out Jñana, might become the cause for attachment and involvement as noose or a snare.194 Action is at its best when performed with detach- ment;" "Act as one free from attachment;"195 "Give fight without passion; "196 "Sages like Janaka were involved in action." Pure intellec- tion, casuistry, reasoning without performance or involvement in life, is bewildering and confusing. Performance without knowledge leads to catastrophe. So any action lacking faith, devotion, sincerity and knowledge (analysis and reasoning of what? why? how?) is disastrous. A cynical attitude to life is suicidal.197

Thus analytical knowledge of the material world with its spiritual implication alone guides action towards perfection. This perfection depends on acquiring the basic power of non-attachment. Thus the know- ledge of Samkhya and Yoga has been combined in the 'perfect-man' of the Gītā. He is not the unconcerned self-centred Yogî traditionally ac- cepted by the post-Buddhist society. The army of beggars and parasitic mendicants which characterise the Hindu society of today is, however, not to be related to the Karma-Yogîs. The Karma-Yogî of the Gîta is deeply involved, with a personal detachment practised over years of disci- pline. He is active day and night. Not for a noment could he rest. Attainment of this degree of impersonality in life is indeed difficult.

This brings us to the third phase, namely, one of dedication, faith, service and love. This is the celebrated Bhakti-Marga, the way of complete dedication. The monks and the nuns in the Christian orders dedicate themselves to a Lover-Christ, a Redeemer. Ancient Christianity and Sufism abound with saints who followed this method, as they abound even today in Saivism and Vaisnavism.

Those who dedicate themselves to me and prostrate and worship; those who sacrifice; those who strive through knowing me (through reasoning) whether through a monistic method, or a polytheistic method, in diverse ways, should know I am the Kratu of the Vedas; the Yajña of the Smrtis; the offerings to the Manes; the herbal- rites that cure; the chants and spells; the offerings; the offered; the fire; the father; the mother; the goal; the way; the Vedas; the Om the Lord, the Witness, the Supporter, the Abode and Refuge, I am the Friend; the prime; the End; the Finality; the Seed; the Immutable, 198

Neither the methods, nor the forms; neither the language, nor the prayers make any difference with Devotion. Those who know could listen in these lines the mystic lines of Revelation (in the Bible) echoing.

Paradoxically enough such devotion alone could lead to the kind of detached action where personal ego is happily and joyously merged in Love for the Beloved. "The one who is aware of this mystery (of Love) never feels anything as 'personal'. The personal ego is merged in the beloved. Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping breathing, speaking, abandoning or accepting, opening or closing the eyes, he allows his entire (body) system to act as sensory and active organs must; but he bears in mind whatever is done, is done 'for' the Brahman (the Beloved). Such actions though acted, do not smear or bind, as no water adheres to the lotus-leaf (which growing in water keeps itself away from it; and does not allow water to attach to it) "199 "The Bhāga- vatam says that the tie between the lover and the beloved could be established in Love or Bhakti by following any or all of these prescribed nine-fold paths: to hear of Him; to sing of Him; to remember Him; to attend to His feet; to worship Him; to prostrate before Him; to serve Him; to befriend Him, and to offer the self to Him."200

Thus the Gîta synthesises the three 'ways' of knowledge of Samkhya and Vedanta; the discipline of Yoga; the Karma of Mîmänsä and the Vedas; and introduces a new system of dedication through identification of the deity and the devoted on the one hand, and the deity and the Universe on the other. This mystery of the 'World and I' is solved by imagining a God at whose 'feet', in whose service and in whose Love the world and I became synthesised. The God, the World and the 'I' become One through Bhakti, in which all past traditions, rites and differences merge as tributaries into a river, and as rivers into the sea.

This is the basis of Hindu theism; i.e., Hindu Polytheism.

This is its philosophic basis. The many-channelled hymnals of the Vedas around the single fountain-head of 'Ekah-Sat', the One Real, have to be viewed in the light of the above synthesising elements in Bhakti.

Culturally, monotheism appears to claim a higher snob-status than polytheism. It is taken for granted that the polytheistic accommodation of the Bhakti-Märga is necessitated by the people having an inferior I. Q. But Monotheism could easily become a projection of individual ego. A monotheist's fervour could result from an

identification of that very ego with what could be taken for the cosmic. This could be the reason why the people brought up with monism as a fetish become prone to intolerant fanaticism. It is a surprisingly sad feature of history that most of the cynical people who made little of human sorrow and plight in the interests of personal acquisitiveness, concentration of power and national chauvinism have been, religiously, followers of monism. Worship of God in a multitude of forms is considered by these to be dangerously regressive, crudely primitive and pollutively heinous. Gîtă lovingly includes the polytheistic approach as substantially sublimating, and concludes the polytheistic approach in the supreme monism of the synthetical view of the variegated universe in the superb paeans of the climaxing verses of chapter eleven.

"It is only Me they adore in adoring piously and devotedly the other gods, even when they are ignorant of the correct-rites. "201

If we say that the concept of Zehovah, Allah, the Holy Ghost, the Brahman, the Logos, etc. are the same, we admit the fact that many names do not make many gods; even attributes do not limit the Supreme. The bite must be made according to the mouth, and the mouthful should be swallowed according to the power of digestion. Abstract intellection is not everybody's meat.

Many of the deities worshipped by the Hindus are not mentioned in the Vedas under their present names; and many Vedic gods are today known mostly to scholars. But it would be wrong to see a change in reli- gion or a deviation from the Vedic idea of divinity in what is merely a matter of fashion, a way of representing the Divine that suited a particular time or country, a particular set of habits, or a different conception of the Universe. The gods are universal principles; they are all pervading realities. The words or forms we use to represent them are mere approximations, which can vary like the words of different languages used to represent the same object, or like the different symbols used to represent the same mathematical fact. 202

Standardisation of belief is not the best arrangement in the social system of spirit; it could not only lead to regimentation, propaganda and proselytism; it could cause a more serious injury to the spirit by thwarting its recent aspirations. It could make him spiritually blind. Hinduism welcomes all and sundry to the democracy of self-assertion in a spiritual society. Even a Guru does not foist a deity on a disciple. The deity is

selected in accordance with the disciple's Guna and Prakṛti, i.e., the subject's emotive requirements. This is the reason that the same Guru is found to offer different Mantras symbolising different deities to different disciples. There is no doubt that such freedom often leaves room for super- stition, magic, ignorance and ritualism; but the alternative is regimenta- tion and spiritual jail. Inadequacy of a mere refined intelligence bereft of sympathetic feeling is a common feature in any human society, parti- cularly in the so-called advanced societies. But the freedom with which the Hindu moves, permits him to grow freely, as an alternative to growing blindly. There is no doubt that fundamentally the liberty of approach is the birth-right of souls' choice; and multiplicity of ways to the supreme offers no real problem to the keen traveller.

This maniness has been ironed out by the Hindu-Adorers by the adoption of some symbolic representation apart from Zoomorphic or anthropomorphic elaborate forms. These are the Yantras or the Lingas, which as symbolic signs conveying transformal messages assist in concen- tration and meditation. Thus emerged the necessity of the Lingam for the Yogîs and the devotees.

(C) The Emergence of Lingam

Every entity is a composite of three factors. The entity may be one; but it contains in it space, time and thought, provided it thinks, as it must. The stone for instance, appears not to think; as a sleeping man appears to be an unthinking specimen. Yet the sleeping state is a stage in thought-cycle. Thus the apparently non-thinking matter, like stone, wood or a drop of water, or an atom is, metaphysically viewed, but the sleeping state of thought. Fundamentally it is not 'non-Thinking', it is only 'not- thinking. Its thinking or not-thinking is a matter of time; it is not a matter of material composition.

Man, fond of reasoning, is fond of the question. How? or Why? How the unreal could come out of the Real? How could the Being be produced from the non-Being? What made the chaotic become cosmic. In the very shape or substance which we term as 'chaos' sleeps the substance of 'cosmos'.

Non-being is explained to be a stage before Being, and is thus linked in the chain of continuum, although it appears to be contradictory to Being. Being and non-Being could not be related in any other way. 'Non-Being' as the state before (Being), evolved the Being which must have existed in Space, which is the very first condition of Being, Space, or Sat. The next link must be Time or Kala. Time as we realise is a measuring

princi- ple. Measurable time exists only in relation to our perceiving faculty. Time perceived is time realised. But eternity is the ever-present time.

The concept of Ever-Present Time or Maha-Kala, or Eternity and Space, fundamentally understood, is realised iconically in the form of Lingam which is a 'standing form in the centre of a circle'. In the 'Siva- Ratri' of Yogatrayananda Time, or Kala has been described as Akhanda Dandayamana, the 'standing measure-pole un-divided'; time is the measur- ing rod, in its eternal form and totality; it is indivisible; and it is standing still with its potency of taking a measure. The immeasurable is beyond feeling, beyond comprehending, beyond thought. When the incompre- hensible is comprehended, the very act, the success, causes joy. Thus Akhanda, or 'the eternally stretching being' perceived as 'Time', the single but divisible entity, causes Joy or Anandam. Is not every human concep- tion legitimately also limited? The inconceivable Time is symbo- lised by this eternally existent symbol (of time) (Akhanda-Dandayamāna- Lingam).

Together, Being and Time, in this way cause Sat-Cit and Anandam. The iconic representation of this idea is the Circle. The Circle, icons the Space; and the 'Standing Time Eternal', or the Maha-Kāla is iconed by the standing Lingam. Together, these two caused 'to think', i.e., to relate effect to cause. Comprehension demands to relate a continuum to a state of 'continua' beyond which all states cease. Thus the non-Being the Being (Space), the measuring standard of Time (Kala) become automatical- ly the starting points of the causal continuum. There could not be anything 'Thoughtless'. Beyond every created entity a law, a principle, an arranged system of evolving cause and effect is perceptible. This perception or realisation causes a thought sequence, and the subsequent consequential joy which is caused by the thought-perception. This thought or Bodha causes Joy (Anandam), which is the third in the series of continuum. No perception, no joy, no feeling is possible for the unconscious. Hence consciousness is inherent in Anandam. The iconic form of conscious perception of 'Anandam' is the single eye, or the 'third eye', which the Yogîs help 'open' through meditation. Sat-Cit-Anandam, the three-in-one, is Brahman whose iconic form is Siva. For each individual existence the presence of Saccidanandam is both essential and inevitable.

A balloon in space is space, though divided by a wall. It is held in time, although the perceptible time is separated from the imperceptible time in relation to perception

alone. Thus the atom, the flower, the stars and the individual life all are in Space, Time and Thought- 'Thought' that leads to consciousness and to conscious delight.

All the gods are in this one Soul, and all dwell in Soul.203 "The Soul in all, and all in the Soul, is seen by the soul steady in Yoga."204 The Gîtã explains that matter as matter cannot comprehend the totality of the Soul, or the Brahman; yet all matter contains the Soul as space contains sound. Soul is supreme because it includes all, 205

Soul's immensity is Brahman. The Brahman is Immense, the continua from which all continuum proceeds in chain-order of causes and effects with the thought process as its only support. This Immensity is the Parama-Atman, the Soul, the Self. Yet there is another 'self' because of which we are selfish. This is the 'I', the ego, the ignorance-covered self that gives 'me' individuality, as I think, but in fact, which keeps me separated from the knowledge and the realisation of the greater, wider, immense Self, the Atman which suffers no duality. Individuality is by nature fragmented. Brahman by nature is the unfragmented Immense.

Man's worship is directed towards the realisation of this Self not of the Individual. Puncture the balloon by a sharp thrust of knowledge, it shrinks and falls, the Space mingling with the Space. The ego-laden 'I' is thus an illusion, as the puffed up bigness of the rotund balloon; the balloonism was an illusive appearance alone. This ignorance born of Rajas, gives the individual ego its Libido, Anger and similar passions. "It is an enemy. Piece it through. This covers all, as the embryonic fluid covers the foetus; as the smoke covers the fire; as dusts cover the mirror. It is the natural and constant adversary of knowledge, and it bemuses intelligence and knowledge."206

Brahman, The Immense

The soul is realised by the thoughtful introvert through processed and disciplined introversion. The actual process of discipline is laid down by Patanjali in Yoga. Since his soul is the nearest to, and the most intimately involved in whatever man does, thinks or dreams, it is upto man to try to be aware of it. Once he knows it, it is easy for him to rescue it from all delusive factors. Realisation of the Universal soul is attainable only through the path shown by the Guru. Attaining this 'realisation of the Universal Self'.

Now the self is the bridge, the (separating) boundary for keeping these worlds apart. Over that bridge day and night do not cross; nor (does the) old age or death, nor sorrow, nor well-doing nor ill-doing. All evils turn back from it for the Brahma-world is freed from evil. Therefore, verily, on crossing that bridge, if one is blind, he is no longer blind; if wounded, he is no longer wounded; if all afflicted, he becomes no longer afflicted. There- fore, verily, on crossing that bridge, night appears ever as day for that Brahma-world is ever illumined.207

The soul is beyond all teachings to be realised; beyond all intellect, or learning. It could be attained by the one who pursues it; to whom its form is revealed. He who has not renounced (motivated) action who is not at peace, who cannot concentrate and meditate, who has not been able to quieten his mind, cannot by intelligence alone acquire its knowledge.208

This is Brahman, the Immense, the Soul, the One that envelopes Causes and Effects. This is the Saccidanandam; Sivam; 'Space-Time- Thought' continuum; the Tri-Mûrti's genus, of which all becomes mere species.

Divine Joy

The nature of the Joy of this Realisation is best described in the Gîtā:

When the Yoga-trained spirit attains the finality of freedom from conflicts, the self views the Self and receives contentment in the Self. When all objectives cease, when the Self-perceived Self realised the acme of bliss, where the knower realises the Reality, he never again is troubled by a sense of possible degrada- tion. He gains that, gaining which no other gain appears to be worthy of any gain. He is settled so firmly in it that even the most grievous of griefs cannot unsettle him. 209

Speaking of the nature of this Supreme, Śivam, Saccidanandam, the Gîtā says,

That which is to be known I shall declare. To know that is to attain immortality. The beginningless, Supreme Brahman is said to be neither Aught nor Nought. With hands and feet every- where, heads, mouths, ears everywhere, he is in the world, yet covering it. Reflections (or Its Consciousness), manifested through the sensory functions and faculties, act, yet do not; as It is devoid of senses. Unattached, It supports all. Unqualified, It witnesses all qualities. It is within; It is without. It is in- animate in the inanimate; and animate in animate. It is too sub- tle to be realised (by ordinary

faculties). It is distributed in all. It supports, destroys and creates all creatures. Light of lights, It is beyond all darkness. It is knowledge, subject of knowledge, and object of knowledge alone. It is the heart of all things. 210

Invisible, beyond the power of expression, beyond seizure or comprehension, or qualification, or discription, or thinking or connotation, it is the Essence of the knowledge of the singleness of Self, the final abode of the world, the peace, the good, the One without two; such is considered to be the Fourth stage (of under- standing) of the Brahman: the Self; the Knowable.211

The Fourth stage is beyond the three stages of existence: gross, subtle, and causal; hence beyond the three corresponding stages of experience also: surface-consciousness, dream-consciousness and consciousness, and the consciousness that sleeps during deep sleep, and about which we know, ordinarily, nothing.

The principal trinities referred to above are subject to the Guṇas.

"The modes of this world are from the stages assumed by me in conjunction with the three Guṇas.

Thus, the world (mystified, due to the Gunas of Prakṛti) knows me not as the immutable."212 "When Prakṛti acts as the Matrix to beget and propagate all mobile and immobile creation, I remain to superintend (the Acts)."213 This Prakṛti acts because of her Gunas, which together constitute the Prakṛti. The basic Gunas could not be distinctly grasped; but the three pervade the created world.

Adana: Utkramana: Pratisthā

Mobility is an evolute of the imbalance of the three Gunas. Mobility is Prakṛti's manifestation. The Immobile is a state in itself; an abstract state which is, because it is. This is Puruṣa, the I. This contains the essence of the mystery of the manifest evolving out of the unmanifest. All manifests are modes of the three Gunas.

The impulse of creation too has three distinct stages: (1) Adana, (2) Utkrānti and (3) Pratistha. Motion is streamed either contripetally or centrifugally; if none of these streams is operative, or if both are neutralised, a third state of static equilibrium could be reached. Obviously, one of these helps to integrate and cohere the molecules; the

one which acts as the cohesive energy is known as Adana: it integrates. The opposite force, obviously, dissolves, disintegrates and prevents cohesion. This is Utkramana. The balance between the two conflicting forces strikes the equilibrium, the neutrality. This is regarded as the celebrated centre (Vaikuntha) of all conflicts arising from the continuity of Space and Time. It is the Pratistha, the Brahma, the Immensity of Being, into which all rhythms, Adana or Utkramana, find a nestling abode. "My supreme abode is there where once reached, there is no coming back."214

Adana's Guna is luminous, open, life-giving, preserving. This is Sattva, and is iconically known as Visnu the pervading power of integration. Utkramana's Guna, contrarily, is dark, narrow, suffocating, disintegrating. It is Tamas obscuring, dispersing, dissolving, annihilating this existence of cohesive integrity. Symbolising this centrifugally motivated skill of disintegration or, anti-cohesion, is the lord of Sleep, Siva, or the lord of tears, Rudra, 'Maheśvara, the great subtlety of the nature of things'215 is iconically described as Siva. In the 'Lingopāsanā Rahasya' Karapātrî, a scholarly sage of our times, speaks of this Tamas as the great and mighty force. "Ultimately everything arises from Tamas (the dark inert force of disintegration), and ends in disintegration. Because he rules over disintegration and controls, It, the lord of sleep, is the principle of the universe." He is the non-Being of the Being, and therefore the Adi-Bhúta, Sanatani (All was Tamas at the beginning.)

The conflict between Sattva and Tamas finds an equilibrium in Rajas, where Peace is. This is the Immense Brahman the meeting place of all conflicts, the ever peaceful amidst the agitated, like the centre of the fire, or the centre of the storm. This is the embryo, the matrix of the mani-fest-unmanifest universe. This is the golden egg, the Cause of causes, Hiranya-Garbha.

The three Gunas or modes are actually a three-in-one compact. They are three, as popularly accepted and understood. What is difficult to understand is Māyā, the Maya-tā, the quality of inescapable satura- tion, of the inevitable film that veils all objects from their real state. This knowledge wears the veil of ignorance. As a result, creatures get deluded.217 The deluded find it difficult to know Reality. Only Grace could help in the realisation of this knowledge. 218 Delusion leads to Asura- Bhāva, the way contrary to Sattva or Deva-Bhāva.219 The Asuras wor- ship with a motive of material gain. A true devotee has no such motive; and his devotion alone, leads him straight to

Realisation; but such Realisa- tion is attained after lives and lives of dedication. The Asuras restless and impatient, eager to achieve power, here and now, become deluded, and create many gods out of the one; their nature sustains them in this pursuit; and they embellish their way by proposing various rites. 220 At the beginning of manifestation from the state of absolute rest, i.e., Tamas, Śiva (the Lord of Sleep), the two other Gunas evolute. 221 The relation of the three Gunas to the supreme One, and the role of Māyā in making the one to be taken as three, is best described in Maitrayanî Upanisad. "The three, Brahma, Viṣṇu and Siva are not to be conceived as independent 'persons': they are the threefold manifestation of the Supreme.'

Maya

The Sakti or Power, that is restlessly moving in the unmoved, polarises and localises through a rhythm. This has been notedalready. In the distant world of the nebulus the whirlpool of creation shoots forth new planets, and absorbs so many into it through the display of these different phases Without the concept of this pure movement and without of the power. its sustenance, it would be difficult to conceive of the forces of creation and dissolution. This unsubstantial power that makes all substances look different through injecting the Gunas in their respective imbalances is Māyā. It is not 'illusion', because it has a reality; it is not real, or even a part of the Real, because substantially it has no state at all. It has been described as 'an introspective deliberation' or Vimarşa, 'the entity that visualises itself'.

Dream Experiences

Dream experiences are unreal only because of their lack of causality and continuum of sequences. These are not related to the world of events in which the dreamer exists in the same sense as cause is related to effects.

Psychiatry and psycho-analysis relate subjects of dreams to causes centred around the psychic personality of an individual. But such causes which evoke dreams are subject to (a) interpretations; (b) hypothe- ses; and (c) past experiences in the active world. Every time there is the same cause there is a similar effect which might not be identical. Yet dreams and their causes do not react every time in the same manner. In the actual world 'cause and effect' act almost with a certainty which is missed in the dream-world. There is no way of urging a dream, much less the same dream, even

when the same cause be present. Other than this as experiences, dreams are as effective as any other on the system of nerves, although the function of the sensory organs are not exposed to objects in the world of bodies. The nostrils vibrate; the lips smile or twist in agony; the skin flushes or pales; the eyes shed tears; hairs stand on end; hair roots shed sweat; seminal fluids get ejected; the consummating glee of a sex-climax relaxes tension; heart beats faster or slower. Hearts have been known to have ceased functioning, and stopping altogether in dreams. Thus reflexes reactive to objects not physically present in the world of dreams react on the body functioning in another world where the body exists. Naturally, if one of these is 'Real', the other is not. Yet, in the dream world we just repeat what we know as the real. Things not experienced are not experienced in dreams. The non-existent in the sensory field does not exist in fantasy or dreams. The Dragon or the Chimera as a whole might not be real; but part by part the composite body has its prototype based in the 'Real world'. Māyā acts through this, holding on to the immediate experiences as of permanent value, although there is no permanence in them. As the waking man views the world of dreams with all its functions, so does the man of knowledge view the 'waking-world' as the functions of a super-dream. "What is night to creatures is the state of waking to the disciplined; what the creatures accept as waking is but the night to the sages.

Thus Māyā is something more than illusion; it is a phenomenon more substantial than 'illusion', although, it is illusive to a degree. Had there not been Māyā the world physically might have cohered and integrated, but mind's relation to the world would have been non-existent. Māyā may not be the body of the letter; but it certainly is the envelope of the letter with its adhesive glue. To take the envelope as the letter is delusion; admitted. But to ignore as non-existent, even as the message of the letter, is to indulge a half-truth, or a partial truth. The shell of the paddy, the body-shell of the human soul, the space shell of the solar system all have their functions, and cannot be passed off as mere illusion. When a piece of string is taken for a snake, the illusion has a basis in the string. When a person sees a tiger in his bed on his twenty-third storey apartment, it might be a hallucination; but he has to reach his mind for the tiger's tail, and chase it out of his mind. When he stops at every third man and finds him to be scheming for his murder, he has to go deep into his psyche which is ailing, and try to cure it. These are not to be brushed aside as illusion. When poets sung of bright damsels trilling over tips of dew from valley to valley and dancing across the sea, they

were singing basically of a reality. But above all the threats, transitoriness, insecurities and uncertainties of life there is a charm, a fascination, an embracing sweetness which spiritually pulls all lives together in a sweet or bitter attachment, this involving, fascinating Force, this total Power is the Mystery of Life; it is Māyātā, the Force of Saturating individual entities with a spirit of together- ness, crystallisation, adhesion. It grows roots into our emotions, and makes us look at things in their assumed roles on the phenomenal stage- show of the Life Drama. It is, in a way, an obstruction to appreciate Truth in its Real nature. It aids and assists the interplay of the Gunas in our Prakṛti.

We have to be aware of the usefulness of Maya, and the great dangers to which we are exposed, were we to be its total victim. Read and dealt with a certain amount of detachment the truth of the matter is realisable. Honey is dear for its sweetness. But the bee exercises a disciplined detachment, and does not jump into the cup that contains it. If he does, he dies, because of uncontrolled attachment. The attachment, becoming a fetish, causes the bee's destruction. The celebrated sweetness of this world of life has to be tasted by the senses; but a comprehension about the role of Maya in objects of desire, and in desire itself, and of its role in the world outside of the realising personality, is essentially important in comprehending the role of Power, i.e., Energy or Sakti, gross or subtle, as manifested through conscious and unconscious centres of energy, like gods and living beings on the one hand, and atoms and the great spheres on the other.

Illusion and Mäyä, as we have noted, are quite different in concept. It is a fundamental mistake to accept Mäyä as Illusion. Since there is no word in the English dictionary to carry the full import of the concept of Maya, for the sake of convenience the word 'Illusion' is used. Through constant use now it has become an accepted form of translation; this causes more and more confusion. But unless the meaning of Maya is separately comprehended, the persistent use of the word Illusion for Maya would continue to create this misleading comprehension. Mäyä leaves no room for error at all. Mäyä is a 'reality', a positive entity eternally present in the world-drama, the primal moving La Belle Dame who beacons from further to further without ever being within our grasp.

A string is a fact; a snake is a fact. But to suffer from a scare that there 'is' a snake, and later discover it to be a string is due to a mental state. There could be a hundred reasons for this mental state. That is not our point in this context. What is important is the fact that the suffering from the scare has been caused by a non-existent snake, and an existent pre-knowledge of the harmfulness of a snake. This is an Illusion.

Mäyä instead of being non-existent, is ever-existent, except in the case of the Yogîs, who recognise 'Her' as Maya, as an aspect of the Mother- Power; and by recognising 'Her', pay Her the due homage without being involved into Her 'snare', as ignorant animals are likely to be, if they forget the nature of the 'snare', and are prompted by the inducement of greed or lust alone. Hunters exploit these weaknesses of animals; and make good their gains.

I love you; I consider this Body, this House, this Position, this Son, this Right to be My-Own. In other words I establish an invisible relation- ship between 'I', and all that exists outside of this 'I'. Some are my own. Some are not my own. The praises are my own; the blames are for others; the profits my own; the losses for others; the accumulations, my own; the dispensations, for others; beauty, youth, position, fame-all, all my own; ugliness, palsy, ignominy, defame for others;-this is the division that this I-ness develops. From this we develop our joys and sorrows. This is a relationship created by a 'fascination' which exists with- out being noted, perceived, seen. But it 'is' there. It is a fact. It is binding, crystallising, fascinating, causing suffering; but it 'is'. It is no illusion. It 'is'. The only redemption is to know the nature of 'I', and the nature of the world outside me.

Illusion misguides, but does not destroy completely. This one does, as she robs all of their sense of looking into things really. Maya is the moving, changing, forming, manifesting, attracting, detracting, moulding, unmoulding energy. In the concept of the Immensity of Maya's role in the Cosmic Immense-silence, there could be no room for anything else, not even of an error. Brahman, the Substratum-Immense, the Real, is innate with Mäyä, which as the moving Power, projects manifestations along with the part of Maya's role inherent in creation, in the manifested. Sages have offered prayers to Mäyä. Poets have sung to the La belle dame sans merci.

That is manifest; this exists; and this is perceived. The non-per- ceived's existence is subject to speculation. Consciousness relates existence to perception. Unconscious

perception does not exist at all. Consciousness for its operation has need for the sense-apparatus. Without sense apparatus no manifestation could be apprehended. Thus our sense-organs cause our personal nature; and nature conducts, even moderates, our personal sense-organs; and in doing so, makes us indi- viduals, as if we were moulded sets. This Nature, which is adhāra, or embryo of the Gunas, is Prakṛti.224 Thus Māyā in the microcosm is an outcome of A-Vidya (ignorance), or Ajñāna (lack of 'knowing') in the Prakrti of the manifested individual entity. To know' the nature of 'I' and the 'non-I' is to recognise Maya's pranks, and keep out of her toying mischiefs. Prakṛti is the Matrix, from where things are 'born'. Gîtā calls it 'Mahad-Yoni', (the Great-Embryo), and Panini explains Prakrti as 'Janikartuh' (performer of delivery, i.e., shooter of evolutes). Prakrti acts perpetually, non-stop, without rest; restlessness, or agitation is its chief spiritual attribute. In it the three Gunas seek their balance; but in manifested objects the three are always found imbalanced. Imbalance is essential for the projection of individuality. Imbalance is character. Imbalance discriminates, classifies and distinguishes. Imbalance getting to balance means the same as the agitation of the self getting to rest at peace.

Prakrti becomes Suddha, Pure, Perfect, although the quality of Māyā remains inherent in Prakrti's modulants and projections. Suddha-Māyā or Prakrti is pure agitation without tension; restlessness without imbalance; consciousness resting in knowledge. This could mean a state of perfect Samadhi, which is never the stillness of the dead. When the Hindu seeks Peace or Santi, he does not seek the dead-end of Nirvana.

Creation is born of the power of Will, the Will to know; and has for its nature, action, 'restless activity' as Goethe would say, 225 which is ever involved in the chain of action-reaction continuum otherwise known as the noose of Māyā. This veiled Power or Visnu-Sakti has three forms: (1) Parǎ, (2) Apara-kṣetrajña, and (3) A-Vidya.226 Our day-to-day action or Karma saturated by the baffling misgivings due to ignorance, is A-Vidya; but beyond this immediate power of Karma there exists a supra-conscious intellection which cuts through the external forms, and experiences the essential nature of things. The non-transcendent power of the intellect, which relates to cosmic knowledge, is the second category of Kṣetrajña. Beyond this intellectual cosmic realisation is a transcendental Power, all pervading and essensive, from which things are, but which is not the things in which all distinction cease; and pure-agitation in a

perfect state of balance retains its perpetual dynamism. This is the Para-Sakti. All the three are aspects of Prakṛti or Maya's moulds.

"She is the supreme Vidya and the Eternal Cause for liberation. Yet, she, the Guiding Spirit of the Lord of All, is the Cause of keeping the Samsara-cycle of continuum in a single chain."227 "Even the Creator does not know of her form. She is the unknowable, the endless, and the per-petual. She is the Oneness in the One, beyond Whom there is no Beyond."228

Mystery

Herein lies the mystery. The consciousness of mystery awes a man when he realises a force greater than himself, and yet beyond his comperhension. The realisation of this incomprehensibility about a power that is of some importance to his existence adds value to this knowledge; and he faces the challenge of knowing it. All awe commands reverence. Usefulness life adds value to a subject. A challenging situation provokes understanding with a Purpose of overcoming it. All this together adds to mystery which is valued, revered and accepted as a challenge to be understood and overcome. Religiosity as an attitude of life springs out of this spirit of challenge underlying the mystery of life.Religion does not only crystallise social customs. It also represents human aspirations and magnifies them finally to form a social conscience. Thus the cumulative effect of this conscience confers some obligatory responses on the individual who must practice even before understanding it. But a time comes when the onus of understanding too weighs on the customary practice; man faces the mystery of that Immense Force beyond comprehension. The very immensity leads him to further challenges. "Religion sums up and embodies what we feel together, and the price of that feeling together, that imagining together, the concessions, the mutual com-promises, are at first gladly paid."229 Sunahsepa paid it; Dadhîci paid it; Jesus paid it; Iphegenia paid it; Tantalus and Prometheus paid it. Sacrifice remains up-to-date a part of religion.

Eucharist and its mysteries, are closely associated with 'Sacrifice'. The Upanisads to speak of this 'togetherness '230 in religious, rites and mystiques. But religion does not answer the urge of the Mysteries. Mysteries belong to a spirit of supernatural enquiry about the supernatural phenomena, of which the most amazing one is the challenge to under- stand that which is beyond the common knowledge of man: that which

supersedes all knowledge. It porposes to perceive the Infinite not merely 'to influence the moral character of man. 231; but to bring home to man's consciousness a solution to what life is, and for what it is, and from where it is. It is actually a metaphysical postulate. Herbert Spencer empha- sises that metaphysical part in religion. "The existence of the world with all it contains and all which surrounds"232 has been a common factor of all religions.

This is the mystery-part of religion; this mystery-part is the subject matter of Hindu metaphysics. The Hindu calls it Mäyä. For his attempts at rationalising this mystery-part in religion the Hindu has remained misunderstood by those who are uninitiated to the cream of Hindu meta- physics; and Hindu metaphysics has remained a bundle of speculative volubility to many, whose mental prejudice as well as of the social environs prevent them to face the challenge of the mystery of comprehen- sion of the Māyā.

The mystery, the thing greater than man (call it superhuman or supernatural as you like), is potent, not only or chiefly because it is unintelligible and calls for explanation, not because it stimulates a baffled understanding, but because it is felt as an obligation. The thing greater than man, the 'power not himself that makes for righteousness', is in the main, not the mystery of the universe to which he is not yet awake, but the pressure of that unknown ever incumbent force, herd instinct and social conscience.233

The mystery of life has been a wonder to the seers of old.

All I know is of my body, a product of a father and a mother inside an embryo. But you are the actor, the doer, the cause and causer of the action, the material and spiritual component formed into the instrument of action; you are the intelligence based in the intellect; you are all movements in all moving bodies; the mother of all; besides whom there is nothing.234

This mother is the mystic Māyā.

You are the innate in the seed as Māyā, Oh Lady, carried away by the inner realisation of the sound seeds, and bestower of solid realisation as success. Abide, O, abide by me; make me thy abode; flourish in the secluded joy of ecstasy; the joy of Siddhi (Success). 235

Despite cynics and hedonists this mystery about the Immense will continue to absorb man's intense attention as long as the sight of an immense firmament with star-studded jewellery will continue to command the attention of man floating through an immense sea of a little support called a ship; as long as the lonely man on a horse will suddenly stop before a terrific cateract zooming down from an immense height amidst unaboded forlorn immensity of sky-skidding peaks of snowy mountain. We feel Immense, think Immense and enquire of Immensity only when we face Immensity. There could be an immense sight. It is Maya's Immensity. The profoundest of immensities is that Immense which resides within us, and which we face ourselves in our profound moments of loneliness. Sings the great prayer in Märkandeya Candî:

It is not very surprising that the One Supreme Lord, at the close of each cycle of 'disintegration-integration-disintegration', at the end of ages, rests in a stand-still sleeping state (when the power of cohesion too rests) is bemused in a state of sleep-of-reinte- gration known as 'Yoga-Nidra'. Thus does Mahāmāyā keep knowledge or expression veiled. She the Lady of action and generation, She the evolutor and the Matrix (as different from the silent Logos) prevents by Her own Will an easy access into the comprehension of Her Immensity.

Even the greatest of the seekers, filled with scriptural knowledge, gets deluded. Their conscious abilities are not adequate for break- ing through the mystery of this veiled Mäyä. She is the one that stirs activities to eject the manifest forms constituting the universe of the moving and the unmoving. Liberation for men is possible only at her Grace. (Else this Mahāmāyā stands as a great barrier to the bodied for realising the Joy unbodied, the Joy of arriving at the perfect stillness of the balanced state of the three Gunas.) 236

One Becomes Many

Thus the analysis of the One leads to the One's function of expressing the Self into many. This calls for Power or Sakti. The Iśvara and the Śakti together forms the Immensity known as the Brahman. This monistic duality, or dualistic monism, leads us to the Gunas which are three. Then Sakti's three states, Creation, Preservation and Disintegration, with the three Gunas, with permutation and combination project many entities. This perfectly metaphysical analysis of the physical crea- tion along with the

modes of consciousness, will and mental attitudes, leads to the basic hold of the Hindu thought informulating the various deities.

It could be seen that by now we have travelled a long way from the Vedic concept of the nature-gods, as from the concept of the one Supreme Divinity of which the Upanisads sing. The Samkhyan analysis of Matter and Mind, the Yoga-analysis of Mind and Matter lead equally to a single source of Balance and Peace, and single goal of liberation. The Vedanta's stand on monism has not been really violated by any of these systems. In analysing Prakṛti and Sakti, further evolutes came into our view. These required well-defined symbolic forms as reminders to the Sadhakas, or the seekers of liberation, and seekers of Peace.

Sadhana (Dedicated pursuit for ultimate success) calls for forms and rites; and rites call for Dharaṇā and Dhyana. Thus each of the evolutes coming from the concepts of Puruşa, Prakrti, Māyā and Guna became a separate spiritual entity known as 'deity'. The many deities which were thus conceived and perceived in their true forms gave Hinduism what is viewed as polytheism, which never lost sight of the Supreme knowledge of Reality, of the Transcendental immensity, or of the Brahman, the One.

Siva is this sleeping state of the One at the end of an age of creation going back to the sleep of inaction. Siva the Sleeping God, is also Śiva, the Good (Kalyana-mûrti), the Field of Grace and the static Field with- out action. Sakti, or Power, stirs this Śiva into action. The great schools of Saivic philosophy stand basically on this analysis (Nirnaya), or principle (Siddhante).

But apart from the rationale of the Siddhantas which intellectually respond to the traditional 'Systems', the charm of the Śiva Idealism had its very popular emotional appeal too. There are thus two distinct currents in Saivism: (a) the intellectual Advaita, and Samkhya con- formity; and (b) the emotional (Visistadvaita) and Bhakti conformity. One was the abstract intellectual metaphysical approach; the other was the fervent emotional approach of the faithfuls. We have noted the Systems and the metaphysics of Sämkhya and Vedanta. Before we come to the Saiva-Siddhanta proper, we try to learn about the emotional Bhakti view also. Only then we shall appreciate the pure Saiva Siddhanta. In other words we go from the world of Samkara to the world of Rāmānuja.

The chapter could be now closed with a rather long quotation on Hindu Polytheism from an article on the Vedic Exigencies by Shrimat Anirvan,included in the first volume of the Cultural Heritage of India (Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture).

"Vedic gods are to the Western mind a mystery, simply because they are gods and not a God. The logical mind playing with the idolum of numbers, here creates an antethesis between one and many, which is not, however, an inevitable psychological necessity. As a psycho-analyst shrewdly remarked, monotheism and polytheism are two counterpoises balancing the spiritual mind. If gods are pushed out, angels and saints immediately rush in to fill the pantheon. The interrelation between one and is a normal psychological function which works just in the same many manner on higher spiritual planes unless inhibited by a theological dogma. Individuals excluding one another in a field of many is a perception of the same sense mind, though even there the universal One-Many will be the substratum for the play of exclusion. Higher up on a plane, which may be called the Idea-Mind, the interrelation between one and many changes into a commingling and interpenetration in which the develop- ment of One into many becomes a fact of mystic experience. The Vedic theory of gods is based upon this perception which is only a sublimation of the normal functions of the mind. It is the One Existence (Ekam Sat) that is viewed as many (Bahudha); and beyond the One, there may be the Zero (Asat, Sunyam), or an Intermediate 'X' beyond numeration (Na-Sat-Näsat).

"There is a correspondence between the planes of perception (Citti) and the planes of reality (Lokas), a fundamental axiom of existence. The percipient is the real One; and if he does not sink himself into a spiritual solipsism, but freely rises into the scale of being, the corresponding planes of Reality also manifest themselves as his luminous self-projection in the form of One-Many. And then, in the spiritual idiom of the Vedic seers, gods are born as One and Many and All. The same phenomenon of expanding consciousness (Brahma) is described objectively in a symbolic language by the Vedas, and subjectively in an intellectual language by the Upanisads. They speak of a metaphysical realism in which One and Many do not clash either in form or in substance; and their theory of god cannot exclusively be labelled as monotheism, polytheism or pantheism, because it is an integrated vision in which all these isms harmonise. Since this was the vision at the root of all forms of Aryan mysticism, a Buddhist nihilism or a Vedantic monism (which are not to be confused with a-theism

or mono-theism) found nothing to quarrel with in a Theory of many gods. This is a phenomenon which naturally mystifies the Western mind, which will see in it nothing but a condescension to an ineradicable superstition. From the Vedic age to the present times, the visions of One Existence and many gods have lived harmoniously in the spiritual realisation of India's greatest seers; and unless one understands from actual experience how this has been possible, it will be futile to talk of a scientific and rational approach to the student of Vedic religion."

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4. तत् त्वम् असि (Thou art That).
5. अहं ब्रह्मास्मि (I am the Brahman).
6. नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः
7.Quoted by Jean Wahl, Article "Roots of Exis- tentialism". p. 6. Collected by Jean Paul Sartor.
8. Ibid., Paul J. Sartor on "Humanism of Existentialism".
9. Gita, V: 5.
10. Ibid., V: 4.
11.Heard, G. op. cit., p. 55.
12.(a) The Conqueror (over the flesh).
(b) Ten powers (the five senses and the five limbs for action have been mastered and used as sources of strength).
(c) Knowledge-that leads to success (in Yoga).
(d) Lord of Yoga.
13. Isherwood. Vedanta for the Western World, p. 81.
14.Ibid.
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16. Ibid., XVII: 2, Translation by Juan Mascaro (Penguin)
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48. Gita, XIV: 10, 23.

24. Ibid., IV: 34.
25. Ibid., III: 20.
26. Ibid., III: 21.
27. Ibid., III: 26.
28. Ibid., IX: 20-21.
29. Ibid., IX: 22.
30. (a) Valmiki, Rāmāyaṇa, Ch. VII: 87-90.
(b) Bhagavatam, Ch. IX: 6; 2-3.
31. Bhagavatam, VI.
32. Ibid., IX.
33. Davids, Mr. Rhys. p. 123
(Quoted by Dr. R. K. Mukerji in his Hindu Civili- zation, Vol. II, p. 149).
34. Mukerji, Dr. R. K. op. cit.
35. Ibid., pp. 41-43.
36. सनकश्च सनन्दश्च तृतीयश्च सनातनः ।
पंचशिखस्तथा ।।
-Tarpana Varidhih.
37. Mukerji, Dr. R. K. op. cit., II.
38. Census Report for 1931 (India), Vol. I, part I, pp. 257-369.
39. Bhagavatam, 326.
40. Samkhya Sûtra, I: 121.
41. Gita, IV: 5-9.
42. Radhakrishnan. Indian Phi-
60. Gita, (Radhakrishnan), p. 316.
61. Vayu Purana.
62.Skanda Purana, I: 1: 6.
See the image of Siva Lingodhava 13th Century Bassalt carving-New Larous- se Encyclopaedia of Mythology, p. 377.
63. लोकं लिंगात्मकं ज्ञात्वा लिंग
49. Ibid., XIV: 5-15.
50. गुणानां परमं रूपं न
यत्तु दृष्टिपथं प्राप्तं तन्मायैव सुतुच्छकम् ।
-Santi Tantra (Quoted by Vyasa Bhasya of Yoga Sutra).
51. Gita, XVII: 11.
52. Samkhya Sutra, V: 87-88.
53. (a) Gita, (i) VI: 19; (ii) XIII: 16; (iii) XIV: 11.
(b) Svetasvatara, VI: 16.
54. "Field is the plate or the flat space known in Śiva- iconography as Gauri-Patta, or the Yoni. This symbol- ises the 'Knower'. The Witness is Siva" (Author's Comment).
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56. (i) Scott, George Wiley. Phallic Worship.
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(b) Gita, II: 69.
(c) Svapna nidra jnana-lamvanam vá.
-Yoga Sutra, Patanjali, I: 38.
71.Yoga-Bhasya, IV: 9.
72.नेहाभिक्रमनाशोस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥
-Gita, II: 40.
73.प्रत्यक्षावगमम् – Ibid., IX: 2.

योऽर्च्यते हि मां ।

न मे तस्मात् प्रियतरः प्रियो वा विद्यते क्वचित् ॥

I have none dearer to me than the one who, consider- ing the manifested worlds as only my Index (Linga), symbol.

-Siva Purana I: 18: 159.

64. Compare Pythagoras and the Sûfis; especially, Jalal- uddin Rumi.

65. Gita, IV: 1-3.

66.Radhakrishnan. Indian Phi- losophy.

67. Compare Kant on 'ens nealissiunan'-

"If anything exists then an absolutely necessary thing must exist; therefore an ab- solutely necessary being must exist," History of Western Philosophy: Radha-krishnan, p. 736.

68. विशेषाविशेष लिंगमात्राणि गुणमात्राणि ।

-Yoga Sutra, Patanjali: II: 19.

69. Radhakrisnan. Indian Philo-sophy, p. 342.

70. (a) Nidra Samadhi-sthitah Popular hymn.

91. Or as Lao Tzu says: "He who knows does not speak; he who speaks does not know."

"He utters him for ever in ever-lasting silence; and in silence the soul has to speak to it."

-St. John on the Cross. "I keep my Mother as a pet secreted in my own heart, I look at her; she looks at me. Let none else know."-folk song of Ben- gal, sung by

74.Ibid., VI: 46.

75.Yoga Sutra, Patanjali: III, 49

76.Gitä, XIII: 27-28.

77.कौपीनवन्तः खलु, भाग्यवन्तः ।

Samkarācārya.

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80.Ibid., II: 50.

81.Ibid., II: 59.

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83.Amiel. Journals, 2 Jan. 1880.

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87.(a) Bharatiya Darsaner Iti-hasa (In Bengali) Dr.

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सत्त्वरजस्तमश्चैव गुणा स्तस्यैव

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96. Vāmā, the Mad (Vämä- Ksepa), has been a saint in Bengal (19th cent.) where his spiritual miracles left a series of legends even in his life time. The demented is cautiously re- garded in India.

97. Gita, V: 8-10.

98. आत्मा त्वं गिरिजा मतिः
सहचराः प्राणाः शरीरगृहं ।
पूजा ते विषयोपभोगरचना
निद्रासमाधिस्थितिः ।।
संचारं पदयोः प्रदक्षिणविधिः
मन्त्राणि सर्वागिरः |
यद् यद् कर्म करोमि
तत्तदखिलं शंभोत्वदाराधनम् ॥

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109. Katha Up., I: 3:11.

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111. Brhadāranyaka Up., IV: 4: 17.

112. Taittiriya Up., II: 7.

113. Chandogya, VI; XII & XIII.

114. नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यः – Upaniṣad.

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116. Brahma-Satra, 11:19.

117. Ibid., II: 1:32.

139.(a) Brhadaranyaka, III: 4:1.

(b) Mundaka, III: 3:1.

(c) Svetatvatara, IV: 6.

140. (a) Chandogya, VIII: 1:12.

121. (a) Brahma-Sutra, II: 3: 17-29.
(b) Mundaka, III: 1: 9. (c) Svetasvatara, V: 9.

122. प्राणेन गन्धानाप्नोति – Kauşitaki, III: 6.

123. Gita, VI: 23, XIII: 38.

124. Bṛhadaran yaka, II: 2: 14 and II: 1.8. Taittiriya, II: 5: 1.

125. Kausitaki, III: 8.

126. Brahma-Sutra, II: 43, 47.

127. Rg Veda, X: 90.

128. Gita, XV: 7.

129. Brahma-Sutra, II: 49-53.

130. Ibid., II: 4: 1.

131. Ibid., II: 8: 10.

132. Prana-Breathing-Inhalation.
Apana-Breathing-Exhalation.
Vyana Holding breath
when exerting the muscu-lar strength.
Udana-Belching the wind from lower reaches. Samana-Wind that helps in assimilating food.

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147. ध्यानाभासवशीकृतेन मनसा
तन्निर्गुणं निष्क्रियम् ।
ज्योतिः किचन योगिनोहि नितरां
पश्यन्ति पश्यन्तु ते ।।
अस्माकंतु तदेवलोचन
चमत्काराय भूयात् चिरम् ।
कालिन्दीपुलिनेषु यत्किमपि
तन्नीलं मनोधावति ॥
-Madhusudan Sarasvati.

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149. Gita, III: 8.

150. Aitareya Brāhmana, VII: 15: 1-5.

151. श्लोकार्धेन प्रवक्ष्यामि
यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।
ब्रह्मसत्यं जगन्मिथ्या
जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरम् ॥
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तोमारे करिबो राधा ॥
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dās (Bengali).
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भावे मनभोर ।
प्रति अंग लागि कांदे
प्रति अंग मोर ॥
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164.Mundaka, I: 3.
165. Ibid., I: 1: 4.
166. Ibid., I: 1: 5-7.
167. न वेदाः वेद इत्याहुर्वेदे वेद न विद्यते परमं वेद्यते येन स वेदो वेद उच्यते In the Vedas there is not Realisation; hence the Vedas cannot be called Knowledge. Veda is that by which
152. श्रीनाथे जानकीनाथे
त्वभेदः परमात्मनि ।
तथापि मम सर्वस्वः
रामः कमललोचनः ॥
- Rāmānujācārya,
171. Danielou, A. op. cit., p. 4.
172. Rg Veda, I: 164: 46.
173. Yajur Veda, XXXII: 1.
174. Atharva Veda, XIII: 3-5.
175. Ibid., I: 34: II: 1: 45: 2; I: 139: 11; III: 6: 9. VII: 28: i.
176. Rg Veda, X: 158: i.
177. Ibid, III: 9: 9.
178. यस्य वाक्यं स ऋषिः। यतेनोच्यते #aar-Nirukta.
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180. (a) Adityas: Amsa1;
Bhaga; Mitra; Jales-vara; Dhata"; Aryama; Jeant; Bhaskaras;Tvasta";
Pusana10: Indra and Visnula
(b) Rudras: Aja; Eka- pada; Ahirbudhanya; Pinaki; Sambhu; Apa-rajita; Tryambaka"; Vrsakapi; Hara"; Is-varalo; and Mahesuarall.
(c) Vasus: Dhruva1; Soma; Anala; Anila; Prat- yusa; Prabhava; Bhava and Visnus.
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183. एतत् वै रूपं कृत्वा प्रजापतिः

the Supreme isknown.-Śivasarvodaya.
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190. Ibid., IV: 17 (cf. Heb. V:14).
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192. Ibid., IV, 17 (cf. Heb. V:14).
193. Ibid., IV: 37..
194. Ibid., Mukta Sangah Samā-cara, III: 9.
195. Ibid., III: 9.
196. Ibid., III: 30.
197. Ibid., IV: 40.
198. Ibid., IX: 14-18 (cf. Eph. VI: 28 Acts X: 35 Ram II:
13-15).
199. Ibid., V: 8-10 (cf. Cor. X. V: 101 and Prov. XVI: 3).

200. श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनं ।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सौख्यमात्म–निवेदनम् ॥
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(b) Denssen, P. Outlines of Ind. Phil., p.

प्रजा असृजत । यदासर्जत् अकरोत् । यदकरोत् तस्मात सः कूर्मः ।
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13.

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228. Devi Upanisad, 26-27.

229. Harrison, Jane Ellen. The- mis, p. 487.

230. (a) Rg Veda, X: 191; 2-4. (b) Atharva Veda, II: 30: 6. (c) Taittiriya Upanisad, II: 1: 2; 1: 3: 1.

231. Natural Religions: Gifford Lectures 1888, p. 193.

232. First Principles (1875), p. 44.

233. Themis, op. cit., p. 490.

222. Ibid., V: 1, 2. (Translation, Radhakrishnan, The Principal Upangads, p. 815).

223. Gita, II: 69.

224. Ibid., XIV: 3; VII: 5; III: 27.

225. Faust, Restless makes the man, 230

226. Roy, Dr. T. C., Bharatipa Darsaner Itihas (Bengali), 290.

227. Markandeya Candi 1: 52.

234. काल्यापराधक्षमापण स्तोत्रम् ।

235. Nayika Hymn, Narada Se- quence; Sandhana Damara, XIII-Semkarācārya.

236. Märkanedya Candi, I: 49-51.

Chapter Five

Bhakti

I

Historical Forces on the Move: Migrations

THE GREEK advance towards the Eastern monarchies had displaced a number of nations Most of these had their own culture and religious life. The time span stretching between a thousand years before and a thousand years after Christ is filled with debris heaped from ruined civilisations. Most had been completely put out of existence.

Cities could be put to the sword and fire; buildings could be destroyed; but the people somehow survive. They look for new places and old rela- tions. It is remarkable that it was during this period that India had evolved a pattern of life and living which was neither totally in conformity with the Vedas; nor was it away from it. New systems were in the making. A new approach to Life and the Beyond called for justification for the changes. Thus evolved the vast metaphysical 'Systems' and the Upa- niṣads. The days of the Aranyakas and the Brāhmaṇas were gradually giving way to a nobler and more liberal thinking. The gradual evolution of a philosophy of universality and liberalism during the later half of this period suggest that the Indian mind had other reasons for getting out of the rigid demands of the Rg Vedic times, and preparing for an adjustment with changed and changing circumstances. Upanisads advocate liberalism and universal oneness.

There must have been strong reasons for this change. The political and military devastations of the Western Asian cultures made a flood of immigrations irresistible in the Indian subcontinent. During these years waves after waves of the immigrating populations and their faiths called for a review of the ancient ways of the Vedas. We shall be engaged with this study, and we shall note how the ancient Vedic way of life and religion was getting adjusted to a vast change that was forced on the Indian society. We shall study these religions and their vastly organised ways. The Western

religions were powerful forces for their respective cultures. This power was not something that could be easily given up.

Hinduism

We shall also note that these immigrations forced the Indian minds to evolve a new type of religious literature known as the Purāṇas, and compile a type of law books known as the Smrti. We shall see that the Purāṇas and the Smṛtis keep on adding and changing. The spiritual distinction of the Varnas became more complicated and more rigid, and took a turn for socially discriminated Jati, or 'caste'. In deciding Varna of persons an emphasis on purity of blood and heredity displaced the ancient fluid division of personal potentiality based on the Gunas and the Karma. Varṇāśrama Dharma was being gradually replaced by what is now known as Hinduism. The Aryan way of life, thus modified, was known as what we now know as Hinduism, the way of the Hindus, i.e., the ways and forms of the life and its ethics pertaining to the residents of the people living to the East of the Indus, or Sindhu. When we recall that it was during this period that two significant incidents took place, namely, the conquest of Western frontier of India by the Persians, and later, the conquest of the Persians by the Greeks, and when we remem- ber also that to these foreigners the people of India were known as the Hindus, we find it easy to understand that Hinduism was, to the eyes eyes of these foreigners, a particular way of life distinguished from (a) the way of the Oriental and Greco-Egyptian life; and (b) an entirely Varṇāśramic Vedic life of the period of the Aranyakas. Neo-Vedism that was born out of the old for the implicit purpose of accommodating the new people and the new religious ideas became by usage to be known as Hinduism.

In the Śraddha ceremony (funeral offerings for the departed) of the Hindus, a traditional prayer is offered, which exposes certain historical and social nuances of the situation above described. "The sages of the Naimisa forest asked the favour of RṢiYajnavalkyato expose to them, who were outside the Varnasrama Dharma the secrets of the Dharma". Then the prayer enumerates a long list of law-givers of this Dharma which is supposedly, to be strictly speaking, outside of Varnasrama Dharma. This phrase ".. instruct us (Varnasrame-taränän no) about the Dharma fit for the ones outside the Varnasrama" supports the fact of infliterations of new trends, which must

have caused the ancient way to undergo some adjustment in the interest of a growing and expanding community.

The new immigrants had their way of worship, and their gods. These we shall study. But the most important of the introductions was a changed way of worship through flowers, leaves, water and fruits. The Gītā mentions specifically that 'even if' this way of worship is followed, God accepts it, provided these are offered with Bhakti.2 This is the key word. We are coming across with this word, Bhakti, only after this historical time. We find that during this period a significant mass of Bhakti literature grew, and found acceptance. As distinct from the Vedic sacrifices this worship of images with Bhakti was characterised by an excess of mysticism and emotional togetherness with the deity. The devotee accepted God in his own image, and patched up a personal relation with him, and then dedicated himself to this god-idea taking the image to be an active actual deity.

The Siva Agamas, Tantra Agamas and Viṣṇu Agamas offer us a treasure-house of this emotively inspired Bhakti literature. So great was the influence of this mysticism of Bhakti that it influenced Islam (and continues as Sufism), and Christianity, and flowed through the emotive approach of the early Christians who considered Christ as a Husband, or a Father, or a Brother.

Therefore, this period, and the gradual growth of Bhakti, has to be looked into, in order to arrive at the subject of Siva worship. It was a form of religious dedication which evolved actually out of a certain course that the history of India, the Vedic culture and the Oriental life-pattern took.

Early Rites

According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Brajendranath Seal and Dr. Tarak Chandra Roy the six systems of Philosophy made their appear- ance and attained their respective forms, between the sixth and the fourth centuries B.C., a span of 200 years. years. This is a period exactly preceding the devastating Greco-Persian conflict, and the attacks of Alexander. But the systems actually grew on their commentaries which took another 1500 years to take shape.

But these hardly dealt with Gods and worship, except what later societies derived from them by inference. The literature of Vedic theological practices comprised mainly of

the Grhya Sûtras and the Brahmanas. These in their turn depended on the Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. Mimänsä as a system only justified the sacrifices and the Samskara, which, together, exhausted the Vedic ritualistic world. These were the famous sacraments, which still primarily and basically conduct the Hindu rhythm of life. Sacrifices, or Yajñas, have been prohibited in the Kali

Yuga, although no definite date for the start of Kali Yuga has been found acceptable to all scholars. If it meant the period following the date of the death of Kṛṣṇa Vasudeva, then it could be said that Vedic sacrifices did take place after that date. The Horse sacrifices of Samudragupta and Kharavela are the instances. There must have been other instances of less notable sacrifices offered by less notable individuals.

The present form of theological rites and worship of many gods in their innumerable temples and pilgrimages, the worship of hills and rivers and river confluences, the importance of lunar and solar dates, the importance of Gurus and Priests in their social roles, the importance of eclipses and the Purana-Vratas (special Penances as prescribed by Purāṇas) suddenly flooded the society, which must have undergone a deep change for some reason or the other. This was quite a new phase, a transformation of the Vedic into the Sanatanic Hindu system. This system included the Puranas and particularly the Agamas and Tantras. (We would do well to bear in mind that the changes and adjustments were in a course of formation during the period falling between the spread of Buddhism and the conquests of Alexander.)

Of the Upanisads the Svetasvatara alone suggests Siva Mahadeva as a God. The principal Upanisads, which according to Dr. Radhakrishnan developed between 8th and 7th centuries B.C. did not include this Upa- niṣad. And this is the only one that, amongst the principal ones, could be called a deistic Upanisad.

We note, along with the above, that during the Axial Era (of Karl Jasper) (200-300 B.C.) India too faced a challenge. Old traditions were put to challenge, and a New Man emerged out of the old. Sanatana- Dharma the traditional ways of life appeared to have bent its course, and the development of the commentaries and of the new Smrti's provide evidences of this new spirit of enquiry.

But orthodox tradition of Hinduism demands all 'new' to be but an epigenesis of the Vedas. As such the Sanatana-Dharma', even in its 'new' form, 'new' interpretation and

'new' treatment, compels the 'Systems' to relate to the Vedas of which the Rg Veda enjoys without the shadow of a doubt, to contain the most ancient of the Aryan thoughts.3

As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that row of books, which contains the record of the Aryan branch of mankind will belong forever to the Rg Veda.4

The Vedas enjoin worship of the 'Devas' (deities), like sun, moon, fire, sky, rain, dawn, water, etc., without their anthropomorphic forms. Presence of such Devas as different sun-gods, Pûşana, Rudra, Rbhûs.

Apsarās, Gandharvas indicate accommodation of local interests in the Aryans settled at different places. Ahura-Mazda of Avesta too could be traced to the great Asuras, who latter appeared as enemies of the Devas, but who originally were 'possessors of wonderful powers'.5 But in the Vedas, specially in the Yajur and Atharva the deities are not so important in 'Sacrifices' or Yajñas, as the technicalities of the entire process of the sacrifice, of which the Brahmana priests were the masters and supreme authorities. This supposed superiority of the sacrifical rites over the dynamism of human will and effort made the Gîtä make more than one oblique reference to the Vedic rites. In the Purāṇas many legends have been recited to indicate the superiority of the Brahmaṇas over the Devas. Moreover imaged forms of deities do not find prominence in Hinduism up to the end of the third century B.C.

The Antecedents of Hindu Ritualism

The 'Brāhmaṇas' codified the theological rites of the Hindus; whereas the 'Grhya Sûtras' set canons regarding the social functions and gradual development of man into an individual limb of the Society. This later included the Sacraments. According to the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa a man is born three times: (1) physical birth from parents; (2) spiritual and educational birth of conscience from Samskāras or sacrificial ceremonies; and (3) the post-physical birth in the world of the spirit after physical death.

The Aranyakas and the Upanisads offer to lead man's training from the physical social status to the mental and spiritual state. Initiation into it is supposed to be man's second

birth. His third birth signifies his spiritual extension of his soul after the body's demise. The emphasis on the growth of the individual identity of the inner man, and not on prayers to a family of gods and goddesses with their own conflicts and problems. Up to the stage of the Upanisads gods appear to have behaved well. No squabbles, sufferings, greed or ambition disturbs the heavenly beings. But suddenly the Vedic goal of 'heaven' appears to have been superseded by an idea of Cosmic Consciousness, and final Liberation from the cycle of birth. Svetaketu in Chandogya Upanisad clearly says, although he knows the Vedas, yet he is ignorant about the final knowledge of Truth. The Idea of the Brahman as the Ultimate Reality emerged in the Aranyakas and the Upanisads. The familiar Hindu Gods of the Purāṇas are as yet absent from the popular view.

Hiranya-Garbha is 'Jyotiśām Jyotih' (Light of the luminous) and not God, the Isvara, who existed prior to the World's being. Isvara is not as bound as Hiranya-Garbha is from which stage the world becomes an emerging potentiality. Iśvara (the potency), Hiranya-Garbha (the Germinal-matter), Atman, Paramatman are ideological entities, each having its characteristic as enunciated in the Aranyaka-Upanisad literature. But the explanations conform to the Vedas, to Yāska, Pāṇini and Sayana.

The Might of the Priestism

The subsequent Jaina and Bauddha movements swept away much of the Vedic Brāhmaṇism, and with it, the influence of sacrifices and the priests. The original Varṇāśrama-society got its severest challenge from Buddhism which did not entertain a priest-laden imbalanced exclusive society.

The reaction against priestism, led by the Buddha and Mahavira, indeed needed royal standard bearers to be effective against exclusiveness. The popular reaction against the position of priests, and importance of temples had in fact started in Egypt and Babylon, Assyria and Iran. Judaism against Egyptian polytheistic society is a case in point. Temple worship and temple cities as found popular in Rameśvaram, Dvārakā, Kanya Kumārî, Chidambaram, Kanchî, Madurai, Trivendrum, Trichina- palli, Pandharpur, Venkata-chala-Bālāji and many more temple-cities of South India, had been the characteristic form of the popular devotions current in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Mittani, Phrygia, Libya, Lydia, Media, Akkad, Palestine, Cyprus and Iran. Of these,

Egypt under Ramesis II and III deserves special mention. (Moses founded his One God Idea about this time.) The temple cities of Karnak and Luxor, the wealth of the priests tempted the Lybian attacks of 954 B.C. From 954 B.C. to 332 B.C. (except for the short period of 'Saite Revival' when Egypt had gathered up her ancient skill in science, medicine, architecture, sculpture, art and poetry, when she could defend herself well) her temple wealth brought on her repeatedly the wraths of Libya, Ethiopia, Assyria, Persia and finally Greece.

Only one human power in Egypt had excelled (the power of Ramesis II); and that was the clergy: here, as everywhere in history, ran the endless struggle between Church and State....The spoils of every war, and the lion's share of the taxes from the conquered provinces, went to the temples,-and the priests. These reached the zenith of their wealth under Ramesis III. They possessed at the time 107,000 slaves, one-thirtieth of the population of Egypt; they held 750,000 acres-one-seventh of all the arable land; they owned 500,000 heads of cattle; they received the revenues from 169 towns in Egypt and Syria; and all this property was exempt from taxation.... Ramesis III showered unparalleled gifts upon the priests of Amon, including 32,000 kilograms of gold and a million kilograms of silver; every year he gave them 185,000 sacks of corn. More and more people starved in order that the gods might eat.

Finally priests, unable any longer to check their power, grown on sup- port of popular submission, built on a mesmerised state of superstitious fear for heavenly reprisals and post-death punishments, found it easy to grab even the kingship, and cause an hitherto justifiable policy to suffer under credulous and senseless autocracy. The result was a general dehumanisation leading to an abject submission to superstitious fear and dependence on soothsayers. No nation can survive without confidence in self, faith in the Spirit of man, and an understanding between will and achievement. Degeneration followed; and the entire east fell under a series of onslaughts practically without any determined fight.

The conquerors themselves fared no better. In their turn they too had their own priestly orders. The temples of Acropolis, Delphi, Dodona, Paphos, Colochis, Crossus, Pergamum attracted both the devotees and the enemies of Greece. Within thirty years of Nebuchadnezzar's death Babylon had fallen to pieces. "The priests usurped more and more power and the temple treasures amassed more resources than the states" exchequer. "The wealth of the temple grew from generation to generation. Kings and

the common equally paid their homage and tutelage to the priestly authority by building temples, embellishing the accessories of the deities. With the abundance of wealth, excesses of passion got introduced into religious festivals, and a whole nation's youth became ease-loving, amorous degenerates. Lands, gold, silver, jewels, precious stones, silk, frankincense, ivory, rare-woods, all flowed into the temple coffers. The priests, of course, could not directly use or consume this vast wealth. They became money-lenders, capitalists, financiers of the nation. The greatest merchants of Babylonia were her priests. Although Marduk was the chief god, an official census checked 65,000 gods in the 9th century B.C.8 Every town had its own divinity to boast of. After making offerings to the supreme gods, every town, every village had to invoke its 'own' local god.9 Larsa had Shamash; Uruk had Ishtar; Ur had Nannar. The tradition is still followed indirectly in the Christian World where special saints, special churches, special phenomena sanctify a city. So is Jerusalem,

Mecca, Madina, Rome, Ajmer and Patna. The Hindus too have theirs. Varanasi, Puri, Kanchi, Madurai, Ujjain, etc., have their own reputed deities. There are 51 reputed places in India known for the 51 Bhairavas and Bhairavis, where the fifty-one Sakti Pithas are worshipped by devotees, specially by the Tantrics. The gods were generous enough to be a part of the society in which they were worshipped. In their appetite both for lavish food, sumptuous festivals and nocturnal visits to pious women seeking children, they were as generous and profuse as only gods could be.

In Assyria too it was the same tale. The great four cities which together formed the Assyrian State, Ashur, Arbela, Kalakh and Ninevah had their respective deities of which Ashur was the chief. The city was named after him. As a matter of fact the name Assyria came from the name Ashur. Ninevah's ruins, now excavated, go beyond 3700 B.C. This race of warriors were Semites, but spoke the Sumerian language. The Assyrian gods and goddesses rolled in ease, luxury and all possible sensuous adornments pompous and grandiose structural habitats and spectacularly impressive state-managed rites, were oblivious of the sources of incomes, and contemptuous about the petty wants of life and living of the millions of the starved devotees. Ashur, Sin, Samash, Bel and Ishtar were the great deities. Ashur was a solar god, only too happy to bathe in the blood of slaves and bonded prisoners; Ishtar had a special taste for young Endymions, and received the attention of those youths through the magic unions of virgins and young women representing her in person. Exorcism and omens formed the

major part of their religion. The role of priests being enjoined on the royal chief, the power of the state-temple and temple-state was absolute. Ashurbanipal's death in 626 B.C. brought an end to this violently bloody state. Only fourteen years were to pass, and the devastation of Ninevah and Ashur was so complete that when Xenophon with his mighty army was passing over the mounds of these cities he did not even know that a mighty monarchy lay in dust under the feet of his army.

The Phrygians who enacted annually the love-death and resurrection of the young and handsome Atys gave to the Romans the cult of Cybele. The Hittites grew in power enough to compel Ramesis II of Egypt to seek peace from them. Crete learned her crafts, especially the art of picto- graphic writings on clay-tablets from them. They were 'Aryans', and the Hebrites mixed with these Aryans enough to bear the Aryan features. Urartu, or Arrarat, or what later was known as Armania, gave another culture, another set of gods, all to pass later under Persian domination.

A tribe of Rajasthanîs in India known as Gaḍedias-live and die in wagon-formed groups of nomads. The name reminds the Phrygians who lived and died in a wagon-civilisation, and were known as Gordios. Their goddess, known originally as Ma, was later known as Cybele or Kabala. She was a mountain-dwelling reproductive spirit.11 The goddess could be best served through sacred prostitution, dedication of virgins and virginity to the temples. Such practices easily remind one of the love between Cybele and Atys, a youth born out of Nana's breasts. (In Bengal a popular snake goddess is worshipped, painted on round earthen discs very similar in motif to the discs unearthed in Mesopotamia (see Plate 18). The goddess is fond of snakes, and snakes are fond of her). Priests often held voluntary emasculation of males, a great sacrifice to the Great Mother, which, today, is faintly recollected in the rite of circum- cision. It is a pointed reminder of the religious offering of the holy Prepuce. The priests who presided over the ceremonies were themselves emasculated. (cf. the Caraka ceremony of rural Bengal, and the Muharram of the Shiahs.) The power of selecting the right person for sacrificing manhood to the temple-Goddess, even life, gave the priests unlimited rights over the people. "The Romans officially adopted Cybele into their religion, and some of the origiastic rites that marked the Roman carnivals were derived from the wild rituals with which the Phrygians annually celebrated the death and resurrection of the handome Atys."12 The Phrygians were removed from the scene by the Lydians. They too flourished around a priest-dominated society where 'by pious and unprecedented

hecatombs to local deities' Croesus (570-546 B.C.) expanded his power over the whole of Asia Minor. Herodotus says that Croesus was defeated by Cyrus of Persia.

Phoenicians, that great race famed in navigation and commerce, who used to round the Great Cape of the African continent thousand years before Vasco-da-Gama, who "bound together the East and West in a commercial and cultural web" were actually responsible, according to Dr. Durant, of redeeming Europe from barbarism. Their god Ba'al had a hundred lesser gods to rule. Ba'al or Melkarth is identified with Hercules; and the Phoenician Istar became the Great Astarte.13

This Ba'al did not have to die with the death of Phoenicia and Lydia. Drops of cultural traits percolate into contiguous cultures and become parts of succeeding generations. With the emergence of the 'Book of law' and the establishment of the temple in Judea, the Hebrews lifted themselves from primitive polytheism to an intensely intolerant, but sublimely creative monism in spiritual history.

Polytheistic religions, by nature, become catholically admissive and permissive. This is not the case with the monotheistic creeds, which gradually acquire a rigidity of purism. Their arthritic metamorphosis reduce them to find other types of creed abhorring, intolerable and derogatory. They become incapable of the democratic spirit of coexist-ence. The Jews as Bedouins were spirit worshippers. Rocks, cattle, sheep, caves, hills, djinns were familiar objects of reverence. The cult of the Bull was so strong as made even Moses despair of its elimination. Serpent-worship continued long after the killings by the Levites.14 The brazen serpent of Moses was worshipped in the Temple until Hezekiah (720 B.C.); Phallicism supplied the vigour of the Jewish approach to the divine. Ba'al was represented by conical upright stones which reminds the lingas of Mohenjo-daro. The principles of virility (as symbolised in the snake), and of reproduction were venerated by the Jews until the conception of Yahveh as the One national god became dominant over the Mesopotamian pantheon, and the chaotic state of deities of the Orient. But the Cannanite god Yahu claimed over a long period great reverence side by side with the Yahveh. This god of Thunder in the hands of the authors of Pentateuch became a good god to the good, but a fascist imperialist expansionist God of Hosts to those who violated, even questioned his authorities. No wonder religion became an instrument of statesmanship, and the Temple became the nerve centre of the Jewish people, with the priests wielding an all-in-all power. They retained traces of the Pagan devotion of human sacrifices, and self emasculation

through their own rites of the prepuce, and by continuing to circumcise. "Priests became a closed caste"15 like the Brahmanas. "15 like the Brāhmaṇas. They could not inherit property; but they were exempt from taxes, and enjoyed various other rights. But the foreign gods never really left the Jewish mental altar. Elijah, Elisha, John, even Jesus cried against the priests and their practices, the whoring kings and the clerical connivance in the debased life of the rich and the powerful.16 Gods and religions are known to have covered more guilt, than revealed the Truth. Gold, Sex and Power dominate man in and out; whereas Truth could dominate privately only the inner man.

Similar power of the clerics in the Iranian Empire made the Iranian temples places of attraction. The readers of the Atharva Veda find in the Avesta many of the similarities which make Ahura-Mazda and Zarathustra closest cousins of the Hindus. The Persian 'haoma' sacrifice has been identified with the Soma sacrifice of the Vedas; and the words Homa, Havana, Havi all of which as Sanskrt words form parts of the Vedic fire-rites are clearly derived from the same verb-stem-'hu'. The story of the birth and influence of Zarathustra has already been told in a previous chapter. His ways replaced the Magian religion of Mithra, which as a form of worship of the Sun-God bore phallic overtones, and never died really. Traces of Mithraism are found still existing in modern religions.

Like the priests of Babylon and Phoenicia, the Magi in Persia was all powerful. But Zarathustra's power lay in moral influence. As a religion Zarathustra's religion Zoroastrianism was splendidly humane, thoroughly ethical and disciplined, totally lacking in violence and the most spiritually advanced. But the preponderance of sex-urge granted the cult of Mithra and Anaita a second lease of life in the days of Artaxaraxes II. The great story of Mithra, dear to the Romans, supplied a basis to much adored Christian legends in general, and to the observance of Christmas in particular. The priests, thus god successfully around the spiritual purity of Zoroastrianism and made the temple-cults felt again.

Temple and priests, phallic rites and variety of sacrifices finally became Persia's greatly favoured religious forms.

Evidence of Migrations in the Pauranic Texts

When Alexander's army brought down this aristocratically biased, militarily feared and clerically influenced society, a large number of Mithraists must have scattered afar.

The Parthians, who were half- Greeks, retained and propagated decadent Hellenism in Asia. Hellenism moved to the shores of Abyssinia as well as to India. Thus spread Mithraism. When Islam made the next attack, Magi-traditions were violently eliminated from Persia. But a large number still migrated to India. Some of them were later to be known as Parsees. These, more or less, preserved a purer strain of Zoroastrianism, which, except for some far removed Northern parts of Persia, near about Hamadan, has been totally extinct in the land of its birth. Reference to the migration of the peoples of these parts to India is recorded in Khila-Harivamsa,17 an appendix to the epic Mahābhārata.

Rṣi Garga18, priest of the Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas, 19 accepted 'Śiva- penance' in order to multiply progenies. He was a worshipper of 'Pasupati'. He was received by the king of the Yavanas, and through the permission of the Yavana (Greek) King started a line of the Pasupatas there, who worshipped Siva. Kala-Yavana, the son of a Yavana girl sired by Garga, in course of time became an ally of Kamsa of Mathura and Jarasandha of Magadha, (all of whom had been Agama-Tantrics) and opposed Kṛṣṇa in his mission of protecting Aryanism. Kala-Yavana perished in that clash with Kṛṣṇa. In Harivamsa Kala-Yavana is found directed by Narada to fight the Vṛṣṇis and the Andhakas (both Kṛṣṇa- followers), with an army raised from his subject feudatories such as Sakas (Scythians), Tukharas (Turks), Daradas (Dard), Tanganas, Pāradas (Parthians), Khasas (Mongol-tribes), Palhavas (pallhavas of Persia), all of whom are described as Mlecchas, i.e. races of non-Aryan origin. The epic points out that in food, habits, dresses they had been alien to the Indian civilisation. This Greek attack forced the Mathura-Yadavas to migrate to the South of the Vindhyas, in Devagiri and Dvaraka. (The Yadavas of Devagiri were finally humiliated by the Pathan Chief Malik Kafur-1307 A.D.).

This phenomenal migration has been referred to in the same book in several chapters, 20 along with a reference to the acceptance by Kṛṣṇa and his followers of Siva worship which had made the Dänavas and the Daityas so powerful. The immigrants have been numbered at 60,000, and their colonies are stated to be spread over the Western Punjab, Kashmir with capital at Jammu,21 then known as Arka-Dvipa (land bounded by rivers where sun is worshipped),

According to Chapter 140 of Harivamsa these Aryans, who in the past had humiliated the Asuras, had to be avenged. Siva, the Bull-God and the lance-weilder, the opponent of Aryanistic Brāhmaṇism and Vedic sacrifice, had been their patron deity. But he too denied assistance to the Asuras for crushing the Brahmaṉas. "The Asuras who had listened to Siva's advice, and accepted the path of peace and understanding, and who had been accepted into the Brahmanical Systems, were blessed by Siva to obtain the same state after death as the initiated Brahmanas deserved."23 There could not be a clearer reference to the Asura, Assyrian or the non- Aryan immigration of an alien culture in India, with direct reference to colonies in Jammu, Kashmir, Western Punjab, Sindh and Kathiavad. The new law-books which accommodated the immigrants have also been mentioned. These works have been left by celebrated law-givers like Yajnavalkya, Sumantu, Jaiminî, Dhṛtiman, Jāvāli and Devala, 24 several of whom are supposed to be of non-Aryan descent, at least of non-orthodox descent.

In 'Satapura'-legend of Harivamsa, where reference is made to the restoration of Aryanism amongst the defeated Asura-colonists in the Sata- pura range, we come across with the story of the spread of Saivism. In form and spirit Saivism and its acceptance indicates a kind of syncretism. "Rudra has done us much harm" protested the Danavas,25 who penanced through their way for a successful score over Rudraism. But they were advised to give up their way, and make the best of their immigrant status, and give up belligerent antagonism.26 Out of the phallic virile orientalism attempting to gain a foothold in Hinduism an Agamic devotion, consistent with the Vedic past, had been taking shape.

It is clear that their respective ways of life and worship differed. The Asuras boldly claim their share in the Vedic sacrificial rites; their social rights of eating and drinking Soma along with the Devas; a right to share the natural wealth and spiritual knowledge; and a right to inter- marry. 27 This was refused until they were converted to the Vedic way of Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, who had been known to Kṛṣṇa. These claims led to the Satapura war. The propagation of races through intermarriage, and propagation of culture thereby, have also been referred to.28 The magical powers of these Magi vied with the skill of the Kṛṣṇa followers. But the spell of the greatest charmer Sambara was set to nought. Krsna's people prospered in subjugating the alien ways.

The entire legend of Sambara, Pradyumna29 and Aniruddha is only an extension of this trend. The story of migration and settlements and gradual assimilation of alien un-Vedic ways by a process of reformed education kept up the Asura forms, although the vicious objects and prac- tices of the Assyrian cults were not accepted. Other Purāṇas, the Maha-bharata itself, refer to these migratory sections of history. The Gîtā refers to the changed way of offering prayers which did not conform to the Vedic ways, and establishes the peace of accommodating 'different ways' through the current of Bhakti and Sraddha, dedicated devotion of the lover to the beloved, or of the inferior to the superior. "Even when one worships other Gods in accordance with rites unapproved by traditions, they are worshipping Me. Even if the formality of rites and ways of life appear to be extremely heterogeneous and non-conforming, because of one's complete dedication to me one should be regarded as good and cultured, holy and sage-like; because he is engaged concentratingly to an object of holy pursuit.' Both the verses of the Gîta suggest a new element of life and form entering into the traditional way. The 'Bhakti'-tradition was emerging in its full glory.

The Temple-gods Unsettled

These people, as noted already, had been unsettled by a series of devastating wars which involved Egypt, the Levant and the entire western and central Asian principalities. Waves after waves came to India for settling there, and the process continued. The cataclasmic changes in history found the Indian peninsula a convenient 'abode of comparative peace'.

Thus the most ancient religions of Western Asia ultimately reposed in a variety of gods spread all over Persia. The Sumerian gods were absorbed by the Egyptian conquest; the Egyptians, who for a very long time held the Eastern Mediterranean sea-board under their control also absorbed a motley of deities from a variety of people until Islam swept over all of them under a stern monotheistic fanaticism.

Babylon had accepted during the Phrygian and Lydian episodes the gods from Asia minor. These included the Gudea gods of the Hittites and Akkads, two of the surprise civilisations of antiquity. Babylon, which conquered and outlasted Assyria, Phrygia, Lydia, the Hittites and the Akkads, was in its turn swept away by the Persians, who swayed bet- ween the Vedic spiritualism of Zarathustra and Atharvan, and the dominating Mithraic cults (mentioned as the cult of Sambara and his Māyā, followed

by the children of Danu and Diti), of the past. Alexander came, and shook the very foundations of the Persian society. The Greeks who colonised in Asia were converted into Asia's great temple- creeds and found diversion in their festive and ornate rites. The Asian gods and temples which never lost their basic ritualistic modus operandi, however, were Hellenised in their names, sculptural excellence and imaging import. Many Greek deities like Hercules, Apollo and Aphrodite gained a niche. Echoes of Homeric legends could be heard in the Purāṇa-legends. But the map of religions in these parts was suddenly transformed in no time by the violent tornado of the Islamic invasions which took place still later. For a thousand years more the gods had survived, and cast their shadows East and West.

But the temple civilisation, the great religion of Mithra, Marduk, Maloch, Ishtar, Cybele, Ba'al with the powerful tradition of priests, could not just be set to oblivion and passed over for good. Archaeologists and western historians have again and again passed off this phase as something gone quite out of existence, leaving not a trace behind. This would be contrary to the nature of historical law of syncretism and sequences. The trends do survive, like Kṛṣṇa in Vrindavana, Christ in Egypt, under other names and assumed parentage. The impact of phallic rites, festivities, orgies, virgin-sacrifice, emasculation, holy-prostitution, promiscuity, splendour, drinks, dances, current amongst the teeming population of Asia had been too exhibitionistic, too sensual, too mystically attractive, too engaging to be entirely forgotten and given over.

Misery and poverty are the nurse-maids of popular religions. Lack of confidence seeks a father image. The powers of the priests on the credulous mind outlived the powers of the princes. The princes faded out; but the priests survived; and with priests, poverty too as a matter of course. The seen could be destroyed, but nothing destroys the unseen, of which the priests were the guardians, and the conjurors. But the multitude of the devotees, suddenly stunned, missed their familiar way to solace and supplication. What they received instead was a priestless, templeless religion of faith in one and only one god. The alternative offered by the conquerors was extinction.

Reaction on the Subcontinent

Hence we notice the sudden upsurge of a higluy emotionalised religious trend in the Indian subcontinent particularly during the years of the disturbance in Western Asia.

Between 539 to 330 B.C. the Western part of Asia was again and again shocked and raked; and within a thousand years of Alexander's conquest of Persia and Egypt Islam had swept the Western Asia clean of priests and deities.

"To refuse to take notice of the diverse and exotic elements in the Indian culture, and regard it as wholly, even mainly, the outcome of Vedism, or even of the more eclectic Purāṇism, is to falsify history. At the same time to isolate these elements, "30 and to emphasise unduly is to ignore the basic homogeneity of the Indian culture, "the product of absorbing forces that were in operation since the very dawn of history."31

Scholars suspect extra-Indian origin for the strange cities and people of the Indus Valley. The affinities of the Indus Valley culture with the Sumerian-Babylonian culture are found to be remarkably similar. Certain characteristics of the inscriptional picture-alphabets found on the seals of either places titillatingly tempt inferences. But nothing has yet areas is beyond any dispute. been 'proved'. Yet the existence of a steady contact between the two

Scholars also agree that the appearance of the Vedic Aryans, brought about a big change amongst these people, and in the civilisation of Northern India, which was predominantly Dravidian in character. The 'Indian-Man', as we know him now, emerged out of this three-pronged pressure brought through the centuries. By the fourth century B.C. Indian history took a shape from where the prehistoric had ceased to function, and the para-historic state of culture clearly emerged. The actual historic time could be counted from the rise of the Mauryas.

But even before the Mauryas the blood, speech and culture of such language groups as the Austro-Asian Nisadas, the Mongoloid Kirātas, the great subcontinental Drāviḍas and the Nordic Vedic Aryans had got mixed up. The Western entry of the Dravidas, the Eastern entry of the Mongoloid Kirātas and the North and North Western entry of the Aryans has been accepted by scholars of Anthropology and philosophy.32 32 The subcontinent of India today represents a highly Dravidised population with a highly Dravidised culture into which various other cultures had come to find a home. The Dravidians ritualised and civilised the present form of Hinduism as current in India; and the Aryans idealised and academised the population through their language, and through the philo- sophy of the Varṇāśrama. Hindu India today appears to be a

combined achievement of the Austric and Nordic traits reaching through the Drāviḍas and the Aryans. This Hinduism includes, of course, Brāhmaṇ- ism, Buddhism and Jainism. Althoughethnicallyspeaking, India is the least of the Aryans; yet spiritually in India the Aryan spirit has reached the pinnacle of human concept of Oneness in diversity, Ekah Sat.

This cultural retention and development of a continuous strain of Aryanism in India, and in Hinduism, specially, has been possible due to the inner message the Vedas and the teachings of the Upanisads. The bold identification of the Spirit of Man with the Universal Spirit of some Ultimate Reality is a transcendental achievement worthy of perennial homage. This special attitude of the individual man towards the Univer- sal Man enforced on the Indian mind a spirit of accommodation and assimilation, which was accepted as a corollary to this Spirit of Universal- ity, and enshrined in the Hindus' highest religious goal.

This tradition, as we have seen, was forced upon India by the run of History operating in the neighbouring countries, and around the Northern Arabian sea-board. The ethnic intrusions and military aggressions of the peoples of these areas made culture after culture fall victim to ever-new attackers. Hittites, Akkads, Sumers, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Scythians, Parthians, Hûns, Sabaras, Dāmaras, Mongols, Abhîras, Persians, Gurjaras, Kuṣāns--all these races and cultures, some of them directly, and some of them remotely, left their imprints on Indian culture, religion and Hinduism. The direct influence of the gods, Mantras, charms and superstitions of the Babylonians, Greeks, Scytho-Persians, Kuṣānas, Hûṇas and Gurjaras, etc., stamped permanent imprints on religion, language, geography, garment, alphabets, literature, rites and manners of the life in India. Customs, traditions, commercial practices, temple-forms all together evolved a new people and a new ideology, viz., the Hindus with their celebrated spirit of toleration, a spirit which the proud exclusive Aryans never condescended to moderate.

Most of these foreigners lost their identity totally, and became part of the Indian life-stream. Law-givers provided for the inter-marriages, and new caste-forms were recognised within the folds of the Kṣatriyas, Brāhmaṇas and Vaisyas. Yavanas, Pāradas, Kirātas, Šakas, Palhavas, Cînas were recognised as Ksatriyas; the Persian

Magi were recognised as Maga Brāhmaṇas; Daradas and Khaśas were degraded from Ksatriya rank to Sûdras due to their ways and tastes. All this was not always smoothly done with grace and ease. The Smrtis of the period betray the complex agony of a rigid caste in the process of getting fitted into a new challenge.33 The strictly Brāhmaṇical way lay through the Smrtis. The Smrtis of the period show how the conflict shook the social structure, the Brāhmaṇical reluctance and the historical compulsions were at war. This was indeed a slow process, but it came to be gradually modulated by a vibrant, and mystically spiritual movement known as Bhakti. Bhakti and its credal importunities acted as a catalytic agent to mould the diversities of national characters and spiritual contents into a single unit known as Hinduism, which, by adjusting the new, made the immigrant creeds a functional part of the ancient Vedic traditions.

II

Emergence of Bhakti

The evolution of polytheism in India despite the cultivation of the Upanisadic ideal is baffling to the sympathetic, and abhorrent to the monistic fanatic. How a people dedicated to monistic ideals of the Spirit could be indulgent to all sorts of possible and impossible, fantastic and ridiculous images of apparently untenable spiritualism has amazed many.

But the initiate in the spiritual contents of the Vedas and the Upanisads, and the students of Indian history bear with this apparent irreconcilement. The Vedic people of India had moulded themselves into a highly cultured and tolerant society. The lessons of the Buddhistic protest assisted these people to learn by humility and brotherliness.

The fundamental trait of this (to wit Indian) civilisation may be described as a Harmony of Contrasts, or as a Synthesis creating a unity out of diversity. Perhaps more than any other system of civilisation, it is broad and expansive and all comprehensive, like life itself, and it has created an attitude of acceptance and under- standing which will not confine itself to a single type of experience only, to the exclusion of all others.34

The extent of this 'attitude of acceptance and understanding' is not ordinarily realised by those who just accept the six-systems and the Agamas and Nigamas as taken for granted. They feel that these have been the out- come of an ancient Hindu heritage; and

do not go into the detail as to how the Vedic India was transformed into the Classical India of the Systems, the Purānas, the Agamas and Nigamas. Yet it was undoubtedly a great transformation; a momentous and phenomenal change in the mental world of a people based on traditions. The Vedic Tapovana grew into the classic urbanised culture. It was during this transforming phase that the sacramental and sacrificial rite of the Aranyakas and the Brāhmaṇas grew into the tropical wilderness of ritualisms, pilgrimages, temple worship and Brahmanisms; the Vedic Varṇāśrama Dharma grew into a rigid, conservative, sectarian caste system; the simple classical of the original Upanisads and the model of the Manava-Dharmasastra developed into a gothic cathedral-like mass of more than 200 Upanisadic treatises, each advocating regionalism of thought and sectarianism of opinions, and several Dharmaśāstras positioned themselves for defending such new situations in cultural transformation as evolved from time to time through forces of history. The laws included new marriage and fuminary rites; new land and inheritance laws; a new outlook on matriarchy in addition to patriarchy.

The Indian culture prior to 600 B.C. was a far cry from the Indian culture after the 500 A.D.

In discussing the sphere of influence of the various Eastern cultures and their inter-communications Dr W. G. de Burgh traces the hold of the Oriental civilisations on the Greeks as far back as 1400 B.C.35 He accounts for the decay of the Cretan and Mycenean cultures to an Indo- European speaking people from the North of the Babylonian Valley. These men were better equipped in arms and knew the use of iron. He, however, does not specifically mention them as Aryans, but these people were responsible for the decay of the brilliant culture which survived in Greece. Minoan religious traditions centering round a goddess survived as a popular religion in the seventh and sixth centuries. Rich commercial cities tempted the covetous Hittites, who became supreme in the second millenium. These in their turn were dislodged by the Cimmerians from the Black Sea shores; and they were driven out by the Scythians.36 In the 6th cent. Lydia stood as a neat little state between the Orient and the Aegean West. But in 549 Cyrus, known to the Hindu Puranas as Karuşa, destroyed the little Kingdom. Iranians became supreme. Their gods threatened the gods of Greece, Asia Minor and Babylon.

In prehistoric times a branch of the Indo-European family had left their primaeval home in the steppe-lands north of the Caspian, and migrated to a south easterly direction, some passing through the Khyber Pass into the Punjab, while others settled in the East of the great Iranian plateau. Early in the second millenium, these Iranian tribes (they called themselves Aryans, whence the local names Aria, I-ran are derived) moved westwards the highlands that fringed the Mesopotamian and Chaldean plains. A thousand years later we find Medes to the south of the Caspian, Parthians in Khorasoan, Bactrians on the Northern slopes of the Hindu- kush, and Persians in the mountains that overhang the Persian gulf in the North-East. The Hindukush and Solaiman ranges formed a natural barrier for India. But the Aryans brought with them the horse. They also brought with them a distinctive religion, which contrasts strikingly with that of their Semetic neighbours on the plain. It differed also, despite a common groundwork that has maintained itself with astonishing persistence amongst the Persians to the present day, from that of their Aryan kinsmen in India. "While the Indian faith subordinated all other divinities to a single supreme god, Iranian religion presented dualistic features.37 Their pantheon grouped itself round two sovereign powers, one of good, a positive creative force, the source of light and life, the other of evil, the negative force of darkness and death, who were called Ahura- Mazda (Ormuzd) 38 and Ahriman.39 In oriental empires subject peoples preserved their local religions, customs, and institutions in entire freedom from interference by the central government."40

The influence of the history of the Iranian empire on the migratory settlements in India, with the subsequent changes in the religious life and literature of the Hindus, is thus clearly definable. The influence of these great changes ranging over more than a millenium inevitably brought about a complete transformation of society which called for a spirit of tolerance, which was neither known to the Vedas, nor to the oriental cults accustomed to armed conflicts and brutal conversions. The circum- stances of history were tampered by the new mind which had evolved through the progress of the Upanisadic Man, who found one in all and all in one, and who cried Isa-väsyä-midam-sarvam (All this is but One Lord's)41 and who sought after 'Totalityaq or Bhuma'. (Joy lies in posses- sing total; fractions contain no joy.) 42 The accommodation meant accom- modation of gods and men, marriages and funerals, ceremonies and rites, festivals and songs, gods and priests, food and manners, dress

and architecture, scriptures and literature. The emigrees became immigrants; the immigrants spread colonies; the colonists became families; and the families became part of the nation.

Such a synthesising force had to be authorised by special codes which were made by Smrtis; by special philosophy, which was provided by the Upanisads, the Systems and the Puranas; and by a totally reoriented out- look, which made little restrictions. It opened wide the door of welcome into the fold of Indianism, which developed, in contradistinction with the Vedic way, a new way of life. The chief spring for this way of life was Bhakti, Devotion, which in its emotive urging became more dyna- mically disposed than the pacific intellectually meditative and contempla- tive way of the Upanisads.

The importance of the contribution of Bhakti in synthesising the various conflicting alien issues has yet to be fully evaluated. Bhakti, side-tracking the conflict of the Caste System, succeeded in bringing Man in the open, recognised the intimate relation that exists between Man and his Spirit. It substituted the subjective mystique of Vedic spiritualism by an objective mysticism. Great writers combined to write a vast literature of poetry for emotional fulfilment. An area of ecstatic delight immediately transformed the being into a non-existing entity of thrilling joy, and the unbodied and the transcendental became a source of joy to the common man. A tranced state of para-consciousness made the common man seek the lures of Bhakti as a ready-grace of the High-Spirit-Sublime descending in the tortured minds of ordinary mortals.

Mithra Worship and the Magas of India

Of the various old gods of the orient and the Central and Western Asia areas which found permanent niches in the Hindu fold under Bhakti's edifying shelter, Mithraism could be quoted as an example of brilliant syncretism.

It is a historical fact the Zoroastrians or Zarathustra-followers came to India both by the Northern routes and the sea routes. These were led by the Iranian priests known as the Magi. These Magi as Maga Brāhmaṇas and Maga Dvijas, introduced Mithra worship in Hinduism. It was accepted as Sun worship. Bhavisya Purana speaks of Samba a son of Kṛṣṇa, erect a Sun Temple at Mitravana on the Candrabhāgā (Chinab).43 Bhaviṣya Purana mentions something more. The Vedic Brāhmaṇas

refused to fall in for the 'Mihira' cult, because of which priests had to be imported from 'Sakadvîpa' (the Scytho-Persian lands of the Sakas). These (Jaragambo, Jalagambu, Jarasastra) were the Maga- dvijas, the Magi descendants of Zarathustra. The Bhoja-Yadavas and Vrsnis (both of Krsna's immediate blood ancestors) were intermarried with these new priests through their daughters.44 These were the later Bhojakas who gave rise to a new language of the Bhojas. Zoroastrian manners and forms are traceable in the Bhojaka Brahmanas or Maga- dvijas. Hiuen Tsang mentions a Sun temple in Sambapura or Mûlasthān (Multan); Polemy mentions Maga-Brāhmaṇas in Southern India (Brach- manai Magoi); Bālāditya grants land to Suryamitra Bhojaka for building a sun temple:45 in Gaya a highly cultured Maga Brāhmaṇa colony existed.46 Their descendants are known today as the Gayālis, experts in the rites relating to the departed souls. The legend of Gaya, the Asura in the Purānas significantly records this syncretism. The presence in Orissa of a sun-temple at Konarak, of a township known as Sambalpur, of the famous temple of Jagannatha, and of a reputed place like Vaitaranî together with the Colonies in Orissa of the Miśra and Acārya Maga Brāhmaṇas and Pûjārî Brāhmaṇas who later took to Vaisnavism, reminds of Maga influence in these parts.

India owes much of her Astronomy, astrology, Graha-pûjā (planetary propitiation), use of the zodiac, to the Magas; Varahamihira (375 A.D.) himself a Maga, states in the Vṛhat Samhita that only Magas should make the Sun-images, and have the rights to instal them in temples. Kriṣṇadās Miśra in his book Maga-Vyakti speaks elaborately of the Maga Brāhmaṇas. The Miśras of Radh Bhûmi (in Burdwan, Midnapur, Orissa and Andhra) are traditional worshippers of the Sun temples, of Jagannatha Swami and of the Siva-lingams. And the word Miśra which means a 'mixture' (of two 'Brahmin' bloods) also could refer to Egyptian traditions of Isis and Osiris, because Egypt is also known as 'Misr'. (The words 'Chini' for sugar, and 'Misri' for candy as used in Hindi respectively mean Chinese and Egyptian methods of crystallising cane-syrup.) These Brahmins, and their Maga traditions, through the Chola-influence went to the Arakans, Cambodia, Campa, Khmer, Java. In all these places Sun and Śiva temples abound, as do the priestly class associated with (a) making of the images of the sun; and (b) installing them. This monopoly appears to have been extended to the

installation of the Linga mûrti of Siva also. Kambojas were originally residents of the North-Western frontier of India and of Afghanistan. According to Buddhaghosa they belonged to the Pārasaka Varna or to the Iranian-priestly order. The Palas of Bengal were subdued by these Kambojas. Sûra Miśra's Jagannathprakāśaka is a special law book (Smrti) where the Kambojas are treated with special elaborations. The temples of Khmers at Campa-Camboja (Cambodia) illustrate the impact that the temple civilisation had made in the regions spread from the banks of the Euphrates to that of the Candrabhāgā, Ganges and to the far away Mekong and the Tonle Sap.

Besides the significant introduction of the Magi as Magas in India, and with the Magi, of the worship of Mihira (Mithra) as Sun and Visṇu, there is another significant point worthy of notice. This refers to the very making of the image of the Sun-God. Before the Sun image was Indianised, his image represented him as a Northern warrior of Persian descent. The deity as found, is entirely mailed in a metal long-coat, and trousers that cover even the toes; he has a girdle which as Avyanga (Aiwyaonghan of the Avesta and Kusti of the Modern Parsees) is elaborately traceable on the Konāraka Sun-images, and later on the Visnu images also. (The Jangama Saiva people who wear the 'Sacred thread', wear in fact the Avyangas similar to the Sacred threads.) This Persian-Kushan 'Mailed' Sun-God later emerged as the great Visnu with a bird for his chariot. The bird sign reminds one of the Sumerian and Assyrian winged gods now unearthed in the ruins of Nimrud and Khorsabad (400- 800 B.C.).

Other Emigrees

The Greeks too came to India to colonise and reside. Patanjali Mahābhāṣya and Gargî Samhita refers to the Greek stay in India. Milinda-panho, a Pali work, is composed by Meandes, a Greek. Helio- doras, another Greek became a Vaisnava and dedicated a Viṣnu Temple. Many of the Greeks accepted Hinduism and changed their names. They, of course, found in Bhakti a half-way house between the licentious and erotic excesses of Hellenism and Orientalism and the stoic puritanism of the true Vedic form.

But the Romans had no imperial designs like the Greeks. They satisfied themselves by remaining mostly as traders; but the Abhîras (Ptolemy's Abiria or Aberia of the Periplus), a nomadic tribe humiliated Arjuna by molesting the Yadava women. The Kalachuri-Cedis belonged to the tribe of the Abhîras. These Scythians who came to

India earlier established a kingdom in 249 B.C. They were powerful enough to send embassy to the Sassanian King Narseh on his conquest over Varhram III.47 Abhiras were completely incorporated in the Hindu castes. Kṛṣṇa him- self was supposed to be brought up amongst the Abhiras. (No wonder Vaisnavism retains tribal traits and tribal followings. They gave us the Apabhramsa dialect of which Bhojpuri became a later form. Kṛṣṇa's frolics with the Abhiras, Abhiri Raga in music, and the popular Abhira sub-caste of India, substantiate the perfect integration of these Northern Persian tribes into the Hindu fold. The Kusanas, a central Indian people, became permanently a part of the Hindu Ksatriya families, and the Hûṇas, who as rulers of Malwa and Madhya Pradesh, later became so Hinduised as to have even changed their names to fall in line with the local Hindus. Hûna coins show them using Sanskrt language, and worshipping the bull, and Śiva. The 'trimûrti' of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Mihira is represented in a seal belonging to a Hûna chief.48

Strange alien sounding names in Indian history such as Mihirakula, Avälla-devi, Nahapana or Chastana gradually gave way to familiar Sanskritised names as Rudradaman, Rudrasinha, Jayadaman, and accepted as royal Kṣatriyas. The Paramaras and Chauhana Kṣatriyas of today claim their descent from the great Hûna families of Cedi.

Gods Rehabilitated

This kind of synthesis enjoined on the social law givers the enactment of new liberal law books. A new religion too had to emerge out of the Vedic Samskāras, and Varnāśrama Dharma. This evolved and compelled the emergence of a completely new kind of Hinduism in which temple, priests and images had to play a dominant role. Gone were the days of Tapovana sacrificial fires; of the hermitage-civilisation. The imperial ways that flourished in the Western Asian civilisations found these entries into the Dravido-Aryan subcontinent, and pushed back the Vedic sacri- fices, Brāhmaṇical Samskāras and Upanisadic Monotheism. The gods of the foreigners came to stay in India under the covering umbrella of the Vedic gods. The Puranas, the Mahabharata and the Gîta refer to this change from Ghee and Animal sacrifices of the Aranyakas and Sutras to the worship (upāsana) with water, flower, images and symbols. Chandogya Upanisad, the Gîta and the Purānas such as Garuda, Vayu, Hari-

vamsa, Bhagavata, Visnu and Märkandeya refer to these changes, and at times to the opposition of the Brahmanas such as Vasistha. A set of new authorities (known as the Fifth Veda) the Purāṇas, were being written to accomodate the various immigrants who embraced the religion of the Vedas with modifications that made it possible for their gods and forms to be accepted by the growing family of the Hindus. Mithra's transfor- mation as Mihira, and then as Sun-God, and even later as Visnu, who had been related to the Vedic Indra is illustrative of the process. So Garutman became Garuda; Rudra became Śiva; Brahma became Agni, and Varuna, Vayu, Aśvinîs each became transformed into images which actually echoed the forms which had been popular in the forgotten civili- sations of Western Asia. The adoration of Skanda and Siva by Baṇā- sura of Sonitapura, and his conversion to Vaisnavism by Krsna is a case in point.

Ecstasy as an Experience

Thus emerged the Bhakti cult. Its blazing zeal, emotive devotion ushered a new phase in the long history of spiritual experiences of India. It was the sublimated form of the cultish frenzy and erotic orgy of West- Asian Paganism. This was novel. This was a re-dedication; a trans- formation; an entry into a new history. Neither the Vedic sacrifices, nor the Aranyaka rituals, nor the Upanisadic soul-search, nor the nihilistic self-immolation of the Jains, nor the abnegated piety of the Buddhists, nor the Tantric esoterism and mysticisms: none of these has to reflect anything even nearly as eloquent, as personal, as beautiful, as sweet as the emotionally inspiring and satisfying stirrings of Bhakti.

Yet to Bhakti, as to a crucible, are brought together all the principal elements of each of the forgotten and contemporary traditions. Those who have studied the greatest of the Bhakti treatises, the Agamas, the Sangamas, the Bhagavat Gita, the Puranas (specially Bhagavata and the Viṣnu), Narada Sutra, Narada Pañcaratra, Sandilya Sutra, etc., discover the claims made by the Bhakti scholars that the Bhakti Sûtras too, like the Vedic literature have contributed to the process of transcendental experi- ence through ecstasy. As such the Bhakti Sûtras have significantly added to the treasure house of Indian spiritual forms. Although the cult of Bhakti developed with its emotive content from out of the people, although it crystallised certain historical demands, it would be wrong to consider it as an entirely disconnected innovation apart from the

age-honoured orthodox systems. The contributions of orthodox authorities are inherent in Bhakti, which as a fruit conserves the creative properties of the bud and the blossom, the pods and the pollens. The Vedas speak of Śraddha, and the Upanisads speak of Upasana both of which are inherent in Bhakti. The immediacy of the outward form need not misguide the mind and consider it as un-Vedic and non-Hindu. Rather, it has to look for its inward contents. In Bhakti lies stored the sublimity of the Vedic rites and ceremonies, and all the other different phases in the spiritual experience of the ancient culture of India. And to this had now joined the elaborate ceremonials of the Magi, and what the Magi had absorbed from the past cultures of Western Asia.

It is true, however, that Bhakti in its present exuberence first germi- nated in the deep South of India, in Dravida (Kerala and Tamilnad); it was encouraged in Karnataka, Orissa and Bengal. It continued to hold some sway in the Gangetic plains. But its hold on the North Western parts of India, was rather feeble,49

Despite this historical survey of the innate relation existing between the continuity of the indigenous, the Vedic and the later Oriental cross- currents of religious ideas in India, despite the inter-relation of these different religious trends that have grown and inter-grown into the gigan- tic and confusing mammoth body of Hinduism, it would be erroneous to get carried away by the inflated claim that Hinduism, and the Hindu gods are mere non-Indian importations. The Bhakti-basis of Hinduism, be it noted, had been inlaid both in the Vedas, and the Upanisads. If there is any relation between the Tamils and the Phoeni- cians, if there is any relation between the Phoenicians and the Oriental cultures, if there is any relation between the Oriental religions and Hinduism, then we could easily insist that the beginnings of the Bhakti way of transcendentalism were deeply rooted in the ancient Tamil litera- ture and Dravida traditions. Nothing is totally new in history; and without a traditional continuity history becomes paper-blossoms floating on water. Although they caused an upsurge and a reorientation, these foreign trends did not actually contribute something entirely new to the Hindu tradition. Bhakti was always regarded as a way of spiritual approach in the Hindu tradition. History changes; and changes make history.

Neo-Brahmanism: The Magi-Magas

The Varṇāśrama society met a challenging situation. The challenge unleashed a current of intellectual activity resulting in a vast literature relating to social laws,

sacramental and ritualistic reforms and justifications of the changes through a series of well narrated legends, which still belong to the proud heritage of the Hindu myths. The law-givers had hardly any choice but to provide for the absorption of the immigrating mass into the main stream of Indian Aryanism. These Hindu law books (Smrti Grhya Sutra, Anusasana) reveal the nature of the impact. New law-givers such as Yajnavalkya, Sumanta, Jaiminî, Jävälî and Devala are mentioned by name in Harivamsa.50

The new society applauded the Austro-Vedic Brāhmaṇism, and attempted to curry favour with them. The greatest influencing factor, of course, was the Priests. The foreigners too had brought with them their own scriptural injunctions and traditional rites. The keenness with which they would safeguard their respective forms is understandable. Colonists form the most diehard conservative groups regarding their past traditions.

Their priestly class was known as the Magi. A new type of Brahaman class was supplied by the Magi. Steeped in ritualisms of the Austro-Vedic class, versed in the Iranian and Babylonian forms, the Magi brought to India a new kind of Literature, the chief of which is the famed Brhat Samhita by Varaha-Mihira. Bṛhat Samhita lays down rules for temple architecture, image sculptoring, and astrological calculations for finding

out propitious dates and times for various kinds of rites and undertakings. Life in Bṛhat Samhita is interlacingly bound up with stars and their progress. Sukra Smrti is another book. It is related to RŞi Angiras. It deals with assimilation of races, spells, chants, architecture, metallurgical castings, handicrafts, specially sculpture and medicine. A comparative study of the legends relating to Angira, Sukrācārya, Jamadagni, Yajnavalkya in connection with the compilation of Taittirîya Samhita and Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, and the legends relating to Jaratkaru, Astik, Jaigiṣavya, Devala, Viśvāmitra, Kapila, Pulastya, Pulaha and Diti as given in the Purānas and the Mahabharata, makes one suspect the conflicts and solutions of a fast-changing society.

A neo-Brāhmaṇical movement was substituting the Vedic society and its blood conscious forms. Threatened by a possibility of complete extinction of identity the Brāhmaṇical autocracy grew itself into a well knitted exclusive force, which on the

one hand made little of Vedic res- trictions, and on the other attempted to clamp further binding rules on the society. The priestism of the cultures of Western Asia appears to have vied with the priestly system of the Vedic society. Brahmanism became more important than Vedism; Varnas became more important than Aśramas; priests became more important than spiritual mentors of society. (Vṛtra's condemnation of the priests in the Bhāgavata, and the conflict of Bhrgu, Visnu and Bṛhaspati in Devî Bhagavata are cases in point.) No more the Vasisthas, Bharadvajas or the Gautamas held the lead; their places were taken up by Dhaumyas, Gargas and Rṣyaśringas. The influence of Dhaumya on the Pandavas was practically nil when com- pared with that of Vasistha on the Ikṣvākus.

It was necessary to evolve a spiritual form that would be completely satisfying to all without putting anyone's traditions to unnecessary strain. It was necessary to contain the Vedic chants along with the anthropomor- phic image forms introduced in the spiritual area. It was necessary to forbid the Kratus and Yajñas of the Vedic times, but replace them with the Satras, Namayajñas and Kirtana assemblies. Something much more direct and much more appealing than the Six Systems and the Upanisadic spiritualism alone could have brought this heterogeneous mass into one single unit known as Hinduism. This catalytic force which crystallised the moving fluidity of spiritual quest of the Indian spirit was Bhakti.

Authority for Bhakti or Bhagavat-Dharma

The influx of the foreign immigrations over the centuries left its inevitable marks on the Vedic orthodox society still controlled by the Aranyaka culture. But it was not long before the combined and sustained might of the emigrees, with their developed culture and well organised laws, began to be felt. If the new had to be contained within the old, then, new codes and new forms of worship, under new order, had to be reoriented. The alternative was annihilation like the West-Asian cultures.

An authority for a new order had already been introduced by Kṛṣṇa Vasudeva himself (and himself a Yadava and Vrsni, grown amongst the Abhîras). This is known as the Bhāgavata-Dharma. This Dharma first came out during Kṛṣṇa's bold challenge against Nanda, the leader of the Vedic Indra Yajña, and his foster father, in the form of his rebellious question, "What avails these Vedic ceremonies?" When further he began

to expand his view, which followed a pragmatic, scientific view of the natural laws, Nanda attempted to hold the young man in check He tried to describe the importance of rain and clouds to an agrarian people. But Kṛṣṇa protested with greater conviction. Natural events are caused by natural laws. "Even if there be some such as God," sceptically granted, "he too must know how to function in accordance with the laws of natural consequence. Cloud and rains are natural pehenomena. Natural laws conduct them. Hardly there is anything in it for Indra to do!"'51 No more powerful challenge to the Veda, from no more powerful a personality need be looked for. But he had his opposite numbers, who in vain challenged him later, the Cedis, the Magadhas and the Bhojas. He crushed them all, and befriended the Andhakas, Pañcalas and Pandavas.

This view replaced the Vedic sacrifices by the idea of what was later known as the great Bhāgavata cult, or Bhakti. The followers of this cult divined, "Hari (the Bhāgavata deity in Bhakti) is all the Vedas crystallised into form."52 Thus Kṛṣṇa laid more stress on the inner purity of the spiritual man, than on the Vedic ritualism. We have seen before that Kṛṣṇa made similar observations in the Gîtā. By saying that "Self itself is the preceptor of the self,"53 he protested even against the master-roll of the Guru, or the all-important Priest! "Hari, the emblematic con- cept of the Bhāgavatas, displaced the Vedas. Indeed in the Kali Yuga the Vedic Karmas have been rendered superfluous by the chant of the name of Hari. "54 The Bhagavatas pray before all scriptural recitations, "Hari may be recited first, last and the middle of all prayers."55

The next protestation of the Bhāgavatas came against the Vedic social order of castes, which affected the Aryans alone, and rejected, by inference, those who were not of Aryan stock.

Under the pressure of these immigrants such a restricted view of society would have caused much harm. The humiliated germinate rebellion. Under the umbrella of Bhakti and Phāgavata-Dharma, Kṛṣṇa welcomed the non-Aryans on equal terms. He mentions some of these non-Aryan rejects by name: Kiratas, Hûnas, Andhras, Pulindas, Pukkasas, Abhiras, Summhas, Yavanas, Khasas and others.56 Hence the Bhagavatas consider all Men Devas and Asuras, equally eligible to a common form of prayer.57 These were also equally eligible to the shares of the natural wealth and

produce of the country. Both in the Bhāgavata and in the Gîtā the over-greedy and the monopolists have been termed as Thieves.58 Later on this very code of conduct was incorporated in Saiva principles of Vasava. The Saivas and Saivism too are based on Bhakti. Like the Nākulîsa and the Pasupata sects of Saivism, who had been variously qriticised, even abhorred, the followers of Vasava too considered the self and its abode, the body, to be the real temple of God; and they had very little to do with the priest-dominated exhibitory temples. Thus they bore the emblem of the deity on their bodies. (Of course, later on these too fell to the enchanting charisma of Brāhmaṇical influence.)

Reaction Against Varṇāśrama

In the literature of the times we hear howling protestations against the Varṇāśrama System of the Vedic society. Of course, this anti- Vedism was the result of the Protestantism of the Buddha and Buddhistic literature. But the Vedic literature was not entirely free from it. Śveta- ketu, we have noted, was told by his father that although he was well versed in the Vedas, he did not have any knowledge of that which is the basis of all knowledge.59 Rg Veda teaches about the gods; Yajur teaches about sacrifices; Sāma teaches all that could be taught; but the knower of the inner Self alone knows all.60 Actually the Maitreya Upanisad recom- mends a release from the 'foolish' Varṇāśrama system as the only way of attaining self-enlightenment.61 It declares as strongly against any imaged deities, which, it says, could never secure release from the bonds of birth and rebirth.62 Those who want to know more about such writings which dealt against the obtaining systems, against Varṇāś- rams, and against Brāhmaṇism are referred to Maitreya Upanisad, Jāvā- lopaniṣad, Sama Rahasyopanisad and Paramatmikopanisad 63

The last one is a brilliant testament in favour of Bhakti, and advocates in favour of Love and Love alone to be the most effective spiritual means of attaining perfect emancipation, although it might not lead to heaven. "Love begets Love; Regard begets Regard; Affection begets Affection."64 "Bow to Dharma; and bow to that which lies beyond Dharma; bow to the fountain of eternal joy."65

In this way we confront a mass of literature growing about this period which had not only been challenging the old, but was trying to replace it with the hitherto unknown philosophy of Bhakti.

"Confer regard, do not seek it.... Do not stop with just speaking of God and equality; establish the same through your actions."66 "Leave aside the vanity of caste. Until one has transformed one's body and self into an abode of God it avails little just to mutter his name.

This tradition had its own ups and downs. The powerful and in- fluential Brahmanism taking new graftings from the Oriental priestic influences, which has been striking new roots, and enjoying the continued benefits of the culture left behind, sprouted new branches and sprang new blossoms more attractive and much more strong in the manner of most hybrids. Although the assimilating role of Bhakti had been receiving a fairly happy response amongst the mass, although Bhakti was really bringing in a large following from out of the non-castes, and from out of the neo-colonists (the names of some of these non-Aryan and non- Indian races have been noted before), soon enough the old Brahmins, and the new Brahmins turned themselves into henchmen of power and lust, greed and avarice. Some even joined the political forces and established a new order of caste system, more complicated, more racist, more frag- mented, and more hereditary. Eternal slavery of human dignity was the price of the changed circumstances.

It had to have a break. And for the break a catastrophe, as pheno- menal as the Greek and Persian onslaughts proved to be over the oriental empires, had to take place. It came in the shape of the post-Muhammad military holocaust of the greedy, covetous, lusty tribal attack of the Pathans and the later conquest of the Moghuls. Thus the surge of the new Islamic shock brought about the next phase of Bhakti, and with it came the slogans of equality. Rāmānanda, Nanak, Kabîr, Caitanya, Dādu, etc. and following Caitanya, a series of great classical scholars, re-established the tenets of Bhakti on the basis of the Vedas and the Systems. The current still continues to flow. Bhakti still holds captive the imagination of the mass Hindu mind.

Saivism, like Vaisnavism, as the accepted form of religious life in re- placement of the Vedic order was the product of the first revolutionary phase of the 1500 years following the Christian era. Then it was that the Bhāgavata Purana declared that

Bhakti is the common form of prayers for the alien races also.68 "Even the Keekatas of Magadha, who are un- cultured, have the right to adopt this Bhakti-cult."69 Not that this order is an innovation; in fact this system comes down from the ancients (of the oriental religions?); it is only that it is being popularised anew.70 Bhakti calls for no ulterior gains. Even if there be a shade of gain, even if it be a spiritual gain, the very idea of gain degrades the subtle evanescence of the nature of Bhakti.71 Besides the Gîta and the Svetasvatara we hear of Bhakti in the Mahabharata,72 and find that even the Ksatriya monarchs had been advocating in favour of Bhakti.73 As stated before, this new phase had to be related to the Vedic times. Without being related to the Vedas no new religious phase would take roots in the mind of the Hindus brought up in the solemn Vedic traditions. The history of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam in India provide ample testimony to this basic peculiarity of the nature of the Hindu. Moreover it was not difficult to find Vedic support for Bhakti (Adoration of Love) and Śraddha (Adoration of regard). Traces of Bhakti, like living cells in embryonic forms, could be found in the Vedas. Vasistha's great Hymns raised for Varuna, is an example." The poetical expression that "Visnu's feet are the fountains of honey"75 might really signify the importance of the sun's power over life and food, but the language betrays the Bhakti approach. Early Christianity in its self-denying Bhakti form, in the examples of the saints, more than through the proselytising zeal of the later preachers led the people more towards the sublimity of Jesus. Men- tion of Bhakti and Śraddha in a number of places has been found in the Rg Veda. The entire 151 hymns of the 10th Mandala is devoted to Devotion (Śraddha). But Atharvan, as expected, had been more pro- nounced. Atharvan admits that Rta and Satya are the two eyes of Yajña, but Śraddha is its life.76 Śraddha has its mysterious power over the personality of Man." Śraddha's powers are mysterious. 78 Śraddha springs from a cordial inspiration and longing.79 Let us adore Sraddha as supreme adorable as Śraddha lights the fire in the pit, and Śraddha offers the butter in the flames.80

In spite of such references Bhakti's progress gathers momentum more and still more as it flows away from the Vedic times, and as more and more tributes are borne to it by cultures which were not strictly speaking Aryan. The more it got freed from the Vedic conformity the more expansive Bhakti became.

As within the cult of Bhakti the impetus for accommodation, assimila- tion and sycretisation was working at a hot-heat speed, a new form of literature-Purāṇas, Upanisads and Smrtis-too were going guns against any further rigidity posed by the Vedic society. "The Father being the same, certainly the children need have no classification on the score of birth rights."81 "There is no difference between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins, neither in shape, nor in prowess; neither externally nor internally; neither in joys, nor in wealth; neither in spirit nor in education;.

"Hunt for the differences meticulously; you don't get any.82 Structure, colour, hair, pain, pleasure, blood, skin, flesh, fat, bones, compare them. Where is the difference really? Language, intelligence, embryonic-stay, sense organs, these two (Brahmana and Sûdra) hardly indicate the differences claimed." "The Brahmanas are not always clear like moon- light, neither are the Ksatriyas red as the Kinśuka blossoms; neither the Vaisyas are yellow as the canary; neither are the Sûdras black like the The conflict continued. A break was imminent. The society was undergoing great strains.

Those who are aware of ups and downs of the various kingdoms that followed the disintegration of the Asokan Empire, and then the powers of the house of Thaneswar up to the Advent of the Pathans, fully know of the divisions from which the Indian society was suffering. Those who are aware of the growth of the vast empires of the Cholas and the Chaluk- yas, the growth of the Raşţrakutas and the Summhas, those who have studied Kalhana's Rajatarangini, together with the evolution of the Rajputs, would realise the tremendous strain under which the social and political conditions of India had been passing. The sudden influx from across the frontiers was stunning. Religion being one of the main strings to which the life rhythm of the Indians clings to, specially at a time of distress, and the religious leaders being one of the most influential forces that unfailingly give a definitive direction at times of catastrophe, a new kind of religion which could extend the Vedic influence as well as contradict the restrictive injunctions of the Vedas, had to spring forth and save the Indian mind from the catastrophe of total disintegration and annihilation; similar calamities made the oriental cultures kiss the dusts of complete oblivion. This new religious phase was Bhakti. And the most liberal form that Bhakti assumed was finalised in Saivism, which contained the Vedic and the Upanisadic cream of thought, as well as the best of Samkhya, Mîmänsä and Vedanta. Bhakti (Saivism) released a spirit of Renaissance in which the formal and the abstract, the objec- tive and the subjective, metaphysics and

emotions found, after all, a haven of peace and continuity. It was a historical demand fulfilled by the promise which the Indian native past held for a healthy development.

III

Bhakti and Love

'Bhakti' implies a loving and attached devotion to a Divine Being, Who is 'absolutely personal', i.e., who is both absolute and personal. The mysticism of 'Bhakti' sublimates the limited to limitlessness, and elevates the transitory to timelessness. The Limitless Eternal Reality of the Absolute becomes tangible within a limited form by His own Grace; the Eternal Absolute God-sense descends in a form that the Limited facul- ties of the devotee could comprehend.

In this sense Bhakti alone synthesises the intellect of philosophy with the emotion of ecstasy. In this synthesis the essence of Samkhya, Vedanta and Yoga becomes one. Its most lucid testament is contained in the Gîtā; and Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Yogeśvara, Himself its propounder, says

The effort in this (path of Bhakti) never goes wasted even if unfinished; nor is there a chance of resulting antagonism. Even an ounce of this proves of great support in a state of dire disaster.84

Love never fails even when unreciprocated; it could only elevate and spiritualise the greeds of selfish quest. Love is self-elevating and elevated. There is nothing like unreciprocated Love. Hunger for reciprocation demeans love.

Bhakti has been current in the Hindu way of life for more than two millenia, and its forte has been its practice as a religion of 'experience'. The cynic in Narendranath Datta, the scholarly conceit (later known as Swami Vivekananda), dared the simple saint Ramakrishna to make him 'exprerience' God. And Ramakrishna's hold on him became firm on this ground alone, that he guaranteed 'experience'. This experience could be intuitively induced by a simple heart, like the child Dhruva's; or like Sudāmā's, the Brahmin friend of Kṛṣṇa; or Nārada's. An apprehension of the Divine in a congealed form becomes an experience to a person who is intuitively simple of mind, and sincere in his devotedly dedicated approach.85 A second type of experience could be induced by ceremonial embellishments, ritualistic atmosphere and charms of chants, songs and mantras.86 A kind of self-love getting projected in imagination

could induce hallucinatory excitement leading to epileptic conditions, often exhibiting violent reactions. Despair, tears, drunkenness, irreverent attitudinous movements and utterances, freedom from inhibi- tory checks and forces often characterise such states of experience.87

Geography and local conditions have much to do with the development of the traits of any particular form of religion of experience. Geographical conditions influence food; food influences the chemistry of feelings; and the chemical reactions encourage and sustain the biological demands that an experience is expected to fulfil. The hot climates and the exoti- cally induced food habits of the tropics encourage the violent forms of induced experience exhibited through physical activities. The colder parts with imposed regularity of food habits prefer the simple experience of intuitive closeness to the object of love. This could explain passivity and activity of approaches in the religion of experience.

But the passive experience of the positive Love settles the mind in a calm grandeur of ability and solidarity, rocklike in its steadfastness88 fanatically attached to its objective of subject-object relation. In com- parison, the active experience of the ever-exciting love unsettles the mind, and a sense of utter exhaustion concludes the ecstatically transcendentalised state of a white-hot lust of thrill. Bernini's famous statue of St. Theresa, or A. N. Tagore's famous painting of Śri Caitanya illustrates the latter state of emotional exhaustion.

Bhakti and Emotion

Emotional excitement resulting in exhaustion wears down mechanism of the body. Such a state is incompatible with the Peace and Content- ment that a statue of the Buddha, or even of the Christ on the Cross, could suggest. Any direct positive awareness of God's benevolence could never figure through the least shadow of malevolence. Mortification of emo- tions leading to calm is one of the ways of experience; simplicity of faith and love leading to calm is another way of experience. This is why tranquillity and the middle way has been again and again harped by the Buddhists and the Taoists. Liberation is the happy joy of a lotus in bloom floating on a sea of tranquillity. The experience that overwhelms to a degree of utter silence of expression of any kind becomes the ulti- mate treasure that spirit reserves without hiding, and hides without reserving.

The danger in Bhakti lies in the evangelical attitude of 'being of help to others'. This could be the most dangerous pitfall for any spiritual quest. There are people always engaged in the holy act, of 'doing good', 'serving mankind', being a 'social servant'. Nothing could drain more quickly the mind of the value of truth and simplicity than this conceited self-appointment to a role which often fattens the ego, and deadens sensitivity for any touch of simple feeling. There is no poison which could sour the milk of human kindness more quickly and more completely than the venom of vanity.

The inner being known as conscience suffers from the strangle-hold of conceit of service to others. Inverted self-love and Bhakti need not be confused. Pure divine Bhakti, a spiritual inducement, demands absolute simplicity first and foremost, and its greatest test lies in a kind of modesty best described by Śri Caitanya: "Hari is to be sung by those who always feel to be humbler than the grass, and more tolerant than a tree." Humility as a matured expression of simplicity registers the title of the devotee to a true spirit of Bhakti. Conceit is the ugly mask that self-love wears, and leads man to play a pantomime in the name of Bhakti. God and 'I' cannot live together, although to have the 'I' dis- solved in God, in Love, to be selfless in love could be the sublimest quest of the perfect devotee. To try to 'do' good to mankind in the name of God is an act of dangerous self-projection from which liberation becomes a hazardous process.

Bhakti and Self-Love

This self-love and conceit in the name of Bhakti could seek subtle forms of satisfaction through exciting theatricality, public demonstra- tion, seeking of platforms and pulpits, marble monuments and places in history. The wise of mind, the peaceful at heart, the sage of the tranquil poise, the Bhakta, seeks nothing except Love of the Lord even in His thunderbolts. What is apparent sorrow or pain is but another mode of loving by the abode of Grace from which nothing but Good and Love could emanate. Pain received from such seeming cruelty springs from the failure to appreciate the wholesomeness of Total Love,

To live in a state of imaginary mission of divine appointment, and be thereby propelled to seek the adoration of the crowd, the felicitations and venerations from an obsequious mass is to seek ruination of the spiritual being through self-spoilation and vainglory. "There is no more dangerous illusion than the fancies by which people try to avoid illusion. It is imagination which leads us astray; and the certainty which we seek

through imagination, feeling and taste is one of the most dangerous sources from which fanaticism springs."90

To be able to face one's own shortcomings full in the face in the light of love is to measure the ability to reach the perfection attributed to God. The discovery of one's own faults is the first step to get cleansed of it. Such efforts wash vanity with humility, ego with effacement, and self-love with dedication. It is a sublimating process whereby possession becomes dedication, heat becomes energy, grief becomes poetry and flesh becomes spirit.

Religions to be effective must evoke faith, and appeal to emotions. Pure intellect may straighten a crumpled complexed understanding; but love alone pacifies. Nothing else." That which cannot sparkle the poles of the inner efflorescent tube and set it alight, cannot mean anything substantial to the soul in the dark.

Theatricality in Bhakti

But many theatrically motivated rites usurp the place of true religion by an induced force of excitement and magnetism. The emotively biased congregations of pseudo-cults profane spiritualism through neurotic reactions that border the magical and the weird." Bhakti's intensity of delight cannot be judged by the numbers in the congregations. The millions that impress, express nothing whatsoever. Genuine spirituality is lonely as says the Gita." The millions that Hitler had aroused through his oratory were countered by the millions that Stalin or Churchill had done through theirs. Political emotionalism leads to fanaticism that kills time; spiritual emotionalism leads to fanaticism that kills both time and eternity for the soul's span.

The path of positive Bhakti leading through absolute love and dedication presupposes application and active interest in promoting good for the sake of good, or for the sake of God. This is a spiritual process. This is a positive path towards achieving elimination of the ego which prevents liberation, and enjoyment of good without bondage. Love lays down obligations; and the obligations are fulfilled by a liberated soul's endeavour to reach the world-soul through sheer simplicity.

The other type of motional Bhakti excites, and opens the path of escapism. A state of drunkenness for a while relieves the mind of a nagging tension; and the neurotic personality goes to a state of temporary loss of awareness which is taken to be trance.

Such induced trances find no reciprocation from sublimity, but react against the very nerves which seek relaxation. This is a negative way, a poisonous, narcotic, physical and even at times erotic way. This has very little to do with the trans- cendental meditation which leads to total relaxation. Love's dedication is the sublimest, and at the same time sweetest form of transcendental meditation.

Emotional religion of experience has taken to the stereotyped two paths the introverts' path of self-search and self-purification; and the extroverts' path of demonstrative theatricality and ecstatic abandonment. Both of these ways have found expressions in Bhakti; and in time both of these ways found expression in Saivism. One of these thinks of Śiva the Yogi of seclusion, the recluse and the austere; the other thinks of the Siva of the congregation, the dancer, the drinker and the exciter of the multitude.

Bhakti and Grace

Bhakti is basically dependent on the natural emotional content of an individual. It is innate in man to enjoy, to luxuriate as a spiritual voluptuary in relishing the wished for, after having attained it. Although most desire it, only a few consummate. It depends on individual efforts. Some feel intensely; some do not. In some the craving is keen, but physical; and being physical, ends, and is followed by remorse and baffle- ment, insatiety and impotence. In others, though a few, the craving is even more keen. This keenness is not felt through their physical sense organs. The feelings involve only a supra-physical state of absolute spiritualism.

This ideal craving releases a dynamic inner force which few men suc- ceed in tapping. When tapped, it leads to an ever-extending, ever- increasing and never dying experience that thrills with satiety, and satiates with thrills. In Yogic term this is called 'trance', Nirvikalpa Samadhi (absolute trance). It is a transcendental state in which the maximum of the best is experienced in an exclusively independent and absolute nature. In this state the 'Experiencer and the Experienced' merge their dual state.

Whereas this could be the extreme ecstatic state of intimate delight, generally it is known as 'adoration' through love, service, dedication and self-effacement. The state is Samadhi; the process is Sadhana; the way is Bhakti and the object of delight is outside of the individual for a sense-perception and grasp of the adorer whose desire is to be saturated with the spirit of the object adored in the fullness of Spirit. This is voluptuousness par excellence of the spiritual voluptuary. It is love in action; a flesh

approach in a flesh world for a flesh atonement and sublimation. It elevates the flesh; ignores its bite; relieves the anxiety of a lack of perpetuity; and relaxes the spirit from the bonds of the flesh. It leads to the reaches of ascension. And all this, let us remember, is due to Bhakti, the tender flowering blossoms of understanding and knowledge cultivated through materialistic reasoning and syllogistic enquiries. The finale of all learning is this dedication, this consummate fulfilment descends as Grace. It releases by binding absolutely. It binds without confinement. Human efforts alone (as Sämkhya or Yoga or even the Vedanta enjoins) are insufficient to lead to this state without the blessings of Grace that is induced to be poured on the object of absolute dedication and submission. Besides feeding the infant, the human mother puts into the spirit of the baby something more which the chemistry of milk does not contain. This is Grace, the spiritual contact of the Great Spirit with each and every life. The living, when awakened spiritually, alone, could get into touch with this contact, the contact of Grace.

Bhakti and Identity

The intensity and the reach of human delight is eager to get related to some tangible entity well-known and familiar through day-to-day experiences. That God the Father, god the Mother could also become god the Spouse, god the Beloved, the Child, the Friend or even the Lover, was a unique postulate, and a source of relieving sustenance. The Vedic path of spiritual meditation or ritualistic applications had nothing like this, although "Upasana' has been mentioned in the Upanisads (harahak Sandhyamupäsita). The Prasthana Marga or the abnegating way of the Jainas or Bauddhas did not know this. This is Pravytti-Marga, the way of absolute consummation, of sense-application and sense-saturation. The Gitä has mentioned the various ways of Yajñas," and even jeered at those who perform rituals as forms. It says, "Doomed are the sceptics;" one must have 'faith' in order to attain true knowledge which alone opens the way to bliss. But the relation of knowledge and faith, of the Correct Way and love itself is confusing." To contain the sense-functions within the total dedication of 'living for someone else' is the way of true Yoga. It is only the confused and the ill-taught who speak of Yoga as a path of abnegation. 'I' the actor acts for the pleasure of a 'non-I'; living, feeling, hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, moving, sleeping-only for the Beloved is the ultimate in Yoga. (cf. the hymn quoted ante pp. 389-90).

Bhakti, a Plebeian Discovery

It was indeed an exposition in advance of the Vedic way where exclu- siveness and individuality prevailed. The forces of history evaluated this new approach of love and understanding; of admission and involvement. The aristocracy of caste made way for the plebeianism of the proletariat. "Many fashion the respective duties as recapitulations of their inner projected visions. To worship is to be devoted to it. Such devotion is destined to lead to absolute dedication and concentration. What is given, how is given-water or leaves, flowers or fruits does not matter. That a response of acceptance is echoed, is of the essence, If good instincts, good wishes, good dedication leads to a spiritual delight, the Spirit is happy to receive, accept, respond and love."99

The new way of the Oriental religions and of the Austric cults found a substantial support in the Gitä. The Puranas, and the Bhakti treatises raised their paeans of praises in celebration of the spiritual way that the proletariats had discovered for themselves outside the metaphysical casuistry, and polemics. The Svetasvatara Upanisad, the Narada Pañca- rätra sang of the Bhakti way. "The learned seek the Absolute; so does the suffering, the sceptic and confused, the motivated self-seeker. But the constantly devoted man of knowledge alone through his dedication attains the ultimate elimination of identities."100 "It is indeed rare, very rare to find one who considers all in One and One in all, as is known by the Bhaktas,"101 the ones whose way has been spelt out in the Pañcarātra of Närada. "Men without this Vasudeva-way of liberation ignore the Absolute residing in the manifested forms. This is their foolishness. To ignore the least of them is to ignore Me."10

Bhakti and Mental Release

This novel way swept over the continent and its ill-treated multitude. The message and content of Bhakti opened a new release-value for minds loaded with unwanted mental complexes, for the sensuous voluptuaries chased by their own temptations, as well as for those dumb millions who slaved mutely under a laboured complex of being of low birth. Man, a slave to his senses, discovered the potential releaser in Bhakti, and a new dimension in the world of spirit emerged as a relief, an abode of peaceful submission. Bhakti provided man with that inner support which he lacked because of his social, moral and educational disabilities. Although it was not, and could not be, orthodox and Vedic, it aimed at exactly what the Vedas had aimed at. The pariah and the outcaste fulfilled their destiny by means of the Bhakti-Yoga. Through Bhakti many of the

pariahs have attained sainthood side by side with high and noble castes- what the Vedas had denied them--God Himself had sanctioned. They received more than heaven; the Love of God. This God had a human shape, and responded with human feelings. It was worthwhile to live and die for such a god. He could feed, feel, serve and love him as he is accustomed to do for the transitory. The image was his projected self, which is his better self; which he wanted to live, but failed to live. The god he loved was framed in his own image; and the imaged one exists only for him, for his relief, for his redemption. This enlivened image provides him with feelings at a sublime height. The imaged god is adored; and adoration leads to the transcendental thrill which rewards all efforts of struggle with the flesh,103

The Image of Love

Vedic literature mentions no such formal imaged deity. The integra- tion of the Aryans and non-Aryans which influenced inter alia the Vedic language and borrowed ever-increasingly the cerebral-consonantal sounds, also introduced the novel concept of a day-to-day intimate god hereafter known as Ista Devatā.

Iṣta Devata is our endeared term in Bhakti. Human mind is dramatically individual. Each one, like pearls and leaves of trees, although biologically identical, is individually exclusive and peculiar. Each mind is its prototype, and each body its citadel. Human aspirations efforts, defeats, retardations, successes and ideals are individual. This individuality supports the statement that there are as many individuals, as many men; as many men, as many minds; as many minds, as many gods. Each one of us lives in our own world. The Supreme tangible form of this inner world of ideals is congealed into a spiritual entity known as Devată; and its respective physical form is the deity which the individual selects for his personal adoration. This becomes his Ista Devatā.

'Ista' the word is derived from the Sanskrt stem 'I', meaning 'wish'. 'Ista' means literally 'the wished one'. Our dreams are made of our wishes; and our dreams look forward to being fulfilled. Dreams are speedy mental projections in advance of our abilities or disabilities. Unrealised dreams like unfulfilled wishes crowd, oppress and choke the mind, resulting in ugly mental dislodgments, agonising sufferings, of illusive joyous moments, which keep us away from a healthy and full life. If these wishes could find a release, even when not fulfilled, life could float on an even keel, and complete its journey more or less calmly. Bhakti divined the splendid idea of choosing the

individual's Ista-Devata, a deity peculiarly the man's own. No one else, besides the individual concerned, needs know what it is, how it is, whence it is. The devotee himself realises his peace by dedicating himself to this Ista-Devata which the soul of his soul, love of his love and life of his life. "Let none watch what you and I do, Mother!" sings Kamaläkänta the words coming from a saint in trance.

He himself may not always succeed in selecting his Iṣta Devatā. Often the deluded fails to hit at the correct thing he wishes. Wishes, like jumping shadows dancing around a man walking through a wilderness in a dark night with a lantern in hand, might cause confusing pressures, and conjure up misguiding spirits which have no existence in reality. Like the witches in Macbeth these wishes, instead of being of help, could bring disaster by jumping in between the real man and his wandering wishes. Under the circumstances the man who is seeking his Iṣta Devata has to seek assistance from a guide, a past master, a spiritual life-guard watching from a distant tower the swimming individual.

The Guru

He is the Guru. This is why in Bhakti the Guru's place is supreme. Guru is higher than all 'made out' gods: be he a Brahma, a Visnu or a Maheśvara. The Guru is the Reality incarnate. He is not a being, but a force; not an entity but an entirety. At every step of a spiritual doubt, a crisis, it is the Guru's hand that saves. Between Iṣta Devata and the Guru, the latter's position in life is of much more significant value. Between the doctor and the wife at a time of crisis the doctor's prescription must supersede all the approaches of the wife. Else life is threatened.

The Guru, after studying the needs of the individual, awards the disciple (a 'chela' or 'sisya') with a Mantra, which is the living god in sound form.104 The image of the word reflects the individual 'Sprhä' or aspiration of the seeker. There have been instances when the seeker has gone from Mantra to Mantra as from Guru to Guru. This is the same case as to go from the family doctor to the specialist; and from the specialist to an expert. Any such change, if there is need for one, must be in accordance with the advice of the family doctor. The seeker, with a Mantra that had suited him at a particular stage, might have to change at another, as he could reach a different stage. In such cases, he might even have to change his Guru. But such changes are not

dependent on the whims of the sufferer, or the seeker himself. Even for a change, the Guru is the adviser.

Imaging the Ista Devata

IŞta Devata is the physical image of the aspirant's aspiration, as Mantra is its sound image. The sense-world is a constitute of the five perceptions: Sabda (Sound); Sparsa (Touch); Rapa (Form); Rasa (Taste); and Gandha (Smell); as imaged respectively by the five organs: Karna (ear); Tvak (touch); Caksu (eye); Jihva (tongue); Näsikä (nose). These five organs are connected with the five physical primal forms of KŞiti (earth); Ap (water); Teja (heat); Marut (wind); Vyoma (sky). Each of these visual forms has a corresponding sensitive form.

Physical forms:	Ksiti	Ap	Teja	Marut	Vyoma
Perceptive forms:	Gandha	Rasa	Rupa	Sparsa	Sabda
Sense organs:	Nasika	Jihva	Caksu	Tvak	Karna

The world gets, by this process, resolved by the sensitive human body. Through striking a perfect balance amongst them then Mind could per- ceive facts in their correct perspective. Comprehension as a faculty of the mind acts at its best when undisturbed by emotion. The emotional being alone causes mental disturbances in personality when disturbed. Thus equipoise of emotions leads to clear conception, and helps concentration.

Bhakti assists in the control of emotions by regulating their expressions through a dedicated channel. Here the 'image', or the IŞta Devata is of great help. The Guru guides the process of sublimation of the faculties, and prescribes particular ways for the sublimation of each of the faculties. The imaging of Vyoma and Sabda is Mantra, which sublimates the faculty of the ear. Similarly, rosaries of special types keep the faculty of touch nearest the IŞta Devata. The imaged form of Murti itself representing the Isla Devata helps keep the eyes devotedly attached to the most desired of forms. To

taste the Caranampla, the water that bathes the image keeps taste under a fervent emotional influence. He is the taste in all food. To eat is to accept His Grace (Prasada). Faith increases. And to keep the house of the Murti, or the temple always covered with incense and perfumes, flowers and sandal paste keeps the faculty of smelling associated with the Ista Devata alone. Each Devata is associated with a distinguish- ed special smell. Mind thus attached, spurns to be engaged in anything other than the Ista Devata as awarded by the Guru.

The Nine Ways of Bhakti

Mind, a totality of the effects of the sense perception, with their immediate and inevitable actions and reactions, through Bhakti is thus kept constantly engaged to the Iṣta and Iṣta alone. Bhakti prescribes the nine ways of reaching this total submission through emotional union: to hear of him; to sing of him; to recite of him; to bow to him; to worship him; to praise him; to serve him; to love him; to dedicate to him totally, 105 Bhakti, thus humanises the faculties; trains them; relishes and voluptuates them, and leads man as man to the fullness of all his physical attainments leading to a perfect mental poise. In Narada Bhakti Sûtra the above nine ways of the Bhagavatam have been developed into eleven ways. Gita says the same thing: "O son of Kunti, dedicate unto Me all that you do, you eat, you offer (in fire as sacrifice), you give and you abstain from...."100 The aspirant so engaged does not consider himself as the doer. He acts, but all his actions are impersonally motivated. He dedicates his entire life and all that he does-to see, to hear, to touch, to smell, to eat, to go, to sleep, to breathe, to speak, to accept, to reject, to dream, to wink; whatever he does, the acts of his organs and limbs are not meant for any good or bad meant for him. He exists for his object of dedication. Thus freed from a selfish motive, he is freed from the worry of personal reward or punishment; personal glory or blemish. He attains a spiritual calm.107 The firm resolve for existing for his Ista Devata alone leads the devotee to this poise. The way of cultivation of this faith is the way of Bhakti, or Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Yoga needed a Pratika (symbol), or a Pratima (image) for holding fast to, and for loving with intense but impersonal love.108 The earliest Pratika and Pratima have been suggested objectively by the Saiva and Vaisnava yogis as well as by the Tantrics who received the forms through their trances (Dhyana and Dharana). The Śiva, the Visṇu and the Sakti forms are the most adored forms in Bhakti.

Scholars are of the opinion that in the Bhakti way of worship Vaisnav- ism precedes Saivism. The standard traditions of Vaisnavite literature (Bhagavad-Gita, Narada Sûtra, Narada-Pañcaratra, Nr-simha-Täpani, Nārāyaṇiya, in Mahabharata-Santiparvam 334-351, Sandilya Sutra, Narada Sûtra) were followed by the recorded experiences in songs, hymns and treatises of the Siddha Acaryas (the Realised Teachers), and those of the Saints, starting with the Nayamaras and Alavars of the Tamils and continuing without breakthrough Rämänujäcärya, Ballabha, Madhava, Yamuna, Śri Krina-Caitanya, Ramdas, Rämänanda, Tulsi, Nanak, Tukaram, Mira-Bai, etc. The list continues. Bhakti principally evolved from its most appropriate habitat in the austric South of India where Vedism reached through various sources, but where the multitude was not admitted to the Vedic sacrifices. From the Tamils it spread all over India, and along the Indian ocean, as the Cola and Pandya influence reached the distant shores. Bhakti is now the chief source of popular spiritualism in India; and its chief quarters are the Visṇu and Siva temples spread throughout the entire subcontinent.

The Bhakti Canon

The canonical position of this Bhakti, or Bhagavata Dharma, which as we have noted Kṛṣṇa himself was supposed to have emphasised, and of which the Pañcaratras have been the authoritative flag-bearers, is very clear indeed.

"Hail to the Bhāgavata Visṇu who by his elemental power inherent in him purifies and sanctifies those of the deluded and the fallen who due to their misguided ways in other lives have been born in such nomadic irregular races as the Kiratas, Húṇas, Andhras, Pulindas, Pukkasas, Sumhas, Yavanas and Khaśas."109

The acceptance of the non-Aryan elements could canonically be granted; but the Vedic and Brähmanic society did not really act upon it. The reservations irked the newcomers. As settlers they had to achieve some status. Failing to secureany, they, presumably became Buddhists. From Buddhism they were reclaimed by the 'Hindu' society, a society which no longer could claim pure Aryanism, or pure Dräviḍism. No race could claim purity in the subcontinent. Racial purity in India cannot be equated with religious purity. All of them had only a geo- graphical unit depending on the characteristic land bounded by the sea and the Himalayan range, and particularly by the

river Sindu. This made them assume a convenient name, the Hindus. They moulded themselves into the new permissive religion, Hinduism, which actually was a projection of .he earlier Vedic traditions, but which was called as Pañcaratra, or Bhagavata-Dharma, or Vasudeva Dharma, or Vaisnava Dharma. Bhakti and Bhakti alone became its single criterion for the immaculate realisation of the Supreme delight. It was simultaneously a projection of the Vedic idea of realisation of a Supreme Deity and of the metaphysical Idea if Puruşa, of the Idea of Brahman; and a projection of the religion of ecstasy.

Many references110 could be quoted in support of this permissiveness. Aliens and outcasts, we have seen, were admitted to the new Bhakti- Bhagavata philosophy. "No matter if the person's way of habits and forms transgress the accepted code of manners, once he is devoted to me with singleness of attention, he has to be accepted as a Good-Soul." Even if people are born of alien races (our of the Vedic fold), once they submit to me and accept me as a resort, they are eligible to reach the highest spiritual status: irrespective of the fact that the person is a woman,

a Vaisya, or a Súdra (disqualified for Vedic Karma), "Any man who having given up all other rites has devoted his soul for achieving me, deserves my union, and thus immortality." "By a chemical process even brass could be gilted bright as gold. Men, when properly initiated, could gain a second life through practising (the way of devotion)."114 The Mahabharata says "An Agama-knowing Sûdra, indeed, attains Brāhmaṇism, when properly initiated. Hell is guaranteed for those who abhor, on caste principles, a Bhagavata-devotee even if he be a Súdra, a Svapaka or a Niṣāda."115 Yamala mentions "The Brahmaṇas of Kali Yuga, due to the influence of Time, un-Vedic and unpurified. Thus, they are as good as the Súdras. Such Brahmanas attain purification only by the Agama-way, not by the Vedic-rites,116 To quote more authorities would be pointless. The systems of Pañcaratra Bhāgavata Bhakti, the Vasudeva-cult, the Nārāyaṇa-cult, the Narada Sutra and Sandilya Sutra were, historically, busy in carving out a post-Buddhist neo-Hindu society where a massive change had been demanding an effec- tive answer to a threatening challenge. This was the Vaisnavism, the cult of ecstasy, in which the streams from different ends of Asia found an abiding form. It was called the way of Bhakti.

Laukika and Vedic Karmas

The gradual emergence of the Bhagavata-philosophy of Bhakti has been mentioned by RŞi Atri in his Law-Book: "When the Vedas were gone came the Sastras (Aranyakas, Brahmanas, Sutras and Upanisads); when Sastras were gone, came the Puranas; those who ignored even the Puranas fell into a rustic agrarian nomadism. These degraded ones became the Bhagavatas." The verse also indicates the gradual spiritual and intellec- tual decay of the Vedic times, which, understandably, Atri decries. It shows the alertness of the law-givers to provide answers to changing times. Throughout the ages Indian Law-givers never gave up their task of adjustment to changed circumstances enforced by history. It speaks highly of the lack of dogma, openness for liberalism and emphasis on the spirit of Man, which in Hinduism clung to the true path of spiritual content.

Between the years 800 B.C. and 700 B.C. the new rites, as distinct from the well-defined Vedic rites, became pronouncedly popular. As Mary preserved Jesus, or Yasoda preserved Krsna, away from common notice these treasured rites preserved those overtones within the new forms. The people of India not only accepted the new forms, indeed they treasured them. Such rites, known as Laukika-Karma (local or homogeneous practices and forms), although thus distinguished, were not allowed to stand in conflict. The liberty to practise their own Laukika rites side by side with the Vedic rites assisted the common householder to appreciate the value of the Vedic forms all the more. realised the anachronism in the Vedic rites in the context of the changing But soon they times. This realisation brought them back to Bhakti which gradually enabled them to attain to the highest spiritual goal without giving up the Laukika rites.

Vyûhas

Both Vedic (as accepted by the Vedas) and Laukika rites have their set forms. These forms in themselves create not only attachments, but also vanity regarding their respective meticulous adherence to perfection. Specialist Brahmins excelled in arguing against each other regarding this respective correctitude. Religious rites became a playfield of more grammar than thought; more advocacy for orthodoxy than sincerity of purpose. But realisation depends on Grace. No amount of knowledge of Authorities, or perfection of form could assist in gaining realisation unless Divine Grace descends. All rites cease, once realisation is achieved.117A

The Vaisnavas adore Lord Visnu, who replaced the Vedic Indra. He is described in the Puranas as a 'younger' to Indra, an extra-Indra (Indravaraja; Upendra). The Vedic Indra's place was taken by Visŋu, the Lord of Creation, the abode of Solar energy. He

is worshipped as Nārāyaṇa, Vasudeva Krsna, and the four Vyûhas. The Vyûhas have a tradition that takes them as a single quartet from the earliest times. They were known to be the first born of Brahma's creation: Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanatkumāra. Too much engrossed in spiritual- ism, they had no taste for marriage and multiplication of species. But these are adored in Vaisnavism, The Visnu-adorer cannot shun the res- ponsibility of procreation as Krsna, Baladeva, Pradyumna and Aniruddha never did. These four became the four-in-one 'formation' to illustrate the Vaisnava way of life. The esoteric aspect of the quartet shall be later discussed. Vaisnavism has grown around these deities.117 Today, in the way of spiritual quest, and thanks to the meticulous injunctions laid down by the Vaisnava Acaryas, Vaisnavism has grown into the most ela- borate form of religious exercise, and is mystically involved in a complex adventure in transcendentalism. But it has its simplest form, acceptable to the common man who could identify his daily life with his daily worship. This is chanting, serving and dedicating..

The Visnu Tradition

The Ṛg Veda prays to the Sun as Visnu (1: 155: 6). The Magi-god Mithra as Mihira found it easy to be accepted as the Sun-god. The first Sun temples in India, as Mihira temples, according to Varahamihira's classic Vrhat-Samhita were erected by the Persian Magi. We have al- ready noted before how the earliest Sun temples had Magi-Brahmins, (or the Magi) as priests; how even now the anthropomorphic image installations are consigned to a particular 'class' of Brahmins, mostly designated by such surnames as Miśra, Kuśäri, Kaula, Acarya, etc. We have also noted how the images of the Sun-God bore an overtone of Central Asian, Bactrian and Iranian horse-riding mailed and shoed here. In verses VII: 99: 1 and 100: 5-6 of the Rg Veda Viṣnu has been described as resplendent beyond conception, clothed with light (Sipivista) and covered with rays (Mayukhas). In Satapatha-Brahmana there is a legend (XIV: 1: 1) where Visṇu and the Sun become one, as one of the celestial Adityas. The same authority speaks of the 'three strides' of the Sun as Visnu. This description of the Sun's daily progress developed as the Vamana (dwarf) legend of the Puranas. But Tad Viṣnoh Paramam Padam, (Rg Veda 1: 22:20) the paramount abode of Visṇu, became the ideal spiritual goal of the Vaisnavas. The heavens, 'the sky' that is, became known as Visnu- pada, Viṣnu's State or 'feet'.118 It is often a matter of curiosity how the town of Gaya claims the honour of a sanctified pilgrimage from the Hindus, as well as from the Buddhists. A deeper study into the life of Gaya as an Asura, the term Visnupada,

the Śräddha-kriya (Ancestral offerings to souls of the dead) could explain why Gautama selected the spot for his long penance. Was he making sure that at this place he had to face the greatest opposition from the Mihira-peoples and the Magi Vaisnavism and occultism? I have already referred to the special Gayali's. Similar- ly there are other temples in the South, inclusive of Puri-Jagannath, where the worship in the sanctum sanctuary of the shrine is the special monopoly of a non-Vedic non-Brahmin sect. The river Ganga, so holy to the Hindus, from the Visnu-Pada,119 Visnu's 'state', with an obvious reference to sprang the 'Milky Way' which is 'one of the courses of the Ganga'. Taittiriya Samhita and Satapatha Brahmana eulogize Visnu as the Sun (1: 9:3:9).

Viṣṇu becomes Indra later in Ṛg Veda (3: 155: 6) (IV: 18: 11); he is also mentioned as the 'germ' of Creation in Rg Veda (I: 156: 3), and Gita echoes this when it says (XIV: 3) "I am the seed-laying father." Visnu is the true sacrifice, as well as the Lord of sacrifice, according to Satapatha Brahmana (1:9: 3:9). In fact later Vaisnavism, quoting such Vedic instances which called Visnu-Yajñavayava, Yajñapuruṣa, Yajñakrt, Yajñabhoktr, Yajñakratu, Yajñavirya, interchanged Vedic sacrifices with Visnu-adoration, or Visnu-Arca, Visnu-Pùjä.

The Upanisads too extolled Visṇu. The Maitri states, food that sus- tains life is Visnu;120 Katha eulogizes the ultimate Paramapada of the human soul as Visnu's abode; chanting of Visnu's name seven times with the 'Seven-Steps' (Sapta-Padi) has been enjoined by the Grhya Sutras, 122 for wedding rites, Visṇu and the 'cow' are associated in the Rg Veda, and Visnu is called 'Go-pa' protector of 'herds', of cows. Hence his later epithet in Baudhayana Grhya Sutra as Go-Vinda,14 and Damodara (one with a cord round the belly-as cowherds do, keeping ready to tie the hind feet of cows for milking them without disturbance). The terms really mean the knower of the Firmament; chief of the celestial body; the sky with the Milky Way around.125 Later when Krsna was identified with Viṣṇu these names Gopa, Govinda and Damodara, would be used as germs for delightful legends with deeper esoteric significance.

This transformation of the Vedic Visṇu into sacrifice, and 'Sacrifice' into the anthropomorphic Visnu-worship automatically transformed the metaphysical spiritualism of Vedic sacrifices into the adoration of an image with devotion and faith. An emotional identification with a tangible deity induces experiences which help release a store of pent up reactions, and thereby lead the personality to enjoy a much needed relaxation from tension caused by conflicts in life. This is the essence of Bhakti

which stands apart from Jñana, or the path of knowledge through learning and understanding. Knowing is not realising. Realisation of an experience gives a supreme feeling of satisfaction. It adds to the meaningfulness of the Prapanca (obvious manifestation) of Life.

The introduction into the Vedic society of this emotional content along with such features as priests, temples, dieties, worship, songs and chants, universal participation and involvement, disregard of caste-restrictions has been considered by some scholars to be due to foreign influence,126 Dr. K. M. Sen appreciates the synthesis in the Atharva Veda of Aryan, pre-Aryan and post-Aryan cultures. He ascribes the wealth of the Atharva Veda to this feature. The age of the Upanisads gained in sublimity of thought because of its foreign contacts. He particularly speaks of the Bhagavatas, the post Greek and post Parthian Vaisnavas, as the pioneers of the Bhakti.127

Antiquity of Bhakti

Dr. Sen's view is however not borne out by facts which point out a much earlier tradition of Vaisnavism. Vaisnavism, as already pointed out, derives its support from the Bhagavat Gită, Mahabharata, Hari- vamsa, Sanat Sujātiya, Narada Sutra, Śvetāśvatara Upanisad, Maitr Upanisad, Chandogya Upanisad, Bhagavatam, etc. Of these some belong to a period much later than Alexander, but some like the Bhagavat Gita must have been older. In discussing the time of the Gitä Tilak has stated that "The Bhagavata dharma dates from 1400 B.C."128 He dates Gitä 500 years before the Saka Era, which means c. 422 B.c.12 He places the life of Krsna contemporaneous with the Bharata war 1440 B.c. As Kṛṣṇa Vasudeva is found to emphasise on the superiority of Karma Yoga, which is the applied part of Bhakti-Yoga in his philosophical advocacy in the Gitä, it is logical to infer that Bhagavatism or the Bhakti way of life had had as early an origin as 1400 B.C.130 But the actual recording of the Epic must have been done much later. Thus Gita's present form is dated prior to 300 B.C. This early beginning was, of course, developed elaborately around the influx of the Western Asians in India. The prac- tice of adoration of idols in temples could very probably be the result of foreign contacts; but that does not necessarily mean that Bhakti as a Yoga is of foreign origin. What was idolatry elsewhere found a psychological sustenance and metaphysical support in Bhakti. Bhakti supplied a rationale to image worship by appealing to the yogic Sadhana, and emo- tional content. The Bhagavata-Dharma thrives in favour of assimilation in the spirit of Love; it emphasises on seeing all as one. The trend of Saguna-Upasana is as old as the Yajñas, but the emphasis on an emotionally identified approach is the contribution of Bhakti. And Bhakti gave us

Pratika and Pratima to assist us in perfect Samadhi. The Vedic Sûtras and Smrtis were by-passed by neo-Vaisnavism which referred it to the Patañ- jali Yoga and the Upanisads.11 Gitä itself refers this Yogic way to gain Samadhi to Vivasvän, Manu and Ikṣvāku, and says that since the Ikṣvāku the tradition was lost.132

The Bhakti of the Bhagavata Dharma as propounded in the Gita is something unique, and not found in the Vedic traditional treatises. It is a special contribution of Kṛṣṇa Vasudeva;133 and its followers were known as Sātvata, Pañcarātra, Nārāyaṇiya, etc. As coming from Kṛṣṇa, the tradition of the Bhagavata or Satvata Karma-yoga and Bhakti must have preceded Gautama Buddha, although several of the Bhakti treatises are post-Buddha.

Bhakti did not necessarily mean adoration of Vasudeva and Visṇu. In one or another form Rudra or Viṣṇu had been adored much before Bhagavata Dharma. Its popularity belongs to the post-Hellenic incur- sions. The greatest appeal of Bhakti was its acceptance of the normal householder's life. The conflict between the Yati-Dharma (Monasticism) or Sannyasa as emphasised by the Buddhists, and the Grhastha Dharma (family duties) as emphasised by the Bhāgavata-Satvatas, has been referred to in the Puranas and epics. Visṇu Purana and Padma Purana speak highly of the Grhastha Dharma,134 Mahabharata in the Dharma- Vyadha Katha1 and in the story of Jajali,136 the merchant, shows that liberation is attainable through a normally conducted life.

Of course the message of Karma-yoga in place of Jñana yoga and Vedic sacrifices fundamentally transformed the fabric of the Vedic society. The Karma of Janaka had been quite different from the Karma referred to above as in the cases of the fowler and Jajali the merchant. The touch-stone was Bhakti, complete dedication to life as an impersonal service for the good of man. All is Vasudeva. Every form is God's own house. To hurt one is to hurt god; to please one is to please god. God's presence in all makes all equal in the sight of yogi who believes in Bhakti and follows the Bhagavata-way.

Janaka's Karma-yoga is quite different. It called for rites, Brahmanic priests, plenty of time-consuming expensive arrangements. Buddha's way emphasised a Sannyasa-abnegation and renunciation. As Bhagavat- ism rocked the Vedic social system, so did the Mahayana Buddhism occasion the famous split in Buddhism. Mainly the split centred around the controversy of monasticism and family life; solitude and ritualism. Asvaghosa and Nagarjuna moulded the Mahayana, and a new spirit of evangelism carried the Buddhistic message throughout the world.

The impact of foreigners on the Aranyaka-Brāhmaṇa culture is undeni- able. The call was urgent; the syncretising process was regular; the penetration of alien population was irresistible; and the need for accommo- dation did not wait for orthodox sanctions. It made itself felt by sheer dynamism. But to claim that the Vedic traditions entirely lacked in the system of invocations for grace, prayers, chant, devotion and fervent appeal would not be true. Apart from Sunahsepa's137 prayers to Varuna there are other prayers138 in the Rg Veda which as hymnals are treasures to the devotee. Dr. Bhandarkar sees in the Upanisadic word Upasana the germ for Bhakti. Bṛhadaranyaka's fervent reference to Atman as something 'dearer' than son, wealth and other object reminds one of the fervour of a Bhakta. Panini (5th cent.) refers to devotees of Vasudeva and Arjuna; Megasthenes (4th cent.) notes the devotees of Vasudeva in Mathura. 'Vasudeva' Dharma is referred to in the Gitä. The word Bhakti is as old as Panini; and he used it in the sense of devotion. But Śvetasvatara Upanisad, a contemporaneous treaties of Panini's Aṣṭādhyāyi contains certainly the earliest and the most definite support of Bhakti and devotion. Buddhists knew of adoration as indicated by their attitude to the Stupas containing Buddha's relics. Therigatha is a book of devotion.

That the pre-Upanisad Indian spiritual life had been put to a stress has been voiced in the Rg Veda itself, in Yaska's Nirukta Kautsa, the Rşi, has been condemned for being 'anti-Vedic."13 Svetasvatara refers to doctrines of creation in verses quite atheistical.140 As a matter of fact Śvetasvatara Upanisad reflects entirely the call for a synthesised way of living. In this Upanisad ritualistic worship has received appreciation, and accommodation.141 Bhakti carved for itself finally a distinguished place in the post-Vedic Indian popular life.

Scholars have judged the comparative dates of Manu, Yaska and Bhrgu, and thereby dates Bhrgu's alignment with Sukräcārya and Parasurama. The same Parasurama is found humiliated by Rama, when he breaks the charm of the Visṇu-Bow of Parasurama. This symbolises a struggle bet- ween two conflicting forces and their subsequent synthesis. The echo of the same struggle is heard in the Vedic Battle of the Ten Kings, and the defeat of the earlier Aryans in the hands of the Bharatas led by Sudāsa. There was an obvious need for peace and understanding. In Bhakti did all these clashes meet a common ground. The contribution of the Bhrgus in evolving the Bhagavata Dharma of Bhakti has been established by V. S. Sukhtankar on the basis of his celebrated studies of the Maha- bharata,142

Rejection of Yajña, and propagation of Bhakti enjoyed a Ksatriya backing. It had been traditional for the Ksatriyas to back movements which challenged Brahmanical supremacy. Let us recall Viśvāmitra's exploits. Kṛṣṇa Vasudeva in his Gita has not been too kind to the Vedic Yajñas, and their efficacy. Then came the other Kṣatriyas: Vardhamana Mahavira, Gautama Buddha, the Haihayas, the Ksatrapas.

The racial connections of the Haihayas, Kshatrapas and the Sakyas refer them to the clans like the Jñātṛkas, Vrsnis and Licchavis, who as Mongoloids were Ksatriyas by acceptance and deference. It is strongly believed that these were Aryanised Mongoloids, like the Sakyas. "We have to note that even though Jñatrkas, Šakyas and Vṛṣṇis all claimed the status of Ksatriya. The first and second clans were possibly Aryanised Mongoloids, like their kinsmen, the Licchavis, while the third, if not originally a non-Aryan, at least absorbed the non-Aryan blood."143 We have seen that Kṛṣṇa in Gitä (IV) refers to his knowledge a kind of Yoga (the Bhakti-Yoga) from the people of the Sun-cult as descended to Manu and Ikṣväku.14 144 Since Vasudevism, probably a Hellenic echo of deification of a national hero of great merit, was identified with Visnu-adoration, as also with the adoration of the Great Rṣi Nārāyaṇa, it became a very popular medium for Bhakti.

Gitä leads after the Svetasvatara as the earliest book on Bhagavata- Dharma. It is the greatest authority on Bhakti. Patanjali's Mahābhāṣya refers to Vasudevism, which includes three more Yadava heroes: Samkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. The Sabha Parvam of the Mahabharata accepts Kṛṣṇa Vasudeva as the greatest of the republicans (Sanghamukhya), and gives him the most respected place amongst the Ksatriya assembly. How the intrusion of alien castes into the 'purer' body of Aryanism was fought bitterly could be judged by a close study of the Cedi king Sisupala's remonstrations against the honour of Kṛṣṇa who was a Vrsni Yadava by caste brought up by the 'lowly' Abhiras. But the Visnupurana and the Bhagavata Purana must be regarded as the two eyes of the Vaisnavas. The Bhagavata Dharma is otherwise mentioned by Megasthenes, the Ghata Jataka, and the Angut-tara Nikaya. When the Yadava people later moved from Mathura and Saurasena, dominated by the Bhojas and the Vrsnis, to the southern regions, they carried with them the Vasudeva-cult. This cult does not appear to have been too popular in Kṛṣṇa's time, as he laments in the Gita, "It is difficult and rare to come across with a great soul who considers Vasudeva to be All." ignorant. "145" He further says, "God dwelling in the human forms is often ignored by the A number of inscriptions refer to the popularity of the Vasudeva

Dharma. Though most of these sources refer to an age much prior to the Christian era, Kṛṣṇa's date is not yet fixed beyond doubt. Taking into consideration the date of the Bharata War and the Chandogya Upanisad, 7th cent. B.C. could be a safe date, which is also supported by the Jaina traditions.

Visnu, Vasudeva, and next Nārāyana became established through the Bhakti way. Śatapatha Brahmana refers to a Puruşa named Nārāyaṇa, The same treatise refers to Nārāyaṇa, the Rşi, offering a five night sacrifice. Narada Pañcarätra and Narada Sûtra constitute the basic treatises for Bhakti as a Yoga. Baudhayana Dharma Sûtra of the 5th century identi- fies Nārāyaṇa with Visṇu. The Nārāyaṇa Gayatri, or the Vişṇu Gayatri is found in Taittiriya Aranyaka (X-II). The followers, Pañcaratrikas, later became one with the Vaisnavas who followed the Vasudeva Dharma.

Today Krsna and his deeds constitute the central theme of the Vaisnavas, though the Vasudevas and the Nārāyaṇas continue to maintain their respective identities, and peculiar doctrinal differences.

But the original point raised must not be lost sight of. The cult of Bhakti was not strictly conforming to what is popularly known and accepted as the Vedic practices. It was essentially Indian; though not Vedic. Bhaktism is thus the life of Hinduism in practice. It gathered its force as a challenge to Brāhmaṇic superiority, and against the ex- clusive rigidity of the caste system. The impact of foreigners demanded a more open and independent system of worship. Bhakti emerged out of it. Bhakti was a historical necessity; Bhakti was a human development.

The Bhagavata religion, which included devotion to Vasudeva, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, or to the Paramätman in the human form, was thus the result of a synthesis of various forms shelved in India. The Satvata Dharma, or Bhāgavata Dharma, is stated in the Mahabharata (Sänti Parvam) to have been exposed by the Sun. This is supported by Gitǎ. When through the Puranas and Harivamsa Krsna's deism had been fully established as Nārāyaṇa, as Visṇu, himself in the human form, the Hera- cletan tradition found no difficulty in accepting it as a familiar way of worship. The Yadava-Sätvata-Vrsnis as keepers of large herds were close to the nomadic Abhiras who too moved with their cattle and herds.

All these people accepted the Bhagavata Dharma.

Bhakti, thus laid, became an accepted form of spiritual life. It made room for all and sundry without caste restrictions. The caste Brahmins still hesitate inter-marry or inter-

dine with the Bhagavatas. But the com- mon man who discovered its emotive contents, just went frenzied about it. It made an approach to God which was direct, close and appealing. Naturally the Saivas were included in the trend. They too went for Bhakti, and devised an anthropomorphic concept of Siva, and supported it by Śiva legends scattered over the Puranas and the epics. The same was the case with the Sakti and Ganapati worshippers. Śaiva and Sakta Bhakti became more popular because of their appeal to simplicity of form and proletarian tribal clientele. At first Saivism was confined to the Nagas, Kirātas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras, Gandharvas, Kolas, Gonds, Kochas, most of whom had been really Hinduised tribes through the grace of Siva and the magnetism of the ecstasy of Bhakti.

Thus Bhakti came as a relief to the tribes outside Aryanism, to the Tamils who clung to their ways of worship and offerings of flower, water, incense, food and lamps. When the displaced Aryans from the Western seas brought with them the Skanda-cult, the temple-tradition and the music and dance, the permissiveness allowed by these forms encouraged the Ganas, i.e., the people outside of the Aryans to join the movement. Their overenthusiasm created a veritable upheaval. This led to a separate Ganapati-cult. Like Śiva, both Skanda and Ganapati remained essential- ly proletariat.

Ecstasy belongs to the people who avoid learning, abstentions, obstructions to life's easy course, intervention of personalities and complex rites. Ecstasy is the blossom of uninhibited joy, and complete relaxation. Worry and ecstasy cannot live together.

IV

Old Forms in New Religions

The historical analysis may now be reconsidered against popular traditions and canons. Historically speaking foreign contacts do have influences on local traditions. But for accepting and developing alien traditions local capacities too must reflect aptitude for assimilation. The state of Christianity as noticed amongst the Voodoo practising Africans, Jamaicans and Arawaks, is not the same as obtaining amongst the Syrian Christians, Coptic Christians, or Cypriot Christians. Both of these sets differ from the Christianity practised in Rome, Avignon or Brazil. Catho lic Christian churches provide abundant evidence of local and historical overtones into the respective nuances of their version of Christianity.

Accommodation of local trends into an accepted religion is a fact true of Islam or Buddhism also, as is evidenced by Islam as practised in Arabia, in Persia, in Indonesia and in Bangla Desh; and by Buddhism as observed in Japan, in Ceylon or Celebes,

Bangkok or Gangtok, Bhutan or Gaya, and Sarnath or Laddakh. This is true of Tantra too, as practised in Kashmir's Kshir Bhavani, at the Kamrupa shrine of Assam, at Jvälä- mukhi in the Punjab, at Vārāṇasi, at Kanci, at Kanyakumari and Madurai, and in the various shrines in Rajasthan, Orissa and Kathiawār. If history mentions that Caligula had built a temple for his horse, then it can be recorded that near Bikaner (Rajasthan in India) there is a temple where the chief deity a rat! Thousands of rats roam about the holy premises. We shall study later that Saivism itself differed in practice in Kashmir, in Mysore and in Kânci or Rämeśvaram. Local traditions, like parent trees, must develop their inner grit and power so that any grafting could be successful. The new forms grafted on the parent body of the Vedic traditions, by surviving, without wiping out those traditions, have only proved the inner vitality and power of the Vedas. To consider therefore Bhakti in general, or Vaisnavism or Śaivism in particular, as foreign imposition would be sadly erroneous. Not only does Bhakti refer to a traditional strain of Vedic and Upanisadic thinking, but it was due to this quality of subjective thinking that the erotic and frenzied excesses of the alien forms could be contained within the subtle and delicate nuances of Bhakti. There is a very strong ground for believing that the Hindu contribution to the world of spiritual grace known as Bhakti is unique, Although a passionate devotion to divinity is a characteristic of mysticism practised all the world over, yet Bhakti contains the peculiar rationale and metaphysical support which is unique. Such Hindu thoughts as Samkhya, Agamas and Yoga are definite contributions to human enquiry; and all of these support the inner contents of Bhakti. Bhakti is the Hindu's gift to the world. In Bhakti the world-mystique, the world- soul, the world-longing for tranquillity becomes one. Bhakti's germs were laid in the Vedas. It is a radition brought down to our days for all. What is now known as Saivism or Vaisnavism, is peculiarly Indian and Hindu because of Bhakti.

Both Christianity and Islam have nursed pockets of the mystique of frenzy and trance; but because of certain dogmas a full development of Bhakti has been halted in the Semetic religions. These religions are dogmatically debarred from accepting the ideas of eternity and trans- migration of Soul (a knowledge dear to the Hindus, and profoundly sub- stantiated). Adherence to this as a dogma renders the unqualified assimilation of the Semetic religions to the Hindu view of Bhakti impossible. A matter-of-fact approach to the mystery about how does life, vitality and consciousness enter or get out of the material body, prevents Semetic thoughts to attain to transcendental knowledge about these. Until biologists could explain the structural peculiarities of

gene, the biological explanation and spiritual inference must find themselves at loggerheads. Dogmas are the crusts that do not permit ordinary logic to probe into the underlying flow of truth.

Brahman: The Sublime Hypothesis

It is true that the spiritual monistic concept of an immanent trans- cendental totality known as the Brahman is the summit of abstract spiritual knowledge, and the essence of abstract perfection of ideas.144 But this could be perceived through intellection and meditation alone; although it is inherent in the subtlest conscious state of all beings.147 "This Atman, is unattainable through books, learning or reason."148 The common man stands bewildered before sheer abstraction. All attempts at describing this 'Holy Ghost' are negatively overtoned. After mentally realising that both concepts of a 'living being' and of some 'divinity' are mere illusions, something affirmative still remains. This affirmation, this Real which denies appearances is the Immensity, Brahman.149 The same idea has been simply stated by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa: Skin the Onion, the appearance, layer by layer; what is found within is the Reality of which all things are aspects. Or, the famous conversation bet- ween Ouddālaka Aruni and Svetaketu in Chandogya Upanisad. Non- duality must of nature remain unmanifest. Unmanifest; yes. But not non-existent; but not unconceived or unapprehended as a Grand Hypothesis.

The common man seeks a handier, simpler and more familiar approach. "This wonder of wonders is seen by some; spoken of by others; heard too, yet by others. But do poeple know it? None!"150

Väskali, the student, asked of Vahva, the Master, about the Nature of Brahman. Vahva remained silent. He asked four times; but the Master maintained his blank silence. Pressed for the fifth time, the Master replied, "Every time you asked, I had replied. How long must you continue asking? Silence is the language which describes the Brahman."151 This aspect of an explanation of the Real has been further dealt with in Kena Upanisad (II: 11) and in Taittiriya (II: 9). "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me," says St. Paul. "If there is really a union of all the faculties, I say, then the soul cannot make it known even if it wants to while actually in union, I mean. If it can, then it is not union."152

If this is the position what would the common man, seeking helplessly a father-image, a mother-image, a friend-brother-benefactor-image do for releasing the tension of his

unsecured psychic state. Without providing for such release, religion becomes meaningless. Religion maintains the equilibrium of mind by providing ample, at times complete, release to tension. The effect of this release is known as peace-transcendental. Religion in a personal sense lays a bridge between the physical being and the eternal being.

The common man, the confused man, seeks a master, an authority, a support, so that by love, adoration, faith and devotion he may find in the person followed or in the object followed something of abiding and sustaining value.

Reason: Faith: Authority

The Age of faith as well as of authority is supposed to have given way to the age of interrogation and experiments. Such areas of despond- ence reveal the narrow view man takes in judging the times without reference to the history of human achievement. The different ages of enquiry, instruction, information and achievement come and go in almost a cyclic order. No age of achievement continues achieving everlastingly; no age of enquiry continues everlastingly its interrogations. Ages of faith and scepticism come in an order of sequence, so that human appre- hensive faculty is never allowed to slug into an inactive state of sang-froid. This is nature's way of sharpening human alertness. The sceptics of today inspire the metaphysicians of tomorrow.

Extreme scepticism runs contrary to faith. Total reliance on the relations of cause and effect undermines the ethics of devotion, love and service. Logic renders faith redundant. Over and above logic stands the dictates of love which we all need.

A combination of reason and emotion alone assures the balanced happiness of man; a combination of grammar and language alone aids expression; a combination of calculation and imagination is essential for execution of the finest arts. Rationality is a great faculty of man; but skeletal rationality alone does not fill up the beauty and purpose of life which calls for such filling factors as faith, love and human inter-dependence. Realisation of the Absolute is impossible without the understanding of knowledge; but to depend on understanding and know- ledge alone, is to miss the human faculties of love, charity, sacrifice and dedication. Like a carriage on one wheel life's imbalance is caused by an exclusive emphasis of the one, in total rejection of the other. Totality is peaceful; totalitarianism is volatile and militant. It is denial of humanism.

Let us recall the legend of Svetaketu. He wanted to see to believe. He demanded to see the cause of life. The Master, his father, pointed out to a living tree, and asked Svetaketu about its cause. As he caused the tree to its fruit, and then the fruit to the seed within it, he was stopped. "Now split the seed, and find its cause" demanded the Master, "I split the seed, but I see nothing more." Then Uddalaka pointed out, "The nothing you see is the cause of life."153

Love for the Unapprehended

There is a world beyond our apprehension. There is a world which we as we, as bodied individuals, cannot pierce. All our physical faculties are measured for the limited world. The immeasurable lies beyond the physical; nay, even beyond the mental. Even reasons fail to comprehend. Sharpening of the faculties of distinction and classification, of analysis and synthesis turn men into acrobats of the mental and intellectual world; but all of that fails to silence our ego, and confer peace on us-peace which is even more sustaining than happiness and joy. Purposiveness of life is revealed after this total peace is attained. Anything outside it is mere palliative social service abounding in temporal power, temporary ego and dream-wishes, all of which like sharks, grow their secret set of gnawing teeth to devour our own peace, as well as that of the world.

"Have Faith," says Ouddalaka-Aruni to Svetaketu, his son. Gita says, "Knowledge is attainable by the men of faith;" 154 "Faith is the Man."155 "The sceptic undergoes total annihilation; the sceptic has no happiness, in this, or in the next world."150 The laws of empiricism are apt to fall into the whirlpools of counter-arguments, and get disarrayed. Delight is recognised when consummated, not before. Described delight is no de- light. Water described in painting might create delight; but to the thirsty it means less than zero. It could tempt, and tantalise; but it brings no fulfilment. Moments of experience have to descend. Experience is never manufactured, much less arranged. It is complete in itself; so com- plete as to become its own justification and proof.

'God is incomprehensible' is a statement that stalls effort. No effort, then, need be undertaken for comprehending the incomprehensible. This obviously defeatist stand is challenged by the positive proposition of love. Religion is an affirmation of man's faith in his Self.

Love demands the beloved. Hence the deity: the one imaged from one's inner cravings. Loving God as the only Beloved is true Bhakti, the self-effacing experience of embodied joy in supplication and dedication.

I saw it all in all of me

And saw me all in (all of) it-

That we are twain in distinction

And yet again one in one likeness, 157

Jalaluddin Rumi, the Sufi saint (1119-73 A.D.), profoundly utters-

I sought a soul in the sea

And found a coral there;

Beneath the foam for me

An ocean was all laid bare,158

"There is no activity," says Meister Eckhart, "in the essence of the soul."159 All is still. "Consumed by the silent inner flames I stood speechless, "140 says Tagore.

The great empiricist Madhusudana Sarasvati, whose entire life's work had been the advocacy of Monistic Vedanta had to say at the end:

Let those Yogis, who will, experience the transcendence of the still light through their disciplined and controlled mind; my mind runs after the admirable looks of the Blue One, who is aboded on the banks of the Kälindi river.101

Love opens the simpler way to realisation of peace. "Paranurakti-T- Isvare," says the Sandilya Sutra (Love God as the One Outside of 'I'). Such Love for the joy derived from love itself is true Love: Love for love's sake, and not for any objective. Subjectivity confers on this grand passion that universality through which one sees all in the One, and the One in all. "I do not seek wealth; popularity, women or literary fame in my life. All I seek is that life after life I should be loving you (God) for love's sake."*162 The Bhagavata Purana clearly says16 that the path of Bhakti must be a completely motiveless attachment.

As long as the fiend of wishes for loving or salvation remains in heart, there cannot be any experience of impersonal joy of love. 164 I seek Him for Him; never for salvation. He is my salvation; this severes even the relative bondage of a slave and a Master, 145 Worship is a waste. Men ignore that I am in every being as its very soul. (Why then worship? Just love all of these) 166 Because I reside in different bodies the fools discriminating the beings, discriminate me. Mind fixed in discrimination knows no peace,167

Love: What It Does for Us

Love alone concentrates all diversions effectively into a singleness of purpose. The discipline of the mind, so concentrated by pure love, adds joy to the soul, and cleanses vision with a clear and intense sight. Gitä extols the wise one who cultivates ekabhakti, i.e. singleness of Love. What does Love do for the mind? How does it chasten the mind of impure and transitory attachments? How does love relate the person to the sublimity of feeling, and existence with transcendence?

If love cannot, what else could? Intellect's function is to discriminate. To discriminate is to run into a world of complexes. To arrive at facts is not the same as to enjoy the fruits of Truth. Intellects inner sense, the mind, bothered with ethical reject-accept-duality, creates waves of consci- ousness which rejects, and at times even vitiates, the inward quietitude which is the quintessence of agitation of peace, the eye of glowing darkness, the light that compels eyes to close.

Adoration

Mind thus seeks something tangible and vibrant, but away from the metaphysical concept of non-Duality: the Brahman, of which the Upani- Şads sing the One without a second. Is this One a Subject or an Object? Is it a Principle or a Feeling? A Conclusion or a Realisation? An inference or an experience? Is it Understanding or Love? Adoration that chastens, purifies and aids concentration could not proceed along the path of Subjective Abstraction. It calls for something to be adored.

For this adoration the Bhakti Sûtras use a number of words: Upasana, Aradhana, Bhajana, Arcana, etc. The justification of taking recourse to these has been laid down even in the Upanisads, where Brahma-Vidya (the knowledge of totality) has been considered as the highest of know- ledge.

The Upanisads confirm Upasana as mind's engagements with iconic or imaged representations of a personal god according to the instructions of Sandilya.188 This is the mind's engagement with the mind's projection. The feeling is intensely vibrant and leads to a merging identification. The legend of Uşasti in the Chandogya Upanisad illustrates the danger of prayers and adoration to qualified divinities without proper compre- hension. "If thou adore without proper knowledge," threatens Uşasti against mechanically chanting priests, "let thine head split into two." Concentration of mind to a self-divined, soul-illuminated deity well-com- prehended in all its aspects helps the entire field of consciousness in attain- ing unity and poise.170 Speculative knowledge when visualised in actual field of performance turns the Veda, the Truth to Karma, i.e., exercise. Speculative knowledge is dependent on much polemics and casuistry. Even when God's existence is 'proved' through skillful human polemics, something shallow and ephemeral still hangs around. A sense of unsta- bility counters against a firm conviction until removed by personal realisa- tion. But no Ideal, no Abstract could-be realised by our limited human faculties, of which we are so proud. Hence adherence to an imaged state of comprehension assists.

This is, however, dangerous. A mistaken, or misguided concept could be a delusion. To concentrate on a delusion could be worse than futility. Hence the intervention of a guide, a Master, a Guru is essential. Guided by a Guru, who before suggesting a deity, takes into consideration the psychological need, the mental aptitude and the physical circumstances of the initiate, the karma of Upäsană could be as effective as the karma of Yoga or Samkhya,171

Upasana and Symbols

The word Upasana (Upa+Asana) literally connotes constant and single-minded total application of devoted attention to the service of the adored. Upasana's stages differ according to the difference in the state of mental concentration, and the poise gained thereby. Attachment to the adored must be made as overwhelming as to get the mind rid of any other attachment. This detachment from the rest, practised through the attachment to the Single, is Upasana's chief contribution to sublime Realisation. Such a mental poise is known as Nididhyasana. In his Brahma-Bhāşya, Samkara has stated clearly that identity with Brahman is attainable through Upäsanã for the imaged and qualified deity when accepted by a devotee, 172

Upasana, i.e. adoration, could be motiveless. Man, devoted to the singleness of subject-object identity, acts with no motive that could influence any personal profit, directly or remotely. This is the highest form of Upasana, and it leads to Realisation. There are other forms of religious devotion which seek heaven, joy and perpetuity of the life eternal. There are still others seeking temporal gains of very transitory nature. The last one reduces prayers to financial investments, and God to a coun- ter-clerk, or a prize-giving Head-teacher.

Iconic-images could reflect the mind of the adorer. These could also help settle an unsettled mind through the law of association. Certain icons and images traditionally treasured as objects of adoration, when accepted, bring along with them the weightage of centuries of experience, good-will and blessings. Worshipping the Fire is one such. Thus the Kusa grass, the size, shape and material of the sacrificial cup, the ladle, the fire-drilling pair of wood blocks, the very chanting melody of the hymns, the fragrance of the burnt butter and incense, cultural and ances- tral nuances and overtones. Through these material and sensitive media mind reaches the very soul of good-will and piety, dedication and application, and ultimately invoke a sacred will to get engaged to an active spiritual participation.173 Elevation, sublimation, concentration, transcendental thrill-any or all of these, could be induced by a touch, a sound, a Mantra-nay, even a special season of the year, or a fixed regular hour in the day, even a particular posture.

Christmas, as we know it today, has been historically criticised to be out of context. Anachronism and inaccuracy is alleged against the dates of the Christmas. It is said to be a mere continuation of a pagan carnival in the name of Jesus. Yet the great thought and moments that the season of Christmas brings to millions of mankind, such as the association of a superhuman advent, a noble sacrifice, an elevating promise, an associa- tion of man's aspiration for loving all, makes Christmas what it is, despite the presumed accuracy of the learned historians. Christmas is a season of Promise in human mind. Christmas is a season of the child-Christ. Christmas is where joy is. Joy is Christmas. The Christians are un- failingly stirred by such rites as the Holy Communion, Eucharist, Lord's Supper, Canonisation, Penticost, Epiphany, Lent Passion. So are the Muslims touched and inspired by such practices as the Muezzin's mystic call to the prayers of the Faithful, the Pilgrimages, the Ramazan fast, the kissing of the holy stone of the Käbä, or the touching of the holy water of Zam-zam, the watching of the Id Moon, participation in the Holy march of Caravan from Cairo to Mecca, etc., etc. They have their dear nuances. Who doubts? Who would deny? The

Hindus, of course, with their far-far more ancient traditions, treasure a much longer list of these associative days, seasons, places and persons. The very men- tion of the names of Ganga, Gitä, and Gayatri conjures up into the Hindu mind strange stirrings. The sound Om, the Salagrāma Śila, the Rudrākṣa Beads, temple bells, distant Vedic chants, the holy perfume of the burnt incense, the not so good smell of the stale garlands and wet leaves, decaying lamps, sooty walls, charred embers of the sacrificial pit, a lowing calf, a seated Yogi-Ah, there are hundreds of points of associa- tion that makes the mind of the Hindu sink like a plummet into the depths of his atavistic heritage. The whisper of the other times, of the childhood of their dead fathers and unborn sons, are heard through these factual points that cast shadows much longer than thoughts. To worship an image or an icon is to induce the mind to concentrate on an impersonal second outside of the ego-laden first person, and thereby to induce subli- mation of ego. Om symbolises the Brahman,174 but Om is not the Brahman175 because nothing, no name could be Brahman but Brahman which is a symbolic word indicating the incomprehensibility of Brahman, The word Brahman itself is a symbol; nothing more. and no more. To know Brahman is to realise Brahman. To realise is to be it. Such icons have been prescribed in the Vedas, the Puranas and the Tantras. Om, for instance is Vedic; the Visnu-Salagrama or Siva-Lingam, or the images of deities are Pauränic; the Yantras and the Mudras are Tântric. 174

The name-objects, shape-objects, line-objects chosen by the devotee reflect his mental attitude, aptitude and requirement. It must have that particular appeal which makes involvement and absorption almost effort- less and automatic. "The images of deities are conceived as the appli- cation of symbolic equivalences, as is also the case of Yantras and for writing. The Indian code of symbols appears to have come down from very ancient times. Its origin is lost in remote ages of prehistoric mankind."""""

The idea behind the cult of images is to worship the invisible through the visible. Nowhere the people worship the mere wood, stone or metal. It is all pervading, and therefore always near;178 (it is) the Divine Essence, invoked by the power of (Mantra) utterance and (Půja) rites, which become the object of worship in the image. It is through the particular (Visesa) that the notion of the totality (Samanya or Bhuma) arises in the mind,170

Upasana and Aradhana

At the stage of Upasana adoration is purely mental; at the stage of Aradhana this adoration is total: physical, creative and environmental. Aradhana expects total engagement and attention. Radha-Tantra illustrates this kind of approach for man to the beloved. Contrary to Upasana, Aradhana is emotive. St. John of the Cross, the Spanish mystic, dedicated himself to God as a girl would to a man, a wife to a husband. The A to Z of the Sûfi-approach is based on assuming this attitude between the Lover and the Beloved. In Bhakti this attitude is known as Rädhä-Bhava180 the understanding of saukhya, or friendliness between loved and beloved. What the later Puranas, and thousands of Lyrics, pictures and temples sing about as Radha and Kṛṣṇa is just illustrative of the emotive transcendentalism of Bhakti: the friendliest longing of the self as a female alter-ego for the dominant male image of Supreme delight and Ecstasy: "The desire of the moth for the star;" the longing of the self for the soul; the consummation of the body in the flames of divine communion. There is not, and could never be, any temporal historicity of Radha in the life of the historical Krsna. But Krsna, the Eternal Soul and the Timeless Cause, is induced by the love of Radha, i.c., of the systems of Aradhana, to come to the urgent human aid; and confer peace and sublimation to the worried mind of man.181 In dedicative Bhakti and Śraddhä, as in love and poetry, feeling becomes fancy, fancy becomes image, image becomes deity and deity leads to transcendental ecstasy. What appears to be illusory and romantic becomes visionary and ecstatic, and transcends to trance.

Upasana, the mental adoration, becomes Aradhana, the physical engagements, in every aspect of human life. Bhajana is adoration through a constant sense of 'being in it', and luxuriate in the state of 'being in it'. Singing for the Lord, of the Lord, is one of its most accepted expressions.

Bhajan makes the adorer serve God as Hisservant and minstrel, and adore Him as a poet adores nature and supernature, by making these reflect in his poetry. Arca or Arcana includes the detailed services rendered to the deified image living a thoroughly personalised life. "Think of That; absorb That; devote to That; serve That."18 Serve with the details from the morning toothbrush to the preparation of his bed for the night, and even fanning him during his sleep. To be engaged thus in his engagements and consider even one's own body as His above and attend to the Self as a servant attending his master, is Arca.

Mind over Matter

Objects of adoration are like aids, which impart instructions to child- ren at school for whom beads of marbles, chalks and boards, models and diagrams are often found very helpful.188 This does not mean that images are toys and models. It cannot be, because the toys are not illuminated and inspired to a point of vivification by the dynamic and magnetic impact of self-denying effusive and dedicated love. The child's love for toys is as simple as toying with wishes. The images are creations of a soul-force and carry with them a great amount of intros- pection, projected peace and faith. Images appear to be toys to the scep- tics. But to the adorer, who is dedicated to them, these very images are living gods. Madonnas have been heard to shed tears for their lovers; dreams appear to speak to them; visions manifest themselves and unite with them; voices confide secrets to them; even sing to them; even leave tangible evidences of their presence. Women feel impregnated by the deity, and deliver children as God's children. To the devotees and for the devotees these are neither aid, nor toys. It simply describes a state of total oneness through unqualified entirety of projection of the self leading to harmonious identity. What are idols to some, toys to others, images to the devotees assume living manifestations of the godhead. Such sublimity of a self-hypnotic ecstatic state transcends the temporal reality, and ascends every virtue of the physically dimensional world.

The mystic process through which such phenomena take place has been the subject of a number of scientific treatises if psychology and psycho-pathology are regarded as systems of science. Such 'miracles' have been known to be yogis,the Siddha Natha sects, the Jainas, Buddhists, early Christians, to our present days. Miracles, as we call them, do happen, as miracles to the sceptics; but to the yogis and Bhaktas who have nothing to wish for themselves, or for any type of interest, these are not miracles at all. These are Vi-Bhůtis, acts that transcend the Bhutas or events relating to the Matter in a dimensionally limited material world. It is a transcendence from the world of facts to the world of realities.

The writer has been a witness to many such 'miraculous' happenings, which surpass common causation and rationale. Each of us is aware of such 'stories' and 'happenings'. If this be true, then images, made of stone-brass-wood or glass or whatever else, and irrespective of the form, could transport the actual devotee to a world of Realities from a world of Ideas, wherein he or she could live with the powers if a super- life, feel with supersenses and act as supermen. It is a greater projection of Will built up through Love. Love makes images live and manifest the Supreme Power of Will. Love

transcends images into a divine exis- tence. Love sees images as Gods. Stones vibrate through the magnetism of Love. Love immortalises the mortal.184

The Mind Attuned

To satisfy the human conditions and human limitations for the associa- tion of the divine, both the mind and the body, though human, have to be attuned to the Supreme. Much has to be discarded; much to be collected; much to be reduced; much to be induced. The twelfth chapter of the Gita mentions in unequivocal terms the harassment of human effort in experiencing the Divine through the intangible, unmanifested way of abstract thinking. "Limited to and circumscribed by the body and the senses the way to realisation becomes a hard task for the physical man. "185 Bhakti adopts the direct way of worship through the medium of the physical. Love man, love God; love God, love Man.

This way has to be well laid in understanding and developed through a master's lessons until the mind accepts. Truth thus understood has to be experienced. The great tradition laid down in Patanjali's Yoga, Aṣtavakra Samhita, Dattatreya Samhita, the Nätha-scriptures and repeated in the later Puranas, and called generally as Astanga Yoga, put together, described the mechanics of eliminating the mental illusions, and supplant- ing the mental field with a cosmic insight, pervading the limits of time and space. "Resort to the discipline of understanding with analysis; avoid it, and fall into the cycles of cause and effect," says the Gita (II: 49).

But after this mechanism is mastered, the instruments being secured, Love has to be evoked to enjoy the fruits of the labour. The way for this experience is laid through Bhakti. Both these, so united, Bhakti and Yoga, Karma and Jñana, inspires a sense of equality and sameness in all forms, so that all kinds of distinctive, discriminating differences are eliminated, and all are united into one Godhead, one Spirit. God, who is in all things, being the only reality, to the devotee, all things alike become godly,186 "Like steps leading to the roof these are the two different flights of steps. One flight is Buddhi (understanding and logic); the other is Śraddha and Prema (devotion and Love)."187

Union

As long as a relation of love exists, duality does. Believers in the One challenge this duality. Vedäntist monism declares, "Thou art that", "I am He". Bhakti also prescribes

Salokya, sharing the same locales; Samipya, living near the beloved; Sarupya, to image the body-appearance in the model of the Beloved; Sayujya, to end in a finale Union. This Union as we have noted time and again, has been described eloquently by the Vaisnavas, Šaivas, Christians, Islamic Saints and mystics. In spite of the basic Semetic belief in monism, its later schismic offshoots, like Christianity and Islam, at least sections of these, find such saints who believe strongly in the dualism of the lover and the beloved, the adorer and the adored. The transcendental phenomenon of Direct Experience (experience gained not through another) (Aparokṣanubhuti) could never be achieved by mere explanations and interpretations. If it comes, it comes through Union alone: direct 'personal' union. Direct Love is Love. Feelings are intimately personal.

"How was the feeling?" asked Rädhä's friends.

"Why ask? Each time I attempt to relate, it glows anew in its minutest details. Since I know it (to have been born within me) I have been watching its beauty; my eyes know no satiety. Eons after eons I had kept myself embraced to it, heart on heart; yet my heart's hankerings know no quiet."

I love God; and God loves me. If that has been a real experience how am I to explain how does it feel? How does He feel? This is the silent Mum, the Inarticulated positive (Anirvacaniyata) of the Mystics. This is what Love seeks, and means. "That Word was God.' It was never spoken. Its only language is silence.

This feeling of oneness, when realised directly by the devotee, confers on him the greatest gift of Bhakti-his ability to see "One in all; and all in One." It becomes an active knowledge, on the basis of which man collects enough strength to conduct himself with equality and equanimity, not only amongst his fellow beings, but amongst all the beings. The result of this spiritual exercise (Sadhana) is the prize of universal love and equality of consideration. As this prize is secured, the blessed one's life and conduct undergo great changes. This involves him, generally with the world around. He is no longer a fraction: he is the whole of the world community. His life of love starts anew. He risks the narrow self for the service of the greater and universal Self. No abstractions of the immensity of the timeless, changeless, limitless, unqualitative god any more succeeds in containing the devotee, who is blessed the supreme wisdom. Bhakti-Acāryas (Masters) matured in this discipline (Sadhana) (from Narada, Dhruva, Prahlada, Bali to Mirä, Namdeva, Vivekä- nanda, Tilak, Gandhi and Tagore) found themselves involved in the reality of God present in Man by following the

Bhakti-way of finding the Man in God. This equating system has borne great results for them.

Love as a Social Force

The importance of this overwhelming aspect of the philosophy of Love, on reflection, appears to be potentially charged with great possibi- lities in the field of political philosophy. Politics could become a very meaningful and purposive system of serving the community, instead of becoming the zig-zag of diplomatic gangesterism and horse-play that it is. The true socialist's fundamental subject is the happiness of the common man, and eradication of deliberate discrimination. Not by bread alone, not by military power alone, not by dictatorial egotism alone, not by amassment of wealth alone, could this service be rendered. Man's happiness has to be won by an inner content. The mass cannot have this inner force. Only the proper leader, charged with this inner force, could confer this happiness when he himself has obtained this knowledge of Love. He has to see the God in Man, after seeing the Man in God. Understood in this light, Bhakti's message of Love retains reserves of immense possibility. "This is the only way; and there is no other; to know the great Puruṣa (Being), Effulgent and Immortal beyond the dark- ness (of self love). "188

Abstract conception, however immaculate, however appreciable, is unmanifest and evanescent. In contrast, how tempting it appears to the devotee when he feels that the object of his devotion could actually become tangible to him. God could appear to him. This God speaks to him, sits near him, assures him and guides him. It is a fitting process; a sustaining security; an embracing thrill; a purposive exercise. Cases of hundreds of saints could be cited in all religions and races when the Ideal became Real, and the evanescent became tangible in three dimen- sional forms to the devotees. "My Way; my Master; my Lord; my Witness; my Friend,"189

"My Father; my Mother; my Husband; my Wife and Beloved!" This has been the cry of Arjuna, Draupadi, Kunti, Närada, Theresa, Magdala's Mary; Catherine; Mira; Jñändeva; Rāmakrṣna; Tukäräm; Nanak and scores of the Vaisnava saints of all religions in whose name great monuments have been raised. "Madhuradhipate-r-akhilam madhu- ram the Lord of all sweetness has made the universe sweet for me. Moses was spoken to; Jesus was spoken to; so were a number of cor-respondents who could establish a contact.

It dissolves utterly,... to rest more and more in No. It is no longer itself that lives; it is I. As it cannot comprehend what it understands, it understands by not understanding.191

God is love, and also the end of love: herein we find the whole contribution of mysticism. The mystic will never grow tired of speaking of this two-fold love. His descriptions have no end, because what he wants to describe is undescribable. But he is definite on one point: that divine love is not something belonging to God: it is God Himself.198

Why does the evanescent immaculate at all find it necessary to descend to the limit of dimensions? The devotee supplies the answer which rings with the echo of experience and sincerity: "The mother cuts the fruit to suit the grip of the child: this is love; The great becomes small to fit into our world of smallness."193 Vedanta too supports this view, as does the Taittiriya Upanisad.194 The Vedic gods are complete with their nature, taste, forms and weapons. In the Upanisads Upāsanā has been prescribed for even such mundane objects as food and water and breath.195 In the Svetāśvatara Upanisad Nature has been termed as the Alter-Ego of God, "Who being known, one is freed from all bonds."

Law of Apperception; the One and the All

Since God is not directly perceptible at the devotees' convenience, the true devotee naturally finds it sustaining to keep himself close to some object intimately associated with the beloved. A strand of hair, a per- fumed handkerchief, a brooch, a few rose petals between leaves of books, conjure up realities in the mind of a person who had tasted of love. In the same strain signs, figures, pictures, images, lyrics, rites help the devotee along his way. This is the same as the use of Pratika, an object that induces towards the subject of feeling. It keeps the mind, which is in- volved in a flood of conflicting knowledge, directed to a singleness of purpose. Many a times hard businessmen, astute diplomats, cynical philosophers have been noticed to carry secretly a small photograph to their respective places of business, which, by just being near them, keep their mental state (so they convince themselves) actively refreshed. To the devotee these become 'direct gods', and assist in realisation. The shoes of Rama for brother Bharata, the parents of the Fowler in the Maha- bharata, the Guru for the many, represent this directness. It is in this sense that Bhakti needs a Rama, a Kṛṣṇa, a Mahavira, a Christ, a Siva for drawing the intensity of love from the devotee, and rid him of that self-love, which, as a film in the eye, distracts clear vision.

Devotion and Learning, Knowledge and Realisation, Understanding and Love cease to be conflicting in this way, the way of Bhakti. The great conflict between 'I' and 'My' becomes quietly reconciled, and the Bhakta loves all love as self-love, or in other words, by loving others alone enjoys the passion of loving himself.

The canonical literature of the Hindus as well as their mythologies refer again and again to Visvarupa-Darsana, the 'seeing of the Cosmic Person (of God). All these descriptions refer to some deity or person as demonstrating objectively in his own form the 'Truth': "All is one and one is all." This is the Hindu way of putting an end to all conflicting ideas of regarding 'your god' and 'my god'; good forces and evil forces; God the loving, and God the terrible; God the forgiving father, and God the penalising judge.

Scepticism and Faith

It raises the fundamental problem of something wanting, something incomplete in the fascinating philosophy of scepticism. The sceptics, the maturest of them, are not less wise. Indeed they are more wise than happiness could bear, and the man of world could accommodate. This excess of wisdom leaves, however, a wide vacuum. Learning without virtue is useless; virtue without contentment is pointless; contentment without spiritualism is baseless; and spiritualism without the milk of human love and kindness is tasteless, lifeless. Want of happiness renders the sceptic unworthy of a following. Scepticism is negative.

It is in the nature of scepticism to study things and thoughts in their analytical dimensions, or in fragments and fractions. Fraction by nature must be conflicting because conflict is the womb of agitation, and agitation releases power in the shape of energy to act and create. But the sceptic fails to see things in their balance, in their purpose, in their totality. Making a fetish of the powers of analysis prevents an acceptance of synthe- sis, or the will to feel the wholesome delight of viewing things in their substantive perspective. Fragmentation of the mind, as of knowledge, must create, and watch at the contraries and the conflicts in a light of perpetual irreconcilement. Such a state must end in chaos. Cynicism is symptomatic of mental imbalance. It is easy for sceptics, therefore, to be cynics. A mind trained at looking at the fragmentary alone gradually acts against the faculty of grasping the totality of a universal fundamental. The development of this faculty is the purpose and content of Yoga. A Yogi is dedicated to

To see a world in a grain of sand,

And a heaven in a wild flower,
To hold infinity in the palm of your hand,

And Eternity in an hour.

The sceptic Arjuna's stubborn queries were set to naught as soon as Kṛṣṇa brought the objective lesson of seeing the one as many, and the many as one. Arjuna, thrilled and overwhelmed, regained his peace and deter- mination, which led him to victory.

Is God near? Is he away? If He is here, is He there too? Is He big? Then who is small? Is He a noun? Then what is the adjective? What is the verb? Is he the Sentence and also the Word? Then what is the sound and the sense? Is He Good or Evil? Is He the Frog, or the Serpent, or the Peacock, or the Hawk, or the Fowler, or the Tiger, or the Elephant, or the Tamer who is killed by the Elephant or Death? Who kills whom? God gives Rain. Good. Who gives drought? Man brings war. Who brings Man? Ethics of thought, like water, assumes the size, shape and colour of the container it is in. The container and the contained serve a common purpose; and all purposes serve the great Truth, God.

This is the nature of the fullness of God. Man must worship God suited to his own taste, demands and intensity; suited to his capacity, will and readiness. Man uses God even for ephemeral purposes. The conflicting purposes and fragmented concepts gave to society the multi- plicity of religions although God is only one and the same. In man's own mind man creates the many gods, before realising the One God who is the supreme. Self-love and vanity carried the conflict to the doors of others, and fought a hundred battles with the hope of establishing the 'correct' God. This kind of catastrophe has caused man tension, unhappiness and misery; and still continues to cause. Our views are coloured by the narrowness of the fragmented ideas and self-projected willful gods of convenience. The cure is to develop the sense of sameness, equality, equilibrium, brotherhood. Once this is attained the Soul of Man is at Peace. Such a man is a Yogi, a Saint. "Happily or un- happily, with the same equanimity, the one who could see all in the same light as himself, is the great Yogi."197 All apparent conflicts, like light and shade, he knows to be the inevitable functional hazards of a

Grand Purpose. To regard such hazards as the ultimate, is to fall a victim to the illusion that physical awareness could establish communion with the Real Truth.

Both Narada and Arjuna appeared to have come face to face with the universality of Truth realised through an objective form. Both were over- whelmed; both suffered nervous shock. A feeling of decorporalled existence generates abysmal fear to the Yogi in practice. It is an appalling realisation to find the corporate being melting into nothingness.

(We shall meet this phenomenon later while dscussing Tantra). Yet it is as sure a stage in Yoga as the outburst of tremendous heat is,196 The physical impact of a sudden feeling of nothingness was too cataclysmic to be borne by the conscious self unaccustomed to the supernatural. Arjuna cried, "I can't bear this experience. I am sacred. (It is too much for me!) Come back to the form I am accustomed to."199 But Kṛṣṇa the Master, had warned, "Any attempt to see the totality manifested in the variety of forms is bound to create confusion."200 "That what you see is just a conjured up illusory phase; not the True I. I could be found in my proper meaningfulness beyond all that you could see. 201 "I am intransient and unmanifest; the ignorant alone take Me to be manifested in (human) forms. True I is unmanifest."20 Kena Upanisad clearly warns against the confusion of regarding the symbolic object of adoration as God Himself 203 Vedanta Sûtra says, "Na pratikena hi sah. (The Real is not the form)."204 No representation or symbol could surpass the direct contact with the Real. This direct realisation is, as we have noted, "aparoksanubhuti', i.e. 'feeling without any meddling assistance'. It is the ultimate goal of the Yogi..

Reconcilement

Then what is the solution? Why then the images, and the icons? Real knowledge of the Truth is attained through the emotive attachment leading to concentration; thereafter, when the knowledge becomes Real, when it becomes a part of the Being of the devotee, he ceases to consider this or that as God. The brass, the bronze, the marble, the wood all become the material containers from which the contained has been emptied, absorbed and made into a part of the very being who had drunk the spirit contained.

The more this elevating idea gets rooted and confirmed, the nearer the worshipper in Bhakti comes to his objective, i.e. Union with the Spirit of things, with God. Our love for the Lord shapes the Lord to a form acceptable to us.205 None of us is without the Lord, the idea, in some shape or the other. All men live by some idea. The racegoer's god is the horse; the thief in the temple searches for his 'purse-god'; the degenerate sex-hungry sitting in the aisle of the church, submits to his ideal of sex- hunt under the nose of a sermon; the ailing's god is good health; the sick's ideal is recovery; the industrialist's is the million; the student's is success at examination; the clerk's is the favour of the boss, etc. All these refer to gains-gains that refer to the physical existence and mun- dane values; and, if at all, only in a limited sense of the Self. Such persons would not hesitate to talk of Sandow or Weismüller in languages of hero worship. Few seek as an Ideal the intensity and perpetuity of an unbodied contentment.

So, mere understanding of this theoretical process does not equip the individual for Sadhana. "You must not mistake this development of the soul as meaning anything intellectual. A man can be of gigantic intellect, but spiritually he may be a baby.... All of you who have been taught to believe in an Omnipresent God, try to think of it. How few of you can have any idea of what omnipresence means?"20 One devotee's spiritual nearness to God differs from that of another because of a spiritual make-up. It is his 'praktana', the collective impact and reac- tion of the wishes and progress of his past lives. All presents are products of the wombs of the past which come back to him by way of the future. The impulsive drive of his past goes to mould his personality, taste, selec- tion, effort. He moulds thereby his objects of endearment; he moulds for himself his peculiar god. Mere rites, recitations, fasts and feasts could be of little or no help at all, unless he attunes his ideals, actions and devotions into one symphony. This is why the ancients in the Sûtras and Smrtis enjoined that the overemotive and the imperfect of training (i.e. those who are overwhelmed naturally by the gross, the Tamas) need not adopt the Vedic rites. Their Upasana would mean abject ritualism deprived of either sense or purpose.

But these ritualists too have place in Bhakti. The least of them participate through, let us say, even toys, in the spiritual hunt for sublime moments of joy. They strive to contrive some moments of God-feeling. The results alone would confirm their respective sincerity. Not even the most frail attempt goes in vain. The catastrophic danger of a total decay of the soul could be saved by this Bhakti which leads the

ignorant along the correct way. To love is to be on the path of sacrifice; to love is to dedicate; to love is to abandon selfish interests and exercise in the sublime process of impersonality; to love is to adopt the right way. No rest, no sleep, no waiting;-constant striving and pushing ahead, until Love is achieved. This leads to the final knowledge of which the scriptures, the books, the learned speak. The two ways converge and become one. This is the reconcilement of spiritual oneness, and emotional plurality; of abstract stoicism, sceptical insecurity, and the sensitive adoration of an emotional involvement.

Image in Bhakti

Bhakti has been termed as a method of Yoga. Yoga's primary pur- pose aims at (i) overcoming the whimsicality of mental pulls; and (ii) culti- vating inner perception by eliminating the external perceptive limitations. In simpler form this is the same thing as to state that through Yoga human faculties reach a concentrated singleness of purpose.

What should be this purpose? Of course, God. What is God? We do not know, as God is beyond knowledge or comprehension. Then, how to concentrate? Yoga prescribes exercises. Gita says that the ways so described are hazardous and demand skill, which the ordinary cannot practise. Then what is to be done?

Here is Bhakti so effective. To form a personal point of concentration, and attribute to it qualities which mean the supreme in aesthetics and ethics as the most beautiful, the most enjoyable and the most immaculate is to image (Dhyana) a form (Vigraha) which models the devotee's 'wished for attributes into a shape. "Religion is realisation. And you must make the sharpest distinction between talk and realisation. Ask that man what is his idea of omnipotence; do you 'see' omnipotence or Almighty God? What do you mean by omnipresent Being?.... The world is too full of talk, therefore we are by our present constitution limited and bound to see God as man. If the buffaloes want to worship God, they will see Him as a huge buffalo.... All go to the sea to be filled up with water according to the shape of each vessel; in the man, according to the shape of man; in the buffalo, according to the shape of a buffalo.... In each of these vessels is nothing but water. So with God!.... Two sorts of persons never require any images: the human animal who never require any religion, and the perfected being who has passed through these stages. Between these two points all of us require some sort of ideal outside and inside.... We are prone to concretise. We are concreted spirits. Idols have brought us here, and they will take us out. But you can worship anything by seeing

God 'in' it, if we can forget the idol, and see God there. You must not project anything upon God. But inject God into anything you like. You can worship God in a cat. Forget the cat and you are alright, because out of Him comes everything, He is everything."208

Once this personal idea in concrete shape is formed, the devotee continues to live or exist 'for Him' and Him alone. Thus the devotee's personal life is elevated to a grade of worthiness, as a servant, a friend and a lover. Love is love where consummation is realised through such different faculties as Service, Friendship and Conjugality. Constant effort to be 'equal to it', as it were, elevates him, purifies him, cleanses him of the dirt with which perception is kept blurred.

This absolute dedication (tadgati) is strictly speaking non-Vedic. It is Arca and Bhajana as different from Upasana. Its unorthodox character has opened its doors to the millions outside the traditional and privileged higher claimants, like the Brahmins. Those who are neglected as tribals, outcasts and females (who even now cannot be ordained in Christianity, Islam or Judaism), are regarded as privileged as even the world ouside the Hindu fold.309 It takes its stand on universal brotherhood as all lives are abodes of the same Atman, the same beloved. Love eliminates all distinctive discordances by concording into one universal symphony. We have spoken of Amrapalli,a harlot,becoming a Buddhist saint. So was Cintamani elevated and Mary Magdala beatified. Christ found the thief worthy of salvation. Gitä insists on the salvation of all those who have cultivated total dedication and prostration (Saranagati).

What the Vedanta and the Upanisads had been labouring to teach through abnegation and chastening (Nivytti and Prasthana), was being taught by Bhakti through dedication and prostration; elimination of passion and emotion, control of mind and will. "I adore the one who loves me."1 "Worry not about other ways. Take shelter in me. I guarantee to rescue you."11

Bhakti and Saivism

This being the essence of the emotive approach to liberation and total knowledge, the ritualistic modes of worship and temple-adoration cannot be quite easily rejected as un-Vedic, or proletarian, or anti-Brāhmaṇical. Closer inspection might reveal that what is known as Brāhmaṇism today, as well as Hinduism, depend in major parts on Bhakti. Hindus today ceremonially keep their direct contact with the Vedas during the

ritualistic Samskāras alone. But 'worship' as a form of Yoga has been acknow- ledged as a great method of Liberation in the Kali Yuga. Bhakti is the basis for Vaisnavism. 'Visnu' etymologically means the inherent life. sustaining the vital force of procreation and development.

Visnu

This is no place for discussing the name Visnu. But our subject Saivism with its overtone of Phallicism leads us to refer this name to a phallic point raised by a renowned scholar. Louis Renou on p. 323 of L'Inde Classique mentions that the name Viṣṇu could have a non-Aryan phallic import meaning 'realised through penis'. How he comes to this conclusion is not quite clear. Etymologically 'Viṣnu' could be broken, as he attempts, into 'vi-+-sanu' which would mean crossing a high peak or elevation. (Kalidasa: Sanuni gandhah suravi karoti. But 'Sänu' also means the 'Sun'; as it means, the 'highest', 'peak-most'. Why then "Vi-sanu' should mean 'high' alone is not clear. Anyhow, from this meaning of 'peak' Renou goes to mean Vi-sanu as something else. Viṣnu has another name, Sipivista which is also an epithet of Siva. (Sanskrt- English Dictionary-V. S. Apte.) What is the meaning of Sipi-visa? Renou says-Penis, or realised through penis. Is this so? Let us see. Now, Sipi means: ray of light, or Water (Sipi-vari preakçṣate-Vyasa).

Hence Sipi-vista gives the same meaning. as Narayana which also means (according to Manu) abode of Water'. If this be so, then how does Renou make to read in Sipi-vista any phallic sense, and how does it mean 'realised through penis'? This looks mysterious. There is a possibility, however; but no probability. Sipi-vista means 'baldheaded'; and by inferential secondary meaning could mean 'a Man (or limb) without a prepuce'. John M. Allegro has shown (The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross) how Man means Penis in Sumerian. But to accept such far-fetched meaning to explain Sipi-vista, and then claim Visnu as a non-Aryan name of phallic import is to ignore all other meanings of the word Sipi.

The other meanings include (a) Brhad-devata (II. 69) (Viṣnate-r-Visate- r-va syad visate-r-vyapti-karmanah, Visnuh), which means 'all pervading', spreading in all directions. (Viṣnat or Vikati); (b) Mahabharata (V-70- 13) 'Visnuh' is his name

because he overcomes all; (c) Idam-Viṣno-r- vicakrame, says Rg Veda supporting Mahabharata; and (d) Visnu Purana says that the name Visnu means 'all pervading'.

The phallic slant could have been given due to a temptation for scholarly sensationalism, or novelty, or both. As such, Bhakti itself is a tradition more ancient than Śaivism. Vaisnava hymns of the Tamil Acaryas, as has already been noted, are supposed to be of earlier origin than the Saiva hymns.

Śaivism has to be understood in this light. That it is anti-Brahmanic, anti-Aryan, alien to the Indian subcontinent, are opinions voiced here and there. Whilst all these could be supported by adequate academic scholarship, it should still be borne in mind, that the very essence of Sai- vism is Bhakti. And Bhakti has an Indian tradition, which touched other parts of the ancient world. These parts fell within the commer- cial sphere of the Tamils who were devoted to the Bhakti cult. There- fore, it will not be unfair to infer that whilst certain types of worship could be obtaining in the ancient world of the Orient (West Asia and East Europe) where temple ritualism and priestly domination flourished around certain deities, inclusive of phallic deities, in India itself, specially in the Tamil-land, the essential features of Bhakti as a way of sublime ecstasy had been cultivated.

This Bhakti, of course, must have come into contact with the ritualistic practices of the migrant nations who happened to stimulate native Indian thoughts; it could have even held serious challenges to the peculiar Vedism of Indian rites. The consequent conflict arising out of such a possibility diversified the forms that Bhakti took amongst the different sects. A question in the Gitä makes us conscious of this possibility. A type of Bhakti, which could be called unorthodox (or unapproved by Hindu- traditions), or unapprovable, was being introduced into the traditional Hindu Life, and needed clarification. "How would you classify (Sattva:

Rajas: Tamas) those men, Krsna, who forsake the law of Scriptures, and yet offer sacrifices with faith (Śraddha-Bhakti)?" The question supports the existence of a confused state. Something unknown was happening. Faith with Bhakti was being practised, but not quite approvable,by the existing forms and laws of the known scriptures. Sastra (Scripture) and Vidhi (form) both were being abandoned (Utsariya) by these faithfuls. There was a foreign trend trying to push into the native form of

Upåsanā. The impact of foreign way of thinking on the native ways produced schools of thinking in Saiva-worship in which the Northern Kashmir strain, the Southern Siddhanta strain, and the fragmentary and reformative Vira- Śaiva strain are the most significant.

These have to be studied now separately.

REFERENCES

1. योगीश्वरं याज्ञवल्क्यं संपूज्य मुनयोब्रुवन् ।
वर्गाथमेतराणान्न ब्रूहि धर्मानशेषतः
सम्वत्रि–विहारीताः
याज्ञवल्क्योशनांगिराः ।
यमापस्तम्बसंवर्त्ताः
कात्यायनवृहस्पतीः ॥
पराशरव्यास शंखलिखिताः दक्ष गौतमौ ।
शातातपो वशिष्ठश्च धर्मशास्त्र प्रयोजका ॥
-Sraddha-Tattva, Bhavadeva.

2. Gitä, IX: 23-30.

3. Ragozin. Vedic India, p. 114.

4. Max Müller. Ancient History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 69.

5. Radhakrishnan. Principal Upanisad, p. 31.

6. Durant, op. cit., Vol I, 214.

7. Ibid., p. 263.

8. Ibid., p. 234.

9. Kula-Devată, Loka-Devata, Sthana Devata (Ancestral gods, Local

10. Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. 1, pp. 529-32.

11. The ancient Gaura, name of Pala Bengal, and its capital; a Maharashtra subcaste Gaura; and a tribe Gadi besides having phonetic similarities could also claim other similarities such as worship of Kali, migratory life, and being prone to coastal living. I have no further access to any clearer evidence to show if these have any historical connec- tion with the Gordios .

12 Durant. op. cit., p. 288.

13 The Balarama-trend of the Vasudeva cult, the Bali and Bāṇa legends, and the characteristics of the 'Bala' people demand comparative study, as all these appear to have some relation with the 'bull', and some Śaivic rites.

32. Ibid.

33. (a) Manava Dharma Sastra, X: 43, 44.

34. Chatterji, Dr. S. K. Presi-dential Address, All India Oriental Conference, 17th Session, Ahmedabad.

35. de Burgh, W. C. The Legacy of the World.

36. Old Testament-Prophecies of Jeremiah

gods and Village gods) are still invoked Brahmanical Hindu rites
rites.
14. (a) Kings. XII: 28;
(b) Ezekiel. VIII: 10;
(c) Ahab worshipped heifers long after Solomon.
15. Durant. op. cit., p. 314.
16. Ibid., p. 314.
17. Op. cit., Ch. I, 14.
18. Incidentally Garga Samhita as a Vaiṣavna treatise speaks highly of integration and indiscrimination.
19. Khila-Harivamsa, Ch. I: 30: 132, 140.
20. Ibid., Ch. 140.
21. Ibid., Ch. 140.
22. This particular race was known from earliest times for (a) Sun Worship; (b) Worship of the Boar which was the image of the Vedic Yajna (Ahirbudhanya Sam hita); (c) Siva and Tantra cults.
23. Harivamsa, 140.
24. Ibid., Ch. 141.
25. Ibid., Ch. 141.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., Ch. 162.
30. "If Indian culture is differ- ent from any other Aryan cultures of the world it must be traced largely to the in- fluence of Dravidian civilisa- tion in India"-C. Raja-gopalachari, "The Tiru-k- Kural" (Cult. Hert. Ind.), Vol. II (RIC).
31. Mitra (Mrs.). Debala: Paper on "Foreign Element in Indian civilization and Zeparia.
37. Yet another reference to the duality of Samkhya as oppo- site to Monism of the Vedanta. This, and the world Assyria' tempt one to believe in the historicity of a Sura-Asura conflict of the Puranas which men- tions, finally, that the Suras had been a later schismic branch of the Asuras.
38. Is he the Varuna of the Vedas?
39. Is he the Aryaman of the Vedas?
40. de Burgh. op. cit., 39-42.
41. Isa Up., I: 1.
42. भूमैव सुखम् । नाल्पे सुखमस्ति ।
43. (a) Chinab: (Chin-ab) China and water, i.e.,
stream flowing from China.
(b) Candra and Bhaga- These are really two streams; Candra, the moon; and Bhaga, the Sun (Could this mean that on the banks of these rivers the two sister cults flourished separately.
55. आदावन्ते च मध्ये च हरिः सर्वत्र गीयते ।
Hari is sung of at the start, in the middle and at the end.
(Recited before Purana recitations).
56. Bhagavata Purana, II: 4, 18.
57. Ibid., VII: 5, 22.
58. (a) Ibid., VII: 11, 10.
(b) Ibid., VII: 24, 8.
(c) Gita, III: 12, 13.
59. Narada-Parivrajaka Up., p. 11
60. Chandogya Up., 1: 3.

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44. Compare to the reference given in Harivamsa cited before.

45. Deo Barank inscription of Sahabad district.

46. Gobindapur inscription, XI: 37, 38.

47. Later historians might some day justify the author's enquiry if a connection between the coast of Orissa and the migrated people of the Persian Empire is an entirely remote possibility.

48. Banerji, J. N. Development of the Hindu Iconography, p. 124. Plate XI: 2. Trimurti figures later developed along the Peninsular India border-ing the Arabian Sea.

49. उत्पन्ना द्राविडे चाहं कर्णाटे बुद्धिमागता ।
स्थिता किंचिन्महाराष्ट्र गुर्जरे जीर्णतां गता ।।

I was born in the Dravida- country, and attained ma- turity in the Karnataka. For a while I abided in Maharashtra; but then I decayed in Gurjara. -Padma Purana, Uttara, 50-51.

50. Op. cit., Ch. I, 41.

51. Bhagavata Purana, X: 24: 8-23.

52. Ibid., VII: 2: 7.

53. Ibid., VII: 20.

54. नूनातिरिक्ततांजाता कली वेदोक्तकर्मणा ।
सांगं भवतुतत्सर्वं श्रीहरेर्नाम कीर्तनात् ॥

61. Maitreyi Up., p. 112.

62. Ibid., p. 118.

63. The Upanisads referred to in this paragraph are form (Minor and Unpublished Upanisads, for Otto Schro- deer; Odyar: Madras).

64. Syama-rahasyopanisad (Ibid.), p. 228.

65. Ibid., p. 247.

66. अमानिना मानदेन कीर्त्तनीयः सदा हरिः ।

A Hari-singer has to return honour for insults. -Caitanya.

67. Vajrasucikopanisad and Bhavisya Purana: Quoted by Dr. K. M. Sen Sastri "Bharater Sanskrti" (ViŚva Bharati- Bengali).

68. Bhagavata, XVI: II: 4, 18.

69. Ibid., VII: 20, 19.

70. Ibid., XI: 14, 3.

71. Ibid, VII and X.

72. Mahabharata, XI: 47, 101.

106. Gita, IX: 27.

107. Ibid., V: 8-10.

108. Patanjali, Yoga Sutra, 11: 44-45.

109. Bhagavatam, 11: 4, 18.

110. (a) Garga Samhita: Vrinda- van, 11: 23.

(b) Visnu Purana, V: 33, 46- 50.

(c) Yoga Vasistha, IV, 1: 11, 56-58.

(d) Gita, V: 18-19.

(e) Brahma Vaivarta Purana (Krsna).

(f) Ibid., 83: 40.

(g) Ibid., 84: 42-53.

111. Gita, IX: 90.

112. Ibid., IX: 32.

In the Kali Yuga Vedic ceremonials appear to be redundant indeed. Let all that end in singing of Hari. (Recited after ritual prayers)

73. Bhisma, Janaka, Pravahana Javäli, Aivapati, Kaikeya, AjätŚatru, etc.
74. Rg Veda: 7th Mandala.
75. Ibid., I: 154: 5.
76. Atharvan, IX: 5:21.
77. Ibid., X: 2, 19.
78. Ibid., X: 7, 1 and X: 7, 11.
79. Rg Veda, X: 151, 4.
80. Ibid., X: 151, 5.
81. Bhavisya Purana, Brahma: 41, 45.
82. Ibid., 35-38.
83. Ibid., 41: 41.
84. Gita, 11: 40.
85. Patanjali, Yoga Sutra, 21.
86. Ibid., 28.
87. Ibid., 30.
88. Ibid., 14.
89. Bhagavatam, XI: 11, 29-32.
90. Letter from Archbishop Fanelon of Cambrai to Aldoux Huxley, quoted in "Perennial Philosophy", p. 292.
91. Patanjali, Yoga Sutra.
92. Patanjali, Yoga Sutra, 111, 12.
93. Gita, XVIII: 52.
94. Ibid., IV.
95. Ibid., 40.
96. Ibid., IV: 39.
97. Ibid., V: 1.
98. Ibid., V: 7-10.
99. Ibid., VII: 20-23.
100. Ibid., VII: 16.
101. Ibid., VII: 9.
113. Bhagavata, XI: 39, 24.
114. Tattva Sagara.

115.संपन्न भावा संस्कृताः ।
शूद्रं वा भगवद्भक्तं निषाद श्वपच तथा ।।
वीक्ष्यते जाति सामान्यात् स याति नरकं ध्रुवम् ॥

Sure is hell to him who dis- criminates against the low- liest of the lowly when these latter are the true devotees of God.

116. अशुद्धाः शुद्धकल्पा हि ब्राह्मणाः। कलिसम्भवाः ।
तेषामागममार्गेण शुद्धिर्न श्रीत वर्मणा ॥

The Brahmanas of the Kali Yuga could be properly sacramented through the Agama way alone, not through the Vedic rites.

117. A. (i) Bhagavatam, IV: 29: 46-47.
(ii) Mundaka Up.,II:2:8.
B. The astirred manifest expression from Prakrti is Cosmic Nārāyaṇa. The Cosmic Puruşa en- ters into Prakṛti Väsu- deva, the regulator of the Cosmic Law. The same divine tainted with subtle ego is Sam- karşana: Samkarşana Hari; and with gross ego is Pradyumna the Visnu. In the Ani- ruddha-form the same. Hari, the Cosmic, is
the regulator of the Mind and its faculty. - from Madhavācārya (Kapilya, XIX: 27).

119. विष्णु पादास गंगेत्रिपथगामिनी

Oh Ganga, sprung from Visnu's foot, and

102. Ibid., VII: 24.
103. Patanjali, Yoga Sutra, 111, 182.
104. Ibid., 1: 27.
105. Bhagavatam, VII: 5, 23. (See Ref. 200; Ch. Four ante.)
118. It is often a matter of curio- sity how the town of Gaya claims the honour of a sanctified pilgrimage of the Hinduism, as well as from the Buddhists. A deeper study in the life of Gaya as an Asura could reveal the true significance of the term of Visṇu-pada. The obli- gatory Hindu Śrāddha- Kriya (offerings to the soul of the dead and the ances- tors, i.e. the Menes) at the Visnu-pada could explain why Gautama had selected that spot for his long penance. Was he making sure that at this place he could have to face his greatest opposition from the Magi-people of the Mihira- cult, Vaisnavism, Tan- tricism, and occultism?
134. (a) Brahma Vaivarta, (Krsna): 84: 1-14; 14- 17.
(b) Visnu Purana, 111, 11- 17.
135. Mahabharata, III: 206-214.
136. Ibid., XI: 260-63.
137. (a) Visnu Purana, IV: 5. (b) Rg Veda (Wilson 1: 60), 1: 38.
138. Visnu Purana (a) IV: 25. (b) V: 85.
139. (a) Ibid., VII: 89: 3.
(b) II: 12.
(c) X: 82.
140. Nirukta (Yaska) quoted by Swami Ghanananda in
"The Dawn of Indian Phi- losophy" (Cult. Hist. Ind.) Vol. p. 342 (RIC).
flowing along the Three-ways.... (from daily bathing prayer).
120. Maitrey Up., VI: 30.
121. Katha Up., 11: 9: (cf. Rg. Veda, 1: 22: 20).
122. Apastamba, Parasara; and Hiran jakelin"Vign-Stana- yatu".
123. Rg Veda, X: 19: 4: and 11: 154: 6.
124. Baudhayana, Gr. Sutra, 11: 5:4
125. (a) Later, when Kṛṣṇa identified with Visnu, these names Go-pa, Go-vinda, and Damodara would be used as gems for delightful legends with deeper esoteric significance.
(b) Bhagavatum, IX: 12-18.
XIX; XX and XXVII.
(c) Mahabharata, V: 70: 8.
126. Sharma, Dr. B. N. K., "Early History of Vaigaism" (Cult. Hert. of India), Vol. IV (RIC).
127. Sen, Dr. K. M. "Bharatiya Sanskrti" (Visva Bharati- Bengali), pp. 53-54.
128. Tilak, B. G. Gità Rahasya, Appen. V.
129. Ibid.
130. Ibid., Appen. IV.
131. (a) Maitreyi Upanisad
(b) Rama-purva-tapani, 16.
(c) Amptabindu, 22.
132. Gita, IV: 1-2.
133. Mahabharata, XI: 3: 47: 10.
146. Gita, IV: 38.
147. Ibid.
148. Mundaka Up., III: 2, 4.
149. जीवेश्वरी मायिकवेति विश्वम् सर्वाविनेनेति नेति विहाय यदा

141. Ibid.

142. Sukhtankar, Dr. V. S., Critical Studies in the Maha- bharata (Edited P. K. Code).

143. Sharma, Dr. B. N. K. "Early History of Vaisnavism" (Cult. Hist. of India, RIC), p. 113. Cf. Majumdar, Dr. R. C. "Age of Imperial Unity", p. 103.

144. Ikṣvaku-This Aryan chief would have been related to the introduction of the Sim cult, and religion of the Magi. Cf. Dr. Sham (Ibid.); and Dr. Majumdar, (Ibid.).

145. The fundamental difference between Vardhamana Mahavir and his disciple rival stands between this point of the universality of the Soul. The Ajivakas, the Jainas, the Svetämbaras and the Digambaras, too, argue this point. (cf. Jnana- deva and Ekanatha).

164. Bhakti-Rasamṛta-Sindhu, 1:2: 16.

165. (a) Hanumana quoted in Bhagavata commentary of Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati (III: 29: 11: 73).

(b) Brahma Vaivarta Puranas, Kṛṣṇa-Janma, 84: 43, 45.

166. Bhagavatam, 111: 29: 23.

167. Gitä, VII: 16, 18.

168. (a) Chandogya, 1: 1, 2.

169. Chandogya, 1: 10, 11 (Read the legend of Usasti).

170. (a) Pancadasi, 74-82. (b) Samkarācārya's com- mentary on Br. Sutra, 1: 3, 9.

(c) Bṛhadaran yaka, 1:3, XI: 14, 26.

171. Gitä, V: 5.

यदवशिष्यते तदद्वयं ब्रह्म ।

150. Gitä, II: 29.

151. Vedanta Bhasya (Samkara 11: 37).

152. St. Theresa of Availla, Confessions, Ch. IV.

153. Chandogya Up., VI: 12.

154. Gită, IV: 39.

155. Ibid., XVIII: 3.

156. Ibid., IV: 40.

157. Hymns of the Robe of Glory,
IV: 4, 5 (An Early Syrian
Christian poem of second century. Trans. by G. R. S. Mead).

158. Jalal-ud-din Rumi (Trans. A. J. Arberry).

159. Sermon-1.

160. "Mukhe nahi nihsare bhaṣ
antare nirvak banhi," Tagore. (Not a word escapes the lips; the heart fired with a mute flame though.)

161. See Ref. No. 147, Ch. Four ante.

162. न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरी
कवितां वा जगदीश कामये ।
मम जन्म जन्मनीश्वरे
भवतां भक्तिरहेतुकी त्वयि ।।

Seek I not wealth, relatives, woman, poetic talents, O Lord. All I seek is love for you life after life

163. Bhagavatam, III: 29: 12.

178. Durastham cantike-ca-tat, Gita, XIII: 15. Also see Svetasvatara, II: 16, 17. Îsa: V.

179. Harihara nanda Sarasvati, Swami. Lingopäsana Ra- hasya ("Siddhanta', II:

172. (a) Brahma Bhasya, III: 359.

(b) Cf. Vedanta Paribhasa.

(c) Yoga Sutra-Isvara Pra- nidhanatvāt.

173. Reference to Ahirbudhanya Samhita, already made, shows how the entire exercise of Vedic Yajña was symbolised into the Varaha- Form of Visnu, the Lord of the Yajña. See Nyasa- Yajna in Ahirbudhanya Samhita. (See Hymn on Varaha: Vinu Purana, 1:4).

174. Katha, L: 2, 17.

175. Brahma Bhagya, IV: 3, 15.

176. (a) Br. Vaiv. Purana, Krma Janma, 75, 78.

177. "Prehistoric Mankind":

This is the reason why the author has undertaken to link them to those civilisations of the orient which belong to prehistoric past.

191. St. Theresa (Penguin), p. 127.

192. Bergson. quoted by Juan Mascaro in The Upanisads (Penguin), pp. 32-33.

193. Tukārām, Abhanga, XXXVIII: 6.

194. Taittiriya, III: 2, 6.

195. Chandogya, VII.

196. Mahabharata, Vana Parvam, II: 13, 3.

197. Gitä, VI: 32.

198. Patanjali Bhasya, I: 36: 37.

199. Gita, XI: 45, 46.

200. Gitä, X: 19.

201. Sandilya Sutra, III: 39, 44.

202. (a) Gitä, VIII: 24. (b) Gita, IX: 11.

203. Kena, 1:58.

1941 -42).

180. Radha Bhāva, Garga Samhita (Mathura) IV: 9, 24.

181. (a) Padma Purana, Pātāla Khanda Chs. 74, 81, 82. Cf. Radha-Mystery (Rädhäism) to 'Agama' in Tantra, as this too comes from Śiva, and goes to Parvati; and is accepted by Väsu- deva.

(b) See Garga Samhita; Garuda P.; Brahma Vai- varta P. and Padma P. for 'Radha'.

182. Gitä, V: 5, 17.

183. अक्षरागम लाभये यथा
स्थूल वर्तुलदृश्यपरिग्रहः ।
शुद्धबुद्ध परिलब्धये तथा
दारुमृण्मय शिलामयाचंनम् ॥

184. (a) Brahma Vaivarta, Kr. Kh. 75-1: 4, 10.

(b) Garga Samhita, Mathura XXI: 21.

185. Gita, XII: 5.

186. Ibid., XIII: 28.

187. Tilak, B. G. (Gtta Rahasya-Bengali Edition), p. 415.

188. Setalvatara, III: 8.

189. Gita, IX: 18.

190. Ballabhācārya, Madhur astakam.

204. Op. cit., IV: 1: 4.

205. Gitä, VII: 21.

206. Vivekananda. Bhakti Yoga.

207. (a) Gita (i) XII: 9-11; (ii) VII: 9; (iii) VI: 45.

208. Vivekananda. op. cit., pp. 45, 75.

209. Gita, IX: 31-33.

210. Ibid., XII: 14.

211. Ibid., XVIII: 66.

Thank You