



# ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

*A quarterly presenting the divine life and teaching of  
SRI ANANDAMAYI MA and various aspects of  
Universal Dharma*

\* \* \* \*

## *Advisory Editorial Board*

**Dr. Govinda Gopal Mukhopadhyaya**  
**Sri R. K. Banerjee**  
**Sri Jainath Kaul**  
**Dr. Bithika Mukerji**  
**Sri T. Sadasivan Aiyar**  
**Ram Alexander**

\* \* \* \*

*Editor : Atmananda*

---

ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ welcomes contributions on the life and teachings of Ma and reflections and personal experiences of Ma's devotees and admirers. Articles on religious and philosophical subjects as well as on lives of saints and sages of all countries and all times are also invited. Articles should as far as practicable be typed with double spacing and on one side of the page.

---

—: ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION:—  
(Postage Free)

INDIA—	Rs. 15/- only	
FOREIGN—	<i>Sea Mail</i>	<i>Air Mail</i>
America	\$ 5·00	\$ 10·00
Other Countries	£ 2·50	£ 5·00

# ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

\*

*The Eternal, the Ātman—  
Itself pilgrim and path of Immortality  
Self contained—THAT is all in One.*

---

Vol. XXIX

● JANUARY, 1982 ●

No. 1

---

## CONTENTS

- |   |     |       |
|---|-----|-------|
| 1. Sri Sri Ma's Utterances  | ... | 1—3   |
| 2. Mātri Satsang—Swami Bhagavatananda<br>Giri   | ... | 4—13  |
| 3. The Heritage of the Hindus—<br>Bithika Mukerji   | ... | 14—20 |
| 4. Mahāmahopadhyāya Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj—<br>Govinda Gopal Mukhopadhyaya                  | ... | 21—32 |
| 5. Ma in Satsanga—Anil C. Ganguli   | ... | 33—48 |
| 6. In Association with Sri Sri Ma<br>Anandamayi—Sri A. K. Datta Gupta                     | ... | 49—60 |
| 7. Meeting a Yogi—S. C. Jaswal  | ... | 61—67 |
| 8. An Eternal Quarrel—Swami Bhumananda<br>Giri  | ... | 68—72 |
| 9. Gleanings from the thirty-second Saṃyam<br>Saptāha Mahāvratā at Kankhal—<br>B. C. Bose | ... | 73—81 |
| 10. Mātri Līlā  | ... | 82—88 |

---

---

“There is, O monks, a state where there is neither earth, nor water, nor heat, nor air ; neither infinity of space, nor infinity of consciousness, nor nothingness, nor perception, nor non-perception ; neither this world nor that world, neither sun nor moon. It is the uncreate.

“That, O monks, I term neither coming nor going, nor standing ; neither death nor birth. It is without stability, without change, ; it is the eternal which never originates and never passes away. There is the end of sorrow.

“It is hard to realize the essential, the truth is not easily perceived ; desire is mastered by him who knows, and to him who sees aright all things are naught.

“There is, O monks, an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed. Were there not, O monks, this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, there would be no escape from the world of the born, originated, formed.

“Since, O monks, there is an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated and unformed, therefore is there an escape from the born, originated, created, formed.”

—*The Gospel of Buddha*

---

---

# SRI SRI MA'S UTTERANCES

*Reported by Sri Gurupriya Devi in  
"Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi", Vol. VII.*

(Collected and translated from Bengali by Bithika Mukerji)

"Just as a hungry person looks for and assembles items of food, so should one search for the ingredients pertaining to the other world."

"But we have no 'hunger' for the other world, so what should we do?"

"That is very true. You have really stated the crux of the matter. If there is no 'hunger' then you must treat yourself for loss of appetite! For this, medicines are prescribed and supportive diet is indicated."

"What is the medicine and what is the diet for this ailment?"

"Repetition of His Name is the medicine and self-discipline is the diet. If you follow this regimen, you will see that 'hunger' is enkindled and gradually it will increase also. In the beginning self-discipline is required. Renunciation and a state of illness (apathy toward spiritual effort) are concomitantly related. As long as one suffers from lack of appetite one must practise the rigourisms of prescribed food and medicine. Haven't you noticed that even when a patient is on the road to recovery and free from his disease, he continues to suffer from weakness for a while? At that time he is given extra nourishing food. He

must become an 'enjoyer' (*bhoktā*)\* at that time. And, what is this enjoyable nourishment for the erstwhile sick man ? It is *sadhanā* !”

“The world is a world of duality and therefore a source of pain. If one is out for worldly achievements, suffering is inevitable. Do you know what it is like ? It is like purposely striking against an already existing sore, so that pain is doubled. To move toward God is on the other hand like soothing the sore with an unguent. There is no other mode of appeasing suffering.

“You see, when someone tastes something delicious, he recommends it to his son, father or other dear ones, saying, ‘taste this, and see how good it is !’ So this body asks all of you to practise the repetition of His Name. It is the only source of peace.

“Set apart one room or one corner of a room for sitting while repeating the Names of God (*japa*) and meditating. Keep this room spotlessly clean, burn incense in it and make it as beautiful as you can. It will acquire an atmosphere, so that as soon as you enter the room your thoughts will naturally turn toward God. Do not worry about being on the right path because in the beginning the variety of ways may appear bewildering. If you sit idle and contemplate the paths nothing is achieved. One must start walking. Once on the road, one meets other wayfarers who give information regarding the journey.

---

\* (A play of meaning of the three words, *rogi*, *yogi* and *bhogi*)

---

“Pitaji, one has to proceed toward one’s home. The physical body is a house of breath. Repeatedly it is stated (by me) that one must look upon it as an inn. Don’t you assemble things and make arrangements before setting out on a journey? In order to return ‘home’ from this wayside inn, you should also make efforts toward husbanding resources for the pilgrimage ahead !”

---

*“Ma, years ago you told me : ‘The husband is the Guru.’ A few months ago my husband died and now I feel all lost. What am I to do ?*

*“The husband who is the Guru does not die. Contemplate your husband as the Guru !”*

# MĀTRI SATSANG

Swami Bhagavatananda Giri

(Translated from Bengali)

(Continued from the last issue)

Kanpur, November 17th, 1958

Before the Mātri Satsang I had requested my brother and sister *vratīs* to make a point of attending the morning and evening *kirtana*. I added that during *kirtana* the ladies seemed to be more prominent while the men's places remained vacant. This caused a brother to say :

*Question* : Just now the Controller has declared that the ladies are more conspicuous during *kirtana*. Does this imply that their devotion is greater and that they will realize God sooner ? It has been found, not only in India but also in Europe and elsewhere, that religious fervour is more predominant among women.

*Mataji* : Mothers do have more compassion— for are they not mothers ? They know how to serve and their power of endurance is greater. Not all mothers can afford to keep servants or helpers. Mothers are endowed with compassion and mercy.

You will receive according to your attitude of heart and mind, whether you sit here or elsewhere.

*Question* : Do we possess less devotion (*bhāva*) ?

*Mataji* : If your heart and mind continue to be centred here even if you happen to be in your room, then your gain will be total ; while if you sit in the pandal and your mind has remained in your home, you will gain nothing. This reminds



me of something : When God created the universe and made arrangements for everyone, sin approached Him and said : “You have provided a place for everyone, but what provision have you made for me ?” God replied : “You will reside with those who do not keep the remembrance of God in their minds.” Wherever you may live, be it in England or anywhere else, you can attain to liberation. It all depends on your attitude of heart and mind, on your intensity.

*Question* : On the path to God-realization do women precede men ?

*Mataji* : Those whose aspiration is deeper and stronger will advance further.

*Questioner* : Women have less intellect (*buddhi*), so they are more religious-minded.

*Mataji* : Do you want to assert that men will precede because of their brains and intelligence ? Is it not true that your entire intelligence must first of all be dedicated at the Lord’s feet ?

*Questioner* : Yes, Ma !

*Mataji* : How can you avoid acknowledging this ?

*Questioner* : Pagal Haranath\* has a lot to say in his books in praise of women. He has declared that women prepared *rotis* and fed Sri Krishna, making Him sit by them.

*Mataji* : Whatever anyone may say is correct from his own point of view. Whose is the *yoga māyā* ?

*Questioner* : It is God’s.

---

\*Pagal Haranath was a well-known Bengali Vaiṣṇava saint.

*Mataji* : It is God's own *māyā*. Now ponder over this fact.

*Questioner* : We have all fallen into the clutches of God.

*Mataji* : When Lord Krishna stole butter from the homes of the Gopis, they caught hold of Him and asked : "Why do you steal from our homes ?" Sri Krishna said : "I do not eat butter belonging to others. I look upon all as my own. It is you who think of others as separate. I never do."

*Questioner* : Krishna stole and ate butter, but when cornered he declared : "I have not eaten it !"

*Mataji* : He was caught in His own net. This is quite true. Do not the Upanishads declare : "He has no feet, yet walks, no eyes, yet sees." This is exactly similar.

*Question* : What is the use of such topsy-turvy arguments ?

*Mataji* : Whose is the energy (*śakti*) that is working within each one ?

*Questioner* : It is God's energy.

*Mataji* : So it is through God's power that all mothers are embodiments of mercy and compassion. You alleged that the intelligence of women is inferior. The less there is of the intelligence (*durbuddhi*) that projects God into the far distance the better. God comes near only when such foolishness (*durbuddhi*) is discarded.<sup>1</sup>

*Question* : What are the means of getting rid of this foolishness ?

---

1. A play upon words ; *dūra* means far and *durbuddhi* foolishness, evil-mindedness.

*Mataji* : Dwell in the proximity of Mahātmās. Concentrate on satsang, *japa*, meditation and the reading of Scriptures.

*Questioner* : We are householders. We do not get any spare time, so we cannot go to Mahātmās. Please tell us how we, in the ashram of the householder, can perform our devotion and worship.

*Mataji* : God is the Supreme Father, Supreme Mother, Supreme Friend. He is all in all. It is no good saying that you cannot achieve anything where you are placed in life. You will have to make an effort. You may give whatever time is necessary for worldly affairs, but all the rest of your time must be spent in the endeavour to realize God.

*Question* : I still implore you to tell me what is meant by *sādhana* ?

*Mataji* : Perform *japa* of God's name, contemplate Him, keep Him in remembrance, and be ever mindful of one important point : do all your duties to the family as a service to the Lord. When attending to your children think that you are serving all these Bālagopāls. Regard your wife as the Goddess, and the wife should serve her husband as a manifestation of the Lord.

Nowadays the Brahmacharya Ashram has been practically abandoned. But it cannot be abolished entirely. (*Mataji* points towards Jogesh Brahmachari.) A real seed is never destroyed—it remains alive in some form or other. The brahmacharya ashram is the very foundation of the life of a householder. It is through this neglect that things have been thrown into confusion. In the householder's

ashram a spirit of service must be fostered. Always think : "I am the manager of the temple that my household represents—not its proprietor." Endeavour to cultivate this attitude of mind.

Just as a clock has to be wound every twenty-four hours, so should you regularly spend some time in the mornings and evenings in *japa*, meditation, reading of religious books ; and whenever you have the opportunity seek *satsang*. The *grihastha ashram* is also a kind of ashram. If you observe its rules and regulations it will certainly become a real ashram. The four walls do not tie you down. The actual bondage is that of the mind. If you worship God wherever you may be, God is bound to be revealed. You will succeed in proportion to your eagerness and the depth of your devotion.

By a life of service your mind will be purified and you should always consider yourself as a tool in the hands of the Lord : He is directing all your movements. Work with your hands and keep your thought fixed on God. Whatever time you can spare try to spend in the contemplation of the One.

Mahātmas tell of the supremacy of God's name. Under all circumstances and in all conditions remember God's holy name. If you have a Guru, use the mantra given by Him for your *japa* and if you have not yet found a Guru, repeat whichever of God's names appeals to you most. Pray to Him thus : "O Lord, I just cannot live without you anymore !" By continuing in this strain your fervour will increase and you will realize God who, when found, nothing more remains to be desired.

Just as fire or even a spark of fire has the power to burn everything to cinders, so can the name of the Lord destroy all sin and evil. Therefore cling to His holy name; this is all your little daughter begs of you. The greater your intensity the quicker will you achieve. By rubbing two substances together fire is struck; by digging the earth water is found; so also if you practise your prayer and worship with deep devotion and eagerness, the way to the realization of God will surely be found.

In course of conversation Mataji said :

“Some people ask why it is considered a sin to emit smoke while enjoying a cigarette? It is not proper to smoke a cigarette and eject fumes of smoke. (Mataji points at Sri Chakrapaniji, a Mahātmā present.) He also stated that people pollute the air by blowing smoke into it.”

*Mataji* : By the repetition of God’s name, by meditation and *kīrtana* the whole atmosphere is purified. Perform action dedicated to the Lord and have no fear at all : by the execution of His work the road to liberation will be opened up.

*Questioner* : In this world there are two paths : One—to practise *japa*, meditation and discrimination, and the other—to perform one’s tasks in the world free of egoism.

*Mataji* : Speaking of karma yoga is a different matter. Beware that in the name of karma yoga the work is not done for the sheer enjoyment of it. You, the offspring of the Immortal, are a servant of the Lord ; by pouring out clouds of smoke from the cigarette in your lips you are merely fulfilling a carnal desire.

The desire to please Sri Krishna is called love while the desire to cater to one's senses is called passion. Remember you are a tool in the hands of the Lord ! Whose is your wealth ? It belongs to God. You are only its manager, not its owner. You have no right to enjoy a cigarette and spread its smoke all around you.

*November 18th, 1958*

### **Hari Om Ma**

At the request of some devotees Mataji sang kirtan with a very sweet voice in a most melodious tune. The kirtan was so captivating that all present kept on listening spell-bound, repeating each line in unison after Mataji. In this wonderful, heavenly atmosphere deep silence prevailed and waves of immortal bliss poured gently on all present.

*November 19th, 1958*

*Question :* Today someone declared that there was no need of devotion (*bhakti*), everybody should just practise yoga.

*Mataji :* To realize God who is eternally united with His creation is the purpose of yoga. Yoga must be practised in some way or other. Whichever line you may be following can be fruitful. God is infinite and the paths to realize Him are also of infinite number and variety. Whichever line is pointed out to each one by his Guru should be adopted.

One day two men were quarrelling. One said : "My road is correct," the other retorted : "No, it is my road that is correct." This body declared : "Whichever line is chosen is correct for that particular individual." How admirable is the faith of

a person who, so long as he follows his particular line, firmly believes that his path alone and no other is the right one. Those who believe in devotional *sādhana* assert that *bhakti* is the supreme truth and all else false, while advocates of *Advaita* hold that theirs is the only correct path. Disparity arises only while one is still on the way. On reaching the ultimate Destination, it is realized that all roads have led to the one and only Goal there is.

*Question* : So one must not think of another's line that it is wrong.

*Mataji* : Who has created "yes" and "no" ?

*Jogesh Brahmachari* : God has.

*Mataji* : Therefore there is no place for incongruity. No road exists outside of Him. "Yes" and "no" exist only so long as one is still on the path. You are in the "no" as well as in the "yes". You exist in the minutest and most subtle form as well as in the most colossal—the question of getting angry does not arise at all. Baba, do not get angry ! Whatever anyone says is correct from his viewpoint. You should consider that it is your own beloved Deity that has appeared before you in such a guise.

*Questioner* : From now on I shall put my *Thakur* (beloved deity) on the shelf.

*Mataji* : So you will make the Supreme your Guru ? If you have real faith in your Guru it is not fitting to give way to fear. "Hey Krishna ! Hey Rāma ! You have manifested yourself in this form ! O my Lord, my God, it is you yourself who have

come to speak to me in this fashion.” Let others say whatever they please, but you must remain undisturbed.

*Questioner* : It is said in our *Śāstras* that it is not right to remain where the Guru or the *Śāstras* are maligned.

*Mataji* : Actually it is not possible for anyone to speak ill of one’s *Iṣṭa* or Guru. Because my Guru is the Guru of the universe and the Guru of the universe is my own Guru. Similarly my *Iṣṭa* is the world’s *Iṣṭa* and the world’s *Iṣṭa* is my own. If you think calumny is being uttered concerning your Guru, it is not right to remain there.

*Questioner* : During the *Samyam Saptah* it is uncalled for to speak against bhakti.

*Mataji* : My Guru or *Iṣṭa* is present within all. If you feel that evil is being spoken of your Guru, do not listen to it, that is, do not let it enter into you.

\*

\*

\*

In course of subsequent conversation Mataji said :

Let me speak of something that I remember from my childhood. When this body was a child, mother had warned us never to lay hands on anything in other people’s houses without their permission, i.e. never to touch anything even if it lay right in front of us. And then she elaborated on this by telling the following story to her little daughter :

Once upon a time a devotee attained to the realization of Bhagavan Sri Krishna by his worship and contemplation of Him. But in the course of this he had incurred a debt ; he owed a paisa



to somebody. However his *sādhanā* had reached such a high level that the Lord Himself repaid his debt. Sri Krishna thus not only showed him the way but made sure of his ultimate achievement.

On the subject of debts or taking loans, this body's mother used to say : "Never get into debt with anybody. Never touch someone else's belongings." Once someone had sent us a *thāli*\* full of delicious things. The *thali* was emptied and cleaned so as to be returned in good time. Meanwhile someone suggested : "Why not make use of the *thali* ? It can be replaced by another household *thali*."

Thereupon this body declared that to use someone else's *thali* originally sent filled with good things would be tantamount to theft. It is not right to make use of any article belonging to another person without his permission.

*Question* : Please show us a path by treading which every ordinary man and woman in the world can become happy, get rid of sorrow, have peace of mind and tranquillity, so that all may attain to true happiness.

*Mataji* : Of things divine alone must be right speech, all else is vain and full of pain. Where Rāma is, there is ease and repose, where Rāma is not there is nothing but unrest and uneasiness.

\* Hari Om Ma \*

---

\**Thāli* metal plate.

---

# THE HERITAGE OF THE HINDUS<sup>1</sup>

Bithika Mukerji

## **On Methodology :**

It is well known that the Hindu tradition is the Vedic tradition. The multifaceted religious atmosphere which is so characteristic of our country derives its strength and sustenance from the Vedas. The ancient sages lighted for us the path of reverential worship of deities ; they also indicated the way toward the knowledge of the One Reality which remains hidden behind the many-splendoured world of everyday experience.

It is universally believed that the Vedas are the oldest scriptural lore of a living tradition. Hindus consider themselves Hindus by virtue of this ancient heritage, which has supported them in the past, helps them to live in the present and inspires them to a future of hope and blessedness. Our tradition is unique in the sense that it has remained unbroken down the ages. It can be seen easily that the ever-living fount of Truth, lived and taught by the Vedic seers, has been systematically guarded, preserved and proclaimed by succeeding generations of great exponents of the wisdom. Where traditions are broken or radicalised the recovery of

---

(1) This is the first of a series of articles to be published on this subject.

mind. Man does not choose to be rational ; he cannot but be rational and must relate to all that surrounds him through his outward-going sensibilities. The most natural attitude for man is therefore, a rational appreciation of the world in which he finds himself. This is the foundation on which sciences are built and thus it lies at the root of the Western tradition. This intellectual climate reflects an unwillingness to accept anything outside the framework of finite time, space and modes of verifiability.

If we keep both these points in mind, then we may begin to appreciate the unique message of the Vedas. The crucial point regarding the Vedic tradition is that reverence and rationality are held together in a continuity and not in opposition. That which is to be accepted in a spirit of reverence as Truth Itself, is made plausible and reasonable for the seeker of knowledge. The final state of this seeking lies in certainty, a certainty, achieved in the form of a direct apprehension, or in Self-realization because the goal of Vedic teaching is to indicate the ultimate unity of the Self with Brahman.

The Vedas teach man how to live in the world in which he finds himself ; it also teaches that although the world is desirable, it is not of supreme value because the happiness man seeks, lies beyond it. The teaching which seeks to take man beyond the framework of infinite time-space-objects, therefore, is necessarily of a pedagogical nature only. It has educational value, inasmuch as it is geared toward convincing a mind naturally prone to

meaning of ancient texts becomes an academic process. The strength of the ancient heritage is lost to those who feel severed from their roots. Hindus, however, do not regard the Vedas as 'written books' composed by nature worshippers of an early civilization. They are for the Hindus the embodiment of Reality Itself presented to mankind for contemplation by the 'Seers of truth' (*Rishis*) in the form of inspired utterances (*mantra*), strung together in unique sequence (*krama*) and set to specific rhythmic cadences (*chhanda*). The mantra is the heart of the Vedic literature.

A question may be raised if modern methods of evaluating ancient texts are completely inapplicable here, and if so, is this literature to be taken as an inviolable structure totally unrelated to the requirements of changing times? In order to judge the relevance of this question it is well to remember that modern methodology is itself an outcome of a particular tradition which acknowledges many stages of radicalizations in the developing history of its own cultural pattern. The Western tradition starting from ancient Greece recognises a break between an age of myths and an age of rational hypotheses which led to the birth of science. Modern methodologies reflect therefore an ethos which instead of taking anything on trust, would rather subject all phenomena to rational evaluations and employ verification for gaining exactitude in knowledge.

In this context, it is well to remember also, that rationality is the natural predicament of the human

---

worldly affairs, of the necessity for knowing that which lies beyond 'time, space and objecthood'. This pedagogical devise is for awakening an interest in the 'unnatural' rather than the natural ; a dimension of total bliss rather than a preoccupation with fragments of bliss ; a possibility of gaining a unity which is universal and immortal rather than remain at the level of fragmented existence.

Scholars trained in academic methods have spoken of and written about the greatness of the Vedas as ancient religious texts. They have seen in the books, a pattern of development from the worship of many gods, to the contemplation of the One Brahman ; from the preoccupation with worldly affairs and moral social standards toward an a-moral, lonely, asectic way of life ; and from the purity of Vedic sacrifices toward a complicated ritualistic mode of worship culminating in the Pauranic tradition of the supremacy of particular gods. Hindus, on the other hand, do not subscribe to this way of understanding their scriptures. The method of understanding which seeks to categorise ancient texts into time elements, becomes quite irrelevant in this context, because these are not "books written by men in bygone days" but they are the inspired songs of such men and women who have been vouchsafed the ultimate vision of Brahman as 'Reality, Knowledge, Bliss'. The realization of Brahman, spontaneously gives birth to beautiful hymns of celebration and joy. There can be no past, present or future as regards these paens of joy which are to be meditated upon,

contemplated and used for holding on to that dimension of life which sets the real meaning to everyday existence. They are the pulsating, living words which overcome all barriers of time and space ; and what can have a greater power of conviction than the direct apprehension of Truth ?

The theme of the Vedas may be summarised by saying that it lies in a message of hope that although Supreme knowledge of Brahman is unknown to man, yet man is the proper candidate for qualifying himself in order that this great Realisation of the unity of *ātman* and Brahman may be brought about. The one question the Vedas deal with is, "Why should I be called upon to know Brahman ? Why should I discipline myself in this enjoyable world in order to annihilate the I-consciousness which I am ?"

Science requires verifiability for its truths. Since the appeal here is to a mind already seized with thoughts about the other world, a reasonable presentation meets the case. The questioning arises because the possibility of the answer is already within the purview of the seeker. This can be stated in different words : all scriptures emphasize the importance of "The desire for Knowledge" (*mumukṣutva*) ; they also maintain that the desire for Knowledge can awaken only due to Divine Grace, so that the questioning is the penultimate situation culminating in the full certainty of Self-realization, a state of Bliss which finds expression in songs of joy and celebration. The scriptures, therefore, are for those who are already in a recep-

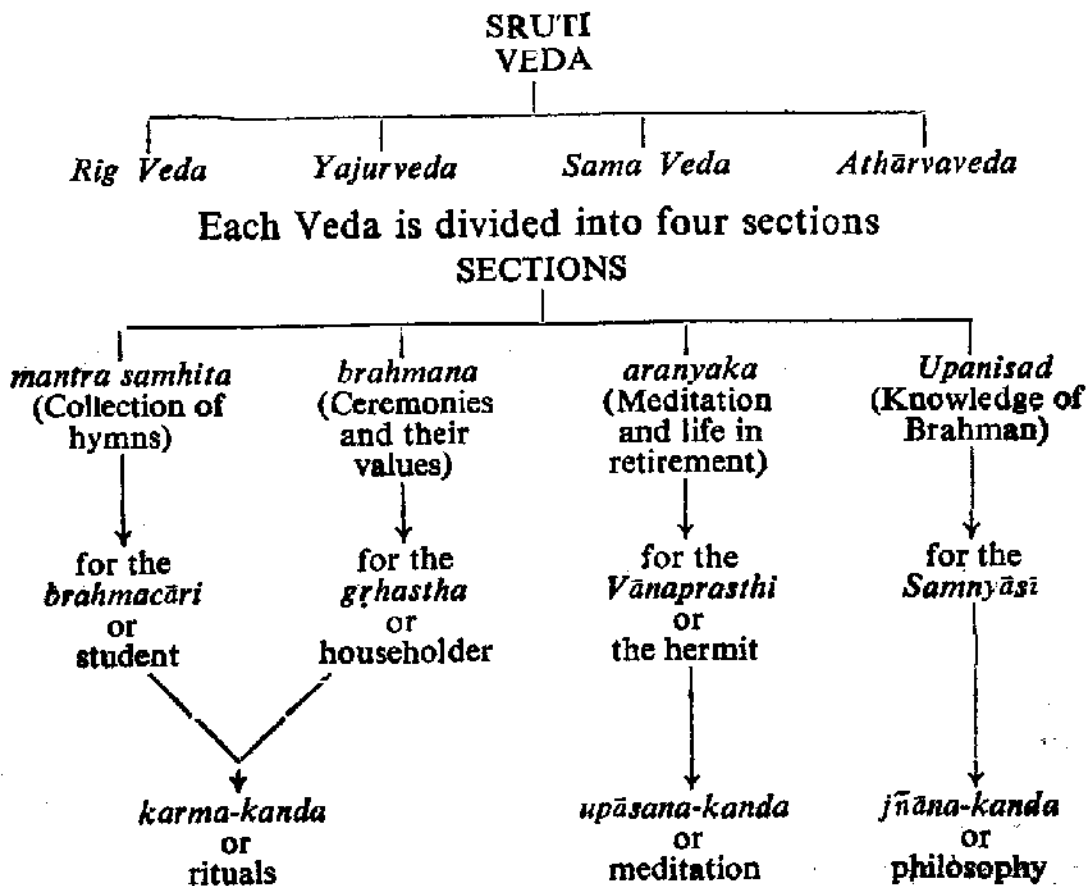
tive mood for the teaching regarding Brahman. They alone may enkindle the desire for knowledge which is the beginning of the quest for the man who is not totally engrossed in the world in the natural way. Like lighting of one lamp from another, the sequence of the transmission of this knowledge has passed from teacher to disciple to form an unbroken tradition from the most ancient times to the present.

In sum, it may be said that the Vedas contain every kind of teaching including the supreme knowledge of Brahman. Nothing which affects the life of a Hindu is totally extraneous to the Vedas in the sense that all teachings down the ages regarding *karma* (social activity) *upāsanā* (worship of deities) and *jñāna* (knowledge) have been in accord with what has been stated in the Texts. The heart of Vedic teaching lies in inculcating a reverential attitude toward the Supreme Being, who is the fountain-head as well as the ultimate resolution of all that there is in the universe.

**Structure of the Vedas :** The Vedas are stated in Sanskrit and are four in number, *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Athārvaveda*. Each Veda is divided into four sections. The first portion is called *samhita* comprising hymns (mantra) to gods. The second section is named *brahmana* ; it contains instructions in prose regarding ritualistic guidelines. The third section is called *aranyaka* or a forest treatise. These deal with contemplative thinking regarding this and the other world. The fourth section, known as *Upaniṣad* is also called Vedanta

because it comes at the end of the Veda in the literary as well as spiritual sense. These contain philosophical discourses between teachers and pupils regarding the supreme teaching of the unity of *ātman* and Brahman.

The divisions are very tenuous. One section flows into another. One *Upaniṣad* belongs in the first section itself. Thus no rigidity marks the divisions. They are fluid in the sense that one may proceed to the forest from the city whenever one feels called upon to do so, otherwise a steady progress is indicated in the passage from the life of a student, to the life of a householder, then life in retirement in preparation for the life of renunciation. The sections may be classified as follows :—



(to be continued)



**MAHĀMAHOPADHYĀYA  
Dr. GOPINATH KAVIRAJ:  
HIS ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION  
TO PHILOSOPHY\***

**Govinda Gopal Mukhopadhyaya**

Philosophy is a pursuit of truth. The Truth is veiled to the common eye and one has to pierce through the veil to see the face of Truth. To connote this 'seeing' the Indian term for philosophy has been '*darśana*'. The savant, whose life and philosophy this seminar has been privileged to discuss, was a life-long seeker after Truth and as such was a philosopher *par excellence* as well as a *darśanika* in the true sense of the term as he had seen that Truth face to face. In this lies the uniqueness of Mahāmahopadhyāya Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj that he was at once a *srotriya*, well-versed in all the *śāstras*, as well as a *brahmanistha*, firmly established in the supreme consciousness. He was a *Riṣi*, a seer who had seen Truth in all its facets (*riṣir darśanāt*) as well as a *Kāvi* who could communicate through faultless charming expression his realisation of the Infinite. Those who were privileged to sit at his feet and had the good fortune

---

\* Reprinted from Seminar papers presented at the Seminar on the Life and Philosophy of Mahāmahopadhyāya Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj, held from 23rd to 25th November 1978 under the auspices of the University of Calcutta.

of being bathed in the perennial stream of illuminating, vibrant words that flowed from his lips, alone can testify to the truth of the above statement.

To many Gopinathji was a mystic and not a philosopher in the true sense of the term. If a realised soul is termed a mystic, he was certainly one in every sense of the term. But there was nothing vague or mystifying in his expositions of truth. On the contrary, his reasoning was so lucid and faultless as well as logical that even a sceptic had to own the truth of his statements. So he was also an ideal philosopher. But did he contribute anything original in the field of philosophy ?

To my mind his first and foremost contribution in the field of philosophy has been to set forth anew the true aim of all Indian philosophies. In fact he is the only Indian philosopher who has put us over again on the right track of philosophical pursuit. This may appear as a tall claim but to make the point clear let me quote his own words, where he beautifully expresses his own idea about the aim or goal of Indian philosophy :

‘In India, philosophy, especially in its earlier and truer form, was intended to serve a practical purpose. Bare speculation is invariably condemned as waste of energy, in as much as it leads nowhere ; speculation is deemed blind without the guiding light which revelation or Higher Perception alone can furnish. Thus the premises from which reason has to draw its inferences are naturally beyond its own reach and stand outside of itself.’

Gopinathji, therefore, clearly puts forth the role of reason in the search for truth by pointing out its limitations.

To quote again :

‘Reason is, by nature, impotent and cannot in anywise overstep its data. It is not creative nor intuitive ; its function is interpretation of facts. Its ultimate resort is, therefore, nothing short of direct experience.’

But if direct experience is to be adhered to, should we then base our reasoning only on the sense-data, which are limited, distorted and often wrong and confused ? To this he replies :

‘But as human experience is limited in its scope and is liable to error, the experience on which our reasoning is based must be conceived as infinite and free from all the defects incidental to erring humanity. This infinite experience is embodied in the revealed scriptures.’ To those who want to discard revelation as mere nonsense or mental fancy, Gopinathji sounds a note of warning : ‘Reason, unaided by the light of this Revelation, would be a groping in the dark and would never be able to discover the truth which is incapable of analysis and synthesis.’ Precisely for this reason, he points out, ‘to the general Indian philosopher, therefore, seeking to build up his individual system of thought on the bed-rock of supra-rational illumination contained in the Vedas or Agamas, much in the same fashion as to the schoolmen of medieval Europe, reason is subservient to faith. “Believe and then know”,—*Sraddhāvan labhate jñānam*—this seems to be the motto of Indian philosophy.’

In assigning the right role to philosophy, Gopinathji states clearly thus: 'Philosophy, if rightly understood, is then only a step in the cultivation of a man's life. To be at all fruitful it must work in subordination to *i.e.*, on the data supplied by, Revelation. Else it is apt to run astray.'

One may object that this subordination of reason to revelation is practically an abandonment of philosophy but Gopinathji strongly affirms that it is not so but on the contrary only assigns its rightful place. He points out that 'in the general scheme of a man's inner culture the study of philosophy is given a secondary, though a necessary place :

*ātmā vāre draṣṭavyaḥ-srotavyo mantavyo nididhyā-  
sitavyaḥ śrotavyaḥ śrutivākyaebhyo mantavyaś  
co'papattibhiḥ matvā ca satatam dhyeya ete  
darśanahetavaḥ*

This implies that the ultimate source of true knowledge is revelation, but as the facts of revelation cannot be accepted without any questioning in the present state of our life, we have to study them with the help of our reason. As soon as it is brought home to us that these facts are quite possible and not irrational, the function of reason as a factor of our culture is fulfilled.'

What then is the function of reason? Gopinathji sets it forth very clearly thus: 'For this function is simply to beget a notion of *possibility* (*sambhāvanābuddhi*) in regard to a certain proposition, and not of its certainty. Certitude can never be reached by the intellectual faculties (*cf. tarkā-*

