

NEWS SNIPPETS

Glimpses of Academic Activities

SYMPOSIUM ON UNITY OF THE MIND:
SCIENCE, SPIRITUALITY AND THE FUTURE OF SOCIETY

A spiritual society is what humankind needs now, as it corresponds to an all-pervasive connectivity of real and unreal, living and non-living, nations and groups, symbolized by the unity of mind, spirit and consciousness, and actualized through peaceful and non-exploitative social relationships. This was the call given by Professor Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India, while inaugurating a two-day symposium on 'Unity of the Mind: Science, Spirituality and the Future of Society', on 5 January 2003 at the National Museum, New Delhi. A two-day symposium was organized by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Philosophical Research and the National Museum.

In his inaugural address, Professor Murli Manohar Joshi emphasized that the reality at the level of fundamental particles cannot be understood in terms of scientific method alone. Science has to be supplemented with an alternative approach to knowledge. He said that human structure was peculiar in its urge for something higher. This is unity of the mind. An integration of science with spirituality will thus pave the way to the future of society.

The other speakers at the inaugural function were Swami Jitatmanandji, Professor D.P. Chattopadhyaya, and Professor P.N. Tandon. Professor D.P. Chattopadhyaya described science as

the "finest expression of reason". But, he added, "reason has failed to generate forces of sanity and unity". Professor Chattopadhyaya emphasized the need to "explore other alternatives". He said: "The quest for the larger human unity, beyond the bounds of family, community, ethnic or religious groups and other relatively larger human aggregates can be successful only when our consciousness is authentically enlarged and endlessly deepened and uplifted."

Professor P.N. Tandon referred to his neurological research that could not give him insight into the mystery of the mind. Mechanical understanding is partial: "We share genes with rats but we are not rats". Basic questions, he said, are: "What makes me 'I'? What makes you 'you'?" It is not possible to answer these questions without addressing "the spiritual component" of our being, he added. In the end, Professor V.C. Srivastava, Director of the Institute, proposed a vote of thanks.

The symposium continued the next day. Professor G.C. Pande was in the chair. The speakers were Professor Navjyoti Singh, Swami Jitatmanandji, Professor P.K. Mukhopadhyaya, Professor L.P. Singh, and Professor S.R. Bhatt.

Professor Navjyoti Singh interrogated mind-matter dualism. "The stuff of mind and matter is the same. Both are *jar*. There is no

ontological distinction between them." He also asked, "Can we deny a plurality of minds? And, can we infer larger consciousness from the working of particular minds?" Professor P.K. Mukhopadhyaya posited spiritual unity in the midst of social diversity. Professor L.P. Singh drew attention to a general decline in moral values. Professor S.R. Bhatt said that the relationship between science and spirituality can be explored through related polarities including those between observation and experience, part and whole, simplicity and complexity. And, lastly, Swami Jitatmanandji elaborated the concept of "spiritualism in action".

Professor G.C. Pande, who was in chair, concluded the symposium by putting the deliberations in perspective. He said that scientific revolution, no doubt, generated an imperative for corresponding social change, but in the midst of these changes it was necessary for man to remain man. Man could survive change only by remaining what he was. This gave spiritual anchors a central place in social organization. But spiritualism in the West was different from that in the East. Professor Pande added that in India, for example, spiritualism transformed the whole approach to passions, desires, and even pain. Spiritualism was change of meaning. The impact of a spiritual man on society was wholesome. Therein, he said, lay the key for a better future society.

NATIONAL SEMINAR ON
CONTEMPORARY WRITINGS AND THE ARTS:
THE CULTURAL SCENARIO OF SOUTH INDIA: REGIÓN, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

A three-day National Seminar was held in collaboration with the Centre for South Indian Studies in Thiruvananthapuram from January 8 to 10, 2003. The seminar was inaugurated by Shri G. Karthikeyan, Minister for Culture, Kerala. The seminar was dedicated to the fond memory of the noted German writer, Herman Hesse. Dr. S. Murali, coordinator of the seminar, earlier, in his welcome speech, contextualized the key issues of the seminar and welcomed all the dignitaries and the participants to the gathering. Professor V.C. Srivastava, Director of the Institute, in his address, highlighted the significance and relevance of the seminar.

Professor M.G.S. Narayanan, Chairman of the ICHR, addressed the issue from the historian's point of view. Literature, he remarked, has become so complex in our times and the acts of critical theorists with

specific theoretical involvements complicated matters further. However, the represented image does not cease to communicate.

The Seminar comprised nine sessions with thirty presentations spread over three days. There were over forty participants from all corners of the country. Among them the noteworthy were—Professor Balwant S. Jani, Dr. Usha Bande, Professor E. Sreedharan, Dr. Madusudan Rao, T. Balakrishnan, Kureepuzha Sreekumar, Dr. Ramakrishnan, Dr. Usha V.T., Raman Nair, Chandramathi and Lalitha Lenin and Professor Enrique Camara and Mr. Guillermo Rodriguez Martin, from the University of Valladolid, Spain.

Dr. S. Murali's keynote paper on the *Dynamics of Representation*, pointed out that the breaking of the bowl was a profoundly meaningful image in comparison with its making, and thus more relevant to our riddle-

ridden present. Professor K. Ayyappa Panikker, the noted poet and critic, Asokamitran, well-known Tamil writer, and Professor Vayala Vasudevan Pillai, the Director of the School of Drama, made their presentations on the first day.

Each day's proceedings were followed by cultural performances—both the folk and the classical. The Spanish troupe also provided arenas for cross-cultural interactions.

At the various sessions deliberations were held on various areas related to *Literature and Region, Writing and Culture*, like poetry, fiction, short story, non-fiction, criticism, critical theory, aesthetics, painting, sculpture, music, dance, cinema and film-theory, drama and theatrical forms and folklore.

The seminar provided a common forum debate by practising artists, writers and critics equally concerned with these issues.

NATIONAL SEMINAR ON CONSCIOUSNESS, SOCIETY AND VALUES

National Seminar on 'Consciousness, Society and Values' jointly organized by Department of Philosophy, Goa University and the Indian Institute of Advanced Study was held on January 17-18, 2003 at Goa. The seminar was inaugurated by Professor S. P. Zacharias, Vice-Chancellor, Goa University and the inaugural function was presided over by Professor V. C. Srivastava. Professor A. V. Afonso, Director of the seminar welcomed the participants and highlighted the objectives of the seminar.

Introducing the theme of the

seminar, Professor Afonso pointed out that a seminar on "Consciousness, Society and Values" must be viewed from multiple angles as, on the one hand, one could focus one's attention on "consciousness" on the other hand, on societal conditions that give rise to value systems at different levels. He further pointed out that the seminar addressed two levels of discourse: the purely descriptive and the normative. It is true that the discussions on consciousness do not immediately bring the normative dimension, but it does surface at

societal level as society has norms. This brings into focus not only the normative but also the inter-disciplinary domains of consciousness.

Professor Zacharias, delivered the inaugural address. Reflecting on relativism of values, Professors Zacharias wondered whether it is reasonable to judge the present, the past, and the future on the basis of our knowledge and understanding of the contemporary value system with which we are familiar.

Professor V. C. Srivastava in his

presidential remark dwelt on the notion of 'reality', and highlighted the historical development of understanding of reality from the stone age to the modern view dominated by Descartes and Newton. He pointed out that contemporary science however is moving away from

the mechanistic understanding of 'reality' under the influence and development of quantum physics and theory of relativity. Modern science looks towards the possibility of 'unity of mind' as a result from a dialogue between science and spirituality. Referring to studies by neuroscientists

who are trying to understand the observed 'shadow' on brain, Professor Srivastava observed that it is imperative that there should be an interdisciplinary effort to understand 'consciousness' in all its aspects.

NATIONAL SEMINAR ON PHILOSOPHY OF INDIAN POETICS AND VALUE-ORIENTED EDUCATION

The Institute organized a three-day National Seminar on 'Philosophy of Indian Poetics and Value-Oriented Education' from January 24-26, 2003 at Kshetropasna Sri Perumbudur. The seminar was organized in association with International Forum for India's Heritage and the Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi.

The inaugural session of the Seminar started with a welcome address by Shri Michel Danino, who also introduced the background to the seminar. Professor Prema Pandurang (Founder, Kshetropasana) gave the inaugural address on "Poetic Imagery in the *Bhagavad Gita*". Professor Kapil Kapoor (JNU) delivered the keynote address, '*Ananda, Saundarya* and Indian Poetics.'

There were eight academic sessions spread over three days. The

presentations were divided in four categories: (i) 'Theoretical Foundations of Indian Poetics'; (ii) 'Indian Poetics as a Vehicle of Indian Culture'; (iii) 'Sources of Indian Poetics'; and (iv) 'Educational Aspects of Indian Poetics'. In all twenty-three presentations were made throughout the seminar, lively and informative debates took place following each paper in which members of the audience frequently participated.

The valedictory function, on January 26, 2003, was held in Chennai and attended by over 100 participants. The function began with the projection of the film *The Genius of India*. Professor K.V. Raman, former Professor of Archaeology and Ancient Indian History, University of Madras, then spoke on 'Integration of Sanskrit and Tamil Poetry in South Indian

Temple Tradition'. Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam spoke on 'Poetry of Tirukkural Set to Bharata Natyam'. The seminar brought together a number of eminent scholars, academicians and poets from various parts of India. They included R.C. Rajendran, T. Vaithamanithy, Anjali Jaipuria, A.V. Subramanian, M. Narasimhachary, A.K. Singh; Vishnu Narayan Namboodiri, S. Ram Mohan, Pappu Venugopala Rao, Prema Nandakumar, T.A. Venkateswaran, Mamata Dash, Siniruddha Dash, Mamta Mishra, Chitra Mahadevan, A. Ramaswamy Iyengar, D. Raja Ganesan, S. Venkateswaran, R. Nagaswamy, S. Swaminathan, Sumathindra Nadig, and G. Siva Kumar.

NATIONAL SEMINAR ON PHILOSOPHY OF INDIAN MUSIC AND VALUE-ORIENTED EDUCATION

A three-day National Seminar on 'Philosophy of Indian Music and Value-Oriented Education' was organized by the Institute in collaboration with International Forum for India's Heritage and Indian Council of Philosophical Research from February 7 to 9, 2003. Inaugurating the seminar, Professor V.R. Panchmukhi, Chairman, Indian

Council of Social Science Research, said that music can only be generated by rapport between the external *indreiyas* and the intellect. The keynote speaker, Dr. Kamlesh Dutt Tripathi, referring to the philosophical texts on the secrets of the body and cosmos, said that music could also be related to *ayurveda*. Dr. Waziffuddin Dagar lamented that *Dhrupada* is

considered to be a rigid musical form like the unmoving polestar from which its name is derived. He gave demonstrations through improvisations in musical *shrutis* to prove otherwise. Bhai Baldeep Singh propounded that music in its most refined form of the *dhrupad-anga* provides the most expressive framework for *Kirtan* or the singing

of *Gurubani*. Malti Agnesvaran gave a live Bharata Natyam presentation to illustrate her paper on the 'Interlocked Tradition of music and classical dance'. Speaking about *Nritya* and *abhinaya*, she explained that music that was bound to rhythm alone becomes in *abhinaya* gestures that convey meaning and ultimately

create a *bhav*. She also demonstrated how the everyday hand gestures accompanying Tamil speech patterns have found their way into *hast mudras* of the classical dance form.

The six sessions of the three-day seminar were divided into focus-areas such as *Shristhi*, *Aasvada*, *Prayoga*, *Sadbhava*, *Savada* and

namely scales, enjoyment, development of genres and forms, pedagogy, presentation and finally, propagation. Each of the sessions was enlightening and evolved towards a meaningful statement on the subject of session.

PHILOSOPHY OF INDIAN NATIONALISM AND VALUE-ORIENTED EDUCATION

A three-day National Seminar on 'Philosophy of Indian Nationalism and Value-Oriented Education' was organized by the Institute at Jadavpur University, Calcutta in collaboration with International Forum for India's Heritage, Sri Sri Sitaramdas Omkarnath Samskrita Siksha Sansad, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, and Indian Council of Historical Research on February 23-25, 2003. The seminar brought together a number of eminent scholars from all over India (also from the U.S.A. and Switzerland). The central theme of 'Indian Nationalism' was treated from historical, cultural, scriptural, traditional as well as educational viewpoints, and this provided a rich variety of presentations as well as debates.

The inaugural session started with a welcome address by Dr. Dhyanesh Narayan Chakraborty (former Professor of Sanskrit, Rabindra Bharati University). Dr. Michel Danino gave a brief introduction to the background and purpose of the seminar. Professor M.G.S. Narayanan, Chairman, Indian Council of Historical Research, delivered the inaugural address, 'India—a Nation or a Civilization?' This was followed by the keynote address by Professor Kireet Joshi, Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research.

There were eight academic sessions spread over three days. The presentations maybe broadly categorized in the following four groups: (i) Cultural and spiritual roots of Indian Nationalism; (ii) Historical

manifestations of Indian Nationalism; (iii) Cultural manifestations of Indian Nationalism; and (iv) Indian Nationalism and recent academic narratives.

The concluding session, on the afternoon February 25, had two young speakers: M. Pramod Kumar on 'How to make Nationalist values inspiring to Students', and Chitwan Jaipuria on 'The inadequacies of the Indian school curriculum'. These two talks brought into focus the failures of the current educational system to promote national culture and values, and listed a number of practical suggestions to remedy this abnormal situation. A lively debate followed with questions and comments from the audience, which included a number of students.

COLLOQUIUM ON SOURCES OF INDIAN CULTURE

Welcoming the participants Navjyoti Singh, convener of the colloquium, sketched the rationale behind the sectional divisions of the colloquium. Culture ultimately rests on the perennial source that makes possible its regenerative renewal through time. Varied and numerous temporal expressions of the perennial are possible. The first session was

devoted to the relation of the perennial with the temporal and to the theoretical perspectives of culture and to the sources of culture. There is an ancient distinction between the folk and intellectual expressions of culture, between the *loka* and the *sastra* or between the *bhasa* and the *sanskrita*. The second session was devoted to language as a source of

culture and the third to the *loka* or folk activity as a source of culture. In modern times there is a bubble of modernity, a hump of Westernization, that Indian culture has to negotiate and navigate. Thus the fourth session dealt with the alienation of Indian culture from its sources. Fifth i.e. the valedictory session was a summing up session.

Introduction: Problem of Sources

Bhuvan Chandel was invited to chair the first session. In the opening remarks Bhuvan Chandel set the tone of the seminar by raising the pertinent basic issue as to the what constitutes the Indian Civilization, which is like a lotus with thousand petals. Every civilization looks for its own sources, its roots, and its identity she remarked. Reference was made in this connection to two seminal volumes on the origin and development of culture by G.C. Pande under the PHISPC project.

G.C. Pande gave the keynote address that established the theme of the colloquium. Prof. Pande began by analyzing the two key terms 'culture' and 'sources'. Term 'culture' is of relatively recent origin (18th century) and it is the emerging social sciences (19th century) that tried to give a scientific character to the study of culture. But its meaning has remained relative. Unlike physical terms, *lakṣya-lakṣana* cannot be separated for the term 'culture'. Social science looks at culture as a social fact to be studied by observation (or at best participant observation). This is highly defective. Empirical investigation or texts from past are inadequate sources of culture. The first proposition that G.C. Pande underlined was that culture is not given as objects; it is a living and growing tradition.

Society does not identify cultures, it is cultures that identify society. Culture is accessible through its symbolic articulation. Sources of culture have a double meaning; (1) a body of material in which the knowledge of cultures lives through its symbolic system, and (2) the spring source from which culture derives itself. The ultimate source of any culture is the experience of values. It

is possible to discern values pertaining to temporal plane, however, there is a realm of values that lies beyond and are related to the ideal person, the ideal form. It is the pursuits of higher values that create culture. Culture is a supervenient world different from the actual ephemeral world of actions. Ephemeral events do not create culture; culture is created by more permanent values that inspire generation after generation.

Culture can be studied through symbolic experience. To study culture from symbolic traditions one needs access to value experience. Living traditions do not just replicate the historical past they recreate it. Poets and thinkers reestablish culture with ever-new creations. Life of a culture is longer than the social and political structures operative in various epochs or its parts. Thus the study of culture is possible through the study of a tradition in its entirety. Tradition should not be studied as if its meaning is fully revealed in one single era. He closed his address by noting that the nearest Indian word for culture is *dharma*.

S.C. Pande asked that traditionally *dharma* is only one of the *purusarthas*, do *artha*, *kama* and *mokṣa* not come under the preview of culture? G.C. Pande in reply said that the term *dharma* has varied connotations and terms like *jāti dharma* and *raja dharma* have restricted particularized connotations. These are only ancillary to the pursuit of *dharma* in its comprehensive form.

T.S. Rukmani pointed out that we have come a long way from the foundational texts of culture and the reclamation of culture is today particularly stressed because of that. G.C. Pande reiterated that culture does not pursue texts but values. It is the value perspective that gives the

texts their significance. For instance, Kalidasa was regarded as a too simple and plain a poet by the Pandits of Varanasi unlike modern scholars. Texts are only secondary in the life of a culture that draws from the pursuits of higher value.

Rana objected to the proposition that *lakṣya-lakṣana* of culture cannot be given. For, *desagata svarupa* and *kalagata svarupa* of culture can be articulated. Padamvir Singh said that there is a chasm between new things and permanent part of culture. G.C. Pande replied that pursuits of ideal values are not affected by the material changes. Changes do occur, even religion changes—sacrifice is found in Vedic times, meditation came later and worship still later—but cultural pursuit remains the same.

Sushil Kumar pointed out that ideal norms cannot be inductively arrived at from facts; does it mean that only elite can pursue culture? G.C. Pande said that the society is not a fact but a mind and all can participate in it.

G.C. Nayak drew attention to the phenomenon of 'cultural opacity' and wondered if all cultures can be brought under one canopy. Can there be a universal concept of *dharma* applicable to all humanity in past, present and future? G.C. Pande observed that if there is nothing permanent, there couldn't be any culture. The soul of culture is the pursuit of what is eternal. *Paradharma* has to be respected. H.S. Gill thought that it is natural to think that sources of culture are many and not one. G.C. Pande replied that there is an invisible unity in visible differences.

Navjyoti Singh asked: what kind of entities are supervening values? Are they same for all humanity? How are they born? Are they cause or are they effect? Can they be listed? In reply G.C. Pande said that Anglo-Saxons thought

that values are objects of desire, Germans thought values are ideal ideas. Values are desired ends that are reachable through discrimination; *sreyasa* is known through *dhi*. Values are search for what gives pleasure

without pain and unifying value is value of self-realization. All objects of desire gravitate towards self-realization, which is the goal of every pursuit. Values are *upadhi*-s for the ultimate source. Highest value is

aprameya; all *prameyas* move toward *aprameya*. *Artha* is not *padartha* but *purusartha*. Values are forms of mediated self-consciousness.

NAVJYOTI SINGH

INTELLECTUAL LANGUAGE AS A SOURCE

H.S. Gill was invited to chair the second session. The session opened with Sibesh Bhattacharya's presentation in which three important propositions were put forward: (1) culture is not a natural entity, it is man-made and it influences human beings as they are born in the midst of a cultural milieu; (2) the perennial values of culture are encompassing universal elements, and; (3) culture becomes a tradition when finer and higher values operate in a given space and time-frame. A culture has to be a living culture because if it becomes dead, it becomes a mere relic of a tradition. In almost lyrical and poetical strains, the speaker compared culture to a flowing river having a source and direction and a goal. As a river assimilates water from tributaries, so is the nature of culture to accept and imbibe traditions and values from other sources, at the same time keeping its own identity intact. Quoting from Tagore, he stressed on the single unity of culture in spite of its various diversities. He concluded his presentation with three thought-provoking vital issues to be pondered over: (1) the present twentieth century scenario of culture; (2) has the Indian culture been cut off from the original sources?, and; (3) is the river-like culture still flowing and inundated?

The second speaker, S.C. Pande, started his presentation with a

mangalacarana in Sanskrit, in defense of, and admiration for, the continued use of Sanskrit language. He felt that the values of life have altered tremendously. He gave instances from his personal life and friend-circle who had held high moral and ethical values but today the concept of value has taken a back-seat. He placed the epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* as the highest sources of culture, which along with other similar works could impart training to the youth and act as paradigms of model conduct of everyday life. He brought up the paper 'The Death of Sanskrit' by Sheldon Pollock and felt that the writer has a biased view of Sanskrit language as he seems to have passed on his bias against the ideologies of political parties like BJP and VHP to Sanskrit. Many scholars of Sanskrit have rendered selfless service to promote it, as they believe in its intrinsic value. S.C. Pande emphasized the continued role of this language in different branches of learning like *Ayurveda*, *Jyotisastra* and *Vastusastra* and thought of it as a rich classical language and as a fountainhead of intellectual culture.

The third speaker, T.S. Rukmani, started her presentation with two empirical models of Diaspora groups in Montreal and South Africa and dwelt at length on the South African

experience of indentured labour, which settled there in the 17th century. She dwelt upon their lifestyles through examples. She illustrated how they drew their sustenance from their culture to face various hardships in a hostile and apartheid atmosphere. She mentioned two important traits of culture that were translated into building temples and in establishing educational institutions. In the second part of her speech she illustrated from Indian philosophy how the intellectual language sustained and enriched the tradition through its innovative interpretations. Thus taking up the concept of permanence of *prakrti*, which is part of the metaphysics of *Samkhya Yoga*, she emphasized that it is against the *Upanishadic* postulation that *Atman/Brahman* is alone permanent and eternal. She demonstrated how the commentators like Vacaspati Misra, Vijñanabhikṣu and Sankara, all deal with the permanence of *prakrti* by introducing innovative concepts of permanence while simultaneously taking care not to violate the traditional theory of the permanence of *Atman*.

The last speaker of the session, G.C. Nayak, also started his presentation with a Sanskrit *sloka* and said that he would continue to admire and eulogize the language even if it sounds hyperbolic, as he really loved

this classical language. He talked about Indian culture, which is multi-dimensional, like a lotus-flower. Assimilation and harmony are the two chief constituents of Indian culture. As Indian philosophers were defensive, were modest, and wanted to maintain harmony, they did not protest much when being attacked on various fronts. This virtue was taken as a weakness. G.C. Nayak laid emphasis on the Sanskrit language as the main source of Indian culture. For

reflecting the values of assimilation, absorption and harmony, there could be no better figure than Tagore. As God cannot be ever pronounced dead, as metaphysics cannot be dead, Sanskrit language too cannot be dead. It enshrines a living tradition and is at present undergoing transformation.

H.S. Gill, the chairman of the session, made valuable observations relating to the presentations. His comments helped to explain, elucidate, clarify and summarize the

ideas presented by the scholars.

The session concluded with the remarks of G.C. Pande. He again stressed that culture is a permanent entity with perennial values. It may be seen jostling and wrestling at times with extraneous influences but it manages to keep its identity intact and that in the ever-changing scenario of Indian culture, the scholars should be able to sift the spurious from the genuine.

MITA BISWAS

NON-TEXTUAL SOURCES OF CULTURE

Sushil Kumar was invited to chair the third session. First speaker of the session, Anuradha Mukherjee, talked about plurality of cultures as exemplified by the variety of languages etc. However, she noted the fact of unity in diversity. Hinduism is largely a Brahmanical ideology. Nevertheless, Brahmanical culture is not inimical to peripheral cultures. Indian culture is characterized by its assimilating quality and it is not in the sense of swallowing smaller cultures and traditions. Dalits suffered from economic deprivation. B.R. Ambedkar thought that Brahmanical religion is responsible for the deplorable condition of Dalits and their salvation lies in Buddhism. Thus, he tried to construct an alternative civil society assimilating Dalit classes in the mainstream.

Reacting to the presentation, T.S. Rukmini observed that Ambedkar wanted to become a Sikh and later changed his mind to become a Buddhist. Lallan Baghel pointed out that Ambedkar realized that some kind of caste-system prevailed in Sikhism as well, and therefore he

opted for Buddhism. V.K. Vashishtha observed that Ambedkar's differences with Mahatma Gandhi on the latter's views about *varnasrama* system led him to accept Buddhism. Bhuvan Chandel raised the issue that Ambedkar and Dayananda, both, were reformers, but Ambedkar did not succeed as much as Dayananda succeeded. Sushil Kumar remarked that emancipation of marginal classes or castes was more important for Ambedkar rather than contemporary caste conflicts sharpened recently due to electoral politics.

G.C. Pande commented on certain points, which cropped up in the course of preceding discussions. He clarified that values are not fashioned out of the ways of life. A view like that would amount to putting the horse before the cart. He also pointed out that 'Brahmanical ideology' is a misnomer. In fact, the whole structure of Hinduism is often misunderstood. For a correct understanding of Indian culture, one has to go back to the *sastra-s*, which are the true sources of our knowledge and comprehension of Indian culture.

The second speaker of the session, R.N. Misra, spoke on mason's marks as non-textual non-verbal code of symbolic expression and their relevance in art studies, especially in terms of artists' and guilds' signatured identity. Reproducing the field data from north India from the Gupta times to 18th century, he traced artists' diasporas, substantiating it with epigraphic and textual evidence, particularly, about an artists' lineage that lasted for nine hundred years. R.N. Mishra cited the specific example of Mughal monuments and the masons' marks incised on them, to show that these artists were largely drawn from central India, a fact corroborated also by *Babarnama*.

A.R. Khan mentioned about Babar's remarks regarding lack of refinement in Hindu architecture, although he had great appreciation for Gwalior Fort. S.C. Bhattacharya pointed out that Babar's autobiography suffers from a great deal of subjectivity. S.N. Dube added that Babar was greatly enamored by the beauty and charms of his homeland and he could never

reconcile to the idea of having been forced to leave it, so much so, that he had desired to be buried in his homeland and not in India.

Third speaker, Purushottam Singh, underlined the fact that among the non-literary sources of Indian culture, archaeology is a major source. Our knowledge regarding the existence of pre-historic and proto-historic culture is solely based on archaeological sources. To illustrate his point, Purushottam Singh cited a recent publication (B.B. Lal, *The Sarasvati Flows on: The Continuity of Indian Culture*, New Delhi, 2002), which has shown that some of the basic tenets of Indian culture can be traced back to about five thousand years ago or even earlier. According to B.B. Lal, continuity of tradition right from the times of Harappan culture to present days can be observed in the fields of ornaments, makeup, toiletries, games, recreation, house and town planning, cooking and associated items, agriculture and water management, land and water transport and even folklore. The manifestation of this continuity is best seen in the domain of religion. The famous *pasupati* seal from Mohenjo-daro depicting a human figure, seated in yogic posture, with a number of animals surrounding him was initially

interpreted to be a representation of *Siva* in the form of *Pasupati* (Lord of animals). Subsequent data, including the recent one (M.J. Kenoyer, ancient cities of the Indus Valley, 1998), firmly re-establishes the hypothesis of Marshall. Besides, their worship and certain auspicious symbols like *Svastika* have come down to us from the Harappan times. In the light of such and similar evidences B.B. Lal has concluded that the great Harappan civilization had roots deep in antiquity, some seven to eight thousand years ago, and saw it flowering in the third millennium b.c. and which still survives not as a fugitive but as a vital organ of our socio-cultural fabric.

S.N. Dube observed that the survival of the material aspect of Harappan culture has been noted in certain other spheres also, such as, in the defences of Kausambi. T.S. Rukmini raised a question with reference to the decipherment of the Indus script.

Fourth speaker of the session, V.S. Bhatnagar, dealt with the oral traditions of Rajasthan, which have continued for centuries. Some of these are sung on the advent of the month of *Phagun*, while others on auspicious occasions, like marriage etc. *Dhawal-mangala-gita* is sung

specially by women in different *raga*-s. Other similar oral compositions are *khyala*, *kahavaten*, riddles, *pavara*, etc. Popular life (*loka-jivan*) and their cultural traditions are vividly reflected in these oral compositions. *Bhopa*-s, *Bhat*-s, *Carana*-s etc. have preserved the oral traditions. James Tod made good use of the legends in his famous work *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. *Bagdawat devanarayana mahagatha* was being sung since 10th century. Only one *Bhopa* could recite the entire *gatha* of which the recording went on for 15 days. Now it covers 566 pages in print, which was published for the first time in Nov. 1993. However, oral traditions are distant in time from the date of their actual happenings and thus get distorted. V.S. Bhatnagar concluded by posing the question – do the non-textual sources lose their basic character once they are published?

A.R. Khan said that most folklore has been published and hence they have ceased to be oral sources. V.S. Bhatnagar clarified that generally a part of the oral tradition gets published and not the whole of it and even that part which is published was being sung for centuries.

S. N. DUBE

ALIENATION OF CULTURE FROM ITS SOURCES

Gobind Thukral was invited to chair the fourth session. In the first presentation, Pradip Lahiri defined culture as the cultivated refinement of human values and in this inclusive definition he included all civilizing ways acquired through training and education. If civilization is the material or the external part of human life, society is the more organized or

the higher aspect, then culture is the spirit that animates them. Culture is a process that is basically humanizing. Indian culture has deep-rooted traditions and is also marked by unity in diversity. Tagore described it as the *mahamanaber sagar tir* (the seashore of the great ocean of mankind) belonging to the diverse races of humanity. This creative diversity

derives its sustenance from the unbroken continuity of the Indian civilization. The form of Indian art and culture is not only aesthetically significant; it is also a manifestation of the deep sense of values embedded in the culture and traditions of the country. Folk culture and traditional performing arts form an integral part of this heritage.

Pradip Lahiri's presentation was followed by discussions on the relation between the classical art alienated from folk art and the intrinsic distinction that has to be drawn between folk art and popular art.

The second presentation by Mita Biswas was on the theme of Indian English poetry and its alienation from the traditions of Indian culture in the modern period. Mita Biswas noted what she described as 'glaring difference' between the outlooks, thematic concerns, values and attitudes between poets of pre-independence period and the poets who came to write after them or are still writing. Poets of the earlier times like Aurobindo, Henry Derozio, Toru Datt, Manmohan Ghosh and Sarojini Naidu dealt with the themes of patriotism or nationalism and their poetry was not divorced from culture and traditions. They made use of myths and legends in their poetry that belonged to the culture and spiritual heritage of the country. In contrast, Nissim Ezekiel, Dom Moraes, Kamala Das are alienated from these traditions. A deep sense of alienation characterizes the images and symbols

of their poetry. Attitude change, according to her, is the result of a change of sensibilities brought in by Western influences.

In the third presentation Navjyoti Singh said that nature of cultural values is an important philosophical question. The thesis that values are *aprameya* (not object of knowledge) and that they emanate from *Brahman* is not self-justified and amounts to value monism. There are many traditional formulations of the Advaita, like that of *Sabda Brahman*, and in what respect values coalesce into the perennial has to be demonstrated. Values are not experienced unlike the *Brahman*. There are strong arguments that perennial elements of cultural values are plural. Cultural values are like norms and some of them are perennial. Navjyoti proposed a formal theory of values based on Vaisesika and Mimamsa philosophy. As a thought experiment, if a set of all acts of justice in past is made then its consistency and completeness can be ensured if two formal conditions are accepted: (1) all actions are readable and (2) all disputes are adjudicable. Once these meta-conditions are

accepted the structure of human society and kernel values, like that of *parasparikta* (mutuality) and *sarnagata raksate* (protection of dominion), can be derived.

H.S. Gill asked whether the proposed structuralism could accommodate novelty. Navjyoti said he is inclined towards an *apurvavada*, which accepts ever-unprecedented novel entities and situations. Bhuvan Chandel said there are misunderstandings regarding value monism and apparent pluralism of values. G.C. Nayak drew attention to Navjyoti's scientism and doubted whether the set theory could be applied to values since *dharmajijnasa* is fundamentally different from *vastu tantra*. Navjyoti responded that there is no reason as to why idea of collection and natural kinds do not apply to *dharmajijnasa*. Rana commented that the presented theory is like creating order out of chaos and one has to explain why culture is not one. Sushil Kumar thought that the singular virtue of goodness is an overarching entity in every community.

L.K. BARUA

VALEDICTORY SESSION

G.C. Pande delivered the valedictory address in which he took up some of the issues that emerged in the Fellows' Colloquium.

He observed that the question of values in culture is a reformulation of the earlier problematic, what is the human good? Values are differentiated as finite and infinite. The relationship between these two types of values is at issue. The infinite

value is absolute, independent, and so is valuable in itself. Finite values are limited, dependent, and so are valuable in relation to the infinite, that is, as intimations of it through experience of *sukh* or *dukh*. This should not be taken as a restatement of psychologism or simple hedonism. The experience of *sukh* and *dukh* is the only way to cognize the absolute. An order of moral authority represents

a hierarchical structure of finite values. Such an order is injunctive in character and jural in behaviour. No doubt, different societies differ among themselves in the priority they give to moral injunctions, and the place such injunctions find in their respective moral orders. But the consequent pluralism in the moral domain, moral conflicts and contradictions as between societies,

are resolvable through transcendence into infinite value. This passage of finite plurality into infinite unity is different from theological monism. It is akin to Hegel's Absolute Mind or the concept of *Brahma* in Indian philosophy. Several philosophers from ancient to modern times, in different cultural traditions, have underlined such passage of plurality into unity through transcendence. In Plato, the diversity of goods and objects is unified into the good. The *Siddhis* also take this line of reasoning. *Dukk-nivṛty* is possible only through shedding of discrepant experiences in ever greater measure as one moves forward in the journey for realizing *mukta-atma*, that is, in the journey from the lighted object to the source of light. In the course of this journey the distinction between the self and the other vanishes. Both unite in the moral obligations of a higher order.

The reflection on the human good thus reveals points of confluence among different cultures. But when culture is seen against unequal distribution of power and wealth in the world the discourse undergoes a transformation. Odious comparisons are made. Powerful countries attribute universality to the culture of their societies and marginalize other cultures. For example, to call the culture of the people in India as Indian culture is to marginalize it. It amounts to saying that the power and wealth of the Western people is predicated on the superiority of their culture. India and other similarly placed countries that do not share this

power and wealth are so because of the backward and undeveloped state of their respective cultures. The result is that intellectuals and scholars in such countries develop two souls: they are rooted in the culture of the society to which they belong, but their actions correspond to Western cultural practices. In this context two basic questions arise.

First, can cultures be characterized as good and bad, developed and undeveloped, creative and stagnant? The answer is, no. The culture of the people in India is valuable not because it is Indian but because it is a culture. One way of elaborating it is to take the case of poetry. There are no golden rules for writing good poetry. The good in a context maybe bad in another. One cannot say that culture affirming poetry is better than the one expressing alienation with it, or *vice versa*. This means that appreciation of poetry requires a sensitive and open mind. It is not necessary for good poetry to be steeped in the ideas and practices of the poet's culture. At the same time, there is no reason why good poetry should draw on ideas and images of another culture. Yet good poetry communicates new ideas through new images. Culture can be creative without borrowing from other cultures or destroying tradition.

And second, what is creativity in culture? It is an alchemy that combines the new with the old. It is not a negation of tradition. Only a trained critic is capable of deciphering the continuity. T.S. Eliot in the West, or Rabindranath Tagore and

Sumitranandan Pant in India built their poetry on ideas and concepts taken from the past. At the same time, this cannot be advanced as a rule. Creativity does not follow fixed rules. Often there is a tendency to derive criteria from a work of art and apply them to later work. A lot of cultural production, therefore, is imitation of old models. But this leads to bad art. Creativity cannot be programmed. This is true of philosophy also. Great philosophers give rational and logical expression to the supreme spiritual principle. Sankaracharya and Ramanujam did so. Lesser ones write commentaries on them. Creativity thus consists in representation of the infinite in our lives, as opposed to finite values that are relevant in a limited way only. Another point about creativity is its embodiment in books written by the masters and their interpretations. Greater still are those who practice the principles enunciated in the books. This is a well-established norm in Indian tradition. A moral exemplar is more effective than a legislator. Laws facilitate the process but moral inspiration is needed for diffusion of creativity. Likewise, distribution of wealth does not change the deeper attitudes of the people. For these reasons, Gandhi was more effective than Ambedkar. Now, in the present context of globalization, creative reflection is needed on what is good and important. But the problem remains: how should one move the masses in that direction? Which is likely to be more effective: books legislation, or example?

SUSHIL KUMAR

ADDENDUM

MODERN SENSIBILITIES IN A PERENNIAL STREAM

*A short note on the Sanskrit works of Govind Chandra Pande
in the context of the question "Is Sanskrit Dead?"*

SIBESH BHATTACHARYA

In his article Sheldon Pollock the eminent Sanskritist at the University of Chicago has laboriously argued that Sanskrit as a living language had met its demise a few centuries ago; what continues is only a carcass.¹ The author shows no familiarity with contemporary creative works in Sanskrit. Perchance he had the occasion to go through the Sanskrit works by Acharya Govind Chandra Pande, particularly his *Astacaliyam*,² *Saundaryadarsanavimarsah*,³ *Ekam Sad Vipra Babudha Vadanti*⁴ and *Bhagirathi*⁵ he would have thought more deeply before finalizing his thesis.

We would first take up *Bhagirathi*, a collection of poems in Sanskrit, for, *Bhagirathi* exemplifies all those virtues that Sheldon Pollock accuses the Sanskrit literary sensibilities as lacking in. It is not our aim here to just contradict Pollock's thesis; this is too narrow and ephemeral an aim and will not serve much practical purpose other than an exchange of polemics. The vitality of Sanskrit would depend on the creative vigour of its practitioners and not on the successful rebuttal of Pollock's arguments. We have referred to Pollock's article because its negative

focus helps us in locating some of the special merits of the poetic universe of *Bhagirathi*.

Bhagirathi is a collection of 163 poems, which by their form and style could be designated in the terminology of traditional Sanskrit Poetics as *Muktakas*. The poems also adhere to the patterns of metre of classical Sanskrit. But in the delineation of themes, imageries, locales and sensibilities, the poems of *Bhagirathi* are unmistakably modern and contemporary. The poems have been grouped under seven thematic clusters. Within and across these clusters a recurrent mood of pensive yearning for a purer lost time can be detected. A large number of poems have a strong visual content, they often look like a gallery of paintings. In this way, they may appear as resembling the picturesque qualities of Kalidasa's poems. But in their themes they are completely different from the old traditional Sanskrit poems. There are cycles of poems on the visual richness of Kashmir, its lakes and gardens, birch trees, snow-capped mountains, poems on sea, on seasons, on Ajanta, on Mughal gardens, and also on China. Such wide diversity of locales had

never before figured in Sanskrit poems. These poems are an eloquent testimony to the fact that it is not at all necessary for Sanskrit poetry to remain a prisoner of themes harking back to the myths and legends of the *Puranas* and the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

But it is not only in the diversity of locales, that the poems of *Bhagirathi* are different from the traditional Sanskrit and thus can claim to breaking new grounds; in their philosophical underpinnings too, the poems of *Bhagirathi* pulsate with a fresh spirit. For, the poems of *Bhagirathi*, despite their picturesque qualities, derive their main character from the underlying mood and philosophical content which are markedly modern and deeply humanistic. Bereft of the underlying philosophical content, the poems could have been mere scenic images. Often these images serve as montage. The giant old, dead and barren tree with vultures sitting on the branches (p.10) stands as a symbol of the *Devasura* battle, the eternal conflict between the good and the evil spanning the entire course of human history. A number of poems centre around the theme of relationship between man

and state and history. This history consciousness raises these poems to a new level unknown in the old Sanskrit poetic tradition. For example, such poems as the sensitive depiction of the Chinese Revolution (p.172) and at the same time the philosophical reflection on the ultimate futility and emptiness of the apparent startling political events replacing one set of power mongers by another (p. 8) make *Bhagirathi* so contemporary and relevant to us.

However, the resonance of the poems of *Bhagirathi* is not confined to contemporaneity alone. Running through many of the poems is a deep sense of consciousness of India's past heritage and culture and its continuity. This past is not a dead carcass; it is a living entity. It is a continuity, the seeking of the unwilting values, that informs the ideal Vrindavana beyond the physical one, the perennial Ganga which renews itself with every new wave, the eternal *Bhagirathi*, which is symbolized by Kalidasa (p.184), by Tagore (p.197). This kind of history consciousness gives *Bhagirathi* its distinctive flavour.

There are also another set of poems (e.g., pp. 22, 40) reminiscent and pensive which bears something of the character of elegy. Such poems are also novel and break new grounds in Sanskrit poetic tradition.

Bhagirathi hopefully would inaugurate a distinctive creative urge in contemporary Sanskrit poetry writings. In fact, the ability of Sanskrit to engage with the 'modern' (which is often identified with the 'Western' with a capital

'W') universe of sensibilities with ease and candor without any obvious sign of strain or of renouncing its native quality and virtue had been brought out very strongly by Pandeji's earlier work *Astacaliyam*. In *Astacaliyam* Pandeji, translated in classical Sanskrit and in Sanskrit meters fifty-sevens representative lyric poems of the most famous English poets spanning from Shakespeare through Milton, the Romantics like Blake, Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley, Tennyson, to Arnold, to Poe, to Yeats. These poems include such diverse varieties as sonnet, ode, elegy, ballad, etc. These poets represent the finest and the subtlest of 'Western' sensibilities and heritage. *Astacaliyam* has effortlessly absorbed these sensibilities and adapted them to the universe of Sanskrit literature without doing violence to the historical character of Sanskrit. *Astacaliyam* is a concrete demonstration, if any such demonstration was at all necessary, that Sanskrit language is a living organism of tremendous vitality and universal hold. It is capable of responding to all modern and humanistic demands.

It is a pity that professional Western Sanskritists allow such creative endeavours in Sanskrit as *Astacaliyam* or *Bhagirathi* to remain 'unnoticed' (?) in their evaluation of Sanskrit language and literature and the culture that they think Sanskrit language symbolizes. One feels particularly sad to notice this indifference in the context of the unstinted and well-deserved

encomium showered on the creative upsurge within what is now called the 'Indo-Anglian' literature.

It is equally to be regretted that in the Western eyes the capacity to engage in analytical and philosophical issues in Sanskrit is not conceded beyond the 'religious and speculative' philosophy of the traditional variety. In his *Saundryadarsanavimarsab* G. C. Pande has critically dealt with the entire Western heritage of aesthetic concepts and theories along with the traditional Indian *Rasasiddhantas*. Similarly, in his *Ekam Sad Vipra Babudha Vadanti*, Professor Pande has critically dealt with the Western sociological and philosophical theories and concepts of religion and contrasted them with the Indian notion of *Dharma*.

One only hopes that the future successors of Witzels and Sheldon Pollocks in Western academic establishments would show more openness while dealing with the future of Sanskrit language and would consider the works of contemporary Sanskrit authors as Madhusudan Ojha, Govind Chandra Pande and others with the respect and attention they deserve.

NOTES

1. 'The Death of Sanskrit' by Sheldon Pollock, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 43, no. 2, April 2001.
2. Sampurnanand Sanskrit Visva-vidyalaya, Varanasi, 1995.
3. Sampurnanand Sanskrit Visva-vidyalaya, Varanasi 1996.
4. Sampurnanand Sanskrit Visva-vidyalaya, Varanasi, 1997.
5. Raka Prakashan, Allahabad, 2002.

Radhakrishnan Memorial Lectures

One of the most important academic events of the Institute is to organize Annual Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture in the memory of the 2nd President of India Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. In the month of June, 2003, the Seventh and the Ninth Radhakrishnan Memorial lectures were delivered in the Institute by Professors Murli Manohar Joshi and Vishnu Kant Sastri. The lectures were scintillating. Apart from the importance of the themes chosen and the subtlety and the thoroughness of the approach and the exceptionally high level of articulation that marked both the lectures, these lectures derived their significance also from another dimension. The lectures strongly demonstrated how wrong and superficial can be the sedulously circulated notion that involvement with national politics is necessarily detrimental to academic sharpness, rigour and refinement. These lectures were also very reassuring in the sense that they exemplified that the capacity to think originally and fearlessly, which distinguished the politics of the freedom struggle of this country, still continues to flow amidst the hustle of our present-day national politics. These lectures, indeed, were worthy tributes to the memory of a great scholar who also excelled as a statesman.

Seventh Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture

Professor Joshi in his lecture (June 26, 2003) put the paradigm of development that has been guiding the world for the last three hundred years or so under the searching eyes of a 'microscope' and brought out the central fallacy of the philosophy of unlimited growth in a limited world. In a comprehensive and penetrating analysis of the history and the growth of modern science and economic development, he showed how they took the trajectory they did.

He pointed out that the astonishing advance in science and technology over the last three centuries and the consequent material advantages they have bequeathed have had a blinding impact on the contemporary perceptions about the nature of the universe and man's role in it and about human destiny. These developments created a feeling that finally the magic solution to all the problems of the world has been discovered and everything is just waiting for the Midas' touch to be turned to gold. The world has just to shed off its outmoded attitudes and begin applying science and scientific temper to all walks of life and look forward to the dawn of the millennium.

Unfortunately, the course of the actual events did not walk the path of expectations. Despite stunning scientific and technological innovations, a truly just, happy and harmonious world remains as distant as ever. Instead of creating an equitable

world, the technological changes appear to have widened and deepened the cleavages. The economic disparities between nations and between various segments and groups within the national boundaries are increasing at a disturbing pace and extent. It is no wonder therefore that the contemporary world is fast turning into a hotbed of ethnic conflicts, terrorism and senseless violence.

It is not only that the conflict of interests between nations have got aggravated men in general have become much more edgy, disoriented and disturbed than they were before. A dehumanizing process seems to be overtaking man. These are alarming signals. And then, to cap these the frightening consequences of the fast depleting natural resources and the degradation of environment and biosphere are staring us in the face. It seems something crucial has gone terribly wrong somewhere.

It is not that voices of dissent about the course chosen by the world for its future development were not heard. Among the most compelling of such voices were those of Marx and his follower Lenin. But unfortunately they mistook symptoms for the disease and prescribed treatment for them. The disease thus not only lingered but got aggravated.

More perceptive were some of the great sons of our own country. Tagore, in a number of his writings had warned of the folly and danger of succumbing

blindly to the 'charms' of scientism and uncritical industrialization. Mahatma Gandhi's views are well known. And from within the domain of science itself came the voice of J.C. Bose. Unfortunately, they did not receive the deserved attention. Even the implications of Bose's findings were not worked out and properly appreciated.

In his in-depth and perceptive analysis Prof. Joshi showed that the trajectory the modern scientific and technological 'progress' took was a natural, perhaps inevitable, outcome of the philosophy it enshrined. It was based on a paradigm of exploitation and a master-servant worldview. From Galileo, Descartes, Newton, the founding fathers, the modern science has inherited a mechanistic worldview where nature is looked upon as something to be exploited for the benefit of men. This discourse soon acquired a hegemonic character and was borrowed by Locke and the Positivists and was applied to the understanding of society. Such a philosophy by its very nature is unable to inspire or sustain a scheme of balanced and harmonious growth. In an impassioned plea Professor Joshi has appealed to our reason to call a halt to this mad rush along this uncritical philosophy of growth. Instead, we could better look towards our own traditional holistic philosophy—a philosophy of concord and all-round harmony.

SIBESH BHATTACHARYA

नवम राधाकृष्णन स्मृति व्याख्यान

प्रख्यात हिन्दी साहित्यकार, चिन्तक, एवं अधुना उत्तर प्रदेश के राज्यपाल, आचार्य विष्णुकान्त शास्त्री जी ने जून 21, 2003 को नवम राधाकृष्णन स्मारक व्याख्यान में संत कबीर की साधना के मूल स्वरूप पर नयी दृष्टि से प्रकाश डाला।

कबीर पर चल रहे नवीन अध्ययन-दृष्टियों को उनके सही परिप्रेक्ष्य में रखते हुये जहाँ उन्होंने इस दायरे में पनप रहे एकाधिक वितण्डा-जालों से विभ्रमित पाठक को मुक्त किया, वहीं कबीर की मूल पहचान को कुछ ऐसे सहज और स्पष्ट रेखाओं में उकेरा कि कबीर काव्य का बुनियादी स्वरूप उजागर हो उठा।

अपने प्रकाशित व वितरित भाषण को एक तरफ रखते हुये उन्होंने आशुवक्तृत्व के माध्यम से एक सजीव-सहज वातावरण निर्मित कर दिया और आरम्भ में ही स्पष्ट किया कि केवल इतिहास ही वर्तमान को प्रभावित करता हो, ऐसा नहीं है, बल्कि वर्तमान भी इतिहास को प्रभावित करता है।

उन्होंने कहा कि नित्य नवीन दृष्टियाँ पिछली उपलब्धियों का नित्य नूतन मूल्यांकन चाहती हैं, और करती भी हैं। परन्तु समय के इस प्रभाव का मूल्यांकन करते समय हम उत्साहातिरेक में कभी-कभी कवि के मुख्य पक्ष को भूल जाते हैं। गौण पक्ष को मूल के प्रभावान्तर्गत ही देखना चाहिये।

इसी संदर्भ में वे कबीर की पहचान पर पड़े एकाधिक आवरणों को सूत्रधार की कुशलता से एक-एक कर हटाते चले; और रामचन्द्र शुक्ल से लेकर आचार्य हजारीप्रसाद द्विवेदी के कबीर अध्ययनपरक इतिहास का संक्षेप में विवेचन करते हुये उन्होंने आधुनिक युग की अन्य अध्ययन-दृष्टियों का आलोचनात्मक परिचय कराया। उन्होंने कहा कि भावनात्मक रहस्यवाद, योगात्मक या अभिव्यक्तिमूलक रहस्यवाद के विभाजनों से कबीरपंथियों का बहुत अधिक सरोकार नहीं था और न ही

कबीर स्वयं उन बारीकियों की परवाह करते थे।

शास्त्री जी के अनुसार कबीर पर सूफी तसव्वुफ का भी प्रभाव कम है। वे उनसे सत्संग भी करते थे, पर फटकारते भी थे। कबीर जैसे व्यक्तित्व को समाज सुधार से भी उतना ही जोड़ना चाहिये जो उनके मूल वक्तव्य का आनुषंगिक हो। और वह मूल वक्तव्य है निर्गुण की भक्ति कबीर के राम निराकार हैं पर निर्गुण नहीं इसीलिये उनकी भक्ति सुलभ है।

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कबीर की साधना ने मानवीय संदर्भ में उस निर्गुण भक्ति को साकार बनाया जो सत-रज-तम से परे है और औपनिषदिक परम्परा में निर्गुण उपासना के रूप में भारतीय परम्परा का अंग है। कबीर को यह परम्परा अपने गुरु से मिली। अव्यक्त अक्षर की उपासना का यह मार्ग रामानन्द ने दिखाया और रामनाम के निरन्तर स्मरण के महत्व से परिचित कराया।

आचार्य शास्त्री के सारगर्भित व्याख्यान के बाद एक विचार-मन्थन सत्र आयोजित हुआ जिसमें श्रोता वर्ग के साथ एक अत्यन्त आत्मीय वातावरण में शास्त्री जी से सभी ने भाषित विषय पर खुली बातचीत की।

कबीर पर सूफी प्रभाव की बात को लेकर कुछ प्रश्न उठाये जिस पर शास्त्री जी ने पुनः आंतरिक साक्ष्य पर बल देते हुये कहा कि एक-दो दोहे के आधार पर ऐसा कह देना अनुचित होगा क्योंकि कबीर का निर्गुण प्रिय राम, जिसकी वे अपने को बहुरिया कहते हैं, सूफी आराध्य से कहीं भी मेल नहीं खाता। सूफी निर्गुण प्रेम की शैली और कबीर की निर्गुण प्रेमा भक्ति को इस प्रकार बड़ी ही बारीकी से उन्होंने अलग किया और उसे औपनिषदिक परम्परा की निर्गुण उपासना से जोड़ा जिसमें उस निर्गुण तत्व के शरण में

जाने की बात की गई है जो सगुण निराकार है। इस मान्यता को उन्होंने औपनिषदिक उद्धरणों से पुष्ट किया।

एक अन्य-जिज्ञासा यह प्रस्तुत की गई कि निगम और आगम से ओतप्रोत जिस भारतीय संस्कृति को कबीर ने परम्परा में पाया था, उसके एकान्तिक पक्ष से उन्हें प्रभावित मानना कहाँ तक उचित होगा, क्योंकि नाथ-सिद्धों की आगमिक परम्परा का कबीर पर गहरा प्रभाव था यह सर्वविदित है। साथ ही कबीर के विचारों को निर्गुण भक्ति की अपेक्षा निर्गुण साधना कहना अधिक समीचीन होगा। इसी प्रकार एक प्रश्न कबीर साहित्य में प्राप्त उन विभिन्न धाराओं से सम्बन्धित था जिसमें यह कहा गया कि योगात्मक रहस्यवाद, अभिव्यक्ति मूलक रहस्यवाद आदि विभाजन तो हम अध्ययन की सुविधा के लिये कर लेते हैं। परन्तु क्या आरंभिक या परवर्ती दौर जैसे विभाजन कर के यह कहा जा सकता है कि योग की ओर उनका झुकाव साधना की एक अवस्था तक ही सीमित था? अपने उत्तर में उन्होंने पुनः उन धाराओं के स्रोतों पर ही बल दिया जिसमें योग उन्हें परिवार से और औपनिषदिक परम्परा का ज्ञान उन्हें गुरुमुख से प्राप्त हुआ और

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रामानन्द की प्रेरणा से वे निरन्तर अपने को भीतर से जानने की, आपनरो आपा बूझा की साधना करते रहे।

विचार-मन्थन सत्र में जिन विद्वानों ने भाग लिया उनमें प्रमुख थे प्रो० जी०सी० पाण्डे, प्रो० डी०पी० चट्टोपाध्याय, प्रो० ललन प्रसाद सिंह, प्रो० एल०पी० पाण्डे, डा० रत्ना लाहिडी आदि।

रत्ना लाहिडी
अध्येता

Lecture by
Professor D. P. Chattopadhyaya

Professor D. P. Chattopadhyaya, a former Chairman of the Institute and currently the Chairman, Centre for Studies in Civilizations, New Delhi, spared a few days in June (2003) from his busy schedule of commitments and spent them in the Institute interacting with the fellows and visiting scholars. On the forenoon of June 20 he gave a lecture on the fascinating theme: "*In Praise of the Law of Jungle: Human Obligations to Jungle and its Animal Inhabitants*".

The lecture was a gentle and penetrating admonition of the glibness with which we often use the expressions like 'the law of jungle', 'animal-like', 'beastly', 'brutish', and so on in a derogatory sense. In fact, in areas like loyalty, fellow feeling, obedience to laws and conventions, the laws of the jungle seem to compare favourably with those operating, or not operating, among human beings. Even in the area of violence animals may come better off than man; the animals are not known to indulge in violence for its own sake. Instances of sadistic animals are conspicuously absent. The animal world, despite the violence that characterizes its pervasive struggle for survival, is not even a pale shadow of the cruelty perpetrated by men on men, either in scale or in ferocity. The animals are also mercifully free from the overweening covetousness that seems to have taken hold of the modern man in a vice-like grip.

The lecture was followed by a lively discussion. Prof. G.C. Pande observed that the view of animal in the ancient world was quite different from the view of animal and animal behaviour that is widely prevalent in the modern age. In fact, in the ancient world some animals were regarded as

symbols of wisdom, virtue and dignity. The conduct of animals was often regarded as educative. In the *Panchatantra* and *Hitopadesa*, it is the animal-characters who represent the exemplars. The virtuous aspects in the character of Siddhartha Gautama were symbolized by animal figures. Many of the early *avatars* in the Indian concept of incarnations were again animal figures. Bhuvan Chandel, the Director, S. C. Pande, Sushil Kumar, T. S. Rukmani, Navjyoti Singh and some other fellows also participated in the discussion.

New Director of IAS

Professor Bhuvan Chandel, an eminent philosopher, joined as the new Director of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study on April 21, 2003.

Professor Chandel who was the seniormost Professor of Philosophy and the Dean Faculty of Arts at the Panjab University, Chandigarh, is the eleventh Director of the Institute.

Professor Chandel has authored/edited more than half a dozen books besides several articles in various national and international journals.

Earlier Professor Chandel had served as the Member-Secretary, Indian Council of Philosophical Research (1991-1994) of which she was the Founder Director (1981-1984). She is also the Honorary Member-Secretary of the Center for Studies in Civilizations, New Delhi, and has been actively involved in the Multi-disciplinary Research Project on the 'History of Indian Philosophy, Science and Culture'.

Professor Bhuvan Chandel is a member of the Executive Council of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP). She

has been expected the General President of the Indian Philosophical Congress at its Annual Session to be held in October 2003.

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