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OF SANTA CRUZ, INDIA

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are the ultimate ingredients of matter. The *guṇas*, that form the very basis of material objects, never remain steady ; they keep transforming themselves into newer and newer combinations, impelled by a higher purpose. In the beginning, we have the evolution of similars, and later dissimilars and finally the gross elements. The change continues beyond the point of infra-atoms and atoms. At the latter stage changes of appearance of the very same atoms takes places. There is a change of appearance of things. The same conglomeration of atoms continually takes up newer forms. What makes up dust particle, later on becomes a lump of clay, which is moulded into the shape of an earthen pot, and later breaks and returns back to dust.

In his deep meditation, however, the yogi sees the comparatively changeless *guṇas* in the changeful appearances. The new forms and stages of growth and decay, are nothing more than the changes of the original ingredients. The changes that we see, are only superficial. Beyond the changeful is the comparatively steady, and beyond it the changeless.

It is this awareness and habit of distinguishing the changeable from the changeless, that constitutes true advancement in self-evolution. The intrinsic understanding of the real from the unreal (*viveka*), is a starting point of a yogic development. When however such an understanding or discrimination is lacking, yogic technology cannot and does not help in bringing about much good. What time such inherent discrimination is available, the mystic and yogic development becomes quite a natural corollary.

NATURE OF VAIRAGYA IN THE PATANJALA YOGA SUTRA

by RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

ALMOST all the schools of philosophy lay stress on the cultivation of *vairāgya*. From a close study of the definitions of *vairāgya* as given by the teachers of various schools, it appears that the word *vairāgya* has not been used in the same sense in all schools of philosophy. In this paper, we shall try to expound the nature of *vairāgya* according to the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali.

Many exponents hold that the essence of *vairāgya* is renunciation (*tyāga*). It appears that Patañjali did not subscribe to this view. Renunciation, however, has its own merit and it has some touch with *vairāgya* also as will be shown later.

At first it should be noted that *virāga* or *vairāgya* is quite contrary to *rāga*. Now *rāga* is designated as a *kleśa* (affliction) (*vide* *Yogasūtra* 2-7) which again is a form of *avidyā* (nescience).

In the Pātañjala school, *avidyā* is not the negation or absence of *vidyā* (correct cognition, *samyak jñāna*), but a positive entity in the form of 'erroneous apprehension'. Thus it follows that *virāga* being opposite to *rāga* must fall under the province of *vidyā*. In other words, we may assert that in *vairāgya* the element of *jñāna* is predominant. Hence it can reasonably be concluded that the essence of *vairāgya* cannot be renunciation (*tyāga*), for renunciation is a form of activity.

That the essence of *vairāgya* in the Pātañjala school is not renunciation is further proved if we consider the sūtra—“*Abhyāsa-vairāgyābhyām tan-nirodhaḥ*” (1.12). It is evidently clear that these two are the means (*upāyas*)* to *vṛttinirodhaḥ* (cessation of mental fluctuations). These two means must be of different nature. There is no doubt that *abhyāsa* falls under the province of action, for it is a kind of effort (*yatna*)

* A discussion on *mokṣa* must include the *upāyas* along with the desired knowledge. ननु नाम त्वया मोक्षः कृत्स्नः पञ्चशिरवाच् श्रुतः । सोपायः सोपनिषदः सोपासङ्गः सनिश्चयः ॥ (Śāntiparvan 320-165). *Sopāya*= with the *upāyas*.

as is expressly stated in the sūtra "Tatra sthītau yatno 'bhyāsah'" (1.13). Evidently vairāgya must be of the nature of jñāna.

The word vāsikārasamjñā used for defining vairāgya (in *Yogas tra* 1.15) clearly points out that vairāgya is a function of the cognitive faculty. Vairāgya is a kind of jñāna—it is of the nature of reflection. The word samjñā (in vāsikārasamjñā) means 'knowing' (sam + root jñā + the suffix añ in the sense of bhāva).

When an aspirant comes to realise that every object is devoid of intrinsic value or when he becomes able to realise that he cannot be deluded or overcome by any object—internal or external—then this firm realisation is termed vāsikārasamjñā or vāsikārajñāna. A person who can acquire such jñāna cannot be disturbed or affected by objects. In the intellect of such a person, objects appear neither as upādeya (capable of being accepted) or heya (capable of being forsaken). Remaining in the state known as madhyastha, he utilises every kind of object in order to achieve his goal or ideal. A madhyastha accepts or rejects a thing or indulges into an action without being influenced by any external factor. In such a state, an aspirant becomes able to subjugate the saṁskāras of those actions which are being done by him.

The person possessing the aforesaid vāsikārajñāna transcends 'trṣṇā' (craving). To such an exalted being, viśayas appear as tasteless and he takes the help of every kind of objects to serve some definite purpose. It is needless to say that this purpose is nothing but the creating of sāttvika development in society.

When a person ceases to work for work's sake, i.e. when he does not work being compelled by the vāsanās, he may rightly be said as a tyāgin. Tyāga (renunciation) may be outward expression of vairāgya but it should not be supposed that the existence of tyāga presupposes the existence of vairāgya necessarily. If tyāga has its source in the aforesaid vāsikārasamjñā, then and then only tyāga can retain its character successfully; otherwise tyāga will turn into a means to unrestricted enjoyment. Such enjoyment is sometimes found to exist in the subconscious or even in the unconscious state of mind.

Vāsikārasamjñā gives rise to the thinking that the knower of objects is greater than the knowable things in every respect. Further it is also realised that the known is such a divine entity as can never be glorified by the transitory objects. Without the knower all knowable things become meaningless. Once the greatness of the knower is firmly realised, the aspirant will naturally tread on the path of self-knowledge. Even if one quantum of the self-knowledge of the first stage is acquired, the aspirant will clearly understand that worldly things do not constitute any part of personality.

The knowledge that the knower is absolutely different from knowable things gives rise to extreme vitrṣṇā (absence of craving). When an aspirant becomes able to determine that the proper knower is immutable and infinite, then the aforesaid vairāgya becomes endowed with the divine knowledge of Absolute Awareness (Citiśakti). This is the state of parāvairāgya (vide *Y. S.* 1.16).

Since parāvairāgya leads to the state of naiṣkarmya, it can easily be conceived that aparāvairāgya (i.e. vāsikārasamjñā) bestows considerable influence over the actions that are performed by an aspirant. Actions being regulated by vairāgya can properly constitute the essence of renunciation. Mere 'leaving of actions' is useless and it has nothing to do with jñāna or vairāgya.

At the beginning, we remarked that the nature of vairāgya varies in different schools. We understand that in the enumeration of four sāttvika rūpas of buddhi in the Sāṁkhya philosophy, vairāgya does not come under jñāna, for it mentions jñāna and vairāgya separately (along with dharma and aiśvarya) vide Sāṁkhyakārikā, 23. In this scheme, the essence of vairāgya must be understood as renunciation. The result (i.e. the state to be achieved) of this vairāgya as stated in the Sāṁkhyakārikā (45) also proves that the essence of vairāgya is of the nature of tyāga only. In this vairāgya, jñāna plays the least part, and this is why vairāgya is said to lead to the state known as 'prakṛtilāya' which is essentially different from 'Kaivalya'. Vairāgya as shown in the Yogadarśana positively leads to Kaivalya.