

Yogananda,"³ book is autographed on the final page. Price \$22.50 (*sic*). Also available is the Sixth Edition 1952 of *Yoga Personal Hygiene*, 338 pages, Hardbound prices \$7.50 (*sic*). It seems that the books used when The Yoga Institute was at Harriman are floating around in that area.⁴

I continue with groups here—very few are regular students—many come and go at their convenience, may be since there is no fee obligation. Of course, many were *only curious* to begin with. When finding out what Yoga really is, perhaps they lose interest due to impatience—not getting *instant* results. The few that remain share deep interest and this is important! I will continue as long as there is interest regardless of how few attend.

Recently a man, Shri J., was to be in Ohio, conducting Yoga Seminar. Among the many subjects he was to cover in Yoga, it was added that he was a Hindu palm-reader, psychic reader and also gave mantras. I can't help to be a skeptic, when I hear something like this. *I believe that it is not necessary to exploit Yoga this way.* Unfortunately, more were interested in the latter subjects—some mythical nonsense than Yoga itself. We are having many interesting things crop up regarding Yoga here. Yoga Retreats are conducted in isolated areas by *swamis of all sorts*. Having talked to people who attend, . . . I do not get involved with their activities.

3. "During the interval, one of the American students, Miss Bozena Brydlova, the originator of Brydlovan Theory of Numerals, enquired of the Founder if the latter had returned back to America since she noticed one XXX 'Swami Yogananda' advertise his lectures in Los Angeles. This query was followed by many other anxious students and *it was realized that someone had been moving in the U.S.A. under the same nom de plume.* This personation was undesirable, and in order to avoid reflections arising out of his name (and that of the Founder), the founder was required to adopt a legal title 'Shri Yogendra' by announcing the same in the Government Gazette (of 25th January 1923, p. 162) and informed his American associates accordingly." Cf. *Ibid*, p. 94.

4. Whenever any celebrity receives international recognition, the rare materials associated with his life are overrated beyond normal price.—*Ed.*

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blood. From the right heart to the lungs, from the lungs to the left heart, from there through the arteries into the capillaries of the tissues, back through the veins into the right heart, round and round, goes the blood in its wondrous, uninterrupted cycle, performing many chores. It takes carbon dioxide from the cells and exchanges it for oxygen in the lungs. It is a travelling departmental store of foodstuffs, carrying everything a cell needs—amino acids, fats, sugars, vitamins and salts. The blood also carries a variety of other wares—hormones to stimulate laggard cellular mechanisms, antibodies to battle invading poisons, clotting agents to seal breaches in its cyclic path. It distributes the heat evolved from the furnace of the cell, thus maintaining a uniform temperature throughout the body. Finally the blood keeps the acidity of tissues within tolerable limits.

The blood does its life-sustaining function, but it is the brain which thinks and commands the muscles to move. This it does through the long, thin threads of nerve cells leading from the spinal cord to the muscles. Messages are sent along this network—at a speed of 120 feet per second—ordering the muscles to perform their functions.

While the cells, the heart and the brain make up for life, its sustenance, and its activity, the ultimate determinant of the many-faceted jewel of life is the gene, the basic unit of heredity. Certain traits, including diseases, are passed down from parent to offspring through the genes which determine not only whether we are tall or short, dark or light in complexion, but also how we metabolise our sugar or cholesterol, what is the level of hormones in our blood, how we react to nicotine, etc., etc. Correction or alteration of the gene can mean changes in the very personality of the to-be-born. And synthesising a gene in the laboratory holds out the awesome prospect of the “man-made man,” the prospect India-born Dr. Hargobind Khorana held out recently.

All said and done, despite all the achievements of science, specially biochemistry, *our knowledge as regards “the stuff of life,” the atoms within us, is “still infinitely less than all that still remains unknown.” “Know all about me” is the terrifying challenge the wonderfully complex living cell has hurled at science.* It may take centuries, even the very infinity, to meet it.

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 put forward by the exponents of various schools it appears that the word *vairāgya* has not been used in one and the same sense. We shall therefore try to explain the nature of *vairāgya* according to the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali.

A good number of teachers hold that the essence of *vairāgya* is renunciation (*tyāga*). It appears that Patañjali did not subscribe to this view. Renunciation, however, has its own value and it does possess some touch with *vairāgya* also—as will be shown later.

At first, it should be noted that *vairāga* or *vairāgya* is quite contrary to *rāga*. Now *rāga* is designated as a *kleśa* (in *Yoga sūtra*, II, 3) which again falls under *avidyā* (nescience). *Yoga sūtra* II. 3 speaks of it as a form of *avidyā*, though properly speaking *avidyā* is the *prasavabhūmi* (breeding ground) of *rāga*.

In the Patañjala school, *avidyā* is not the negation or absence of *vidyā* (*samyakjñāna*, correct cognition), 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 *avidyā*. 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, for renunciation is a form of activity (*kriyā*).

That the essence of *vairāgya* in the Patañjala school is not renunciation is further proved by the *sūtra*—*Abhyāsa-vairāgyābhyām tan-nirodhaḥ*—(I. 12). It is evidently clear that these two are the means (*upāyas*) to *vṛttinirodhā* (cessation of mental functions). These two must be regarded as having distinct nature with separate operation peculiar to their own. Since *abhyāsa* falls under the province of action (*kriyā*) for it is a kind of effort (*vatna*), as stated in *Yoga Sūtra* I.13 (*Tatrashti-*

tav yatno bhyāsaḥ), it is quite reasonable to hold that vairāga is of the nature of jñāna.

The word *vaśikārasamjñā* used for defining vairāgya (in *Yoga sūtra* I. 15) clearly points out that in vairāgya the element of 'reflection' plays the greatest part. The word *samjñā* in *vaśikārasamjñā* means *jñāna* (sam + 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 conviction is termed *vaśikārajñāna* or *vaśikārasamjñā*. A person who is able to 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). Abiding at the state known as *madhyastha*, he utilizes every kind of objects in order to achieve his goal or to attain the highest perfection. A *madhyastha* neither as *upādeya* (capable of being accepted) or *heya* (capable being forsaken) 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 *saṁkāras* of those actions that are being done by him.

A person possessing the aforesaid *vaśikārajñāna* transcends *trṣṇā* (craving). To such an exalted being *viśayas* appear as tasteless, but he may take the help of every kind of objects only to serve some definite purpose. It is needless to say that this purpose is nothing but the producing 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 *vāsanās*, he may rightly be said as a '*tyāgin*'. Renunciation may be the outward expression of *vairāgya* and it should not be supposed that the existence of *tyāga* presupposes the existence of *vairāgya* necessarily. If *tyāga* has its source in the aforesaid *vaśikārasamjñā* 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.

Vaśikārasamjñā gives rise to the thought that the knower of objects is greater than the knowable things in every respect. Gradually it is also realized that : (i) the knower is such a divine entity as can never be glorified by the transitory objects, (ii) without the knower all knowable things become meaningless. Once the greatness of the knower is firmly realized the aspirant will naturally tread on the path of self-knowledge. Even if one quantum of self-knowledge of the first stage is acquired, the aspirant will 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 *viṣṇā* (absence of craving). When an aspirant becomes able to determine that the real knower is immutable and infinite, then the aforesaid *vairāgya* becomes endowed with the divine knowledge of Absolute Awareness (*citiśakti*) This is the state of *paravairāgya* (*Y. S. I. 16*).

Such *paravairāgya* leading to the state of *niṣkarma*, it can easily be conceived that *aparavairāgya* (*i.e.* the *vaśikārasamjñā*) exerts 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 things' is useless and this 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 the 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 *aśvarya*, vide (*Sāṁkhya kārikā* II. 3). 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 *Sāṁkhya kārikā* 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 *prakṛtilaya*, which is essentially different from *kaivalya*. *Vairāgya* as shown in the *yoga* philosophy however positively leads to *kaivalya* (consciousness absolute).