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His Holiness
SHRI KUMARASWAMIJI
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Born : 1909

Graduated : 1932

Ordained : 1933

THE VIRASHAIVA PHILOSOPHY AND MYSTICISM

Shri. Kumaraswamiji
Navakalyana Math, Dharwar.

Foreword by
Dr. Paul Branton, Ph. D.
The famous writer on Esoteric Knowledge

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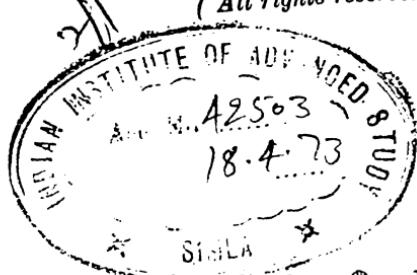
Introduction by
Rev. Dr. J. M. Holmes
The Minister of Community Church of New York

1960

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O P I N I O N S

This book is the treasure of India's ancient and yet modern philosophies. Nothing but good can come to the Westerner who makes a perusal of it. And the Easterner who wishes to become more fully aware of his own spiritual heritage has here a splendid chance to do so.

Rev. R. E. Davies
26, Frayne Road
Ashton gate, Bristol 3, England

I have read the book with keen interest and note with delight that you have made the dynamical side of life prominent and followed the path of transcendence by gradual ascent from crude matter to fine energies and lastly to the Supreme Being of saturated silence. This covers the whole scale of life and in ascent and descent the dynamic centres of life are touched, moved and made active.

The book contains important information regarding Virashaivism, its philosophy and mysticism and makes comparative touches. It is well-written, well-planned and well-arranged.

Dr. Mahendra Nath Sarkar,
M. A., Ph. D.
Prof. of Philosophy,
Presidency College, Calcutta.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The drift of modern thought is towards a greater tendency to unite the spiritual and material modes of our life rather than place them in opposition and antithesis. It is this synthesis of spirit and matter through life that is the keynote of the present work. And in view of this tendency it has seemed to me very desirable to place Virashaiva Religion on a more rational basis than has hitherto been the case. I have endeavoured to find for it a philosophical, psychological and even a scientific ground, that may serve as a corrective to the very irrational developments which have been taking place in certain directions. Such a basis would at the same time enable us to understand Lingayat Faith in a better relation to the deeper phenomena of life and consciousness to which, broadly, the terms occult and mystical are given.

The fundamental principles of this basis have been dealt with in this work. I have tried to show how the leading concepts of Virshaivism such as Anubhava Vidya, Shakti-vishist-advaita, Linga-tatva-nirnaya, Sat-sthala Sidhhanta, Linganga-Samarasya, Shivayogà and others are capable of interpretation in terms of

philosophy, theosophy, psychology, mysticism and occultism. *Mysticism of the Sharanas* is a mirror which reflects the Lingayat Faith as a rational mysticism bringing into bold relief the synthetic view of action and contemplation. The *Virashaiva Weltanschauung* and *Virashaivism Explained* give a philosophical exposition of Shakti-vishist-advaita both from European and Indian stand-point. Kashmir Shaivism does admit Shakti-vishist-advaita but it does not express it in so many words. Virashaivism, on the other hand, is bold enough to explicate it. *Virashaivism Explained* unravels the full implication of Shakti-vishist-advaita by admitting a metaphysical distinction of higher and lower nature in Shakti. *Virashaivism—Quo Vadis!* deals with the theological aspect of Linga. *Nisus in Virashaivism* is a synthetic view of the triple culture of the head, heart and hand. *Civitas Dei* is a dissertation of the psychological process of the mystical states of consciousness. *Divina Mensura* is a decisive attempt to evaluate and locate Shivayoga in the contents of occultism. The *Quintessence of Lingayat Religion* is a constructive survey of the relation of the conscious self to the Supreme both in its finiteness and its absoluteness. *Pentagram* is a plan designed to achieve mystic realisation through the aid of a five-pointed path. *Theosophy and Virashaivism* treats of Virashaivism in the light of Theosophy. In order that there should be a clear exposition of Virashaivism from various stand-points I am forced to repeat certain things which, I hope, the reader will view with indulgence.

The reader comes across many a saying of the Sharanas in the body of the book. They are not the exact or literal translations; rather they are free renderings being as much general in content as they are particular in intent.

In bringing out this present book I have referred to and drawn upon many an author to whom I gratefully acknowledge my debts.

I am very much indebted to Dr. Paul Brunton, and to Rev. Dr. J. H. Holmes, who have been kind enough to adorn this book with their valuable forewords.

Navakalyana Math, Dhaiwar

25th February, 1949

--*The Author*

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This is a reprint of the first Edition with slight changes. Since its publication the book has been highly appreciated both at home and abroad. The great demand for the book has necessitated the publication of this Edition. It is hoped that this Edition will be met with greater response and appreciation.

In the body of the text there are a number of apparent misprints caused by falling of types and punctuation marks while printing. These have not been noted in the corrections given at the end as these can be easily detected.

Due to defective proof-reading a number of errors have crept in the body of the text, which have been rectified at the end. I beg the indulgence of the reader for the same.

—*The Publisher*

FOREWORD

For many years I travelled in India, learning from her books of the past and listening to many of her living teachers of the present and gained much from these contacts.

Since the day when I first put feet on her ancient shores terrible things have taken place in the world, the monsoons of hate have rained down on humanity and the minds of men are in danger of drowning in floods of materialism, strife and violence.

It is, therefore, good to recognize in Shri Kumaraswamiji a voice which is, as he himself writes, exhorting people "to know, be and possess the Divine Being in the discursive individual consciousness" India has a heritage inherited from a long and splendid tradition of thinkers and seers, though there may be those who think that the spiritual leadership of India is gone, but so long as there are writers with the sincerity and understanding of Shri Kumaraswamiji, this tradition will be in good hands.

The enquirer into Virashaivism had very little material in the English language available for study before the

Swamiji's writings began to appear. The Swamiji has done a much needed work in writing the followings pages. Furthermore his attempt to present the principles of Virashaivism in a modern form and to compare or relate them to Western culture, greatly increases the value of his writings to contemporary readers.

*5 Westmoreland Street
Marylebone, London W. 1.
17th October, 1948*

Paul Brunton

INTRODUCTION

It is fitting that, on this anniversary occasion, the master-work of Shri Kumaraswamiji should be published. It must stand as a perpetual monument to the author and as a beacon of far-flung light lifted for the guidance of men's souls through the dark places of this world.

It is doubtful if there is any guidance quite so clear as that of philosophy in its more mystical aspects. Religion is perhaps primary in its all-round influence upon men. For religion is not to be confined to the realm of thought or yet of feeling, but occupies as well the field of conduct, or action. But philosophy and religion are bridged by mysticism which leaps the gulf between them and makes them one. This is made evident by Kumaraswamiji's work which takes up philosophy only to transform it into religion by the mystic genius of his spirit.

It is doubtful if there is any surer road to truth than that of mysticism. We Westerners are more inclined to emphasize reason. We have an idea that the processes of reason contain within themselves their own corrective of error. But this in itself is a confession that reason is prone to error and therefore cannot be trusted—a fact which would seem to be made manifest by the vagaries of rational

research in recent centuries. Mysticism has a direct contact with reality. It brings back from its experience a first-hand testimony of truth. And surely it teaches depths and heights of cosmic being quite beyond the attainment of all other media of understanding. Here in the West we know little of all this, though we have produced great mystics. Therefore is this book a treasure-trove for us.

But it belongs as well to India which produced Kumaraswamiji from out its soul and now seeks nourishment from its own off-spring. For mysticism ever needs refreshment, and philosophy to be thought through again. I feel in this volume that India is renewing its life, and therewith making true and beautiful for ages to come the secrets of her ageless being. So let not India imagine that this work is for others. It is for herself as well. Let her drink deep of this fount of living water and therewith rise refreshed for grappling with the mighty problems of the new freedom which now wait upon her response.

I think it is a fine thing Mr. Koppal has done in publishing this book. It is a touching instance of a master nobly served by his disciple.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Hayes Tolman". The signature is written over a stylized, symmetrical flourish that looks like a diamond or a stylized 'M'.

*Ten Park Avenue
New York 16, N. Y. (U. S. A.)
February 1939*

**THE VIRASHAIVA
PHILOSOPHY AND MYSTICISM**

MYSTICISM OF THE SHARANAS

In the twelfth century in Karnatak there was a galaxy of Lingayat Saints, the pre-occupation with whom was to realise God and to remould the individual life and social institutions by that realisation. To know, be and possess the Divine Being in the discursive individual consciousness, to convert the illusions of desire into illumination of joy, to transform half-lit mental obscurity into an ordered intuition, to recognise freedom in a group of mechanical necessities, to realise the immortal life in this earthly tenement which is subject to change and mutation, to build peace and the self-existent bliss in a society paralysed by physical pain and emotional suffering—this was the promise they offered to the posterity. The number of these Lingayat Saints, or Mystics, that is, the Sharanas ranged from two to three hundred amongst whom there were about sixty women mystics, of whom Akka Mahadevi was the beacon-light. She could stand in comparison with any woman mystic

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either of India or abroad, but excelled all in point of her astounding asceticism to realise God. Basava and Allama Prabhu were the two distinguished names that shone in the firmament of the Lingayat Faith. It was they who dominated all the other saints and gave a decisive turn to the religious renaissance of the twelfth century. Almost all the saints have sung their realisation in different strains and expressed their views and opinions on men and society in varied sayings. The collection of these sayings is known as the *Vachana Shastra*—the Scripture of the Lingayat Faith. The sayings of Basava are characterised by the sublimation of elegance, the apotheosis of merit, the transfiguration of grace. But in reading the sayings of Allama Prabhu, we seem to be the spectators of a 'life-drama' and on-lookers of a Master Spirit's progress and development through the stress and stir of the eternal yea and nay. This spirit of detachment and idealism is manifest throughout his sayings whose cryptic expression surpasses in a way that of Carlyle in his *Sartor Resoritus*, Shakespeare in his *Sonnets* or Tennyson in his *In Memorium*.

The *Vachana Shastra* is the fruit of deep meditation and mature observation of many a Lingayat Saint. It contains true sublimity, exquisite beauty, pure morality and fine strains of poetry. In what-so-ever light we may regard the *Vachana Shastra*, it is found to be a valuable mine of knowledge and virtue. The more deeply one

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works the mine, the richer and more abundant he finds he ore. More light continually beams from this scripture to direct the conduct and to illustrate the work of God and the ways of men. As all the scriptures of the world, it teaches us the best way of living, the noblest way of suffering and the most comfortable way of dying. The importance and value of the *Vachana Shastra* cannot be too greatly emphasized in these days of uncertainties, when men and nations are prone to decide questions, from the stand-point of expediency rather than in the light of eternal principles. Scholars may quote high authorities in their studies, but the hearts of thousands will recite the *Vachanas* at their daily toil and draw strength from their inspiration as the meadows draw it from the brook. A wide-spread interest and admiration is displayed in the *Vachana Shastra* now-a-days by the Lingayat Community; but a mere interest or admiration without an insistent application of truth to life is as good as a pig in the flower garden. The *Vachana Shastra* is to the Lingayat Community what the star is to an astronomer; but if the Community spends all its time in gazing upon it, observing its motions and admiring its splendour, without being led into its spirit, the use of it will be lost to the Community. On the whole, the truths of the *Vachana Shastra* have the power of awakening an intense moral feeling in every human being. They send a pulse of fellow-feeling through all the domestic, civil and social

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relations and teach men how to love the right and hate the wrong. They seek each other's welfare in the right sense of self-sacrifice but not in the shadow of enlightened self-interest. They control the baneful and bastard passions of the heart and thus make men proficient in self-government. Finally they teach man to aspire after God and fill him with hopes more purifying, exalted and conformable to his nature so as to secure an intuition of the Supreme Being.

The *Vachana Shastra* or the scripture of the Lingayat Faith depicts the Supreme Being or God as an eternal, infinite and incomprehensible being, the creator of all things, who preserves and governs every event by his almighty power and wisdom and who is therefore the only object of worship. To the Lingayat Saint or Sharana, as also to all the mystics alike, the presence and love of God are always before his mind's eye. He makes incessant efforts to establish a direct relation to God, so that his ever-repeated call for *Samarasa*, that is, atonement indicates nothing but an approach to Divine Reality. Thus the life's philosophy of the Sharana cannot be summarised better than in the words of Dr. E. Carpenter: "God is through all in all, so that life and limb are His through all in all, so that He breathes in our breath, speaks in our speech, thinks in our thought. What then? Shall we suffer and He not know? Are we in pain and will He not feel? It is the mystery

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of His nature to the eternal and the all-pervading, and yet to blend Himself with our mortal frame, and to abide unchanged while we grow and decay.” Thus we see that the Sharana realises God through intuitive feeling. He thinks but he thinks with the heart; this thinking with the heart takes him on to the secret existence of God. His arguments about the existence of God are simple, straight-forward and yet cogent enough. “The world we inhabit must have had an origin; that origin must have consisted in a cause; that cause must have been intelligent; that intelligence must have been Supreme; that Supreme intelligence is God.” The Sharana out-bursts in a sentimental, albeit serene tone. “Since God is the Supreme intelligence, he is the light of my understanding, the joy of my heart, the fullness of my hope, the mirror of my thoughts, the consoler of my sorrows, the guide of my soul through this gloomy labyrinth of time, the telescope to reveal to the eye of man the amazing glories of a far distant world.” The gift of thinking with the heart drives one towards the integrality of a higher nature, a purer conscience by virtue of which he enters into the communion with God. How often we look upon God as our last and feeblest resource! We go to him because we have nowhere else to go. We fret and fume, we wail and complain, we stress and stir only to learn that the storms of life have driven us not upon the rock, but in the

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inmost recess of Reality, A mystic has said elsewhere : “ God is an un-utterable sigh in the inner-most depths of the soul.” With still greater justice, we may reverse the proposition and say, ‘The soul is a never-ending sigh after God ’ If so, God should be the object of all our desires, the end of all our actions, the principle of all our affections, and the governing power of our whole souls. Thus observes Washington : “It is impossible to govern the world without God. He must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligation.” Because God is the governing power of the world, He is represented as the figure of an eye upon the sceptre, to denote that He sees and rules all things. “In all thy actions”, says the Sharana, “think that God sees thee and in all His actions labour to see Him. That will make thee fear Him and this will move thee to love Him. The fear of god is the beginning of knowledge, and the knowledge of God is the perfection of love.” It is this refreshing knowledge and redeeming love that impels one not only to realise the presence of God in all events and movements but also obliges him to attune his action and attitude to the will of God. This is therefore the *vade mecum* of the Sharana : “In all His dispensations God is at work for our good. In prosperity He tries our gratitude; in mediocrity our contentment; in misfortune our submission; in darkness our faith; under temptation our

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stead-fastness; and at all times, our obedience and trust in Him.”

God is the Alpha and Omega of the Mystic; to him He is a transcendent Reality whose energy is immanent in the universe. It is the stress of this energy that shapes things, guides the course of events and pre-ordains the world-process. The energy that manifests itself in the workings of the world is cosmic will which is sometimes known by the name of Nature, that is purposive and therefore determinant. But God transcends this cosmic will by his Supreme Will which is spontaneous and has the power of doing, undoing and doing otherwise. God is therefore more than Nature. Still Nature is man’s teacher; she teaches the individual to universalise himself and then to transcend the cosmic formula. She trains the unruly personal will of man, unfolds her treasures to his search, unseals his eye, illumines his mind, and purifies his heart. She is a frugal mother who never gives without measure, never wastes anything. She undergoes a succession of changes so gentle and easy that we can scarcely mark their progress. “In nature”, says Shaftsbury, “all is managed for the best with perfect frugality and just reserve, profuse to none, but bountiful to all; never employing on one thing more than enough, but with exact economy retrenching the superfluous and adding force to what is principle to every thing.” Hence the laws of nature are just but terrible.

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There is neither weak mercy nor favouritism in them. Cause and consequence are inseparable and inevitable. The elements have no forbearance. The fire burns the water drowns, the air dries, the earth buries. There is then no trifling in nature. She is always true, grave and severe. She is always in the right and the faults and the errors fall to our share. She defies incompetency, but reveals her secrets to the competent, the truthful and the pure. Says Whipple, "Nature does not capriciously scatter her secrets as golden gifts to lazy pets and luxurious darlings, but imposes tasks when she presents opportunities and uplifts him whom she would inform. The apple that she drops at the feet of Newton is but a coy invitation to follow her to the stars." In all the cosmic movements we thus see at work the great regulative Idea. The ignorant man marvels at the exceptional, but the wise man marvels at the common; for, to him the greatest wonder of all is the regularity of Nature.

The Sharana or the Mystic represents God as the eternal, infinite and imperishable Light, as the great Sun of truth and righteousness of whose innumerable rays nature or law is but a single ray. Natural law is therefore a method of operation, not an operator. A natural law, without God behind it, is no more than a glove without a hand in it. The laws of nature are not, as some modern Naturalists are wont to suppose, iron chains by which the Almighty God is bound hand and foot. They are, according

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to the Sharana, rather elastic cords which He can lengthen or shorten at his sovereign will. The progress in natural sciences has tended more to the omni-potency of natural law. Determinism has furnished extra-ordinarily satisfactory explanations of physical and biological phenomena, and as the cosmic will finds its expression in definite physical and biological occurrences, it is natural to extend the principle of determinism to cover willed as well as unwilled events. On the other hand, the doctrine of evolution has lent some support to the idea of the freedom of will. If man has evolved from animals of a lower mental organisation mainly as the result of natural selection, it is difficult to see why his consciousness should have evolved if it is merely a looker-on in the game and cannot actively influence events. A far more important assault has been made on determinism by Heisenberg and other physicists. They claim that while causality applies to large bodies, it does not apply to atoms. Eddington has attempted to identify this atomic indeterminism with the freedom of will. He regards the human body as a device for magnifying its effects from the atomic to the visible scale of magnitude. It is true that one cannot ascertain that an atom in a given situation will behave in such and such a manner merely that there is a certain probability that it will do so. But if we observe a body containing a million million atoms, these probabilities coalesce to a practical certainty. Hence indeterminism for

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atoms involves practical determinism for large bodies, even if atomic events are really independent of one another. This is the verdict of the physics.

In the field of metaphysics we also envisage both these principles of determinism and indeterminism. That nature is strictly determinant, that it abhors favouritism has been proved already. So long as man works in the region of necessity, he is caught in the roving rocket of nature's law and is enslaved to destiny. What Omar Khayyam symbolises as the 'Moving hand', the 'Eternal Saki', the 'Wheel of Destiny' is simply the nature's force that pre-conditions everything. The poets who pin their attention upon this nature's force as the be-all and the end-all have been generally pessimistic in their out-look upon life, and sing in the doleful strains that the human life has come into existence by the movement of a blind mechanical power, with no charm in matter nor chastity in mind. But the mystic intuits that the supreme will of God transcends the natural laws or limits and behaves independently as an atom behaves independent of one another. When man steps out of the region of necessity and steps into the region of sincere and selfless sympathy that is love, by affiliating his individual will to the supreme will of God, he gets over the tyranny of natural laws and gains freedom not from the law but in the law. This loving affiliation lets the supreme will descend into man by virtue of which he transforms

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his life human into the life divine. It is this supreme will that goes by the name of *Grace* in mysticism, whose touch converts difficulties into opportunities, whose presence vanquishes the apparently inexorable destiny of man.

The Grace is, in the words of the Sharana, like a perfume; the more it is pressed, the sweeter it smells. It is like a star that shines brightest in the dark. It is like a tree which, the more it grows, the deeper root it takes and the more fruit it bears. As heat and cold, light and darkness cannot live together so Grace and sin cannot dwell together in the heart of man. Grace descends into the heart of him who is pure and free from selfishness and fear. But the descent of the Grace is in gradual hierarchy, it pace is serene and silent, at times it may be abrupt and amazing. "Grace comes into the soul", says the Sharana, "as the morning sun into the world; first a dawning, then a light and at last the sun in his full and excellent brightness." Since the Supreme Being is free in his movements, the descent of the Grace cannot be ascertained in definite laws. Hence it is expressed as a mystery. A mystery is something of which we know that it is, but we do not know how it is. While reason puzzles itself about mystery, faith turns it to daily bread and feeds on it thankfully in her heart. It has been well said that a thing is not necessarily against reason, because it happens to be above it. Jeremy Taylor observes thus: "In dwelling on divine mysteries keep thy heart humble,

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thy thoughts reverent, thy soul holy. Let not philosophy be ashamed to be confuted, nor logic to be confounded, nor reason to be surpassed. What thou canst not prove, approve; what thou canst not comprehend, believe; what thou canst believe, admire, love and obey. So shall thine ignorance be satisfied in thy faith and thy doubt be swallowed up in thy reverence, and thy faith shall be as influential as sight. Put out thine own candle, and then shalt thou see clearly the sun of righteousness.” Mysticism may then be defined as an art to experience unmixed and pure delight in all the contents of the cosmos through intuitive faith in the workings of the Supreme Being. If Epicureanism is human nature drunk, Cynicism is human nature mad, and Stoicism is human nature in despair, then Mysticism is human nature in delight. “Learn thou of pure Delight and thou shalt learn of God.”

II

The Sharana never suffers from what the French men call *impuissance de vivre*, meaning thereby an incapacity to face the facts of life and adapt oneself to its hard and unfavourable conditions. His is a Philosophy of virtuous action and vast knowledge. Philosopoy, if rightly defined, is nothing but the love of wisdom. To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates. Philosophy has therefore two aspects: one is the love of wisdom, another is the life of action. Or rather we may say, in the words of Southey, that philosophy is of two kinds: that which relates to conduct and that which relates to knowledge. The first teaches us to value all things at their real worth, to be contented with little, modest in prosperity, patient in trouble, equal-minded at all times. The second teaches man to know more; the more he knows, the more he is desirous of knowing; and yet the further he advances in knowledge, the better he

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understands how little he can attain, and the more deeply he feels that God alone can satisfy the infinite desires of an immortal soul. It is this deep feeling that drives him towards the realisation of divine joy which resides in the heart of things. If mysticism is the art of experiencing unmixed and pure delight in all the contents of the cosmos, the Sharana gains this delight through detachment of idea, *Jnana* and domination of will, *Kriya*. Schopenhauer has written a famous philosophical work whose title is *The World as Will and Idea*. The conception which underlies it is that there are two aspects of the world-process, one as will and the other as idea. The world arises for Schopenhauer when there has been evolved a nervous system sufficiently organised to be the instrument of knowledge. The will, therefore, becomes the thing-in-itself and rules ruthlessly. It is the *will-to-live* that conditions all our modes of thought and activity. This activity is the root-cause of pain in this world which preponderates over pleasure. The only way to cut oneself away from this activity, according to him, is to snub down the will-to-live, not to desire the riches of the world; but to renounce them, and to become an ascetic.

But while pointing out that man can never find any satisfaction in trying to dominate the world-process by his insignificant will, Schopenhauer points out a way of release, which is by identifying one with the world as idea. If once man learns to react to the world, not in

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its manifestation as will, but in its manifestation as idea, then he comes into the possession of profound peace. For this, man must detach himself from the world as will by the development of philosophic (mystic) sensitivity. When he reacts philosophically to the world, he can sense it without being necessarily dragged into the terrible machinery of the world as will. However laudable may be his treatise, Schopenhauer is one-sided in his presentation of the truth; he has presented the ideal aspect of truth, ignoring its real. The philosophical conception of attaining peace or partial redemption by discovering the world as idea is one of the dominant factors of idealism, whether that idealism be philosophic or psychic, literary or artistic. In all the shades of idealism, the conscious or sub-conscious aim is to present types, from the observation of which we are to gain peace through *catharsis*. We may, as philosophers and artists, gain a kind of detachment from the world as will and watch it as idea. But so long as we are in any form of existence, we are necessarily part of the world and there can be no complete detachment from it. That peace which is gained by the identification with the world as idea, cannot be final since there is an element of incompleteness in it. In addition to detachment from the world, there must then be a domination of the world. To state it in other words, we should not only detach ourselves from the world and see it as idea, but we should

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be at the same time identified with the world as will. But we should live our own will and not the world's will. This domination of the world as will is equally the theme of mysticism. A true mystic when he is detached and serene, is yet so intimately identified with the world as will, that he allows all the forces of that world to flow through him. Still he should not allow them to dominate him, for he must create out of their substance a thing of his will, not of theirs. Every great mystic is a vortex of life's forces and the more he dominates them and then reshapes them, the greater is he as an artist.

The joy of creation, which means so much pain and renunciation to the true mystic, is made a thousand times more acute after the realisation of God. Life is more delicately sensed, and so becomes a cause of greater agony. This feeling of agony is pictured in many a saying of the Sharana which closely resembles the telling epigram of James Thomson :

Once in a saintly passion
I cried with desperate grief
O Lord, my heart is black with gile,
Of sinners I am chief.

Then stopped my guardian angel
And whispered from behind,
Vanity, my little man,
You are nothing of the kind.

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But it also becomes larger, fuller, more exquisite and therefore in all ways a greater and a more beautiful thing. For the Divine is Will as it is Wisdom. The Sharana has the knack to recognise will and wisdom as identical and not as antithetical. He is the true philosopher, for philosophy is the love of wisdom but it is so to love as to live its dictates. The world cannot show us a more exalted character than that of a trully religious philosopher or mystic who delights to turn all things to the glory of God, who in the objects of his sight, derives improvement to his mind, and in the glass of things temporal, sees the image of things spiritual. This spiritual vision propels the Sharana to intuit the world as idea and to look upon it as an extension of the soul. "This outer world," says Alfred Noyes, "is but the pictured scroll of worlds within the soul; a coloured chart, a blazoned message book wherein who rightly look may spell in the splendours with their mortal eyes and steer to paradise."

To the Sharana who desires to dominate the world as will life is an activity, it is a serious business to be entered upon with courage and in a spirit of self-sacrifice. Life is hardly respectable if it has no generous task, no duties that constitute a necessity of existence; for every man's task is his life-preserver. This necessity of task bespeaks of the human diversity. If human diversity is an ineradicable fact, the ideal society is

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one in which as many types as possible can develop in accordance with their possibilities. So far every society has tended to idealise one particular type. Some have been narrower than others. The immense strength of Lingayatism lies largely in its doctrine of vocation, *Kayaka*, according to which a man or woman may be called by God to any of a large variety of careers and please Him in any of them. The Sharana therefore opines that the meaning, the value, the truth of life can be learnt only by an actual performance of its duties. For, as Bailey says, we live in deeds not in years; in thoughts, not in breaths; in feelings, not in figures on the dial. We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives who thinks fast, feels the noblest and acts the best. In great and sober moments life seems neither right nor wrong, but something greater and more heroic where fortune is a prize to be won; adventure is the road to it and chance is what may lurk in the shadows at the road-side. Thus sings the Sharana, "A sacred burden is this life ye bear; look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly; fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin, but march onward, upward, till the goal ye win." Life is fruitful in the ratio in which it is chalked out in noble action and patient perseverance. "God has made this world a field of battle and filled it with the cries of combatants. Would you filch his peace without paying the price he has

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fixed for it?" To pay the price is to fight with injustice, to forgive the wrong-doers, to forget the past and to forbear the ill-graces. If the true end of life is to know the life that never ends, we are then to strive hard to ward off the obstacles offered by the inconsistent Matter, *Prakriti*, in the way of self-development. The Sharana agrees with William James when he says, "If this life be not real fight in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which one may withdraw at will."

As there are two phases of the world-process, so there are two personalities in man. Modern psychology has recognised the existence of this duplex personality. Psychology addresses these two personalities as Ego and Super-ego, while philosophy names them as the natural self and the transcendental self. Wherever any writer describes man, he depicts him in this double capacity. Byron aptly remarks what man is : ' Half dust, half deity alike unfit to sink or soar.' How poor, how rich, how abject, how august, how complicate, how wonderful is man! Shakespeare speaks of man in his Super-ego : ' What a piece of work man is! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving, how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a God!' But Pascal speaks of man in his Ego : ' What a chimera is man, what a confused

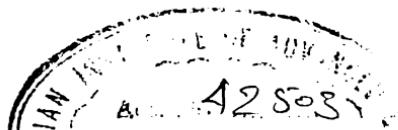
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chaos! What a subject of contradictions! A professed judge of all things and yet a feeble worm of the earth! The great depositary and guardian of truth, and yet a mere huddle of uncertainty! The glory and the scandal of the universe.' Carlyle speaks of man in his double capacity: 'He is of the earth, but his thoughts are with the stars. Mean and petty his wants and desires; yet they serve a soul exalted with grand, glorious aims,—with immortal longings, with thoughts which sweep the heavens and wander through eternity. A Pigmy standing on the outward crest of this small planet, his far-reaching spirit stretches outward to the infinite, and there alone finds rest.' Emerson is more eloquent in his observation on man: 'Every man is a divinity in disguise, a god playing the fool. It seems as if heaven had sent its insane angels into our worlds as to an asylum. And here they will break out into their native music, and utter at intervals the words they have heard in heaven; then the mad fit returns and they mope and wallow like dogs.' Man is an animal; but he is an animal plus something more. 'He is a mythic earth-tree,' says the Sharana, 'whose roots are in the ground, but whose topmost branches may blossom in the heavens.' In the words of the Sharana man is *Pashupati*, he is at once an animal and an angel. But he opines that animal should not be destroyed but should be so trained as to obey the will and order of its Lord, the angel. The way of *Pashupati* or

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the Superior man is therefore three-fold: "Virtuous, he is free from anxieties; wise, he is free from perplexities; bold, he is free from fear." The *Pashupati* is therefore sans pride, sans envy, sans anger. For the Sharana says, "The proud man has no God; the envious man has no neighbour; the angry man has not himself. What good, then in being a man, if one has neither himself nor a neighbour nor God!"

In accordance with the duplex personality of man, life also presents twin aspects—sham and real: the sham life of the ignorant ego, the real life of the wise super-ego. It is true that the Sharana bewails the transitoriness of the sham life only to invite us to know and study the real life. The melancholy refrain of 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity' is often-times heard with respect to the sham life of the ignorant ego "This (sham) life is a hollow bubble, don't you know? Just a painted piece of trouble, don't you know? We come to earth to cry, we grow older and we sigh, older still and then we die, don't you know?" This pessimistic tone exists only as a discord in transition to the real accord. The Sharana is fully alive to the fact that unless man conquers his natural self, gains mastery over his passions and instincts, he cannot progress in self-development; he cannot become a *Pashupati*. The secret of all success is to know how to deny oneself; for self-denial is the price one has to pay to buy



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the Divine peace. To this end lower must be sacrificed for the higher; the coarser give place to the finer; the ego surrender to the super-ego. Every step of our progress towards success is a sacrifice, a self-denial. We gain by losing, grow by dwindling, live by dying. Self-denial is indeed a mark of the higher nature, it is indispensable to a strong character. It is the result of a calm, deliberate, invincible attachment to the highest good, flowing forth in the *voluntary renunciation* of everything *inconsistent* with the glory of God or with the good of our fellow-men. Self-denial therefore indicates not only control or mastery over the lower nature but as well its sublimation. The Sharana is loud in admonishing man to get mastery over his natural instincts so as to transform them into normal intuitions.

If one wishes to learn self-mastery, he should begin by yielding himself to the one Great Master. For we are very apt to be full of ourselves, instead of Him who sees all and rules all. Self-conceit is a greater enemy to self-control. "Whenever nature leaves a hole in man's mind, she generally plasters it over with a thick coat of self-conceit"—thus aptly remarks Longfellow. Indeed a nature's hole in man's mind is a defect in character; instead of getting over that defect in character, instead of getting over that defect by self-control, alas, man is satisfied to cover it which self-conceit. The

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Sharana denounces this self-conceit in strong terms since it allows not man to hear 'the still small voice of God in the heart' and makes him slave to himself, to his own passions and fancies. The command of one's self is the greatest estate a man can aspire to. To be subjected to our own passions is the most grievous slavery. He who best governs himself is best fitted to govern others. This self-government is, indeed, the noblest rule on earth, the object of a loftier ambition than the possession of crowns or sceptres. The truest conquest is where the soul is bringing every movement of the lower self into captivity to the obedience of God. Every temptation that is resisted, every sinful thought that is conquered, every bitter word that is withheld contributes its little quota to the impetus of that great cosmic march which is bearing humanity onward towards a richer life and higher character. "Oh man, it behoves thee", thus exclaims the Sharana, "to conquer thyself. Till thou hast done this, thou art but a slave. More dear in the sight of God and his votaries than any other conquest is the conquest of the self." Self-conquest therefore brings one into the possession of a precious inner empire of peace and *Prakasha*, light. So Jane Porter ironically remarks, "When Alexander had subdued the world, and wept that none were left to dispute his arms, his tears were an involuntary tribute to a monarchy that he knew

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not, man's empire over himself." The man who has conquered himself is the most powerful, for he has himself in his own power, and the power that accrues from self-conquest is the power that endures. The Sharana agrees with Locke when he says, "The most precious of all possessions is power over ourselves power to withstand trial, to bear suffering, to front danger; power over pleasure and pain; power to follow our convictions, however resisted by menace and scorn; the power of calm reliance in scenes of darkness and storms. He that has not a mastery over his inclinations, he that knows not how to resist the importunity of present pleasure or pain, for the sake of what reason tells him is fit to be done, wants the true principles of virtue and industry, and is in danger of never being good for anything".

As there is a duality in human nature, so there is a duality in the moral world too, where the principle of Good and Evil holds good. Our character is but the stamp on our souls of the free choices of good and evil we have made through life. Self-conquest is the discipline to mould and chisel and complete the character. The noblest contribution, which any man can make for the benefit of posterity, is that of a good character. "A good character is", says J. Hawes, "in all cases the fruit of personal exertion. It is not created by external advantages, it is no necessary

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appendage of birth, wealth, talents or station, but it is the result of one's own endeavours—the fruit and reward of good principles manifested in a course of virtuous and honourable action." Oh ye man, work, work, work ! Work fearlessly, work selflessly, work spontaneously, work so as to gain your worth—is the clarion call of the Sharana. All progress depends upon activity. There is no development physically, mentally or morally without effort. And effort means work. Work is not a curse, it is the prerogative of consciousness, the only means to manhood and the measure of civilisation Work so as to gain the worth ! To gain the worth is to get a good character; and good character is moral nature in its best form; it is moral order embodied in the individual. The Sharana is therefore the prophet of moral law and order; he is the champion of right and righteousness He agrees with W. Whewell when he says : " We deny the doctrine of the ancient Epicureans, that pleasure is the supreme good; of Hobbes, that moral rules are only the work of men's mutual fear; of Paley, that what is expedient is right, and that there is no difference among pleasures except their intensity and duration; and of Bentham, that the rules of human action are to be obtained by counting up the pleasures which actions produce. And we maintain with Plato that reason has a natural and rightful authority over desire and affection; with

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Butler, that there is a difference of kind in our principles of action; and with the general voice of mankind, that we must do what is right at whatever cost of pain and loss. What we ought to do, that we should do, and that we must do, though it brings pain and loss. And why? Because it is right."

III

The Sharana accomplishes a good character, that is, a perfectly educated will by conquering the unruly desires of the Ego through virtuous action. Likewise he achieves a coordinated knowledge or comprehensive wisdom by unifying the pure aspirations of the Super-ego or the Soul through vivid contemplation. To the Sharana the soul, being of divine origin, is God's glorious image, it is synteresis that shines as a spark of fire. The Sharana is fully convinced that the soul is indestructible and that its activity will continue through eternity. To look upon the soul as going on from strength to strength, to consider that it is to shine for ever with new accessions of glory and brighten to all eternity is agreeable to that innate disposition which is natural to the mind of man. Everything here, but the soul of man, is a passing shadow. The only enduring substance is within the soul. When man awakes o the sublime greatness and the glorious destiny of the

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immortal soul, he is nearest to the Supreme. For the wealth of a soul is measured by how much it can feel the presence of the Supreme, its poverty by how little. Contemplation is therefore the soul's perspective glass, whereby in its long removes, it discerns God, as if he were nearer at hand. "By contemplation I can converse with God," says the Sharana, "solace myself on the bosom of the Divine life, bathe myself in the rivers of divine pleasure, tread the path of my rest and view the mansions of eternity." Since the Supreme is the ground and goal of the synteresis, it is the divinity of soul that stirs within man, it is the idea of immortality that points out a hereafter and intimates eternity to him. The intellect of man sits visible enthroned upon his forehead, but the soul reveals itself in the *Anahata-nada* only, as God revealed Himself to the prophets of old 'in the still amall voice and in the voice from the burning bush'. There is in souls a sympathy which sounds, and as the wind is pitched, the ear is pleased with melting airs; some cord in unison without we hear, is touched within us and the soul replies. Because of this still small voice within, the soul is able to fly heaven-ward and perceive the glories of God. So remarks Michael Angelo: "Heaven born, the soul a heaven-ward course must hold; beyond the world she soars; the wise man, affirm, can find no rest in that which perishes,

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nor will he lend his heart to aught that doth on time depend.”.

The more the soul hears the still small voice of God within, the more it becomes detached from the remora of desire, the shackles of egoism and the limitation of the sense mind, the higher it soars into the luminous sky of consciousness. All vision depends upon this detachment of the soul or rather the organisation of the dissociated mental states, whether functioning when asleep, when subconscious or when contemplative. Our daily life of the waking state brings to all of us sad and anxious hours and to most men it brings days of monotonous labour. But to every one, whatever the sorrow or the toil of the day may be, night should bring release. When we enter into sleep we are not only liberated from the bondage of labour, but shakles are loosened which by day keep the imagination tied to earth. Only in sleep the imagination is set at liberty and is free to exercise its full powers. Sleep which brings us our dreams fulfils the eternal need within us—the need of romance, the need of adventure; for sleep is the gate which lets us slip through into the enchanted country that lies beyond, since there is detachment of the soul to some extent. Leigh Hunt observes: “It is a delicious moment, certainly, that of being well nestled in bed and feeling that you shall drop gently to sleep. A gentle

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failure of the perceptions creeps over you; the spirit of consciousness disengages itself once more, and with slow and hushing degrees, like a mother detaching her hand from that of a sleeping child, the mind seems to have a balmy lid closing over it, like the eye — it is closed, the mysterious spirit has gone to take its airy rounds.” We are thus somewhat more than ourselves in our sleep and the slumber of the body seems to be but the working of the soul. It is the litigation of sense, but the liberty of spirit; and our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleep. The fancies of our sleep are but the fabrications of the dream mind. Given such a dissociation or detachment the dream mind, with the help of a creative imagination, would fabricate the illusion of any objective event. For the mind is capable of creating almost any kind of hallucination, even to the extent of shaking hands with an imaginary spirit, provided it is not contradicted by the conflicting awareness of reality. We have therefore in dreams no true perception of time — a strange property of mind. The relations of space and time are also annihilated, so that while almost an eternity is compressed into a moment, immense space is traversed more swiftly than by real thought. It would be easy to cite examples of the day-dreamer or trance-dreamer in whose fantasies distance is annihilated and centuries pressed over in the twinkling of an eye. As in normal dreams, the soul may seem

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to leave the body and hover in space or be transported to another sphere, celestial or cosmic

Scientific men are still absorbed in the triumphs of that wonderful age of discovery in the physical world. They have hardly begun to find out how great is the work awaiting science in the field of Psychology. Many of them still regard psychology with a certain suspicion and have not recognised that any purpose, useful to science can be served by the study of semi-conscious, or super-conscious state of the mind. But M. Bergson warns the scientists by saying, "That the principal task of psychology in this century will be to explore the secret depths of the unconscious, and that in this, scientific discoveries will be made rivalling in importance, the discoveries made in the preceeding centuray, in the physical and natural science" It is not until recent years that investigation of certain secrets of man's personality, by means of the revelation of the mind in sleep and trance, have begun to attract the attention of men of science. The initial attempts at explanation of the psychology of dream or trance is purely a material or physiological one. Dreams arise from disturbances communicated to the brain by the system of nerves, acting much as a telegraph wire acts, which inform the brain of the existence of local trouble or distress in some part of the body. Such perturbations of the brain, when they occur during

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sleep occasion our dreams. But medical thought has moved very far from this stand-point. Some of the greatest physicians are devoting themselves to special branches of medical psychology. They have come to realise the immense, the almost incalculable power of the human mind over the body, and are therefore ready to study every manifestation of the mind and its subtle processes.

“They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick.” The mental processes of those that are whole, the dream imagery of those of us who are fortunate enough to enjoy the sound bodily and mental health need not be subjected to the doctor’s scrutiny, but the cases that generally come under the doctor’s notice are the cases of nervous or morbid people; or of persons who, owing to temporary conditions of illness are not for the moment normal or healthy. The conclusions, that a specialist particularly interested in this study draws, are influenced by the proportion of more or less morbid subjects that he will come across. This is an inevitable drawback from which Freud suffers, a specialist of medical psychology. His dream theory, briefly stated, is that dreams are symbols of desires, thoughts or fears, that are sternly repressed by day and that are not admitted to our waking consciousness. By day they are therefore unable to intrude their presence upon us, but by night, when

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our will-power is in abeyance, they dart upon us appearing themselves allegorically and always under a disguise in dreams. Dr. Freud has so elaborated his theory of the dream as the symbol of repressed desire, and of the distortion of the unconscious wish in the dream construction, that one is compelled to see the sex impulse alone amongst other impulses as the force which is able to affect the dream-mind. Many of our dreams are indeed symbolic or allegorical in form but they represent in different ways the moods and thoughts which have occupied our minds by day. Mr. Arnold Forster proposes an explanation of dream-construction which is as ingenious as it is simple. The mechanism is that of association of ideas with the co-operation of the imagination. In dream building, one idea calls up another by successive association, that is free association, unhampered by critical and discriminating judgment. The dream imagination that seizes upon certain elements in the associated ideas, intensifies and objectifies them in imagery by which objects are vividly visualised. Thus, "In a dream, a winding path in a landscape suggests by association a rail road, which is at once visualised and also in the landscape. The two crossing each other suggest a rail-road crossing, which is in turn visualised; then follows the idea of danger from a possible approaching train, and *Presto!* The sound of such an onrushing train is heard; and

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so on, one association calling up another to be vividly represented in images and worked by imagination into a connected story, the images suggesting thoughts and *vice versa*. The whole is very much like the process of certain types of thinking carried on when awake by day."

A more curious and much rarer type of dream than any of those that have hitherto been described is what may be termed the super-dream. In this type of dream, the dream-mind, working beyond its ordinary level of capacity, has actually solved problems that have defeated the efforts of the normal mind in its working hours. Henri Fabre explains that sleep in his case was often a state which did not suspend the mind's activity but actually quickened it, and in sleep he was able at times to solve mathematical problems with which he had struggled by day. "A brilliant bacon flares up in my brain, and then I jump from my bed, light my lamp and write done the solution, the memory of which would otherwise be lost; like flashes of lightning, these gleams vanish as suddenly as they appear." Very similar to his experience are the dream-creations which are so fully described by R. L. Stevenson in his essay called 'A Chapter on Dreams'. He describes the process of inventive dreaming from which many of his stories originated. So completely do these dreams seem to him to be an inspiration from outside himself, the operation of faculties apart from the workings of his normal mind

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and working at a higher level, that he speaks of them as being the handiwork of the "Little people", Brownies of the mind, who bestir themselves to construct or elaborate for him the plots of his stories, far better tales, he declares, than any that he can invent for himself by day. These and many equally curious and interesting experiences seem to require the assumption of a secondary consciousness existing side by side with our ordinary personal consciousness. Unless we can assume the presence of such a divided personality or consciousness, it seems almost impossible to conceive how certain processes of the mind are carried out in the dream-state or in the hypnotic state. Dr. Morton Prince opines that "Certainly there are dreams, as might be illustrated from my own collection in which there is an argument, the end is foreseen and the whole is a well worked-out story or allegory. No associative process alone could have produced such logical coherence. In such dreams the motivating dispositions which have determined the theme and inspired the creative imagination are another matter and are to be searched for in *the antecedent conscious life* of the individual."

What is this antecedent conscious life of the individual but the super-ego? The super-dream is the handiwork of the super-ego which displays the supra-mental faculties. The methods of the super-mind, the qualities of its imagination, its habit of seizing upon part of an argument

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or part of a story to weave into something new and strange—all these are quite unlike the ways of the normal mind that is familiar to any by day. The difference in their methods of working is so sharply defined that one should seldom have to question which is the author of the particular train of thought. They work differently and arrive at different results; and herein lies undoubtedly a great part of the unexpectedness and charm of the super-mind. We find in it something of the attraction that is to be found in mystics, in the inspiration of poets and thinkers, in the spiritual vision of saints and sages, whose outlook is not quite like our own and who bring to it qualities of mind that delight us and display the presence of the Supreme Being. The Greek sensed the super-mind as the matrix of the archetypal ideas which find their fulfilment in the artistic sense of beauty. To him art 'is the most powerful momentum in human life', that is, something within the soul of man which, when once started, goes on with undiminishing vigour through eternity. Art then may be thought of as the only form of expression which tells us something of the 'infinite passion, and the pain, of hearts that yearn.' The mystics in their search for their different stages and degrees of intuitions of Eternal life explore the resources of all the arts—poetry, music, dancing—to raise themselves to the pitch of what Coventry Patmore once spoke of as a 'sphere of rapture and dalliance.'

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Many typical examples of these degrees may be cited to confirm it. Shri Basava and Akka Mahadevi had the celestial visions of their beloved deities of Sangamanatha and Chenna Mallikarjuna; Allama Prabhu had heard the *Anahata-nadanusandhana*; the 'unstruck music of the Infinite' Siddharameshwar would scale the heights of *Kailas* that is to say, of the cerebrum and see there the saints dancing in the sphere of the *Sahasrara*; and many a Sharana had many a vision and voice in accordance with their capacity to respond to the vibrations of the super-mind.

F. Myers writes: "There is reason to suppose that our normal consciousness represents no more than a slice of our whole being. We all know that there exist subconscious and unconscious operations of many kinds—both organic, as secretion, circulation, etc, that are in a sense below the operations to which our minds attend; and also our mental, as the recall of names, the development of ideas, etc. that are on much the same level as the operations to which our minds attend, but which for various reasons remain in the background of our mental prospects. Well, besides these sub-conscious and unconscious operations, I believe that super-conscious operations are also going on within us—operations, that is to say, which transcend the limitation of ordinary faculties of cognition, and which yet remain not below the threshold, but rather *above the upper horizon* of consciousness, and illumine our normal experience

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only in the transient and cloudy gleams." Between these two borders of Ego and Super-ego, of mind and super-mind, widely varying stages of consciousness are included within this border-land state. It embraces experiences far removed from dreams, apparently unrelated to our dream-life and which have a very special character of their own. The initial yet important characteristic of border-land state which has been experienced by every sensitive mystic of any age or any clime is the curious heightening of sense-impressions that take place when sleep is approaching. For example, three or four tiny grains from a spike of lavender will at such moments produce an effect of a concentrated lavender essence, and a scent so delicate that it would pass almost unperceived by day acquires at these times a powerful fragrance. The Sharana or the mystic becomes, in fact, like the princess in the fairy tale who, when she lay down to sleep, was able to detect the presence of a pea, hidden beneath the seven mattresses on which she rested. So is it with the other sense impressions. It is gratifying to learn that Shri. Basava, the Massiah of the Lingayat Faith, has been represented by his colleagues and contemporaries as a man possessing *Pancha-parusa*, meaning thereby he had attained the heightened sensitiveness of the faculties of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

Beside this heightened sensitiveness, in the earlier state of tranquility, certain mental faculties appear

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to operate with heightened powers. At such moments the answer to some difficult question, which has intrigued us and baffled our intelligence by day, may flash into the mind, appearing to come to us from without rather than from within. The missing links of thoughts that were needed have been supplied, we know not how; we are only aware that whereas something was previously lacking, the chain of thought is now entire, and the deduction drawn from it is complete. In this condition, transformation, so to say, takes place; for, we find that the mind is working in a manner different from that which is normally characteristic of it. Any faculty of the mind changes its character and assumes functions different from those which it possesses normally. If the mystic is to do his work of transformation, he needs to have an open mind to science, to philosophy, to religion, to all the life's problems as they are transmuted by the various great departments of life. For all these are related. The more there is of religion—that is to say, the way, that the individual transforms the changing universe—the more fully the message of science, the higher and nobler will be his conception of religion. The mystic, then, if he is to do his work rightly, must be a rounded man in his inner nature. He must be sensitive, not only with his sensorium, but also with the intuition, the mind and the emotions. Especially must he be sensitive to all kinds of ideas. Hence one may say that

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each mystic must profess all the faiths and philosophies and yet none. For his message is not to the universe in the abstract; it is distinctly to mankind, to us, to find ourselves. We are the source of power in the universe, but we have to find ourselves, and the mystic art enables us to find. In India the voice is heard from the beginning of time that the only religion which a man should profess is 'So-nham—I am God'. But it is the proclamation of all genuine mystic art, for the individual finds himself again as that permanent, unchangeable spiritual entity, as he bodies forth mysticism.

Thomas Traherne, 'the divine philosopher', has composed the *Centuries of Meditations* which is considered his *magnum opus*. Dr. Tallock, in his *Rational Theology* has succinctly summarised the under-current of these 'meditations' in the following words: "No spiritually thoughtful mind can read them unmoved. They carry us so directly into an atmosphere of divine philosophy, luminous with the richest lights of meditative genious. . . . We see a mind religious to the core His mind is fresh as a new-born life, with open eyes of poetic wonder and divine speculation. He has not painfully reached the serene heights on which his thoughts dwell; but these heights are the natural level of his lofty and abounding spiritual nature." If one would like to closely study and parallelise it with a number of the sayings of the Sharanas, he would doubtless find

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a very close resemblance subsisting between the *Centuries of Meditations* and the sayings of the Sharanas. Traherne's *magnum opus* is entirely based on the mature study of the Bible. It is no less a manual of contemplation. Each century depicts the progressive stages of contemplative life. Likewise we are apt to discern a psychological sequence in the contemplative life of the Sharana. The state of contemplation is peculiar not only by reason of the heightened sensitiveness of organs and the mental faculties but also because it is the condition in which the soul puts itself in tune with the Supreme. The mystery and elusiveness of the mental phenomena which belong especially to the contemplative state have always made a strong appeal to thinkers like F. Myers and those who have followed along similar paths of enquiry. They are bold enough to acknowledge that many of these phenomena lie beyond man's present knowledge and still elude his understanding. There is a readiness now to admit the possible existence of a human faculty, hitherto unrecognised by science, by means of which communications may take place between mind and mind, through channels other than those of the senses. It is by virtue of this faculty that the soul holds communion with the Supreme, puts itself in tune with the Infinite, so much so that the abnormal experiences, the supra-mental powers reveal themselves that attest the existence of a supra-physical and extra-mundane plane. One of

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the rarest of all acquirements is, therefore, the faculty of profitable contemplation. For contemplation is the nurse of thought, the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit. No soul can preserve the bloom and delicacy of its existence without silent prayer and lonely musings; it is the harmonious voice of creation, an echo of the invisible world. "Contemplation is the life of the soul, action is the soul of contemplation; so contemplate that thou mayst act, so act that thou mayst contemplate upon the glory of God." This is the religion of the Sharana or mystic. This is the mysticism of a true religionist or Sharana.

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Virashaivism is generally considered to be a phase of the Agamanta. In the twelfth century Karnatak witnessed an unprecedented revival in Virashaivism. The precursor of this revival was Shri Basava, the Prime Minister to a king named Bijala who ruled over Kalyan (from 1157 to 1167), a city of historic importance, about sixty miles from Gulburga in the Mysore State. The magnetic personality of Shri Basava attracted towards him persons of all shades and sympathies from all parts of India, ranging from the prince to the peasant. As a consequence there was an assembly of two to three hundred Virashaiva Saints and Mystics whose sayings in Kannada language stand unrivalled in point of gracefulness of melody, forcefulness of movement and peacefulness of mystery. It is gratifying to learn that there were about sixty women mystics in that assemblage amongst whom was Akka Mahadevi, the beacon-light. The pithy and powerful sayings of these Virashaiva

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mystics or the Sharanas are compared sometimes by great scholars like the late *Mahamahopadhyaya* R. Narasimhacharyaru, to the sayings of the Upanishadic seers. The sayings of these Sharanas, that is the supermen of the Lingayat Faith, then are spontaneous and a direct outcome 'of the divine afflatus springing from within, the result of inspiration through God-intoxication'. Hence they breathe the spirit of a God-intoxicant one, characterised by redeeming love and refreshing knowledge. Although Virashaivism is a phase of the Agamanta, it underwent radical changes in the hands of Shri Basava and his colleagues to such an extent, that it became Lingayatism—the special Faith of the Karnatak Virashaivas—the philosophy of which will be our immediate concern.

Robert Arch defines philosophy as the attempt to think rigorously and consistently about the world which undeniably is there. But the world as it exists in our normal consciousness is a duality which the intellect obstinately refuses to resolve into a unity. It presents a 'higher' and a 'lower' aspect, an abstract or transcendental region and a concrete or definable one; or in other words, it represents the higher term *Spirit* and the lower term *Matter*, which the formal mind refuses to resolve into an inexpressible sense of harmony and unity. Seeing, then, that these two regions or poles actually exist in our normal consciousness,

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we must at least postulate that there is a reconciliation between the two. And the deeper mind in us intuitively feels that there must be some link between the spirit or the higher transcendental region of our nature and the matter or the lower necessitous region of time, space and causation. So it seeks a term which will admit both and identify both. It demands not an elimination of either but a reconciliation.

What is that term which connects and co-ordinates spirit and matter? It is in the words of Indian philosophy *Mahat* or *Brihat*, the cosmic consciousness; and cosmic consciousness becomes real to spirit and spirit becomes real to matter and the dualism between them breaks down. If we refuse to recognize this connecting and co-ordinating link between spirit and matter, the two must appear as irreconcilable opponents bound together in an unhappy wedlock and their divorce, the one reasonable solution. This *Mahat* or *Brihat* is one and indivisible in essence but in manifestation it becomes a complex rhythm, a scale of harmonies, a hierarchy of states or movements. This hierarchy is composed by a descending or involutive and an ascending or evolutive movement, of which spirit and matter are the highest and the lowest terms. Between these two terms or creations linking them together is the world or the organization of consciousness, of which the Infinite Truth of things is the foundation. "There dominant individualisation

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no longer usurps the all-pervading soul and the foundation of consciousness is its own vast totality arranging in itself individualised movements, which never lose the consciousness of their integrality and total oneness with all others. Multiplicity no longer prevails and divides, but even in the complexity of its movements always refers back to essential unity and its own integral totality. This world or organization of consciousness is therefore called *Mahalinga*, the Divine Static, in Virashaiva philosophy. It is this *Mahalinga* that is the Shiva of the Shaivas, the Brahman of the Upanishads, the transcendent Reality of the Ontologists, the God of the Gnostics and the Absolute of the Philosophers.

The Absolute, says Bradley, is supra-personal; the absolute says Bosanquet is teleological. Combining these two views the Virashaiva mystic or the Sharana says that the Absolute is the impersonal personality, that it is at once transcendent and immanent, static and dynamic. The static aspect of the Absolute is called *Sthira, Shiva or Linga*; and the dynamic aspect of the Absolute is called *Chara, Shakti or Jangama* in Virashaiva philosophy. This 'hara' or *Shakti* is the dynamic divine Will which is the personality of the Absolute Truth or Shiva Linga, for the *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* describes this *Will* as the very soul of the Lord hid in the modes of its own workings. *Devatmashuktih snagunair nigudha.*¹ This divine Will exists, therfore, in the Absolute Truth by the

1 देवात्मशक्तिः स्वगुणैनिगुदा ।

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relation of identity, *Samarasnya*, which has been expressed very vividly by the Sharanas in their sayings and one of the sayings of Shri Basava in this connection runs thus :

As submarine fire is hid in the waters of the seas,
As a ray of ambrosia is hid in the moon,
As fragrance is hid in the flower,
As affection is hid in the maidens,
So is Truth hid in the heart of Will,
O Lord of the Spiritual Unification.

It is this integral association of Shiva and Shakti or *Shakti - Vishista Advaita* that is the Virashaiva *Weltanschauung*—the world view of a Virashaiva. For he views the whole world as the expression of the Divine Will under the stress and guidance of the Divine Static and holds that there is only one *Chit - Shakti*—the integral conscious power of the Divine Spirit to characterize which modern science is still fighting shy. Even the Western philosophers are at a loss to define it. Belfort Bax calls this Will an a-logical element and as such he stresses the a-logical element of feeling against the Hegelian tendency to find in thought or knowledge the sole foundation of the real. This is an approach, in some respects, to the position taken up by Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, but without those thinkers' pessimism. Emphasis on the 'a-logical' has been carried to more sensational conclusions by Henri Bergson who denies altogether the ultimate validity of

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intellectual judgments. For him as for Schopenhauer, the thing-in-itself, whether in man or in external nature, is irrational impulse—the *elan vital*. But the nature of this *elan vital* remains in Bergson somewhat vague and undefined. He calls it the ‘vital fluid’ the cosmic force, of which the whole universe is the play. He conceives life to be a stress and a stir; but to the Sharana it is a constant urge of the Dynamic Divine. He does not draw his inspiration from the unconscious prompting or the sub-conscious ideation in man like Bergson. But he draws his philosophical inspiration from the height of the supra-mental super-conscious force, the *Chit-Shakti*. In this the Sharana is nearer to Schopenhauer than to Bergson. Will in Schopenhauer is the primal reality which objectifies itself in the form of ideas. He can see that Will lies beyond the realm of Platonic ideas and necessarily is superior to logical reasoning. He has the philosophic genius to see that Will is more dynamic than personal and hence the idea of reason cannot appeal to him. But he has not the insight to see the static and transcendent aspect of consciousness, which is called *Mahat* or *Brihat* in Indian philosophy. His philosophy has, therefore, removed the ordinary localization of change to a centre.

The Sharana allows Will or *Shakti* a very significant position no doubt; he makes it the supreme principle of expression. But *Shakti* in Virashaiva

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philosophy has a locus in Shiva. He therefore emphasizes the integral association of Shiva and Shakti, Linga and Jangama, Truth and Will. He characterises this inseparable unity in terms that attract by their sublime simplicity and rich suggestiveness. The former is supra-cosmic transcendence, and the latter is the cosmic unity; the one is the infinite silence and the other is immanent sublimity. Between these two the Sharana has attempted a synthesis by saying that the cosmic Will or Shakti is the manifestation of the supra-cosmic Reality or Shiva which it really transcends. The cosmic Will has no absolute existence, it is in fact the concentration of the transcendence; being a concentration it is more seeming than real; it is relatively real.

This divine Shakti is therefore conceived as creative, conservative and destructive from the cosmological view-point; as redemptive from the theological view-point; and as supra-subject from the epistemological view-point. But Shiva transcends this immanent sublimity or Shakti. It is the Infinite Luminous Silence, the silence that resides in the heart of all things. It illuminates all, but itself as an object always eludes our grasp. This silence is the plenum of being and consciousness; it is also the delight of freedom. This infinite luminous silence or *Mahalinga* has the sense of 'fullness without content, completeness without growth or fruition, freedom without tension or resistance. And the Will moves in the sphere of this .

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luminous silence, in the atmosphere of supreme awareness. It is therefore an outflow from the Supreme, a divine movement of the Eternal and an immanence inherent in the Infinity. What science calls matter and energy, what metaphysics calls subject and object, are only the bipolar expressions of this Divine Will. And it is this Shakti that expresses finer forms in the gradual unfoldment of Life, which accounts for the different kinds of energies set in a hierarchy—physical, vital, mental and even supra-mental

The transformation of the physical, vital and mental under the influence of the *Mahalinga* or the Divine Static and their movement and functioning in the Divine Dynamic are the great promise of the Virashaiva philosophy. The spiritualization of matter is a great advance in the Lingayat Faith. Plato seeks supreme satisfaction and felicity in the realm of super-sensible ideas; for to him the impress of matter upon the soul is tormenting. The Bible maintains an apparent duality or polarity of our nature and keeps spirit and matter eternally apart, treating matter as illusion and spirit alone as reality. The Vedanta and the Sankhya equally condemn the movement of ignorance and seek rest in transcendence. It is true that an attempt has been made in the Vedanta to make the life's movement conceived in spirit, but the Vedanta by allowing a distinction between the relative and the

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Absolute and finally, by totally denying any possible synthesis between the two, emphasizes the uniqueness of the Absolute and its realisation and does not harmonize dynamic spirituality with transcendent quietism. Even the Agamas extol Shiva-hood as the final consummation of life; the super-sensible is set against the sensible and a division between spirit and matter is conceived to exist. But in the synthetic philosophy of Virashavism, the integral association of Shiva-Shakti cannot allow any division to subsist between spirit and matter; hence in the Lingayata Faith the divinization of life is considered as the desirable end or consummation.

The obliteration of the division between spirit and matter, the sensible and the super-sensible introduces a new meaning into spiritual life and values. Matter is eternally plastic and with the touch of spirit it dissolves its stiffness and exhibits its pliability, so that it can be a safe instrument for spiritual expression. In fact matter is an illusion of intellect. From the standpoint of life there is no matter but only the play of spirit through different grades of expression. It is indeed a kind of illusion to think of the division between body and mind, and humanity has long suffered under that illusion. The supra-mental Force or *Chit-Shakti* is the only reality and if with the different thought-currents the nervous system is affected and the tone is changed, then there is no wonder that the Transcendent Energy can

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spiritualize the flesh and remove the sense of materiality. The spiritual is the real and the material is at bottom spiritual. Because we are accustomed to think in terms of intellect, we are committed to this kind of dualism. Bergson has truly said that intellect represents in a statical form what is really living and dynamical and if, instead of taking our guidance from intellect, we take our inspiration from life, the cast of existence would appear fundamentally different. Bergson is the protagonist of intuitionism and he would admonish us to look at life from the view-point of intuition. Viewed in this light what happens? Matter ceases to exist. If we succeed in setting aside this inertia, materiality will disappear and life will present to us an aspect of dynamism.

This possibility of spiritualizing matter makes the connection between heaven and earth direct. The kingdom of God is not to be sought beyond but here. The true spiritual effort lies then not only in the striving after transcendent existence but in making matter the channel of expression of spirit. In this connection it is pertinent to quote the sayings of Shri Basava which run thus: 'Indeed he cannot be a superman so long he labours under the illusion that there is a demarcating line between heaven and earth... And the earth is, as it were, a mint managed by God—those who deserve well here, deserve also well there.' The whole movement of life is directly related to the

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transcendent Energy; for, by being thus related the movement grows in fullness and perfection. Hence the minutest events have a setting in the cosmic life; and in the Lingayat Faith the meaninglessness of life and its illusion are replaced by its richness and actuality. Nothing in life is meaningless, nothing in it is purposeless, since every movement in life is the expression of bliss and beatitude and their so called uneventfulness or discord originates from their isolation from the whole setting and our inability to read the divine purpose in life.

To the Sharana Reality is then not only divine Puissance but is also divine History. The Reality urged by an inner divine compulsion evolves the whole world out of itself, and in the course of evolution it reveals the divine purpose through different phases of life. This position is similar to that taken up by Croce and Gentile, the Italism philosophers, who insist on the ultimate reality of time and on the extreme importance, therefore, of history as the progressive attainment of self-consciousness by the world-spirit. The world-process then in Virashaiva philosophy is not an illusion but an integral play. In introducing this conception of the integral play into the ultimate Reality, the position of the Sharana becomes somewhat different from the extreme transcendentalism of Shaṅkara on the one hand, and from the theistic position of Ramanuja and Chaitanya on the other. In Shankara's philosophy

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Lila or play is a concession to the theological attitude. In Vaishnavism a distinction is made between the *Antaranga Lila* and the *Bahiranga Lila*. But to the Sharana *Lila* or play is the very soul of Reality; it is the expression of dynamic fullness in integrity. He views life in its entirety as ever creative and ever complete; and the joy of completeness is the joy of harmony; for in the infinite life which is ever complete and ever accomplished the sense of harmony is never lost. Even if there are changes—and there are incessant changes in infinite life—they take place according to the law of harmony.

Spiritual dynamic fullness is the greatest conception in Virashaivism. In Indian thought dynamism of life has not received due recognition. Even in the *Tantras* and the *Agamas* which are considered to be the repository of dynamic spiritualism, an attempt is made to transcend all forms of dynamism however fine. But the Virashaiva philosophy lays stress on the dynamism of spiritual life and the transfiguration of every movement of life through the instrumentality of *Ista-Linga* (an ideal of Infinity that the Sharana or the superman of the Lingayat Faith always wears upon his breast), is indeed unique. This uniqueness has introduced into the Virashaiva system which is called *Sat-Sthala*, the ideal of divine transfiguration and spiritualization of all the forces in man in place of liberation. To the Sharana, then, liberation or emancipation is not the

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ideal. The greater ideal is life and its divinization. Emancipation presupposes an enternal conflict between life's possibilities and spirit's transcendence, and makes the former meaningless. The setting of the immanent beauties and sublimities equally loses force with life's stirrings and formations. Though the Sharana denies the conception of emancipation in the usual sense still he is fully alive to the supreme puissance of life in the divine *Ananda*. He conceives a state in life when every movement will be spiritual and the finest peace of soul shall be established in the greatest movement of life. The free response will be enjoyed in the transparent light and intrepid activity. In this greater ideal which the Sharana calls the *Sarvanga-linga-Sthala*, all the beauties and harmonies of the Divine Life are thrown open to man and every movement of life will be felt as divine. Life is to be completely divinized and humanity should be installed in a Divine Society. This is the promise of Virashaiva philosophy.

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The *Shaivagamas* generally preach a theistic philosophy which believes in a Supreme Being, who is the creator of man and the universe, distinct from both, yet intimately related to both. Theism then posits three entities : Being, man and the world, which go by the name of *Trika Shidhanta* in the Shaiva Schools. They acknowledge three entities *Tatvas* (1) A Supreme Being (2) The subjective souls and (3) The objective world. These three entities. *Tatvas* are given different names in the different Schools of Shaivism, but their attributes and mutual relations do not vary much, though the terminology varies from School to School. These Schools all agree in opposing *Maya-vada*, the doctrine of the unreality of the world. Says the *Pauskaragama*, "If the world is an illusive appearance of conscious being, the effected world will be a hollow unreality; how can the world which is established to be really

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existing by all methods of proofs be a false transmutation of consciousness?" The Agamas do not regard the world as an illusion or a false show. Bhaskararaya says, "Really according to the belief of the Tantrikas, who hold the doctrine that the world is a transmutation of Brahman, the universe is real; because as there is absolutely no difference between Brahman and the world, just as there is no difference between a pot and the clay of which it is made, the reality of the universe necessarily follows from the reality of Brahman."

It is clear from this that the Agamas do not deny the reality of the world, but they identify it with Shiva who transcends it. He is one without a second; He is the All. If all is Brahman then there can be nothing but Brahman and therefore the existence of the all does not contradict the unity of the final truth, does not establish the reality of difference. It is one *Samvit* or *Mahat*, the cosmic intelligence looking at itself from a myriad view-points, each point conscious of and enjoying the existence of the others. One form or one particular self-expression may disappear into its source and continent; but that does not and cannot abolish the phenomenal universe. Therefore the Agamas regard the world as a great game of 'hide and seek' in which the real hides behind the apparent, spirit behind matter. "Everything becomes, nothing is made. Everything is put out from latency, nothing is brought into existence.

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Only that which was can be, not that which was not. And that which is cannot perish, it can only lose itself; hence all is eternal in the eternal spirit." Why should we think so? Because of the eternal and invariable unity which gives permanence to the variability of the many. Therefore in all things is seen the stress of the hidden spirit; it is *Prajna*, the universal intelligence, conscious in things unconscious, active in things inert. The energy of *Prajna* is what the Agamas call *Shakti*. The tree does not and cannot shape itself; the stress of the hidden spirit shapes it. The seed evolves a tree because the tree is the idea involved in the seed. If there were no such insistent idea we should have a world of chances and freaks, not a world of law. There would be no such notion as the nature of things, if there were not an originating and ordering intelligence manifesting a particular idea in forms. The Real, the Idea, the Phenomenon—this seems to be the true order of theistic philosophy.

Hegel, the protagonist of modern philosophical theism gives a graphic account of these three entities. "Being is the notion implicit only; the special forms have the predicate 'is'. Pure Being makes the beginning, because it is on the one hand pure thought, and on the other immediacy itself, simple and indeterminate; and the first beginning cannot be mediated by anything, or be further determined.....Being-for-itself, as reference to

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itself, is immediacy, and as reference of the negative to itself, is a self-subsistent, the One...The terms in essence are always mere pairs of correlatives, and not yet absolutely reflected in themselves; hence in essence the actual unity of the notion is not realised but only postulated by reflection. Essence, which is Being coming into mediation with itself through the negativity of itself, is self-relatedness only, in so far as it is in relation to all other—this other however coming into view at first not as some-thing which is, but as postulated and hypothetised. Being has not vanished; but firstly, Essence, as simple self-relation is Being, and secondly, as regards its one-sided characteristic of immediacy, Being is deposed to a more negative, to a seeming or reflected lightEssence accordingly is Being thus reflecting light into itself.The Essence lights up in itself or is mere reflection and therefore is only self-relation, not as immediate but as reflected. And that reflex relation is self-identity....Essence is mere identity and reflection in itself only as it is self-relating negativity, and in that way self-repulsion. It contains therefore essentially the characteristic of difference. The notion is the power of the substance self-realised. It is a systematic whole, in which each of its constituents functions, is the very total which the notion is.....The onward motion of the notion is no longer either a transition into, or a reflection

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on something else, but development. The realisation of the notion—a realisation in which the universal is this one totality withdrawn back into itself and which has given itself a character of immediate unity by merging the mediation; this realisation of the notion is the object."

The characteristic Theism of the Agama Schools lent to the conception of Shiva being regarded as the final cause of the universe. But the Shaiva system became indived into four different Schools with reference to the question how far causal efficiency belongs to the Will of Shiva and how far to the actions of souls. These Schools are: (1) The *Lakulisha Pashupata* of the Guzerat which prefers to call the Supreme Being Pashupati, the Lord of the cattle; (2) The *Shaiva Siddhanta* of the Southern India, which deals more with the three *Malas*, the three-fold impurities of the individual; (3) The *Pratyabhijna* School of Kashmir which attempts to unravel the net-work of the five limitations of the individual that is, the *Pancha-Kanchukas* of the Purusa; (4) The *Virashaiva* School of Karnatak which prefers to call the Supreme Being *Sthala*, the nature of which is designated as at once the static and dynamic, the transcendent and immanent. With respect to the question of the causal efficiency of Shiva and of *Karma*, the Pashupata School maintains that Shiva is a cause, independent of the actions of the individuals but that the "efficiency of actions depends upon an individual's

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power of action being unobstructed, on account of conformity with the infinitely potent Will of the Lord.” The Siddhanta School regards Shiva as the universal Agent, but not irrespective of individual action. “The fruition of the actions, good as well as bad, reaches the individual souls by the order of the Lord. His dependence on the action of the individual does not detract from His independence, just as a King’s depending on his guards to protect his city does not detract from the royal power. Just as the holder of a magnet directs the motion of a needle, so the Lord directs the fruits of the actions to the proper individuals.” The Pratyabhijna School conceives Mahesvara to create the universe by mere force of desire, for he is of unobstructed power, bliss and independence. This School, therefore denies causal efficiency to all but the Will of Mahesvara. The Virashaiva School agrees with Pratyabhijna in ascribing the causal efficiency to the Will of God, but it goes a step further and says that this divine Will or *Chit-Shakti* is the integral conscious power of the Supreme Being which is behind the self and the cosmos.

This integral association of Shiva-Shakti which has been thrown into lurid light by Virashaivism is described thus in the *Anubhava Sutra*:

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Shaktirapratima saksat shivena Sahadharmini
Saksini satya-sampurna nirvikalpa Maheshvari. ¹

And the same *Sutra* gives a vivid image of the Supreme Being :

Ekameva para-brahma Sat-chit-ananda-laksanam
Shivatvatvam shivacharyah Sthalam ityahuradarat.
Sarvesam sthanabhutatvat layabhutatvatah tatha
Tatvanam mahadadinam Sthalam ityabhidhiyate.
Yatradou sthiyate vishvam prakritam pourusam yatah
Liyate punar ante cha Sthalam tat prochyate tatah.
Sthakarah sthanavachi syat lakaro laya-vachakah
Tayoh karanabhutam yet tadeva Sthalamuchyate. ²

¹ शक्तिरप्रतिमा साक्षात् शिवेन सहधर्मेणी ।

सक्षिणी सत्यसंपूर्णो निर्विकल्पा महेश्वरी ॥

² एकमेव परं ब्रह्म सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणम् ।

शिवतत्वं शिवाच्चार्योः स्थलमित्याहुरादरात् ॥

सर्वेषां स्थानभूतत्वात् लयभूतत्वतस्ततः ।

तत्वानां महदादीनां स्थलमित्यभिदीयते ॥

यत्रादौ स्थीरते विश्वं प्राङ्गतं पौरुषं यतः ।

लीयते पुनरन्ते च स्थलं तत् प्रोच्यते ततः ।

स्थकारः स्थानवाची स्यात् लकारो लयवाचकः ।

तयोः कारणभूतं यत्तदेव स्थलमुच्यते ।

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All the three Shaiva Schools recognise only three entities : *Prakriti*, *Purusa* and *Parabrahman*. The Supreme Being, Self and the Cosmos. The stress of the hidden spirit or the Will of Parabrahman has not been brought to the forefront in those Schools though all have an implicit faith in it. It is in the *Shaktaymas* that we find the Will playing an important role, but there the Shakti gets the upper hand of Shiva who lies inert and upon whose breast she dances her dance celestial. Virashaivism maintains a perfect balance between Truth and Will by saying that Shakti is the personality of Shiva; that the Will or *Para-prakriti* is the very soul of *Para-brahman*. Hence Virashaivism acknowledges four entities *Prakriti*, *Purusa*, *Para-prakriti* and *Para-brahman* that is Matter, Self, Will and Spirit. That there is an integral association between these four entities is clear enough from *Shakti-Vishista-Advaita* which is the Virashaiva designation of philosophical Theism. If the Theory of Relativity has introduced the conception of the four dimensional continuum in the domain of physics *Shakti-Vishista-Advaita* has ushered in the domain of metaphysics, 'the doctrine of four units'. Shakti-Vishist-Advaita or the *Relative Dualism* as we prefer to call it, has as yet remained outside the purview of prominent scholars, since no serious attempt has been made to expose it in a scientific method; for method may be said to constitute three-fourths of any science. Discoveries

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may occasionally be due to accident, or what happens to be such, but a genuine advance in any science is always accompanied by a change in method and new results are but the application of improved methods of investigation. There is a special reason for emphasizing the importance of method in the study of metaphysics, since it yields the true and sure foundation for the art of mysticism. In the domain of metaphysics *Advaita* admits one and only one entity; *Dvaita*, preferably *Sankhya*, admits two entities; *Vishista-Advaita* (Theism) admits three entities and *Shakti-Vishista-Advaita* admits four entities. The following paragraphs endeavour to give a disquisition of this doctrine of four units or entities in as much a scientific method and manner as possible.

Man is a mental being, the *Purusa*, who is essentially self-conscious; but self-consciousness implies a separation into two aspects—subject and object, mind and matter. The modern name of consciousness or ‘awareness’ equally implies this, for awareness implies something of which it is aware, a duality at the least. In the highest abstraction of awareness this duality is implied. Consciousness ceases if the sense of limitation be withdrawn and it is dependent on limitation for existence. Awareness is essentially awareness of limitation and only secondarily awareness of others. Awareness of others comes into being with what we call self-consciousness, self-awareness. The abstract twain-in-one,

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consciousness-limitation, mind-matter are ever inseparable; they appear and disappear together; they exist only in relation to each other; they resolve into a necessarily unmanifest Life—the Supreme synthesis. Electricity manifests only as positive and negative; when these neutralise each other, electricity vanishes. In all things electricity exists—neutral, unmanifest; from all things it can appear, but not as positive only or negative only; always as balancing amounts of both over against each other, and these ever tending to re-enter together into its source and support, the unmanifest.

All is separable then into 'self' and 'not-self,' into Purusa and Prakriti. Even separate thing is summed up under one or other of the headings, self or not-self. Here then we have a duality. But the twain are not two separate things isolated; there is a continual relation between them, a continual approach and withdrawal, an identification and a repudiation—this inter-play shows itself as the ever-changing universe. But this relation is magnetic, but of magnetism of the subtlest kind, called 'Fohat,' *Daiviprakriti*, or *Chit-Shakti*, 'the light of the Logos.' It is of the Absolute and in it the essence of consciousness and essence of matter exist, polarised but not drawn apart.

This Fohat or *Daiviprakriti* or *Para-prakriti* is the real nature of the Absolute or the Supreme which is the source and support of all existence; and it is this Higher

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Nature, the Integral conscious-power of the Supreme Being, *Chit-Shakti*, which is behind the self and the cosmos. Chit-Shakti or the life of Divine in the words of the Sharana is rather the inherent one, yet variable inner power of all these changes of object-consciousness. It is a fundamental truth of the becoming, a truth that supports and gives a spiritual and divine significance to all its appearances. It is that which determines the primary law of all becoming and of each self. It constitutes the essence and develops the movement of the nature. It is the force of the Supreme so manifesting; it is the light of its consciousness and the power of its energy in things revealed in a pure original mould that is the self-nature. That force, light, power, is the eternal seed from which all other things are the developments and derivations. This eternal seed is the power of spiritual being, the conscious will in the being, the seed which the Absolute casts into the supramental vastness from which all are born into phenomenal existence. It is this seed of spirit which manifests itself as the essential quality in all becomings and constitutes their nature; and it is this seed of spirit or the Divine Nature that forms the personality of the Divine Being or Absolute.

The debate on the subject of Divine personality has been the cause of much heated discussion. It has been taken for granted by critics that those who hold

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to the personality of God mean that, in their opinion, God is a person identical in qualities, with human persons, only very much larger and more powerful. On this assumption, it has been pointed out that the universe as we know it, could scarcely be conceived as the work of such a being, and the idea of the personality of God has been dismissed almost without argument. A moment's reflection would soon disillusion any candid critic that this is not what intelligent men have understood by the personality of God. This train of reflection follows the discursive method as opposed to the 'Intuitive' of which we are the adherents. When we employ this *intuitive method* to determine the Divine personality we are compelled to take every 'perfection' that is very valuable quality, which we find in created being and attribute it 'in a more eminent manner' to the Creator. That is to say, we are to free the quality in question, from all the limitations of finite existence and conceive it as perfectly realised in God. If we take the quality of 'knowing' as an example, we must think of the Divine Wisdom as unlimited and unmingled with ignorance. We may confidently affirm then that personality is not the persona or the mask but a *Power inherent in the infinite Presence*. It is, therefore, clear that in attributing personality to God we are by no means making Him 'One of ourselves'; on the contrary, we are recognising the existence of a being

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who, while not entirely other than ourselves, surpasses and transcends us immeasurably. This is the reason why Bradley regards the Absolute as 'Supra-personal.' He denies the evolution of the Absolute and says, "The Absolute has no history of its own, though it contains histories without number. Hence we define the Absolute as 'an impersonal personality.'

This our definition of the Absolute brings us to the Theistic position which is a central element in all religions. The difference between Theistic and Pantheistic theories of the Divine Nature is often said to lie in the fact that Pantheism holds the Divine to be wholly immanent, while Theism holds that God is both immanent and transcendent. "The modern term immanence appears to mean much the same as the older 'attribute of omni-presence'. The idea of God cannot be associated with the idea of spatial limitation. That on which all things depend cannot itself be among the 'things'; and since space is the relation between things, we cannot think of God as occupying space. Consequently we cannot regard God as being present in any particular place to the exclusion of others, which is the same thing as saying that there is no space where God is not. There is, however, a difference between the ideas of omni-presence and immanence in this respect. Some writers would speak of degrees of immanence, but would hesitate to speak

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of degrees of Divine Presence. The conception of immanence includes the idea of the manifestation of the Divine Nature. In this respect there are plainly degrees of immanence. Some aspects of creation must be supposed to be more complete disclosures of the nature of God than others. Thus thought, we could not affirm that there is more of God in the human person than in the stone, we could justly assert that personality tells us more about the Creator than the stone. The doctrine of the Divine Transcendence, therefore, is intended to guard against the danger of Pantheism. In the most general forms, it is the doctrine that the universe, if by that we mean the sum of finite existence, does not exhaustively display the being of God. "He is beyond the greatest that we can conceive in point of power and the highest that we can conceive in point of value."

This Infinite Being is the Absolute of the Philosophers, God of the Gnostics and the Transcendent Reality of the ontological argument. The essential element in this argument is its insistence on the idea of the perfect and the absolute as a necessity, on which the mind cannot help having it. It may be pointed out that in all our thinking there is implicit the idea of the absolute. The conception of truth seems to involve the thought of an absolute truth; the conception of value involves the thought of an absolute value;

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nor would the ideas of partial truth and imperfect values have any meaning apart from the concept of that which is neither partial nor imperfect. It is really an attempt to state in the form of reasoning two different pieces of true insight. In the first place, there is inherent in the self-conscious individual an intuition of his relatedness with an Other who is not wholly Other, a Beyond that is within, and hence an immediate consciousness of Reality in which the deepest and permanent needs of the self are satisfied. In the second place, all thinking and knowing depend, in the last resort, upon an ontological assumption. We must begin by taking for granted that the world is really knowable by our minds, that it is rational. This is an assumption which can never be proved because it is itself the pre-supposition of every possible proof and hence it is not discursive but rather intuitive. "The foundation of intuitional knowledge is conscious or affective identity between that which knows and that which is known; it is that state of common self-existence in which the knower and the known are one through knowledge."

On the basis of this intuitive knowledge is built the theistic philosophy which recognises difference and distinction as integral to the life-process of the Absolute. The essence of Pantheism is the denial of any real distinction between God and the world.

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Thorough-going pantheism asserts that the All is God and God is the All. It is clear that on every pantheistic hypothesis the freedom, and therefore the responsibility, of finite person must be an illusion, for they are by nature the one divine Reality. Not only does a pantheistic view tend to destroy the reality of the moral life but it tends to abolish the distinction between Good and Evil and affords no basis for our judgement of value. If all is Divine, every aspect of the all must be a revelation of the Divine Reality and the difference, which to us seems so important, between right and wrong, good and evil, must be only a distinction from our point of view, not grounded upon the nature of things. This is so because, according to the Ontologists, 'the Real is rational and the rational is real.' But it was Kant who by transferring the weight of the defence of philosophy, to the sphere of morals 'to make room for moral faith', proved that the Real is not only rational but also righteous. In terms of Indian philosophy the realm of metaphysics is described as *Satyam* the Real, as *Ritum* the righteous, but the Real itself is supra-rational and supra-righteous.

The root *Ri* means 'to flow'; we find it in the Greek *rheo* and again in our own river. *Ritam*, the cosmic Order or the supreme Law, is the even flow of natural phenomena and the natural sequence

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of events. Ritam is therefore the cosmic order that evolves harmony out of chaos and that this order is the result of a higher Law is clear—a law which the gods themselves can never transgress, and that it is a beneficent law, is no less evident. Hence Ratam is holy, is true, it is the 'right path'—the 'Right' itself, the Absolute Good, which is at once transferred from the tangible and visible into the invisible and intangible world—from the physical into the metaphysical. There is a moral Ritam as there is a material one, or rather the same Ritam governs both the worlds. What law is in the material, that Right is in the moral order and both are *Ritam*. Therefore the God who is the Ordainer and keeper of the physical law is also the guardian and avenger of the moral law, the punisher of sin.

That we live in a realm of law, that we are surrounded by laws that we cannot break, this is a truism. Yet when the fact is recognised in a real and vital way, and when it is seen to be a fact in the mental and moral world as much as in the physical, a certain sense of helplessness is apt to overpower us, as though we feel ourselves in the grip of some mighty power, that, seizing us, whirls us away whither it wills. The very reverse of this is in reality the case, for the mighty power or the *Divine Will*, when it is understood, will obediently carry us wither we will, when we allow ourselves

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to be driven away in the breath of God as a leaf in the tempest. For Nature is conquered not by defiance but by obedience and her resistless energies are at our bidding as soon as we, by knowledge, work with them and not against them. We can choose out of her boundless stores the forces that serve our purpose in momentum, in direction, and their very invariability becomes the guarantee of our success.

Ritam is the Cosmic order that evolves harmony out of chaos under the stress and guidance of a higher Law. The Absolute, says Bosanquet, is teleological or self-directing; and here teleological means *Ritam*. In general the teleological argument has been form the facts of order and adaptation to ends to the source of order and purposive Intelligence, to a higher Law. The admission of any teleological element in evolution, *Ritam* - moral as well as material, of any tendency towards the production of value, suggests the thought of creative power. Fortunately for the order of things a greater unseen power, a universal Will, a universal Force or Law is at work, which not only gives us all the frame work and conditions of our idea and effort, but evolves by them and by the law of these conditions out of the things in being the thing that is to be. And this power deals with us not so much according to the devices of our reason,

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the truths and fictions of our intelligence, but much rather according to the truth of what man is and the real motive and meaning of what he does. Hence, it is not our intellectual ideas that govern our action but our moral nature and temperament, not *Buddhi* but *Bhava*. Reflection, however, will show that if we are under the obligation to pursue the moral life, as we understand it, the evolution of moral consciousness affords a ground for belief in a providential ordering of evolution. If the evolution of moral ideas were merely the result of non-moral and indifferent causes, if the changing conceptions of good were nothing more than the outcome of a process which had no spiritual direction, we should be at a loss to justify any recognition on our part of absolute obligation. If we take it as a fact of experience that we are really under an obligation to obey the right so far as it is rational and to see the rational so far as it is righteous, then we must believe that the development of the moral life is a directed development, the progressive revelation of a God, which, in some way, transcends the process of evolution. Thus the ontological as well as teleological arguments, pursued to their legitimate ends, will reveal that the ultimate Reality or the Absolute is at once the Truth and the Law—the Truth which is both rational and supra-rational, and the Law which is both righteous and supra-righteous.

Stayam, Kuam, Brihat—this is the secret of meta-

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physics To put it in plain words, the Truth is the Law and the Vast. The *Mahat* or *Brihat* is the Absolute Consciousness of which Ritam or the Law is the very soul. By the power and presence of its inherent soul the Absolute consciousness formulates itself as the Individual Self. This formulation does not proceed from any kind of necessity but it is a conscious act of the will. The ontological argument 'has proved beyond doubt that there is inherent in the self-conscious individual, as intuition of his relatedness with an other who is not wholly other, a beyond that is within. The will of the Absolute Consciousness, in order to provide a field of action for the individual self to evolve into deeper and richer provinces of the Supreme Being, formulates itself as the phenomenal nature. The teleological argument has confirmed the truth of this statement by proving that over and above this cosmos is the supracosmic Law under the stress and guidance of which the even flow of natural phenomena or the order of the whole cosmos is established.

Evelyn Underhill seems to grasp the truth of the metaphysics, for in the preface to her *Mysticism* she says, "Twenty years ago, I was already convinced that the facts of man's spiritual experience pointed to a limited dualism, a diagram which found place for his contrasting apprehension of the Absolute and contingent, Being and Becoming, simultaneous and successive. Further

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that these facts involved the existence in him too of a certain double-ness, a higher and a lower natural and transcendental self, something equivalent to that 'Funklein' spark or apex of the soul on which the mystics have always insisted as the instrument of their special experience. Both these opinions were then unpopoluar. The second, in particular has been severely criticised by Prof. Pratt and other authorities on the psychology of religion. Yet the constructive work which has since been done on the metaphysical implications and mystical experience, has tended more and more to establish their necessity at least as basis of analysis, and they can now claim the most distinguished support. The recovery of the concept of the super-natural,—a word which no respectable theologian of the last generation cared to use—is closely linked with the great name of Fredrich Von Hugel. His persistent opposition to all merely monistic, pantheistic and immanent philosophies of religion, and his insistence of the need of a 'two step diagram' of the reality accessible to man, though little heeded in his life-time, are now bearing fruit. This re-instalment of the Transcendent, the 'wholly other' as the religious fact is perhaps the most fundamental of the philosophic changes which have directly affected the study of mysticism. It thus obtains a metaphysical background which harmonises with its greatest

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declaration and supports its claim to empirical knowledge of the truth on which all religion rests.”

Having thus obtained a firm grasp of the fundamentals of true philosophy, we now proceed to review *Dvaita*, *Advaita* and *Vistisa-advaita* so far as their metaphysical implications are concerned, in the light of these doctrines of the four units or entities. *Adwaita* or monism declares the Absolute to be a subject without objects, an Eternal without relation to the change, and an Infinite without relation to the finite. It is something like the pure Being of the Hegelians which, as Hegel himself said is equal to pure nothing. Blinded by *Mayavada*, it denies the reality of objects, changes and limits. The Infinite ceases to have any sense if the reality of the finite is denied; objects, changes and limits are undoubredly relative, but because they are relative they do not causes to be true, they are relatively true. The Monists' Absolute, therefore, which is without difference is no absolute. The only real Absolute is he who is at once one and different, who is a subjeet eternally supporting the object, an Eternal ceasessly producing change and an Infinite ever sustaining the finite. Object and event are real, though relative, to the Subject and Eternal. We shall now speak a few words on the real existence of finite knowledge in the Infinite. This consciousness

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we call our own, which is the essence of our life, is undoubtedly the manifestation of the infinite consciousness. But as, on the one hand, it is a manifestation of the infinite consciousness so, on the other hand, it is only a partial reproduction of the Infinite. It is different from the infinite consciousness; therefore, it is as true as its unity with it. Its finite and partial character is real and not imaginary or due to ignorance. It is not through error that we suppose our knowledge to be finite; its finitude is real, undeniable. But the *Mayavadin* says that the idea of individuality is due to ignorance. Now we ask whose ignorance? There can be no ignorance in the Absolute, who is all knowledge. But ignorance surely exists; therefore, the finite individual, the subject of ignorance exists too. That ignorance is negative, privation, admits of no doubt. As ignorance, as privation, a negation confirms this inference, so love and holiness, as positive virtues, confirm the same inference. Therefore, though unable to explain the mystery of creation, to explain clearly how the finite exists in the infinite unity-in-difference, still we arrive at this undoubted conclusion that the existence of the individual is not merely apparent, not due to ignorance, but is real. The individual is real, not merely phenomenally real, but truly real—real in relation to the Absolute.

If Monism errs too much on the side of unity;

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Dvaita or Dualism errs too much on the side of difference. For Dualism imagines God and man to be entirely apart from each other; this is not real Theism, but only a species of Deism. A god from which man and world can exist apart independently cannot be their support. Such a dualism is really opposed to deep worship and spiritual communion. To say the Supreme Soul is entirely outside ourself is to go against the sane laws of ontology, which has proved beyond doubt that there is an Other who is not wholly other and a Beyond that is within. From this it is evident that there is in us a strange combination of the individual and the universal. It is because the Infinite exists in us as our Higher Self, our Supreme Soul, that we can transcend our individuality, can know truths beyond the pale of our individual life, can acquire necessary and universal truths, and can hold communion with the infinite. A merely finite being, a mere individual, far from knowing any other higher truths cannot even know that he is finite and individual. But one who has known himself to be finite and individual, has, in knowing only this much, transcended his finitude and individuality. One who can go beyond oneself, can know truths outside his individual life, can acquire universal truths, is not merely finite, merely individual; the finite, and the infinite, individuality and universality, are inseparably blended in him. As it is true on the one hand that

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we are finite and individual, so it is equally true on the other hand that the infinite, universal and all-knowing Being is our source and support, the light and life of our finite and individual souls. Knowledge is everywhere characterised by this necessary unity-in-difference. Every individual self is lighted by the infinite Light.

It is in the *Vishista-Advaita* or Qualified Monism that we find the truth of unity-in-difference expressed more fully and exposed more clearly. In the *Vishista-Advaita* the specific meaning of Brahman is *Bhagavan*, who is possessed of absolute spiritual powers and has neither equal nor superior. This *Bhagavan* is not the undifferentiated Absolute of the Monist, nor is he the pure Being of the Hegelians. Brahman, so conceived says the *Bhagavata*, is only an aspect of the Reality, but not the fulness thereof; that full Reality is Shri Krishna who is a person or rather he is the one and the only person in the universe. But he realises his divine and absolute personality through an eternal process of self-differentiation, which is called in the *Bhagavata*, *Nitya Lila* or the eternal sport of the Lord and in this Divine Lila Radha is the eternal Partner of Shri Krishna. Radha is therefore neither absolutely different from nor absolutely identical with Shri Krishna. She is the Shakti of the Shaiva, the Laxmi of the Madhwa, eternal Law of the Teleologists. The mutual relation of

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Shri Krishna and Radha is 'one of inconceivable difference-in-inentity and identity-in-difference'. And it is in and through this Radha that Shri Krishna realises his personality and becomes the Person. But this eternal sport of the Divine, the *Nitya Lila* has two aspects : one inner and the other outer. The inner sport is the eternal sport of the Lord within His own Being; Radha, the supreme nature is Shri Krishna's partner in this inner sport and as such, it stands outside the time series or rather it is supra-cosmic. There is however another aspect of the *Lila* of the Lord. It is his outer *Lila*, called also his phenomenal sport. This outer sport or *Bahiranga Lila*, says the Vaishnava, is not an absolute necessity to Shri Krishna, for the absolute is full and complete in his own Being. That this cosmic play or the phenomenal world is not at all a necessity of His Being is the common Vaishnavic and Christian view. The world is not necessary for God, but God is necessary for the world. He has no need really of us; we alone have need of Him. Our relations with Him are not necessary like those of Radha in Vaishnavic consciousness or of Christ in Christian consciousness. In Christianity humanity is God's not upon its own right, but through Christ; similarly in Vaishnavic consciousness, the *Jiva*—the common name for all intelligent creation including both human and non-human—is Shri Krishna's not upon the *Jiva*'s own right, but through His Radha, by adoption.

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That the Vishista-advaita has truly comprehended absolute as teleological, that the Satyam is not only Mahat but Ritam is commendable; but its division of the Lila into an inner and an outer which is both unnatural and irrational is not convincing. For Love and Power are the presiding deities which guide both the cosmic and supra-cosmic activities; or rather the universal Will or the eternal Law formulates itself as Love and Power, as Grace and Force to conduct both the phenomenal activities and spiritual subtleties. To make a division of life into an inner and outer sport is to admit opposition between Love and Power, between Grace and Force. All error like all evil is born of a division in the indivisible. Because God has a myriad aspects, mind breaks up His unity, it creates a violent opposition and a vain attempt at mutual exclusion in the united family of Love and Power, Grace and Force that are convergently busy with the universe. To the Vaishnava Love is all-in-all, nay, the love is the Form of God. Since love has attraction it has play which is exhibited in the *Antaranya Lila* or supra-cosmic region. But he is slow in recognising the play of power which is manifested in the cosmic expression, still slower in realising the truth that unless power yields a secure foundation in the phenomenal activities, no super-structure of the spiritual necessities is possible. Love is essential to establish new cycles of civilisation

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in grace, tenderness, wisdom and spirituality. It is indeed true that power does not exhibit the finest in the Divine, but love does. Power is necessary for cosmic adjustment, love for establishing spiritual federation. The truth is that Love and Power, Grace and Force are not opposite, but rather they officiate as twin officers of one *Minister*, the Will and the two aspects are called by the name of *Bhakti* and *Shakti* in Virashaivism. Viewed in this light, the truth shall be revealed that at the back of creative evolution of a new cycle of civilisation, works unseen the Power that controls and destroys the dark forces and the Love that cements humanity into a divine federation on Earth. It is one of the merits of Virashaivism to have emphasized the importance of 'negativity' in development; progress in a moving world occurs not in a steady upward movement, but by the overcoming of negation. Without the negation there would be no movement. The good, it is alleged, exists through the constant over-coming of its opposite, the evil. The truth is the continual transcending of error and reality grows through the unceasing strife with illusion and partly illusory ideas. Moral good exists only in the overcoming of moral evil. If there were no opposing movement there would be no such thing as virtue. We cannot gainsay the truth of these contentions, rather we are compelled to admit that we cannot imagine a world in which

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goodness did not imply the possibility of its opposite evil and truth was not gained at the cost of the unremitting revision of error. Hence it is the cardinal belief of a Virashaiva, who holds that God has made this phenomenal world a field of battle and filled it with the trampling of combatants and the cries of great wrestle and struggle. He could then ask us, 'Would you filch His peace without paying the price God has fixed for it?' The world is a field of battle and man must become a warrior; this is, in brief, the message of Virashaivism. When we say this, we do not accuse of Virashaivism as being blind to the finer sensibilities of love and grace, for it is fully alive to the delicacies of divine love; but what it says is that in order to manifest the graceful movements of love and wisdom in this earth-consciousness, a strong foundation of power is an imperative need. Hence the profound significance of Virashaivism lies, however, in its intense and most pronounced note of heroism.

VIRASHAIVISM—*QUO VADIS?*

The four dimensional mode of consideration of the 'World' is the most dazzling achievement in the domain of physics. The world of the physical phenomenon is naturally a four dimensional continuum in the Space-Time sense. The conception of the world continuum is natural on the Theory of Relativity. The Theory of Relativity has only rendered the physical science more mathematical in its nature, more precise in its methods.

The scientific method in the real sense represents the point of view of the physical inquirer. A man is a scientist for the time being so long as he has only to do with that which may be touched, handled, seen or otherwise perceived through the senses. We know all that can be known about it when we have combined all that our senses can tell us. Through the senses we define its configuration or its relations in space. The senses, indeed, reveal things other than space-properties; they tell us of the colours, sounds, smells and so forth, which

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are in some sense inherent in objects; and these, of course, are an essential part of our conceptions of the various objects. But we treat these so called secondary qualities as in some way dependent upon the geometrical properties. They point out rather than constitute the object. We reach the ultimate goal of physical sciences by establishing certain formulae expressible solely in terms of space and time. The physicist, of course, speaks of 'forces' and of 'energy.' But he has nothing to do with the meaning of such words, apart from what he calls symbols for certain changes measurable in space and time. The force of gravity for example, is measured by the velocity generated in a given time, that is, by the rate which a body is moving after it has been falling in vacuum for a second. To say that it varies inversely as the square of the distance is to say that, of two such bodies, the one which is at twice the distance from the assumed centre will begin to move with a quarter of the velocity. Of the force, considered apart from its measure we say nothing whatever and it was precisely by confining their attention to the measure that scientific reasoners were able to get rid of the metaphysical puzzles which had made progress impossible.

In more refined inquiries we have to pass beyond all possible limits of observation and to postulate atoms, which, by their nature, are imperceptible. But they still have to move according to the analogy of perceptible

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bodies, and the use of them is justifiable because they bring us back to conclusions which are again within the limits of perception. The recognised atom of all scientific inquiry is to give quantitative relations, that is, to lay down formulae expressed in terms of time and space and nothing else. Scientific method again is nothing but a more refined and systematic application of methods more or less roughly implied in every movement of our lives. All human action upon the external world consists simply in changing the positions of pieces of matter. To move a thing is to impose upon it certain relations expressible in terms of space and time; and so far action implies thought, it implies innumerable more or less conscious judgements of the same kind. To make these judgements articulate and explicit is to make them scientific. The whole structure of scientific knowledge is built up from such elements and is, therefore, nothing but a system of formulae in terms of space and time. So long as we are dealing with the so called physical science no body objects to this procedure. We are only systematising and giving precision to our thought.

‘This is a chair,’ is a phrase which in the first place asserts that we have a certain set of organised sense impressions. But it also means that we have an analogous set of impressions and that if we changed places we would also change sensations. It is a compact formula,

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which not only indicates the sensations of an observation at a particular time and place, but also gives the sensations of every other observer, as those which would be perceived by the same observer at other times and places. It is a general formula with such an indefinite term that when that term is filled in or defined, it indicates the sensations corresponding to any particular case. We are, as it were, postulating an *omni-present consciousness*, which may be for the moment focussed at any particular point. This habitual reference to the common instead of to the particular, generates the impression that we are somehow laying down truths, 'objective' in the sense of having no reference at all to personal individual experience. Such formulae have been constructed from the experience of the race at large, and therefore are independent in one sense of personal experience. Yet, in fact, each man is necessarily his own base, from which all things are measured for him, and he only discovers wider formulae in which his own experience is included, not formulae from which it is excluded. We do not get a step nearer towards the abolition of the subject. To say what would or did happen, outside of all experience, actual or potential is to use words without meaning as much as to say what we felt when we do not feel.

What then are these time and space, which the scientist hugs to his heart with tenacious tendrils? Eternal

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and self-existent realities, or transformed sensations, or mental forms somehow imposed upon chaotic sense materials? A life-time may be devoted to studies which will convince us that no answer can be given; we may however say in some sense, without fear of contradiction, that in any case *we cannot get outside our own consciousness*. We know nothing directly except the modifications of our consciousness, thoughts, sensations, emotions, notions and so forth; and all statements of knowledge carry with them a reference, explicit or implicit, to the knower. An object without a subject is a meaningless phrase. The basis of the knowledge of every individual is his own current of consciousness, which is transformed into knowledge by reflection. What then are we doing when we raise this vast structure as physical science composed essentially of time and space formulae? We are filling up the gaps in our immediate perceptions. Each man's experience is fragmentary, discontinuous and narrow. He sees infinitesimal arcs, and connects them by drawing the whole circle. We extend the range and supply the intervals of our knowledge. We are doing so somehow every instant of our lives, and when we reach the farthest limits of the physical sciences we are still doing the same. Kepler constructed the solar system in the same way. He observed a planet in certain positions; he supplied the intermediate positions by discovering the

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curve which passed through all the observed positions; and to do so he had to place himself in imagination at a different point of view from which the relations asserted to exist might be matters of direct observation. All scientific progress is a development and a more distinct articulation of the same procedure.

We do not inquire what is the ultimate meaning of space or 'outness' what we precisely mean when we say that a thing is 'outside' ourselves or 'outside' another thing. We only say that we are not in this process getting rid of an observer, but only hypothetically extending his powers. We are 'producing' our curves; seeing in imagination what we should see through a telescope or a microscope, or should if we moved to Sirius or could touch a ray of light; what we should see if we could live a thousand years hence or had lived a thousand years ago, or if we could see the back of our head as well as what lies in front of us. We are still only doing what we are doing when we shut our eyes or imagine the chair behind us. We thus obtain formulae which are independent, in a sense, of our particular position. Yet they are so constructed that, when the necessary data are filled in, they give the experience corresponding to that position. We thus construct a universe extending indefinitely in space and time beyond our own immediate perceptions. We then obtain general

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statements of facts which bear no explicit reference to our own personal experience. We fancy that we thus get an 'objective' universe in the sense in which 'objective' means outside all consciousness, instead of meaning a formula common to all consciousness. The formula, which is true for you and me and for all other conscious beings, is taken to be true without any reference to the omni-present consciousness at all. We forget that not only the sensations of light or heat, for example, have no meaning apart from a sentient being; but even that light and heat as used for the supposed physical causes of the sensations, vibrating atoms, and so forth have no meaning apart from the recipient being. On the strength of these arguments we have not dogmatically but logically to assert that all that science can reveal to us is not a state of things which existed outside consciousness, but that which was perceived if there were a perceiver. *We abstract from our own consciousness, but not from consciousness itself.* This is the conclusion at which the modern science has arrived with all its methods, investigations and means of inquiry; and the conclusion that there is a *consciousness-in-itself* or an omni-present conscious Being has only strengthened the truth of the ancient wisdom which proclaims what we live, move and have our beings in this vast sky of consciousness.

It may be seen that the science of physics, in

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its last resort, is turned into the science of metaphysics, and the stir of inquiry into the spirit of intuition. The study of metaphysics is *consciousness* as the ultimate reality. In determining the nature of reality the Indian mind has not subordinated the claims of intuition to the claims of intellect or reason. Reason claims to formulate truth by removing contradiction and asserting self-consistency. If consistency is accepted in the formulation of truth, why should *intuition*, which claims to give immediate awareness be ignored? For, the criteria of truth are self-consistency, which reason finds out, and self-awareness, which intuition reveals. Indian metaphysics emphasises this immediate awareness as higher than, but not necessarily in conflict with the claims of reason. Hence the approach to the study of consciousness is dual: one the logical and the other psychological, one the rational and the other intuitional. Reason sees it as fact of being. The received position with the rationalist is briefly as follows: "Empirical Reality is the imperfect unfolding in time through categories, inadequate taken by themselves, of an eternally complete, actual and self-subsistent idea or consciousness. Being means simply presence in and for this consciousness. The Idea or the Logos is the infinite and eternal Rest into which all motion and dialectic are absorbed, in which it has its final issue, and becomes transformed. The ultimate expression of this *Idea* is *self-consciousness*, the unity of apperception of Kant. The formal unity

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here referred to, is the last word of philosophy in its analysis of experience. This resolution of the problem of philosophy is substantially that of Plato and Aristotle, of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel." It is the statement of what we may term philosophical theism or orthodox transcendentalism.

Kant was the pioneer of a line of speculative thought, which restored to philosophy the larger basis it had occupied under the ancients. He reopened those wider issues which had furnished the themes of the treatises of Plato and Aristotle—issues which form part of the meaning and constitution of one reality. The order in which Kant discusses this problem in the *Critique* and elsewhere, was immediately determined by the course of his own thought. The key to the whole is, however, to be found in the deduction of the categories from the ultimate unity of apperception or consciousness. The question now arises, is this thought-unity from which Kant starts really ultimate? Is the ultimate form of the category absolute? Is pure thought subject? Does not consciousness presuppose *that which becomes* conscious? In other words, is not the 'I think' itself susceptible of further analysis? Is not this ultimate 'I' distinguishable from its thinking? We believe it is, and that the treatment of this principle as final, and as a purely logical or formal unity, is the origin of the

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tendency in speculation hitherto professing to be most synthetic. The synthetic unity of the consciousness, that is, the logical element pre-supposes the a-logical element, the 'I' or the principle which becomes unified. This principle, which, considered *per se* consciousness or knowledge itself pre-supposes, may hence be regarded as the matter of which thought or consciousness is the form. Now we contend that this ultimate, all penetrating material element has been ignored by most of the leaders of speculation from Plato to Hegel, and an appearance of having transcended the distinction been obtained by the hypostasis of form. At first sight this may seem a subtlety which can have very little speculative worth and certainly no practical importance. But we shall endeavour to show that it does, as a matter of fact, give a colouring to the whole course of thought; and that the antagonism of Materialism and Idealism, using these terms in their widest philosophical sense, is involved in it. In the generic method which deals with a process out of relation to time, the starting point is also the goal, the beginning and the end as in a circle. The ultimate principle which involves and includes all others is necessarily the determinant of the entire system of principles. Hence whether that ultimate principle be formal or material, logical or a-logical, makes a profound difference and decides indeed the whole character of the system.

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In Plato, what we are here contending for, is very plainly exhibited. The unifying thought-form, the Logos is abstracted from its a-logical matter, *Hyle*, and hypostasised throughout as the system of ideas, which reaches its culmination in all-embracing supreme Idea. Aristotle lights upon the abstraction so glaringly and consistently carried out by Plato and energetically denounces him for it. But, never-the-less, Aristotle himself falls into substantially the same attitude. For him also pure form, in other words, the Ideal, the creative intellect, as *actus purus*—was the determining element, the all-embracing fact in the constitution of the real. All systems formed on Plato and Aristotle exhibit the same tendency, namely, the hypostasis of the pure form of consciousness and *a fortiori* of Thought or the Ideal as such.

We pass over those lines of development such as the Dogmatic and the Empirical, in which, since they are not based on transcendental analysis, the abstraction in question is not so obvious or so easily pointed out in a few words. But coming to Kant, who re-affirmed the analysis of experience or reality as the first problem of philosophy, we find the same abstraction made at starting—the abstraction namely of the form of knowing or thinking from its matter, the a-logical subject which it presupposes, and whose self-determination is thought. Fichte, at first sight, appears to

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adopt a more concrete stand-point. This is even confirmed, as it would seem by certain statements and certain portions of his analysis. But when the system is viewed as a whole, it is seen that experience with Fichte, no less than with Kant, is analysed only into the formal unity of consciousness. Even Fichte's 'Ego' is pure thought and not that which thinks and which is the possibility of thought. The moment of actual self-consciousness is the determining moment of the whole. To Schelling the same remarks apply, at least as far as the earlier form of his system is concerned. The synthetic unity of apperception in Schelling's system appears as the formal indifference or identity between subject and object. There are modes of statement in Schelling as there are in Fichte, which would seem to indicate that they had a presentiment of the abstraction involved in the procedure that they had inherited from Kant. But these were not strong enough to alter the fundamental character of their systems. Their ultimate principle remained Self-consciousness, that is, not the Ego, but the Ego's consciousness of itself. Thus they were formal and abstractly Idealistic.

The principle, which Fichte and Schelling were vaguely cognisant of, but the real bearing of which they failed to grasp, was seized by Schopenhauer and placed in the fore-front of his philosophy under the name of *Will*. Schopenhauer's system embodies

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unmistakably among other things a protest against formalistic Idealism. This explains the favour with which he regards all materialistic views of the universe. He felt that in pure thought, considered *per se*, there was no dynamic principle; that the categories of consciousness, even the highest, did not of themselves constitute reality; but presupposed a matter, a subject, of which they were the determinations. Essentially the same revolt against the formalism of the Thinkers in the direct line of development from Kant underlies, as it is seen, the system of Herbart. It is scarcely necessary to say that for Herbart the distinction between the empirical and the pure ego does not exist. For him the mind, the psychological object, is the only fact standing in need of explanation. Herbart, on the ground of his ontology, protests against psychology being confounded with metaphysics or logic. All facts have a psychological side, but this by no means exhausts their whole significance. The confusion of the empirical or psychological space, which is a continuum with intelligible space, which is an *interruplum*, was in Herbart's opinion, one of the greatest errors into which Kant fell. The same applies to time as to space. As to the categories, when correctly viewed, they are to coincide with the forms of language, and a complete system of them presupposes a universal grammar,

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The encyclopaedic mind of Hegel, with its Titanic grasp of method, could hardly be oblivious of the fact we are here pointing out, leaving its track, as it does, throughout the whole history of philosophy. But Hegel evades, in his own case, the obviousness of the formal nature of the stand-point he occupies common with his predecessors, at least as regards the working out of his system by his dexterous manipulation of terminology. But it only requires the most cursory glance to see that taint of Idealistic formalism pervades the whole Hegelian construction. With Hegel, the concept or the Idea, that is, pure consciousness, is the totality of the Real. This alone is the most distinct pronouncement of Thought as the *prius* of the world-order. The way in which Hegel covers up his formalism is ingenious but hardly convincing. Let us take as an instance such passages where Hegel defines the Ego as 'The universal in and for itself,' as 'pure self-reference,' as 'the abstract universal' etc. Hegel here refers to the synthetic unity of apperception, the universal form or consciousness which is as he insists, formal and abstract; but in this he clearly ignores that from which it is abstracted, the 'Self' of the 'reference', the 'I' which determines itself as thinking. Hegel is, however, the first speculative thinker of modern times who takes a definite stand on the formal or actual side of knowledge,

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or consciousness as ultimate end, who is therefore the protagonist of the modern philosophical Theism. In opposition to Hegel appeared Schopenhauer who saw a flaw in the 'guild philosophy' as he called it but had little clear notion as to the philosophical method. He accordingly thought that he had read the riddle of the world when he had affirmed an a-logical will to be the Absolute, apart from any transcendental analysis of deduction. Be this as it may, the orthodox transcendentalism broke down.

Let us now subject the fundamental assumption of the orthodox transcendentalism to a little criticism. Its speculative point is self-consciousness, 'The I becoming aware of itself as the knower of knowing.' This is the moment of self-consciousness, the act of empirical recognition. It is therefore necessarily the moment of philosophical reflection. This act itself is formal or actual but it is obvious, when scrutinised that it is not the act itself but its ground which is also its content that constitutes the subject-matter or object of philosophy. Now the question arises at once, what is the relation of this ground or content to the act itself? Otherwise stated, what is the knower that is identified in this synthetic act with the empirical me? Is the knower of the knowing himself an act? Is the 'I' which knows exhausted in the act of self-recognition? The orthodox transcendentalist must

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perforce assume that it is, since for him formal unity is final; the 'I think' is the ultimate fact of consciousness, in other words, he identifies the moment of reflection with the moment reflected upon. He declines to distinguish the matter of self-consciousness from its form. If the 'I' which knows, is not exhausted in the act of knowing, it must be conceived as the infinite ground of that act; but if infinite, if no limit can be assigned to it, it cannot be itself actual, since an act is, by its definition, something determined or finite. This 'I', therefore, that which knows and which recognises itself as knowing or thinking, which can never itself become wholly object to itself, but which is involved as necessary implication in the nature of all objects of consciousness—this 'I' cannot be regarded as act, but must be rather the *power*, or *potentiality* of knowledge or thought.

Now we maintain that it is incumbant on the advocates of orthodox transcendentalism to show why in their analysis they stop at the formal synthesis, rather than at the material ground, which that synthesis presupposes. Because of this, orthodox transcendentalism fails to render an adequate account of the material element in experience. It has no satisfactory explanation to offer of sense and its conditions; it knows nothing or says nothing of the dynamis of the world, of the *trieb*, the impulse, the will, the force of empirical

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reality; or if it has anything to say on these things, it is, as it were, imposed *ab extra* and not deduced from its central principle. This latter is, *ex hypothesi*, pure Intelligibility and hence cannot yield *per se* any results adequately explaining sensibility. It is pure Actuality, and hence can have no part nor lot with potentiality. It is the *what-ness* which scorns the parent *that-ness*; the purely statical in which is no dynamical Disguise the fact as he may, the orthodox transcendentalist can never, owing to his initial assumption, transcend the region of the purely formal or logical; he can never explain the concrete. He is doomed to wander in the realm of the abstract or of thought-forms without any hope of attaining the Real, except in a purely arbitrary manner. Hegel himself attempted it, but in vain. He talks a great deal about *Der concrete begriff*; it is true, but the concreteness is throughout an assumption and not a demonstration.

The theory which, while occupying in general the speculative position, may yet be regarded as antithetical to the one in question, demands at starting a speculative *point d'appui* or first principle, the working out of which shall include the *material* element in Reality. When we speak of the Being as an object, it is its a-logical side that is present in consciousness. The reality of any empirical object or thing no less than empirical reality in general, has its two elements: an indeterminate matter or

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potentiality of being known, and determinate form given in the actual moment of consciousness into which the matter enters merely as implication. So we repeat once more, popular thought and language implicitly recognise the antithesis of actual consciousness and possible consciousness. It will appear that every act as such must be in Time. Actuality when scrutinised, resolves itself into being simply the vanishing moment of Time which brings us back to the fact that, that for which Time is, can never be actual and finite; that is, it must always be potential and infinite. If it be true, it follows that the primary datum of the orthodox transcendentalism which we have termed philosophical Theism, is got at by a confusion between the moment of reflection and the moment reflected upon, the result being that the actual moment of reflection is hypostasised. Now the view opposed to this which finds its final datum not in the form or act of consciousness, but in the matter or power of consciousness, not in the definite unity of Thought, but in the indefinite unity of that which thinks, may be termed philosophical Materialism or Neo-transcendentalism.

Now for the Neo-transcendentalist, the independent being of the past and absent is deducible not from actuality at all, but from ground or possibility. Empirically independent being implies coalescence with the non-empirical potentiality or ground of my own and

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therewith of all possible consciousness. From the stand-point of Neo-transcendentalism the ground of individuation and of independence lies entirely in the sense-impression. Sense is the element in and through which the particularisation of the 'I' is given no less than the particularisation of the determinations of this 'I'. To sum up this part of the argument, what is Actual is present in and for consciousness ; this ground, however, is not present in consciousness, for *ergo* me it is not Actual. But if it be contended that such Actuality, though not for me subsists in world-consciousness, I would ask how my experience and consciousness are thereby explained? If it be Actual, it must be outside my experience ; if it be something outside the synthesis of my consciousness, how can it enter into the transcendental analysis of that consciousness as an element of explanation? In other words, it must be something over, against my actual consciousness or experience here and now.

In almost all synthetic systems of philosophy it is the moment of *form of limitation*, of *for itselfness* which has dominated the whole ; it has been both *telos* and *dynamis*. For Plato it was the Ideas which informed the unreal matter of the sense-world. For Aristotle again the *Logos*, the *entelechy* was the determining principle of the *Hyle*. For Hegel lastly the formal moment was absolute explicitly ; the concept was self-existent. But from another point of view, the *matter*

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may be regarded as self-determining and the form as its self-determination. The hypostasis of the formal moment which has so long dominated the speculative world then disappears, the ultimate principle of 'Theory of knowledge,' or philosophy, the science which alone deals with first principles properly so called, is no longer consciousness or thought as such but the a-logical subject which determines itself as *conscious* which is the *materia prima* of consciousness.

Man finds himself conscious of being in the world of which he forms a part and a parcel. He apprehends this fact long before the impulse arises in him to comprehend it. He is aware, that is to say, of this world in its *concrete actuality*, long before he feels himself driven to try and become aware of it in its *abstract possibility*. But this impulse nevertheless arises at a certain stage of man's development and the result is philosophy. Philosophy may therefore be described as an out-burst of the conscious endeavour to re-construct the given world of *actuality* according to its possibility. This awful and all-embracing problem, as a matter of course, exhibits a variety of aspects and has naturally been approached by many paths. The history of philosophy is nothing but the exhibition of these aspects as they progressively unfold themselves to the human mind, and of the various paths that have been struck out for their investigation.

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The first aspect under which the problem presented itself in ancient India as well as in ancient Greece was that of *being* or existence with an avowed object of discovering the ultimate constituent of the physical universe. In the next stage, that is, in the age of the Upanishads the problem became refined. It was so no longer an ultimate cosmic principle that was sought for; but the ultimate *form of existence* was thought of as one of which the world of sense was a mere mode, if it were not indeed opposed to it. The problem of philosophy continued to be attacked on the side of being from these two points, the concrete and the abstract throughout the period of *Sat-Darshanas*, the six systems of philosophy, in India and in Greece until the Sophistic Revolution which issued in Socrates that radically changed the standing ground. It was then seen that in as much as the possibility of formulating, much more of solving the problem of *being* of the sensible world presupposed the capacity of *knowing*. The first step in philosophy must be an investigation of the conditions under which this knowledge comes to pass, in other words, an examination of the capacity of *knowing* itself. The philosophical labour of the two great thinkers of antiquity, Plato and Aristotle, were mainly occupied with this problem.

The Reality or the ultimate principle should then be studied under the two aspects: the aspect of *being* and the aspect of *knowing*. In the gamut of philosophy

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to know is as necessary as to be ; being and knowing are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Such a comprehensive study of the Reality is to be found in the Agamic lore, the dominant and recurrent note of which is struck in the conception of the integral association of *Shiva - Shakti*, Idea - Will or Consciousness - Force. Existence has two aspects : intuitive and effective, a power of self-awareness and a power of self-force, by which the Reality possesses itself whether in its static condition or in its dynamic movement. For in its creative action it knows by self-consciousness all that is latent within it and produces and governs the universe of its potentialities by self-force. This creative Energy of the all-existent is termed *Chit - Shakti*, in the Agamas. This *Chit - Shakti* is the transcendent will which is integrally associated with the transcendent consciousness, and they have play in the cosmic as well as in the supra-cosmic expression. But beyond this play is *Para-Shiva*, the Supreme peace of Existence, the infinite luminous Silence which even surpasses the cosmic and the supra-cosmic play of this transcendent will. *Chit-Shakti* is therefore an impersonal agency that plays behind a luminous consciousness. It is transcendent in the sense that it transcends all relative knowledge and experience ; it is super-conscious force which gradually takes form or condenses into stress or dynamic points of force-centres.

Hence the Agamic philosophy does not rest

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satisfied with an analysis of the world as phenomenon, that is, as subordinated to the principle of causation. It claims to have a word to say on the world regarded as a thing-in-itself, as noumenon. The immediate investigation into the nature of experience discloses a something which we call world, appearing under diverse forms, all of which may ultimately be regarded as modes of causation. But what is this thing which appears, which becomes object of consciousness; what is the thing that is considered apart from its appearance? Its answer is *that which appears* is not *consciousness*, for the latter, pursue it as far back as you may, still remains only the form assured by the thing itself, this, *the matter* of the world is Will. The world is therefore the objectification of Will. The most immediate objectification of the Will is body. For the subject of knowledge, the body, is given in a two-fold way as an object amongst objects, subject to the laws of matter, and as the direct embodiment of Will. The act of the Will and the act of the body are not two things bound together by a causal nexus; the action of the body does not follow the action of the Will, as an effect follows a cause; but the two states are the same fact differently viewed. For matter indeed is the arrest of creative energy and suspension of the transcendent Will, because of the dominance of inertia. To Bergson matter is the process inverted, more properly

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it is the process of evolution suspended. If, by the principle of redistribution this suspension is stopped then matter will cease to exist and all will be the play of Transcendent Will.

Philosophy is as we have seen, an outburst or an offspring of the conscious endeavour to reconstruct the given world of perceptive experience, the world found constructed in actuality according to its possibility. That philosophy itself in common with all thought is an abstraction, is of course true; but that which is concrete may yet be describable in abstract terms. It is precisely this task, the task of rendering *the concrete in terms of the abstract*, that Whitehead lays upon philosophy. True to this, Whitehead makes an important distinction between the spatio-temporal flux of events meaning, the realm of actuality and what he calls 'eternal objects' that is, the realm of possibility, a distinction which is strongly reminiscent of Plato's between the world of becoming and the Forms. In terms of this distinction he conceives the world-process as a flux of events which have only spatio-temporal characteristics, all their other characteristics being due to 'the ingressions' into the flux of eternal objects or the realm of possibility. This realm of possibility of which everything can be thought about is not for Whitehead, as it was for Plato, a world of ultimate reality. On the contrary he insists that, divorced from

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the flux of events, it is an abstract world. The eternal objects become concrete and therefore real only, in so far as they are 'ingredient' in the world of events. When an eternal object ingresses into the spatio-temporal flux, the result is a concrete occurrence. The actual world which consists of such concrete occurrences must of necessity be a *selection*; and the present actual world is one among an infinite number of worlds, all of which are latent in the realm of possibility.

What is the determining principle of selection? Whitehead's answer is that God determines this selection; for God is the principle of actuality who is also the principle of *limitation*. "We conceive", says Whitehead, "actuality as in essential relation to an unfathomable possibility; eternal objects inform actual occasions with hierarchic patterns, included and excluded in every variety of discrimination. Another view of the same truth is that every actual occasion is a limitation imposed on possibility and that by virtue of this limitation the particular value of that shaped togetherness of things emerges." Viewed from this stand-point the principle of limitation must itself stand outside the world and it therefore cannot be located within the flux of events; nor can reasons be found for it, since from it all reasons flow. Thus observes Whitehead, "God is the ultimate limitation, and his existence is the ultimate irrationality. For us reason can be given for just that

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limitation which it stands in His nature to impose. God is not concrete, but He is the ground for concrete actuality. No reason can be given for the nature of God, because that nature is the ground of rationality." Whitehead's conception of God as 'ultimate irrationality' does exactly fit in with the Transcendent Will or the *Chit-Shakti* of Virashaivism which is a phase of the Agamic lore. Will is, as we have seen, the ground of actuality as well as the ground of rationality; it is irrational or a-logical in the sense that it is the source and support of all conscious thinking, the ground and goal of all rational working.

Since body and world are the immediate and mediate objectification of the will that has in itself no form but only expression, there then exists the law of correspondence between body and world; and the Agamic lore has envisaged the seven expressions of the Transcendent Will that has condensed into seven dynamic Points or Force-centres in the body corresponding to the seven planes or worlds. We ought to regard them as independent yet interpenetrating each other and if we so regard the gradations of worlds or planes, we see them as a great connected complex movement. The higher precipitate their influences on the lower, the lower react to the higher and develop or manifest in themselves within their own formula something that corresponds to the superior power and its action. The material world

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has evolved life in obedience to a pressure from the vital plane, mind in obedience to a pressure from the mental and so on. But it must be remembered that all this must not be taken in too rigid and mechanical a sense. It is an immense plastic movement full of the play of possibilities and must be seized by flexible and subtle sense in the seeing consciousness. Such a series of worlds is symbolised by the Ten Heavens of Dante, the Hierarchies of Dionysus, the Tree of Life of Sephiroth of the Kabalah and receives its counter sign in the inward experience, in the long journey of the self through purification and illumination to union.

The path of the Soul's ascent to union with the Divine must then be literally a transcendence. It is a journey 'upward and inward' through a long series of intermediate states or worlds till, having traversed the seven force-centres, the soul at last arrives, in occult language, at the crown of cosmic vastness informed with supra-mental super-conscious force. St. Thomas Aquinas virtually accepts this doctrine when he says, "As all the perfections of creatures descend in order from God, who is the height of perfection, man should begin from the lower creatures and ascend by degrees, and so advance to the knowledge of God..... And because, in that roof and crown of all things, God, we find the most perfect unity, and every thing is stronger and more excellent, the more thoroughly it is one, it follows that diversity and

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variety increase in things, the further they are removed from Him who is the first principle of all." Says St. Augustine, " We ascend thy ways that be in our heart, and sing a song of degrees; we glow inwardly with thy fire, with thy good fire, and we go, because we go upwards to the place of Jerusalem "

All evolution is really a descent, a descent of the transcendent Will into dynamic points or force-centres in the human body. The seventh centre is the thousand petalled lotus or *Sahasrara Chakra*, the coronal, at the top of the head which corresponds with the *Sutyaloka*, the world of true existence, where the Will dwells upon *Sat* or pure existence as its basis. The sixth centre is the *Ajna Chakra*, the frontal, between the eyebrows which corresponds with *Tapoloka*, the world of energy, of self-consciousness, where the Will dwells upon the active power of consciousness as its basis. The fifth centre is *Vishuddhi Chakra*, the laryngeal, at the throat which corresponds with *Janaloka*, the world of creative delight, where the Will dwells upon active delight of being as its basis. The fourth centre is *Anahata Chakra*, cardiac, at the heart which corresponds with *Maharloka*, the world of large consciousness, where the Will dwells upon pure idea as its basis. The third centre is *Manipuraka Chakra*, the umbilical, at the navel which corresponds with *Svarloka*, the world of pure mentality, where the Will dwells upon the mind as its basis. The second centre is *Swadhisthana*

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Chakra, the spleenic, at the spleen which corresponds with *Bhuvarloka*, the world of free becoming in form, where the Will dwells upon life as its basis. The first centre is *Adhara Chakra*, the basic, at the base of the spine which corresponds with *Bhurloka*, the material world, where the Will dwells upon matter as its basis.

Matter is the first basis of life for the evolving human consciousness and the Upanishads image it as the foot-stool of Brahman. What we call physical matter is only a limited mode of motion in a space-filling Substance. Other modes of motion we appreciate as light, sound, electricity etc., but in a last sense it is consciousness, and consciousness alone which assigns to these modes their respective values, calling some of them matter and others force. It is therefore quite easy to appreciate that since what we refer to as other planes of Substance, are simply other modes of motion, other forms in and of the primordial substance. It is just as easy for consciousness to make an objective world and substantive bodies out of any other of these modes and forms, as it is to make up our present world of physical perceptions. All worlds we conceive are made in consciousness on precisely the same terms.

Since the path of the soul's ascent to union with the Divine is a journey upward and inward, in the *Bhurloka*, in the material world or the physical consciousness, the soul becomes the material being; in *Bhurloka* or the

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vital consciousness, the soul becomes the vital being; in the *Svarloka* or in the mental consciousness, the soul becomes the mental being. In the *Maharloka* or supra-intellectual consciousness, the soul becomes the ideal being. In the *Jnanaloka* or the consciousness proper to the universal beatitude, the soul becomes the all enjoying and all productive being. In the *Tapoloku* or in the consciousness proper to the infinite self-awareness, the soul becomes the all conscious being. In the *Sutyaloka* or the consciousness proper to the state of pure existence, the soul becomes the pure being. Man, being one in his soul with the Supreme who inhabits all worlds and yet exceeds them, can live in any one of these states of consciousness and partake of its experiences. He can be anything he wills from the material to the spiritual being. Hence the state of the Will is a hierarchy which is composed by a descending and an ascending movement, of which spirit and matter are the highest and lowest terms.

When we say that spirit is the highest term, we do not mean the Absolute or the Godhead; for it is not the end or summation of a series, but the *wholeness of all* and therefore is outside and beyond all relations, classifications or definitions. Spirit is simply the final term of manifestation of that aspect of the Absolute which we view as Becoming. The manifestation is, as we have seen, the descent of the

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transcendent Will into the graded planes. But in each further descent there is a further limitation not only of the forms but also of the Will. Hence the Agamic lore is justified in speaking of this manifestation as higher and lower, as *Urdhva Srisi* and *Adhas Sristi*, which respectively stand for the higher hemisphere of Satyaloka, Tapolaka, Jnanaloka, that is, *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, and for the lower hemisphere of Bhurloka, Buvarloka, Swarloka, that is, matter-life-mind, *Satva-Rajas-Tamas*. All manifestation proceeds then by the two terms *Vidya* and *Avidya*, the consciousness of unity and the consciousness of diversity. They are the twin aspects of Chit-Shakti, the formative self-conception of the Absolute. But the Soul depends on and moves between the biune principle of unity and multiplicity. Starting from the essential oneness to the resultant multiplicity, it comprehends all things as the one in its manifold aspects and apprehends separately all things as objects of its Will and Knowledge. To the Soul's self-awareness all things are one Being and the whole movement of things an indivisible process. But in action it proceeds from the unity to the multiplicity and from the multiplicity to the unity, casting an ordered relation between them, thus creating an appearance of division in the indivisible. The soul is therefore the *Divine Gnosis* or the pure intuitional Idea born of the Maharloka which is a connecting and coordinating link

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between the higher and the lower manifestations.

At the apex of this Soul is the Absolute, the pure Godhead which is found in some form or degree in all mystical religion. It is variously termed, the indwelling Spirit of the New Testament, the 'spark of the Soul' of Eckhart, the 'Ground' of Tauler, the 'Divine Principle' of modern Transcendentalists, the Supreme *Puissance of Existence* or the *Niskala Para-Shiva* of the Agamic lore. If such an Existence is, it must be infinite, for neither reason nor experience, neither intuition nor imagination bears witness to us of the possibility of a final terminus. All end and beginning presuppose something beyond the end or beginning. An absolute end or an absolute beginning is not only a contradiction in terms, but a contradiction of essence of things. Infinity imposes itself upon the appearances of the finite by its ineffable self-existence. But this is infinity with regard to Time and Space, an eternal duration, an interminable extension. The pure Reason goes further and looking in its own colourless and austere light at time and space, points out that these two are categories of our consciousness, conditions under which we arrange our perception of phenomenon.

Here the philosophical rationalists are justified in saying that time and space disappear when we look at Existence in itself. If there is any extension, it is not a spatial but a psychological extension. If there is any duration, it is not a temporal but a psychological

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duration. Hence it is easy to see that this extension and duration are only symbols which represent to the mind something not translatable into intellectual terms, an eternity which seems to us the same all-containing ever-new moment, an infinity which seems to us the same all-containing, all-pervading point without magnitude. Thus it is said of the Absolute Perfect which is eternal and infinite, "That which is perfect is a Being, who hath comprehended and included all things in Himself and His own Substance, and without whom and beside whom, there is no true substance, and in whom all things have there substance. For He is the substance of all things, and is in Himself unchangeable and immoveable, and changeth and moveth all things else. But the perfect cannot be apprehended, known or expressed by any creature as creature. We therefore do not give a name to the perfect, for it is none of these. The creature as creature cannot know nor apprehend it, name nor conceive it."

We have now, by our scrutiny of the seven great principles of Substance which the ancient seers fixed on as the foundation and seven-fold mode of all cosmic existence, discerned the gradation of evolution and arrived at the true metaphysical knowledge towards which we are striving. We have also laid down that the origin, the content, the initial and ultimate reality of all the seven-fold substance is the Supreme, the nameless Perfect, the pure Godhead, the infinite luminous Silence.

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The principle which underlies this continually ascending experience and vision uplifted beyond the material formulation of things, is that all cosmic existence is a complex harmony and does not finish with the limited range of consciousness, in which the ordinary human mind and life are content to be imprisoned. "Being, Consciousness, Force, Substance descend and ascend a many runged ladder, on each step of which Being has a vaster self-extension, Consciousness a wider sense of its own range and largeness, Force a greater intensity and a more rapid and blissful capacity, Substance a more subtle plastic rendering of its primal reality; for the more is also the more powerful since it has a greater permanence in its being along with a greater potentiality, plasticity and range in its becoming. Each plateau of the hill of being offers to our widening experience a higher plane of our consciousness and richer world for our existence."

"Does the ascending series affect the possibilities of our material existence? It would not have affected them at all if each plane of consciousness, each world of existence, each grade of substance, each degree of cosmic force were cut off entirely from that which precedes and that which follows it. But the opposite is the truth; the manifestation of the spirit is a complex weft and in the pattern of one principle all the others enter as elements of the spiritual whole. Our material world

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is the result of all the others, for the other principles have all descended into Matter to create the physical universe. As matter is the last word of the descent, so it is also the first word of the ascent; as the powers of all these planes, words, grades, degrees are involved in the material existence, so are they all capable of evolution out of it. Therefore the material universe is bound in the nature of things to evolve from its apparent life its hidden and higher life, from its apparent mind its hidden and higher mind; from its apparent super-mind its hidden and higher soul; and it must in the same nature of things evolve from its concealed spirit the triune glory of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. Evolution comes by the unceasing pressure of the supramaterial planes on the material, compelling it to deliver out of itself their principles and power which might conceivably otherwise have slept imprisoned in the rigidity of the material formula."

All that we have said bears testimony to this fact that there are a series of subtler and subtler formulations of substance which escape from and go beyond the formula of the material universe. Without going deeply into matters which are too occult and difficult for our present inquiry, we may say, adhering to the system on which we have based ourselves, that these grades of substance, in one important aspect of their formulation in series, can be seen to correspond to the ascending series of Matter, Life, Mind,

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Super-mind and that other higher divine triplicity of Sat- hit-Ananda. Over and above this seven-fold series is the Supreme, the infinite luminous Silence, the transcendent Reality which is Supra-cosmic infinite. The whole series with its apex, the Supreme, resolves into four great terms; the lower triplicity of Matter - Life - Mind or the *Apara Prakriti*, the supermind or the Soul, the higher triplicity of Sat - Chit - Ananda or the *Para Prakriti*, and the Supreme which bear very close resemblance with the pre - Vedic Shaivite words, *Attam*, *Anil*, *Amma* and *An*, the inmost significance and the integral association of which is with perfect accuracy mirrored in the Virashaiva conception of *Linga*.

Virashaivism historically considered is a fine and full-blown flower of Shaivism. The inscriptions of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa have revealed the astounding truth that the cult of Shiva was current as far back as 3000 B. C. To quote Sir John Marshall: "Amongst the many revelations that Mohenjo Daro and Harappa have had in store for us, none perhaps is more remarkable than his discovery that Shaivism has a history going back to the Chalco-lithic age or perhaps even further still, and that it takes its place as the most ancient living faith in the world." Again to quote Dr. Prananath: "The cults of Shiva and mother Goddess had already been shown to be very old. It is interesting to find them current as far back as 3000 B. C." The scholars like Father

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Heras are of opinion that Shiva is the God of the Dravidians or Proto-Indians as he calls them, and it is addressed as the *Lingodbhava-murti*, the self-existent truth. The image of Shiva called Shivalinga found in all the Shaivite temples through-out India is only a plastic representation of the self-existent truth. This Shiva-linga or *Sthavara-linga* form of worship as we have it in the temples is the characteristic feature of Shaivism. But the distinctive mark of Virashaivism is *Ista-linga* form of worship, that is to say, it advocates the wearing of Linga, the idol of Infinity, upon the body of each person so that the body shall be a temple fit for God to dwell in. The Linga worn always on the body of each person becomes symbolic of the presence of God not in the far off heavens but in the very cells of the human body. Thus Virashaivism does countenance the building of the body in order to serve as temple for God; and more particularly of a Cosmic body—the matrix of an epitome or an exhibition of the essentials of all spiritual life in which one can see dramatised not only the cosmic process of the Divine Wisdom, but also the inward experience of every soul on its way to union with that Absolute to which the whole creation moves. It is gratifying to learn that this ancient cult with its art, literature and philosophy, with its adherents numbering about four millions who reside mainly in Karnatak exists even to this day with a frequent production of eminent souls in all departments of life.

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The decipherment of the picto-phono-graphic inscriptions of the Indus Valley has indeed worked as a revelation in the history of Dravidian culture and civilisation, for we come across with such significant words as *An*, *Anil*, *Amma* and *Atam* having a perfect correspondence in *Shiva*, *Sharana*, *Shakti* and *Sristi* all culminating in the Virashaiva conception of *Ista-linga*. Many arguments have been advanced, many theories have been formulated by scholars regarding the nature and conception of Linga. Jean Przyluski, the French scholar derives the conception of Linga from *Langala*, the plough and he further observes that Linga is of the Austro-Asiatic origin. Some scholars who are under the Aryan influence advance the theory that Linga is said to represent the sacred fire of the Vedic sacrifices, while the temples stand for the sacrificial grounds. These temples again represent our hearts and the Lord is said to abide there in the form of Linga or a glow of effulgence as the Soul of our souls. The third theory derives Linga from the Sanskrit root *Likh* which means to sculpture or paint, God being the sculptor of the universe, he is known as Linga. The fourth one advanced by the Agamas is that Linga is the cause and principle of the evolution and involution and the Agamic meaning of the word *Maya* is that which evolves and involves. But in the Virashaiva conception, Linga simply stands for a symbol or a mark. It is *Kuru* (குரு) and as such it is

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symbolic of the pure and perfect consciousness *Aruhu* (अरुहू). Even philosophy speaks of the material and potential contents of consciousness and Theosophy has proved beyond doubt that each definite thought has an appropriate form. According to the Virashaiva then, Linga is said to represent an appropriate form of a definite and complex thought about God.

God, *An* or Shiva is described as *Para-Samvit*, the consciousness pure and perfect. In Western Philosophy the concepts, consciousness and mind are mutually exclusive. They are sometimes used synonymously and a line of demarcation is not to be found till we come to Bergson who declares that mind and matter are correlative. But in Indian Philosophy these two concepts are poles apart from each other. Consciousness is *Samvit*, the enlightener of the mind, the senses and their operations, whereas mind is *Jada* or unconscious. In other words mind is matter and consciousness is spirit. The eyes see the world when opened and directed towards an object, similarly when consciousness is turned on mental operations the Spirit sees, not conceives the functions of the mind. These mental functions exist whether consciousness accompanies them or not, just as the world exists whether beings see it or not. Sight manifests the functions of the mind. Because of this illuminating power inherent in the spirit he is called *Svayam - prakasha*, self - illuminating. Consciousness is

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frequently compared to the light by mystics. The light of the sun reveals itself to us directly and when it impinges upon any object it manifests the existence of the object also. So the spirit reveals his existence to himself and also illuminates a body or a mind he is in contact with, which otherwise would have remained unconscious, unknown and unmanifest. European Idealism makes the manifestation and existence of matter dependent upon the mind. It holds that whether there be a noumenon behind what we recognise as matter or no, it is certain that sensations exist and that as sensations are mental modifications, no objective existence is possible in the absence of mind. Constructive Idealism represented by John Stuart Mill and others admits a permanent possibility of sensations behind the phenomena of objective world but the thorough-going Idealism of Berkley does not. Indian thought is a much more profound idealism than these. Mind and matter are both objective to the spirit. They are revealed by him without whose illumination they are *Asat*, non-existent, but to himself is always illuminated. Consciousness is an ultimate factor of human experience and cannot be or need not be manifested by anything else. Descartes argued, "I think, therefore I am." The Indian philosophers argue, "I am, therefore I am."

An integral intuition into the nature of Consciousness as an ultimate factor of human experience

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shows us that it is indeed one in essence but also that it is capable of an infinite potential complexity and multiplicity in self-experience. The working of this potential complexity and multiplicity in the One is what we call from our point of view manifestation, creation, world or becoming or *Attam* in the Dravidian terms. The agent of this becoming is always the self-consciousness of the Being. The power by which the self-consciousness brings out of itself its potential complexity and multiplicity is termed *Amma* or *Chit-Shakti*; and being self-conscious is obviously of the nature of the Will. But not will as we understand it, something exterior to its objects other than its work labouring on material outside itself but will inherent in the being, inherent in the becoming one with the movement of the existence, self-conscious will that becomes what it sees and knows in itself. By this Will the worlds are created. *Amma* or *Chit-Shakti* is the inherent power of illumination of *An* or Shiva. What heat is to the fire, light to the sun, moon-light to the moon, Shakti is to Shiva, *Amma* to *An* and even as these are intrinsic and ever-abiding in the fire, sun, and moon, so is the divine power to God. This divine power or energy is even inseparable from and in nature one with Shiva, nay, it is the very Soul of the Lord himself. This *Amma* is termed *Jata-Vedas*. "That which has a right knowledge of all births. It knows

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them in the law of their being, in the relation to the other births, in their aim and method, in process and goal, in their unity with all and their difference from all. It is this Divine Will that conducts the Universe."

This supreme nature, *Chit-Shakti* or *Amma* is then the "Infinite, timeless conscious power of *An* or Shiva out of which all existence in the cosmos are manifested and come out of timelessness into time." But in order to provide a spiritual basis for this manifold universal becoming *An* or Shiva formulates itself as *Anil* or Sharana by the presence and power of its inherent divine energy or *Amma*. In the manifestation which is thus put forth from the Supreme, *Anil* or Sharana is the silent observer of the multiple existence. It is always one with *An* in the consciousness of its being, and yet different from it only in the power of its being; different not in the sense that it only supports the one power in multiplicity and complexity of movements. But we must be careful not to make the mistake of thinking that this *Anil* is identical with *Jiva* or the human soul manifested in time. For the *Jiva* is the basis of the multiple existence or rather it is soul of multiplicity we experience here. In the words of the Gita *Jiva* is the *Ksara-purusa*, the mutable which enjoys change and division and duality. But *Anil* is the *Aksara-purusa* the immutable soul which is our real self, our divine unity with God, our inalienable freedom from that which is

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transient and changing. It is by realising our oneness with this *Anil* or *Aksara-purusa* that we get freedom from ignorance, freedom from the chords of desire, freedom from the imperative law of works. There is a pregnant saying in the ancient wisdom that Father is born of the Mother as Son; son-ship, not servant-ship is the secret of realization. This son is Sharana or *Anga* in the Virashaiva terminology, and Shiva is born of *Chit-Shakti* as Sharana. In this highest dynamic *An* and *Anil*, Shiva and Sharana, Linga and Anga are integrally associated. This relation of Linga and Anga spells a great mystic truth that God and soul are ever distinct, yet ever united. If unity is eternal and unchangeable, duality is persistently recurrent. The soul's union with God is a will-union, a mutual inhabitation and not self-merge which leaves no place for personality; for personality survives even in union with God. This mysterious union-in-separateness of God and soul is a necessary doctrine of all sane mysticism. *Anil* or *Anga* then exists in *An* or Linga by the relation of identity-in-adaptability.

In order to provide a field of work for the manifestation of the Supreme, *Amma* or *Chit-Shakti* urged by an inner impulse of vast consciousness formulates itself as *Attam*, the becoming or *Sristi*; for the totality of things is the becoming of the Lord in the extension of his own being. This double principle of being and becoming

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is natural to the Shakti as the double principle of Anga and Linga is germane to Shiva. What the Europeans call Nature is only this becoming or *Attam* and this *Attam* or *Sristi* is only an outward executive aspect of *Amma* or Shakti. Because of this deep and momentous distinction between *Amma* and *Attam*, between the two natures phenomenal and spiritual, the Virashaiva has been able to erase the incurable antinomy between the self and cosmic nature; and therefore, to him unity is a greater truth, multiplicity a lesser truth, both of them are a truth and neither of them is an illusion. For he looks upon this world or *Attam* as being produced by an act of will, and as such he looks upon it as a field of work given for the soul to educate its will and to burn the illusions of desire into an illumination of joy.

We are now in a better position to understand the title of the theme 'Virashaivism—*Quo Vadis?*' Virashaivism, whither goest thou? To this question we would answer that it goes to formulate a theory of four units or entities *A*, *Anil*, *Amma* and *Attam* or *Shiva*, *Sharana*, *Shakti*, and *Sristi*, out of which it evolves a connected and co-ordinated view of life in conformity with the experience of all the mystics. That there is an integral association between these four great terms is clear enough, but that association is not in the nature of a division but a distinction to which the necessity

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of metaphysical thought has irresistably driven us. This is the reason why we prefer to address Virashaivism as the doctrine of four units or entities that is mirrored in the conception of the *Ista-linga*. Just as the Theory of Relativity with its conception of the four dimensional continuum has wrought a change in method in the field of Physics and brought a hinge to the science of Mathematics, so this theory of integral association with its doctrine of four entities innovates a radical change in the study of Metaphysics and introduces a real hinge to the art of Mysticism.

Now it remains for us to show by diagrams how the Virashaiva conception of *Ista-linga* represents an integral association of these four great terms *An*, *Anil*, *Amma* and *Attam* or *Shiva*, *Sharana*, *Shatki* and *Sristi*. *Attam* or *Sristi* is in the words of the *Gita*, *Apara Prakriti* or in the words of the *Agama Adhas-sristi*, the lower creation, characterised by the consciousness of multiplicity. Multiplicity is the play or varied self-expansion of the One, shifting in its terms, divisible in its view of life, by force of which the One occupies many centres of consciousness, inhabits many formations of energy in the universal movement. It is this *Attam* or *Apara-prakriti* upon which the Virashaiva looks as an objective world-process, as a progressively emergent evolutionary process of self-expression of the Divine Will working through the divine history,

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towards ever greater and ever higher expression of the transcendent delight. Wherever there is movement, life and mind are seen to be present involved or evolving; therefore, life and mind have some kind of material form as the initial condition of their activities. In this lower creation then there are three principles: Matter, Life and Mind. These three matter, life and mind or in more popular Indian philosophical terms *Tamas*, *Rajas* and *Satva*, when represented by diagram, appear as a triangle. *Attam* or *Adha-sruti* is therefore represented by Λ .

Amma or *Chit-Shakti* is in the words of the Gita, *Para Prakriti* or in the words of the Agama *Urdhva-srasti*, the highest creation, characterised by the consciousness of unity. Unity is the fundamental fact without which all multiplicity would be unreal and an impossible illusion. Multiplicity is implicit or explicit in unity without which unity would be either a void of non-existent or a state of blank repose. In this consciousness of unity all is in all, each in all and all in each, inherently by the very nature of conscious being without any effort of conception or travail of perception. There the spirit manifests as pure in existence, *Sat*, pure in self-awareness, *Chit* and pure in self-delight, *Ananda*. *Amma* or the *Para-prakriti* who is the very soul of the Lord is therefore described as *Sachchidandamayi*. To represent this supreme state of

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consciousness again a triangle is needed. But one should mark the subtle difference and the shade of meaning between *Amma* and *Attam*. *Attam* is *Sattvarajastamomayi*, while *Amma* is *Sachchidanandamayi*. *Attama* is *Apara-prakriti* the lower or phenomenal nature, while *Amma* is *Para-prakriti* the higher or spiritual nature. Yet these are not isolated from each other, but integrally associated with this difference that the triangle which represents *Amma* is placed upon the triangle represented by *Attam* in a vertically opposite direction. When thus represented the diagram will assume this form: X.

Between these two creations, linking them together is the world or organisation of consciousness, of which the intuitive truth of things is the foundation. In all the activities of man which ramify into a search for truth in science and philosophy, an appreciation and creation of beauty in art, a struggle for the good life in morality is ingrained an essential condition. Throughout man feels or intuited as if he is in the presence of an Other, as if he is in relation with an object. Of course, this subject-object relation is fundamental in every kind of experience; but in our spiritual activities there is that essential condition of the added feeling or intuition that the other who is not wholly Other, a Beyond that is within, is in some way responsive to us. Mysticism is, therefore,

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the complete development of this intuition of responsiveness which is implicit in all our spiritual activities and as such, suggests the possibility of another world, the world of the fourth dimension.

This world of the fourth dimension is in popular Indian philosophical term *Maharloka* or the world of large consciousness. The principle of this *Maharloka* is intuitional Idea, not intellectual conception. The difference between the two is this that intellectual conception not only tends towards form, but determines itself in the form of the idea, and once determined, distinguishes itself sharply from all other conception. Pure intuitional idea sees itself in the being as well as in the becoming. It is one with the existence which throws out the form as a symbol of itself and it therefore carries with it always the knowledge of the truth behind the form. Its nature is *Dristi*, seeing, not conceiving. Viewed from this stand-point, the intuition of change or duration of Bergson, the stream of consciousness of James, a harmonious all-complete experience of Bradley, and the religious insight of Whitehead cannot give us a true vision of Reality which is only Presense and revealed to us as in intuition. One who has attained this *Dristi* or intuitive eye is called *Anil* or *Sharana* or the Seer who is represented by a straight line since he has run at a tangent to the vicious circle of birth and death, to the trivial round of old habitual ideas and associations. In

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the third stage then the diagram takes on this form X : . This straight line is drawn to the right side along the jine representing *Sat* or pure existence since the intuitive ideas originate in it with an insistence on the right angle of vision.

The last that remains to be represented is *An* or Shiva. It is the transcendent Reality, the pure Absolute the supra-cosmic Infinity. In the words of Theology it is the ineffable and uncreated Light; in the words of the Christian Mystics it is Godhead, the Divine Dark, the deep Abyss; and in the words of the Sufi Mystics it is the dawn of Nothing ; in the words of the Virashaiva Mystics it is the infinite luminous Silence. It is itself its own world, its own universe ; of any other than itself it can form no conception. It knows not length nor breadth nor height, for it has no experience of them ; it has no cognisance even of the number two, for it is itself one and all being really nothing. How to represent it ? Words come out baffled, it defies all definition and description. Yet the humble attempt of the human mind to represent it ends in a zero. So it is represented by a zero or *Shunya*. And as it heads the list, the zero or *Shunya* is placed on the top of the diagram of the third stage. The figure in this stage then will assume this form X ^o : . This is an appropriate form of a definite and complex thought about God. It can be very well seen from this how profound, how noble, how pure and

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perfect is the conception of *Linga* in Virashaivism. It is in this direction of giving a connected, a co-ordinated and a complete view of the final and fundamental Reality that Virashaivism goes ; Virashaivism *Quo Vadis !*

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Virashaivism offers us the most complete synthesis of the spiritio-psychological discipline. As philosophy, it presents a synthesis of thoughts, as spiritual discipline, it presents a harmonisation of spiritual cultures. Its out-look is therefore synthetical, its basic discipline is harmony. Ancient psychology accepted the soul and was chiefly concerned to distinguish the various functions of the soul, so as to assign them seats in the various parts of the body. In this, it only anticipated however dimly, the truth of the modern experimental psychology which observes that there are some telepathic points in our body. Professor Callegaris, a famous Italian specialist of experimental psychology says that thought-waves will be the means of enabling persons, thousands of miles apart, to communicate with one another. He believes that there are three 'communicating disks' in the human body and one of which he places behind the index finger of the right hand. This statement confidently proves that there is a 'Law of Corres-

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pondence' between body and soul; and between body and soul linking them together is mind with which modern psychology is chiefly concerned. In all we have a trinity body, mind and soul which the Sharana or the Lingayat Mystic calls them respectively by the names of *Tanu*, *Mana* and *Dhana* or *Bhava*. And each one of the trinity has a triple aspect; soul is *Sat-Chit-Anandatmaka*, that is, it is at once a Divine Presence, Power and Peace; mind is *Kriya-Jnana-Ichchatmaka*, that is, mental activity is a cyclic process of cognition, conation and affection; body is *Shira-Ura-Karatmaka*, that is, corresponding to these triple activity of mind and soul there are three points in bodily organism namely the head, the heart and the hand.

Cogitating upon the fact that the 'Law of Correspondence' holds good with respect to body, mind and soul, the first question with which rational psychology begins is the question of the seat of the soul in the body. Hence it is germane to rational psychology to concern itself with a discussion of the part or parts of the body, with which the soul comes more directly into contact. Professor James says, "In some manner our consciousness is present to everything with which it is in relation. I am cognitively present to Orion whenever I perceive that constellation, but I am not dynamically present there; I work no effects. To my brain, however, I am dynamically present in as much as my thoughts and feelings seem to react upon the processes thereof. If then by the seat of

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the soul is meant nothing more than the locality with which it stands in immediate dynamic relations, we are certain to be right in saying that its seat is somewhere in the cortex of the brain." Descartes imagined that the seat of the soul was the pineal gland, while Lotze maintained that the soul must be located somewhere in the "structureless matrix of the anatomical brain elements, at which point all nerve currents may cross and combine." Aristotle observed that the seat of the soul was in the heart and he arrived at this conclusion by noticing that the diseases of the heart are the most rapidly and certainly fatal, that psychical affections, such as fear, sorrow and joy cause an immediate disturbance of the heart and that the heart is the part which is the first to be formed in the embryo. Add to these the psychological experiments of Professor Callegaris who has discovered three communicating disks in the human body and one of which he has posited in the hand. It will be seen then, that the head, the heart and the hand of the body shall be considered by the western thinkers as the most direct points with which the soul comes into contact, thus corresponding with *Shira-sthala*, *Ura-stha'a* and *Kara-sthala* of Virashaivism.

The culture of the head, the culture of the heart, the culture of the hand! These three types of culture have been cribbed, cabined and caged respectively in the Upanishads, in the Bhagavata and in the Agamas, the hoary scriptures of Hinduism. The quest of the Upanishads

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is truth, the final and fundamental truth ; but this quest is more through intellect than through life. The main effort of the Vedanta is therefore not the psychological opening but fine understanding which enables us to transcend the limitations of the formal mind. Hence the Vedanta rejects any other approach than the intellectual, which in the end rears up fine intellectual intuition, culminating in the consciousness of pure Godhead, one without a second, *Yekameva Advitiyam Bhrahma*,¹ as the sole reality. In the undifferentiated Godhead of the Upanishads we see the mind's attempt to conceive that Reality as unchanging yet changer of all, as the unconditioned Absolute in which all is resolved, as the only substance that survives. "In philosophy, substance is that which underlies or is the permanent subject or cause of all phenomena, whether material or spiritual ; the subject which we imagine to underlie the attributes or qualities by which alone we are conscious of existence, that which exists independently and unchangeably in contra-distinction to accident, which denotes any of the changes of changeable phenomena in substance, whether these phenomena are necessary or causal, in which latter case they are called accidents in a narrower sense. Substance is with respect to the mind, a merely logical distinction from its attributes. We can never imagine it, but we

¹ एकमेव अद्वितीयं ब्रह्म ।

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are compelled to assume it. We cannot conceive substance shorn of its attributes, because those attributes are the sole staple of our conceptions; but we must assume that substance is something different from its attributes" We cannot conceive substance but we are compelled to assume it; yes, conception is psychological, assumption is logical. Since Vedanta rejects any other approach than the logical, it naturally leads to the cultivation of the cognitive faculties culminating in the cusp and apex of intellectual intuitionism, which is really the culture of the head.

The Bhagavata School represents a definite tendency of thought with an emphasis more upon *concrete* spirituality than upon the transcendent wisdom of the Upanishads. The speciality of the Bhagavata lies then in laying stress upon the *concreteness of the Divine*. But this concreteness reaches its fullness in the conception of *Bhagavan*, where the devotional spirituality reveals its full nature and finds its free play. The Divine is essentially concrete; because of its concreteness it exhibits its essence as a supra-person embracing as well as transcending finite souls. For amongst the souls themselves there is a dynamic identification or an internal relation or to be precise a *prehension* in the words of Whitehead. A prehension is a grasping or taking hold of one thing by another, but this grasping includes an element of activity, *an active taking into relation* instead of *a passive being in relation*, which

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differentiates it from Hegel's. Hence the finite souls which are also concrete are taken up into their proper relations by the Divine who is the highest concrete Reality, since He integrates in Himself the total existence. The use of the word *concrete* in this connection needs explanation. A thing's concreteness is proportional to the mass and richness of the ingredients it contains, to the number of the elements that go to make it what it is. Thus the idea of concreteness introduces the conception of degrees of reality, according to which one whole is represented as being more real than another, in proportion as it gathers into itself and comprehends more elements. Final and fundamental reality is to be found only in the whole which contains all other wholes as of its parts, thereby achieving a degree of concreteness, by comparison with which all other wholes are seen to be abstract. They are abstract only in so far as they are *abstracted from* the whole of wholes to which they belong, and in which alone their real nature is revealed. Now such abstraction is a falsification of the real nature; therefore the separate being or the finite soul which appears to exist in its own right is not *really real* but *relatively real*. The only being who is entirely real is the whole of wholes, who is the *Bhagavan* or the Absolute.

The Absolute is self-conscious. Self-consciousness

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is fundamental in all knowledge. All consciousness is self-consciousness, since we cannot know a thing without being aware of the fact that we know it. Thus self-consciousness is a whole within which all other forms of consciousness fall. For this reason, it achieves a greater concreteness, because of a greater inclusiveness, than any other form of knowledge. It is this concreteness that compelled the Bhagavata to conceive of a mysterious *union-in-separateness* between God and soul, which conception flowered into the play of Love. This play of Love is unceasing, for in this play there is a constant tendency to identification and a contrary tendency to separation. The centric urge in the finite soul touches and enjoys the Divine, but this tendency is succeeded by a contrary eccentric urge. These two tendencies make the life a constant play in *bliss*, in which the Divine and the human are simultaneously on the point of union and separation. This union-in-love to a Bhagavata is so rich a spiritual promise that the possession of powers falls into shade before it. The constant flowering of the Divine Life through the ardent yearning of the aspirant may stop with the psychic powers in the cosmic play and the soul may rest content with these possibilities and form of actions. Indeed these are great privileges, for they make one acquainted with the life of power through nature in its creative formation; but unless the aspiration

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be still finer the rich harvest of the life in Love cannot be reaped. This life in Love has illumined *Ananda*. The *Bhagavata* lays more emphasis upon the bliss aspect of the Divine since it has the greatest attraction for the finite souls. But this bliss is not to be identified with the crude feeling of pleasure; but it can well be associated with all finely expressive activity that is Beauty. What is beauty? Beauty is essentially expression and the expression which is conscious must of necessity be rhythmical and harmonious. *Beauty is the ivine on the point of expression*; and the soul of beauty lies in bliss. Bliss consists in serence, tranquil and unlimited expression and ineffable delight. This delight is expressed in radiant feeling and transparent joyousness through the refined emotions of the heart.

The spirit in its self-expression, according to the *Bhagavata* is love, beauty and bliss. It is love, for it is ever attractive to the soul; it is beauty, for it is finely rhythmical in its expression; it is bliss, for delight is its being. He has divorced *power* from spirit in its inward being, for majesty and power are to him conceptions relative to cosmic regulation, not to the inner self-expression of spirit to itself. Power may not exhibit the finest in the Divine but power is necessary for cosmic adjustment. Love alone can never attract the earth towards heaven and integrate

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humanity and divinity in indissoluble union, The spiritual kingdom on earth can only be established when the forces are responsive to the finest urges of the Divine life; when the Time-Spirit is ripe, the Divine in its beauty and love, with all its wealth of power can intervene in the cosmic regulation. The truth is that at the back of cycle of civilisation works unseen the power which controls and destroys the dark forces and the Love that cements humanity into a divine federation on earth. It is this power, *Shakti*, the transcendent will that forms the theme of the Agamas.

The Agamas lay stress upon the dynamic principle, *Shakti*, which is integrally associated with *Shiva*, the Static. *Shakti* is immanent in *Shiva*, it is the force of projection in creation and the force of withdrawal in liberation. It is the creative energy of all possibilites—spiritual, psychic, vital, cosmic as well as individual. Hence it is the transcendent will which is not only a principle of active force and knowledge and creatrix of the worlds, but also is an intermediary Power and state of being between that self-possession of the one and its hidden multitudes; it creates the many but does not lose itself in their differentiations. It possesses the power of development, of evolution, of making explicit; and that power carries with it the other power of involution, of envelopment, of making implicit. “This Divine Nature or *Shakti* has therefore a double power, a

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spontaneous self-formulation and self-arrangement which wells naturally out of the essence of the thing manifested and expresses its original truth, and a self-force of light inherent in the thing itself and the source of its spontaneous and inevitable self-arrangement."

In the Vedanta this Shakti has been thrust into the background but in the Agamanta it has been kept in the foreground. Herein lies the great difference between the Vedanta and the Agamanta; for the former lays stress on transcendent spirituality, while the latter emphasises dynamic spirituality. But we must note this important divergence of opinion and observe that the two opposing views carry with them important consequences, practical as well as theoretical. On the first view, which lays stress on the absolute transcendence of God, there will be a disposition to despair of the world and human progress, and to seek the Kingdom of God wholly in the unseen; on the second view, which lays emphasis on the divine immanence, there will follow naturally a religion which has affinities with humanism and seeks the Kingdom of God partly through the promotion of human progress. Hence it is argued by those who take this view that creativeness is an essential characteristic of the Divine Nature; that creation is not an illusion but an act of will.

In practice, as in theory, Vedanta and Agamanta widely differ. As a method of discipline Vedanta is more

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intellectual. It anchors on discrimination and philosophical reflection which ultimately presents the truth of identity. It presupposes complete freedom from the working and the functioning of the lower triple—physical, vital and mental. Its practice teaches us, in one word, the final and total withdrawal of our being from all the aspects of life to enjoy the *poise* in luminous Silence. Agamanta, on the other hand, presupposes close touch with the informant Silence, but it implies more. It saturates our being with the movements of the dynamic Divine in its cosmic and supra-cosmic expression. Dynamic spirituality reveals to us the secrets of the Divine ‘in its irresistible power, in its absorbing beauties, in its joyful movement and in its ever fresh and ever creative life.’ Nay, it allows us the privilege of enjoying not as a remote observer, but as an intimate partaker of these spiritual privileges and genial currents of the soul.

In the method of discipline, the Agamanta differs from the Vedanta in insisting on the *psychological opening* of our whole being. For the sake of the psychological opening of our whole nature, the Agamas recognise the importance of the transcendent will, impersonal and super-conscious, and seek an affiliation of our will to it. With this affiliation, individual will is redeemed from its inertia and imperfection and can feel its identification with the divine will. This identification makes the individual a swiftly sensitive

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and readily responsive receptacle of the inflowing divine Energy, with the result that the individual becomes an effective and powerful agent of the Divine Life and expression. The Tantras and the Agamas do not regard *Prakriti* a barrier to the expression of the Divine Life; matter can be made a fine instrument of the supra-mental expression. The truth of this statement shall be clear when we consider the theory of evolution as propounded by the Agamas.

Of the facts about evolution, and obviously one of the most important facts, is that it tends to *produce values*. The most reasonable hypothesis then is that values are not accidental by-products but integral to the process of evolution. But this tendency to produce value needs an explanation. Theory of 'emergent evolution' sponsored by Professor S. Alexander and Professor O. Lloyd Morgan is meant to satisfy this query as well as intended to meet the difficulties which the older theories of evolution encountered in connection with the facts of the coming into existence of specially new qualities and values. This new theory holds that life, mind and consciousness are not the mere resultants of prior conditions, but 'emerge', all of a sudden, unforeseen by any human eye in the course of evolution. This theory of emergent evolution may be welcomed more as a descriptive formula than as a definite principle.

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It is to the credit of the Tantras and the Agamas that they have satisfactorily explained the theory of evolution. They differ from the Emergent Evolutionists in proceeding from the subtle to the gross, from the finer to the coarse. The finer cannot emerge from the gross rather the crude is the finer restrained in its complete expression. Evolution is really a descent, it is down-ward movement. It is not that life, mind and consciousness emerge or evolve out of matter, but it is the Spiritual Force that in its downward movement exhibits these different grades of energy emerging in the course of evolution. Life and mind are the finer manifestation of the creative Energy of Shakti, but not of crude matter, for matter indeed is the arrested Energy and suspension of its creative flow because of the dominance of inertia. If by the principle of *redistribution* the whole setting of life is changed and the crudeness and the inertia which hinder the free expression of life and delight be overcome, then life may show emergence into finer expressions, into the luminous expression of *Satva* and the delightful vibration of *Rajas*, together with the calm equilibrium of *Tamas*.

Under the ingressions of the Divine Shakti fine integrations are formed through life in society, but the higher and the finer emergence of life through family, society and huminity has not yet attained

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complete spirituality. For life in this stage has to overcome the restraint and obstruction of unconscious matter and therefore cannot reveal full spiritual spontaneity and freedom, and the super-conscious will, if allowed to have its free and full play with an affiliation of the individual will, is powerful enough to counteract successfully the resistance offered by unconscious matter. Matter is indeed energy checked in its creative flow because of the dominance of *Tamas*. If humanity succeeds in removing this check through the inflow of the Divine *Shanti* the emergence of the supra-mental life through nature shall not be utopian. But the emergence of this supernal Life implies an infinite labour on the part of humanity whose hand, by dint of supreme activity and stupendous sacrifice, has to break through the stony obstacles of unconscious matter till it disappears into radiation.

Virashaivism which is a phase of the Agamanta is at once a faith and a philosophy. As a faith it inculcates the adoration of the Absolute in the form of *Linga* which is really the symbol of the Infinite Truth. Hence the name of Lingayatism. In this faith, the Lingayat blends harmoniously the spiritual devotion of the Bhagavata with the transcendent wisdom of the Upanishads with its stress on the Divine abstractness. He agrees with the Upanishadic seer when he says that the Linga conceived in Infinite Truth in its abstractness is

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Atyutisthat-dashangula ; that is, Linga is the super-cosmic Infinite; and he concedes to the truth of the Bhagavata Bhakta when he declares that the Linga, conceived as the symbol of the ultimate Reality with its form oval and colour blue-black having glazing splendour, is made captive in the ten fingers of its votary. For at the time of worship, the Linga is placed at the palm of the left hand with a canopy formed by the right hand so that it appears to be a captive in the hands of its votary, because of this sincere surrender and intuitive faith. If the cultures of the head and the heart respectively belong to the Upanishadic and Puranic literature, the culture of the hand is a distinctive feature of the Lingayat literature. Since creation springs from Eternal Hand and since it (creation) is an act of the Divine Will Virashaivism essays to transform the hand into Prospero's magic wand, by transferring the seat of the soul from head and heart to the hand. Those who hesitate to accept the truth of this statement need only look to the experiment of Prof. Callegaris, who has discovered three communicating disks in the human body and one of which he has placed in the hand. Or to return to occultism which forms the sanctuary of the Ancient Wisdom, occultism maintains that the Divine Aura encompasses all living beings and flows freely and spontaneously through the finger tips of the human hands.

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Now it remains for Virashaivism as a spiritual discipline to found a synthesis of the Infinite, the universal and the individual Divine respectively revealed by the transcendent spirituality of the Upanishads, the concrete spirituality of the Bhagavat and the dynamic spirituality of the Agamas. Since these three centres of divinity have their corresponding points in body, Virashaivism with its bold and penetrating insight has ascertained three definite localities in body which go by the name of *Shira-sthala*, *Ura-sthala*, and *Kara-sthala*—the head-station, the heart-station and the hand-station. The infinite Divine has a locus in the head and is termed *Bhava-linga*; the universal Divine is situated in the heart and is called *Prana-linga*; the individual Divine has its seat in the hand and is therefore addressed as *Ista-i·ga*. *Ista-linga* is the individual Divine, extending itself in the realm of eventualities. It fulfills what is contained in the truth, what works out in the possibilities reflected by the mind, what appears to us as the fact objectively realised. *Prana-linga* is the universal Divine which takes its stand in the possibilities. It has behind it the freedom of the infinite and brings it in us as a background for the determination of the finite. Every action in the world therefore seems to emerge from a balancing and clashing of various possibilities. *Bhava-linga* is the infinite Divine which sees the truth in itself, the truth in its becoming, in its essence. It

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contains all that is in the *Idea* comprehensively, not piece-meal. This Bhava-linga is *Sat*, the divine Presence, which is the transcendent and luminous Silence that resides in the heart of all things. The divine Presence is therefore necessarily the divine Peace characteristic of the divine Life, Prana-linga. But neither of them can survive in the earth-consciousness unless they are securely founded upon the divine Power which is best illustrated by *Ista*-linga. *Ista* means the desired object or the cherished-for ideal; and for a Lingayat the ideal is not only to realise but also to manifest the divine in the world.

If a divine work has to be done in this physical world, if it has to remain not as an influence merely but as a fixed thing in the physical world, the culture of the hand, *Kara-sthala*, comes to be recognised as the foundation on which the super-structure of the cultures of the head and heart is to be built. The Virashaiva is a profound exponent of this culture of the hand. Then what does it imply? It implies

- (a) the truth of the physical world and its importance;
- (b) the necessity of the earth-life and the human endeavour, its evolutionary meaning;
- (c) the truth and importance of the Individual, the liberation of the individual soul consequent upon the realisation of the Divine *here and now*.

“The liberation of individual soul is therefore the keynote of the definitive divine action; it is the primary divine

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necessity and the pivot on which all else turns. It is the point of Light at which the intended complete self-manifestation in the many begins to emerge. But the liberated soul extends its perception of unity horizontally as well as vertically. Its unity with the transcendent One is incomplete without its unity with the cosmic Many. And that lateral unity translates itself by a multiplication, a reproduction of its own liberated state at other points in the Multiplicity. The divine self reproduces itself in similar liberated souls as the animal reproduces itself in similar bodies. Therefore, whenever even a single soul is liberated, there is a tendency to an extension and even to an outburst of the same divine self-consciousness in other individual souls of our terrestrial humanity and—who knows?—perhaps even beyond the terrestrial consciousness.”

The liberated individual soul is therefore a divine ‘seer-will’ who belongs to the supra-mental region ‘where to will is to create, to think is to see.’ In that region will and seeing are one. Therefore when he has the sight and lives in the truth consciousness, his will becomes the spontaneous law of the truth; in his acts also he becomes one with all beings and his life grows into a representation of oneness, truth and divine joy and no longer proceeds on the crooked path of egoism full of division, error and stumbling. Since will and sight are combined and no longer as in the human mind

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separated from each other, he strives to see unity in the Divine trinity and comprehends the divine movement as a whole, and knows in its large line the divine intention and goal in it, without seeking to fix arbitrarily its details. He will try to sound the depth of the cosmos, to understand what the Divine in it is seeking to realise, not only at the present, not only in the next generation, but beyond, and for that he will speak, strive, if need be battle, even while, all the while, he knows that there is more yet beyond, beside which the truth he has seized will seem erroneous and limited. Therefore he will act without presumption and egoism, knowing that his own errors and those which he combats are alike necessary forces in that labour and movement of human life towards the growing Truth and Good, by which there increases shadowily the figure of a far-off divine Ideal. In a word, he becomes the divine Hero who has that sublime trust in the Supreme Power that guides the universe, who has that high audacity of the human soul to wrestle with the Infinite and to realise the impossible, who has that wise and warrior confidence in its ultimate destiny which mark the great innovators and renovators. To create such a race of divine heroes is the one end and aim of Virashaivism; it has created many a hero in the past, and we hope that it will create many more in the future. In this lies its speciality and significance, its appeal and importance.

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The proper study of mankind is man who is himself neither a machine nor a device but a being, a most complex being indeed; therefore the most needed synthesis is, at the present time, undoubtedly, that of man himself. The harmony of his inner powers and planes is the condition of his peace, their mutual understanding and helpfulness is the means of his ascent and progress. Man has ascended from the rudimentary forms of life that lies below him and, though he stands at the head of them, he is nevertheless constituted of the same stuff that they are, and partakes to a certain extent of their nature. The animals and plants all belong to the unconscious plane of life; man, so long as he remains in his condition of animal-hood, belongs to this plane also. It is only recently that man is beginning to emerge from this plane, and step forth into the plane of conscious existence, where his deviation from his previous condition of animal-hood is showing

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forth in an increased intelligence, so marked as to change the entire basis of his life from physical to mental. The difference between the conscious life and life on the unconscious plane is in the use of the reasoning powers. On the latter plane man does not reason to any great extent. It is this fact that gives us the right to call man unconscious and the word 'unconscious' only relates to the power or lack of power to examine the operation of his own mind as the law of growth operates in him. In one sense all life is conscious; but in the sense we speak of, there is a growth which proceeds without being observed by the person or persons in whom it is going on. This is what we call growth on the unconscious plane. A man grows, he lives his allotted number of years and dies; he may have been a thinker on many subjects and may have brought forth great truths but until he turns his attention to himself, to his own self, to the law of growth as it proceeds in his own being, he will not have ascended to the conscious plane of life. It is on this plane where the man no longer lives the vegetable life of his predecessors, but uses his reasoning to the extent of their development, and from animal stage of life, on to the thinking, reasoning stage. This ascent may not only be called an ascent from unconscious to conscious life, but from a condition of ignorance to one of intelligence, from animal to human, from physical to mental.

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This transposition from the physical life to the mental lies in the different degrees of intelligence that the creatures on the different planes are capable of showing forth. It is on this account that mental Science makes the statement that all is mind. "All is mind, of which every creature and plant from the lowest form of life up to the most gifted human being is a mental expression, and the form that each creature or plant shows forth marks the degree of its mentality." The reason for the assertion that all things are mental is apparent, since it is now known that there is no such thing as dead matter; that what was once called matter is only a low form of mental substance, on its way upward from still lower conditions by virtue of the *innate power of growth*, which is latent in all things. And how are all things coming upward in the scale of life? We answer, by the power of thought. It is a demonstrated fact that everything thinks; or at least, that it possesses in latency the power to think, and in the natural process from low to high will in time begin to think. The individual therefore in whom the potentialities of thought centre is called man. This man is the Manu, the thinker, the *Manomaya-purusa*,¹ mental person or soul, in the mind of the ancient seers. No mere superior mammal is he, but a conceptive soul basing itself on

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the animal body in the matter. He is conscious noumen who accepts and utilises form as a medium through which person can deal with substance. Man, the mental being strives to seize upon matter and its vital energies and subject them to the law of its own progressive transformation. Hence the upward struggle of the inherent power of growth is always from darkness to light, from ignorance to intelligence from death to life divine.

When the mental science affirms that all is mind, it does not evidently mean that the individual embodied mind is the creator of the phenomenon of matter. Earth existence cannot be the result of the human mind which is itself the result of earth-existence. If we say that the world exists only in our own minds, we express an untruth and an absurdity ; for the material world existed before man was upon the earth and it will go on existing if man disappears from the earth or even if our individual mind abolishes itself in the Infinite. We must conclude then that there is a *universal mind*, subconscious to us in the form of the universe or super-conscious in its spirit, which has created that form for its habitation. Since the creator must have preceded and must exceed its creation; this really implies a *uper-consient Mind*, which by the instrumentality of an universal sense creates in itself the relation of form with form and continues the rhythm of the material universe. The human mind is only a labourer of acute but limited

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intelligence which takes up the confused materials offered by life and, having improved and adopted according to its power, hands them over to the Super-conscious Mind in which dwells the Divine Artist. Therefore our world has yet to climb beyond mind to a higher principle, a higher status, a higher dynamism, in which universe and individual become aware of and possess that which they both are and therefore stand explained to each other. "The universe and the individual are necessary to each other in their ascent. Always indeed they exist for each other and profit by each other. Universe is a diffusion of the Divine all in infinite space and time, the individual in its concentration within limits of space and time. Universe seeks an infinite extension, the divine totality feels itself to be, but cannot entirely realise; for in extension existence drives at a pluralistic sum of itself which can neither be the primal nor the final unit, but only a recurring decimal without end or beginning. Therefore it creates in itself a self-conscious concentration of the All through which it can aspire."

We should then relate the individual to the harmony of the universe. There it is necessary for us to realise Supra-mental and Supra-physical order of life, the richness and complexity of which is revealed to the inner eye. Just as there are sense organs or formations of sense capacity which see the physical world differently, so there

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may be other supra-physical and supra-mental envisagings of the universe which surpass the human mind. "States of consciousness there are in which Death is only a change in immortal Life, pain a violent backwash of the waters of universal delight, limitation a turning of the Infinite upon itself, evil a ceiling of the good around its own perfection; and this not in abstract conception only but in actual vision and in constant and substantial experience." To arrive at such states of consciousness is, for the individual, one of the most important and indispensable steps of his progress towards self-perfection.

Every ascending step in the evolution of beings, from the physical to the mental, from the mental to the supra-mental, has been marked by a fresh accession of *vitality* in the new species or race. Vitality is the result of aspiration or desire. Every being, no matter how small and inferior, has aspirations or desires that reach higher than the environment of its life will permit it to realise in the undeveloped state of its intelligence. So the mere fact of the existence of these aspirations or desires calls for a higher grade of beings in which they become embodied. They form a basis of life, as it were, or serve as a demand upon nature for the next higher type which shall evince more intelligence than the former ones. Thus the chain of being is preserved, even though the forms of being are always changing; and so proceed in desire. Every sane desire of every creature then is finally

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attained. If this attainment fails to show forth in the creature itself, it goes on to development in some other ego. In the scale of evolution it is the ungratified desire of the lower creature that produces another grade of creature higher than itself—so mighty is desire, so unerring is its fulfilment. Seen in this light, what is man but a bunch of desires! His desires are much more numerous and far reaching than those of any of his predecessors. Since desires increase with increasing intelligence man has more and more desires than in any life below him. His desires will constantly increase in numbers as he goes on gaining ideas and working out the possibilities contained in the principle of life. As these possibilities are unlimited, man's power gets to be unlimited also in proportion as he becomes consciously one with the Life Principle, which he does by learning his relation to it.

It is evident that desire is the mainspring of all growth; it is the infusing principle of individual growth. Hence man, the individual is the mirror of mankind, since he is the culmination of all the lives that existed before him, since he is the sum-total of all the previous growth on the planet whether expressed in mineral, vegetable or animal forms of life. He is the complete compendium of all the lives that ever existed and he has reached this high position through the medium of that *impeling impulse*, the aspiration or desire which underlies every manifestation of life. That impulse we think of

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so seldom, analyse so little, and in many instances condemn as unnecessary and even unholy. But that desire or impulse has never been crushed out. It has advanced steadily towards its own fulfilment, in spite of the misguided intelligence that could not comprehend its mission. Desire instead of being crushed out by the half-formed intelligence of past times, has gone on in its efforts and developed the intellect until the time has arrived, when the intellect perceives the mighty mission of desire and begins to attach the value to it that it deserves. This investigation of desire is the beginning of man's conscious life. It marks his ascension from the animal or physical to the mental plane where we shall soon see that the force within itself as expressed in desire is a sufficient guarantee, that what it wants to be it will be, and that what it wants to do it will do.

What is desire but the law of love or *attraction* individualised in the creation? We have seen that *life exists*; it has but one function, that is to *draw or attract*. This attracting power is the seed-germ of every manner of growth and exists in the atom as well as in the planet; for it holds the atoms together as it holds the planets together. All races of man have felt the presence of this principle of Attraction or Love in a myriad of different forms. Feeling it and not comprehending it, they conceived it in a personal light whereas it is impersonal. The principle of Attraction does permeate,

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all nature is but the comprehension or the understanding of this Love; all nature is intelligence in a myriad varying shades of recognition of the same Love. Every being that obeys the principle of attraction, that simply lives and grows without a knowledge of how it is done, is on the plane of unconscious growth. Progress means an intelligent recognition of this principle, a recognition so full and complete as to render the being a constantly growing exponent of its own possibilities and power. This involves the constant acquisition of knowledge; the constantly widening recognition of the life-principle. This then being individualised in the man, becomes the ever-flowing fountain of *perpetual delight* within him. This is the kingdom of Heaven within of which Jesus spoke. If man seeks it aright he would find it, for it surely does exist; and its deathless waters are for us who, by searching within ourselves, can find it. Man is therefore a consciousness of the life-principle; he is a recogniser of it and he shows forth as much of its power and possibilities as he recognises.

Of the principle of Life the first status is an *inc*onscious Drive or Urge, a force of some involved will in matter or atomic existence. But that drive is not free and possessor of itself, its works or their results, but entirely possessed by the universal movement in which it arises as the obscure unformed seed of individuality. The root of the second status is Desire, eager to possess

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but limited in capacity. The bud of the third status is Love which seeks both to possess and be possessed, to receive and to give itself. The fine flower of the fourth status or the supra-mental life we see as the pure and full emergence of the Super-conscious Will, which directs the soul's seeking for the individual and universal delight of things. But Will with Schopenhauer, is a blind irrational Desire for sentient life, lying at the root of the manifested universe which is essentially dynamic in its nature. As such it is the main characteristic of the ultimate and absolute *subject*. Von Hartmann endeavoured to modify the stark a-logical subject-will of Schopenhauer by introducing a more or less logical *Idea* as a guiding principle and thus to a certain extent mediating the systems of Hegel and Schopenhauer. Neither Schopenhauer nor Hartmann has the genius to envisage the unhampered play of the will which is conjoined with Wisdom in the supra-mental plane. Will in its lower aspect is the dynamic energy of thought and desire; in its higher aspect it is the producer of *archetypal form*. And on this higher plane, the supra-mental where we consider that the super-conscious Mind exercises its sway, we must conceive that Will is wholly directed by that supreme Wisdom, *Sophia*; and it is in this sense that we commonly speak of the Divine Will, *Chit-Shakti*. By the Divine Will we mean the ultimate Law or Destiny impressed upon the

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manifested universe or cosmos *as a whole* through that highest divine potency which we call the Logos or *Linga* in the Virashaiva terminology.

Cosmos and man are the two essential manifestations into which the Logos descends and through which it has to be approached; for other intermediate catagories are born only of their inter-action. This descent of the Logos or Linga is in its nature a self-consciousness condensed into different psychic phases. For each successive level of descent to the Logos is to man a stage in an ascension. Thus there are two movements, the descending and the ascending which serve as the two ends of a single consciousness whose motions, now separated from each other, must join if the *Life-power* is to become the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, and the most wonderful in potentiality. The life-force in the vital is the indispensable instrument for all action of the Divine Will on the material world and the physical plane. It is therefore only when this vital is transformed and made a pure and strong instrument of the Divine Will that there can be a divine life. Then only can there be a successful transformation of the physical nature or a free and pure action on the external world. The vital energy by itself leads nowhere since it is instinctive and irrational in its nature; it runs in chequered, often painful and ruinous circles, because it has no right guidance; it

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must therefore be related to Logos and to the Divine Force acting through it for a great and luminous purpose.

“There are two movements necessary for this connection to be established. One is upward; the vital rises to join with the higher consciousness and steps itself in the light and in the impulsion of a higher force. The other is downward; the vital remains silent, tranquillised, pure, empty of the ordinary movements, waiting till the dynamic power from above descends into it, changes it to its true self and informs its movements with knowledge as well as power. That is why the *Sadhaka* feels sometimes that he is rising up into a happier and nobler consciousness, entering into a brighter domain and purer experience, but sometimes, on the contrary, feels the necessity of going back into the vital, doing *Sadhana* there and being down into it, the true consciousness. There is no real contradiction between these two movements; they are complementary and necessary to each other, the ascension enabling the divine descent, the descent fulfilling that for which the ascension aspires and which it makes inevitable.”

When the vital rising from its lower reaches joins with the psychic, then the vital being is filled with pure aspiration and devotion natural to the psychic. At the same time it gives to the emotions its own abundant energy, it makes them dynamic for the change of the

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whole human nature so as to bring down the supreme consciousness into matter. For the psychic principle is that "which is not the life nor the mind, much less the body, which holds in itself the opening and flowering of the essence of all these to their own peculiar delight of the spirit. When the vital not only touches the psychic but fuses with the spiritual, it is then able to come into contact with and obey a greater light and higher knowledge. Ordinarily the vital is either moved by the human mind and governed by its more or less ignorant dictates or seizes upon this mind and uses it for the satisfaction of its own passions, impulses or desires. But when the vital is in contact with the Spiritual, it is possible for it to be guided by a higher intuition and inspiration, a truer discrimination and revelation of the divine Truth and the divine Will. This obedience of the vital to the psychic and the spiritual is the dawn of the Yogic consciousness in its dynamic action upon life.

It is not difficult to understand this situation. In India there is a wide range of spiritual activity. In the villages there is a great deal of religious observance, but there is also a great deal of social and economic activity. In the cities there is a great deal of religious observance, but there is also a great deal of social and economic activity. In the towns there is a great deal of religious observance, but there is also a great deal of social and economic activity. In the cities there is a great deal of religious observance, but there is also a great deal of social and economic activity.

II

We have seen that the proper study of mankind is man, who is himself neither a machine nor a device, but a being, a most complex one indeed. Therefore he cannot be saved by machinery; only by a spiritio-psychological *path*, by an entire change which shall affect all the members of his being, can he be liberated from his discords and imperfections. It is admitted on all hands that there is a path which leads to the perfecting of man, a path indispensable to the pilgrim's progress on his way to self-realisation. Vira-haivism as a path aims at the perfecting of man in all his members, at the spiritualisation of all his forces. That there is a path which brings about an inner change in man is recognised by all the great religions; and the chief features of that path are described in similar terms in every one of the great faiths of the world. Thus we may read of it in the Roman Catholic teachings as divided into three parts:

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- (i) The path of purgation or purification
- (ii) The path of illumination
- (iii) The path of union with Divinity.

In the mystic teachings of Islam the path is known under the names of the Way, the Truth and the Life. We find it in Buddhism divided into eight sub-divisions which goes by the name of *Astanga-sheela*. In Virashaivism the puritan of Hinduism, the path is characterised by six stages, namely *Bhakta-Sthala*, *Maksha-Sthala*, *Prasadi-Sthala*, *Pranalingi-Sthala*, *Sharana-Sthala* and *Aikya-Sthala*.

It is the path which stage by stage enables man to fulfil the command of Christ: "Be, ye therefore perfect even as your father which is in Heaven is perfect." It is the path of which the same Teacher declared: "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The life to which the path leads the pilgrim is not the life of the passing joys of heaven but to the life which means a change in the attitude of man, which inner change compels him to have a glimpse of the Divine plan and then to become a conscious active co-operator with the Will of God to carry out his scheme of evolution. And "to see that plan is to have the Beatific vision; to work for that plan is to change one's mortal nature to that of a deathless immortal. Deathlessness in life, Eternity in time, Divinity in humanity are his who, understanding

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the plan, works for it unceasingly." This path which involves a spiritio-psychological discipline is termed *Yoga*, and the path which is characterised by six stages is called *Sat-sthalā-yoga* in Virashaivism. Hence *Sat-sthalā-yoga* is the path by virtue of which the pilgrim climbs straight up the mountain of self-realisation, regardless of cliff and precipice, of gulf and chasm, fearless of all menace and careless of all consequence, knowing that there is nothing which can hinder the Eternal Spirit, that no obstacle is stronger than the strength of the omnipotent Will.

First in the sequence of the psychological states of spiritual consciousness comes *Bhakta-sthalā* which is characterised by intense devotion to one and the only one God. This is evidently monotheism and Virashaiva Saints declare in unequivocal terms the oneness of God since, in their view, polytheism can neither survive the growth of moral consciousness nor convince the critical intelligence. Yes, the polytheistic conception of the world outrages the demands for the supremacy of one law of Righteousness, as it flouts the sense for coherence which is the motive of intellect. A world directed by many Gods can neither satisfy the philosopher nor can it give any basis for the fully conscious moral life. In this stage all the tender emotions of the pilgrim cluster round God crystallising into devotion, the religious emotion, *para-excellence*. Psychologically it is a highly

compound emotion consisting of wonder, fear, gratitude and negative self-feeling. This element of negative self-feeling is indeed the corner stone of devotion; by which the Soul tries to negate itself before the almighty God by constantly brooding upon the frailty of human nature and evanescence of the worldly life. It is because negative self-feeling is an essential element in devotion, that the extremely confident, himself-satisfied and thoroughly conceited person is incapable of devotion and that genuine devotion implies a certain amount of humility and generosity. It is for this reason that all the sayings of Virashaiva mystics in this stage are marked by qualitative varieties of emotional experience of God. The emotional qualities are indeed subjective in as much as they indicate to us primarily not the nature of things, but rather the nature of our impulsive reactions to things. Considered from this psychological view-point, all the passionate yearnings, prayers, psychic burning hot heat of the mystic in this stage are merely impulsive reactions to God.

This psychological reaction brings about a change of taste, the most momentous one that ever occurs in the mystic's experience, for in him it means the first emergence of that love for God which is to constitute his distinctive character, and emergence crucial in its effect on every department of his life. Thus the self-awakes for the first time to the touch of the

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Transcendent Reality, the awakening involving a disturbance of the equilibrium of self, which results in the shifting of the fields of consciousness with the consequent removal of the centre of interest from the first to the second or New Birth. The birth of the individual is into his own little world, where he is controlled by the primary instincts of preservation and reproduction—instincts which are doubtless a direct inheritance from the brute ancestry. But the dawn of the second Birth ushers the individual into the world of large-consciousness often attended with the glimpses of a splendour without or a vision within. Ah, the passage from the first to the second Birth is not so smooth as we are wont to guess; it is oft chequered by a series of strongly marked oscillations between 'states of pleasure' and 'states of pain.' These two states answer to the thirsts or tendencies, one the upward and inward and the other downward and outward. Each step towards the vision of the Real brings with it a reaction of the nascent transcendental powers, which are easily fatigued because of the unaccustomed nature of the individual. So the pendulum of the Self swings backward and downward consequent upon the repercussion of the primary instincts. This systole and diastole motion is usually marked by an intense heat or an interior flame or a sensible fire which heralds the pangs of New Birth. Thus declares a mystic, "I was

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seized and possessed by an interior flame, for which nothing had prepared me; waves of fire succeeding one another for more than two hours."

It is in this torment of New Birth that we have the first swing back of the oscillating Self from the initial state of mystic pleasure to the complementary state of pain. It is, so to speak, on its transcendental side, the reflex action which follows the first touch of God. The mystics have a profound conviction that the New Birth is a painful process at the best; for the birth pangs must be endured in the spiritual as well as in the material world. The Christian Mystics point to the passion of Christ as a proof that the cosmic journey to perfection, the path of Eternal Wisdom follows of necessity, the way of the Cross.

This divine necessity of pain, this necessary sharing in the travail of the New Birth is the theme of the second stage, *Mahesha-sṭhala*. The object of the Mahesha-sṭhala is like the object of all purgation, freedom—freedom from the fetters of the senses, the 'remora of desire', from the results of environment and worldly education, from pride and prejudice, preferences and distaste, from self-hood in every form. The self, in this stage, is to be purged of all that stands between it and goodness; and purification is a perpetual process which involves the drastic turning of the self from the unreal to the real life, from the even tenor of easy-

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going life; to the uneven stress of hard and ascetic life. Here asceticism finds its justification, for the Mahesha has to observe vows, *Vrita*, regulations, *Niyama* and moral precepts, *Sheela*. A saying of the Virashaiva Saint is pregnant with this truth: "Not to touch the property of others is a *vrita*, not to cherish desire for other's woman is *sheela*; not to injure any being is *niyama*." Hence it is clear that the divine necessity of plan which the mystics always welcome and often court incites them to build up the moral character and so acquire goodness. In this life of human beings, we find "God is pure Good in Himself." says Eekhart; "Therefore will He dwell nowhere but in a pure soul. There He can pour Himself out, into that He can wholly flow. What is purity? It is that a man should have turned himself away from all creatures, and have set his heart so entirely on the pure Good that no creature is to him a comfort, that he has no desire for aught creaturely, save so far as he may apprehend there in the pure Good, which is God. And as little as the bright eye can endure aught foreign in it, so little can the pure soul bear anything in it, any stain on it, that comes between it and God; To it all creatures are pure to enjoy; for it enjoyeth all creatures in God, and God in all Creatures." Here is an apparent contradiction to be resolved; that the mystic who has declared the fundamental necessity of 'leaving all creatures' yet finds

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them pure to enjoy. How? by renunciation, by giving up lust. It is not love but lust, the possessive instinct the very food of egoism, which poisons the relation between the self and the external world and immediately fatigues the soul. It divides the world into thine and mine and unreal standards are set up, and claims and cravings begin to fret the mind. So the Mahesha exhorts us: "That thou mayest have pleasure in everything, seek pleasure in nothing. That thou mayest know everything seek to know nothing. That thou mayest possess all things, seek to possess nothing..... In detachment too spirit finds quiet and repose, for coveting nothing, nothing wearies it by elation and nothing oppresses it by dejection, because it stands in the centre of its own humility. For as soon as it covets anything, it is immediately fatigued thereby." The upshot of all this is that we only enjoy true liberty in respect of such things as we neither possess nor desire. Hence real integral enjoyment of all this movement and multiplicity in its truth depends upon an absolute renunciation; but the renunciation intended is an absolute renunciation of desire or lust born of egoism and not a renunciation of world-existence. And the solution which the Mahesha offers to the apparent paradox depends upon the idea that desire is only an egoistic and vital deformation of the delight of being from which the world is born. By extirpation of ego and

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desire delight again becomes the conscious principle of existence.

By renunciation, by detachment is then to be understood the positive aspect of purification, the remaking in relation to reality of the permanent elements of character. These elements so far have subserved the interests of the old self or Ego, worked for it in the world of sense. Now they must be adjusted to the needs of the New Self and to the super-sensible world in which it moves. The object of renunciation is to do away with that old self, to break up his egoistic attachments and cravings, to give a decent burial to his self-regarding instincts and desires in order that the higher centre, the new man may live and breathe. In psycho-analytical language, the process of renunciation or detachment is the process of setting up 'new paths of neural discharge.' It means that the mystic life has had to express itself in action and for this new paths must be cut and new habits formed resulting in a complete sublimation of personality. The psychological basis of *Bhakta-sthala* is, as we have seen, affective. The Bhakta is affected by qualitative varieties of emotional experience of God; whereas the psychological basis of the *Muheshasthala* is conative. The conative drive of the psyche is here concentrated on the death of self-hood in its narrow individualistic sense. All the twisted elements of character which foster the existence of this unreal yet

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complex ego are to be pruned away. Then, as with trees of the forest, so with the self of man, new branches will spring into being and grow towards air and light. But this change of character is often a stormy matter; it is a period of actual battle between the inharmonious elements of the self and its lower and higher springs of action of toil, fatigue, bitter suffering and many disappointments. Nevertheless, the object of renunciation or asceticism is the annihilation of the surface self and appearance of the subliminal self; that is, it results in a complete sublimation of personality.

Spiritual transmutation consists in an entire reversal of the ordinary self-seeking attitude of mind towards men and things and this reversal brings about an entirely new set of experiences. Thus the desire for a certain pleasure is abandoned, cut off at its source and not allowed to have any place in the consciousness. But the mental force which that desire represented is not annihilated, it is transferred to a higher region of thought, transmuted into the purer forms of energy. The law of conservation of energy obtains universal in mind as in matter, and the force shut off in lower directions is liberated in higher realms of subliminal activity. "Mental forces, like molecular, have their opposite poles or modes of action and where the negative pole is, there also is the positive. Where ignorance is wisdom is possible; where passion abounds peace awaits; where

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there is much suffering, much bliss is near. Sorrow is the negation of joy, sin is the opposite of purity ; evil is the denial of good. Where there is an opposite there is that which is opposed. The adverse evil, in its denial of the good, testifies to its presence. The one thing needful, therefore, is the turning round from the negative to the positive ; the conversion of the heart from impure desires to pure aspirations, the transmutation of the passional forces into moral powers.”

This conversion of the heart opens the mystic to a new vision, a new consciousness, a new mode of action which bespeaks of the existence of a new and higher life. When this is reached the pilgrim has become pure, the mystic has become a sage ; he has passed from the superficial life to the subliminal. He is born again and there begins for him a new round of experiences ; he weilds a new power ; a new universe opens out before his spiritual gaze. This is the stage of Prasadi, this is what is called the purified life. As passion is the key-note of the selfish life, so peace is the key-note of this serene life. Rising into it man is lifted above inharmony and disturbance. When perfect Good is realised and known, not as an opinion or an idea, but as an experience, as a possession, then calm vision is acquired and tranquil joy abides through all vicissitudes. The Prasadi’s life is ruled not by passions but by principles. It is founded not upon fleeting

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impulses but upon abiding laws. In its clear atmosphere the orderly sequence of all things is revealed, so that there is seen to be no room for sorrow, anxiety or regret. There reigns serenity of the purified life born of disinterested intellect. Hence the primacy of intellectual clarity, that is, *Nirmala-mati*, in its disinterestedness or detachment. The more the mind becomes detached from the things of sense, the more dear, sensitive and renewing it becomes. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds," said the Apostle Paul. By the renewing of the mind, the whole personality (that is, the repressions and resistances) will be transformed into the creative force that God intended it to be.

To attain to this high calling the Mystic in the *Prasadi-sthala* should not only reckon himself dead to the old ways of thought and imagination, but he must also reckon himself alive into God's power of life. He has to train his mind to think as far as is humanly possible from God's stand-point, direct his imagination to visualise things from his point of view, so that he may become a swiftly sensitive and readily responsive receptacle of divine energy. Thus by being a perfect instrument of God the *Prasadi* does not play at cross purposes with His Will. By an intuition in his nature, an inspiration in his heart and a reason in his mind, he puts himself at the service of some strong ideal, some intelligent Force that serves God, and understands the

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firm Teacher. The *Prasadi* understands His stem yet loving compulsion in things and learns to progress not by struggle and suffering but by obedience. To this end, the Mystic in this stage lets his thought dwell in God, build up the consciousness of His power, to the exclusion of all fearing and worrying tendency with regard to the past or the future. He does resolutely keep God's all-power in the very front of his consciousness and see all his difficulties and anxieties through the light of His consciousness. This would bring deep stillness and unity of being and conserve all his energies for action. Thus the *sine quo non* of the *Prasadi Sthula* finds its justification in the saying, 'Right thought is the infallible source of right action.' *Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam.*¹

This change of consciousness from the surface to the subliminal, however abrupt and amazing it may seem to the self which experiences it, is to the psychologist a normal phase in that organic process of development which was initiated by the awakening of the transcendental sense. That there is a *Subliminal* self behind our superficial one, not inconscient but conscient, greater than the waking mind, endowed with surprising faculties and capable of a much surer action and experience—has now been confirmed by psychical research. The subliminal consciousness is a form of mental life, a kind of perception radically different from

1 योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्

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that of normal men. It is really 'transcendental fceling' in excelsis, the clarity of intellectual vision termed *Nirmila-mati* in Virashaivism which is the distinguishing mark of *Prasadi-sthala*. In this stage the actual physical perception seems to be strangely heightened, so that the self perceives an added significance of reality in all natural things; is often convinced that it knows at last 'the presence of God in the phenomenal world.' In Blakes' words, 'the doors of perception are cleansed so that everything appears to man as it is.'

This sense of the presence of God is not a metaphor. Innumerable declarations prove it to be a consciousness as sharp as that which other men have of colour, heat, sound or light. Such a sense of the divine presence may go side by side with the daily life and normal mental activities of its possessor, who is not necessarily an ascetic or an abstracted visionary, remote from the work of the world. It is true that subliminal consciousness has now become, once for all, his centre of interest; its perceptions and admonitions dominate and light up his daily life. "How that presence is felt, it may be better known by experience than by any writing," says Hilton, "for it is the life and the love, the might and the light, the joy and the rest of a chosen soul. And therefore he that has sooth fastly once felt it, he may not forbear it without pain; he may not undesire it, it is so good in itself and so comfortable.

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He cometh privately sometimes when thou art least aware of Him, but thou shalt well know Him or He goeth ; for wonderfully he stirreth and mightily He turneth thy heart into beholding of His goodness, and thine heart melt delectably as wax against the fire into softness of His love.”

To feel the presence of God is really to experience the psychic state of the subliminal consciousness, for there is neither entrance nor departure for God ; only the eye and the inner mind opens upon the vast noumenon. “It is not by the eyes that He enters,” says the Prasadi, “for He is without form or colour that they can discern ; nor by the ears for his coming is without sound ; nor by the nostrils, for it is not with the air but with the mind that He is blended. . . . By what avenue then has He entered? Or perhaps the fact may be that He has not entered at all, nor indeed come at all from outside ; for not one of these things belongs to outside . . . Only I have ascended higher than myself, and lo! I have found the World above me still!” Mark the words, ‘I have ascended higher than myself and have found the world above me still !’ which only speak of the higher plane of consciousness. The Mystic in this stage has transcended the narrow limitations of sense, and transferred his consciousness into the region of noumena. The surface mind is conscious only of succession. The special feature of

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the subliminal mind is the power of apprehending simultaneity. In the peculiarities of the subliminal consciousness we recognise the effort of the mind to bridge the gulf between simultaneity and succession. Here the phenomenon is called upon to carry the values of the noumenon.

By training the cognitive dispositions, by cleansing the doors of perception and by being a perfect instrument of God, the Mystic intuits self in natural things, the sense of unity in separateness, the evolutionary sweep of a mighty and actual life pulsating throughout the universe. It is this mighty and actual life that is called *Prana Lin'a* in Virashaiva philosophy; and the Mystic who becomes conscious of the living reality of this world of becoming, the vast arena of Divine activity, the indwelling creative power, as the very soul or immanent reality of things is known as *Pranalin'i*. The Self, in this fourth stage or the *Pranalingi-sthala* participates, actively and open-eyed, in its mighty journey towards God, and seeing with illumined sight all things and creatures as they are in that transcendent order, detects in them too that striving of creation to return to its centre which is the secret of the universe. To the *Pranalingi* the universe is presented as an expression of life, great cosmic life transcending and including our own, not life as an expression or by-product of the universe. The strange passionate philosophy of

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Neitzsche is really built upon an intense belief in this supernal nature and value of life. But the charm of his philosophy is marred by the one-sided individualism which precluded him from holding a just balance between the life of Ego and the life of All. "Give yourself," then, says the Pranalingi, "to this Divine and infinite life, this mysterious cosmic activity in which you are immersed and of which you are born. Trust it, let it surge in on you, cast off the fetters of the senses, the remora of desire; and making your interests identical with those of the all, rise to freedom, to that spontaneous creative life which, inherent in every individual self, is our share of the life of the universe. You are yourself vital—a free centre of energy—did you but know it. You can move to higher levels, to greater reality, truer self-fulfilment, if you will. Though you be like an oyster in your shell, you can open that shell to the living waters without, and draw from the immortal vitality. Thus only by contact with the real shall you know reality."

If we accept this verdict, we must then impute to life in its fullness the innumerable worlds, the many faceted planes which escape the rhythm of our senses. We are compelled to perceive in it, as the mystic declares, 'the beating of the heart of God', and we agree with Heracleitus that "There is but one wisdom to understand the knowledge by which all things are

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steered through the All." Union with reality apprehension of it, will upon this hypothesis be union with life at its most intense point, in its most dynamic aspect. This union alone can abrogate antinomies between the self and the world, and give meaning and value to human life. The possibility of this adjustment, of union between the life of Ego and the life of the All through intuitive love forms the theme of the *Pranalingi-sthala*. Reality, says Eucken, is an independent, vital and all-embracing life, unconditional by the apparent world of sense. To know it and to live in it means true destiny; and man is real, and in the deepest sense alive, in virtue of this free personal life-principle within him. If, instead of that free and conscious co-operation with the great life of the All which alone can make personal life worth living, we move like slaves oblivious of the whole to which our little steps contribute, we miserably fail to observe the measure of the mighty forces. Thus Pranalingi tells us, "Our minds being distracted from the Coryphens in the midst, the Energetic word who sets the rhythm, we do not behold Him. We are absorbed in the illusions of sense; the eye which looks on eternity is idle. But when we do behold Him, we attain the end of our existence and our rest. Then we no longer sing out of tune, but form a truly divine chorus about Him, in the which chorus-dance, the soul beholds the fountain of life, the principle of Being."

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Such a beholding, such a rising of a radiant consciousness of the *otherness* in natural things, is of the essence of illumined sight of Pranalingi, is the 'saving madness' of which Plato speaks in the *Phaedrus*, "is the ecstasy of the God-intoxicated man, is the lover, the prophet, the poet drunk with life "

Modern psychologists have struggled in vain to discredit this 'sense of the presence,' this 'saving madness', sometimes attributing to the psychic-mechanism of projection, sometimes to the wish-fulfilments of a more unpleasant origin. It is true that modern psychology has discoverd the key to the understanding of human behaviour which is built upon the basis of innate tendencies that are in all essentials, very similar to the instinctive tendencies of animals. But modern psychology, with all its sincerity and sagacity, has failed to assign to the psyche its proper place and due development. It treats only of the processes of the psyche but not of the psyche which forms, as it were, the source and support to all these processes. Affection, conation and cognition have their source and origin in Intuition, the psyche. This is, as it were, the fountain from which proceed all these three phases of activity. William Macdougall defines intuition as 'implicit apperception' and he regards it as the germ from which the power of abstract thinking develops. The psyche is really an inner and deeper mind, the mind whose highest

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element is not a recept or a concept but an intuition. This is the mind in which sensation, simple consciousness and self-consciousness are supplemented and crowned with cosmic consciousness. Lotze practically abandons all inquiries into theories of perception and starts with the assumption that we are living in a cosmos, not a chaos; that the order, coherence, reason in things to which consciousness testifies, are realites. The prime characteristic of cosmic consciousness is, as William James says in his *Varieties of Religious Experiences*, a consciousness of the cosmos, that is, of the life and order of the universe. We may then conclude the status of Pranalingi with these eloquent words of James. "Along with the consciousness of the cosmos there occurs an intellectual enlightenment or illumination which alone would place the individual on a new plane of existence--would make him almost a member of a new species. To this is added a state of moral exaltation, an indescribable feeling of elevation, elation of joyousness, and a quickening of the moral sense, which is fully as striking and more important both to the individual and to the race than is the enhanced intellectual power. With these come, what may be called, a sense of immortality, a consciousness of eternal life, not a conviction that he shall have this, but the consciousness that he has it already."

The wonderment does then lie not in the degree

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of the fact, but in the fact itself—the great fact that the universe is not a mechanism but a life, and that we are that life. The real cause of all intuitive love—whether it be the exquisite dawn of love in youth or maiden, or the intense fervour of creative genius or whether it be the religious frenzy of the saint, or the rapt ecstasy of the mystic—lies in the fact that it is the revelation of the self to the self, the great discovery by the individual self of the potentiality of its own infinite nature, of its own mighty power. It is the discovery of this *potential mighty power* which is the cause of all this manifested drama of space and time that forms the fulcrum of the fifth stage or the *Sharana-sthala*. This almighty power is, as the Sharana observes, the inherent one, yet variable inner force of all the changes of object consciousness. It is a fundamental truth of the becoming, a truth that supports and gives a spiritual significance to all its appearances. It is that which determines the primary law of all becoming since it is the eternal seed from which all other things are the developments and derivations. This eternal seed or *Shakti* is the Power of spiritual Being, the conscious Will of the Supreme, the seed which the Absolute casts into the supra-mental vastness from which the manifested drama of space and time comes into being.

If the *Sharana* talks in terms of time and space, of great and small, of being and becoming, it is

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because he recognises the true nature of a thing ; for he knows that the true greatness of a thing is only discoverable in its inner nature and relations, but not in its outer size, fuction or form. The outer measure and relationship of a thing is always dwarfed by something greater, and still greater again, until in relation to infinity, a solar system becomes as infinitely small as an atom. But when we consider the inner nature and relations of a thing, the thing itself, however small it may be, expands to infinity, and itself becomes the Infinite. It is then seen to be the one infinite substance with the potentiality of all that ever was, is or will be, that potentiality being infinitely more real than the fragmentary portion which is called the actual present. The cosmos is not great because of its outer expansion in diversity but because of the inner compaction in unity. So the Sharana agrees with Emerson when he declares thus : "There is no great and no small, to the soul that maketh all ; and where it cometh all things are, and it cometh everywhere."

What is the real significance of all this ? Is it not simply that the apparently individual self never in reality can or does transcend itself in any action or experience either in perception or in apperception ? Is it not that the self is all sufficient in itself ; that it not merely need not, but, never can go outside of itself for any experience, any knowledge, any revelation ? The

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Sharana has won this unity of self through intuitive love and through this winning he has weaned his psyche from the fetters of illusion. When this principle of the unity of self has been clearly realised and has become the ruling power in man's life, he may be said to have reached his spiritual manhood; he enters into his heritage in the universe. He has attuned his will with the Great Law and thereby he enters into the Great Freedom—not a freedom from the law but a freedom in the law. Then he enters into peace; the peace in which his strife is ended because there is no longer any question of his will against the one Will. He is unified with that Will, and in that union he enters into the infinite peace of the harmonious Whole.

The Sharana therefore believes more readily in a divine Will or Destiny, feels more vitally conscious of the spiritual urge in the irresistible subconscious intention of the world. For the order of things in the cosmic life there is a great unseen Power, a universal Will, a cosmic Force or Law at work, which not only gives us all the frame-work and condition of our idea and effort, but evolves by them and by the law of these conditions out of the thing in being, the thing that is to be. And this power deals with us not so much according to the devices of our reason, the truths and fictions of our intelligence but much rather according to the truth of what man is and the real motive and meaning of what

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he does. Since the Sharana is a man of action, he will often seize on the idea of that universal Force of fact to divinise to himself the mighty energy that he feels driving him on the path of world-altering deeds. "He is," in the eloquent words of Shri Arabindo, "like a shell discharged from some dim Titanic howitzer planted in concealment far behind this first line of trenches which we see thrown out by life into the material world; or he is like a planet sped out from Nature's hands with its store of primal energy sufficient for its given time, its fixed service to the world life, its settled orbit round a distant and sovereign light. He expresses in the idea of Fate his living and constant sense of the energy which has cast him down here whether to break like some Vedic *Varut* the world's firm and established things or to cut through mountains a path down which new rivers of human destiny can pour. Like Indra or Bhagiratha he precedes, the throng of the divine waters follow. His movement decides their course; here Indus shall flow, there Ganges pace yellow and leonine to the sea. Therefore we find that the greatest men of action the world has known were believers in Fate or a divine Will."

We thus, as individuals, live move and have our being in this region of law by which we are most certainly limited and conditioned in order that we may fulfil a definite function in the cosmos and the purpose

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of a higher will, which, when reunited with it, we shall presently discover to have been no other than our own will. It would then clearly appear that any violent effort to renounce our present duty, to refuse those actions which immediately present themselves to us, as those which we were intended to do, would be the very greatest unwisdom. Ah, is it so that under any circumstances we are to accept the conditions as being the higher will, and make no effort to free ourselves from them? By no means! who ever said that the individual should never aim at anything higher? The whole of evolution is precisely that aim. But it is our attitude towards the lower as well as towards the higher, towards the individual as well as towards the environment that counts, for the individual and the environment are two composite, distinguishable, yet not separate aspects of the whole life. If integration and harmony within the individual, that is, a synthesis of psychic instruments and faculties is essential to the *Pranalingi*, adjustment and harmonious relationship with the environment is still more essential to the *Sharana* in order that he may have a peaceful, happy and prosperous life. To attain perfect adjustment with the environment is a much more difficult and arduous task than to have harmony within oneself. Hindu genius has always excelled in the spiritual but has unfortunately failed often in the social one. The long-standing political subjection of the Hindus is

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probably due to the lack of effort at adjustment. But in Virashaivism, the puritan of Hinduism, we find *Sharana-stha'a* mainly aimed at doing away with excessive other-worldliness and at securing proper adjustment with the environment. If we are in rebellion against the lower, against the environment and shirk our duty in due fulfilment thereof, we may possibly succeed for the time being in throwing it off. But we have left something undone; something we shall have to go back to. The only road to the higher is the present thing well and faithfully done. It is as if in building a house we were to neglect some of the lower work; the whole building must suffer; sometime or other the work would have to be done over again. Our progress or evolution is such an actual building; the building of a temple, the building of a cosmic body eternal in the heavens. And the Sharana, a superman of action, is therefore pledged to build the kingdom of Heaven or *Salya-yuga* upon earth. Having attained the unity of the diverse elements of his psyche, having had the audacity to face squarely and fairly the adverse nature, the Sharana would venture upon the mighty action of founding the Kingdom of God in humanity, of establishing the *Civitas Dei*, in the building process of which he has 'to suffer woes that hope think infinite, to forgive wrongs which are darker than death or night,' 'to defy power which seems omnipotent,' he has neither

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to change nor falter nor repent but ought to be rejoicing and optimistic, ought to love and bare 'till hope creates from its own wreck the thing it contemplates.'

Last comes the *Aikya-sthala*, the sixth stage which is characterised by a rarified psychological state of a *unitary consciousness* that implies the invariable sense of unity or wholeness which accompanies the mystic experience. That there is a psychological sequence right up from the beginning of the *Bhakta-sthala* to the end of the *Aikya-sthala* would be clear enough if we take a bird's eye-view of the psychological basis of all the stages. The psychological basis of bhakta *Sthala* is affective; of Mahesha, conative; of Pra·adi, cognitive; of Pranalingi, intuitive; of Sharana, executive; and of Aikya, is unitive. What does the psychology of this unitive state represent? It represents the final and successful establishment of that unitary consciousness which has been struggling for supremacy during the whole of the pilgrim's progress. The deepest and richest levels of human personality have now attained to light and freedom, the Ego *Aham-ta*, is re-made into the super-Ego-*Paraham-ta*. The soul has at last unified itself with the Over-soul; and with the cessation of stress and stir spiritual strength has been liberated for new purposes. "The beginning of the mystic life," says Delacroix, "introduced into the personal life of the subject a group of states which are distinguished by

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certain characteristics, and which form, so to speak a special psychological system. At its term it has, as it were, suppressed the ordinary self, and by the development of this system has established a new personality, with a new method of feeling and action. Its growth results in the transformation of personality, it abolishes the primitive consciousness of self-hood, and substitutes for its wider consciousness, the total disappearance of self-hood in the divine, the substitution of a Divine Self for the primitive self."

What does it mean when cast into the philosophic mould? It means that the Ego has risen at last to the true freedom; the self has entered on the fruition of Reality. Hence the Aikya has opened up new paths for the inflow of that Spiritual strength which is at once vision and an execution. For in that free atmosphere of Divine power, vision and execution or sight and will are combined and no longer as in the mind separated from each other. Therefore the Aikya has the sight of and lives in the truth-consciousness, his will becomes the spontaneous law of the truth in him and knowing all its acts and their sense and objective leads straight to the human destiny, which is always the enjoyment of Divine Delight, the state of immortality. From contact set up with this Divine Delight, he draws that amazing strength, that immovable peace, that power of dealing with circumstance, which is one of the most

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marked characteristics of the unitive or Eternal life. "To be a mystic", says Evelyn Underhill, "is simply to participate here and now in that real and eternal life, in the fullest, deepest sense which is possible to man. It is to share as a free and conscious agent—not a servant, but a son—in the joyous travail of the universe; its mighty onward sweep through pain and glory towards its home in God. This gift of *Sonship*, this power of free co-operation in the world-process, is man's greatest honour. The ordered sequence of states, the organic development, whereby his consciousness is detached from illusion and rises to the mystic freedom which conditions, instead of being conditioned by its normal world, is the way he must tread if that sonship is to be realised. Only by this deliberate fostering of his deeper self, this transmutation of the elements of his character, can he reach those levels of consciousness upon which he hears, and responds to the measure 'whereto the worlds keep time' on their great pilgrimage towards the father's heart. The mystic act of union, that joyous loss of the transfigured self in God, which is the crown of man's conscious ascent towards the Absolute, is the contribution of the individual to this, the destiny of the Cosmos."

In that mystic act of union there is no suppression of life, but it intensifies a change in its form. This change consists in the perfecting of personality by the

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utter surrender of want or desire which is the badge of subjection with its attendant discord and suffering. By an absolute renunciation of desire and its knot, the ego's. Delight and Being becomes the self-possession of the Aikya. It is only by the *Ananda* or Delight of being at once transcendent and universal that man can be free in his soul and yet live in the world the full active life. For to that perfect person or Aikya there is nothing whatsoever in the universe that is rea'ly separate, individual or discrete; that everything in its wholeness and completeness would expand to infinity and become the Absolute all; that every atom is balanced against the whole universe, and acts and reacts at every moment with the Whole, and that therefore the Whole is present at every moment, in everything however minute it may be. This reveals that everything depends upon what the Aikya sees, how he looks at existence in souls' view of things. Being and becoming, one and many are both true and are both the same thing. Being is one, becomings are many but this simply means that all becomings are one Being who places Himself variously in the phenomenal movement of His consciousness. Only he sees with knowledge and not with ignorance; and this integral vision which cuts the gaurdian knot of ego, enables him to enter into harmony of oneness with universe, into the Great Freedom and a consequent ability to possess and enjoy it.

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The Aikya attains to freedom, Freedom at last! the Freedom of the upper airs; the Freedom of the Spirit that 'bloweth where listeth.' Freedom! The freedom of the universe; the freedom of the perfect Law; the freedom of the perfect Love; the freedom of the Self which knows itself to be the perfect Law of perfect Love; which knows the universe to be its own infinite Will, its own unutterable Bliss; which knows now that it was its own self-realisation, the silent eternal depth of its own Being. Into that heaven of Freedom "He standeth now like a white pillar to the west, upon whose face the rising sun of thought eternally poureth forth its first most glorious waves. His mind, like a becalmed and boundless ocean, spreadeth out in shoreless space. He holdeth life and death in his strong hand. Yea, He is mighty. The living power made free in him, that power which is Himself, can raise the tabernacle of illusion high above gods, above great Brahma and Indra."

Let us now listen to the serene sayings of the Aikya: "Light, Freedom, Knowledge, air to breath, room to expand—*infinite room*. At last I thrust my head above the soil; I see the light; I see glory in the sun-shine; it is as wine in my veins. I breathe the upper airs; I exult in my freedom, freedom to expand illimitably, freedom to rebecome the Infinite Flame.

"The freedom of knowledge, knowledge of my

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whole nature; of the meaning and fruition of the past, of the infinite content of the future, of the centre where past and future meet in an eternal now.

“I have still my roots in matter, but I know now why they are there. I no longer regard them as encumbrance, as cause of pain and sorrow. I no longer identify myself with them—or with the soil—as the content of my being. I am matter, but am also spirit—and the two are one. I draw nourishment from the soil; by the alchemy of my nature I transmute the lower into the higher; into leaf and flower and fruit; into a thousand beauties and ten thousand joys.

“The freedom of Truth. The truth of all things—and all things contained in the infinite Truth. Freedom to accept all things—good and evil, light and darkness, freedom and bondage, bliss and pain, spirit and matter. The recognition of a perfect whole—the recognition of identity with the whole.

“Freedom also from the limitations of mind, from the effort to explain the inexplicable; no longer the necessity to do so, for I am the unexplainable and if I had explained myself I should cease to exist.

“I have built many bodies, endeavouring to explain and tried many ways and followed many teachers who have cried, ‘Lo here! Lo there!’, the final truth! Now I know these for what they are; now I appraise them at their true value; now I know that the Truth is the Great Law that is everywhere—and above all that I embody in myself the Great Law.”

The integral vision of this Great Law gives us power and freedom to act, and we say, that it is not

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only our right and privilege to know in all the heights and depths of our nature, but that we are here in physical life and on the material plane for no other purpose but to embody it. For the great World-process is the path of knowledge; it is the self-elevation of the Self to the Self, whether we consider the self as universal or individual. The knowledge which we appear to acquire from outside, from the not-self, is seen on any close analysis to be nothing but the disclosure to ourselves of our own nature and powers; it is the expansion of the individual to include more and more of the universal, which is already there. If knowledge of all things did not already exist, how could the things exist? If God is not already infinite Love, how could any mystic ever experience that Flame of Love? "What that flame of love, what that subtle being is, of which this whole universe is composed, that is the Real, that is the divine Soul, That art Thou." We have then gone out from our Divine Source, and we return thereto—that is the World-process, that is the history of Man, that is the beginning and end of our human endeavour. We have gone out from our Divine Source in consciousness only; in fact, we have never departed therefrom; for how can anything really be separate from the all-inclusive one? Therefore is our return accomplished by freeing ourselves from the false sense of separation. Thus the supreme fact of our life and consciousness is, since on close scrutiny the individual life and the universal are one and identical, *Thou art that.*¹

¹ तत्त्वमसि

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The primary object of all occultism, *Yoga-shastra* is Self-knowledge, that is to say, knowledge and control of all and every vehicle in or through which the self functions on every plane of the Cosmos. The occult teaching, whether it be based upon the Eastern Yoga and Vedanta philosophy or the Western Hermetic and Kabalistic systems, runs thus : Man is the measure of the Macrocosm. The fundamental principle of all knowledge is therefore correspondence and analogy, 'as above, so below', whilst the fundamental method is 'man, know thyself'. No man can know God in any greater measure than he knows himself, and he rises through such self-knowledge to the apprehension of a unitary supreme knowledge which, so long as he imagines himself to be a separate self, he ascribes to a separate God.

In the motto 'know thyself first', the act of knowing necessarily involves the fact of being. Epistemology or the science of knowing is indissolubly

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wedded to Ontology or the science of being. What then does the self know itself to be? It knows itself to be a Knower. Whatever object the self may know, it knows itself with it as the knower; with whatever object-consciousness its self-consciousness is made manifest and the form of this self-consciousness is — 'I am the knower'. It is only as a knower that the self knows itself. But the term 'knower' is relative; it implies an object of knowledge. A knower who knows nothing is absurd and unmeaning. But cannot the self, it may be asked, know itself? Yes, it can, we reply; but in knowing itself it must know itself as possessing some characteristics. Under whatever characteristic it may know itself, it will be seen that every one of these characteristics is related to some object or other; and that unless some object or other is known or thought of, these characteristics cannot be known or thought of. If the self thinks of itself as unextended, as spaceless, such thought is possible only in relation to the thought of extended objects. If it thinks of itself as permanent and unchangeable, such thought is possible only in relation to transient, changeable objects. If it thinks of itself as one, such thought is possible only in relation to the thought of many objects. We therefore see that self-consciousness is impossible without object-consciousness.

There is no denial of the fact that object-

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consciousness is invariably accompanied by self-consciousness forming its source and support and making it possible. Self-consciousness is the universal principle that remains constant in the midst of the changes of object-consciousness ; nothing can enter into consciousness without being conditioned by it. We cannot know anything else without knowing 'I know'; and we cannot anticipate any future knowledge without thinking 'I shall know'. All knowledge is *wound* as it were; with the thread of self-knowledge. The whole structure of the world-knowledge stands on the ground-work of self-knowledge. What, indeed, is the whole world-process but the unfolding of the knowledge-aspect of the total content of Reality or the Self? We shall therefore say that in the development of our whole nature which is co-existent with the whole world-process, to know is as necessary as to be.

Now it is seen that the universe or the world-process is presented to our experience in the dual manner of Consciousness and Substance, or Being and Becoming, or Unity and Multiplicity, or Reality and Appearance, or Perfection and Process—each of the corresponding terms of these dualities being more or less equivalent. We shall then ask, can the self be really known if only one of the terms of this duality is known? On the one side we have Consciousness, Being, Unity, Reality, Perfection ; on the other Substance, Becoming,

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Multiplicity, Appearance, Process. And we may state the same question in another form. What would consciousness be without object, or being without becoming, or a bare unity without multiplicity, or reality without the appearance which it subsumes, or perfection without that which is perfected as process. Hence all experience, all rationality, all knowledge of the why and wherefore is required to complete that perfection of our nature which is implied in the attainment of a full conscious unity with the spiritual Life, by which, through which and in which all things are brought forth into manifestation. If there is any choice at all between the knowledge of that Life as being, and a knowledge of it as Becoming, it is because of the human intellect which is unable to comprehend that Life as a whole. In and behind each individual is the whole of that Life, it is one and indivisible; it is Continuity, Unity, Passivity as Being; it is Relativity, Multiplicity, Activity as Becoming. It is immanent in all things, for the thing is never other than it; yet to the thing as thing, to the individual as creature, it is supremely transcendent.

We are now in a sound position to understand the principles of occultism, the first of which is that there is an *Infinite Life* which is at once static and dynamic, personal and impersonal and yet utterly transcends them both. The second principle is that there is an *unbroken continuity of Life* represented by various *orders*

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of beings—of which the individual is only an almost infinitesimal unit — from what we arbitrarily call the ‘lowest’, to that which we call the ‘highest’. And the third principle is that there is an unbroken line of *communication* through all these orders, so that, at whatever stage the individual may be, he will always find the possibility of communicating with individuals—whether incarnate or discarnate—who represent a further stage than that which he has himself attained. It is this possibility of communication with higher individuals, with other orders of beings that is the occult meaning of the *Sutra*. In Virashaivism, the fountain-head of pure occultism, the meaning of *Sutra* has yet retained its constant and living sense of occultism. *Sutra* is generally understood to convey the maximum of meaning with minimum of words. But in reality it means *the thread of communion* by which the identity of the individual through the other and higher orders of beings with the Absolute in the totality of his nature, is realised. Thus in principle we are bound to believe in Masters, Initiates, higher Spirits, in unbroken line up to the Logos Himself. To each one of us must be sufficient the evidence personally received of the particular line of communication, which has been opened up for him in this matter. There is no one favoured channel, no one communication or cult, which can offer the knowledge or the method. By few or many stages, by few or many lives, by various

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routes, direct or devious, the individual comes at last to that stage which is sometimes spoken of as the beginning of the 'way'—the stage at which he definitely sees his goal and bends the whole of his energies towards its attainment.

In the physical or gross body there are three principal *Nadis* which are called *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Susumna*. *Nadis* are the astral channels composed of astral matter that carry psychic currents. *Ida* starts from the right testicle and *Pingala* from the left; they meet with *Susumna* *Nadi* at the *Muladhara* or the Root *Chakra*, the base of the physical body. This conjunction of the three *Nadis* is known as the Triad or *Triveni*. This meeting again takes place in the *Anahata Chakra* or at the heart; and at the middle of the eye-brows or in the *Aueyna Chakra*, the conjunction again occurs. Thus there are three Triads in the human body corresponding to the mystic number 333. This is the real signification of 333 Sutra intuitively apprehended by Dr. Mohan Singh, the author of the *Secrets of Spiritual Life*. The first Triad in the *Muladhara* represents the subconscious state where the *Kundalini* or Serpent fire lies coiled up with her three *Vritis*; the second in the *Anahata* stands for the surface-consciousness, a welter of three *gunas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* which keep up themselves continually transforming; and the third in the *Agneya* is symbolic of the super-conscious state of *Nada*, *Bindu* and *Kala*.

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The *sine quo non* of occult teaching is that man is the measure of the universe. The universe can never be explained otherwise than in terms of man—until, indeed, Man realises and thus ‘becomes’ what he is now, in the wholeness of his nature, Cosmic Man. But manifestation (of the universe) is a relative term; by manifestation is to be understood that schematised plan of the universe which we are obliged to formulate within our empirical consciousness of time and space; that is to say, anything of which we are compelled to affirm that ‘in the beginning’ and subsequently something took place. The Absolute or the ever-concealed Godhead is thus manifested in the Divine Trinity; the Divine Trinity is manifested in the Logos, who is the synthesis of the Trinity. The Logos in his turn is manifested as Cosmic Man on the lower planes of the Cosmos; whilst Cosmic Man is again manifested in individual man. When occultism says that man is the measure of the universe, it means not the individual but the Cosmic Man who exists on all the planes of the Cosmos, and in an appropriate manner fulfils his function thereon. The way of occultism is therefore destined to remake the individual into the Cosmic Man; and this is possible when the individual transfers his centre of interest from the Physical to the Spiritual plane. If man appears to be individual and fragmentary on the physical plane he must appear to be less so on the psychic plane, and

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still less so on the mental plane, whilst on the spiritual plane we can only postulate that he exists in its eternal perfection as the unitary Man, 'made in the image of God.'

When we say that *spirit* is the final term, we do not mean the Absolute, or God as the Godhead; for these are not a term, are not the end or summation of a series, but are the *wholes* of *all*, and are, therefore, outside and beyond all relations, classifications or definitions. Spirit is simply the final term of manifestation; we can only, therefore, say that 'God is a Spirit' in the case of the hypostasised 'persons' of the Divine trinity in Christian theology, of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* in Hindu philosophy, of *Nada Bindu Kala* in occultism. It is only by means of this hypostasis that we are able to speak of a *spiritual plane*, for that plane is the plane of the Logos, which it is legitimate to consider as having a relation to the lower planes of the cosmos and as being the highest term in manifestation. "Coming forth from the depth of One Existence, from the One beyond all thought and all speech, the Logos or the spirit by imposing on himself a limit, circumscribing voluntarily the range of his own being, becomes the manifested God and tracing the limiting sphere of his activity thus outlines the area of his universe. Within that sphere the universe is born, is evolved and dies; it lives, it moves, it has its being in him; its matter is his emanation;

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its form and energies are currents of his life. He is immanent in every atom, all-pervading, all-sustaining, all-evolving. He is its source and its end, its cause and its object, its centre and its circumference. It is built on him as its sure foundation, it breathes in him as its encircling space, he is in everything and everything in him. Thus have the sages of the Ancient Wisdom taught us of the beginning of the manifested words... And from the same source we learn of the self-unfolding of the Logos into a three-fold form or trinity."

Hence we find in all occult teaching the symbol of a Triangle held sacred as representing the three-fold aspects of the Logos or Spirit as the final term of manifestation. We may thus note with both Swedenberg and Bohme a most fundamental recognition of a three-fold division of the Divinity in the manifested universe or cosmos. With Swedenberg this is what he calls the 'three discrete degrees'; with Bohme they are what he calls 'the three principles of the Divine Essence' having their correspondence in the 'three-fold life of man.' "My book," says Bohme, "hath only three leaves, the same are the three principles of eternity, wherein I can find all whatsoever Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his apostles have taught and spoken; I can find therein the foundation of the world of all mysteries, yet not I, but the spirit of God doth it according to the measure, as he pleaseth." When we

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turn to Swedenberg we find that his doctrine is practically the same. Cosmic Man contains within himself the whole manifested universe, and is God's self-expression. His doctrine of discrete degrees is briefly as follows : Every act implies three factors ; (a) the act itself, constituting the external event, (b) a psychological process as the *immediate* cause of the act and (c) a motive or purpose as the originating cause of the act. In his own terminology these are, effect, cause and end, and they also correspond with organism, function and faculty. Cosmically we might represent these as Material world, Cosmic mind or man and God—the latter being principally identified with Love as the originating cause or we might analyse them into the three principles of man, (a) Body or Form (or perhaps action, phenomenon), (b) Mind or Ideation (or perhaps imagination,) and (c) Emotion (or perhaps will). We may notice a similar triple classification utilised by Fabre d'olivette who entitles his three principles, respectively, Providence, Man (cosmic) and Destiny ; and his work an effort to interpret history in terms of these principles.

Modern psychology has taken for its starting point the discoveries and the fundamental theses of the physical sciences and has worked as a continuation of physiology. The physical sciences are the study of inconscient Force working in inconscient Matter;

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a psychology which accepts this formula as the basis of all existence must regard consciousness as a phenomenal result of the inconscient working on the inconscient. Mind is only an out-come and as it were a record of nervous reactions. The true self or spirit of existence is, for the Modern Psychology, the inconscient. Freud, the foremost psycho-analyst seized upon this inconscient and developed the conception of a dynamic unconscious one, previously imagined by philosophers like Schopenhauer and Von Hartman. But here the difficulty confronts us with the problem whether this spirit of existence of which our working life is only a surface and a phenomenon, is conscient or inconscient. If it is inconscient in its very nature, then we cannot hope to illuminate ourselves with the hidden light—for light there is none—or to possess ourselves of the secret of its power. On the other hand, if it is conscient, that is to say, a consciousness deeper, greater, more powerful than our superficial self, an endless vista of self-development opens out before us and the human race marches towards infinite possibilities. The conscient therefore and not the inconscient was the truth at which the ancient Indian psychology arrived; and it distinguished three strata of the conscient self—the superficial existence, the subconscious and the super-conscious. Hence the source and support of life is not the unconscious but the super-conscious whose creative word is

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Aum, the *Panava*, the Ever-lasting Yea, perpetually uttered within the depths of the divine nature. This is the occult meaning of *Nada*. *Nada* is not a physical sound which emits when a tuning fork is vibrating, nor is it an internal sound which is heard when the ears are closed. It is indeed a *Spanda*, a vibration, a perpetual movement of the Logos or the Spirit in the divine depths of the Absolute.

It is said that God breathed into the nostrils of man and not into his mouth; breathing through the nostrils is therefore always invigorating and gives strength to the lungs. When man breathes through his nostrils slowly, serenely and spontaneously, a natural sound comes from his breath. What is that natural sound ! It is *So-hum*. When we drop S and H, the two consonants which stand for *name* and *form* or *Maya*, we have then *Om*, the pure and full vowel that represents the underlying Reality of name and form. The purport of what we have said above is contained in the Sanskrit verse which is found in the *Shivayoga Pradipika* :

So-ham kritva atma mantram

Svapada-parapadam Vyakta varnadvayam tat
Vyalumpet vyanjane dve

Punarapi rachayet divyam omkara mantram.

सोऽहं कृत्वा ऽत्ममत्रं स्वपदपरपदं व्यक्तवर्णं द्वयं तत् ।

व्यालुभ्येत् व्यञ्जने द्वे पुनरपि रचयेद्विव्यमौ कारमन्त्रम् ॥

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This *Om* is the *Pranava*, the perfect Life, an all-pervading presence, the seat of which is, as the occultist observes, in the *Ajneya Chakra* corresponding with the middle of the eye-brows in the human body. This is why a great Yogi focusses his attention and concentrates his energies at the middle of the eye-brows in order to galvanise into activity the higher astral sense. This higher astral or occult sense, which is termed the sixth organ or the third Eye is the spiritual Radium, the *Meenakan* (మీనకణ), the *Animisha Dristi* in Virshaiva terminology. Meenakan symbolises the *ever-wakeful eye of the Absolute*. It is this ever-wakeful eye of the Absolute that goes by the name of *Bindu* in occultism. This Bindu is in the nature of light, but it is not the physical light of the heavenly luminaries, nor is it the internal light which is seen as soon as the eyes are tightly closed. It is the light of consciousness, it is the self-awareness of the Absolute, it is the transcendent Light intangible but unescapable, ever emanating its splendour through the universe. Therefore the *Pranava* which is all-life is also all-light, it is at once an infinite presence and an infinite *Prakasha*. Allama Prabhu, the master-occultist, gives a correct, concise and all-comprehending description of this Light in his *Mantra Gaupya*. ,

॥ నటిల భూమధ్యద స్ఫురిక వణద జైవ్యేత
 ఘటదోళగే తానాగి తొళగి బెళగి
 వటవ్యక్తుద కెళగే లోకాది లోచగలు
 ఘంపికయంకడగిద పరాత్మరపిదు.

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If Nada is the breath or life of the Absolute and Bindu the light or know edge of the Absolute, then *Kala* is the Law or Will of the Absolute. In occultism, *Kala* is defined as ‘*Svatantrya-shakti*’, that is, the Will of the Absolute. “But not Will as we understand it, something exterior to its object, other than its works labouring on material outside itself, but Will inherent in the Being, inherent in the Becoming, one with the movement of existence, self-conscious Will that becomes what it sees and knows in itself, Will that is expressed as Force of its own work and formulates itself in the result of its work.”

Tennyson has had the glimpse of the truth when he says :

“God is Law, say the wise ; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by Law the thunder is yet his voice.
Law is God say some; no God at all, says the fool;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent
in a pool.”

In his preface to the *Leaves of Grass* Walt Whitman says: “What has ever happened, what happens, and whatever shall or may happen, the vital laws enclose all, they are sufficient for any case and for all cases—none to be hurried or retarded—any miracle of affairs or persons inadmissible in the vast clear scheme where every motion and every spear of grass and the frames and spirits of men and women and all that concerns them, are unspeakably perfect miracles all, referring to all and each distinct and in its place.”

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The primary object of all occultism is, as we have seen, knowledge and control of all and every vehicle in or through which the Self functions on every plane of the cosmos. If so, then each plane of the cosmos has its own laws ; and we can never explain the 'higher' in terms of the 'lower', though we may be able to refer the lower to the higher as cause thereof. The laws of mind are no more applicable to the region of spirit than the laws of the physical body are applicable to mind. The higher is only conditioned by the lower as working in or through it ; the lower is a limited manifestation of the higher. Spirit, mind and body—each of these stands in its own province and is governed by its own specific laws on its own plane; yet these planes interpenetrate and each and all act and react together in the constitution to that harmonious Whole which is Reality. The higher in the sense of being more universal or cosmic is never limited and conditioned by the laws of the lower; the lower is only a particular mode of its activity, and as such it is necessarily a limitation and a relativity, that is to say, a *thing*, but never a '*thing-in-itself*'.

But the *thing-in-itself* is the spirit that belongs to the plane of the Logos ; and below the plane of the Logos, in the manifested universe, all action is governed by law. Hence the individual can no more be helped from a higher plane apart from natural law, in the widest sense of the term, than he can help himself on this plane without such knowledge. For the practical

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means of doing any action, whether on this or any other plane, a knowledge of natural law is essential. Thus natural law is the living Will of the Absolute, on whatever plane it may operate; and in each further 'descent' there is a further limitation, not merely of the form but also of the will. This limitation exists just in proportion as the individual is identified with the form, and is unable to rise above it—primarily in conceptual thought, but finally in actual consciousness. But the individual has to transform himself in the Cosmic Man, as he is the measure of the universe; therefore the individual man has now to unlimit himself, to *detend* as Bergson calls it. Our whole evolution is the recovery in what we call *knowledge* of the whole content of the self. We have *to know as well as to be*; either of this without the other is only one half of our nature. Where the individual unlimits himself or detends into the depths of the cosmic consciousness, there, in that sphere, knowing and being are identical. Law and Logos are one. There, in that still and serene atmosphere the Cosmic Man experiences what *Chit-kala* is, enjoys the full and unhampered play of Will of the Absolute.

It is seen that an attempt, however perfunctory, has been made to unravel the net-work of *Nada-Bindu-Kala*, the very matrix of occultism, which, on its disclosure, reveals the secret of the Logos as Life, Light and Law. These are three terms but they are really one and

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therefore can be regarded as a *triune* basis of all conscious being. The conception of *Linga* as understood and explained by the Virashaiva Saints in an occult sense, is *Nada-Bindu-Kala Sva-upa*, that is to say, the Linga is the Logos revealed. The seat of this Linga is, as Allama Prabhu says in his *Sayings* and in his *Mantra Gaupya*, in the *Sahasrara Chakra*, the thousand petalled lotus. 1

The Sahasrara Chakra is the seventh centre, the coronal, which is at the top of the head and which, when stirred into full activity, is the most resplendent of all the centres of the astral plane, full of indescribable chromatic effects and vibrating with victorious and vertigenous rapidity. The realm of this Sahasrara Chakra or the higher astral plane is therefore described as *Satyam*, *Ritam*, *Brihat*—the Truth, the Law, the Vast. In this cosmic vastness which is supra-mental is situated the Logos or Linga, which is at once a Cosmic Medium, a Cosmic Memory and a Cosmic Agent. And the man who has realised the Logos or Linga of this Cosmic Consciousness is indeed the Cosmic Man, the much sought for object of occultism.

1 ఉన్నాని జోకి బ్రస్కరంథుడ మేల సహస్రదళ పద్మ ; అల్లి అమృతవిహదు ;
అల్లి ఓంకారస్త్రమాపనాగి గుహేశ్వరలింగమ సదా సన్మిహితను.

బ్రహ్మంద్రద కోసేయ వమాంది వమావను

నిమంలను నిదేణి తాప బల్లను

వమంవరిదా నిత్య సిమంగంగల్లదే

చమిం భూభారిగ్మంగిదు సమ్మదు.

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The existence of this higher astral plane, which is described by occultists as an imponderable 'Cosmic Medium', that is beyond the plane of normal sensual perceptions yet inter-penetrating and binding up the material world, has been sensed by many a philosopher, ancient as well as modern and traces of it may be detected in their writings. It is really identical with the 'Archetypal world', that is to say, with the world of Platonic Ideas, or *Yesod* of the Kabalah—the 'Perfect Land' of old Egyptian religion, in which the true or spirit forms of all created things are held to exist. Human consciousness in the course of its transcendence, passes from the normal sensual perceptions of the object to a deeper perception of the subject; it is this deeper and higher perception of a causal world that is symbolised in the 'archetypal plane' or world of Platonic Ideas in which are contained the realities, patterns or ideas, whose shadows constitute the world of appearance in which we dwell. When Plotinus asks us, "What other fire could be a better image of the fire which is there, than the fire which is here? or what other earth than this, of the earth which is there?", we are sure of a hint of that deeper and higher perception of the Causal World. The most distinctive feature of Professor Whitehead's philosophy is, as Professer Joad remarks, the postulation of eternal objects which, entering into the flux of events, confer upon the

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physical world the characteristics which it is seen to possess. Thus Whitehead's eternal objects bear a strong resemblance of Plato's forms, both in respect of their intrinsic nature and of their relation to what Plato called the world of becoming. At the beginning of his most substantial metaphysical work, *Process and Reality*, Professor Whitehead owns and welcomes the analogy and refers to Plato as his chief teacher. "If" says he, "we had to render Plato's general point of view, with the least changes made necessary by the intervening two thousand years of human experience, in social organisation, in aesthetic attainment, in science and in religion, we should have to set about the construction of a philosophy of organism."

Next, the Astral plane is regarded as constituting the 'Cosmic Memory' where the images of all beings and events are preserved as they are preserved in the memory of man. There the concepts of future creation are present in their completeness in the Eternal Now; 'all duration is now, all distance here'. On this theory Prophesy, that is, to read the past and future is possible only if the eyes of the mind open upon this timeless Astral World. The Supreme Substance, namely God had Descartes held, created two Substance, mind and matter--the essence of mind is Thought, and of matter Extension. Thought and Extension, according to Descartes, proceed on two parallel lines, but

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matters are so arranged that an event in the one is always accompanied by an event in the other. How is this possible unless we believe in the law of universal causation? But we find Descartes playing fast and loose with the law of causation. To Spinoza, Thought and Extension are one and the same thing—which thing is God, the only true reality of which they are merely appearances. But it is Leibniz who envisaged the *causal relation* between the material process of Extension and the ideal process of Thought. "All our thoughts and perceptions," says Leibniz, "are but the consequence contingent, it is true, of our precedent thoughts and perceptions, in such a way that were I able to consider directly all that happens or appears to me at the present time, I should be able to see all that will happen to me or that will ever appear to me." Is it not an endorsement on the saying of an occultist that the past and the future are rolled into the ever-present? Alas! by reducing the notion of *cause and effect* to a mere habitual association of ideas, Hume made it logically impossible to infer the past or to predict the future. But in spite of Hume's logic, we know that causation exists and there is an end of it.

Last, the Astral plane is a 'Cosmic Agent' which connects soul with soul since all beings live and move there in an ineffable completeness and unalterable oneness. In that Astral plane which is the archetype

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of our material world, is the Logos who is the *locus*, namely, the place of souls. He is also a power of effective will and intuitive knowledge always apparent in its unfailing works and spontaneously perfect in every process. Rishi Patanjali says that the indicator of the Logos is the 'word of glory', *Tasya vachakah pranavah*;1 and in him is the highest limit of the seed of *omniscience*, *Tatra niratishayam sarvajnabe-jam*.2 By putting in tune with the Logos or Isvara, an occultist or Yogi may attain to omniscience. Shri Arabindo the present Yogen of a high order, true to the Indian genius, endorses the view of Patanjali in his *Yogic Sandhana*: "He (Yogen) simply puts himself into relation with the thing itself, not with its form, name or quality but with itself. He may never have seen the form, heard the name or had experience of the quality, but still he can know the things. Because it is the thing itself and it is in himself and one with himself, that is, in the *Maha-karana* in a man. There all meet the *Atman* and are so entirely one with the *Atman* that by merely being in contact with it, I can know everything about it. Few Yogins reach that state. But all the same, even in the *Karana*, I can put myself in relation with the thing and know it by *Bhava*. I put myself, my soul into relation with the soul of the man I study or the thing I study. *Prajna* in me becomes one with the *Prajna* in him or it. How do I do this? Simply

1 तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः ।

2 तत्र निरतिशयं सर्वज्ञतीजम् ।

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by becoming passive and facing him or it in my *Buddhi*. If my *Buddhi* is quite pure or fairly pacified, if my *Manas* is *shanta* then I get the truth about him. I get it by *Bhava*, by spiritual or subjective realization".

We may see then that occultism, in the real sense of the term, is neither magic nor witch-craft but a sustained and all-comprehending effort at self-knowledge, namely, knowledge of the self working in and through the *Shusrara* ' *hukra*, the higher plane. This coronal centre is characterised by cosmic vastness, a grandeur of the Supreme Light, the treasure-house of miraculous knowledge. It is the *Divina Mensura* of the mighty forces; and the man who has realised this coronal centre is indeed the Divine or Cosmic Man who is the measure of the universe. Not *Humina Mensura* but *Divina Mensura* is the decided object of real occultism; it is this *Divina Mensura* that is termed *Shiva-Yoga* and the Divine Man is called *Shiva-Yogin* in Virashaivism. Allama Prabhu, who is believed by the Virashaiva tradition to have a strange encounter with Gorakhanath, (a fact which still needs historical corroboration), was such a *Shiva-Yogin*, a Cosmic Man who had attained to the *Vyomakaya*, the cosmic medium. Although Virashaivism has produced a galaxy of occultists less in status to Allama, yet in these days, the occult-sense of *knowing* is fast fading away only to feast upon the mystic sense of *being*, that is, the emotional side of our nature.

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A religion, in an esoteric sense is a *quality of life*; the soul of Lingayat religion so far as its esoteric side is concerned is to be sought in *Linganga-Samarasya*, the integral association of God and Soul, the technique of which is *Sut-sthala*. The history or evolution of humanity, as we are able to read it to-day discloses as its primary phase a gradual development of physical organism. The rise of organic forms out of what we term the inorganic world and a slowly increasing complexity of structure through plant and animal to man characterises a biological process. And modern science, in so far as it is physical in its scope and biological in its function, may be regarded simply as a somewhat higher degree of this primary recognition of a material environment and necessity. In the second phase we have the emergence of that faculty which we call Mind passing from its earliest manifestation as a mere instinctive knowledge adapted to the more

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immediate needs of the physical organism, into that higher quality which we apprehend as a rational mind or intellect. As man rises from physical necessity to an intellectual need and desire, which later on finds expression in that deeper inquiry into the nature of life and consciousness, Philosophy comes to play its part. From outward and known physical effects we pass to the search for an inner and subjective cause. But this is neither a final stage nor is it the highest quality of our life. As a further stage we have the growth and development of a moral and spiritual sense, born of a gradually evolving intuition and perception of a deeper order of things than that of merely physical and material, and of a certain relationship of the individual to the larger cosmos by which we are environed and of which we are a part. It is this inner perception of quality of life which is broadly classified under the term Religion : the dawn of a moral sense, of ideas of duty, sacrifice, virtue and above all of Intuition.

Thus in a certain sense we may say that Philosophy is higher than Science and Religion is higher than Philosophy, that each of these expresses not merely an additional quality in our life which the other lacks, but also a quality which is deeper in our nature and further in our evolution. The province of science is to garner facts, to observe, to record; to classify and to demonstrate. Science is an exact and experimental

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knowledge of the relation and proportion of things in all regions, in which facts can be observed and experimented. It endeavours to formulate the laws which govern phenomena of the physical universe, but in doing this it leaves untouched, the great problem of our life and consciousness. Philosophy takes the facts which Science brings to light and states them in larger terms. It states the real fundamental problem of the relation of consciousness itself to this external world of phenomena, the living vital fact of the existence of subject or Knower, and the relation of this subject to the external world as the object which is known or perceived. But Religion with its inner perception of the cosmic order, unites subject and object through the comprehension of common self-existence. In man's great quest for truth it is always a deep and an indefinable intuition which gives rise to what presently becomes a clearly formulated Science and Philosophy; and deepest of all in our nature lies the intuition of Religion. Religion then is that quality of soul which prompts it to a passionate search for the source of its existence, from which it is separated in consciousness and towards which it is continually moving. The stronger this intuition becomes, the higher becomes its expression in the individual as morality, duty, sacrifice, virtue, love and these not as something enforced by law but as the spontaneous outflow of the soul from its own nature. These are the foundations

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of all social as well as of all individual well being When they decay, when the religious ideal becomes feeble or obscured, the individual, the community or the nation falls into decadence and death.

Lingayatism is essentially a Religion, the soul of which as we have said is to be sought neither in the *Panchachara* nor in the *Astavarana*, but in the *Lingangasamarasya*, the technique of which is *Sat-sthala*. *Panchachara* and *Ashtavarana* are the historical forms in which an inner quality of the religious soul expresses itself from time to time as creed or dogma or worship. And these historical forms must of necessity be imperfect and mutable. No greater mistake can be made than to suppose that any finality can be arrived at in them any more than in science or philosophy; for nothing that can be stated by the formal mind is more than relatively true. In this sense, even *Lingangasamarasya* and its technique *Sat-sthala* would be merely the findings of the formal mind since the final religion is formless and creedless. It is participation in the One Life which is 'no respector of persons'. But the clear and pressing demand of the present age is that formulated religion, as presented by its authoritative exponents, should be rational, by which this much at least is meant, that no presentation of it shall come under the reproach of being antagonistic to the known fact of nature and experience.

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The demand is something more than the demand for a re-statement or re-formulation of old beliefs. It is a demand for a total abandonment of a method of religion which rests merely on tradition. It is now clearly recognised that any religion worth the name must rest on a much more stable foundation of history; that it must in fact rest on nothing less than the evolution of human thought and not on particular events whether true or otherwise. Individual systems may be founded on particular events, but individual systems are no longer required by enlightenment and reason; nothing short of universal principles which are true for all time and may be experimentally demonstrated at any time, can satisfy the present demand on the part of those who have read the book of nature and of history in a wider and nobler vision. Thus the demand is for actual knowledge of our spiritual life and powers as well as of our physical nature and environment. It is not the demand for a religion which shall pilot us as individuals safely to Heaven, but for one which shall enable us to realise in ourselves here and now the Divine powers, which do v belong to us in our own deeper nature, in its oneness with the whole of the cosmos. It is the demand which shall enable us to realise in an actual consciousness and quality of life that unity of the individual with the Man and of Man with the Universe. Let us in this larger light study the formulated Lingayat Religion.

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The *Lingadharana-Chandrika Shaivas* is a treatise written with a view of establishing the efficacy and veracity of wearing Linga, which is the distinctive mark of the Lingayats. Nandikeshvara, the author of the *Lingadharana-Chandrika* begins with an exposition of Linga both in its internal and external forms : ¹

1 *Jyotir-linu,anusandhana-rupa-antar-linga-dharana-pratipada,am.*

2 *Istulinu-rupa-bahya-dharana-pratipadanam*

The study of Linga as adumbrated by Nandikeshvara demands a dual approach, one the psychological and the other cosmological. We do not mean, by a cosmological approach, an enumeration of the 36 principles, which are the common stock of the Shaivas, the Virashaivas and even of the Shaktas, but we mean an appreciation of the cosmos both in its idea and form the stand-point of *Trio*—matter, life and spirit—as revealed by science, philosophy and religion. Matter is form and there is no form which does not express a life; spirit is life and there is no life that is not limited by a form. Hence the manifested universe is *Kuru,hu* (କୁରୁହୁ) a cosmic form instinct with life and informed by spirit.

This spirit is the self of the cosmos which is self infinite and indefinable. If this infinite and indefinable is, it is necessarily a pure Existence, *Sat* or *Iru,hu* (ଇରୁହୁ).

1 ज्योतिर्लिङ्गानुसःधानरूपान्तःलिङ्गधारणप्रतिपादनम् ।

2 इष्टलिङ्गरूपवाह्यलिङ्गधारण,तिपादनम् ।

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It cannot be summed up in any quality or quantity nor is it any aggregate of forms or a formal substratum of forms. If all forms, qualites or quantities were to disappear this would remain. Existence without quantity, without quality, without form is not only conceivable, but it is a one thing we can conceive behind these phenomena. When we say it is without them, we mean that it exceeds them, that it is something into which they pass in such a way as to cease to be what we call form, quality, quantity in the movement. So all things that are conditions and appearance of the movement pass into that from which they have come and there, so far as they exist, become something that can no longer be described by the terms that are appropriate to them in the movement. Therefore we say that the pure Existence or *Iruhu* is an absolute and in itself unknowable by our thought, although we can go back to it in a supreme identity that transcends the terms of knowledge. Hence the pure Existence is an omni-present Reality which is the truth of all life and existence whether absolute or relative, whether corporeal or incorporeal, whether intelligent or un-intelligent. The Reality is One and not a sum or concourse; but this Unity in its nature is indefinable. When we envisage it by the human mind we are compelled to proceed through an infinite series of conceptions and experiences. And yet in the end we are obliged to negate our largest

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conceptions, our most comprehensive experiences in order to affirm that the Reality exceeds all definitions. We arrive at the conclusion that from it all variations begin, in it all variations consist, and to it all variations return. All affirmations are denied only to lead to a wider affirmation of the same Reality. All antinomies confront each other in order to recognise one truth in their opposed aspects and embrace by the way of conflict their mutual unity. The pure Existents or *Sat* is the one besides which there is nothing else existent; *Iruhu* is the be-all and end-all.

Philosophy is an intellectual search after the fundamental truth of things ; the search conducted with a consistent and rigorous thinking culminated in the discovery of *Sat* as the self of things. If Philosophy is an intellectual search after the fundamental truth of things, Faith is an attempt to make that truth of things dynamic in the soul of man. To wear *Istalinga* always upon body is a distinctive mark of the Lingayat faith. Linga, as explained and understood by the Sharanas, is the materialisation of *Sat* both in idea and form. *Isti* means worship and it is only *Sat* the highest God-head that deserves worship. To carry *Ishtalinga* always upon the body is to instil it with the presence of God ; when the very cells of the body thus get saturated with the idea of the omni-present Reality the human body itself becomes *Linga-rupa*.

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The conception of Linga both in idea and form deserves special notice. We have already seen that *Sat* is self of things and that Linga, so far as idea is concerned, is none other than the Self. Has this God-head no form? Why, the manifested universe is its Form; then Linga so far as form is concerned, must be after the model of the Universe. Ah, the form is finite and perishable and has only three dimensions. Yes, the idea is infinite and imperishable and therefore it is the fourth dimension. The finite universe (*Kuruhu*-ಕುರುಹು) has therefore the infinite *Sat* (*Iruhu*-ಇರುಹು) as its source and support. *An* (ಅನ್), in Dravadian language, means source and support, and *Attam* (ಅತ್ತಮ್) stands for the finite universe; the compound word is *Ataman* (ಅತಮಾನ), the corrupt form of which is *Atman* in Sanskrit. Thus observes Father Heras, "In the old Dravidian language the word very likely was *Ataman*, a compound word, *Atam-an*. Now *Attam* in ancient Tamil means underworld and *An* means Lord *Ataman*, therefore, means 'the Lord of the underworld'. This word while passing into Sanskrit lost the second short *a* and by a natural reaction lengthened the first *A*, thus becoming *Atman*." We would, therefore, without any fear of contradiction like to say that Linga is *Atman*.

The conception of Linga as a symbol of the universe in a spheroidal form is quite an old one. The

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mind of the ancient man dallied lovingly with the universe in which it lived, moved and had its being. The ancient man being, endowed more with an astral vision, saw naturally the hidden side or the fourth dimension of the universe, which enabled him to portray Linga as at once greater than the great and smaller than the small. For the astronomers of to-day our whole universe is similarly the three dimensional surface of an enormous sphere, a sphere with more than three dimensions. The obvious regression of the Nebulae is the result of an expansion of space in which they are situated, and this expansion of space, in turn, depends upon the lengthening of the radius of the world sphere. And so, the whole universe would expand, as gas expands. This expansion doubles the distance of the Nebulae from us, according to Eddington, every 13 hundred million years, and according to the French astronomer Mineur, every two thousand million years. If astronomy proves the enormous greatness of the universe, physics, on the other hand, with its theory of atom, has reduced the universe to an inconceivable smallness. "An atom is a centre of force, a phase of electrical phenomena, a centre of energy active through its own internal make-up and giving off energy or heat or radiation." An atom is, as Lord Kelvin says, a vortex-ring or a centre of force and not a particle of which we understand as tangible substance. This ultimate particle of matter is now

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demonstrated to be composed of a positive nucleus of energy surrounded—just as is the sun by the planets—with many electrons or negative corpuscles. The elements differ according to the number and arrangement of these negative electrons around their positive nucleus, proton; and they rotate or move around this central energy of electricity as our planetary system rotates round the sun. Thus an entire solar system, as Prof. Soddy has pointed out, is to be seen in an atom. In these theories of the universe advanced by astronomy and physics we find a perfect justification of the description of Linga as the greatest of the great and the smallest of the small, *Anoraniyan mahato mahiyan*. 1

Is it not gratifying to read in this light, in the light that Linga is *Atman*, the following passages in the *Chhandogya* and the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishads*? "This self within the heart is smaller than a grain of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, (and let us add, smaller than an atom). This self within the heart is greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds"

1. અણોરણીયાન् મહતો મહીયાન् ।

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Does not the saying of Basava strike a similar chord ? i
 “This self under the form of mind being light, indeed is within the heart, small like a grain of rice or barley. He is the ruler of all, the Lord of all. He rules all this what-so-ever exists.” In the Gospels, many parables are devoted to the Kingdom of heaven, and this heaven is not only the paradise of the devout people, it is also the divine Self in man. The Kingdom of heaven is at the same time that which is smallest and that which is greatest, and Jesus Christ uses in this connection a similar image. “The Kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man taketh and soweth in his field ..which is indeed the least of all seeds ; but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.”

It is also interesting to learn that the conception of Linga as a symbol of the universe in spheroidal form is not so far distant from the most ancient and apparently

1. ಜಗದಗಲ ಮುಗಿಲಗಲ ಮಿಗೆಯಾಗಲ ಸಮ್ಮಗಲ.
 ಹಾತಾಳದಿಂದತ್ತತ್ವ ನಿಪ್ಪು ಶ್ರೀಚರಣ,
 ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಂಡದಿಂದತ್ತತ್ವ ಸಿಪ್ಪು ಶ್ರೀಮುಕುಬಿ.
 ಅಗನ್ಯ ಅಕ್ರಮಾಳ ಅಗೋಳಚರ ಲಂಗವೇ,
 ಕೂಡಲ ಸಂಗಮದೇವಯ್ಯ,
 ನೀವೇನ್ನ ಕರಣ ಲಕ್ಷ ಬಂದು ಭುಳಿಕಾರಯ್ಯ !

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most naive ones, describing our world in the form of an Egg. For we read in the *The Secret Doctrine* :

“In The Egyptian Ritual Seb, the God of Time is spoken of as having laid an Egg or the Universe.... The Mundane Egg was placed in Khoom, the water of space, or the faminine abstract principle ..*ka*. The mighty one remains in his Egg, during the struggle between the ‘children of the Rebellion’ and Shoo, the Solar Energy and the Dragon of the Darkness.

“We see the idea of Egg present in the Orphic and the Dionysiac mysteries. Icphyiy also shows it to be a representation of the world. In the *Orphic Hymns*, Eros Phanes evolves from the Divine Egg ..The Egg was sacred to Isis; is almost always represented holding a lotus in one hand and in the other a circle and a cross.

“Plato in his *Timaeus*, tells us that the universe is a sphere; and with some Greeks, the first born of the world was Dionysus, the God who sprang from the Mundane Egg.

“In the Scandinavian cosmogony, the Mundane Egg is again discovered in the fantom Germ of the Universe, which is represented as lying in the Ginnungagap, the cup of Illusion, *Maya*, the boundless and void Abyss.

“We read in the laws of Manu : When the Lord *Swayambhu* (self-existing) decided in his mind to

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imamate from His substance the various creatures, He produced first the waters in which He laid a germ. This germ became an Egg, shining like gold, and in which the Supreme Being was himself born in the form of *Brahma*, the father of all beings.

“The importance given, in religion and symbology, to certain birds, is due to the fact that they lay eggs. Such is the case for *Kalahamasa*, the swan of Eternity, in India or for Ibis, in Egypt. Even the Christians have to this day the sacred birds for instance the Dove, as the symbol of the holy the Ghost.”

The author of *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky, the gifted woman comments in the end as follows : “The symbol of an egg expresses the fact taught in occultism, that the primordial form of every thing manifested from atom to globe, from man to angel, is spheroidal, the sphere being with all nations, the emblem of eternity and infinity.”

The origin of Linga then, so far as historical study can solve the problem, is to be sought in a symbol of sphere which serves an emblem of eternity and infinity with all nations. Viewed in this impartial, charitable and catholic light, all the attempts of the scholars to explain away the origin of Linga as Lemurian or Mediterranean, as Tibetan or Tamilian, as Asiatic or Atlantic, as Aryan or Dravidian, are merely the offshoots

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of the discursive intellect, which only confirms the truth of the proverb, 'as the blind saw the elephant.'

Having thus proved the truth of *Istalinga* from a cosmological view-point, we now proceed to question the veracity of *Jyotirlinga* from a psychological view-point. The proper study of psychology is man, the conscious being. But in order to understand the real nature of man, it is necessary first of all to inquire into the nature of consciousness, the reality of which is all that we are sure of. Human consciousness is essentially self-consciousness, for even in the simplest process of sense-perception man is aware not merely of a change, but of the consciousness of a change. All human experiences, in brief, consist not of mere events, whether physical or psychical, but of recognitions of such events. What we apprehend therefore is never a bare fact but a synthesis of relations in self-consciousness which involves a subject as well as an object. The Recognitive School of the Kashmir Shaivism has brought this truth into bold relief. As evolution pre-supposes involution, so cognition presupposes re-cognition; man therefore in cognising an object recognises himself; that is, in knowing and becoming aware of any object, physical or psychical, he knows or becomes aware of his self. Because of this *a priori* state of consciousness man who is essentially a conscious being is termed *Jnata*, the knower, in Indian philosophy; for he knows the functions of the mind,

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the senses, the muscles and of himself as the self.

Stout defines consciousness as the awareness we have of ourselves and of our own experiences, as states of the Self—an inner sense—the function by which we perceive the mind and its processes, as the sight perceives the material facts. Father Maher defines it as the mind's direct intuitive and immediate knowledge either of its own operations or of something other than itself acting upon it; in other words, the energy of the cognitive act, and not the emotional or volitional acts as cognised. The definition of consciousness, according to two famous psychologists Stout and Maher, approximates to some extent to the Indian idea which holds it as *Samvit*, self-awareness, which is *Svayam-prakasha*, self-illuminating. Perception, emotion and conation are functions of the mind that take place according to mental laws, whether they are or are not illuminated by the light of consciousness. In ordinary psychic experience, this light of consciousness is inextricably interwoven with the functions of the mind; and can be discerned only when it is separated from the mind and contemplated apart from its functions. This pure consciousness (*Aruhu-எடுப்பு*) as apart from the unconscious (*Maruhu-எடுப்பு*) or personal consciousness in the words of William James, is *ahit*. William James is right in so far as he makes a distinction between pure consciousness and personal consciousness; but on account of his vision

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being blurred by Pragmatism, he could see consciousness as a perpetual stream and not as a steady light that knows no change.

Consciousness is Spirit that has an inherent power of illuminating the mental and bodily functions, which would otherwise remain unconscious. The mind of man is an organ composed of subtle matter and is not immaterial or spiritual. Sensation, perception, volition etc. are in Western philosophy called subjective states and treated as non-material. Indian philosophy analyses them into two factors, namely,

(1) a mental process internal but not subjective and
(2) the accompaniment of consciousness illuminating the process. The first is material and the second is immaterial. Mental processes are variously classed: the Sankhya attributes to the mind all psychic life while the Vaishesika regards it merely as an organ of attention. But almost all systems of Indian philosophy are agreed in regarding mind as matter. It is difficult to realise mind to be matter because of the fact that it derives a pseudo-subjectivity on account of its being an inner organ. When our muscles act our consciousness accompanies the action; but we can in thought separate the consciousness from the muscular action and realise the latter as a phenomenon of matter. But each man can study mental action only in the operations of his own mind;

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and as these are accompanied by the light of his own consciousness, the separation of these two and the appreciation of the difference of the nature of consciousness and of mental action, becomes a matter of difficulty.

Perception then should be clearly distinguished from apperception or consciousness. Plato and Aristotle use such phrases as 'the seeing of sight', 'the thinking of thought' to indicate consciousness apart from mental functioning. The *Kena Upanisad* uses strikingly similar phrases 'what speech does not enlighten but what enlighten speech' etc. Plotinus, among ancient philosophers first clearly formulated this distinction and calls apperception by the name of *Parakolonthesis* which is strongly reminiscent of *Chit-prakasha*. "Intelligence is the one thing and the apprehension of intelligence is another. And we always perceive intellectually, but we do not always apprehend that we do so." The idea that consciousness is not a necessary concomitant of mental operations is first clearly enunciated in modern European philosophy by Leibniz. "As a matter of fact our soul has the power of representing to itself any form of nature whenever the occasion comes for thinking about it; and I think that this activity of our soul is, so far as it expresses some nature, form or essence, properly the idea of the thing. This is in us and is always in us whether we are thinking of it or

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not." Leibniz means to say that all psychic life is in itself unconscious except in so far as the light of consciousness illuminates it and manifests it to the knower. It is this self-luminous consciousness that goes by the name of *Jyotirlinga*.

Jyotirlinga and *Istalinga*, the self of cosmos and the self of man are identically the same and so are one. The self of man is termed *Anya* which is *Chit-rupa*, the pure Conscient; the self of cosmos is termed *Linya* which is *Sat-rupa*, the pure Existent; and that *Anya* and *Linga* are one and the same is proved by the subjective mode of worship, that is, *Aham-grahopasana*. The realisation of the one existence in the apparent infinite multiplicity and complexity through self-awareness, is *Samarasa*, delight equal and equable. *Samarasya* is therefore *Ananda-rupa*. *Linganga-samarasya* then is a technical name of the Lingayat religion for the highest God-head, *Sachchidananda*. The Self of all whether in man or cosmos is an infinite, indivisible existence; of that existence the essential nature is infinite, imperishable force of self-conscious being; and of that self-consciousness the essential nature is, again, an infinite inalienable delight of being. God is *Sachchidananda*. He manifests himself as infinite existence of which the essentiality is consciousness, of which again the essentiality is self-delight. Delight cognising

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variety of itself seeking its own variety, as it were, becomes the universe. "If there were not", says the *Taittariya Upanisad*, "this all encompassing ether of delight of existence in which we dwell, if that delight were not our ether, then none could breathe, none could live." The cosmic existence of which we are a part is in its most obvious view a movement of force; but that force on close scrutiny proves to be a constant and yet always mutable rhythm of creative consciousness. And this rhythm is in its essence a play of the infinite delight of being ever busy with its own innumerable self-representation. The world-process then, is not a chaos as the materialist holds, but a fairly charming cosmos as the mystic observes. "Creation springs from one glad act of affirmation, the Ever lasting Yea, perpetually uttered within the depths of Divine nature.... The whole creation is the play of the Eternal Lover, the living, changing, growing expression of God's love and joy." It is participation in God's love and joy, penetration in the One Infinite Life that is in the objective of Lingayat religion.

The Divine Existence is pure and unlimited being in possession of all itself, it is *Sat*; whatever it puts forth in its limitless purity of self-awareness is truth of itself, *Satya*. The *Sat* in itself is a spaceless and timeless absolute of conscious existence that is bliss; but

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the cosmos is, on the contrary, an extension in space and time, a movement, a working-out, a development of relations and possibilities. Then there must be a power of knowledge and will which out of infinite potentiality determines relations, develops the results out of the seed, rolls out the mighty rhythms of cosmic Law. This power indeed is nothing else than the Force of *Sat* itself, it is *Vimarsha-shakti*. It creates nothing which is not in its own self existence, and for that reason all cosmic and individual law is a thing not imposed from outside but from within. All development is therefore self-development, all seed and result are a seed of truth of things and result of that seed determined out of its potentialities. In the universe there is then a constant relation of oneness and multiplicity; both between the One and the Many, and among the many themselves there is the possibility of an indefinite variety of relations. These relations are determined, as we have seen, by the inherent power of the Divine Truth. They exist at first as conscious relations between individual souls; they are then taken up by them and used as a means of entering into conscious relation with the Truth. It is this entering into various relations with the One Truth that is the object and function of Religion. All religions are justified by this essential necessity and Lingayat religion is no exception to this.

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We may state the object and function of Religion in another way, by saying that Truth is the perception of such a relation and proportion in apparent diversity that this becomes a realised and harmonious unity. There must necessarily be degrees of this perception and it is this graded perception of Truth that justifies the necessity of *Sat-sthala*, six steps of self-realisation, in Lingayat religion. The final perception of the unity of the whole universe would be the absolute Truth and therefore absolute Reality. Such a final perception, however, would not only transcend anything that we know as thought but also anything that we know as consciousness. Our perception of Truth or Reality will grow clearer and fuller as we approach to a consciousness of the Unitary nature of all that enters into our experience. We may, by a progressive expanding or a sudden luminous transcendence, mount up to this Truth in unforgettable moments or dwell in it during hours or days of greatest super-human experience. When we descend again, there are doors of communication which can keep always open or reopen even thought they should constantly shut. But to dwell there permanently on the last and highest summit of the Divine Truth is in the end the supreme ideal for our evolving human consciousness. And this ideal is nothing short of at one-ment or *Samurusya*, when the will

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of *Anga* becomes united with the will of *Linga*—which perfect union reveals itself not in self-annulment but in self-fulfilment. Read Urilinga Peddi's saying which is pregnant with the soul of Lingayat religion 1.

A religion in its esoteric-sense, is essentially Mysticism suggestive or expressive of a *unitary consciousness* that transcends the limitations of intellect. William James speaks eloquently of this characteristic. This over-coming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic states we both become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness. This is the ever-lasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences of clime and creed. In Hinduism, in Neo-Platonism, in Sufism, in Christian Mysticism, in Whitmanism we find the same recurring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity which ought to make a critic stop

1. ತತ್ತ್ವ ಪದ ಲಿಂಗವೆಂದರುಹಿ,
ತ್ವಂ ಪದ ಅಂಗವೆಂದರುಹಿ,
ಅಸಿ ಪದ ಪೂರ್ಣವೆಂದರುಹಿ,
ಅಂಗವೇ ಲಿಂಗ ಲಿಂಗವೇ ಪೂರ್ಣವೆಂದು,
ಇಂತಹ ಗುರುವು ಇಷ್ಟಲಿಂಗವ ಕೂಟಪ್ರಧಾನವಾದ ಬಳಿಕ
‘ತತ್ತ್ವಮಸಿ’ ಪದ ನಿಷ್ಟ ಅರಣದು
ಲಿಂಗ ಪದಿಷ್ಟಿಯ ವಿಶೇಷಜ್ಞರಾ.

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and think, and which brings it about that mystical classics have, as has been said, neither birthday nor native land. Perpetually telling of the unity of man with God, their speech antidates languages and they do not grow old. *Linganga-samurasya*, bereft of its technique is mysticism pure and simple that echoes the ancient nay, eternal Wisdom.

But religion has its exoteric side also; as exoteric it is a conventional expression of formal belief. If the esoteric side is the soul of religion the exoteric is its form. Forms of religion, like every thing else in this world of forms, must change and decay. They will have their way and cease to be, as knowledge grows in gigantic strides. New religions, so called crop up and overlap the decay of old forms and formulas. New teachers, new hieophants arise, and the new wine must be put into new bottles. Yet the old forms may and must persist for many an age. They do so in virtue of their acquired momentum and vested interest as well as from the fact that each does actually, for the time being, express a fundamental fact in human experience. Gautama Buddha was a reformer of Brahmanism and the laws of Manu; yet Brahmanism still holds sway over millions of souls. Not-with-standing Christianity as a reformation of the Jewish religion and the Law of Moses, Judaism is still the religion of millions of followers and

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Mosaic tradition. And Basava was a reformer of Shaivism and a revolter of Varnashrama, yet Shaivism and Varnashrama have had their spell over millions and millions of souls.

Basava is the founder of Virashaivism in the sense in which Buddha is of Buddhism and Christ of Christianity. Prof. M. R. Sakhare is clear and emphatic on this point. "To the solution of the problem—who is the founder of the Virashaiva faith?—we have a clue in the very word 'Virashaiva'. By the time the 12th century was ushered in Jainism and Vaishnavism had gained ascendancy. Shaivism in the South had reached a crisis and time had come for it to rise or to fall. But down it was not to go; for by the time the century had half passed there shot into space a great hero who revolutionised the Shaivite faith in a short space of time. The attempt was heroic and the achievement was brilliant. Shaivism rose triumphant over the trammels of Varnashrama and the result was Virashaivism. The hero happened to be the Prime Minister of the then King of Karnatak. He was a Kannada man and what wonder if Kannada become the language of the scriptures of the new heroic religion and Karnatak become the home of the new faith as it is even to-day! That was how the new faith came to be heroically founded and that is why it has come to be

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called Virashaiva religion, meaning the heroic Shaiva faith. That was how again Basava became the King of a great religion though the Premier of a little province."

Three things emerge from the labour of Prof. Sakhare, three things of which Navakalyana Math has already stood as a champion: Lingayatism is the faith professed and followed by the Karnatak Virashaivas; Basava is the founder of this faith and *Vachan-i-shastra* are the scriptures that embody the principles of Lingayatism.

P E N T A G R A M

“ The glorious Divine person had scarcely placed his hand upon my head when the worldly bondage of mine disappeared. He made me like himself. Behold ! He manifested himself by annihilating isolation between myself and Himself. The great divine Image, *Mahalinga*, that was in the palm of his hand, He established in the palm of my hand. The great divine image of the palm of my hand, He established in the inner chamber of my mind. The great divine image of the inner chamber of my mind, He established in the inner-most recess of my heart. The great divine image of the inner-most recess of my heart, He established in the super-mind or in the illuminating reflex of my inner mind. The great divine image of the super-mind, He established in the super-conscious so that the divine consciousness permeated my body both within and without. Such is the working of my glorious Lord Chenna Mallikarjuna. ”

—Akka Mahadevi

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Artists opine that imagery is the vital need for the complete satisfaction of the human soul. Bare knowledge of facts gives only information but a living contact with personality which reveals itself through imagery brings about a complete satisfaction to the faculty of imagination. In the store house of imagination not all the images but only those that have touched our vital chords of life, that have established a close contact with our personality, that are significant for their own sake and that add wealth to our consciousness thus making our life richer for us, are stored. These interestingly significant and immensely rich images find their permanence in our minds through the selective process of intellect. It is this selective process of reason which enables us to establish a living and real contact with the world through the range of our artistic emotions. Hence the artistic emotionalisation of life is the end which the artists have set before themselves. This selective process trans-values only those images that have permanent interest to our minds, that help us to grow in the delicate net-work of our temperament but rejects those that fail to have any response to their insistent calls from us. This process of selection and rejection is genuinely human, supremely artistic. This is a step on the right road to the divinisation of life.

But the process of divinisation of life is to be had in the correct and comprehensive manner of establishing

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the closest contact with the Divine Personality. Now-a-days, a truer insight has restored personality to its throne in almost all the departments of life. In the last century it was generally the usage to talk in terms of 'Laws and tendencies and movements', and it all sounded very detached, impersonal and tremendously scientific. Economics was branded as a dismal science just because the existence of personality was sedulously ignored. It was John Ruskin who insisted that behind economic laws were living personalities and made men realise that, whatever generalisations you might make, humanity was involved. Henry George made economic abstractions come to life. In his *Progress and Poverty* he made it clear that any science divorced from human life would soon turn out to be a Gordian Knot, the paradox of Sphinx and modern civilisation had had to face this problem. We may have advanced beyond or discarded as fallacious the economic or political theories of these writers; but we are indebted to them for re-discovering and re-emphasising the fact of personality which is too easily overlooked in an age of mass-movements and mass-production. In consequence of this revival of interest in personality, psychology has come to the fore-front to study personalities; the child, the adolescent, the abnormal type, the worker—all are weighed in new scales only to arrive in the end at a decision, that it is not the principle but the personal factor that sways the human life.

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As in science so in art, nay, even in trade and industry it is personality that counts. What then is personality? *It is more easily detected than defined.* We may observe the difference between two musicians. They may play the same composition correctly, but one may be faultless and flat and un-inspiring while the other may be putting something of himself into it which is not in the score. We cannot define it, but we call it the players temperament or Personality. It is this peculiar and elusive temperament that is called 'Personal magnetism', which plays a very important role in religion. It will be readily granted that this has its perils also. More dangerous is the exploitation of personality for unworthy ends and the foolish habit of attaching undue importance to particular personalities, which encourages and is fostered by the unscrupulous or unworthy that thrive upon it. Worst of all is the undisciplined devotion to human personality in some rather unhealthy forms of religion. It does not mean that there is no place for personality in religion but it is clear that place must be formed for personality in religion; otherwise, we shall be leaving out all that is most rich and vital in experience. The development of religions points unmistakable to the truth that the place of personality in religion is the central place. If we consider the pagan religions, we will be convinced with

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one profound truth, namely, that man cannot be satisfied to attribute natural phenomena to mechanical laws but seeks to relate them to personal agencies. The rivers, rocks and trees were thronged with personal beings, who in some way were responsible for natural activities. This polytheism was only a step on the road to a right belief in God. The next step was taken by monotheism, the belief in one God, who is a just God, a loving God that controls and directs nature by this personal will. This imperative need of discovering personal agencies behind the natural phenomena drove irresistably man's search after the final truth until it culminated in the revelation of a God manifest in the flesh. To manifest God in one's own flesh and bone, that is, to divinise the whole of life is the alpha and omega of real mysticism and Yoga.

Mysticism explains the principles of metaphysics in terms of personality; mysticism means relationship to a person. When we have said that we have only opened a fresh problem, How is that relation to be made real ? Virashaivism has hit upon a method of establishing a living and close contact with the Divine Person by placing the *Istalinga* or the divine image upon oneself; *Istalinga* represents the Divine Person or rather it is the Personality represented. It is in the words of Virashaiva mystic 'Grace'. "The grace really means an all-pervading presence and peace central to all existence. So long as

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one is thinking of the form as a thing, however holy, sacred or symbolic, it will profit him nothing; but directly one passes to the identification with the presence, one knows he is coming in contact not with an object but with a personality. Through contact with the Divine Personality one accepts all and rejects none; he takes into himself all joys, sorrows, thoughts, aims and hopes of the world around us and returns them enriched and transmuted into a sublime and serene commerce. If growth is possible by contact with personality, the contact should then range, as Akka Mahadevi observed, from the spiritual to the material, as matter and spirit are the base and summit of life. It is this synthetic vision of life combined with innermost heartfelt aspiration of possessing God not only in the spirit or psyche, but even in the palm of hand, so that the whole of the body may be infused with God-consciousness both within and without, that compelled the Virashaiva to feel sincerely, think logically and see comprehensively the imperative need of wearing upon himself the Divine image or *Istalinga* which has brought him the nickname of *Lingayata*.

Lingaga-dharana or wearing of Linga is the distinctive mark of the Virashaivas. But Linga, as interpreted by the Virashaiva mystics, is the Supreme, the source and support of all existence, the ground and goal of all evolution. Linga is therefore the ultimate reality from

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which all beings are born, by which those that are born, live and move and in which they enter after dissolution. It is for this reason that the etymological meaning of Linga is *Liyate yatra gamyate iti Lingah*.¹ Some times the word Linga is derived from the root *Gama* alone meaning to go deep, to penetrate in, to understand as in the case of *Adhigama*. Hence Linga means the object sought by the Yogi and the object is none else than the highest Godhead. In the Vedic terms Linga is *Pusan*, *ekarse yama surya prajapatih*.² Linga is the *Pusan* the fosterer or increaser, for “He enlarges and opens man’s dark and limited being into a luminous and infinite consciousness; He is *Ekarse*, the sole seer, the seer of the oneness and knower of the self and leads the Yogi to the highest sight; He is *Yama*, the controller or ordainer, for He governs man’s action and the manifested being by the direct law of truth, *Samadharma* and therefore by the right principle of our nature; He is *Surya*, the divine illuminator, who exceeds mind and forms the pure self-luminous truth of things. His rays are the thoughts that proceed luminously from the truth

1 लीयते यत्र गम्यते इति लिङ्गः ।

2 पूषन् एकर्षे यम सूर्य प्रजापतिः ।

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but become deflected and distorted, broken up and disordered in the reflecting and dividing principle, mind. A luminous power proceeding from the Father of all existence, *Prajapatih*, He reveals in Himself the divine *Purusa* of whom all beings are the manifestation."

To the Virashaiva mystic then, Linga is the absolute Truth, the light of supreme consciousness, the abode of infinite delight. If Linga is the Supreme, the Infinite, naturally a question suggests itself to the thinking mind, why is that symbol round the neck of a Virashaiva? Yes, it is a symbol, but symbolic of what? of the universe! Why is it symbolic of the universe? because God pervades the universe and yet far exceeds it; he is both immanent and transcendent. He is at once the changing movement and the changeless Master. Let one read the wise saying of the ancient seer: *Tad-jati tannjati taddure tadvantike tadantara-sya sarvasya tadvat sarvasyasya bahyatah* । "It moves and yet it moves not, it is far and (at the same time) near. It is located within all, and yet, it resides outside all these." The universe is a system of moving or changing things, but

। तदेजति तन्नजति तद्दूरे तद्वितिके तन्त्ररस्य सर्वस्यतदु
सर्वेश्वास्य व्राह्यतः ।

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this change is real and not illusory since the change is always with reference to a centre. If change were merely an illusion there would have been no need for a background. Because of the insistence of the illusory nature of the universe Buddhism ended in *Nirvana*. But Virashaivism has the knack to see that every change is a change with reference to a centre. A changing substance cannot be supported by an equally changing substratum. Virashaivism calls the changing substance *Chara*, the dyanamic, and the unchanging substratum, *Sthira*, the static: and between the two it intuits coherent relation "The mystics," says Evelyn Underhill, "have resolved the perpetual opposition between the personal and impersonal, the transcendent and immanent, the static and dynamic aspects of the Divine Nature, between the Absolute of philosophy and the sure true friend of devotional religion. They have done this not by taking these apparently incompatible aspects, one after the other but by ascending to a height of spiritual intuition at which they are, as Ruysbroeck said, 'melted and merged in the unity' and perceived as the completing opposites of a perfect whole."

"God is here felt to be not the final abstraction, but the one actuality. He inspires, supports, indeed inhabits both the devotional, conditional finite world of

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becoming and the unconditioned, non-successional infinite world of being; yet utterly transcends them both. He is the Omni-present Reality, the all-pervading within whom 'the worlds are being told like beads.' Considered as Immanent spirit, He is the mind within the mind. The need felt by mystics for both these ways of describing reality is a proof of the richness and balance of their spiritual experience, which neither cosmic nor anthropomorphic symbols, taken alone could express."

So the Virashaiva mystic says that one should move from the form to the formless, 1 from the definite to the indefinite, from the known to the unknown. In thus moving from the finite to the infinite there is a formidable obstacle in the path of the mystic. The obstacle in the pilgrim's path is not consciousness in general, but self-consciousness, that is, the consciousness of the Ego. The Ego is the limitation, that which opposes itself to the Infinite. For the infinite by its inherent self-formative Energy can at once dwell in the consciousness of multiplicity and relativity as well as in the consciousness of unity and identity and is therefore not bound by ignorance. But the Ego, being

1 ఆ కారవిదిదు ఆచ్చణే పూజనే మాడబేళ్లద
నిరాకారవ సంబలాగదు.

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unable so to dwell, identifies itself with the object in the movement absorbingly, to the apparent exclusion of the knowledge which remains behind veiled, at the back of the mentality. The movement of mind in nature is thus able to conceive of the object as reality and the inhabitant as limited and determined by the appearance as of the object. It conceives of the object, not as an immanation in one of its frontal appearance, but as itself a separate existence standing out from the cosmos and it similarly conceives of the Inhabitant. This is the illusion of ignorance which falsifies the realities. The illusion is called *Ahankara*, the separative ego-sense, which makes each being conceive of itself as an independent personality. The result of this separation is an inability to enter into harmony and oneness with the universe and a consequent inability to possess and enjoy it. The mystic therefore educates the Ego to transfer its centre of self-activity to an organ of revelation of the Infinite Being and to live a life of affection for and one-ness with the universe. Hence the ideal of the great contemplatives, the end of their long education is to evolve a large impersonal personality and to heighten sympathy into constant experience of world-oneness; is to become the modes of the Infinite. Filled with an abounding sense of the Divine Life, of

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ultimate and adorable Reality, the mystics develop the most profound and vital methods of psychological self-discipline and self-development so that the mental and the psychical life of man may express the Divine Life through the utmost possible expansion of its own richness, power and complexity. And the saying of Akka Mahadevi is a beautiful monograph of the method of psychological discipline and self-development through the contact of the Divine personality. The method finds itself reflected in five stages, according to her version; namely *Kara-sthala*, *Manu-sthala*, *Bhava-sthala*, *Jnana-sthala* and *Sarvangalinga-sthala*. The psychological method as adumbrated by Akka Mahadevi is a five pointed path designed to achieve mystic realisation.

Generally psychology aims at rendering our knowledge of *human nature* more exact and more systematic in order that we may control ourselves more wisely and influence our fellow-men more effectively. Hence the most satisfying answer of psychology seems to be that it should help us to a better understanding of human nature. But human nature has its basis as well as its summit; it has its basis in the sub-conscious or in the instinctive energy as the modern psychology observes, its summit in the super-conscious. Modern psychology looks all right at the base but looks askance

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at the summit. Sub-conscious and the super-conscious are but the twin formulations of the same nature. The key-note of the sub-conscious is Life, the key-note of the super-conscious is Light. In the sub-conscious knowledge or consciousness is involved in action, for action is the essence of life. In the super-conscious action re-enters into light and no longer contains involved knowledge but is itself contained in a supreme consciousness.

Between the sub-conscious and the super-conscious intervenes the intuitional knowledge, the foundation of which is conscious identity between that which knows and that which is known. "It is that state of common self-existence in which the knower and the known are one through knowledge." Modern psychology deals admirably with the subtleties of the *Libido* or the *Elan vital*, that is, the sub-conscious which runs through the triple activities of the physical, mental, and vital; but it leaves out of account the intuitional and the super-conscious as being foreign to its treatment. Indian psychology, on the other hand, looking at human nature not piece-meal but comprehensively, gives a correct and complete view of Life ranging from the sub-conscious to the super-conscious. In the saying of Akka Mahadevi, the *Kara-sthala*, *Mana-sthala* and *Bhava-sthala* are the ambit of the sub-conscious. *Jnana-sthala* pertains to the

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intuitive knowledge, whilst *Sarvangalinga-sthala* is the super-conscious *par excellence*.

Kara-sthala is of the action and of the physical plane. Most of our actions are done sub-consciously. The saying that 'Practice maketh perfect' is merely an indication of the sub conscious mind which learns to do the task easily, and by so doing, takes it off our conscious hands. For the sub-conscious is a reservoir of unlimited tireless force, it is the mine of nature, it possesses extraordinary powers and intelligence but no inspiration. The sub-conscious mind, if led aright, is a very good instrument that reduces all repeated thoughts and actions into habit which, in course of time, become part and parcel of the very life. Every time a bad action is indulged in, wonderful changes take place in the nervous system, profound alterations are made in the brain centres and energy becomes stored up in certain cells so as to make it easier to do the wrong act on a future occasion. It is equally true that every time a good action is done, similar changes, but in a reverse direction, take place which prompt the occurrence of the same action, easier in the future. Thus by conscious right action, a good habit is formed which becomes, in course of time, the character that affects the whole of life.

The aim of *Kara-sthala* is the building of character; character, as the psychologists opine, is the system of

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directed conative trends. Character of the finest type is that which is complex, strongly and harmoniously organised and directed towards the realisation of higher goal or ideal. It is true that we harbour primitive desires and primordial impulses but these can be transmuted into noble action and high achievement by directing the thought to higher and better things. For example, the power of sex, that is, *Retas* becomes transformed into brain power, that is *Ojas*, if the thought and attention are completely transferred from sex to intellectual pursuits. If however the thought is allowed to dwell upon sex or passion, then the kingdom becomes divided against itself and man begins to drift towards the abyss. The word man comes from the root 'Mana-to think,' and man is the thinking being. Thought is therefore the distinctive mark which raises man far above the animal kingdom. Right thought then is necessary to right conduct if the training of right thought is the objective of *Manasthala*. "Thought is not essential to existence nor its cause but it is an instrument for becoming. I become what I see in myself. All that thought suggests to me, I can do; all that thought reveals in me I can become. This should be man's unshakable faith in himself, because God dwells in him."

We may see by this that it is not possible to overcome evil habits by fighting them; for the more we fight them,

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the stronger they become. The way of escape is not by fighting evil or wrong habits but by turning the thought and attention to better and higher things. Whatever we focus our attention upon or whatever it is that we think to idealise, our sub-conscious mind endeavours to actualise and make real in our life. It is for this reason that the will must be used not to fight the habit but in raising and directing the thought to something higher and better. Alas ! a change must take place in the heart of the individual before he can aspire these higher and better things. For aspiration is the intense application to acquire moral sentiments such as forgiveness, kindness, justice, etc. It is the longing for heavenly things—for righteousness, compassion, purity and love as distinguished from desire, which is the longing for earthly things,—for selfish possessions, personal dominance, low pleasures, and sexual gratifications. When the rapture of aspiration touches the mind it becomes renewed and its thoughts are transmuted into inspired talks. For aspiration is the twin angel to inspiration, it unlocks the gates of the heart which is the seat of finer and tender emotions that lead the way to peace. To thirst for righteousness, to hunger for the pure life, to enter the path of peace by rising in holy rapture on the wings of angelic aspiration—this is the promise of the *Bhava-sthala*; this is the right road to

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wisdom or intutional knowledge. "Mental forces like molecular, have their opposite poles or modes of action; and when the negative pole is, there also is the positive. Where ignorance is wisdom is possible; where passion abounds peace awaits; where there is much suffering, much bliss is near. Sorrow is the negation of joy; sin is the opposite of purity; evil is the denial of good. Where there is an opposite there is that which is opposed. The adverse evil in its denial of the good, testifies to its presence. The one thing needful, therefore, is the turning round from the negative to the positive; the conversion of the heart from impure desires to pure aspirations; the transmutation of the passionnal forces into moral powers."

The purified action, the enlightened mind, the illumined heart open the self to a new, a higher, a wider mode of consciousness which is a distinctive mark of the super-mind. We have already seen that the sub-conscious mind, though it be wonderful, is merely instinctive lacking originality and inspiration. But all inspiration and originality come from the super-mind; all poets and powerful writers draw their inspiration from this source. One who is able to use this higher mind develops the divine quality of originality. If even a person is to bring forth a new idea that shall enrich humanity and add to the common good, it must come

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through this super-mind. For what we get from the sub-conscious mind is the outcome of facts and knowledge supplied to it; what we get from the super-mind is direct inspiration from higher planes. Rising into the higher plane of the super-mind, man is lifted above inharmony and disturbance. Hence in this higher realm the Truth is viewed at once as the essence and the image. When the Truth is thus realised and known, not as an opinion or an idea but as an experience, as a possession, then calm vision is acquired and tranquil joy abides through all vicissitudes. The life here is founded not upon fleeting impulses but upon abiding laws, whereby it is ruled not by passions but by principles. In its clear and calm atmospheres the orderly sequence of all things is revealed, so that man is able to know Truth and to see things as they really are, and not as they falsely appear to the sense:—

The super-mind is then only accessible to him who is more delicately attuned to its finer vibrations and one who is properly attuned becomes a fit recipient of divine wisdom or *Jnana*. This is the secret of the *Jnana-sthala*. In this stage the mystic intuits all things by direct knowledge, since all knowledge springs from within and his self learns to universalise itself transcending the limitations of the sense-mind and the shakles of egoism. This deep and continuous urge of the soul to

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universalise itself drives it towards the integrality of the higher Nature which endows the soul with the most extraordinary force of accomplishment combined with an immense drift of creative imagination and original thought that marks the prophet. Such a prophetic soul can read the will of God, the logic of events and can put itself in tune with the universe and divine Force that manifests itself in the mighty working of the Time-Spirit.

Lastly the soul ascends from the *Jana-sthala* to *Sarvanga-linga-sthala*, the state of the super-consciousness *parexcellence*. It is the realm of an ineffable Light and infinite Delight where the soul becomes itself steeped in the Supreme, bringing about a *Yoga* or union which is conveyed by the simile of a pool of salt water in which every particle is penetrated by the salt. This all embracing but complex unity with the Supreme secretly but divinely compels the soul to look up from its cosmic consciousness to the transcendental and to derive from that all its sense of being to movement of works. In this luminous transcendental state the sense of being is only spontaneous outflow from the Supreme; the movements of works is only a divine movement of the Eternal. This super-conscious or the transcendent state, therefore, leads the soul to an abiding peace and an all-embracing grace which can not only be enjoyed

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for oneself but communicates to other. It is this power of communication either by word or deed or by thought or will that marks the real state of the *Sarvanga-lingin*, that is, the Divine person who has mastered the divine Art of Life. He is, as it were, a dyanamo of divine electricity which sends its currents thrilling and radiating through mankind, so that the Soul of humanity may be transfigured by its mere inflow.

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The term *Gnosis* means an esoteric knowledge, knowledge about the septenary constitution of man, knowledge about the structural facts of the universe and knowledge about supra-cosmic Infinite or the Absolute. It is *Gupta-vidya*, the secret science, the most conclusive evidence of which is found in oriental civilizations that testify to the existence of occult powers of perception and of an occult fraternity to which only the highly developed truth-seekers are eligible. Yet it is customary with Western thinkers to blindly ignore oriental knowledge and to start the history of any thought or movements with Greece. To the Western thinker who is accustomed to view Greece as the matrix of all thoughts and movements—a view which is only partial and prejudicial—the term *Gnosis* seems to have its source and origin in the Eleusinian and other Mystery cults which always implied an *initiation*. The rise of

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Ecclesiastical Christianity, however, overtook many of the rites and terms previously associated with Eleusinian and Orphic cults and they were in turn represented as originating in and belonging exclusively to the new Religion. Like all the Pagan or pre-Christian origin of Christianity, much of this connection of the new religion with Gnosticism and the Initiatory Mysteries is lost in obscurity, though modern scholarship succeeded in tracing a few links. Whatever may have been the original nature and source of these ancient Mystery cults, from which the term Mysticism is thus derived, it is evident that Mysticism is now no longer connected with the great tradition of a true esoteric knowledge or Gnosis, carefully guarded and only handed on to the most tried and approved individuals.

With the decay of Gnosticism and the Mystery cults there does not seem to have been any real cessation of tradition of existence of this great esoteric knowledge. It was only that its possibility was withdrawn from the knowledge of the world at large and confined more strictly to secret schools and communities, owing to the persecution by the Christian Church. It is therefore difficult, though not impossible, to trace any connected historical links in this tradition. Still it is gratifying to learn that attempts are being made to revive the tradition of occult science and to keep ablaze the torch of Ancient

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Wisdom. An enormous and widespread revival of this Ancient Wisdom took place in the later part of the last century, through the indefatigable efforts of the remarkable and gifted woman, Madame H. P. Blavatsky. In 1875 she founded the Theosophical Society and thus inaugurated that modern movement known as Theosophy; which has gone a great way in introducing oriental religious philosophy to the occidental world. The movement claims to be a revival of the Secret Science, *Gupta-vidya*, directly inspired by great teachers or Masters belonging to a supreme Hierarchy of Initiates, that watches over and guides the efforts of individuals and of the Race as a whole towards the consummation of Self-knowledge or knowledge of the Self.

It is pertinent to question whether, without such teaching and guidance from Hierarchy of Initiates, the Race could ever have attained unaided the great truth in religion and philosophy which we possess either of to-day or of by-gone age. We have to revise this popular theory of the direct inspiration by God or an Angel in the light of ontological assumption when humanity is tending fast to over-pass the anthropomorphic conception of Divinity. As also we must get rid of the extreme opposite view that man had no inspired guidance and that he has been entirely cut off from beings in the invisible or unseen world, beings who are as much beyond him in their evolution as he is beyond his original proto-plasmic cell. Above all we

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must relinquish the indolent idea that all these ancient traditions about the Gnosis have their origin merely in a crude animism and nature worship. If we are to subscribe ourselves to the view, there exists *a priori* the possibility of a supreme knowledge as ontology proves, we cannot easily deny or disprove the existence of elder Brothers of the Race, who in long past ages or in previous cycles of evolution have already accomplished the real knowledge or realisation of Self. Nor can we conveniently brush aside the existence of *Intelligences* in almost infinite grades that link up the limited consciousness of the individual on this physical plane with the Cosmic consciousness of the Logos, since there is an unbroken continuity of Life represented by various orders of beings, of which the individual is an almost infinitesimal unit. Hence the belief in an unbroken line of communication through all these states, so that at whatever stage the individual may be, he will always find the possibility of communicating with individuals—whether incarnate or disincarnate—who represent a further stage than that which he has himself attained. Thus in principle, Theosophy is bound to believe in a Hierarchy of Masters in an unbroken line up to the Logos Himself.

Our object is not to bring forward historical evidence for the existence of such a Hierarchy of Initiates nor is it our aim to support the claims of any particular School or movement which professes to be in

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direct touch with it. But our endeavour is to represent broad principles which will appeal to an inner intuition rather than to an outer reason. For the great mass of humanity the divine origin and the latent possibilities of their nature must doubtless still remain unrecognised, so long as they are Agnostic or Atheistic. And the ordinary run of mankind seems always to be drifting towards the gratification of pleasure of the lower nature. It is the pleasure-principle of the sub-conscious, as psycho-analysis observes, that dominates the deeds and needs of an ordinary man. So it is of no use trying to force knowledge on those who are un-ready for it. Every individual has a *line* which he cannot at present transcend; it is this line or lineage that represents a particular stage of evolution he has reached. Beyond that limitation all is not merely unfamiliar to him but commonly appear to be hostile. He has to pass through many successive stages of evolution before he is able to respond to the call of the Supreme Knowledge. Still we have a strong conviction that no effort on the part of an individual is lost as the law of conservation of energy attests. As there is no short cut to perfection which is to be attained through a definite process, so also there is no closed door to shut out the aspirant from the Supreme Knowledge, which shall be disclosed to him according to the measure of his faith and effort. When he is ready he will receive the *light* of knowledge as a matter of right and not of favour, whether he belongs to any secret order or none at all.

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Today we see a vast movement, seething and surging, that reflects itself in a large number of Secret Societies, Schools or Cults claiming to possess 'Occult knowledge' and to be more or less in direct touch with a supreme Hierarchy of Initiates, personally unknown to the world at large. If occult knowledge is mainly associated, in the popular conception, with certain psychic or astral phenomena or with the exercise of the individual will in certain magical practices or ceremonies, we had better pass it by. True occultism is a supreme knowledge of the content and meaning of the Cosmos, as valid in its nature as any knowledge which inductive science may attain to in its gradual progress and legitimate effort. The primary postulate of occult philosophy is the unity of the individual with the universal and the necessity of self-knowledge as the only key to the nature of *Reality* or the Absolute. But Reality is not partial, it is full. It does not constitute as one part of the universe or of our own nature as set off against another part. Our true perception of Unity must include phenomenon as well as Noumenon, diversity as well as Unity, evil as well as Good. A true and a deeper knowledge of ourselves, as there is really no other knowledge, will certainly intensify our synthetical sense of spirit and matter. Since the manifested universe exists in consciousness, we are compelled to conclude that manifestation is an attribute or an aspect of that deep ground of our nature which

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we speak of as One Reality. The phenomenal world-process is, in some way, an integral part of that great Life by which, for which and on which alone, this whole universe exists. As this is the case, we cannot but regard our phenomenal or present embodied life, not merely as an integral part of that One Life which expresses itself in the great *elan* of the universe, but also as standing in a like relationship to our own transcendental subject.

Manifestation means to our formal mind a limitation and a sequence in time and space. Time and space are the two catagories or fundamental modes by which the universal is particularised or individualised. But this individualisation is not a sin but a starting point; for in that there is a special movement, a proper nature and an individual energy. Follow that like a widening river, says the Occult Philosophy, till it leads thee to its infinite source and origin. True occultism must thus be distinguished by a clearer apprehension of the *as well as* from a conception of an *either—or* which is only a clap-trap of the formal mind. This clear perception or rather apperception will not allow us to leave behind this manifested world as it were in a flight from one part, vaguely regarded now as something higher, as something contained only in the future or as something more real than the present contains. A rational occultism then will not fly from definite to the indefinite; rather will it strive not merely to make the

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indefinite more definite, but also to enrich and ennoble the present definite to transmute and transform it to a higher power and quality in our consciousness. Says Bohme, an occult-mystic, "Wherefore seek the Fountain of Light, waiting in the deep ground of the Soul for the rising thereof the Sun of Righteousness. Whereby the Light of Nature in the, with the properties thereof, will be made to shine seven times brighter than ordinary. For it shall receive the stamp image and impression of the super-sensual and rational Life will hence be brought into the most perfect order and harmony."

Certain it is that by reaching within ourselves to a much fuller and deeper realisation of our true divine nature, we shall immediately transmute our knowledge of the phenomenal into something quite incomprehensible to our present faculties and understanding. We shall possess supra-physical powers and supra-mental sight, to which each present movement will contain not merely the passing fact but also an *Eternal Truth*. The Seer then realises that full and rounded beauty and perfection of Life which assuredly lies at the root of all manifestation, and he comes into the possession of that unitary consciousness which rises out of our present fragmentary life into unity with the great Life that lives and moves in all. Such realisation is Theosophy. The etymological meaning of Theosophy is the Wisdom of God, the Logos. To be more precise, it is the Wisdom or

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Knowledge of the great mysterious Life which is present in its fullness at every moment and everywhere. In her *Isis Unveiled* Madame Blavatsky observes, "Light, the first mentioned in Genesis . . . is the first begotten, and the first emanation of the Supreme; and Light is Life, says the Evangelist. From its swelling electric bosom springs *matter* and *Spirit*. Within its beams lie the beginning of all physical and chemical action and of all cosmic and spiritual phenomena." To come to a true and complete knowledge of this, to realise each movement as the very heart-beat of Life itself to recognise that each movement contains all eternity and is fulfilled with immeasurable Beauty and Perfection—this would be to be a Theosophist indeed. And what is all Science, all Philosophy, all Religion and all Art, but an endeavour to express and explicate this eternal fact? By this very effort all prove that Eternal fact is involved in every soul as the deep ground of its nature, is implicit in every rational mind, the accomplishment of which must be the goal, the final perfection and rationality of the individual in his conscious unity with the Infinite and the Eternal.

The affirmation of a Life puissant upon the earth must have Spirit as its summit and matter as its basis. By this it is not meant that Spirit is the highest term, but it means that it is simply the final term of manifestation of that aspect of the Absolute which is viewed as Becoming. The transcendental Will of the Absolute, which is termed

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Chit-Shakti in Virashaiva Philosophy, is a creative force of endless duration. Because of this inherent *elan* the manifestation depends on and moves between the biune principle of unity and multiplicity, named *Urdhva-sristi* and *Adhas-sristi* in Virasaivism. The human intellect being unable to comprehend the manifestation in its entirety makes a difference between the higher creation and the lower. But to the eye of intuition, the knowledge of the One and the knowledge of the Many are a result of the movement or the endless duration of the spontaneous Will of the Supreme. The soul or *Anga* works by double faculty of comprehensive and apprehensive knowledge, for it proceeds from the Unity to multiplicity and from the multiplicity to Unity casting an ordered relation between them. The soul is therefore the pure intuitional *Idea* that inhabits the arche-typal world or *Maharloka*, which is a connection and co-ordinating link between the higher and the lower creations or manifestations. The Theosophist has to realise the soul by a mystical communion with the Divine or God-Consciousness which is termed *Linga* in Virasaivism. In order to make this vision possible he must live, have and move his being in God who is a *locus* of souls.

Linganya-samarasya or the realisation of the spiritual unification is the promise offered by the Lingayat Faith—a promise which is also a crowning achievement of a true Theosophist. This realisation is to be accomplished, says the Sharana, the Lingayat saint, now and here, now in

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this earthly tenement, here in this terrestrial manifestation. It is not a thing to be postponed to doomsday, to be miraculously effected by some last divine intervention and judgement. For this tabernacle is not to be treated trivially; on the other hand, the physical body is of great importance since in its heart is a minutest hollow space or cave where the Supreme dwells. Allama Prabhu, the Lingayat Saint and mystic of a very high order of the 12th century, addresses the Overself or the Supreme as *Guheshvara*, Lord of the cave. Ah ! what a significant name of God expressed in a cryptic language ! Other Lingayat Saints of the 12th century, headed by Shri Basava, who was the Messiah of the Lingayat Faith, describe this minutest hollow space or void as *Bayalu* (ಬಯಲು) and the Overself that pervades this void as *Niravayalu* (ನಿರವಯಲು), a verity. As the void is permeated by verity, all things in the universe, nay, the whole universe which is only a manifestation of immense and immeasurable Life is fulfilled by the presence of the Infinite and the Eternal. Such is the chorus of all saints of any time and clime. " The Infinite is hidden in ourselves like a truth hidden in isolated facts. When we know that this One in us is the One in all, then the truth is revealed." So interrogates Allama Prabhu :

"Can the fire hid in the flint burn?
Can the tree hid in the seed break forth?
None knoweth this secret save the Adept,
Oh, Lord of the Cave."

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Prabhu's interrogation is very significant in as much as it implies a unique truth of life. It is true that fire hid in the flint cannot burn, nor can the tree hid in the seed break forth. But it does not mean that the creative force of endless duration that guides either the fire or the tree is inert or inactive; on the other hand, it is so still, so serene, so profound, as to appear dumb and dubious to the eye of the formal intellect. The saying of Allama Prabhu, therefore, hymns the solemn note of serenity, of stillness, of profound peace which is only expressive of a puissant presence of the Infinite that is intelligible to the eye of intuition. Do we not see that the immense and inscrutable processes of the universe, all perfect themselves within a deep and an august silence? Do we not know that the great natural forces disinterested and self-poised in bliss, all prepare themselves for action in an infinite stillness and serenity? This deep and august silence is indeed the plenum that resides in the heart of all beings. Hence it is not the helpless stillness of inertia or inaction which heralds dissolution, but it is the serenity of the assured sovereignty which commands the harmony of life. Prabhu's saying speaks of such sovereign stillness which is the calm, collected and well-balanced attitude of an Adept. The more complete the calm, the more mighty is the Yogic power.

But this sovereign stillness, this deep and august silence, as in the universe, so in the individual, is often covered by a ripple of talk and activity without, the depth of ocean with its lovely surface of waves. We see the stir

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of innumerable waves above, hear the noisy and misleading surface of sound and thereby endeavour to read the logic of events and to judge the heart of God's intention; but we often mis-read and mis-judge. For the knowledge of life's profundities, its potent secrets, its great and hidden laws are exceedingly difficult to the formal mind. They seem to it a vague indeterminate movement, a profound obscurity from which the mind recoils willingly to play with the fret and foam and facile radiances of the surface. If we brush aside these surfaces and burrow into the secret and disguised reality, we are sure to envisage a vast spiritual world that reveals the wise and unerring plan of the plenary Cosmic Self. Theosophy believes in a spiritual world, not as anything separate from this world but as its inner-most truth. With every breath we draw we must always intuit this Truth that we live, move and have our being in God. Born in this great world of the mystery of the Infinite we feel impelled in a spirit of reverence to accept our existence as a gift from God. We are not, as the material science asserts, the product of mere chance drifting on the current of inconscient matter towards an eternal nowhere. We are set here to evolve a large impersonal personality and to heighten sympathy into constant experience of world Oneness. We are born in this variegated universe to discover and realise the immanence of God to some measure at least, in human love, in the greatness of good in

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the martyrdom of heroic souls, in the ineffable beauty of nature, in the dizzy whirl of earth through space, in the royal ecstasy of its blazing splendours and its eternal motion of the sun, in all that is past and all that is now and all that is pressing forward to become.

If the Infinite is immanent in every grade of consciousness and in every blade of grass, then the earth plane is not a place of sojourn but a school destined to evolve the faculties of an individual; the world-process is not a chaos but a cosmos consecrated to reveal order and intelligence in Nature and a supreme plan of Evolution. This plan is not as was hitherto supposed, 'the result of a fortuitous concourse of atoms' but it is suggestive of mathematical precision, ordered harmony and a great design; and thereby it testifies to the presence of a purposive and directive mind behind the great drama of this manifested universe. "To see that plan" observes C. Jinarajadas, the President of the International Theosophical Society, Madras, "is to have the Beatific Vision; to work for that plan is to change one's mortal nature to that of a deathless immortal. Deathlessness in life, eternity in time, divinity in humanity are his who, understanding the plan, works for it unceasingly." Aye, the atheist denies the plan, the agnostic doubts it, the philosopher infers it the poet feels it, the artist apprehends it, the occultist sees it, the mystic intuits it and the Adept knows it.

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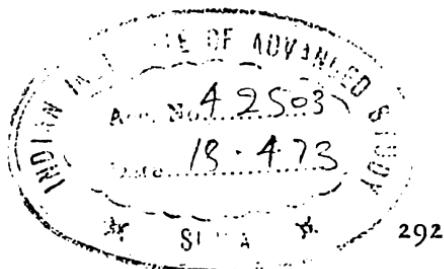
CORRECTIONS

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Read</i>	<i>For</i>
1	15	number	nnumber
3	2	the	he
4	8	conformable	conformble
5	8	straight	stright
11	14	its	it
15	3	this	thi
16	13	the	tne
17	9	truly	trully
21	8	neighbour	neignbour
27	7	Origin	origion
28	18	small	amall
31	8	suspicion	suscipcion
31	16	Century	Centuray
31	23	from	rom
33	12	—construction	—constrrcction
35	11	conceive	oonceive
40	3	mankind	minkind
40	19	genius	genious
49	9	Cosmic	osmic
52	19	transcendent	transcendeent
54	24	Add 'a' after 'Virashaiva'	
72	3	freedom	freedon

75	8	Consciousness	Consciousness
57	27	<i>Satyam</i>	<i>Stayam</i>
76	18	guidance	guidance
78	22	subject	subject
82	2	in-identity	in-identity
83	10	spiritual	spiritual
87	4	is	ia
93	25	that	what
98	15	Schelling	Schelling
106	21	awful	awful
106	21	-embracing	-embracing
111	14	an	in
112	18	Condensed	Condenced
115	21	<i>Bhuvarloka</i>	<i>Bhuvrloka</i>
117	10	the	the
118	4	termed as the	termed, the
122	15	full-	ull-
122	21	this	his
124	4	come	come
124	11	conception	couception
126	17	Berkeley	Berkley
128	7	time	tiime
131	15	<i>Shakti</i>	<i>Shatke</i>
132	2	Whenever	Wnerever
144	11	<i>divine</i>	<i>ivine</i>
144	13	serene	serence
145	13	is	i
146	19	The	The
149	13	or	of

150	20	form	from
151	12	the	rhe
153	16	stone	sone
160	24	super-	uper-
162	27	Every	Evey
164	3	desire	derire
167	6	categories	catagories
168	23	lower	lover
170	7	liberated	librated
171	6	Buddhism	Boddhism
171	24	is	i
172	18	consciousness	consciousnees
175	19	object	ob ect
176	24	all	ail
178	23	basis	ba is
179	12	reversal	reversa
180	22	disturbance	distuibance
182	1	Stern	Stem
182	8	the	thc
182	17	experiences	experienees
183	2	feeling	fceling
193	27	the	tbe
195	9	add 'to' after 'have'	
195	26	than	th n
200	21	breathe	breath
201	2	future	furure
201	9	nourishment	nourlshment
201	20	unexplainable	unexplainable
201	27	freedom	fr e dom

202	5	self-revelation	self-evelation
207	24	him	kim
208	9	currents	curre ts.
213	1	A	a
214	1	<i>Pranava</i>	<i>P anava</i>
215	3	Corresponding	Correspnding
222	6	Thing	Thihg
229	22	duly	du y
230	1	delete the word ' <i>Shaivas</i> '	
230	23	delete the second 'self' and add it as the first word in line 25	
238	15	Primordial	primordal
242	14	strongly	storngly
245	11	Therefore	Therfore
254	25	unmistakably	unmistakable
272	19	or	of
274	4	add 'that' after 'view'	
277	11	Categories	Catagories
281	13	describe	di cribe





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