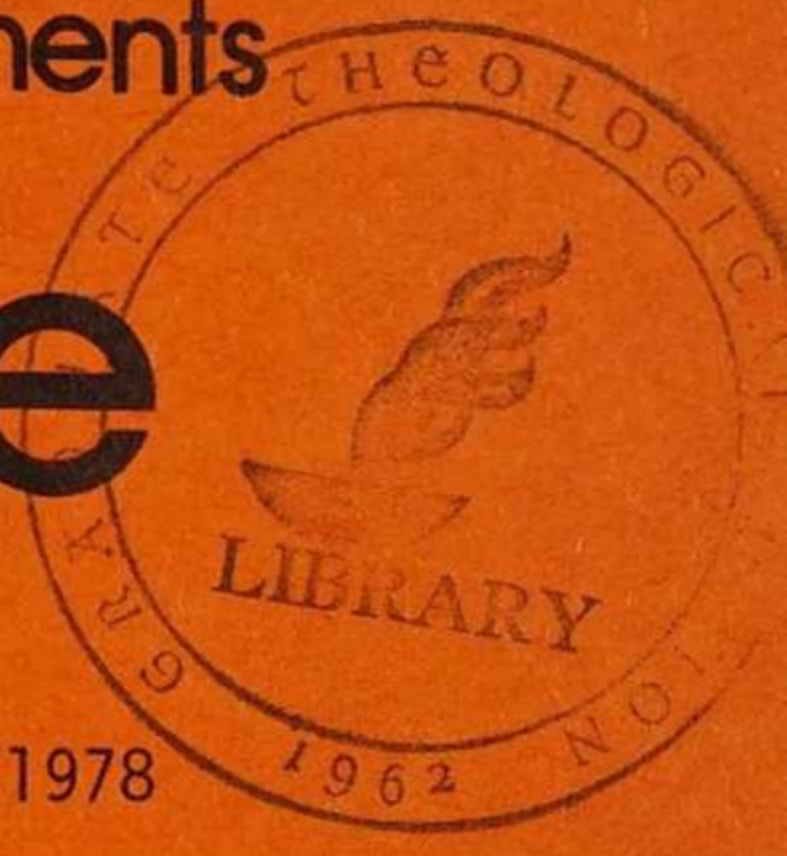


Steeley, Graduate Theology

new religious movements

# up-date



Vol. II, Issue 2. September 1978

DEC 1 1978

	page
Editorial	1
Introduction	2
Much Ado About Nothing? (Ole Riis)	3
European Influences... (M.G. van Dijk)	12
Salvation and Death (Johannes Aagaard)	24
New Religious Movements in Norway (A. Romarheim)	39
The Present Situation in Sweden..(L. Wikström)	47
TM Litterature - A Survey (R. Kranenborg)	53
News	57



## EDITORIAL

We regret that this issue is somewhat delayed. But we still intend to publish four issues within this year.

We run this journal on a very low budget with very few personnel: any financial assistance from our readers would be most welcome. Such assistance can - in the first place - take the form of paying your appropriate subscription, which is still 35 d.kr. for one year (Europe, UK and Ireland) and 50 d.kr. (other countries).

But you can also assist us by sending articles, news, reviews or comments, which can make "Up-Date" really international and ecumenical.

## INTRODUCTION

We begin this issue with the first chapter of a series on the youth rebellion and its consequences. The sociologist Ole Riis, formerly at the theological faculty in Århus, now at the research-highschool in Haderslev, Denmark, gives a bird's-eye view of developments in the last decade and tries to answer the question: is it Much Ado About Nothing?

One of the most independant minds within the Tantric fold of hinduism is Sri Aurobindo. M.G. van Dijk has studied his work, especially in its relation to Western thought. In this presentation of his study he summarizes the European Influences on Sri Aurobindo's Thought.

Johannes Aagaard publishes his last study on Swami Narayana-nanda, dealing this time with his concept of Salvation and Death. This study should be read as one example of the Tantric Way of Salvation.

From Norway Arild Romarheim describes the situation of the New Religious Movements in Norway. And in a related article from Sweden Lester Wikström gives a description of recent developments on the neo-religious scene. Of particualr interest are his comments on TM.

R. Kranenborg from Holland gives a survey of some recent TM-litterature, and the last part consists of some News.

## MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING ?

or: Whatever Happened to the Youth Rebellion ?

by Ole Riis

This article is an essay on the connections between the youth rebellion, the new marxist movement, the new religious movements...and the deafening silence from the established Christian churches about all this. The article is in three parts of which the first and second are based on the manuscript for a lecture at the Ecumenical Youth Camp at Ebeltoft, Denmark 1978.

Estuans interius  
ira vehementi  
im amaritudine  
loquor me menti;  
factus de materia,  
cinis elementi  
similis sum folio,  
de quo ludunt venti.

Seething inside  
with boiling rage  
in bitterness  
I talk to myself.  
Made of matter  
risen from dust  
I am like a leaf  
tossed in play by the winds.

Carmina Burana, prob. appx. 1300

Come gather 'round people where-ever you roam  
and admit that the waters around you have grown  
and accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone  
if your time to you is worth saving  
then you better start swimming or you'll sink like a stone  
for the times they are a-changing

Dylan , appx. 1963

Part 1: What Happened in 68 ?

Did the "youth rebellion" come as a surprise, or was it just the logical continuation of a trend ? Let us first concentrate on the young people involved. The young people of 68 were brought up in the post-war period. If we allow

discussion to concentrate initially on the middle-class youth in Western Europe and USA, we can say that the educational ideology of their upbringing was "liberal education" in opposition to "authoritarian education". The young people were allowed quite a degree of self-determination. They were as regards material things living in a historically unique period of abundance. And the ideological setting of their lives was cold-war anti-communism and the defence of democratic values. These young people were generally characterized by an upward mobility in formal education. And higher education was ideologically identical with neo-positivism in most sciences and in some areas of the humanities also. Lundberg's optimistic idealism was representative of the view-point such young people met at college: "Science can save us...". Science, technology, The American Way, Nato. And then something cracked.

#### The Happy 60s ?

But wait a little: the picture is not complete yet. The young were the obvious role-players in the rebellion. But every opera has not only heroes and heroines. It has a chorus, orchestra, workers and managers, not in the spotlight, but just as important for the play. In the happy 60s the "old middle class" in C.W. Mill's terms was crushed by competition. Small shops closed, and big supermarkets and corporations took over. There were many who were not so happy in "the happy 60s". Nevertheless the small tragedies did not add up to a rebellion from the old middle class, (or only to a small degree, i.e. French poujadism). That was because there was a corresponding expansion of job-positions for the new middle-class open to the formerly self-employed. The workers were both better off and worse off in the late 60s than in the 50s. Unemployment was far lower, and payment in real terms was better. But the 60s was also the period where the thumb-screws were given another

twist: Rationalization, time-studies, automation, etc. The 60s was a time, where much was written by social scientists about the problems of "mass society", i.e. automation, mass media, megalopolis, bureaucracy ect. - but nothing was done, as these phenomena were identified as belonging to man's historic destiny. There was no longer any question of ideology. The US and the USSR would converge little by little because of the demands of technical progress. Bell became famous when he talked about the end of ideology....but behind the seeming lack of some conscious goal or guide-lines for society amongst politicians, there lurked a purpose and goal, so obvious that no-one discussed it: Goods, market-values, money, living-standard, status symbols...

#### Rebellion against the affluent society

In the 60s affluence was enjoyed by the middle-class, discussed, and sometime problematised, for example by Galbraith, to name the most famous. An important part of the economy changed its focus from the production of goods in obvious demand, to the small luxuries, i.e. the gimmick for the man who has everything. Salesmanship and marketing became really important sectors of economic life. Consumer ideology became more openly hedonistic. The pornutopian trend was simply the logical conclusion to general consumerism. When it is legal and even positively valued to roam around in flashy cars, devour expensive liquor, inhale polluted air from burning dried leaves wound up in white paper... why should not the devouring of sex also be legitimate? In the progress of capitalism, all sectors of life tend to be split up into a private sphere, and a commodity-sphere; and all persons and things are treated as commodities. Man even becomes a consumer of religion. He chooses his religion in the supermarket of life-styles. And, as a further, logical step, salvation is offered as a graded commodity in some of the new religious movements, as in the times of Tetzels: The more you can buy, the more you get.

The heroes of the age of consumerism were the young, energetic, potent, affluent, beautiful....hence the shock when the pampered young rebelled. But were the young really the heroes - or were they just puppets, held in strings of advertisement, media....who suddenly cut their strings and turned against the puppet-masters, and bit the hands who fed them with Donald Duck, Coca Cola...mascara, blue jeans, rock records and all those indispensable items of modern youth culture ?

Many tiny streams flowed together and formed the historical flood that broke the dam. One factor was the Weber-Fechner law, which in popular terms runs as follows: One glass of beer is fine, a glass of whisky on top is super, a double of Glenfiddich on top of that is good....but in the long run, you will end up vomiting, if you continue. And, in a way, the middle-class youngsters ended vomiting all those material goods that their parents had pursued during their whole life. As if this pursuit of goods was the very meaning of life - a new holy grail. Another factor was the confrontation of democratic ideals with historical realities. Many of the young never quite understood the political double-talk. They made the mistake of taking the speeches serious. All the greater was their shock as a result, when the mask fell. In Algiers, for the French, in the Bay of Pigs and Vietnam for the Americans - above all in Vietnam, because so many, in the US and in Europe, for long held on to the naive hope that the leathernecks and GIs were sent to defend truth and democracy...and not United Fruit, ITT and Rockefeller.

Another factor again was the accumulation of questions, important but unanswerable within the framework: "science = positivism". Questions about pollution, resources, waste ect. were raised. Most important of all was the question about "the quality of life". Yet, because the quality-problem could only be answered by "the system" in quantitative terms, in marketable commodities, at the same time as that kind of answer was being refuted, the basic presuppo-

sition of buy-and-throw-away-consumerism was undermined and the "system" inevitably shaken to its foundation. The sky-scraper was built upon sand.

Many factors contributed, but the only one of those I will mention here is the vastly extended output of international information created in the 60s, when the "telly" became standard equipment in most families in the industrial world. Clippings from the Vietnam-war were cut in between Perry Mason and Laredo. And politicians without TV-flair were as outdated as silent-movie actors in the 30s. A new kind of contact was experienced. Superficial, giving only an illusion of being "real" and "close" - but nevertheless significant.

No discussion of the youthrebellion would be complete without mentioning the pop culture. We have earlier in human history seen cultures with age co-

horts set free from the general standards, living as sub-cultures with their own norms. But there is probably no precedence for an age-cohort with such a specific new creative content. The jazz-generation was in a way a predecessor. But the cultural traits of the jazz-generation did not to a comparable degree find expression in such specific crazes and fads. More important, however, is the fact that most of the cultural traits of the jazz-generation were created FOR it by members of older age-cohorts, while the beat-generation succeeded in creating something for itself, by itself.

Some of the more obvious cultural traits were a hair-do and clothing that defied the standards of the bourgeoisie. The scorn vented on long hair and unisex-dresses is hardly comprehensible today. The young somehow broke with the standards of the middle-class in relation to behavior and sex-roles. But these traits were only part of the general undermining of a functionalistic culture. We can point to the youth-revival as a break away from linear-rational forms, and pop-art as an effort to create a re-evaluation of cartoons, ad-posters etc.....

But most important of all was, of course, innovation in music. This was the reason why we can now talk about the rock-generation. Pop music suddenly changed from commercial placebo-products to something with radically new forms and content. Pop music merged with folk music and protest songs, and became the new musical style that brought cohesion to the young dissenting generation. It gave the new age-cohort a certain self-confidence. And the very fact that older people did not understand, what was going on ("do You, mister Jones ?" as Bob Dylan sang) supported this effect.

The mass-media provoked provocations. This was a well-known fact among the rebellious young. The first mass demonstrations in western Europe occurred not in '68 but in '67, when the colonels took over in Greece. Many resolutions never hit the headlines; but the provocations did. Thus it became a dictum, that you HAD to be provocative in order to get into the media. And the provocations escalated. Many young pacifists became militants overnight, as a result of being clobbered by the police, handcuffed, imprisoned and maltreated. So the whole movement escalated from the peaceful demonstrations, where the "provos" gave the police a shoeshine and flowers to the aggressive and bloody rebellions of the early 70s.

#### The Marxist revival

Whilst the surge of the youth rebellion could be predicted, its political direction seems rather more surprising. Originally, the youth movement in the 60s contained several anarchist strains, not only in the politically unreflective happy-go-lucky-flower-power-San-Francisco-cult, but also as an explicit programme in e.g. the dutch Kra-bouter-movement. It must also be remembered that many of the banners in the streets of Paris in May '68 were black and red! Anarchism was a logical answer to the original political questions, but experience showed that the defensive mechanisms of the establishment were quite strong

and, moreover, that the system would not yield to pleas and arguments. The question about the causes of the youth rebellion is in no direct way connected with the question about its direction. The youth rebellion contained many kinds of answers to the problems encountered, and many of the answers within the movement were incompatible. The rebellion thus covered the new pacifist groups on the one hand and the militant system-fighters on the other. It included escapist drug-cults on the one hand and concrete-reform-activists on the other. It covered attitudes ranging from a general laissez-faire to a new kind of asceticism.

Nevertheless, the later formulations of the platform of the rebellion had unmistakable marxist overtones. Marxism is, of course the direct negation of the capitalistic system. Marxism was not however a direct answer to the kinds of questions raised by the rebellion, at least not in the forms marxist analysis took in the 60s. Many of the now ageing rebels are still grappling with the intellectual task of answering the original questions of the youth rebellion within the marxist paradigm.

Several reasons may be given for this formulation of the political platform of the rebellion. First, marxism was encountered as an ideology of liberation in Cuba, Vietnam, etc.... Secondly, the ideological separation of countries like Yugoslavia and China from the Soviet Union lessened the fear of marxism as a monolithic system. Thirdly, the Prague spring spread a belief in socialism with a human face, and the Russian suppression accentuated the question as to whether the Soviet system with its uniformity, bureaucracy, growth-mania was "real" socialism. In all, it became obvious that socialism was not necessarily associated with state bureaucracy and Gulag Archipelagos. The introduction of marxism into the youth rebellion cannot, however, be isolated from the historical process. It must be connected with a growing dissatisfaction among the workers, with weakened faith in reformism and fabianism, and with increasing political cynicism and disillusionment

with the political authorities. In the 60s, the workers earned more, but they also produced more, and others gained even more from this. Although the young rebels and the workers could meet in dissatisfaction concerning the establishment, an alliance was difficult, because of the differences in social background, of elitist trends among the young, well-educated rebels, and also because the workers were far from having reached a point of material satiety. There was a cultural void between the workers and the youngsters.

The new marxism included two elements, both of which were probably necessary to the formulation of the new platform. On the one hand the humanist writings of the young Marx were widely publicized and read for the first time.

On the other, studies of Marx's "Capital" gave an adequate explanation of the continuing defeats of the young rebellion. The first wave in the rebellion was "activist" and rather spontaneous, but a number of defeats gave rise to a more analytical line. The main question in this analysis was about the self-regulating and self-perpetuating mechanisms of the establishment. And the studies of "Capital" told that the wants and wills of the politicians meant very little, as most sectors in the society were subsumed by Capital. It is possible, for instance, to make many people see the Vietnam war as an imperialist enterprise, but as long as it yields some profits, and the hope of more, public opinion can change very little as regards the war itself. The second, analytical wave, was rather defeatist and introvert. Many books were published, but little action took place, since most analysis lead to the result that any action will strengthen the defensive mechanisms of society.

And now, today, the rightists - who had no answer to all the criticisms, who had no alternatives to the trend, no cultural innovations, no answers to the questions - are beginning to formulate a counter-attack.

Their economic crisis makes a good background for the re-establishment of a growth economy, the reinstatement of law and order, the reformulation of conservative values. These answers are, of course, superficial and short-sighted. But the left-wingers have difficulty in finding a strong, united criticism. Many of the left-wingers were laughed out of the public debate, when they predicted an economic crisis, an ecological crisis and fascist trends in society. The best analytical answer to the causes of the troubles today is still that of the marxists. But this analysis tells us very little about how to get out of the desert and into the oasis.

European Influences on Sri Aurobindo's Thought

by M.G.van Dijk

1. This study began with methodological comments and considerations. The comments were concerned with the lack of material, the far-reaching uselessness of most of the studies written by disciples and sympathisers of Aurobindo (I.A), and the verbosity of his style of writing. This last question showed itself in relation to 'automatic writing' (I.B). It caused sometimes a lack of exactness that was bound to have consequences for the practicability or impracticability of the integral Yoga as a 'path' for followers. Integral Yoga is not (yet) a fully developed system. Also, a somewhat confusing intercultural choice of words was found without any further explanation of these words being given. Aurobindo has by that overlooked the philosophical problems inherent in those words. He has not seen himself as a philosopher in the usual meaning of that word. He has considered his 'science' to be of a higher order and has criticized 'Western' philosophy and science as one-sided and too rational (I.C).

Some remarks concerned the cultural background of Aurobindo. He is an unusual phenomenon, being a college-professor, politician, political journalist, social thinker, poet and yogi, and having his roots both in Indian and European culture. This study can hardly cover this whole spectrum (I.D).

This study takes the view that the poetry of Aurobindo and his philosophical/political work represent equal parts, both integrated in the one person who expresses one vision in different ways (I.E.1). The relation between the period before 1910 and after is seen as a continuing one, the so-called caesura of 1908-1910 cannot be proved to be a deep one (I.E.2).

Aurobindo shows an ambivalent attitude to the 'West', which manifests itself in several places in his work. Together with his rather 'journalistic' attitude of dealing with 'Western' items does this cause that scientific and philosophical standards cannot be adapted to his work.

Aurobindo had an idealistic conception of philosophy (I.E.6). We shall trace this in his interest in Plato's theory of ideas and Plotin's emanation, in his vision on development, aesthetics and poetical inspiration of the romanticists, in the probable influences from hegelianism and idealistic personalism, and in some striking

resemblances with the intuitionism of Bergson. Aurobindo has clearly known himself encouraged by 'signs' in recent history: the symbolism as found in the history of literature, the revival of the ancient Celtic mysticism in the Irish literary movement, the increasing criticism on "barbarism" and "philistinism" in Great Britain and on the self-sufficient ethics (e.g. Arnold, Nietzsche), and the rise of subjective sensitivity (e.g. Lamprecht's period of "Reizsamkeit").

2. We found that Aurobindo has been influenced intensively by the English language and culture, even so considering the social situation in colonial India of that time. He was not just a bi-lingual Indian, as most of the others of the educated class he belonged to; he had received a thorough English education from nearly his fifth year on. Yet it has to be noted that the way of dealing with this situation in (auto-)biographical literature up to the present probably shows a - conscious or subconscious - distortion, especially where his early childhood is concerned. This is supposedly due to a (self-)justification in Aurobindo's later, nationalistic years. A similar explanation can be the background of the contradiction of data concerning the riding test as part of the selection for the Indian Civil Service (III.C).

Doubtless Aurobindo's boyhood has not been very rosy. He has had a severe, extremely anglophil father whom he has known since his eighth year from letters only. His mother was mentally unstable. One can say that he has been without parents since his eighth year. His maternal grandfather, who viewed life as a kind of mixture of Vedānta and Hindu nationalism, made a special impression on him as a child. The ideas of this man formed a foreshadowing of his own later, more enlightened ideas (III.A + B).

In Aurobindo's biography there is no mention of a strong resentment towards England. He hardly felt at home in the English society, but English culture in the narrow sense of the word, and especially English literature, remained a lifelong part of his identity. His philosophical as well as his poetical works have been written almost exclusively in English.

The 'brown gentleman' Aurobindo Acharya Ghose passed his adult years in India; he studied Indian culture and entered deeply into parts of it. But his English education and training were like a skin, which he was neither able nor liked to simply shed; he has

succeeded at best in making it porous in order to breathe a much more universal air. Getting ahead of the conclusion we may say that indeed a big part of his work has been written more or less in Indian terms and that traditional Indian values have been rethought by him. But it has to be remarked that European starting points can be found for many aspects of his thought, or at least parallels, which he has known and which have interested him. He may have developed his thought much further than European thought, but starting points and parallels, taken as a whole, have laid down largely the structure for his own work. Of course this conclusion remains somewhat hypothetical as long as the Indian side has not been looked into on the same intensive scale, both historically and philosophically. During his stay of fourteen years in England Aurobindo had come to know a broad spectrum of European culture, literature and history, and to some degree also philosophy. There he had also been put on the track of the orientalist. This means that also his opinion on Hinduism and on Indian history has partly been influenced by European scholars (V.F).

3. His English school- and college-education as well as his study for the Indian Civil Service brought him a general knowledge, with a special weight on literature, starting with the Greek and Latin classics. Besides this study, which came to him easily, young Aurobindo had his own interests. These were literature (poetry), history and politics. As far as history was concerned he was most of all interested in revolutionary movements, which supported his budding interest in the liberation of his "motherland", which was, however, fully strange to him at that time. So culture in the narrower sense played the biggest part in his education as well as in his personal interest. Grown up in a time of increasing interest in aesthetics (praeraphaelism, Oscar Wilde) Aurobindo approved fully of this climate, supported by some friends of his elder brother, who were all budding poets like himself.

Supported by a thorough education in classical literature - he saw the classical thinkers and writers mostly through the eyes of the nineteenth century romanticists (V.A, C + D), - Aurobindo began gradually to build up his own theory of the special role of beauty. In this he knew himself to be following a tradition which had its origin in the Greek ideal of 'kalos kai agathos', which

was taken up again in the Renaissance and was continued in the English romantic period. Where it was the question to see beauty as a deeper dimension behind all phenomena of daily life, there young Aurobindo knew himself supported by symbolism (VII.B), a literary movement at the end of the nineteenth century, which had shown to his opinion already its first beginnings in the early English romanticists (Shelley).

Beauty had already for the romanticists a vague supernatural aspect and it had also something of a progressive revelation (Keats), which should take shape by means of poetical inspiration. Aurobindo was to assent and go further along those lines. Later on he developed the theory that beauty is of strictly divine origin, that it forms the third element of a trinitarian formula, together with absolute truth and absolute consciousness (V.C). This formula (Sat-Cit-Ananda) is built from the three highest divine attributes and is based philosophically on the principle of oneness-in-diversity. Hence to contribute to the progressive manifestation of beauty was a work pleasing to God and a very important part of true religion. Religion without beauty was something Aurobindo could not imagine, and precisely that annoyed him so in the Christianity as he had experienced it. In England he had predominantly lived in the rather puritan circles of the middle-class and had experienced there a Christianity that showed itself almost as an ethical religion, which threatened to reduce the cultural aspects of human life ("Hebraism" contra "Hellenism", Arnold, IV.D + V.D).

Aurobindo seems not to have met a Christianity that felt itself inspired by the freedom of the Holy Spirit, otherwise he would have mentioned this aspect, so important to him (IV.D). It is also striking that all poets of Aurobindo's interest have had an aversion, varying in degree, to religion as established in the English Churches. This aversion and sometimes opposition to orthodoxy can be traced easily in most of their works (Shelley, Wordsworth, Arnold, Meredith, Swinburne, Stephen Phillips, III). We also meet the same opposition in Mazzini, Aurobindo's favourite Italian revolutionary.

4. Aurobindo thought to have found the ideal of freedom rather in those periods and aspects of European history, which are usually not called explicitly Christian, namely the Greek and partly the Roman culture, their revival in the Renaissance which - as a small example - had returned the freedom of the blank verse to poetry,

and also the French Revolution and the Italian struggle for independence.

With Matthew Arnold (V.D) Aurobindo shared the opinion that Greek culture had given us the example of free inquiry. In the persons of the purified philosophers-politicians of Plato's Republic he had seen a glimmer of the selflessness and inner freedom, which he would describe later on as so important in the figure of the rsi. Only he who aspires (eros) like Plato to the world of the pure ideas or like Plotin to the higher spheres of emanation is really on the road to inner freedom (VI.B). There is an important platonic influence on Aurobindo. The inner freedom however asks for being transposed into outer freedom. The inner freedom of a man who averts himself from the world does not contribute to the progressive manifestation of the hidden God in his cosmos. Inner and outer freedom are complementary.

Aurobindo had already learned in England that outer freedom, as a concept of liberalism, had to be corrected by the classical virtues of self-control (Arnold's "the not-ourselves", Goethe's "architectonic", V.D). The outer freedom of the French Revolution, with its ideas of the rights of man, had according to Aurobindo to be completed by the idea of the duties of man; it had to be founded on an inner attitude, that means, it asked for a Mazzini (X). Real inner freedom is necessary when man will be able not only to claim his rights and by that probably fall into individualism, but also to surrender himself to the Divine in nature, in the family, in the society and also in the nation and in the world-order.

5. If outer and inner freedom complete each other and if the realization of both is the very aim of real (= true) religion, i.e. a religion which connects self-realization and -manifestation of the Divine in his cosmos with the self-realization of man in his environment, then religion and politics are related to each other. Politics as religion and vice versa was a theme which Aurobindo had already learned from Mazzini (X). He propagated it consistently in his political period; the national liberation of "Mother India" was a religious duty. Later on he was to give this idea an universal dimension, however without altering its original essence.

Young Aurobindo learned from the Irish revolutionary movement that prolonged outer slavery can smother the inner and hidden call and promise so much, that they are in danger of disappearing.

Both Ireland and India have had to undergo this experience. Therefore they have as prime duty to free themselves from this outer duress in order to fulfil their great mystical task (IX). That might mean war, at least as a last mean, but war is also an aspect of the mysterious world events, as taught by Heraclitus, to whom Aurobindo felt rather congenial. Integration of something new means necessarily desintegration of the old; the cosmos is in permanent movement. Aurobindo was to interpret this movement later on in an evolutionary way, and he was convinced to explain by that the implicit meaning of Heraclitus himself (VI.C).

France and Ireland are two countries which Aurobindo has never visited. But from the subjective point of view they have been more important to him than England which he knew so well. France had given to the world the ideals of freedom, equality and fraternity, ideals so important to a freedom-fighter, and ideals which it tried to mould, in spite of its failures. That was precisely why the French possessions in Asia exercised such an attractive power on several western-educated Indians like Aurobindo. France was for him also the country of Jeanne d'Arc, the legendary symbol of the relation between religion and nation (VII.A).

In Aurobindo's vision Ireland incarnated the mystical heritage of the ancient Celts. To revive this heritage was its special vocation and its contribution to the future world. He held also the view that it was precisely the Celtic element in English literature which enabled the mystical dimension of poetry to emerge in that language and thus laid down the foundation for "The Future Poetry" (IX). This spiritual poetry of the future world would have to give a special expression to and be a vehicle for the new religion, i.e. the true and profound religion. This religion has to be supported by the integral Yoga, which aim it is to include all traditional yoga-systems in a 'weltbejahende' vision and experience. This yoga is the medium which can help man in his evolutionary development to reach a stage where he will have grown beyond (= super) the possibilities of the present situation; man is then a "superhuman being". Growth in this integral Yoga means an increase of inspiration; "overhead poetry" then arises.

6. The evolution of all human faculties as part of the self-realization of the Absolute, the Divine, in his creation (he means in fact the things emanated) is the fuller dimension which Aurobindo

has given to the idea which he had already traced from the French Revolution and its precursors in European thought onward; it is the idea of development in the social, political and humanitarian sense, and of evolution in nature.

Many romantic poets had dreamt of a better humanity, which would know no more suppression after having liberated itself with great sacrifices under the guidance of a promethean hero-figure. This humanity would grow into a new harmony with nature (V.C). The socially and ethically minded heroes of Shelley impressed young Aurobindo and gave him romantic-political motivations (V.A). Epic poems are a permanent theme in his literary work. He had of course the opportunity to build upon the classical epics and on the ethical changes in the hero-figure, originated by Milton in the epic tradition (V.B). This ethical change may have led Aurobindo to the psychological, to the 'hero' in the figurative sense of the term, the man who strives for inner freedom and has to fight against unnatural, conventional opinions and against desires and passions (Wordsworth's "The Prelude" and in some way also Meredith's "Modern Love", V.C + E).

It was Darwin who had shocked the religious orthodoxy by undermining the traditional concepts of creation and nature, and thus the concept of God as well.

In the decennia after Darwin, poets like Meredith and Swinburne became interested in scientific thinking on evolution. They found great interest in nature as the mother of all living beings, man included. Thus they presented the basic elements for Aurobindo's later theory of nature as the mother-goddess, as śakti and as aspect of the Divine, which was not to be neglected but on the contrary was to be treated positively and developed, because it is in reality the element carrying the whole of the divine self-manifestation (V.E). In the same direction something had already been done by Wordsworth, although a poet before Darwin and not clearly an evolutionist, who had provided Aurobindo with the view that man has to be in harmony with nature as the ground of his existence.

Aurobindo came to know evolution as a political notion already from the French Revolution, but also and more explicitly from the Italian Mazzini, who in his turn had built on the German philosopher Herder. Hegelianism formed also a great attraction for many educated Indian and also for some of Aurobindo's fellow-workers during his

political period. In Aurobindo's time Hegel's idealism was rising in England. Hegelianism gave him the example of political and social evolution as providence of God, that means evolution as a kind of theodicee (VIII.B). The latter was pre-eminently a theme which he was to give later on a broader and more cosmic dimension in the form of a God, Who develops Himself in history and in the cosmical process. This shows also some analogy with the Indian concept of līlā.

That evolution is furthered by 'men of great historical importance', being a kind of sollicitors of the "World-Spirit", is a striking point which can be found both in Hegel and Aurobindo. These are persons who know the one thing needful in a certain period, the thing to be done.

7. At the end of the nineteenth century a clearly psychological aspect was added by the theory of Lamprecht to the teachings of Hegel, which dealt predominantly with political and social evolution. This German historian, Lamprecht, divided history into five periods on a social-psychological basis and paid also great attention to the element of cyclism in evolution. Aurobindo has been clearly interested in this thought and has mentioned so himself openly, against his usual practise (VIII.D). He has followed more or less Lamprecht's division of history and has appreciated this historian's attention to evolution as a growth of sensitivity. In his own thought we find clear signs of the cyclical aspect of evolution. And he had to pay attention to it, for he wanted already in his political period to revive the great but remote past of his country into a still greater future, just like Mazzini. Later on he was to give this idea a world-wide dimension, but structurally nothing would change (satya-yuga).

The thinking of Nietzsche was cyclical par excellence, who in his turn felt inspired by Heraclitus. The Nietzschean idea of the "Übermensch" intrigued Aurobindo strongly. His attitude to this aphoristic thinker and his central idea shows a variety, ranging from uncommon approval to stereotypical criticism (VIII.C). Therefore his attitude towards Nietzsche may be called representative for his attitude towards Europe as a whole. This can be characterized as a taking over or as a knowing to be inspired by. This first aspect is followed by criticism; Europe has not been conscious enough of the good starting points it possesses in its thought and cultural history, it has not developed them the right way, it has

even reversed them to their - sometimes titanical - opposite. Aurobindo himself thinks that he has understood these implicated and in themselves right intentions better and that he has explicated and developed them consistently. In his synthesis of 'East' and 'West' the 'West' has brought in some good elements, but it is the vocation of the 'East' to bring in the better part. Such a scheme can be found in his work several times, with some variations which have to do with gradations in sharpness of criticism and with the positive feeling of affinity (I.E.7 + XII).

8. The "Superman" is the aim of the evolutionary integral Yoga. One normally associates the word evolution with the development of the earth as a whole. Aurobindo, however, was mostly interested in the evolution of man and especially in the question how present-day man could grow into a "Superman", who is able to see and to realize the Divine in all things without losing his individual and personal being. Aurobindo has known the scientific theories of natural evolution in a popularized form; they were one of the dominating themes in the thought of his time. But he criticized them, because they tried to explain man with the help of the lower stages of evolution which they knew better, and not from a higher level, as he would prefer it and as he visioned it himself.

Aurobindo's conception of evolution has to be considered as a part of the philosophical and especially metaphysical or religious reactions against the evolution-theory of natural science, which he has called predominantly materialistic and one-sided. He has accepted the idea of evolution and has not simply denied the theories of natural science. He has taken up and elaborated those aspects of them, which to his opinion should be considered for a deeper explanation and a spiritualization. But by that very fact he has an essentially different interpretation of evolution (XI), which shows itself also in his opinion that evolution is conditioned by involution, this being a typical idealistic concept.

Aurobindo's thought may be described as a new, dynamic idealism, that bases itself on the idea of an evolutionary development into one humanity, united in surrender to and love for God, the Person, Who, Himself the absolute Being, is standing above all opposition between person and impersonality, but Who makes all, who discover Him and His works deep in themselves, grow more and more to persons.

9. Up to this point the sequence of this study has not been followed exactly, but the parts have been interwoven in order to provide a deeper insight in their mutual dependency. We shall now sum up shortly all grades of influence according to the table of contents, as far as not mentioned before in detail.

In Aurobindo's youth we can suppose a small influence from Stephen Phillips, a minor poet of his time, known to him personally, but this influence cannot be fixed easily. Shelley's influence on Aurobindo has to be called very significant, both on the poet and the young patriot in him. Shakespeare and Milton have interested him mostly as important examples in the history of English literature.

Keats has had influence on Aurobindo by his identification of beauty and truth, and Wordsworth has surely drawn his attention to the revealing voice of nature. Matthew Arnold has had a considerable influence on Aurobindo, mainly as a prose-writer. Tennyson does not seem to be important for this study. In the case of Meredith we can only suppose an influence, that of Swinburne however is sure. It has provided young Aurobindo with a poetical vision on natural evolution, on nature as the mother of all beings.

Max Müller's booklet India, What Can It Teach Us? must have been the first or at least a very important information to young Aurobindo on the high cultural standard of classical India, as seen by a sympathizing European. An influence of J.S. Mill is not certain. However supposedly known to Aurobindo, his ideas may only have influenced the latter indirectly, modified and deepened by B.C. Chatterji.

Aurobindo has clearly been influenced by Plato's Republic and Symposium. A more or less vague - that means poetical and romantic - Platonism is characteristic for his work. Plotinus' influence seems to be there, but in a very general way; it cannot be proved exactly. Aurobindo has liked Heraclitus very much, but he may have come to know him too late to speak in terms of influence. This relation is a case of feeling supported by a rather congenial thinker.

We face nearly the same question with Mallarmé, the French symbolistic poet, strongly admired by Aurobindo. The influence of Bergson must be seen as probable. There is a striking analogy between his estimation of intuition and Aurobindo's.

Aurobindo has seen Goethe as an all-round person, the usual vision

of him in contemporary England. But lacking sufficient knowledge of German Aurobindo cannot have very well known Goethe's poetry. Although not really a Hegelian, Aurobindo's thought cannot be imagined without a diffuse influence of Hegelianism. The relation Aurobindo-Nietzsche has been ambivalent. The German thinker must have inspired the Indian so much that we dare to speak of influence, being in this remarkable case a mixture of strong interest and strong criticism. Lamprecht is the only one, except some English poets, to whom Aurobindo has ascribed openly some influence on him. Surveying all German influences we can say that German idealism has exercised a much greater influence on Aurobindo than he has conceded himself.

The Irish liberation movement has been very important to Aurobindo, especially on the existential level. It was not a history to be studied but an actual and inspiring news from a country supposed to have a mystical nature, just like India.

Aurobindo has seen the lesson to be learnt from the Italian liberation movement mainly incorporated in the person and ideals of Mazzini, who has had a strong influence on him.

The use of the important idea of evolution by Aurobindo does not mean a strict influence from Darwinism; there may be only a rather vague influence of evolutionary thought in general. The traces are not clear enough for concluding more.

10. Surveying the whole a hypothesis becomes very probable: Aurobindo aspired to be 'a modern rsi. The Indian rsi has, according to him, always been the natural director of society and the best guide for the religious, moral, cultural, practical and even the political life. But that is exactly the scale of his own biography as well as the scope of his integral Yoga. Studying European influences one is very struck by the fact that Aurobindo has given his opinion on the value of rsi-hood directly after having mentioned the philosopher-politician of Plato. And most of the European influences on or striking parallels with Aurobindo's thought show more or less important tendencies to or even aspects of his own ideal of rsi-hood: inner freedom, high morality, heroic attitude, social orientation, sense for duty and sacrifice, mutual love, inspiration, intuition,

being a seer, thinker, prophet and poet, leadership by personal authority, being called for doing the one thing needful, seeing a deep and harmonizing reality behind all phenomena, relation between politics and religion, growing into oneness of religion and poetry, of religion, culture and aesthetics.

We can even make intelligible many aspects of Aurobindo's attitude and self-estimation. 'Automatical writing' can be explained at least subjectively by the idea of being inspired from above, just like the rsis of old have been. If philosophy usually has, according to Aurobindo, hardly an impact on life, then his work is not philosophy; rsis have been practical men. Wise men and seers are not bound to one culture, therefore Aurobindo could feel himself permitted to neglect cultural boundaries and to make a synthesis of 'East' and 'West'.

The rsi-hypothesis also shows the ambivalence of Aurobindo's attitude to the 'West'. The rsi being originally an Indian ideal, Aurobindo wanted to re-incorporate the Vedic rsi on a higher, modern level (cyclical evolution), as an example for the whole world, c.q. Europe. But in fact many aspects of his personal rsi-ideal are historically and psychologically of European origine.

---

## SALVATION AND DEATH

Swami Narayanananda's Understanding of Salvation -  
An Example of a Tantric Way of Salvation

by Johannes Aagaard

Sri Swami Narayanananda Maharaj of Rishikesh (Himalaya) stems from South India, where he was born in 1902. His first name was "Najunda", which means "gift of Shiva". When he was 5 years old his father died, and he grew up - like so many of the holy men of India - with his mother, under her influence, a part of her world. At the age of 27 he forsook the world and became a Sannyasi, searching for a true guru. 1)

He began his search at Belur Math in the Ramakrishna Mission in Calcutta, where he became a disciple under the name of Narayanananda. His spiritual leader there was Mahapurushaji Maharaj. In 1932 he left the Ramakrishna Mission and made for the Himalayas in order to attain Samadhi.

In 1933 - during the night of Shivaratri - for the first time Narayanananda achieved the full arousal of Kundalini, so that he was able to force his Shakti right up to Sahasrara and to attain Samadhi (for further details see below).

He achieved the usual results - both breathing and heart-beats ceased, and he became totally united with the great void. 2)

Three years later - in 1936 - he broke his connection with the Ramakrishna Mission and entered on his own career as a guru. 3)

Today he has a centre at Rishikesh in Kashmir and another at Coorg in South India. His third centre is in Denmark, at Gylling, in a place near Aarhus, where his disciples live in two ashrams. There is also a centre on the island of Lolland, and an ashram at Långaryd in Sweden. There has been some considerable unrest at the Gylling centre: a number of prominent disciples broke with him in the summer of 1974. There were many reasons for this, but the main one was the account given by some of the disciples of the rather strange sexual activities that took place between the guru and some of the girls among his followers. The truth of these allegations were however denied by the guru and his remaining disciples.

The present writer has investigated the state of affairs at Gylling, and has had the opportunity of listening to the evidence of many people. He is in no doubt whatever of the accuracy of the allegations. In themselves these are by no means unusual - this kind of account seems to be more the rule than the exception in connection with a certain kind of Indian guru. In the course of the attempt to understand what really happened at Gylling it gradually became clear that it was quite simply a matter of a confused tantric activity. This brought the whole Gylling-phenomenon down to earth, and made it easy to understand.

Not so easy to understand at first were the violent reactions - both for and against the truth of the allegations - from the disciples; both sides must have been aware of the simple fact that Kundalini meditation is in essence tantric, and has therefore sexual implications. 4)

As a continuation of my earlier description of the guru from Gylling, it will be useful to make clear how such a tantric cult as this expresses its understanding of salvation. The practice - or malpractice - of the cult is one thing: its doctrine of salvation - its soteriology - is quite another. 5)

#### The Content of Salvation.

Narayanananda's ordo salutis (system of salvation) is the "ordo Kundalini". The master himself expresses this quite clearly, when he writes that "the path to salvation" is the opening of the Sushumna canal, the purpose of which is to allow the snake to penetrate it. 6)

It is this penetration that makes it possible for a man to transcend time and space, or rather the concept of time and space, as Narayanananda formulates it. Kundalini - which means "the coiled one" - is found in the form of a snake right at the very base of the spine, where, normally, it sleeps. It needs to be awakened, and then forced into the Sushumna canal, which is found connected to the spine. The snake has to rise up through this canal, and pass - in all - six "stations" on the way (chakras), so that finally it will be able to reach the topmost point, on the crown of the head - "Sahasrara". If it reaches that point, salvation is achieved, and "Nirvikalpa Samadhi" attained in the form of "Moksha" - the great liberation.

The snake is the power, or potency, called "Shakti", and it is understood most often as the female element, that must rise up and meet the male element that sits and waits at the highest point in the form of the God Shiva, the great "he". The two are united in a blissful abandonment of all differences. The experience of unity is a clear enough sign of sexual exhilaration, and there is an obvious connection between Nirvikalpa Samadhi and the experience of a form of orgasm.

If we are to understand the experience of salvation, it is necessary to realise what the relationship is between redemption and creation, and what, in this connection, "creation" means. 7)

Creation is understood as evolution, for reality comes into existence as development, i.e. as growing out of the basic unit of being, which one can call God. Salvation is therefore involution - that is to say the dissolution of reality, and the merging of everything in unity with God.

It is in creation that reality came into existence, as a result of the fact that Shakti left Shiva and became "mind and matter". During the evolution of creation Shakti disposed a part of her power in the different points which represent the gradually increasing distance from the divine unity. When Shakti settled down at the lowest point - "Muladhara" - near the aperture of the anus, she was, by the very nature of the case, powerless and weak - in other words, human. In order to overcome this human weakness, she must return - all the way - to Shiva, and again become divine and powerful. To return this way is salvation, and thus salvation really means overcoming creation and regaining power as a superman - i.e. as a divine being.

When Shakti is at the lowest points, then it is "ordinary persons" we are talking about, but if Shakti is aroused and raises up, then it is a matter of extraordinary powers and superhuman strength. It is by this means that one acquires the so-called "siddhis" - supernatural talents - which manifest themselves in the form of, inter alia, visions of light, elevations, and strange inner experiences.

To be saved, then, means to be made strong, and weakness correspondingly indicates that one is damned.

It is this that lies behind some of the statement made by the guru - as for example when he asserts that there is no salvation for the weak. "The weak have no place in religion. It is the bravest and it is the strongest only that succeed in religion." Or: "Strength is life, weakness is death. The greatest sin in the world is weakness." 8) 9)

It is for this reason also that Narayanananda's attitude towards "strong men" can mean but one thing. In conversation with his disciples the arguments he uses are often clearly fascist, because of his admiration for powerful men. 10)

He says, for example, "Today India needs a dictator, a good, strong man, to deliver her from her problems. Your so-called democracy is meaningless, when one has to deal with idiots.....Democracy has lost its purpose, even in America."

It is not surprising that he approves wholeheartedly of Hitler: "Take Hitler. When he came to power his first step was to liquidate all the leaders of the country, he did this on the very first night he came to power. At that stage it was the Jews who sat on the money in Germany, and they behaved selfishly, as enemies of the nation; Hitler saw this clearly, and so he understood that the nation could never rise, so long as the Jews were there. So he began, with determination, to get rid of them. In a short while he raised the nation to a very high level and made it one of the greatest powers in the world. When in prison he wrote the book "Mein Kampf". It is a good book..... All the ideas he wrote in it were later to be successfully put into practice.... Hitler got to power, and raised the nation to a high level. Then came the war... Hitler also had the atom bomb, but did not wish to use it...."

Similar ethical and political comment is found at length in tape-recordings of his darshans. They clearly reveal a man who is full of contempt for all human weakness, but with limitless admiration for men of the greatest power, for strength and might.

Mythologically, then, salvation is discovered in the unity between Shiva and Shakti, as a result of the raising up of Kundalini.

Psychologically, salvation means that the human element is conquered and abolished, with the aim of becoming superhuman, or rather divine.

Salvation means further, that one abandons the reality of everything that can be experienced, i.e. the whole world with its changes and differences. All differences are dissolved in unity with God, for differences are only the projections of the mind, and do not represent the truth, but merely illusion.

This of course has important consequences for the possibility of having faith in the world. That is impossible. The world is just one great illusion, and it is important to live without being ensnared by it. The Swami is consistent, for he realises himself that this is not only "anti-materialism", as most disciples seek to interpret it, but also "anti-human" - or, in other words, "anti-ethical". He writes: "The ideas of vice and virtue, good and bad and all the pairs of opposites are only in the mind." 11)

Nothing, therefore, is really good, and nothing is really bad; all that is human is relative. Everything is a mixture of good and evil. So nothing is found in the world that is absolute and eternal, which one can relate to as an example of salvation and ultimate reality.

For Narayanananda salvation is simply a matter of getting beyond the world of change and relativity. "The mind of a God-realized man is not subject to change. He keeps the perfect balance of mind under all circumstances.....he is not pleased by good things and events, nor he is moved or displeased by bad things and unfavorable events...." 12)

The ~~saved~~ man is **in** this way raised above all differences, above good and evil. He is unaffected by all influences, and is himself the only influence. The man who is saved is not an object - he is only subject. He who is saved is a superman, who is himself only cause, never effect. In this way the saved man lives "without the Gunas" - that is without living within the causality of the world of phenomena. The saved man lives "beyond", i.e. in the reality of transcendence, beyond all that is relative changeable and temporal, and for this same reason outside all questions of what is ethical and unethical.

Thus salvation means salvation from the world, "the world of names and forms....in time, space and causation." For that world is found only in the mind, and is not reality. The mind is an instrument of the self, and because of this it is the mind that gets all the senses to function. For this very reason however the mind is misled - for "the actions of the Gunas, born of Maya Shakti" make the real unreal, and the unreal real.

Salvation is to become aware of this snare, and to get free from it. This happens when one abandons the created world of illusions and attaches oneself to the uncreated world of salvation.

The meaning of salvation is not that anything in the world is changed; nothing is changed in the world - instead one transcends the world.

Salvation therefore is neither a struggle against something or someone, nor yet for something or someone, but is rather an escape from the illusions of the world, which are due to God's own "illusory power". 13)

God catches men in the net of illusions, but God also makes it possible for men to escape from this net. God is behind the illusory reality of creation, but God is also behind salvation's flight from this reality. God himself, however, is neither creator nor redeemer. The creator is not God but His Shakti, and God is quite definitely not redeemer either, for it is man himself - with the right insight and the right technique - who makes salvation possible. Salvation depends utterly on man's own technical knowledge.

#### The Technique of Salvation.

Salvation, then, is a matter of becoming strong. That is its whole purpose. But how one becomes strong is a technical problem. The fact that, for example, Transcendental Meditation is always claiming that the TM method of meditation is merely a matter of "a simple technique", "a neutral technique", is an example of a general attitude in most guru-movements, especially the tantric ones. Salvation is a matter of acquiring the right technique of salvation. TM provides production-line techniques for the masses. The tantric gurus, in contrast, provide "tailor-made techniques" to suit different kinds of people." 14)

The difference between the various gurus consists first and foremost in the techniques they provide for their disciples. The content of salvation is, by and large, common property, but so far as technique is concerned, there are many ways to the same goal.

In short, when it comes to technique, the question is which form of Hatha-Yoga is used: 15)

1. Mantra Jap - i.e. repetition of mantras, which are short sounds with mythological-cum-religious connotations.
2. Prana-yama - i.e. control over the power of life by means of breath-control.
3. Asanas - i.e. postures or positions one needs to practise in order to enable the body to function in a "tantric" manner.
4. Mudras and bandas - i.e. special techniques whose purpose is to arouse the Kundalini-snake. 16)

Hatha-yoga is normally represented as a series of neutral techniques that are designed simply to make people better able to start breathing more naturally, to use the body more sensibly, and to learn concentration and/or relaxation. Any objective reader of Hatha-Yoga literature will come to the conclusion that in fact the precise opposite is the case.

Such techniques can only cause the body and its functions to be deformed, and unable to operate in the way it is meant to - if indeed the purpose is a normal human life. But then of course that is not the purpose at all. The purpose is, rather, that these techniques will work together to make salvation possible, and salvation consists in transcending this human life.

The aim of the techniques is - briefly - "to close the doors of the body", so that all communication with the outside world ceases, so that a radical sense-deprivation takes place, so that the vitality of the body - "prana" - is retained within the body itself, so that the Kundalini-power can be raised to still higher points, with the ultimate aim of escaping from life altogether. 17)

The more one reads about Swami Narayanananda the clearer it becomes that there is an unbalanced tension even within his own system - a tension between death and life. On the one hand, there are no limits to the good, healthy results his yoga promises both for soul and body, for the individual and for society. On the other hand, the whole system can only be understood as a radical flight from this world as it is. Outwardly (exoterically) the system is a universal recipe for "the way to happiness, strength, and a long life." But inwardly (esoterically) it is a particular recipe for an effective and speedy escape from life and attainment of the great Death. This tension may perhaps have a simple explanation - its mythological basis, which is expressed by the fact that the chief divinity of this cult is Shiva, at one and the same time destroyer and preserver of life.

#### Salvation and Death.

"When Kundalini Shakti reaches Sahasrara, and when one experiences Nirvikalpa Samadhi, all bodily functions cease, including one's breathing, and even one's heart-beats", writes Narayanananda. 18)

This ultimate salvation is "very, very rare". 19)

But as it happened to him, there are rare occasions when it happens to others, when the elect escape the world of illusion. 20)

If the attainment of salvation according to Narayanananda means the cessation both of breathing and heart-beats, it is natural to see a connection between salvation and death.

On the one hand, he states that Nirvikalpa Samadhi does not mean death; on the other hand, he writes himself that "an ordinary person" cannot return (from salvation) to consciousness of relativity. Such a person stays in his body for 21 days and then leaves it, as a dead man. 21)

In reality this doctrine is meaningless, as no "ordinary person" can possibly attain salvation. Salvation is not achieved all at once. According to the system's own law one can only gradually rise up to the heights of salvation, and on one's way up one leaves behind the stage where "ordinary persons" exist, and one becomes a saint, a prophet, a superman. An ordinary person cannot be saved, and the man who is saved is no ordinary person.

But what is then the purpose of such a teaching? Certainly a good many of his disciples are clearly influenced by a death-wish and this promise of death does not frighten them. The present writer asked one of the most gifted young disciples - a research student in Mathematics - why he worked so hard at his meditation when it would lead to his death. The answer came short and clear - "Yes, of course; that is what I long for."

But there are some, according to Narayanananda whose salvation does not involve death. There are some great souls, born perfect, that is to say incarnations of God, Messiah-figures, prophets and other great saints, who come into the world with a mighty message from God which must be heeded. Such supermen do return to reality after attaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi, for they are able to keep their true self clean, and to work for suffering humanity. They give their message, and they reveal the way to liberation. Such people can go in and come out of "Moksha" or "Nirvikalpa Samadhi" at will. 22)

Such supermen - and Narayanananda reckons himself to be one of them, for he claims that he has attained salvation and yet is still alive - are perfectly free. They have no need even of the holy scriptures: "They are of no more use to him". Instead, his own words and actions are an expression of the divine truth: "His very words become the Scriptures, and his very acts become the Smritis. The point is that "the knower of reality becomes God himself." There is not the slightest trace of sin, ignorance, or dependence, to be found among those who are saved. "What remains after Samadhi is God and God alone." 23)

All these statements spring from the same basic doctrine that "Guru and God are one and the same" The guru is God himself for his disciples, and what he says and what he does are identical with the will of God.

He is himself quite free to talk and act as he wishes. He is not bound by his religious tradition(s) but is absolutely free. Everything he does is good, and everything he says is true.

It is clear that this has serious consequences both of a religious and an ethical nature. It leads to uncontrolled despotism, and it is what lies behind the total suppression of the people who become his disciples.

We have already observed the totally dominant role sexuality plays in Narayanananda's system 24); it is very important to realise the equally dominant role played by the death-wish. There is no doubt in reality salvation corresponds to death, just as damnation corresponds to life. When salvation is attained, there is no experience of the body. There is no trace of the senses, nor of the ego. The will and the intellect cease to function. The mind is completely taken up into the great Self. 25)

Of course, as we have already seen, Narayanananda denies that there is any question of death in the experience of salvation itself. That follows only in the case of ordinary people (after 21 days). He writes that, in itself, the experience of salvation is not death. It is "full-waking-state in deep sleep, as it were." It resembles deep sleep, but there is the same time consciousness, not limited kind, but oceanic consciousness. 26)

If we are to understand Narayanananda's denial that salvation is death, we must remember that by death he understands something quite different from what death means in our culture. For him death is "only a change of form". Death is only a change within the world. So even death belongs to illusory reality. To admit that Samadhi is death would therefore mean a contradiction in terms, for it is only through Samadhi that an individual goes beyond the illusory world to the great reality. 27)

Death, then, is not a liberation but the transition to another existence within the cycle of the soul's migration. Since death is not a liberation, liberation cannot mean death. Death is only a point between two lives, whereas Samadhi is liberation from all lives, all reincarnations. It may be defined in the following way:

Samadhi is the great and decisive Death, because death is not real. It is through Samadhi that one escapes from the life from which even death cannot release us.

Who, then, can be saved?

With this in mind one must ask who on earth according to this system can be saved?

The first point that must be insisted on is that according to this system it is at any rate not God who saves.

So the question of salvation is not a theological problem, in the true sense of the word, nor in a sense is it a religious problem.

If salvation is to take place, it is man himself who must carry out his salvation. In principle anyone can achieve it. Narayananda strongly emphasises that "any man" - even married people - can reach the goal. "Moksha is the common property of each and every man or woman". He who seeks will reach the goal. 28)

The idea behind this universalism is that there are several different Yoga-roads to the goal. There is something for every kind of person. One kind of person can make it with the help of Karma-Yoga, others with the help of Bhakti-Yoga, others with the help of Jnana-Yoga, others again with the help of Rajah-Yoga....."and all who work hard will get to the final goal." In principle anyone can achieve salvation, irrespective of caste, creed, or sex. 29)

On the other hand, as well as we have already seen, salvation is "very, very rare". And there is no doubt that the system itself has as its basis the fact that only those who follow Narayanandas way can really reach the goal within a reasonable period of time. 30)

It is the same with most gurus. On the one hand they preach that there are many ways to the same goal; on the other hand it is only their own way that can in fact be seriously considered. The other Yoga-ways are only accepted as temporary, partial means to salvation - i.e. as a preparation for the real truth, the real Yoga, which in Narayanandas case is the tantric way Maha-Yoga, i.e. Kundalini-Yoga. The other ways are accepted only insofar as they serve to point to the ultimate, best way, the Tantric way; and that way is unique.

Since salvation is identical with the full raising up of the Kundalini-snake, it follows that an incomplete raising, a partial raising, a wrongly-directed raising is identical with damnation. So long as Kundalini Shakti is situated in Swahistana Chakra (the second point at the sexual organs) "where the root of the penis and the testes meet" 31) one is really "in hell-fire". To allow one's Shakti to remain in the sex-chakra is sheer misery and perdition. Such a person cannot remain in good health, whether mental or physical. "Such a person has no salvation". 32)

People who continue to combine their vitality with their sexual power are thus lost. They are already in Hell, and cannot be saved. The second chakra is the only chakra where the power must not remain. If the Shakti on its way up gets stuck in the second chakra one must immediately go back to the first chakra, and from there one must begin again with a violent thrust to get past the fatal point where power can be lost through sexual activity. Every effort must be made at this point, for "if one leaves the effort and if one gives up work on being dejected one will be doomed for ever. Then the whole of life will be miserable." 33)

We are thus back where we started. Sexuality is the great obsession. It is Narayananandas pathological relationship to sex that has shaped his extraordinary religious outlook. The whole aim of his system of salvation is to conquer and transform sexual power, with which he has been quite unable to discover a natural, relaxed relationship. The centre of his religion is sex. It is not, as his disciples sometimes would have us believe, just one element in his system; the very system itself is drenched in sex, but in such a way that sex at one and the same time is given both too little and too great importance.

If - like his antagonistic former disciples - we regard his sexual activities as inexplicable contrasts with his teaching, then we have not understood his teaching. Swami Narayananda must be opposed not because his practice and preaching do not fit, but precisely because they fit together so well.

It is possible to have the greatest sympathy for people who, having grown up in a sexually maladjusted culture, and sex-mad milieu (mad because it either underemphasises or overemphasises the importance of sex), end up by signing away their freedom, and committing themselves to a man who can see no difference between himself and God. 34)

But we cannot allow our sympathy for such people to obscure the fact that the system in which they seek shelter is even sicker than the sickness they are fleeing from. They are in flight from the damnation in our culture, but they end up in a religious system that puts the guru in the place of God, and damnation in the place of salvation.

## Notes:

1. See "A Brief Life-Sketch" from Narayanananda's "The End of Philosophy or the Ultimate Truth and the Universal Religion", 1962 p. 247 ff
2. See book quoted above, also Narayanananda's book "Relevation" 1968 p. 280
3. For more details, see "Nyreligiøse bevægelser" KTppublication 1975 p. 144
4. I have written more details about this in "New Religious Movements Up-Date" Vol. 1 issues 3/4, p. 4-33 "A Yogic Attitude to Sex"
5. It is still denied, passionately, by his disciples that Swami Narayanananda is tantric. But anyone can read the truth for himself in Swami Narayanananda's most important book "The Primal Power in Man or the Kundalini Shakti" from 1950 (quoted here from the 1960 edition). In this book the Swami himself writes: "Arthur Avalon has written a voluminous book on Serpent Power (Kundalini Shakti). He has done yeoman's service unto the cause of Hindu Religion, especially the Tantras. I heartily thank him for his great efforts and the service rendered. Arthur Avalon gives too detailed a description and a few places his insights are not satisfactory", and therefore Swami Narayanananda has, according to his own understanding of the matter, "made the subject easy as far as possible, so that any man and woman can follow the subject easily".....  
This corresponds with reality. The Swami's main work is nothing other than a kind of "easy reader" in comparison with the great classical work on tantra - Sir John Woodroffe's "The Serpent Power" (first published under the pseudonym Arthur Avalon). All the Swami's other books are variations on the same theme, expounded in "The Primal Power" alias "The Serpent Power". It should be quite clear from this that Swami Narayanananda is a populariser of tantric doctrine. For this reason his understanding of salvation can be seen as an expression of the tantric conception of salvation. Many versions of the tantric understanding of salvation are found, but Swami Narayanananda's understanding is one of them.
6. "The Primal Power" 1960, p. 46
7. Swami Narayanananda gives a very precise description of this in the book "A Practical Guide to Samadhi", 1957, p. 75ff from 1966 edition
8. "The Primal Power" 1960, p. 97
9. "A Practical Guide..." 1966, p. 162 f. & p. 207
10. See "Darshan med Swami Narayanananda, en discipels notater", Gylling 1973, p. 102 f
11. "Revelation", 1951, p. 9 & p. 199 from 1968 edition. About the abolition of all opposites, see my article in "New Religious Movements Up-Date" Vol. II, issue 1, April 1978 p. 3-13: "Yogic Meditation and Action"
12. "Revelation" 1951, p. 9 from 1968 edition
13. "The Ideal Life" 1965 p. 3

14. In an interesting circular from some former TM-meditators, who are now propagating the way of Gururaj Ananda Yogi, the "deserters" write that TM's "education procedure is only relatively precise with regard to the techniques which suit individuals.....We have Maharishi and the TM-movement to thank for the fact that so many people's eyes have been opened to see the value of meditation, and that so many today get so much out of his system of meditation...." But they now introduce the new guru, who "personally designs the exact technique that suits each individual best, and so provides the quickest possible development."

15. Detailed accounts of Hatha-Yoga, by its practitioners, is to be found in Shyam Sundar Goswami: "Hatha-Yoga" Swedish edition 1953, and especially in Theos Bernard: "Hatha-Yoga, the Report of a personal Experience" (1st edition 1950), 1975 from Samuel Welser, New York. Swami Narayanananda's Hatha-Yoga technique is also described in his book "The Secrets of Prana, Pranayama, and Yoga-Asanas" 1959 and 1967. See also "The Primal Power..." 1960 pp 100f, 55f, and "Revelation" 1968 p. 247f. There are many indications that Hatha-Yoga as a general term is most correctly used to mean just those techniques which can be seen to be the technical aspect of the tantric system. It is only in connection with this system that they mean anything. Outside this system they are more or less meaningless. Thus Hatha-Yoga is the "know-how" of tantrism.

16. Theos Bernard writes unequivocally (p. 60): "The aim and goal of Hatha-Yoga is to enliven or awaken this force", i.e. Kundalini.

17. The clearest description of this is Theos Bernard's book, mentioned above, but with this information in mind one can see the same pattern in all accounts of Hatha-Yoga. The aim of the breathing-exercises is quite clearly to train one's ability to hold one's breath (both in and out) as long as possible and as often as possible, an "ability" the physiological effects of which can easily be imagined.

18. "The Primal Power..." 1960 p. 198, and "Revelation" 1968 pp. 68, 237, 247.

19. "The Primal Power.." 1968 p. 237

20. So far as is known the goal has not been reached by one single Danish disciple, although several of the ordinary disciples have alleged the contrary to the author. What they have really experienced are powerful inner experiences of an orgasmic character. Seeing that there are very few of his disciples in India or in other countries, and that among them not one guru-like individual has emerged, it is questionable whether any of his disciples have attained the desired goal. Naturally, not many have ever dared to ask Narayanananda, if he even himself has attained it. We have some tape-recordings of conversations between him and his disciples, in one of which a disciple ventured in the direction of this dangerous question, but he was rebuffed by the guru with great irritation and aggression.

21. "The Primal Power.." 1960 p. 272: "Revelation" 1968 p. 71: "The Secrets of Mind Control" 1959 p. 243: "A Practical Guide..." 1966 p. 137 ff: "The Secrets of Prana..." 1967 pp. 8, 22f, 25, 35f, 40. And several other places. It is a very pronounced element of Narayanananda's doctrinal system.

22. "The Primal Power..." 1960 p. 272f. "Revelation" 1968 p. 71
23. "The Primal Power..." 1960 p. 273f. See my article in New Religious Movements Up-Date Vol. 1, 2nd issue 1977, p. 8-14: "Guru and God"
24. See my article mentioned above: "Yogic Attitude to Sex" Up-Date Vol. 1, issues 3/4 p. 4-33
25. "Revelation" 1968 p. 70. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, a thoroughgoing tantric teacher and practitioner (Hu-meditation) writes in "The Book of Secrets" 1976 p. 30: "In the eyes of Tantra, Yoga is a deep suicide. You must kill your natural self...."
26. "Revelation" 1968 p. 71
27. "Revelation" 1968 p. 106
28. "The Ideal Life and Moksha..." 1951, p. 63 in 1965 edition
29. op cit. p. 85
30. "The Secret of Mind Control" 1954, p. 228 in 1959 edition
31. "The Primal Power...." 1960 p. 71
32. "The Primal Power...." 1960 p. 242
33. "The Primal Power...." 1960 p. 255
34. As I said after my first visit to the guru at Gylling: "A third-class guru with first-class disciples."

## NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN NORWAY

by Arild Romarheim

### 1. Some general views about the conditions for the spreading of new religions in Norway

Norway is a country where Christianity traditionally has a strong position among the people. A number of revivals in the seventies have contributed to strengthening the position of Christianity, not least among the younger generation. At the same time a growing secularization of society is taking place. This results in a growing polarization between traditional Christianity and the people in general. But this process of secularization seems to be proceeding at a slower pace than in some of the other Nordic countries. This is due to the prevalent form of folk religion in Norway. Research indicates that Norwegian popular religious beliefs have a greater content of traditional Christian faith than is the case in other Scandinavian countries. It is well known that folk religion often lead a life rather independent of the faith of the Church, and one participates in the rituals of the Church on one's own terms. This has been and is the case in Norway also. But at the same time it is a fact that the essentials of the Christian faith are regarded as true by the majority of Norwegians, including those who are not active in churchconnected activities. According to a sociological investigation by Hauglin (Rapport fra Nærby, 1970) 57% of all Norwegians have a conception of Jesus as saviour. A total of 80% state that they have a positive attitude to Christianity. 10% of the population are practicing Christians and go to the Holy Communion. This has certain consequences for the appraisal of Norway as a market for new religions. The great majority of Norwegians with religious beliefs have in their beliefs a built-in respect for Christianity. Those who have a hostile attitude to Christianity will often be negative or sceptical to all religion. The result is that any new movement that presents itself as religious will get minimal following. On the other hand, one that emphasizes its religious neutrality in toning down everything that may be understood as religious, will acquire followers. If the religious element neverthe-

less is in evidence, it must be given a Christian interpretation in order to gain recognition. This will only have a positive effect if one at the same time can assure the public that the movement is not a sect. One must give the impression of representing the same kind of religiosity as that of Christianity. Most new religious movements of Oriental type can be characterized by the following formula: They introduce themselves as in principle non-religious, but at the same time they emphasize that their method of cognition is in principle compatible with all religions and will enrich all religions, also Christianity. They claim that their method of cognition is in reality the source of all religions. In other words, they are offering the essence of all true religion, including Christianity. This way of thinking is consistent among the majority of the new religions. A few exceptions exist, especially among some of the sects inspired by Christianity. Norwegian folk religion today does not seem to have any objections to this way of reasoning. Once the respect for Christianity and Jesus are pronounced, it will be looked upon as an advantage if this can be reconciled with other world religions. Here a certain change seems to be taking place in the thinking of common people, corresponding to the changes toward a more pluralistic society. This is not a radical change, seen from the point of view of folk religion. One has never been interested in fixed dogmas of faith that are in opposition to other dogmas. The pluralistic situation in itself has a more persuasive effect on folk religion than the minister's sermon in church on Sunday. The new religion's way of presenting themselves fit in well in this picture: One is not a religious sect, but represents the most genuine in all human cognition. The process of secularization is as mentioned proceeding more slowly in Norway than in other Nordic countries. Nevertheless it is ever more in evidence. In general, secularization will always mean a weakening of the established religion and increased opportunities for the religious minorities. We see this for instance in Moslem countries, where Christian missionary activities are indirectly profiting from secularization. In the North European countries, the situation is parallel, but here secularization favours the new missionary religions at the cost of established Christianity. Secularization leads to a crisis of religious identity for some people. The message of the new religions fits right into this situation.

A common denominator for the new religions that have made their entry in Norway during the last 10 to 15 years, is that they promise the individual an identity: The point is to find oneself and to find a connection where one can belong. The new religions give a real offer to fulfil these needs. They offer a method of self-realization and a social environment. The need for an environment seems to be most prevalent among those who join movements that derive from Christianity (e.g. The Children of God, the Unification Church, Jehovah's Witnesses). On the other hand the need to realize one's own identity seems to have been more prevalent among those who join orientally inspired movements (e.g. TM, Divine Light Mission, Ananda Marga), according to interviews with members. Particularly striking in the last mentioned group are the frequent testimonies about getting a completely new self-awareness upon taking up meditation. One acquires a feeling of being in command of one's existence. One is in possession of a power in one's own person of which one earlier has no idea. A young man who joined the Ananda Marga told that before, he was very dependent and insecure compared with his friends. Immediately after the initiation ceremony and the first meditation a radical change took place. "I myself came into focus as never before, I acquired an enormous self-awareness, an enormous power....a feeling of unexpected possibilities. This situation continued also in my daily life. I was really much more in command of various situations than before. When everybody was fretting around me, I was "up there". ....You felt you were much stronger than other people, that you were God." The new religions can point at concrete results for the individual as a consequence of their method, and this testimony has an undisputable effect. It is seen and registered by everybody. It awakens interest and pulls new prospective members to the movement. What then is the situation in Norway after some years of hectic missionary activity by the new religions? Have they had any success? We shall give a brief survey and present the most important facts.

2. A brief survey of the distribution of the new religions in Norway.

a. Movements with a Hindu background:

Most widely represented is TM by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Even in some

remote places courses have been arranged for the "World Plan". Some towns have already passed the 1% limit, which is regarded as particularly important as a step towards the realization of the "World Plan". In connection with Bergen passing the 1% limit in January, 1977, the local TM instructors declare that they follow the development with great expectations. They expect a reduction of the crime rate, traffic accidents, sick leaves, and abuse of alcohol and drugs. At the same time they proclaim the ideal society that will arise when the 5% limit is passed, "free of problems and suffering, full of harmony, peace, progress and perfection", according to "Bergens Tidende", March 17, 1977.

Half a year later the same paper gives great publicity to the latest development of the TM technique with the headline "Up into the air by meditation" (September 30). It is now possible to levitate one's body above the ground and to make oneself invisible, the so-called sidhis technique. This has not yet been practised in Norway. But the TM instructor Finn Kolberg reports having seen it in Switzerland. Since then this TM instructor has been travelling about the country, giving a great many lectures on sidhis. Using TM, one can by the mere use of one's will levitate one's body. This is a side effect, it is emphasized. And it demands years of training. Special courses of sidhis are being arranged. They take 4-5 months and cost altogether 22000 Norwegian kroner (£ 2200). The movement seems to have a well-organized network of local press contacts. Similar articles appear in ever more newspapers just before a lecture is about to be made, often with the addition of an interview with a local adherent of TM. The movement has as of today initiated about 26000 in the TM technique, that is about 0,6% of Norway's population. It may be relevant to ask why this movement has had such success. Firstly, it has succeeded very well in hiding its religious identity. The last few years, however, this has become more and more evident, after the initiation rite was disclosed (to the author by a deserter) in the spring of 1974. It is reasonable to assume that also the marketing of the sidhis technique will make people in general more aware of the real character of this movement. An external circumstance that has contributed to the progress of the movement is its arrangement with some semi-public teaching institutions (Friundervisningen, AOF and others). These are financed

by the government, but enjoy a great degree of freedom in their choice of courses to be offered. The classes take place mainly in the evenings. As this movement has got general recognition of being a neutral technique for relaxation, TM-courses have been arranged by these institutions. However, The World Plan seems to be on the defensive here. And another movement is about to take over this market, namely ACEM. In 1971 the unique thing happened in the history of TM that a special group within the organisation was excluded and thereafter started teaching TM in its own way - in opposition to the mother organisation. They call themselves ACEM and is guided by Are Holen. The motherorganisation "The World Plan" has tried to stop this new TM movement by means of lawsuit. They held that they had the exclusive right to teach the TM technique. In spring 1977 the verdict was given in Oslo byrett which cleared ACEM on all points. However, The World Plan has appealed the sentence. ACEM has replaced the initiation ritual used by The World Plan with a talk, through which the fitting mantra is found and given to the pupil. The movement has a distinct academic profile. ACEM is evidently the more successful of the two movements. They have taught the TM technique to approximately 9000 people. ACEM is better organized than The World Plan. Through the semi-public evening courses ACEM today is teaching TM in 60 different places throughout the country. During the last year they have also got some groups in Sweden. Some tantric movements have also come on the scene, namely the Scandinavian Yoga and Meditation School and the Ananda Marga. Ananda Marga is known because of the lawsuits in India about the founder of this religion, Anandamurtiji. In 1976 he was convicted of having killed six adherents. An earlier Norwegian leader left the movement in 1976. And he stated his reasons as follows: "I joined this organisation because I supposed it would make people better, instead it made people fanatics. The leaders got great power over their adherents, which they abused to get domination even over their private lives. In foreign countries threats have also been made with the use of arms."

Other movements of Hindu background have been spread only to little extent in Norway. The Divine Light Mission has initiated about 50 persons. About 20 of these take active part in the meetings. The movement of Narayanananda has a few groups here. But the Hare Krishna movement seemingly does not have any permanent colony, but sometimes some Swedish adherents have visited towns in Norway.

The reason for this unsuccessful proselization is obviously that the Hindu features of these movements are very clear.

b. With Buddhist Background: Tibetan Buddhism.

Several times the last years so-called coronation ceremonies have taken place in Oslo. The international leader, Karmapa, of this branch of Tibetan Buddhism, Kargyudpa, has been present together with some lamas. 150 Norwegians have been watching the ceremony, and most of them have gone forward to get the blessing. A Norwegian colony has been established, Karma Tashi Ling. A Tibetan Lama is living here together with 6 - 7 disciples.

c. With Islamic background.

These movements have got rather few adherents in Norway. Most successful is Bahai with about 200. The movement has not increased during the last 4 years in spite of the fact that they have a lot of clever and sympathetic spokesmen. They have bought an area for a temple building. But it is very uncertain whether these plans will ever be realized. Subud has about one hundred adherents. A great international conference was held in Oslo a few years ago. The Ahmadia movement has scarcely had any progress among the Norwegians. But a teacher in the high school and his wife consider themselves as Ahmadia moslems. A lot of the foreign moslem workers from Pakistan have joined this movement, about 130. They have regular meetings. The Ahmadia want to build a mosque in the environment of Oslo, but they have not succeeded yet. The relation between the Ahmadia and the orthodox moslems in Oslo is not yet friendly, especially from the orthodox point of view. They do not accept them as moslems at all. Especially interesting is the meeting with the Moslem foreign workers. About 6000 Moslems from Pakistan and some thousand from other countries are living in Norway. Probably they will get a mosque in Oslo. The municipal authorities of Oslo are willing to give a site for this purpose. But till now the moslems have not been coordinated enough in this matter. Pakistani Moslems here, with whom I have had conversations, hold that there exists a "Gospel of Barnabas" according to which Jesus says that "After me there will be another prophet, and his name shall be called Muhammed" (See also Quran, sura 61,6). So they claim, also according to Christianity Muhammed is the final prophet. This "Gospel of Barnabas" is widely spread in Pakistan, and it compli-

cates the relations between Christians and Moslems also here in Norway.

D. With a Christian background

Only the more traditional denominations like Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons have any sizable following (7500 and about 3000 respectively). But the Unification Church is making a strong impact in spite of the fact that they have no more than 200 adherents in Norway. This movement came to the country from Germany when Ingrid Schneider (now Jørgensen) got employment as a secretary at an Ecumenical office of the Church of Norway, where she was employed for several years. The tactics of the movement is to change the church from the inside. They don't resign from the State Church. They make great efforts to prove that there are no essential differences between them and the Church. They have made several advances to the public schools, offering teaching materials concerning the creation and development. They also regularly send circular letters of information to the clergy of the Church of Norway.

The Children of God are in decline. There are now about 40 disciples of Moses David in Norway. The Worldwide Church of God has about 120 adherents. But they have an efficient means of propagation in their journal "The Plain Truth", which is distributed free of charge in several thousand copies in Norway.

E. With background in Occultism.

Theosophy has today about 100 followers, Antroposophy about 500. The latter represents a significant cultural influence in society, among other things through their schools for children (the Steiner schools) that have gained great official recognition.

Cosmology has about 20 followers. The movement seems to have come to a stand-still. The Rosicrucian Order also has a few adherents, meetings are held sporadically. Astrology seems to have a growing following. But this cannot be registered in any accessible statistics. We should also mention Eckankar movement, which presents a method for soul travel out of the body into the higher worlds. In Norway there are about 50 adherents. This movement has some similarities with the ancient gnosticism. And so has a lot of the movements mentioned above, e.g. the movements of Occult and Hindu background. Most of them reveal a hidden knowledge about the divine nature of man and they offer means for the soul to

"get home", to reach back to ones original state of existence, that is to find ones true identity.

Astrology, divination, magic, Spiritism etc. leads us back to what we discussed in the introduction, namely folk religion. This is possibly where the decisive battle will be fought about what kind of religion will be the predominant in Norway in the future. Here great changes may be taking place - without being registered neither by students of religion nor by theologians. Therefore research should be started in this field. A certain barometer exists, in the form of for instance the weekly coloured press, which has been called "the ordinary man's bible." This is the main reading of a great many Norwegians. Here there has been a growing tendency to take up occult themes, especially astrology, but also themes from yoga, transmigration, the "Ufological" hypotheses of Däniken, magic, voodoo etc. It is difficult to formulate any thesis on such a basis. But a poll among the book-shops of Oslo confirms that occultism is in great demand at the moment. One single shop is selling literature on the occult for 25000 kr. a month. A number of unsystematic observations show a growing interest among the youth for the theory of transmigration. No clear conclusion can be drawn. But one must count it as possible that Norwegian folk religion is changing its character. If so, this will in the long run have decisive consequences for the access of new religions in Norway.

But before such conclusions are drawn as I here have suggested as possible, the matter should be subjected to thorough systematic investigation. Before this is done, one should refrain from too strong assumptions. Because - as they say - it is difficult to prophesy, especially about the future.

# THE PRESENT SITUATION IN SWEDEN AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NEW RELIGIOUS SCENE

by Lester Wikström

## 1. Transcendental Meditation (TM)

Jan-Otto Ottosen, a professor of psychology at the university of Gothenburg, was, in January 1974, asked by Socialstyrelsen (The Swedish Social Welfare Board) to make an investigation into TM. The reason for this was that TM, in an advertising campaign 1973, claimed that TM could decrease the risks for psychosomatic illnesses such as high blood pressure and gastric ulcers. Furthermore, in a circular letter, The students International Meditation Society (SIMS), offered their services to social health care centers in Sweden. Finally the head of the Ministry of Social Affairs received a request from the TM organization in Sweden, concerning financial support to courses in TM. In the request they had enclosed reports on their activity, scientific documentation and a financial report.

The results of the investigation made by Dr. Ottosen was presented to The Swedish Social Welfare Board in May 31th, 1977. It is based on an analysis of the scientific documentation on TM and on the personal experience Mr. Ottosen had of TM. He judged it necessary to join the TM for some time to personally learn their way of working. The TM-scientific documentation is summarized in the report "Collected papers", vol.1, ed. D.W., Orme-Johnson & J.T. Farrow and published by Maharishi European Research University Press, 1976.

In his conclusions of the analysis of the 101 TM-experiments Mr. Ottosen says, that the analysed scientific documentations reveals a number of methodological mistakes and weaknesses, which mean that the conclusions drawn from this material are invalid.

About 13 physiological experiments to which TM refers, Mr. Ottosen says the following in his criticism:

"1. The experiment group was made up of experienced meditators and no account is given of the criteria applied in choosing the group. Therefore one can not rule out that it is a question of a selective group which need not be representative for the effects of TM?

2. From the investigations one is not able to assess to what extent the findings are specific to TM. Certain comparisons are made with normal relaxation, but there are no comparisons with other methods of systematic relaxation.

Observation of other techniques shows that one can attain similar changes with them. Without direct comparisons it is not possible to say which method is the most effective. Thus one cannot claim that the effects are specific to TM." Mr. Ottosen makes the same objections regarding the 11 neuro-physiological experiments. "The indicated correlation between synchrony and creativity can naturally not be taken as proof that TM has brought about the synchrony. Here one draws a false conclusion on causality from correlation." In seven of the experiments physiological changes through TM are accounted for. About these Mr. Ottosen says the following:

"Without reservation and as a rule one has drawn the false conclusion that the difference between meditators and non-meditators depends on the meditation. One does not take into account that the meditators can be a selected group, whose starting-point has been different in respect to the autonomous stability." Summing up Mr. Ottosen says that in these experiments no permanent physiological effects are accounted for by TM. 13 studies treat the effect of TM in different illnesses. Mr. Ottosen says: "One can see a certain effect after TM in angina pectoris, asthma and insomnia, but nothing shows that the results are specific for TM." About the experiment regarding changes of weight during TM Mr. Ottosen says: "From a methodical viewpoint a completely impossible study."

From a study on the effects of TM on stammering Mr. Ottosen says: "The absence of an account of the criteria for choice and the degree of coarseness in the method rule out the possibility of drawing conclusions. Regarding the studies of intelligence, learning and success in studies Mr. Ottosen says that the difference between the groups can have been caused by different starting points and different possibilities for development. Regarding the 15 experiments which prove that TM promotes personality development, Mr. Ottosen says that they do not document any personality development effects through TM. The experiments are often inclined to, in a far too uncritical way, disregard the methodically wrong source which is to be found in the unequal comparison groups.

According to certain TM-studies, TM should counteract misuse of narcotics and alcohol and be a good method in the treatment of crime. But Mr. Ottosen says that documentation for this is "weak".

The results of the use of TM in psychiatry are "modest" says Mr. Ottosen. In two studies it is proved that TM "increases work satisfaction and capacity and that it decreases the inclination to change employment; that it improves the relation between workers and superiors and decreases the motivation to climb the career ladder. These are two remarkable studies, in which the conclusions appear invalid due to the fact that the control problem has not been solved. However it reflects the zeal and naivety which characterizes TM enthusiasts. One gets the impression that one need not apply ones energy to work-environmental questions but to TM alone."

The conclusion that the documentation draws without too much hesitation is, that TM can have physiological effects of an antistress character. However, it is neither possible to say how often this happens nor if this is specific to TM. The overall impression is that TM, like other similar techniques, functions like an anti-stress treatment but that it does not have any deeper and lasting

effects. In his final remarks on his personal experience in TM Mr. Ottosen says that he has no complaints on the general atmosphere of the course. The leaders were friendly - - and the atmosphere undramatic.

When comparing TM meditation technique and the technique taught by Langen and others he found similar results. The difference, however, was that TM has a religious framework because of the initiation ceremony and because of the prophetic role which Maharishi has been given and which he has accepted.

Finally Mr. Ottosen says that probably TM can be useful as a method of counteracting stress. The dangers involved seem to be minimal. Therefore, there is no reason for the Socialstyrelsen to prevent the activities of TM. On the other hand there is no reason to give TM financial support since there are other techniques which are equally good, i.e. the German method called autogenous training.

Finally as regards TM's Siddhi-programme which was explicitly accounted for in Dagens Nyheter on 26th November 1977. In this article, the TM teachers say that they are waiting for the go-ahead from Maharishi before they present siddhi for the general public: "At MERU - Maharishi European Research University in Switzerland - Maharishi's scientists are working frenetically to find a valid scientific theory which can explain why the law of gravity is ruled out. Having done this they can present it to the general public....Furthermore we want to learn to fly more gracefully." The next day the paper followed up the article on TM. An engineer, who had studied the pictures, said the following about the flying lady: "She gets up in the air by leaping and the photos are taken precisely when she is at the highest point in the leap. Please, observe the arms, which give assistance, and observe the flying hair and that the trousers fall in a different way every time." On behalf of Dagens Nyheter the paper's correspondent Svend Lindquist invited the two TM-teachers to an ex-

periment: "It is sufficient if Per and Ingegerd, in a sitting posture on a bathroom-scales, succeed in reducing the body-weight by half through the power of meditation. Well, even a reduce of the weight by two kilos mean more than thousands of photos....If you are charlatans who have been carried away by the new superstition, of course do not do this experiment. But if you beleive what you are saying - you cannot loose anything. Heartly welcome!"

Three weeks later on 14th December 1977 Aftonbladet, the socialist evening paper, had a page with the headlines: "He has taught 40 swedes to fly" and "For 10.000 crowns I will teach you too to fly." In an interview Mr. Ottosen, the professor I previously referred to, says that TM is a kind of relaxation and that one enters into rest but the Transcendental Meditaters do not have a monopoly on the art of relaxation. According the flying statement Mr. Ottosen says: It is absurd and impossible.

When interviewed the TM-teachers say that the goal of TM is "stressfree individuals in a stressfree society. The transcendental meditation will give invincibility to all states and a boundless consciousness to the individuals.

## 2. Scientology and Narconon

In the second part of my review I will deal with a recently published book "De fördömda scientologerna" (The condemned /or damned/ Scientologists) written by Svante Nylander, editorial commentator of Dagens Nyheter, the leading morning newspaper in Sweden, independent liberal as they claim. In the preface he says that in 1975 he was visited by a group from Narconon. "They asked me to help them to prevent Socialstyrelsen from stopping their work. I was convinced that Narconon is a good movement and that it would be a crime to forbid them to work", he says. At three different times at least he has written editorials in which he has defended Narconon and the scientologists.

Nevertheless "The book is not a defence for Scientology", says Nycander in an interview, "it is a defence of the freedom of religion - even when this manifests itself in ways which one dislikes."

Nycander is a sharp intellectual and a good liberal. He dislikes Scientology, he says in the quoted interview. He does not feel attracted by Scientology. In his opinion L Ron Hubbard, the founder of the movement, has a lot of "bizarre ideas". But also the Pentecostal movement and the Church of Sweden are based on bizarre ideas, in his opinion, so why should the Scientology Church be particularly persecuted?

The startingpoint is that Socialstyrelsen 1969 and again 1977 stated that "Scientology is not a recognized science or religion but should be considered as a rather diffuse doctrine, which consists of a mixture of truisms, absurd ideas and that scientology as a medical treatment against drug abuse must be rejected since this method neither is scientifically based nor is tested by experience."

## SOME TM-LITTERATURE: A SURVEY

by R. Kranenborg

1) Books of Maharishi Mahesh Yogia) The science of Being and art of living (London 1966)

The most important book of Maharishi. It consists of lectures. You can call it the "TM bible". There are many editions of this book and a comparison of the differences in the text is a good theme to be researched by a student. Also published as "Transcendental Meditation" (New York 1968, Signet Book)

b) On the Bhagavad Gita (Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1969, Penguin). The second important work of Maharishi. It is called "Translation and commentary" but that means the vision of Maharishi on this book. He is reading the TM-technique everywhere in this old hinduistic book. It is not a really scientific explanation.

c) Love and God (Oslo 1965, SRM)

Here we have a biography of Guru Dev, and we find something about the relation between Maharishi and his master. Then we have mystical prayers of Maharishi to God. Very interesting and makes clearer the understanding of the hinduistic background of Maharishi.

d) Meditations (New York 1973, Bantam Books)

In this booklet Maharishi is very open. What he is saying is not very new. You can find almost everything in "The science of Being and the art of living". But his open-hearted reactions are fascinating, for instance: we don't speak about religion, because modern man doesn't want religion; he wants science; therefore we are presenting TM as a science.

2) TM-books

a) Bloomfield, H.a.o. TM, discovering inner energy and overcoming stress (New York 1975, Dell-book)

This book from the TM-movement is not a bad one. It starts

with the situation of stress in which most people are living. The title of the first chapter is clear enough: "The crisis of modern life". In the following chapters extensively demonstrated is that only TM is the way to come out from the stress. From the same author: "Happiness, the TM program, psychiatry and enlightenment". (New York 1977, Pocket Book).

b) Campbell, A. Seven states of consciousness (New York, 1974, Harper and Row). Campbell is an author of the TM movement who wants to give a modern philosophical substructure to TM. In the TM litterature he is an exemption as he knows that, scientifically spoken, the Creative Intelligence is an hypothesis. Therefore he is not too fanatic. His aim is to show which possibilities may exist if the hypothesis of the Creative Intelligence is a true one.

c) Campbell, A. TM and the nature of enlightenment (New York, Harper and Row). This book one can see as the follow up the former one. It is not very new, but interesting.

d) Dennison, D/McWilliams, P. The TM book (New York 1975, Warner Book). A popular TM propoganda book with many little drawings and with questions sceptical people have about TM. The questioner gets such good answers that, in the end, he exclaims, "I'll take it!" A Book of simplification. It is, however, interesting to see the way TM is working with the science of creative advertising.

e) Winter, G. A season in heaven (New York 1974, Bantam Book) A report of an American author who followed a course at Maharishi. The book is not presenting many new things. The most interseting aspect is the strong gloryfying of the personality of Maharishi.

f) Drake Hemmingway, P. The transcendental meditation primer (New York 1967, Dell Book) Also a report of an author. She describes her way towards and in TM. Not very interesting and I have the impression that she doesn't understand the whole of TM very well.

g) Forem, J. Transcendental Meditation (New York 1973, Dutton). A TM book that is relatively old (1973). It is very

readable and has many examples from people who did TM. It presents an all-round view on TM, as it sees herself, and on the way the people of the TM-movement are thinking and acting.

h) Robbins, J./ Fisher, D. Tranquillity without pills (London 1973). A popular explanation of TM. Strong propagandistic. In the end critical and sceptical questions are answered, but the answers are not satisfactory.

i) Wallace, R. K. The physiological effects of transcendental meditation. (Los Angeles 1970)

His dissertation about the psysical results of TM is the first book about this theme. It meant a revolution in the history of the movement and it has concluded that TM, from that time, is propagating herself exclusivily as a science. The results, Wallace discovered, we can find in every TM-book. A research on which you can put many critical questions.

### 3) Books about TM

a) Dancer, J. The transcendental meditation experience (New York 1967 Award Book). Report of the author who let himself be persuaded by his friends to do TM. He liked it, it helped him, but he remained very sceptical about the TM-movement as a whole. He doesn't hesitate to publish his mantra (hirem) and he suggests that you also can meditate with words as "love" or "one".

b) White, J. Everything you want to know about TM, including how to do it. (New York 1976 Signet Book)

One of the best books about TM. Critical and all-round. The author was initiated, but published his mantra (sham). He is discussing in this book many issues of the TM-creed in a thorough way. A book one has to read if one wants to know what TM really is.

c) Jefferson, W. The story of the Maharishi (New York 1976

Pocket Book). A history of the movement. He confronts us with many facts. As a general view very suitable. The author is not a member of the TM-movement, but he is also not very critical. He doesn't discuss the matter.

d) Ebon, M. Maharishi the guru (New York 1968, Signet Book)

Ebon collected some articles about TM. He himself is (according my impression) not a member of the movement. This book was published in 1968, before the scientific phase of the movement and therefore we meet a TM which is another one than the movement we know in 1978. Everybody who wants to know how it looked like in the beginning (eg. the Beatles) has to read this book. The book is not discussing TM.

e) Elbon, M. TM, how to find peace of mind through meditation (New York 1976, Signet Book)

Five of the 20 chapters are dedicated to TM. This book is a more fundamental one than the first book.

f) Lewis, R.G. What everyone should know about Transcendental meditation (New York 1975, Pillar Book)

A christian approach to TM. In this book mostly hinduism and christianity are compared. About TM as a movement is not very much spoken. The author makes clear that TM is pure hinduism.

g) Benson, H. The relaxation response (New York 1975, Avon)

The author is analysing meditation in general and TM in particular. He has isolated the mechanics of TM from the hinduistic and religious background and shows us how it works. You can say that he presents us with a form of "secularised TM". He suggests as a "mantra" the word "one".

h) Mildenberger, M. /Schöll, A. Die Macht der süßen Worte. Die Bewegung der Transzendentalen Meditation. (Wuppertal, 1977). This book was reviewed in the first issue of Up-Date.

i) Kanellakos, D.P. o.a. The psychobiology of transcendental meditation (Benjamin, Menlo Park, Calif. 1974)

A very important book, as the methods and researches of TM are being analysed in a critical way. It appeared that the scientific quality of the TM-research is very low. What is mostly claimed by the TM-propaganda is scientifically not to be maintained.

## NEWS

A résumé of an article which appeared in FS-Voraus, (4/160, 18.4.) on the Moon movement (Unification Church).

Pastors of the Evangelical Church in the Federal Republic of Germany have been warned by their church leadership that the Unification Church is planning to recruit new members directly in parishes. Members of the sect are trying to gain the confidence of the pastors by joining in parish activities such as youth work and visiting (without at first disclosing who they are); so far they are apparently concentrating on large towns. Meantime parentsgroups have been formed all over the Federal Republic to fight against recruitment practices of the new religious movements.

Two items from EPD, 20/7/78:

Bonn: 20 July 1978. Klaus Immer, member of the Federal Parliament (SPD) has called attention to the right of churches to warn (their members) against other religious groups. He did this in answering a letter from the "Society for the advancement of Religious Tolerance and Human Relations" of Munich, which urged Immer to provide that the churches, particularly the protestant churches, be "legally curbed" because of their critical position regarding certain sects.

In answer the member of Parliament stated that the right to one's own religious convictions "in no way" excluded "the right of the various groups to delimit their boundaries against each other nor even to question the legitimacy of other groups. They are completely justified in warning their members and if need be the public as well regarding the doctrine and practice of others."

Further Immer expressed his astonishment that the society for the Advancement of Religious Tolerance and Human Relations

was so uncritically protective of such, in his opinion, completely intolerant groups as the KRSNA disciples and above all the "Unification Church" (Moon sect). Unfortunately neither of these was either tolerant or harmless. "The latter even has connections with Middle East terrorism and too often confuses religion with strong economic and political interests," wrote the member of the Bundestag.

Kassel: 20 July 1978. The attempt to enjoin the distribution of the information booklet "Modern Youth Religions" has failed. According to the Diaconic Agency of the Evangelical Church (Kassel) the Regional Court has rejected a plea for this action by "Transcendental Meditation".

The informational text, prepared by Rev. Helmut Aichelin, head of the Evangelische Zentralstelle für Weltanschauungsfragen (Stuttgart) deals with six "youth religions", among them the militant anti-communist Unification Church (Sun Myung Moon sect), the "Children of God", and the Hare Krishna Disciples. The Kassel agency writes in a renewed "Warning on Youth Religions": "Strong material interests are only thinly hidden, an international network makes of their methods an impenetrable jungle". Those responsible for youth are urged to be concerned for the reasons for the susceptibility of young people to "pseudo - religious groups" as well as with the practices of their leadership

## NEWS

A résumé of an article which appeared in "Christianity Today" 24th February, 1978. It is a condensation of a well-documented report filed by correspondent Joseph M. Hopkins.

Children of God's (CoG) name has been changed to "Family of Love". The term "colony" has been changed to "home".

Gone is the hierarchy of prime ministers, ministers, archbishops, bishops, regional shepherds, and district shepherds. The "homes" will be led by a "servant" and a "handmaiden", who will report directly to "king and queen counselorships", a sort of regional headquarters in Rome (for Europe and Africa), Tokyo (North America and the Pacific), and Lima, Peru (for Latin America).

In this connection Moses David declared: "The King is taking back the reins of government and we're going back to a direct dictatorship! .....So as of my birthday, February 18, 1978, you're all fired."

No more than half of the members of overseas "homes" can be Americans after April 1. Polygamous relationships with nationals are suggested as one way to cope with the requirement.

Trial marriages are preferable to "formal legal marriages" to determine if the relationship will work.

Each home must submit to regional headquarters a monthly "Flirty Fish witnessing report". (Under the recently revealed Flirty Fish policy, CoG male and female members alike are admonished to "go to bed.....if necessary" with potential converts and donors in an effort to "win their souls for Jesus"). The report asks a listing of the number of sexual encounters with "fish" (outsiders), mates, and non-mate members, along with the number of spiritual decisions that are made.

Each member is to keep a Flirty Fish (FF) diary, detailing

"your best" FF experiences, the type of job and income bracket of the fish, the expenditures in fulfilling the FF policy (clothing, jewelry, perfume, travel, drinks), and the gifts presented by the grateful fish, whether money or goods. Each home is to list the "top three FF lovers of the month", with the "total number loved" by each and "number of times".

"Gifts" from beneficiaries of CoG women applying the FF policy are to be sought. "We can't afford to just continue supporting some kind of religious brothel ministering to men who don't pay their way..." Moses David complains.

At least 10 percent of CoG's women become pregnant as a result of FF evangelism.

In a letter dealing with Islam last fall, Moses David exposed how far he has drifted from his doctrinal moorings as a Protestant minister years ago. He says: "...I don't even believe in the Trinity. You can't find that word in the Bible, so why should I believe it?"

If CoG statistics are to be believed membership in 1977 soared from 6.929 to 8.068, including 3.650 live-in adults, 1.451 children, and 2.967 part-time members. Only 10.5 percent of CoG members reside in the United States. The number of "homes" increased from 736 to 842 in 73 countries.

"Grand Jury Indicts 11 From Scientology Church" an article taken from Herald Tribune August 16, 1978.

Washington, August 15 (UPI) - A federal grand jury today indicted 11 members of the Church of Scientology, including the wife of founder Ron Hubbard, on charges of stealing government documents from the Justice Department, the Internal Revenue Service and a U.S. courthouse.

The indictment, issued in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, charges the California-based church with recruiting members "to infiltrate various agencies and departments of the United States."

The indictment charges that church members used electronic surveillance and prepared "bogus credentials to gain access to various agencies and departments."

The indictment, which the church had expected for weeks, was the latest blow in a long-running feud between the Scientologists and several federal investigative agencies.

Prosecutors prepared the 42-page indictment after raids on the church's Los Angeles and Washington offices on July 8, 1977, in which FBI agents carted off tens of thousands of documents.

The government's case is based on those documents, and the church and its attorneys have been engaged for more than a year in a struggle to get them back.

Some church officials now say that their actions were illegal, and the church said recently in a statement that those indicted would surrender to the FBI rather than await their arrests.

Church officials have contended that although the infiltration and purloining of government documents may have been illegal, members "did so in defense against a government bureaucracy which has consistently acted against the civil and human rights of the church" for 20 years.

The IRS has for years opposed the church's tax-exempt status. In 1962, the Food and Drug Administration raided church offi-

ces, charging that the Scientologists were illegally using and promoting the benefits of their "E-Meter", which is attached to the skin as a sort of lie-detector during spiritual counseling.

The indictment charges nine members, including Mary Sue Hubbard, second-ranking official in the church's hierarchy, with one count of conspiracy to steal government documents, burglarize government offices, intercept oral communications and forge government passes; 10 counts of theft of government property; one one count of intercepting oral communications; 10 counts of burglary and one count of conspiracy to obstruct justice, to obstruct an investigation, to harbor a fugitive and to make false declaration before a grand jury.

Two other members face slightly different charges.



ISBN 8787019 698

TRYK: SR/AU-TRYK