

EDITORIAL

We are at the threshold of the 3rd millennium. The tremendous explosion of knowledge and the impact of the electronic communication during the last decades brought along with it development and disadvantages for contemporary man. Stresses and strain are part and parcel of life today. To ease it, therefore, the next millennium will be preoccupied with a new discovery of man and his subconscious energies. Not only religionists but also the "Secular" man already speak about "the depth reality" and "inner dimension" of man, contemplation as a means to arrive at "calmness and serenity" at a "deeper level." Students and teachers, physicians and officials, scientists and businessmen are using zen and yoga, TM and biofeedback, mind-control techniques and visualization to enhance human potential and attend states of consciousness. The psychophysiology of awareness has become a new science of our age, a science of consciousness of mind expansion, of indepth awareness. Interestingly, all these are new expressions of what is traditionally called contemplation. Every one needs contemplation today. Are we unconsciously entering into the "noosphere" prophesied by Teilhard the scientist and theologian?

The reason d'être of the Journal of Dharma is to foster inter-religious understanding and dialogue among religions through mutual sharing, appreciation, study and discussion. For the realisation of this aim, the Journal brought out, over the past decades, several issues on religious experience, mysticism and its means and methods. The present issue is yet another attempt to go into the contemplative dimension of religious and secular humanity in contemporary times.

The religious as well as secular man want to contemplate the ultimate reality and the reality of his own life; to look attentively and intimately with concentration of his own inner self as the source of freedom and peace. Thus contemplation becomes a religious exercise and a self-fulfilling introspection. In this context people speak about religiousness without religion and contemplation without religious objects. In the first article Swami Satya Vedant, Vice-Chancellor, Osho Mutiversity, Poona, focuses on contemplation as the cornerstone of Osho Rajaneesh's vision and work. Contemplation, in Osho's language, is the most powerful means to change the consciousness of man in order to experience inner peace and balance. Only meditation can save humanity from a global suicides. Hence he proposes his revolutionary methods of meditation, towards which millions of people are attracted.

Prof. Pathrapankal highlights Jesus' vision of contemplation, exploring the contemplative experiences of Jesus. In fact Jesus's vision and experience are the basis for new contemplative movements, transforming individuals and society at large.

Dr. Pandharipande examines the Japa - contemplative method of Tukaram, a 17th century Indian mystic, and its mystical consequences. Repetition of God's name, visualising his form and praising it in hymns is becoming popular among all religions. It is very much akin to repetition of mantra in TM and Zen which are again every one's method of self-actualisation. It is in this context and because of the relevance of the repetition of God's name today, that author introduces Tukarams Japa and its mysticism.

The charismatic movement in christianity is getting momentum today with about 332 million membership all over the world. Dr. MacNutt, one of the leading figures of American charismatic movement, in his article shows charismatism as a way to contemplation. The result of the Baptism of the spirit is a contemplative vision and experience of Christ, which transforms the individual, heals the sick and reveals the society.

Dr. James Aerthayil, professor of theology at Jnanadeep Vidyapeeth, Poona, brings out another aspect of the contemplative movement today, namely man's search for interiority, inner self and depth-reality. Psychology speaks about deeper levels of consciousness as source of energy and religion points to the inner cave of the heart as the goldmine of serenity and equanimity. Interiority is a meeting point of both, which can eventually release tremendous spiritual power and psychological strength for modern man. Hence the article looks at interiority in its secular and religious character as a powerful contemplative movement today.

Born in flesh and oriented to spiritual transcendence, man is a mystery ever explored anew and yet never explained fully. Philosophers and contemplatives visualised and partly explained the infinite possibilities of finite man and suggested means and methods to explore them further. New trends in philosophic intuition and contemplative insight help man to realise all his potential especially spiritual. It is with this hope that we bring out this issue of Journal of Dharma on contemplative trends today.

James Aerthayil
Associate Editor