

World-bound in structure and God-oriented in nature, man constantly experiences the painful predicament of his being torn between the to-be and the not-yet in his daily lived-life. His existence is an extended polarity between actions already actualised and yet to be actualised. Rooted in time but destined for eternity, his factual fate is of finitude and often of futility that brings about a constitutive unsatisfactoriness (*dubkha*) in his very existential make up. At the core of his consciousness and at the heart of his being, man confronts an estranged situation. The deeper he delves into the layers of his ignorance and unauthenticity the stronger is his craving for an integrated and authentic life. Consequently, quest for *moksha* and liberation has always been in the very life-stream of man.

Understood in the philosophico-religious perspective, liberation consists in man's unlinking the link with his ill-directed dynamism that stems from his unauthentic and undue attachments. Being blinded by the ignorance (*avidya*) and bound by the fetters of finitude, at the centre of man's stream of consciousness, there is a sedimented layer that separates him from the original ground and the ultimate goal. Unauthentic actions issuing from his fundamental ignorance are the root cause of this separation and the consequent enslavement. This existential enslavement of man takes various expressions in oppression and exploitation, in destruction of human freedom, and his personal and cultural identity. Liberation, therefore, immediately implies freedom from imposed oppression and ill-devised dependence. True and lasting liberation is a gradual growth in authentic and integrated consciousness. It is a progression in man's being present to himself, his attaining a real awareness of his own true being.

The process in consciousness is also simultaneously, a progression in human freedom. If human thought is a journey in consciousness from its pre-predicative level to its several scientific expressions, human history is the progression of the awareness of freedom. Man liberates himself in the acquisition of genuine freedom which through his work transforms the society and the world he lives in. He attains freedom not for himself alone, but for others too. Freedom and liberation can rightly be understood only in terms of integration and inter-subjective relationships. If estran-

gement and unauthenticity are radical ruptures in relationships, liberation and *moksha* consists in realizing union and integration. The way of *moksha* and liberation is essentially a way of growth in consciousness. Liberation becomes integral only when man in his manifold dimensions is liberated, only when he becomes a totally new being, a living God-man, whose very existence is a supreme self-gift.

This number of *Dharma* is a study of this fundamental and fascinating theme of man's *moksha* and liberation. Dr. I.K. Watson of La Trobe University in his systematic study: *From Karma to Moksha*, analyses in depth the intimate interrelation between action (*karma*) and liberation (*moksha*). He shows how *Karmayoga* can be practised as a means to achieving *moksha*, and once it is achieved, how purposive action among us in this world remains not only possible for the *Siddha* but also in a certain form wholly to be expected. Actions usually leave automatic traces that inclines us towards things and hence make us find ourselves in the existential situation of wrong-centredness (*dubkha*). The same actions (*karma*) become means of *moksha* when they are *dharmic* or related to *Dharma*; when they are designed to establish right-centredness (*subkha*) or integration. Actions without attachments always bring about *Brahma-nirvana*, the enlightenment of full *atma-vidya* that is realized on two levels: *moksha* for oneself and *moksha* for others. Having once attained *moksha* for oneself why a *Siddha* remains in our bounded world is not totally unintelligible because he does so to lead others to the same *moksha*. But, how the being of *Siddha in fact* relates to our estranged world remains hidden to all but another *Siddha*. It is primarily a question of realization rather than of reasoning.

Dr. Kapil Tiwari of Victoria University, Wellington, confines his scholarly article on liberation to the understanding of self-knowledge and its implications for the *advaitic* concept of *moksha* according to Samkara. He examines the question of self-knowledge in all its meanings in a way that makes it central to the general problem of existence rather than something external and exclusive of it. He shows that the self-knowledge which is soteriological in *Advaita-Vedanta* is transcendent to thought and that it cannot be conceived in terms of the empirical. Self-knowledge for the Advaitins is not a negative withdrawal from the real universe but is only the correction of our vision of the nature of the world. When man attains self-knowledge he is freed from the power of *Māyā* and sees the powerful presence of Brahman everywhere. Though the

advaitic liberation, maintains Tiwari, is mainly one of self-knowledge (*jnana*), Samkara does not exclude the way of *karma*. *Jnana* transforms the whole perspective of man, reality, and the universe. Hence *karma* cannot be excluded from this enormous transformation, a transformation whose accomplishment consists in manifesting or letting the true nature of human actions and the world emerge to the surface in the presence of our self-knowledge.

Dr. Francis Vadakethala of CSWR in his significant study of liberation analyses Ramanuja's threefold yoga. Man, being embodied, is in the state of bondage which restricts the freedom of the self that is essentially spiritual and Godlike. This state of bondage is characterized by ignorance that develops false tendencies as attached to *karma* which in turn brings about the chain of transmigration. Liberation is the breaking of this bondage, the setting of the self free from its material encasement. The function of yoga is to guide the aspirant in the process of liberation. Dr. Vadakethala explains in detail how Ramanuja's understanding of the three yogas helps to penetrate into the complementary and inter-related nature of yogas. Though Ramanuja speaks at length on three yogas, especially on the *bhaktiyoga*, he knows only one yoga, concludes Dr. Vadakethala, and that is the yoga of *bhakti* which however includes in itself the yoga of duties (*karmayoga*) and wisdom (*jnanayoga*).

The synthetic approach to liberation studied in the context of Ramanuja's *Vishishdadvaita* is followed by a stimulating comparative study by Dr. Sebastian Kappen on *Marxist and Christian dialectics of liberation*. Liberation is the final goal both for Marx and Jesus. Though they move on two different planes they have much in common. Dr. Kappen compares carefully the Christian and Marxist humanism not as historical systems but as values for which these two great men stood. Marxism is a humanism of liberation, the abolition of alienation. The Marxist concept of alienation finds an analogy in the Christian concept of sin. However, the Marxist analysis is inadequate as it failed to give due importance to the personal existential dimension, especially to the meaning of human freedom and the ultimate goal of individual life. The Marxist manifesto of human liberation should find a positive echo in any authentic Christian, says Dr. Kappen. His analyses of the interrelation between man and nature, man and society, being and knowing, man and transcendence show well the creative and transformative structure of man, the true source of his liberation. He concludes with a remark that both Christians and marxists should

recognize the provisional character of their respective positions and work for a total liberation of man through a common commitment.

The thematic treatment of liberation is concluded with an interesting Biblical study by Dr. Lucius Nereparampil in his article: *Liberation as Salvation: a Johannine Interpretation*. John the Evangelist being a realist in his appraisal of man and his universe, sensed the basic misery and bondage of man and was convinced of the need of a saving hand from above to liberate and lift him from his existential estrangement. In Christian tradition, especially in John, salvation and liberation is the merciful act of a loving God. It is the liberation of the total man from the slavery of sin, darkness, world, death, and Satan. Liberation, according to John, shows Dr. Nereparampil, is the attainment of a new life of Grace, a supernatural birth from God. It consists in kenotic transformation, in an intimate union with the triune God and, finally, in an integration with Christ. Johannine liberation is an interior transformation and a personal communion with Christ. Thus the fullness of liberation— free and loving gift from Christ—is communion with God and with our fellow men.

This doctrinal study on liberation is followed by a historical survey by Prof. Arabinda Basu. All Indian philosophy is designed to show man a way to release him from the present state of existence. The Vedic quest for immortality takes the form of a self-liberation in the Upanishads. In Gita it is *Brahmanirvana*, an integrated existence *brahmi-sthiti*. Through the Tantric idea of *Jivanmukti* and the Saiva Siddhanta *Sayujya*, the evolution of the idea of liberation in Hinduism reaches the *kaivalya* of Samkhya-Yoga. Professor Basu, then, states briefly the essence of liberation in Vedantic schools, in Bengal Vaishnavism and in the Nyaya-Vaisesika systems. Finally, he concludes with the Aurobindonian synthesis of liberation as attained through the integral yoga, a liberation that means integration of which Saccidananda is the beginning, middle and the end.

In our discussion on *moksha* and liberation it has not been possible unfortunately, to touch on many other relevant points and include some other allied perspectives. Liberation is a theme which is so vast and varied that an exhaustive study is not easy in a limited, single number. However, we hope that what this number presents will give some impetus for further research.

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