

Psychology of the Heart

Mystics have invariably affirmed that the seat of God, within, is the heart. The heart is then the centre on which one must meditate. The heart is the emotional centre. It is also the centre of physiological blood circulation to which all blood flows, and out of which it flows to all parts of the body. The seat of life, for man, is the heart. For the person who seeks to know the secret of life, meditation on the functions of the heart is important.

Most persons are also diseased in the heart. Heart troubles are mainly the effect of strains on the heart affections. Therefore not only is it the centre of circulatory processes of the blood, which it purifies and sends out, it appears to be the centre which is closely linked with affections, and it is this aspect that seems to be important for a proper and fuller understanding of the heart. The heart is closely linked with the nervous system, the autonomous nervous system, and along with the glands we have an integrated autonomous activity of both the afferent and efferent functions.

In meditation what is usually done is that one imagines at the region of the heart a light, a form of God, or an akasa (dahara) and so seeks to see it internally, that is to say, as one would see it in a dream. This, normally, is possible for most imaginative minds, but is almost next

to impossible to others. Meditation on any form-a form projected from outside into this internal perception is finally valueless. The experience of the inner Self seems, ultimately, to be beyond even internal vision. The sense of being is what one may at best be able to feel. It is the peace of the heart.

The heart is connected, we said, with the other circulatory systems of the nerves too, if we may so speak about this nervous system. The important centres of the nervous system are the spinal cord and the brain with all its several divisions: the cerebrum, cerebellum, medulla and so on. This connection with the nervous system is almost the connection with the 'thought' element so to speak, or the mind. At the present state of our knowledge we may not identify the two, but there is no doubt that at the physical level the thought manifests itself in the form of nervous flow and feeling in terms of blood and glandular flow (flow of secretions of glands).

In one sense the heart, including all its systems, extends to the whole physiological man. Similarly the mind or nervous system, from the head down to the toes, may be considered as almost synchronising with the former. But we recognize the physical heart as the centre of the former, and the head as the centre of the latter.

The Yoga of transmission takes up the heart, for it is that which has to be taken up as the starting point of the

human individual, as already stated. It is by this heart that man decides his own fate and future. Where it leads he goes. Of course by exercise of will he some times subordinates the demands of the heart to those of the head, or to the larger interests of the entire organism. But his intuition seems to be based more on the yearning of the heart than on the reasoning of the head.

Since the heart is the seat of love, or offering oneself to the Ultimate, the heart is accepted for the purpose of stimulating love for God. Instead of offering an external object as the object of love, one is made to seek that which is transcendent to both the objectives external and the objective external and the subjective.

The object is something suggested, by many, as capable of keeping up our sensory attention. An object having the characteristics of beauty and attractiveness is counselled. There are some who suggest that one should, by analogy, think of the object of attainment as all pleasing, and delight. But the real goal is attainment of that consciousness which can perceive the Ultimate as all and everything. If consciousness is what has to be enlarged or made subtle, it has to be led up to higher levels of the psychic organisation in man, whose gross representations are the nervous and circulatory systems. The purification of the heart is achieved by seeking the entry of the transmitting force into it, so that it may not

only help the process that is going on all the time, but also help it to be sensitive to the ascent of consciousness to higher centres within it.

The centres or points which the Sri Ramchandra's Raja Yoga technique has, at the beginning itself, undertaken to purify and make capable of subtle experiences are those near the heart-they are called A and B. The location of these two points are given in the "Efficacy of Rajyoga" by Sri Ram Chandra. The points A and B are those, which the seeker has to attend to and keep clean and dynamic. A is the higher point which helps the throwing out of all dirt already accumulated, whereas B is the lower point which helps pushing out the incoming impressions from the outer world-gross impressions. Once these centres are kept clean the seeker begins to feel the ascent of his own consciousness to higher levels on further transmissions.

According to the seekers' aspiration the transmission helps them to the higher centres. The heart itself has a miniature field of points. In the larger expansion of the same we have the points called 1 (the heart), 2 (atma), 3 (buddhi or jnana), 4 (agni, tejas), and 5 (visuddha). The expansion of the heart coincides with the entire circulatory (blood) system of the body. The 6th point is the Mind centre or cit-lake. The transmission is done at the heart centre so as to lead the individual to the

experience of the several points in the order mentioned, till he reaches this point of cit (consciousness or mind). This secures for the individual a very high experience of being beyond the particularised sense-world.

In no other system have these points been mentioned. As a matter of experience they seem to be, unaware of this descent and ascent of the flow of the higher superfine consciousness into the heart and to the cit-centre (head). The two points within the Heart Region (which can now be said to extend from the toe to the crest of the head) are most important for experience. In the continuity established between these two points there is harmonization and peace of a different order. According to the experience, the values of the higher centre are inverse to those at the heart centre, but though such, they are not contradictory, but reveal the dynamics of the flow of transmission and thought force.

It is of course possible for the flow to be developed straight to the heart from the cit-lake, without having to travel the four intermediate points of visuddha, agni, jnana, atma and reach the experience of peace at both points and feel liberation. Most great saints have the experience of these points, and claim to have reached the highest state because, in a sense, these points are reflections of the higher points in the Mind Region or of the still further Central Region, of which they have

hardly any awareness. The intensity of these experiences makes this assertion possible.

The recurrence of similar experiences at different levels of consciousness is a well-attested fact. The experience of the expanding subtle forms of force are thereby not to be considered to be just differences in degree, but differences in kind. Further, Sri Ram Chandra tells us that there is a new principle involved in this process of ascent of the consciousness or force. There is the principle of invertendo or inversion: that which is the above becomes the below, and that which is the right becomes the left. The wave motion always gives us some idea of the inversion. This shows that the changes in function vary very much according to the position. In the nervous system there is the feature of decussation-the right going to the left and the left going to the right. This may be full or partial. Similarly phenomenon occurs in the general movement of consciousness. Therefore meditation is also generally counselled on that portion which is going upward, rather than that which leads downward.

The points of the heart region are to be considered in terms of the upward movement of the individual psychic being, and it may also become aware of the descending force, which supports the entire organism and its ascent. The old school had taught that there were seven centres

called plexuses, which were placed at various parts of the human body: namely the sacral, sexual, solar, thymal, throat, centre of the eyebrows, and at the top of the head. They are all closely connected with the spinal cord. The coiled power, or serpent power, said to be at the sacral plexus is roused by means of breathing exercises etc., and made to flow through the central nerve in the spinal column (susumna) arousing all the other centres till it reaches the top of the head centre called sahasrara. Sri Ram Chandra shows that though this power, called Kundalini or serpent power, is within the system, it is not a power that makes for liberation, even though it assists the liberated being in doing cosmic work. It is not necessary to arouse it at all for attaining liberation. Further it is not necessary to go down to the lowest physical level for ascending from the heart to the Centre or the Ultimate centre. Yogis make much of this Kundalini following the footsteps of tantriks who seek to gain powers over the centres, and thus display magical effects. But these, ultimately, bind the individual, and in some cases it is just likely that the so called pancamakaras or five prohibited actions or things of higher Yoga, matsay, mamsa, mada, madyam, and mithuna,* have reference to this kundalini arousal, and lead to strange results, however much they may be symbolically sought to be justified.

The Sri Ramchandra's Rajayoga said to be propounded

by this Kundalini school or the tantrik school is unnatural, for it does not lead to the Ultimate Liberation. It is said to lead to bhoga or union or oneness with one's beloved, or is said to be the union of Sakti with Siva within the individual's organism.

According to the Yoga of Sri Ramchandra's Rajayoga these are not at all considered necessary for liberation, which is the discarding of all rings of chains of bondage. No psychic power such as the Kundalini can be said to do this. The best that should be suggested is that if Kundalini is claimed to be the individual's deepest aspiration for Union with the Ultimate transcended and supracosmic Consciousness, it might as well start with the heart rather than the sexual seat or organ. It is this unfortunate linking up of the heart with the sexual seat that has led to the imaginary developments about the efficacy of the Kundalini-yoga.

Once this was accepted there naturally followed another Vedic symbolic development of the Nyasa (or location of deities, rsis, chandas and lokas within the human body), the developed symbolism of the chakras symbolising the five elements.

All these seem to be based not so much on direct experience but on certain techniques of placing cosmic points within the organism, thus giving rise to the general imagination of the principle "as in the

macrocosm so in the microcosm."

Cosmic analogy arise out of this acceptance of the mystic principle "as in the macrocosm so in the microcosm"-yatha ande tatha pinde. This is very useful, but has to constantly come under verification of spiritual experience. Imaginative construction may simulate the real, and most practicants are led to believe this equation.

Sri Ram Chandra points out that in so far as the ascent of the psychic being is concerned, it is good and easy for it to tread the path put lined at the beginning proceeding from point1 (citta or heat) to the 2nd and then the 3rd, the 4th and lastly the 5h which is identical with the Visuddha; and then on to the Cit-lake(point 6) which is above the ajna (the center between the eye-brows). In spiritual development the ajna does not play any part. Some early Yogic works mentioned centres such as Manas, Manonmani, Unmani and lalana etc., above the Ajna. But the ascent to the cit-lake is very important, for one passes the first stage of the journey and enters into the region of the Mind, or the subtle worlds of experience.

TABLE

Sahsrara	Crown of the head	Visvedevas	Jagati	Angirasas	Satya
Ajna	Centre of brows	Indra	Tristhub	Kasyapa	Tapas
Visuddha	Throat	Varuna	Panktria	Gautama	Janah
Anahata	Heart	Brhaspati	Brhati	Vasista	Maha
Manipura	Navel	Surya:Arka	Anusthub	Kutsa	Svar
Svadhishthana	Genitals	Vayu	Usnish	Bhrgu	Bhuvar
Muladhara	Sacral plexus	Agni	Gayatri	Atri	Bhuh

The heart-region is indeed the most important for the beginner as well as the advanced seeker. One has constantly to keep this region pure and receptive of the higher forces coursing continuously, without break. This is due to constant looking up to the higher levels or the highest level, called constant remembrance or devotion.

The heart, in its perfection, is just devotion flowing or opening upward to the highest Godhead who is leading it.

The heart region is generally taken to be the centre of the Earth (prthvi), and in the sense of being the last evolute, contains all. So the contemplation or understanding of the heart is said to be most necessary.

The five points have been elucidated as follows:--

Point 1-Citta yellow 6

2-Atma red

3-Jnana white 5

4-Fire black 4 3

5-Water green

6-Vayu colourless 2 1

There is some reason; therefore, for some seers thinking that the point 2 that is in the right is the Self to be realized. That is the psychic heart wherein the atma dwells. But this view is only partially correct, in so far as the atma mentioned here is not the Absolute self. The colours assigned to these points are also to be justified in a way as they are all major earthy tattvas, or elements, and therefore contain matter which is of that colour. It is when one leaves the heart region that one is free from the experience of colour and in the presence of achromatic

experiences.

The view that we move from light to light, usually held by several thinkers and writers, requires modification. From darkness or ignorance or blindness it is true that we seek to move towards light, knowledge and restoration of the power to perceive the future, and our real goal. We are also aware of the supreme fact of death, which seems to be a relief from our present miseries, but also seems to be a problem for those who feel that all life has no meaning if it were merely a travel towards death. Immortality seems to be the goal, and this simply means, for the majority, just physical immortality. If this is not to be had then it is a kind of immortality about which no one has spoken with any degree of clarity, except as a dwelling in a world with bodies which do not register the ravages of time-vijara, vimrtyu.

Whilst this is not incorrect as an explanation of the movement of man towards the ultimate freedom the limitations of darkness, ignorance, nonexistence, and death, the psychological experiences of the higher world as experience of light seem to be not quite exact. We do move from the heart-region initial darkness towards the yellow light (jyotis) and thence to the devotional light of redness, and thence to white light. Most persons reaching this state find that they have the

experience of an immense light, brighter than the lights we know. It is the reflection of a still brighter light of the higher worlds of brahmanda (Cosmic Region). But as we pass on we come across the hot bright or dark light which begins to consume the entire ignorance or it is that which leads to the higher experience of the flowing waters of reality whose variegated colours are enchanting and pleasing. It is however the seat of purity mixed up with fascination. We go upward still, and come across the experience of the real life that is beyond these lights. The colourlessness of this condition shows that one has passed beyond the earth consciousness, the pinda-pradesa.

Sri Ram Chandra says that most persons feel that they have crossed the whole course of evolution, and have attained complete liberation, if they cross some of the points mentioned above. He has also intimated that there is no special necessity for passing through all these points to reach the cit-lake (point 6), for there is a direct link between the heart and the cit-lake. If one is capable he could take a flight to it (even like a bird, suka-path). But it appears that for a comprehending under-standing, it would be necessary to know the terrain of the heart region and it is also, in the long run more easy to ascend. At each point of ascent there is a new peace, a new ananda (pleasure), a new freedom (mukti). On this ascent one finds shackles falling off, like chains being removed,

through the removal of one chain reveals the presence of others beneath it.

Sri Ram Chandra has also in his "Reality at Dawn" shown that the ascent of the soul takes several rings-about 23 Number (five and eleven, and seven)* before the free state is arrived at. But most saints seem to think that the getting rid of the first five rings is liberation. Even this is of course a very advanced state, but it only means that those who cross these need not come down to the physical being but could undertake their higher journey in the Mental plane, or the planes of psychic egoism or the astral journey leading to the ultimate. It is only when one reaches the Ultimate that one could be called truly liberated. Many are the wonders of this Heart Region. One who moves above from one ring to another, or from now point to another, could receive forces from the higher worlds or contact higher powers, which are displayed as siddhis or miracles. But the possession or attainment of these links and connections do not go far, not do they intimate liberation from the chains or the results of their exercise. It is only the supreme Master, or Guru, who could prevent the deviations and lead the aspirant to the higher regions without succumbing to these potentialities.

For most psychologists these powers and their use in matters of the physical world, or in political and social

relations, are interesting studies. Para-normal life that includes parapsychological states has been quite a field for inquisitive seekers after the psychic condition.

The psychoanalytic thinkers did a great service to humanity when they removed the extraordinary limitation of psychology to measurable physiological behaviour. How the behaviour patterns organized themselves on the basis of units of behaviour called reflex-arcs and conditioned reflexes and so on has been the one primary condition of scientific psychology, as they called it. Of course it was science of kind, it was also psychology of a kind. The inner life of the individual, his psychic growth informed or warped by his expanding world of realization on the one side, and knowledge on the other, the awareness of an 'I' and 'Thou' and others, have not even been thought of as worth considering in the science of the psychic being. Not that they have no value. Their value is for the individual's existence within the world of men and things, which is practical, or pragmatic. It has just closed its eyes to the several problems of the religious and the mystical people. If the scientific psychologist thinks that knowledge is got only through sense organs and motor organs, the knowledge that mystics and seers claim is that which does not need the help of these organic instruments! Not only that, these instruments are obstructions to real intuitive vision and knowledge. They

are hindrances. Therefore scientific psychology cannot accept this fundamental difference. One of them must forsake the name of psychology.

Psychoanalysis has rightly stated that the science of the inner life of the individual human being, who is a dynamic creature motivated by the basic desires for perpetuation, propagation, and sexuality, gives a better norm of man than the behaviouristic patterns of a cultural prison-house which may, for all that we may say, be good for the individual though bad for his liberty. But the psychic life does not end there. Deeper than the subconscious and the unconscious is a life that is of the spirit, which can only be known by means of the yogic transmission. The inner life extends to the cosmic unconscious as Jung has stated, and even more than that or deeper than that. The Vedic symbology which has been interpreted psychoanalytically by Jung in his "Psychological Types" does not fully bring out the higher reaches of the Mind. The higher reaches of the mind go beyond the three levels or steps of Visnu so to speak. The Mind cannot go to it, not just the individual or personal mind but even the higher mind. That is the Reality behind, or beneath, the mind of which the mind may be the first expression, but it is a superconscious mind.

Obviously the higher we go, or the deeper we fathom the

psychic being, we arrive at that condition when the nature of the consciousness itself changes - that is to say, consciousness is transcended and one is one with existence. Since existence brings out consciousness, consciousness is inherent within it, and that is the reason for the former being spoken of as existence-consciousness. In a sense it is that condition when the function of consciousness, which is to reveal the object to its subject, is transcended, and one experience being by being; what this means in words is inexpressible. In any case we are caught up in language terminologies of our ordinary ways of knowing. The knowing by the heart is also transcended. The subtle experiences which are also flowing through the gross physical become experienced, and one becomes more aware of the superconsciousness all round, peaceful, leading, bright and luminous, and free from heaviness and obstruction from the external.

Once we reach the Mind-lake or Cit-lake we are in a different consciousness.

The heart region alone gives the cues about the psycho-physiological basis of human existence. Buddha's statement that the psycho-physiological aggregate (skandhas) is the human body, and that it is automatically governed by its own inner impetus of desire, is well known. This he held, however, to be

adharma, not the right movement, because it is individual and binding and promoting only ignorance and activity of the chain of causation (dependent causation). The five skandhas are well known also. They can be described in terms of the basic elements of earth, water, fire or heat, air and ether or, physiologically, by bones, blood, nervous-impulses, air or breath and waves and vibrations. In any case they are dependent on desire or the will to live; by any means and by all means.

The purification of the heart region undoubtedly would involve the minimum regulations about conduct or dharma. The devotion to the five yamas or controls is necessary. The five are satya (truth-speaking, truth-willing, truth-doing, truth-thinking), ahimsa (non-injury, non-killing), aparigraha (non-robbing or grasping), asteya (non-stealing) and brahmacharya (sexual purity) which has in certain quarters been so rigid to exclude marriage and all association with women. The excessive practice of the virtues, as we shall call these five, had led to unsocial existence. Through these may be preferable to the license that has prevailed where these have not been practised, yet it seems they are excessive, and middle path is the right one. The golden mean seems to be when the last, the sexual life, is regulated and divinised rather than totally rejected or tabooed.

A sat-sang is one in which these virtues are practised

normally. Any one who seeks the higher life has to get this discipline of the will and desire so as to be fit for the higher life. A sadhu is one who habitually lives according to these five vows or virtues (virtue seems to be derived from vrata).