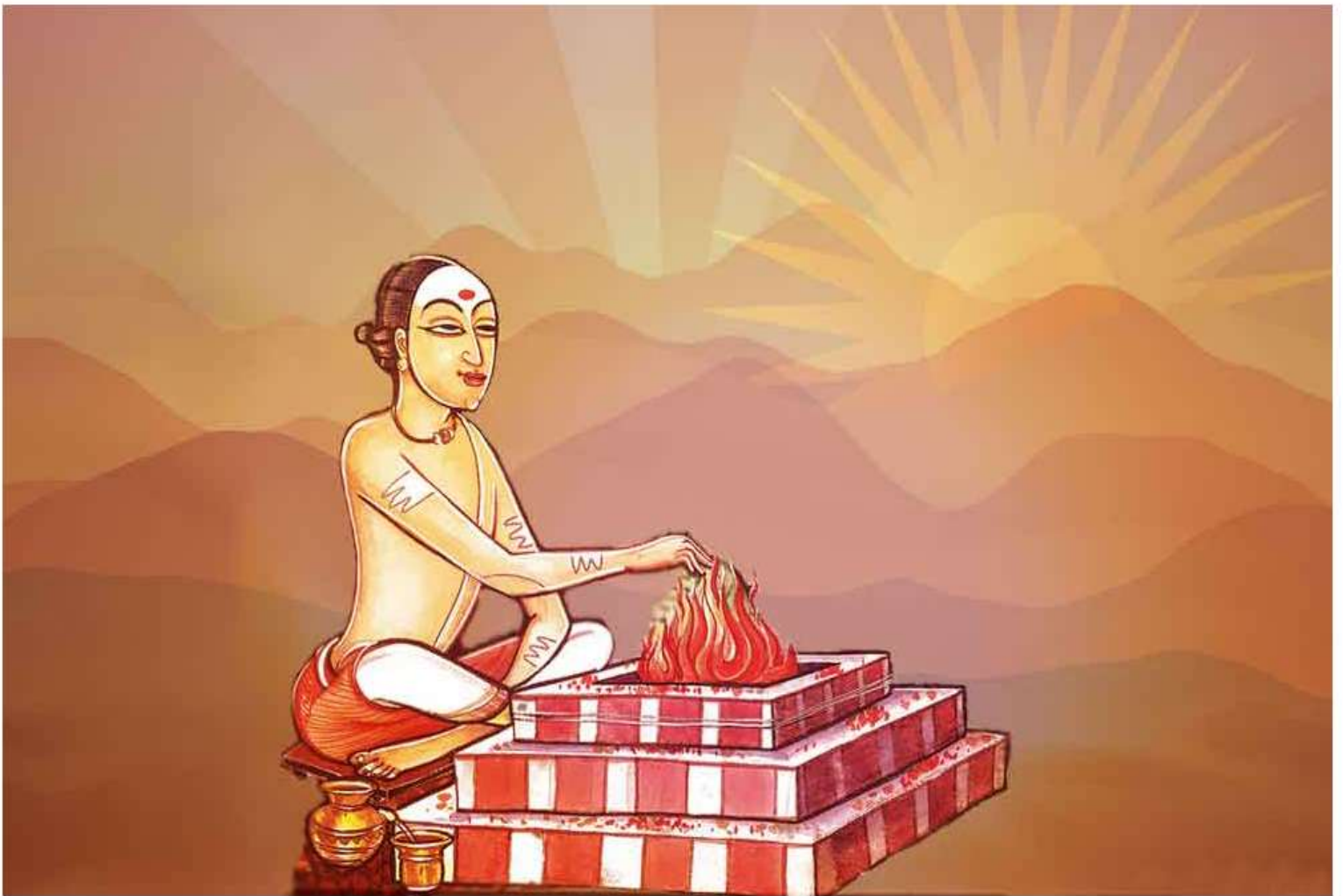


Master E.K.

BOOK OF RITUALS



BOOK OF RITUALS

MASTER E.K.



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PREFACE

Once again there is a call from my spiritual colleagues, Albert Sassi and Elizabeth Warnon, to compose a concise treatise on the rituals of the wisdom religion. The scope of the present work is to explain the nature and the symbolism of the ritualistic key to the wisdom. The work deals with the sacramental value of initiations and the changes brought upon the student thereby. One of the main attempts of the author is to prove that the content of the initiation rituals belonging to many religions and orders remains the same throughout and that the common content is expressed through many forms, symbols and allegories throughout the centuries. The dawn of the science of rituals is traced to the dawn of man on this earth and this is because the dawn of man itself is the result of an organised ritual of the unseen forces of nature ever at work. Hence the necessity of such a branch of science is inevitable and the attempt needs no apology.

The main scheme and the content of the book belong to my Guru but the author stands responsible for anything

proposed in the book. In all humility the work is submitted as an offering to the divine light of the human perception of the readers and there ends the attempt.

As soon as I received the call to write this book, I invited my spiritual student, Y.V. Raghava Rao, to get the book typed. Since the time was insufficient, I dictated the book directly for typing. The book was started on 15th April 1967 and finished on 27th April 1967. My thanks are due to Mr. Albert Sassi and Ms. Elizabeth Warnon for inducing me to compose this book. My thanks are also due to Mr. Y.V. Raghava Rao for the great pains he took in getting my oral version typed.



E. KRISHNAMACHARYA

Waltair.

27th April 1967

Contents

The Science of Rituals - Its Purpose	1
The Role of Symbolism in Rituals	7
The Operative and Speculative Rituals	14
The World Rituals — Classification	22
The Vedic Rituals	25
1. The Zodiacal Mysteries	38
2. The Planetary Rituals	40
3. The Soma Sacrifice	42
4. The Fire Ritual	62
5. The Consecration Rituals	69
6. The Introductory and the Concluding Rituals	76
7. The Soma Ritual	83
8. The Animal Sacrifice	91
9. The Horse Ritual	96
10. The Man Sacrifice and the All-Sacrifice	101
11. The Significance of the Cremation Rituals	127
The Puranic Rituals	134
Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals	157
a) The Tradition of the Dying God	158
b) The Tradition of the Eternal Fight between the Serpent and the Eagle	163
c) The Tradition of Man Vanquishing the Serpent	168
d) The Tradition of Bricklaying and Building the Temple	174
The Tantric and Agamic Rituals	204
Rituals and Mystery Compared	228
The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns	239
The Future of the Rituals	264
The Content and Form of the Future Rituals	275

The Science of Rituals - Its Purpose

There is a practical key to the theoretical side of wisdom. Without this key, the whole theory remains a fine speculation. The expected core of wisdom is not realised without the practical approach. The life of man is an externalisation of the principles that are dormant in him. Man lives mentally in the phenomenal world with the guidance of his supraconscious planes which work in him and guide him through his nature. This nature includes man's instincts, reflexes and emotions, which make up his behaviour. This plane of nature is not exposed to the individual consciousness of man's mind in the majority of the people on earth. Man thinks that he is reasonable; he believes that he is after truth, happiness and realisation of what he feels unrealised. But the reasoning of man is bound

The Science of Rituals - Its Purpose

by his own nature, which guides him and makes him respond to himself and the environment only in terms of his present stage in evolution. This is true as much with individuals as it is with society, nations and races.

A proper analysis of oneself enables man to understand that his nature (the source of his behaviour) cannot be easily approached or mastered. Any amount of knowledge in any number of branches—sciences, arts, politics, economics, sociology, religion, etc.—cannot allow him to achieve the abovesaid step of getting at the mastery of his own nature. The whole activity of the universe has its genuine secret within itself as an essence. Man is also made up of the same essence. But between man and the universe, there is one's own nature which receives impressions that are his own and not genuine. However impersonal they may be, the impressions of man are bound to be “the substituted secrets” of the genuine ones that exist as eternal truths in the splendour of the creation. The

BOOK OF RITUALS

subjective consciousness is substituted by the awakening of every Cosmos through the process of creation. It is still substituted by the plurality of the phenomena that build the universes in general and solar systems in particular. So the substitutions in the level of the individual man on this earth are many. It is the duty of man (it is rather the inner urge of man) to go higher up to the more and more original levels of creation by resubstituting. To this there is the impediment of his own nature, which works hitherto as his own protective shell.

Here comes the necessity of crossing one's own nature only to enter into a wider nature which serves as the background. Such a crossing of a series of natures serving as layers of veils requires "doing" and not "knowing" or "studying". Man is doing something always according to his own nature and as instigated by his own nature. Such a doing is not useful for the present purpose. There is a way of doing certain things in a certain manner which enables

The Science of Rituals - Its Purpose

man to cross his own nature. This presupposes a science of doing things and that science is the “Science of Rituals”.

A ritual works as a sacrament to change and broaden the nature of man. This science of sacramental workings is imparted to man by the higher nature and it is always there, existing as a branch of the impersonal wisdom of the universe. From time to time man rises to this impersonal level to gather a part of the ritualistic wisdom. It is later followed and practiced by a set of people and is gradually clothed in the various religious allegories. Thus, we find that all the major religions of man, including the most ancient (pre-Vedic, Vedic and early Buddhistic religions) religious schools, contain their own set of rituals and the ritualistic sciences. A careful study of the common essence of the rituals needs no apology because it goes a long way in aiding man to cross his own nature.

Whenever man works anything against his own environment, there is the origin of evil, sin, sorrow and

BOOK OF RITUALS

suffering. By a curative process, the bitter experience one gathers makes him rectify and enter into a more correct working. Thus, gradually man is trained to tune himself with the workings of nature around him. In other words, his nature is gradually replaced by the nature of his nation, race, planet and the solar system. The more a man attunes himself to a broader nature, the more his work is universalised or ritualised. For this, the science of rituals teaches us to understand the activity of the creation and try to imitate its work. When a part or the whole of creation is understood as a mystery in a limited scale, it serves as a ritual and it will have a definite sacramental value upon him. By this we can understand the reason why the various rituals of the world religions are in the form of dramatised versions with the creative forces as characters. The sun, the moon and the planets show a wonderful order and precision in their movement and behaviour. The properties of space (geometrical, numerical and physical) follow a definite

The Science of Rituals - Its Purpose

order. The whole creation is a well-knit play of a series of chain actions. The whole succession contains a drama, a mystery play, which is imitated successfully by the experienced ritualist. The characters in the rituals include the planetary consciousness, the dawn, the dusk, the noon and the midnight and such like. This is because they are the builders of the universe and they form the primary symbols for man to speculate in the light of his sacramental changes.

The Role of Symbolism in Rituals

Symbolism rules the objective experience of man. The whole life activity is expressed as an allegory of the hidden cause. This cause (which is the creative urge of the innermost consciousness) is concealed in the created state of things around man. Hence to a ritualist every objective phenomenon of creation, whether primary or secondary, will serve as a symbol concealing truth in its very nature. The subjective truth is concealed in everything by its representative value and is revealed through the activity of the living being that works as an allegory. Thus, every incident happening on the physical plane is an allegory of truth. Historical incidents and the cycles of evolution also serve as the allegories of the hidden truth which is concealed in the subjectivity of man. Every living being is

The Role of Symbolism in Rituals

an observer forming his own centre with its own horizon as the circumference and the rest of the objective world in-between. This is the reason why the symbol of the circle with its centre located, “⊙”, has become the oldest symbol of worshipping by all ritualistic religions.

In a mystic piece of architecture describing the splendour of the ever-unfolding bird (Suparna) with his centre everywhere and circumference nowhere, we find a question and an answer in the Rig Veda. The question is, “I question: where is the centre of this creation?” The answer is: “Here is the centre of creation”, “here” meaning the consciousness of a created entity. Every created being has its own centre and its horizon as the circumference. Here the centre and the circumference are but the two points of a compass that are relative to one another. The fixed point is the centre and the movable point is the circumference. It is to be remembered that these two points are ever interchangeable. These two are concealed under

BOOK OF RITUALS

the two arms of the square (the objective splendour of the creation which forms the mind and matter). Hence the square concealed in the two points of the compass forms the starting symbol of every ritualist who enters into life as an “Entered Apprentice”.

The whole space is an unbound subjectivity to itself but it is a globe relative to an observer. The apparent dawn of the objective universe is in fact the dawn of the observer. Hence the dawn as a symbol is a substituted secret whereas the dawn of the observer is a genuine secret. Similarly, the sunrise and the sunset exist to an observer relative to his span and position. For this reason, many rituals include the symbolic East and West as the two guiding angels of man. These two symbols are called Mitra-Varuna on the cosmic plane, the Aswins (Twins) on the plane of manifestation, sunrise and sunset on the solar plane, beginning and ending of the day on the terrestrial plane and awakening and sleep (birth and death) on the anthropomorphic plane. The whole

The Role of Symbolism in Rituals

day is taken as a pattern for a ritual. The symbolic journey of the sun around our earth during the diurnal motion of the earth is taken as a path described in the pilgrimage of the evolving soul. The upper half of the circle is called the Golden Mug and the lower half the Silver Mug. Here golden means solar and silver means lunar, which will be fully explained later. These two mugs contain the sap of the experience of man (called Soma juice in the Vedas). The sun appears to fly from east to west while the man on earth is travelling from west to east. Hence the quest of man for truth is described as his journey from the west in quest of light. Again, the upper half of the circle represents the illumination side of man's consciousness while the lower half represents the merged earth (the subconscious and the supraconscious planes of man). The upward journey of man from west to east is symbolised to represent the training for perfection in the known levels while his journey from east to west along the lower half represents

BOOK OF RITUALS

his descending down into the hidden treasures. Such are the symbols of the ritualist in short.

From this we can know that the symbolism of a true ritualist does not include any man-made symbols like the script of any language. Man-made symbols are never universal and are confined to a group of people having a common understanding. The universal symbols form the language of the gods to be deciphered by man. They are the archetypes of the universal phenomena and they give man instructions through the “universal alphabet”. This alphabet includes number, shape, sound, colour, smell, taste, touch and the thought of man. All these exist as concealed properties (Sadhyas) and are revealed to the observer (when they manifest as Siddhas). In both of these states, they exist as creative intelligences (Devas). They form the primary alphabet of the ritualist and aid him to have the sacramental fitness to realise himself (around himself). The linking principle of man with his dawn and

The Role of Symbolism in Rituals

dusk forms his radius and the diameter within his objective circle. The relationship is then worked out in the form of his process of realisation (which is his evolution from atom to man). This is expressed by a numerical ratio called “pi”. Hence the ritualists worship “pi” as the universal consciousness entering into man. It is also represented by the glyph that denotes the two-legged entity (man) bearing the wisdom on his shoulders (π).

Like this, we find that all the ritualistic symbols of man are prehistoric and represent the culmination of a branch of formulated wisdom. The story of the evolution of space into a solar system and the evolution of an atom into a man also are taken as two grand dramas or mystery plays that are enacted by the ritualist as exquisite pieces of rituals. Even the historical stories of a predominant nature are visualised in the ultimate fitness of the universal phenomena. Their place is located in the periodical occurrences in nature and incorporated in books called

BOOK OF RITUALS

Puranas. It is for us to get ourselves familiarised with the nature of the abovesaid symbols and many such like, some of which will be divulged through (the course of) this book. If such books are studied in their literary or historic aspects only, the study is bound to be partial and as such fails to give the full import intended by their authors, who happened to be the great seers.

The Operative and Speculative Rituals

Before we go into a detailed study of the various rituals, let us try to understand the various methods of classifying the rituals. The terms “operative” and “speculative” are in vogue among the many modern ritualistic schools and especially of those belonging to the Masonic Order. By “operative rituals” they mean that the one type belongs to the practical conducting of rituals without going very much into the deeper study of their significance. This is because they are effective by practical application, irrespective of the rationalistic approach. The sacramental value of any ritual depends upon the proper conducting and the teamwork, and the intellectual levels of approach have nothing to do with the energy produced and the effect obtained. What is required is only a consistent

BOOK OF RITUALS

faith and a training to reach perfection in conducting the rituals.

The speculative rituals have everything to do with the understanding of those rituals. A student is expected to think out and work out the symbolism of a ritual from his own point of view and self-expression. For this reason, some of the ritualists are of the opinion that there should not be much explanation and literature dealing with the significance. However great the speculative theory may be, it is bound to be an understanding of a single person, which must necessarily be different from that of another. The ritual being the same to all, every person is expected to evolve his own approach to divulge the symbolism and know the science of building and the composite effect of the ritual that is figuratively called the Building of the Temple. This is quite in doing with the life of a man. Every man lives to work out his own path of solving the world problems and his own problems. However, there is a

The Operative and Speculative Rituals

positive need to have a speculative explanation of the various parts of the ritual by a more experienced brother for the primary guidance of the novice to become a real “Entered Apprentice” in the sacramental sense. For this, there is a piece of architecture from time to time by an experienced Director of Ceremonies. The attempt should be only to read a short passage containing a simple non-technical explanation of the mystic side, in a lucid style.

The fact is that an entered ritualist has to complete and perfect the operative side of any ritual when his mind begins to ponder over the import of the ritual. Then only the details are worked out in a synthetic way, a way in which the outline or the unity of a ritual is not lost in the mind of the student. Any mind cannot but react to any piece of work one repeatedly does in a trained manner. The training is bound to rouse the curiosity of the mind and make the mind enter into the concealed mystic side of what he is conducting. This is what is exactly required and this

BOOK OF RITUALS

is the only activity that leads the student from his human exterior to his divine interior through the veils of his own nature growing less and less dense and more and more subtle until the iridescent veil is also pierced through.

There is a still deeper explanation of the terms speculative and operative and the explanation deals with the esoteric side of man. All the normal life activity of man which is not of a sacramental value is called operative. It includes the temporal and ephemeral problems of man trying to work out his own Karma—the problem of discharging his own duties towards his parents, wife and children, his superiors, inferiors, friends, associates and enemies, and also his duties towards his fellow animals, plants and his environment. A non-ritualist who is an ordinary man is bound to create new waves of Karma through his instincts, reflexes, emotions and thoughts while performing the abovesaid duties. At this stage, if a man takes to conduct certain rituals, there will be a change in

The Operative and Speculative Rituals

his attitude. This change gradually replaces his idea of burden and responsibility towards his own work by a nobler idea of an impersonal duty. Gradually life ceases to be a problem and begins to become active as a mystery play. Hitherto he is said to have conducted the operative rituals in life and henceforth he is entering into the speculative side of the very same ritual. In the former stage it was his work and his Karma. In the latter stage it becomes the work and the Karma of the family, the race, the planet, the solar system and the cosmos. In the former stage he had an incentive (Sankalpa or conditioned incentive) to do his work. In the latter stage he will have only his sense of duty according to the already existing plan (Kalpa). In the former stage, his mind is engaged in the fourfold attitude of acting: his duty, his motive, his results of wages and his happiness (termed in Sanskrit as Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, the four Purushārthas). In the latter stage, the whole activity becomes one where the means and the end

BOOK OF RITUALS

merge in the one great motive force called the ritual of life (Yagnārtha). This is the intended explanation of the Masters of Wisdom about the operative and speculative aspects of the rituals. The difference is mainly that which is marked in the stages of the student while he undergoes the required spiritual evolution. It deals mainly with the activity of the externalisation of man's principles to realise the principles of the guiding Hierarchy of mankind to meet the needs of the planet through the gateway of Shamballa. In fact, this ritualistic approach is an inevitable process in the syllabus which prepares the student to have the required fitness to receive and co-operate with the work of "the Avatar of Synthesis, who is to come".

Here it is not out of place to mention a few words about the explanation of the two big columns at the entrance gate of the ritualistic temple. In fact, this explanation finds a place among the externalisation of the zodiacal mysteries and the phenomena of the Hierarchy through the influence

The Operative and Speculative Rituals

of two great stars, “Castor” and “Pollux”, which belong to the constellation of Gemini. These two stars are two great suns who are much ahead of our solar system in their evolution. They are among the spiritual guides of all the beings of our solar system. They govern the vocal cords of every individual and it is the duty of the student to identify the activities of his vocal cords with the sacred mission of the two abovesaid guiding stars. The function of those stars is “to establish” the beings “in strength” and the vocal cords of the student should be trained to attune the self-expression (externalisation of the word) through the medium of sound (the province of Jupiter and Uranus). This is done by the aid of “the tongue of good report” secured by the student. His tongue should always be of good report. He should submit his power of judgment to the power of the Almighty. Expressing opinions and passing judgments about others should be vocally and mentally stopped. Then the student is allowed to enter

BOOK OF RITUALS

through the gateway (the gateway from the objective into the subjective universe) between the two columns. At every step, caution touches his consciousness as a prick of sword, and fearlessness makes him proceed uniformly and works as a noose to prevent the student from receding backwards in his spiritual evolution. Of course, this aspect of the temple symbolism will be once again touched in the chapter dealing with the zodiacal mysteries, wherein some other parts of the temple and the implements of the ritual are explained.

The World Rituals — Classification

Now we propose to group the world rituals under different headings to have a systematic study. The first system of classification runs thus:

1. The Vedic Rituals
2. The Kabbalistic or Jewish Rituals
3. The Masonic Order of Rituals
4. The Agamic Rituals
5. The Greater Mysteries
6. The Lesser Mysteries

Before entering into the details of each of these varieties, the reader should remember that there is a twofold significance to each and every ritual. There is the cosmic and the anthropomorphic applications intended.

BOOK OF RITUALS

The details of every ritual should be realised externally as well as internally. For example, the animal sacrifices of the Vedic, Egyptian and Levite rituals are intended to be conducted either externally or internally.

In the external application, an animal is brought and its physical flesh and blood are used for the atonement. Whereas the same ritual can be conducted with an image which is a symbol of an animal or even the meditation upon the animal in all its nature. These two types of the same ritual are called respectively the objective ritual (Bahiryaga) and the subjective ritual (Antaryaga). These deal with the operative and the speculative side once again. Since man has crossed the consciousness of all the living beings on this earth during his course of evolution, his consciousness contains the association (Vasanas) of all the animals in his behaviour. This is the only possible explanation of the animal behaviour of man. When man conducts the rituals, first operatively and then

The World Rituals — Classification

speculatively, he crosses the nature of the animal in him and will have a jerk in the spiritual evolution of his own soul. Even the human embryo undergoes all the biological changes of his previous evolution during the course of his ten months in the womb. The whole drama of his previous evolution to laborious spans of years is symbolically enacted within a period of nine months. This instinctive memory of the scene of the drama of his previous evolution will be given a jerk through the sacramental value of the animal rituals. No doubt, the subjective application of animal rituals is definitely superior to the objective application. But the latter is by no means a bad practice. Thus, we find the twofold application of all the other rituals in the life of man.

The Vedic Rituals

The subject of the Vedic rituals is so vast and profound that we are bound to have only a bird's eye view that can give us the unity to approach the detail. First let us be familiar with the essentials of the Vedic thought. The Vedas are four in number:

1. Rig Veda
2. Yajur Veda
3. Sama Veda and
4. Atharvana Veda

It is said that before the advent of the black age, the Veda was one. Vedavyasa divided it with a specific purpose into the four Vedas. It is for the convenience of the disciples belonging to the black age or the rationalistic age, as the age is different from the fully or partially intuitional age. There was a time when the whole of mankind was

The Vedic Rituals

guided by the highest type of intuition (cosmic consciousness working through man). It is called the golden age or the age of the Devas. Then there was a partial interference by the individual intelligence of man. Three-fourths of the wisdom was divine or intuitional and one-fourth was human. After a time, the ratio grew half to half. These two periods (the second and the third periods) are respectively called the silver and the copper ages. Then the fourth age has the domination of the human intelligence with its empirical and personal opinions governing the three-fourths of the wisdom. The remaining one-fourth exists as the undercurrent intuition of man concealed under the ever-active waves of the various branches of knowledge gradually losing their unity. This fourth age is called the iron age. The magnitude of these ages is well established in all the Puranas and discussed enough in the Secret Doctrine of H.P. Blavatsky and the Treatise on Cosmic Fire by A.A. Bailey. This is the inner meaning of

BOOK OF RITUALS

the story that Vedavyasa divided the one Veda (Wisdom) into four Vedas (fourfold application into four different branches of wisdom). Of course, there are four different volumes of the Vedas to the ordinary student, but they contain mainly a common text with some minor differences.

The Rig Veda contains the mystic hymns as a literary collection. The word “Rik” means a ray of light as well as an emanation of sound. Consequently, the passage describes the mystery of objectivity (Aithereya) of the one immanent consciousness called cosmic fire (Agni). There is the description of the churning of the fire, the birth of the Aswins, the dawn of the ignition point (Agni) of a universe which pervades into a globe (Vishnu). Then there is the description of the mystic globe which is termed cake which contains the gods as numerical potencies. Subsequently there is the description of the origin of the brilliant and the dark beings, the creative and the reproductive beings and

The Vedic Rituals

the constructive and assimilative beings incessantly at work around an axis of the globe, upon which the potential time of the vast span is arranged in the form of hours or divisions of the making up of the activity of the whole universe.

The axis is further described as a sacrificial mast or rod to which the cosmic man is tied to be sacrificed into the objective beings of the whole universe. Then it is described how the one consciousness (father consciousness) is killed by the three factors of objectivity (space, time and consciousness) and how the offspring lost the presence of the father consciousness in the form of their own self-expression (word). Such a matchless approach is first given in the Rig Veda, in the Purusha Sukta. It is further stated that the cosmic man is the parent of the microcosmic man and it is the duty of the latter to sacrifice himself (his consciousness) into the former. This is the origin of the Holy Trinity in all the religions.

BOOK OF RITUALS

The book further describes the various splendours of the dawn in all its symbolic levels of application. It also describes the kingdom of light and the king piercing through the layers of the body of the all-devouring vastness of the serpent (Vritra) which is the background of darkness. The symbolic fight and the compromise between the darker and the brighter forces are also described. The whole book contains a key to the formula of the whole day with all its splendour. The unity is lying dormant in the ritualistic application whereas the scholarly approach to the text gives only a detached description of the various phenomena of the creation. In fact, the order of the mystic passages (mantrams) is jumbled in the exoteric text of the Rig Veda. The real order exists only in its ritualistic application. This order is given in the ritualistic book of that Veda, which is called Aithereya Brahmana. H.P.B. has hinted at many places in her work that the Brahmanas of the Vedic texts contain the real key to approach the Vedas. In fact, the

The Vedic Rituals

unity of the Veda exists in the unity of man, and the text of the Veda is only a literary relic of the real Veda. This literary relic enables a man to approach the original Veda which is within oneself. Many of the mantrams of the Veda end with a passage saying “one who knows this will be the knower of the Veda”. This means a direct key that the reader contains the Veda within himself as “the only copy of it now in existence”, in the words of H.P.B.

The Yajur Veda is considered to be a text having the ritualistic approach directly. It deals with the various sacrifices and the paraphernalia and the regalia thereof. The construction of the temple, the altar and the various things, including the bricklaying and the dimensions of the bricks and of the temple, are described. The process of invoking the cosmic fire, inviting Him to the altar, and the process of worship are given. Various patterns of the fireplace are described. Various food grains, milk, curds, butter, ghee, are symbolically described as the implements

BOOK OF RITUALS

of the rituals. Various animals and the spirit of various professions of man (that cause different mentalities to evolve the ego enough to cross the social levels) are described and the spirit of offering is glorified. Once again, there is the symbolic man sacrifice (offering the human consciousness as a sacrifice into the consciousness of the Purusha, the Cosmic Man) is described. Hence, we get the Purusha Sukta in this Veda also. A discussion of the rationale of the various implements belonging to various rituals is found in a highly interesting manner in a book, Satapatha Brahmana, which forms the speculative side of these operative rituals of Yajur Veda.

Another significant point is that the Rigvedic hymns are all composed in various metres; those metres are glorified and the symbolism divulged in the various passages of the Yajur Veda. The mantrams of the Yajur Veda include both metrical hymns and some prose. The various metres and the scanning of syllables in the Vedic

The Vedic Rituals

literature is itself a profound and sublime aspect. It deals symbolically with the various divisions of time and space of the universe. For example, the Gayatri metre (the greatest of all the Vedic metres) contains twenty-four (24) syllables which represent “the twenty-four-inch scale” of the Masonic rituals. It denotes the 24 hours of the day and the 24 lunations (12 full moons and 12 new moons) of the year and the distribution of man’s work into these divisions. Another example is the five syllabled metre called Pankthi. It ritualises man into the activity of “the five-pointed star” ☆. This ritual opens the five gateways of man’s consciousness between the five sense organs of man (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch) and the five states of physical matter in the universe around (solid, liquid, light, ether and space). This is allegorised in the Upanishad as the revelation of “Five Great Collections”. It is further allegorised by Vedavyasa in the Mahabharata as the story of the five sons of the white king.

BOOK OF RITUALS

Thus, we find the division of syllables in the Vedic tradition is highly significant. It is also understood that any verse composed according to any regular metre has a peculiar musical potency that can elevate man from the rationalistic to the intuitional levels through his mystic subconscious nature. The device is further carried out in the arrangement of the number of verses in each hymn and the number of hymns in each book. This tradition is carefully kept up in the composition of the Puranic literature also. The solar allegory, the Ramayana, is composed in 24000 poems according to the Gayatri metre. The lunar allegory, the Mahabharata, is composed in 18 books (3 fourths of 24 because three fourths of the creation lies as a concealed formula to reveal the remaining one fourth). The solilunar allegory, the Bhagavata, is composed in twelve books after the 12 divisions of the zodiac and the twelve months of the year. We, therefore, find a correlation between the various metres of the Veda and the splendours

The Vedic Rituals

of the creation, especially the astronomical and the astro-biological phenomena of the whole universe in general and this earth in particular.

The Sama Veda is described as the wisdom of the music. As music is different from sound, the Rig Veda deals with the origin of objectivity as sound and light, while the Sama Veda intuitively gives us the origin of the music. Metre is also different from music and hence the necessity of Sama Veda differing from Yajur Veda. The origin of the word from the consciousness of man includes sound, syllable and muse (thought before it is differentiated from the semi-subjective experience). All the rituals that are described in the Rig Veda and the Yajur Veda are reproduced in the light of the origin and development of music in the Sama Veda. The origin of sound from the muse of man is traced as the point (Bindu) and its creation into the objective world (externalisation) is described as the line of music (Nada). This line further develops into seven

BOOK OF RITUALS

branches that are the seven musical scales (Swaras). In fact, these scales are the working intelligences (seers) on the plane of Creation. They exist as seven principles on the cosmic plane. They descend as seven sound-lights during the “churning of the ocean”. They incarnate as the seven suns (stars) of the Great Bear, in each cluster of solar systems. In each sun, they externalise as the seven rays for initiation. From each physical body of a sun, they emerge as the seven colours of the spectrum. In ether they descend as the seven musical scales. They remain hidden in man to be revealed as the moods governed by the music discovered by man. On the earth, they work out the cycles of the seven races of mankind. All the potentialities of the races are present in every man, to be perfected. The musical potencies serve to govern the higher emotional side of man to construct the proper bridge between the consciousness of man and the wisdom of the universe. They are therefore

The Vedic Rituals

called the Gandharvas, who are in no way different from the Devas on the other planes of creation.

Once again there is the application and description of all the rituals, including the zodiacal and astro-biological mysteries in terms of music in the Sama Veda. The ritual according to the Sama Veda consists of producing the word into the required music (Chandogana and Udgitha). The import of the rituals of this Veda is much discussed in a book called Jaiminiya Brahmana. This book contains many mystic charges about the above-mentioned rituals.

The Atharva Veda deals with the application of the higher rituals to the lower (denser) planes of man. The term Atharva means lower, signifying the lower counterpart of the upper principles of creation. Man's life in the mundane world is unguided when untrained. He seeks persons, wealth, power and possession for his guidance for some time, in vain. But when he is once initiated into the path of the ancient seers, he will find a place for himself in the

BOOK OF RITUALS

ultimate fitness of things. For all his personal requirements he discovers the original counterparts on the impersonal levels. This gives him a key to ritualise his lower life in guidance by the higher principles. For his every thought and emotion, he finds a source in the universe. For every personal requirement he finds an impersonal solution. All the unsolved problems of his comprehension will find a culmination in the higher. Gradually the lower is illuminated by the higher and sublimated, magnetised and made to merge in the higher. These two principles, the higher and the lower, will assume the form of the two great Gurus, seers and initiators (termed as Atharva and Angiras). This is the reason why we find mantrams fulfilling the daily needs of man in this Veda. Engineering, medical science, priestcraft, administration, statesmanship, politics and military science, etc. find their place in this Veda.

The Vedic Rituals

Once again we find the presence of the hymn addressed to the Cosmic Man in the Atharva Veda also. This denotes the necessity of the offering of the whole activity of the personal man to the Cosmic Man. Life is actually ritualised in this Veda in all its mundane aspects. The speculative ritualistic key to this Veda is highly interesting and illuminating. It contains the divulging of many truths in the form of many allegories. This book is called Gopatha Brahmana.

1. The Zodiacal Mysteries

A cursory glance at the vast syllabus of the four Vedas shows the presence and the predominance of a set of rituals that are called the zodiacal mysteries. We find the rotating wheel of the zodiac and its divisions. The two divisions of the wheel into day and night, the increasing and the decreasing moon, the two half-years with increasing and

BOOK OF RITUALS

decreasing magnitude of the day, etc. are described. The threefold division of the day as well as the year is present. There are also the fourfold, fivefold, sixfold, tenfold, twelvefold and twenty-fourfold divisions of the day, year, etc. The wheel is also divided into 27, 28, and 30 divisions called “Nakshatra divisions”. Elsewhere in the Vedas, it is divided further into 360 degrees and 720 half-degrees. The various beginnings of the day, the lunar month and the year are given with their various muses. The cycles of seasons and the bigger cycles of great ages are also described. The various apparent (symbolic) journeys of the sun and other planets along the path of the zodiac are given as a master key to divulge the journey of the soul from the stage of the atom to that of man. For this reason, we find in the Puranas many stories of symbolic journeys. The journey of Arjuna for one year, the journey of the five sons of the widow for twelve years in the forests and their great journey of no-return directly into heaven are all described in an

The Vedic Rituals

allegorical sense in the Mahabharata. The path of the rituals, it is said in the Vedas, is concealed along the circumference of the wheel. In this sense, a ritual (more correctly the cosmic ritual) is called the great approach to the path to be traced (Adhwara). This is the salient reason for the sacramental value of a sincere pilgrimage to any holy place conducted by any person.

2. The Planetary Rituals

The planetary rituals occur next in prominence to the zodiacal mysteries. We find the occurrence of the solilunar set of rituals forming the prelude of many main rituals of the four Vedas. In fact, the solilunar rituals stand as the regularly prescribed rituals of an initiate. It is said that every initiate into the cosmic wisdom (Brahma Vidya) should regularly perform the solilunar rituals (Darsa-Purnimas) for 30 years. This is because the period of 30

BOOK OF RITUALS

years belongs to the cycle of Saturn, the Divine Disciplinarian who is the outer guard of the temple of human fate. The moon is the cause of the lunations and he makes a sidereal month of 30 days whereas Saturn completes his cycle in 30 years. The moon stimulates the seeds of individual Karma once in every month and gives repeated cycles of experience which serve to equalise the oddities of the lower nature of man. The same thing is done in a much bigger scale within 30 years by Saturn. The lessons taught by the moon to man daily are solidified by Saturn annually. In this respect, Saturn works as an immediate past master to the sun in ritualising the life of man through his pieces of architecture translated into the fruits of the Karma of man. All the possible experiences of man are covered completely by a cycle of Saturn; his emotions and thoughts are purified and stabilised and the ritualist crosses many barriers in trying to keep up his regularity in conducting these rituals for 30 years.

3. The Soma Sacrifice

The Soma sacrifice comes next in prominence. It also forms a prelude to many advanced rituals. It is allegorically described as the ritual of drinking the juice from the root of the plant Soma. This is only an exoteric explanation of an esoteric truth. Soma is the cosmic principle which governs the phenomena of reflection. Hence it also governs the experience that is a reflection of the cosmic consciousness upon the life experience of a man. Our moon, the satellite, serves as the reflecting principle of the solar ray to our earth. Hence the moon works as a blind to the wisdom of Soma, the king of cosmic phenomena. Soma also governs the mind principle which exists even before the formation of the brain cells in the embryo and which arranges the forces to build the brain cells. Soma, the king, is described as governing the oceans and presiding over the construction of boats to cross the ocean. Hence the ritual Somayāga is intended to give the experience of the Soma

BOOK OF RITUALS

principle as the sap of human life. Without this plane of experience, all the practical magic becomes meaningless. To the man on this earth who is initiated into the higher mysteries, the experience of Soma is received through the mystic rays of the planet Neptune. The Rig Veda describes the glory of Soma in the following words: “Soma has his place in the bosom of these Nakshatras (arcs of the circle). When one (man) squeezes the Soma herb, he thinks he has drunk the Soma. He Whom the initiates know as Soma, no one (except the initiate) ever tastes!” H.P.B. has many times mentioned in her Secret Doctrine that the moon is only a blind to conceal the higher principle when the sevenfold planetary scale is taken into consideration.

Such is the grand application of the Soma sacrifice ritual in the Veda that it is borrowed by the authors of the applied sciences of the Vedas into the atonement rituals. For example, the health rituals of Ayurveda (the medical key to the Veda) describe in detail the performance of the

The Vedic Rituals

Soma ritual by using the juice of the plant Soma (*Ephedra vulgaris*) to prolong the lease of life. Sage Bharadwaja is said to have performed a prolonged penance to realise the king of devas in this plant and through his grace he secured an immeasurable span of life, enough to conduct researches in the line of the medical key to wisdom. For many such reasons, the Soma ritual gained much prominence among the common prelude rituals of the higher mysteries.

As we go through the texts of the four Vedas and the corresponding Brahmanas, we are made to understand that all the four Vedas have the ritual as the main object. The subject matter of these Vedas bears definitely a secondary importance to the meaning part of the wisdom. This is because the object of the Vedic seers is the realisation and the becoming of a man and not his acquiring a scholarly hold over the various branches. The import of the Vedas is secondary in importance to the performance of the Vedic rituals. Thus, all the four Vedas have their ideal in the

BOOK OF RITUALS

ritual. A true student will understand that the ritual existed long before the present edited versions of the Vedas. The tradition of the ritual is far more ancient than the text of the Vedas. Ritual made its appearance with the beginning of the creation and man came out of the ritual of the cosmic, solar and planetary forces. For this reason, it is proper to say that the ritualistic Veda pre-exists the present round of humanity and that there are repeated attempts of man to develop a literature about it. The present version of the Vedas is but one of the many such attempts. This version forms but part of the Veda which always exists in the ritual of the gods. It is said, “the gods conducted the ritual (in due and ancient form) according to the formula of the ritual (which exists beyond any creation eternally to reveal the creation periodically) and those laws (properties) of the ritual ever exist as the set of the first laws” in the Purusha Sukta. The orientalist may try to prove philologically that the Rig Veda is the oldest. It only means that the present

The Vedic Rituals

Rig Veda version may be the oldest of the four present Vedic versions. This exoteric study of chronology can never solve the sequential problems of the essential spirit of the Veda. Just as there is germination and fertilisation before the existence of the textbook of biology and just as there is the social spirit existing in man before the science of sociology, so also the ritual exists before the Vedic texts of any cycle. This clearly proves the esoteric truth that the Yajur Veda (the ritualistic wisdom) existed before the Vedic texts came into existence. The unity of man exists as a synthesis within and around himself before he can systematise his knowledge about it. This is the rationale of the theory of the impersonal nature of Veda without any author. The various persons who attempted (individually and collectively through a group contact with the creational hierarchies) to get at the already existing unity into the various mantrams have designated themselves as seers and not authors of the hymns. Even then, they did not give them

BOOK OF RITUALS

under their personal names as proper nouns. They attributed the seerhood to a higher and impersonal principle in themselves and the name of this principle is given as the seer of each mantram. Vasistha, Viswamitra, Kanva, Praskanva, Medathidhi, Dirghatamas, Hiranyasthupa and the like are the names of the seers of various mantrams. These names signify certain cyclic phenomena in nature or in man or in both. This is further proved by the fact that at many places these numbers are used not only in singular but also in plural numbers, like Vasisthas, Kanvas, etc. Of course, the orientalist tried to interpret this plurality to mean the lineage of each original seer. This is one of the aspects to be taken into consideration before we can correctly understand the tradition of the Vedas. Each sound, each syllable, each metre and each hymn is said to have a seer by some name who is in some places the presiding deity himself. There are also hymns that invoke the reader himself as the seer or the deity of the mantra.

The Vedic Rituals

Gayatri, the greatest of all the mantrams of the four Vedas, invokes the presence of that deity in man, who stirs up the intellect into the actions of man.

Incidentally it should be mentioned that the process of invocation forms the main content of the ritual. If man is not invoked into the role of the seer or deity, he cannot enter into the spirit of the ritual. In its workings, the ritual is a mystery play or a drama to be enacted by men as actors who play the role of the creative lights. This is after the fashion of the various gods enacting the role of the deity of omnipresence during the workings of one creation. The whole creation is properly understood as a mystery play enacted by God. Just as the script of a drama exists long before the actors enact it, so also the ritual of creation exists before the ritualists (whether gods or men) take up the play. For this reason, the process of invocation should be mastered. Everyone can invoke the presence of any god of any plane in himself, provided he can sacrifice his memory

BOOK OF RITUALS

about himself during the time of the ritual. The science of invocation is itself an extensive subject in the Vedic studies. In English it was well introduced by A.A.B.

A rationalistic belief in the existence of the subtler forces at work, a well cultivated social temperament to entertain those intelligences and invite them into himself, and a good amount of conscious self-confidence about one's own uprightness and equality of behaviour should be present. Further, they should be synthesised and crowned by unconditional hope and confidence—these are the necessary requirements to produce the phenomena of invoking a presence. All these aspects are existing in every ordinary man but they are ill-arranged, haphazard and miscellaneous. Lack of synthesis makes them serve no significant purpose on the impersonal levels. By being allowed into the performance of a ritual after achieving a spirit of surrender, a novice can get the ability to invoke through a regular attendance to the ritual. The process is

The Vedic Rituals

similar to that of an iron rod being magnetised. Thus, the true spirit of prayer should be understood and the process of invocation familiarised before one becomes a good ritualist. Attaining mechanical perfection in conducting the various parts of the ritual is the fundamental requisite of the student. The various implements and their handling should be mastered. His mundane activity should become less prominent than his ritualistic activity in his mind. Then he begins to realise the ease of getting things done. Hitherto he was toiling with his work due to his own limitations of Karma. Henceforth he ceases to do the things to discover that things are done through him. Mundane activity ceases to exist to him, and his things are looked after automatically by the higher intelligences. This holds good as long as he keeps the spirit of submission. Such an attitude is described as devotion and self-surrender by the subsequent spiritual authors but the realisation is always linked up with the conducting of rituals.

BOOK OF RITUALS

With these introductory remarks about the preparation for a ritual we propose to enter into the practical side of the leading Vedic rituals. According to the intention and utility of the ritualist, many of the rituals are classified into various types, like atonements, correctives, and achievements (occult and mundane), etc. We are not concerned with the study of the rituals according to this classification because it is relatively unimportant. Widely speaking, there are two different injunctions to the two types of ritualists (utilitarian and sacrificial). The one is “one who wants to achieve enjoyment and fulfilment should conduct rituals”. The other is “the candidate to a second birth (spiritual birth) should conduct rituals for nothing (for no end)”. Lord Krishna clarifies the statements further in the Bhagavad Gita like this: “Those who conduct rituals to fulfil desires are the dabblers in the workings of the various rituals and are motivated. For those who aim at the highest poise (Yoga), his work (of the rituals) serves as

The Vedic Rituals

a stimulating cause”. The same work of the ritual serves to keep the adept in his own level and prevents a fall. Hence the two injunctions will classify all the rituals according to the aim and intention of the ritualist. Nothing more is necessary about the classification according to the requirements.

The commentaries on the Vedic rituals divide the whole activity of man mainly under two headings, one the worldly and the other, the spiritual. The first is the non-ritualistic (unrealised) action of man; the second is the ritualistic (sanctified) activity of man. Then the ritualistic activity comes under three headings:

1. Offering the whole activity to a deity or the highest deity of Omnipresence. This is called Yaga.
2. Offering something to the creative or reproductive gods through the vehicle of fire or water is the second type. This is called Homa and Tarpana, and

BOOK OF RITUALS

3. Giving up the right of something in favour of a person or persons, in a spirit of sacrifice, considering the persons as the living forms of the deity of the ritual. This is called Dana.

These three types of offerings, when conducted with a co-operative and well-meant attitude, will purify the environment as well as the inner nature of the ritualist so that the place and the mind of the ritualist form a congenial harbour for the invisible intelligences to lodge and work out the building of the ritualistic temple on the higher planes and thereby bring down the fulfilment of the whole ritual. The creative forces are invoked through fire. The reproductive, vegetative and germinative forces are invoked through water. The consciousness of the cosmic man himself as the intended deity of the sacrifice is invoked by the offering to human beings. Satiating the hunger and thirst of any living being that is mentally attracted to the place of the ritual is absolutely necessary to

The Vedic Rituals

touch the love aspect of the deity. Hence there is no sacrifice without an offering of food, clothing and money among the whole of the Vedic rituals.

Another division of the Vedic rituals into two classes according to the intention of the ritualist is as follows:

1. A ritual conducted for the fulfilment of the sacrifice
2. A ritual conducted to accomplish things desired by the ritualist

In the first case, the performance of the rituals becomes an unavoidable duty of the initiate. In the second case, the performance is optional and is based upon the type of attainment aimed at by the initiate. Always the first of the two categories is considered as the first part to lead one to liberation and unconditional bliss (Swarga) by the wise men of old. In the second category, the performance binds the ritualist to the result and unavoidably leads him to pain or pleasure.

BOOK OF RITUALS

According to the nature of the rituals, there is another division into the regular and the optional groups of rituals. The regular rituals form part of the daily routine of the initiate, as will be explained later in detail. The initiation ritual, the two twilight rituals of the daily routine, prayers and the worship of fire form part of the regular or compulsory type of rituals. The grand Vedic sacrificial rites like the horse sacrifice and the Soma sacrifice are considered to be the optional or occasional sacrifices conducted by the ritualist with the aid of the congregation of fellow ritualists. They may be conducted to achieve an intended result or merely as a part of their life mission, as is previously explained. Even the performance of any such ritual to achieve a result is not considered as something bad or unimportant as long as the result remains universal and not individual in its end. For example, the ritual of Varuna conducted for the specific purpose of getting rains is by no

The Vedic Rituals

means of a secondary nature since the result is not individual.

There is still another division of all the Vedic rituals, according to the nature and scope of each ritual, into the following four classes:

1. The archetypal rituals, which imitate the phenomena of the creation. The twilight rituals and the fire kindling (kindling the three fires that correspond with the dawn, the dusk and the noon), etc. come under this category.
2. The archetypal group of rituals which recur at longer intervals. The kindling of the monthly fire is an example of this group.
3. The mixed type is that which partakes of the nature of the two types mentioned above. For example, the occasional ritual conducted to invoke the double deity Agni-Soma comes under this division. It resembles the new moon and the full moon sacrifice

BOOK OF RITUALS

in its frame. Since the new moon and the full moon are monthly phenomena in nature, the ritual is conducted after the fashion of archetypal. Yet this monthly fire ritual differs from the solilunar ritual of the full moon and the new moon and part of it takes the pattern of another annual ritual (Savaneeya). Hence it is of a mixed type.

4. There are independent and miscellaneous rituals that do not come under any one of the above three headings. For example, the fire offering with laddles, which symbolises the earning of the daily wages and their proper distribution in the life of the ritualist (both in the operative and speculative sense), comes under this heading.

All the types of divisions explain the nature and purview of the province of the Vedic rituals. Subsequently, there is another grand division for all the rituals of the world by the Masters of Wisdom through the course of the

The Vedic Rituals

Kali Age. The initiation rituals were separated from all the other types of rituals and various schools of temple initiation were established to form the various orders of rituals. More correctly, all the world rituals were renovated and given with a new light of application. From that time onwards, the main purpose of the esoteric temple rituals is only initiation into the comparatively higher degrees of realisation. Initiating man into the ever-expanding layers of consciousness through planetary, solar and cosmic gateways has become the main object of the world rituals. Gradually, the secondary forms and motives of the application of the world rituals will fade into insignificance and only the path of initiation will gain prominence. This is the true renovation of the most ancient form of the rituals of mankind. This is also the reason why the majority of the Vedic rituals are congregational in their nature and more freely accessible for the public to attend than the rituals of the medieval ages. Welfare of the whole creation in general

BOOK OF RITUALS

and mankind in particular seems to be the sole object and benediction of the Vedic rituals. The spiritual consciousness or light produced as a result of any Vedic ritual is meant to be distributed among those who attended and also among those who could not attend. The welfare that is meant by the ritualist is in its highest form, the invocation of God consciousness in every living being on this earth. Thus, there is a higher and more sublime concept to every Vedic ritual and this concept unified all the rituals into the One Ritual, i. e. the initiation of man into the human and solar mysteries. This sublime aspect is stressed by the Masters of Wisdom. The attempt of Vedavyasa to re-arrange the code of rituals into the present Vedic and Puranic lore proves the work of these Masters in this line. Lord Krishna revealed and discussed this renovation and unification of the ritualistic wisdom in the Bhagavad Gita. The Bhagavata Purana contains stories of Maitreya initiating disciples like Vidura into the new set up. Of

The Vedic Rituals

course, there is a simultaneous existence of the lower type of the application of various rituals in various religions in the centuries after the advent of Kali Yuga, but none of these secondary applications could survive to stand the test of time. Only one school stands unchanged and it is the school of the initiation of man through ritualising his life. Through the medieval ages we find the various esoteric temples of initiation under the name of various ritualistic orders maintaining the same theme and purpose.

In the modern age, there is again an attempt for the re-unification of the various ritualistic orders and such a one is found in the example of the trans-Himalayan festivals and rituals that are being conducted by the direct and indirect disciples of the Masters. The Vaisakh festival, the Ashadi festival and other full moon festival rituals and the initiations conducted under the guidance of the various inner spiritual heads are the good examples of the new approach. Mr. Leadbeater describes the details of a few

BOOK OF RITUALS

such rituals which aid initiation and soul contact in his books named “The Masters and the Path” and “The Hidden Life in Freemasonry”. Some more examples of the still modern-aged versions of these rituals can be seen in the detached conversations and graphic descriptions in the volumes of Alice A. Bailey dealing with the rays and initiations.

The attempt in framing the modernised versions of the ancientmost rituals is to remove the non-essentials that have accumulated as crusts around the standardised ritualistic truths of the ancients. The second half of the twentieth century is exactly the period during which all the ancient mysteries will be modernised, renovated and conducted at first under various names and finally under the name of a single ritualistic order. Some of these future versions of the rituals are already prepared and only a few specimens are given out. Even those that are given out exist in manuscripts though they are being conducted in some

The Vedic Rituals

initiation temples. One such ritual (really classed among the grandest of rituals) is given as an example of the future versions of the ancient mysteries at the end of this book and it is the Mystery Play of St. Mark.

4. The Fire Ritual

This forms the starting point almost of all the Vedic rituals. Invoking the fire and gathering the fire are the two main aspects of this ritual. We know fire only as a phenomenon of fire. The process of ignition, combustion and emitting light and heat are ever mystical in their nature. Thousand sciences may explain the phenomena but the existence of fire before any phenomena is always a mystery. It is highly symbolical and bestows a fund of revelation to the one who ponders over the aspects of the externalisation of the flame. Kindling the fire and the utterance of the word are the two grand similes used to

BOOK OF RITUALS

depict the objectivity of creation in the Vedas. The fire sacrifice usually begins with the ritual of consecration. Two phenomena, fire ignition and pervasion, are symbolised and formulated. The two are respectively presided over by two deities called Agni and Vishnu. The first is the beginning and the second is the culmination of the creation of the deity. It is said that all the other deities are Agni and at the same time Vishnu. This means that every phenomenon is preceded by ignition (the emergence of the point or the centre of the circle). It is followed by the pervasion (the circumference of the circle in one plane and the globe in all planes). This globe is called the offering which is prepared upon 11 counterparts. This means that the point is the first number of creation (number one), the circumference is a zero which completes the number ten as the units of creation. In the meanwhile, there are nine numbers that evolve and work as the creative potencies. That is why the cosmic man is said to have stood upon ten

The Vedic Rituals

digits. The Puranic terminology describes the workings of the other nine numerical potencies as the nine creators of the creation.

A few words of explanation are required about the concept of numbers that belonged to the ancients. The seers posit that numbers are creative potencies or intelligences that exist in eternity as seeds of creation. They evolve into the workers of the creation. These numbers of the decimal system are not man-made. They exist as cosmic thought-forms in space and the living being contains their counterparts as seeds to be germinated into the intelligence of the individual.

The abovesaid 11 units of the formative globe of one creation are further grouped into two groups of three and eight. On the geometrical plane the globe evolves the threefold activity of the universe. The symbologists represent this as the equilateral triangle within the circle . This means that the creation is made manifest on three

BOOK OF RITUALS

different planes mainly. There are three levels of the utterance of sounds in the Vedic musical scales. Also, the content of the whole globe of creation is mainly divided into three groups, the material, the ethereal (astral and etheric) and the ideational. Each of these contains eight subdivisions (the seven planes and the parent spirit). The whole phenomenon is described as a versification into three lines of eight syllables each. This is the mystic scanning of the Gayatri metre, which contains 24 syllables divided into 3 equal parts of eight syllables each. Vishnu, the Lord of Pervasion, is said to pervade the whole in three strides. In the Puranic allegories, he is said to have started his Avatar as a dwarf who grew up and pervaded the earth (material universe), heaven (causal universe) and the realms in between. The story of Vamana contains this whole symbolism. Space, time and mind form one example of the three strides. Past, present and future in time form another example. Length, breadth and thickness in space

The Vedic Rituals

form another example. The conscious, the subconscious and the supra-conscious mind forms a third example.

The ritualist prepares a globe of the flour of corn with ghee and offers it to fire in the sacrifice. Ghee symbolises the reproductive activity (female force because ghee is got from the female animal) and rice grain represents the creative activity (male principle because the seed represents germination). Such an offering to fire with the abovesaid speculative architecture of the ritual is considered to be the beginning of the full moon and new moon ritual. This is because the sun and the moon represent the creative and the reflective principles on the solar plane, while they represent creation and reproduction on the planetary plane. They are the father and mother principles in creation. Astrology also teaches us that the sun represents the father and the moon represents the mother in the horoscope. In the individual, the sun represents the spirit of man and the moon represents the soul of man. On

BOOK OF RITUALS

a lower plane, the sun represents the consciousness of man (the “I AM” in man) and the moon represents its reflection, which is the thought of man. The earth represents the physical sheaths of man. Every lunar month, the moon principle describes various apparent angles with the sun while reflecting the ray as the moon light of the sixteen phases. All these phases control the tides of the ocean, the etheric currents that keep up the earth’s magnetism, the liquid content of the various physical bodies and also the mental activity of the beings. Thus we see that the ghee and rice grains have a profound symbolism representing the creative and reproductive principles that guide the whole creation.

Then the activity of the ritual extends into seventeen items. The evolution of the formula of Yajna (that is concealed in one year as the specimen) is into twelve months (corresponding with the twelve signs of the zodiac) and five seasons (corresponding to the division of the year

The Vedic Rituals

into the formula of the five-pointed star). Thus, the time aspect of creation is scanned into the formula of one year and the personality of the year is called the first great patriarch (Prajapati). The terms patriarch and Prajapati mean the Father-king. Time as the year is the father as well as the ruler of this creation. A sublime concept of time indeed! Here the ritualist invokes the Prajapati in seventeen stanzas called the kindling verses.

There is an allegory about the year god. The ritual once deserted the gods. Again, the gods sought to bring it out and they brought it through their offerings. This means that the whole globe which manifests the rotation into the formula of the year merges into dissolution periodically. Then the gods who formed the counterparts of the year exist as principles though withdrawn into seeming nothingness. They exist as seeds. They once again offer themselves as parts of the whole when the year once again externalises itself into the form of the globe. This whole

process is allegorised into the story of the emergence of the egg that contained Prajapati (the patriarch) after the previous merging. This proves that the whole creation ever exists eternally though it undergoes evolution and involution periodically.

5. The Consecration Rituals

The actual beginning of the consecration ritual is highly interesting. It is exactly an imitation of the birth of man from the mother's womb. This bestows the sacramental value of the rebirth. The person who wants to be consecrated into the discipline of this ritual is asked to lie down in the posture of the baby in the womb. Water is sprinkled upon him and this represents the sprinkling of the seed in the mother's womb. The water represents the seed of the father. Then the ritualist is called "possessed of seed". He is then anointed with fresh butter and is

The Vedic Rituals

considered to have been consecrated to God. His eyes are anointed, and this act represents the descending of light to the eyes of the embryo. It means light consciousness has entered the man in the womb to serve as his physical and spiritual sight. He is then purified with 21 handfuls of Dharbha grass. This represents the construction of the body of Purusha (the embryonic man in the manner of the Cosmic Man) with 21 sticks of fuel in seven layers. “Seven are the layers and three times seven are the sticks of fuel for the Purusha”, says the mantram in the Purusha Sukta. Then he is conducted to the hut of the consecration. This represents his abode in the womb, wherein he enacts the drama of his individual evolution as an embryo. In and from a firm womb he lives and moves. Sun should not enter the hut except through a passage in the east. Nor does he come out into the sun until the ceremony is completed. This also represents the slumbering state of consciousness in the subluminary caves of his preparation in evolution. He is

BOOK OF RITUALS

covered with a garment and above that he is again covered with the skin of an antelope. The garment represents “the coat of skin” that is given to him by God in the womb. The skin of the antelope represents the placenta. He lies there with closed hands because it is the very posture of the babe in the womb. Also, it is the pass grip representing his reception of the polar and the lateral consciousnesses. Through this pass grip, he is allowed to come out of the mother’s womb by the gods who initiate him into “the path”. The skin of the antelope is torn and he is taken out. This represents the breaking of the placenta and the child coming out into the world. He is made to lie with his head to the east and the hands and legs folded into his trunk. From that posture he is made to rise gradually, through a symbolic time of six hours.

The head in the east is highly symbolic. When a man is born on this earth, his head represents his east. The east is the symbol of the dawn of man. It marks the ascendant

The Vedic Rituals

of an individual in the horoscope. Astrology also teaches us that the sign and the planets on the ascendant govern the head of a subject. The twelve signs therefore govern the whole body from head to foot in twelve divisions. When a man is made to lie on his back with his head to the east and closed hands and legs into the trunk, then the whole globe of space around him serves as the egg in the mother's womb in its spiritual sense. It is actually the case in the physical sense when a child is physically lying in the mother's womb. The egg in the mother's womb contains all the potentialities of the 360° of the zodiac with the geometrical centre lying in the heart of the embryonic man. The stalk of the egg represents the eastern horizon because the head is located there in the first stages.

Here the whole of the ritual of consecration bestows upon the ritualist the sacramental value of the second birth (the spiritual birth of the consciousness which is different from rebirth). Since this part of the ritual is dramatic in its

BOOK OF RITUALS

nature and contains the imitation of the corresponding phenomena in nature, it belongs to the category of the mystery plays. After this ritual, the person is called Devarata, which means that he is given away to and brought up by the gods. In the mystery temples of the various schools of east and west, both modern and ancient, we find such a type of ritual by many names since the mystery temple of nature conducts this during its workings of bringing out an individual from the universe.

The symbolic time of six hours represents the period of six hours from sunrise (the birth of the solar god as the child) to noon. During this time, the apparent sun (the individual) is observed to travel from east to the midheavens. Relatively, the individual is made to change his position from the horizontal (level) to the vertical (plumb). Thus, he describes a right angle, which is the corner of a square, through the changing position of his head. The square forms the fourth part of the circle around

The Vedic Rituals

him. In evolution, this represents the journey of the soul from the horizontal to the vertical levels. The horizontal level is the level of the vertebral column of an animal while the vertical level is the level of the vertebral column of man. The evolution of man from the stage of an animal comprises the fourth part of his evolution from the stage of an atom to that of a man (through the inorganic, plant, animal and human stages).

Then follows the ceremony of installing the fire and protecting it to survive throughout the ritual. Here the fire represents the inner consciousness of man which is brought out from the subjective to the objective stages. Fire is secured by a process of churning two pieces of wood that are carved out and arranged into the position of a ball and socket (the container and the contained). The container represents space and the contained represents time. Life is churned out of this mystic implement of the ritual. The Lingam, which is the subsequent development of the idea

BOOK OF RITUALS

of this implement, is worshipped in all the temples consecrated to Siva. The fire that is churned out of this implement and secured into proper fuel is established first at one place “in the east, then in the west and then in the south”. This is after the formation of the day with its east and west marked by the first ray of the sun, and then the meridian which is approached by the sun. These three fires correspond with the invocations of the morning, evening and noon. In the lighting ceremony of the rituals of various schools, we find the same order followed till today. The fire on the altar in the east is first worshipped by many offerings containing rich food grains, butter and ghee. Various herbs are also present in the offering and the herbs are those that are capable of producing medicinal effects to elevate the consciousness of man. Subsequently, there is a main altar in the centre of the ritualistic field in some schools of the rituals. This represents the light in the centre of the temple to illuminate the very sacred lore that is

The Vedic Rituals

concealed in the heart of man (love). Thus, comes to an end the consecration ritual. Then follows the introductory ritual for the main ritual of fire invocation.

6. The Introductory and the Concluding Rituals

The introductory and the concluding rituals represent the exhalation and the inhalation of the creation. Astronomically, they correspond with the sunrise and the sunset. In the text, it is given that the introductory ritual causes an advance (of the solar god) to heaven. The goddess Aditi (Primordial Deep) comes to prominence here. Aditi is the mother of the gods and she begins to conceive and deliver the gods beginning with the Sun god. This represents the poise of breath which exists before, within and after the exhalation and inhalation. Astronomically, it represents the background of the day

BOOK OF RITUALS

which exists before, within and after the sunrise and the sunset.

The sunrise, noon and sunset form the three corners or cardinal points of the day, and with the midnight (the womb of Aditi) there are the four corners plotted. They stand as the four points of the cross within the circle described by the apparent sun during the day. In another plane, these four points are located at the sunrise, the sunset, the north pole and the south pole relative to the vertical position of man standing on the surface of the earth. They form the east, west, north and south. They exist only to an individual existing on the earth. They form the horizontal cross of man. The horizontal cross within the circle of the horizon around man, when juxtaposed at the centre along with the vertical cross of the four points of the day, gives the six points around man (the east, south, west, north, above and below). This gives the six-armed ritualistic symbol which is called Shanmukha in the later symbolism. When the four

The Vedic Rituals

corners of the horizontal cross are linked up, there is the horizontal square containing the cross and fixed in the horizontal circle. When these four points are linked up with the upper point of verticality which denotes the midheavens (high twelve), there is the figure of the pyramid . Each side of the pyramid is a triangle, and the base is a square. Numerically the triangle represents three (sides) and the square represents four. These two numerical potencies, 4 and 3, when added give 7, the number of rays. When multiplied (4×3), they give the number 12, which is the number of months in a solar year (the signs of the zodiac). The same esoteric significance is denoted by the pyramid symbolism of the Egyptian rituals. Every esoteric student knows that the Egyptians used the pyramid to initiate the student into the mysteries of the solar year with the Sun as King and the Moon as Queen.

Another pyramid is formed when the four points of the same square are linked up with the lower pole of verticality

BOOK OF RITUALS

(below, which represents the midnight sun or the way to hidden treasures). The candidate is expected to dwell deep into the mud and mire of matter and its subluminary caves of consciousness to cross the lower point and emerge in the east as the next rising sun (next step in his evolution or realisation) bearing the burden of the hidden treasures on his shoulders. The double pyramid is a very essential symbol in the daily morning and evening rituals of a twice-born initiate who belongs to the Vedic rituals. During the twilight invocations of the sunrise and sunset, the ritualist invokes the presence of the angels to the east, south, west, north, above and below before he describes the circle around himself by rotating on his own axis (like the earth) along his right hand. He invokes in the following manner:

I bow down to the East and to the Gods dwelling therein

I bow down to the South and to the Gods dwelling therein

I bow down to the West and to the Gods dwelling therein

I bow down to the North and to the Gods dwelling therein

I bow down to the above and to the Gods dwelling therein

The Vedic Rituals

I bow down to the below and to the Gods dwelling therein

I bow around along the circumference and to the Gods dwelling therein

This formula of the double pyramid seems not practised by the Egyptians, Chaldeans and any other ritualists except those of the Vedic order. Here we must correlate the relationship between the pyramid, the double pyramid and the cube of the ritualists. If the pyramid is separated from the pyramid below and then the pyramids are made to stand on the vertex of one another, the solid figure formed by these two pyramids becomes one third of a cube. If four other pyramids are made to stand meeting at the same vertex, we will have the perfect cube that is to be polished by the ritualist. The cube is the symbol of the perfect arrangement of the year. There are 8 corners to a cube and each corner is surrounded by three right angles which crush the fourth right angle of the cross into the thickness of the cube. They are the three villains who crush

BOOK OF RITUALS

the father consciousness or the builder to cause his untimely death into the matter of this universe. Thus the 8 corners of the cube contain $8 \times 3 = 24$ right angles which form the objective lunations of the year and the 24 hours of the day. There are 8 more right angles crushed into the thickness of the cube and they exist as the subjective consciousness of the year god, arranged as the hours on the axis. This is the reason why the point, the circle, the straight line, the cross, the square, the line of horizontality (the level), the line of verticality (the plumb) and the set square (right angle) stand as most important among the implements of masonry. The construction of a building positively requires these implements because they are required for the construction of the whole universe. These implements form the symbols of man borrowed from nature. Truth is concealed in them and is allegorically revealed as the trained experience of the ritualist. The

The Vedic Rituals

technical names of the potencies ascribed to the four corners of the horizontal square are as follows:

The East represents brilliance or splendour.

The South represents the spiritual food.

The West represents the beasts or cattle (the beasts of the heavens that stabilise as the figures of the zodiac).

The North represents the Soma juice.

Among the two other points, the upper vertical pole represents heaven (the subtler principles of creation and man). The text then says that “these worlds are turned towards one another”, meaning that a pyramid is made to stand inverted on another erect pyramid. The ritualist is said to bring the magnetic currents of creation (Maruts) into order. These currents are said to be the subjects of the gods. By establishing order among them, one gets at the grip to establish order among human beings. Such a man who establishes this order lives in safety. The invocatory

BOOK OF RITUALS

verses of the Rig Veda that are used in this connection and are composed in a metre called Thrishtup convey the same meaning. They invoke:

“Prosperity to us in the ways of wilderness

The highest safety in the way

O Agni, lead us by a fair path to wealth

We have come to the path of the Gods

O Soma skilled in thought—the God of all, the Lord of the good”

7. The Soma Ritual

The ritual of purchasing of Soma is the next to follow. It also is symbolic in the astrological sense. Soma is made available when it is brought in a cart drawn by two bullocks. One of the two bullocks should be yoked and the other should be loosened in the east to purchase Soma.

The Vedic Rituals

Soma belongs to the north, but the herb is purchased in the east. This shows that the whole phenomenon of creation in its astrological symbolism travels from north to east. The position of the midnight sun is turned north for the reason of some very deep astronomical phenomena that follow the various rotations of the earth through ages around its poles. Hence from north to east means the emergence of the whole creation from the subjectivity of midnight to the objectivity of dawn. The north pole of the earth gradually shifts towards the position of the equator through ages, producing cyclic geographical phenomena, and this fact has a direct connection with the purchase of Soma in the east. North represents the subjective consciousness of man and east represents the dawn of the objectivity. In-between there lies the northeastern corner, where the first foundation stone is laid down to the construction of the whole building. All this imbeds a fund of wisdom that becomes revealed through a proper meditation and the

BOOK OF RITUALS

ritual of the student. Of course, much is to be explained to fill up the missing links, but it takes volumes after volumes.

Of the two bullocks, “that which is unyoked” is the symbol of the creation at the point of stability, and the one yoked is the symbol of the creation “that is on a journey”. This sentence of the text denotes nothing more than the two points of the compass while describing a circle, according to the language of the modern ritualists. It is also described that there is a constant fight between the forces of light and darkness. On the four directions (east, south, west and north), the forces of darkness conquer those of the light. Then there is a fight in the northeastern corner and the forces of light conquer those of darkness at this point. Hence the northeastern corner is the unconquerable quarter of the ritualist. It denotes that aspect of man’s consciousness which we call effort. At this point, man clears off his debts (obligations) to gods and men. He has conquered.

The Vedic Rituals

The forces of light could not conquer those of darkness at the four points because they had no king. At the northeastern corner, Soma is made the king. With Soma as king they conquered again the four corners. Here Soma represents the magical power of man borrowed from the cosmic principle of Soma through the solar symbol of Neptune. The abode of Soma is located somewhere about the gap between the pineal gland and the pituitary body in the human mechanism. The point between the eyebrows is the east, and the vertex of the head (where Sahasrara is located) is the north, according to the symbolism of practical magic. The abode of Indra, Rudra and Soma, located between the pineal gland and the pituitary body, is, therefore, called the northeast. Here Soma is made a king and the brighter forces of man conquer the darker ones. This consciousness which is invoked as Soma in man is considered to be the guest of the ritualist, and there is the ritual of receiving Soma.

BOOK OF RITUALS

Then follows the ritual of bringing Soma forward to meet Agni. There is an allegory here, in which the gods purchased (secured) Soma by offering him their utterance in the form of a naked woman. Soma sold himself for the cost of the woman. This is because Soma is a Gandharva and loves women. For this reason, the ritualist should speak his mantrams inaudibly when Soma is brought. The whole allegory means that the Soma consciousness belongs to the Gandharva plane (musical plane). Music sells itself out (is secured) to the utterance of the word. What a woman is to a man (in the highest sense of reproduction, the expansion of the objective universe), the word is to Soma. The utterance is made naked means that the power of speech in man should be filtered away from his emotions, instincts, reflexes and other influences. Even the impression of the man-made language should be kept away. The power of speech should be given up to the descending consciousness of Soma. At this stage, when the word is uttered, it is

The Vedic Rituals

uttered only on the mental plane, when it includes the music as an expression. It is interesting to note that the astrologers located the powers of practical magic and devotional music in the planet Neptune, to be received by the sun of our earth through Venus on the higher levels, and to the moon working as a satellite via the solar ray on the lower planes. Once again ponder over the significant statement of H.P.B. that the moon works as a blind to a higher planet. With this ritual, Agni is not only seen but also heard by man through the word on higher planes.

The other nine creative gods along with their offshoots that form the clusters of the hierarchies of the creative intelligences follow Agni in the path of Soma to make their presence externalised into the consciousness of man. Agni is here glorified as a god made for life (the god with whom the life of the whole planet is made). He serves as the footstep of the ritualistic food (the mystic food of wisdom) on the navel of the earth. That is why in the ritual the navel

BOOK OF RITUALS

of the high altar is invoked as the footstep of the sacrificial food. This means that the activity of man at his solar plexus serves as the food of gods through Agni. In the physical sense, it is true because the solar plexus rules over the peristalsis of the abdomen to prepare the food for the forces of the whole body. In the spiritual sense, the activity of the chakra at the navel governs the emotions and instincts of man that are to be eaten away by the higher intelligences above to work out the whole plan of the ritualistic wisdom of man.

The whole process signifies the bringing of Agni forward to meet Soma. The Agni of man is brought to march upward to the northeast to receive the cosmic consciousness of Soma there. All this process is included in the training of the eightfold path of yoga prescribed by Patanjali, but the ancient most ritualistic keys are not linked up therein. This is because Patanjali's object was only to give the practical instructions in short, avoiding the

The Vedic Rituals

rationalistic and the ritualistic discourses. This whole process of realisation should be instigated by someone at first. Here the instigator is called Savita (who corresponds with that potency in man called Sankalpa). Sankalpa is not the only requisite to lead the student to success. There should be a power produced (like that of the effort of utterance in man). This power is there innate and is personified as Brahmanaspati, the lord of the utterances. Brahmanaspati presides over the power that is concealed in the arrangement of things. He is a cosmic principle who manifests himself through the ray of the planet Jupiter. That is why the astrologers say that Jupiter is the lord of the wisdom coming down to the levels of speech whereas Mercury is the translator of the speech into the language of man. Here the reader is advised to go through the chapters on Jupiter, Mercury and Neptune in my previous work, “Spiritual Astrology”.

BOOK OF RITUALS

At this juncture, the ritualist is expected to meditate upon Vishnu, the Lord of Pervasion, because all the gods from Agni to Soma and Brahmanaspati are made up of his pervasion. Thus, ends the ritual of bringing Soma as the guest to be received by Agni the householder. In this process, we find that the ritual of invoking and establishing Agni is closely connected with (in fact forms a part of) discovering and inviting Soma. Herein comes the necessity to sacrifice the animals in man. This is called the symbolical animal sacrifice.

8. The Animal Sacrifice

The subject is so vast that the reader is expected to know the detailed procedure of the ritual only from the fifth book of Aithereya Brahmana. It is fully worked out there.

We now deal with the significance and the collective symbolism of the ritual. It is already mentioned that man

The Vedic Rituals

contains all the animals of the creation (animal nature) in the form of his associations through past birth. It is the purpose of God to make man the master of all the animals, plants and minerals of the universe. Man is expected to be the guardian, the trainer and the caretaker of all the other forms of creation. Such a position of higher responsibility is got only by attaining the mastery over the animals in him. For this reason, some spiritualists of the Vedic path hold that man should abstain from eating anything by killing. There are some practices prescribed to achieve this. The practices include the practice of eating some leaves of high food value after they fall off from the tree. Eating fallen leaves and drinking water makes a man perfectly fit to conduct the rituals of the animal sacrifice.

Another phase of the animal sacrifice is that there is a symbolism about the study of the animals around man. Every form of living being, whether plant or an animal or a human being is a concealed potency in space. The

BOOK OF RITUALS

arrangement of the clusters of stars around the globe of space that forms the object of visibility from this earth is presented in so many shapes. The matter of this earth creates the bodies of its living beings as models of the abovesaid forms of visibility. The body of every species on this earth has its original in the shape of the clusters of stars. This original shape is called the symbolic animal sacrifice into creation for the evolution of the living being. The ritualist is expected to meditate upon this shape of every animal and plant and the meditation should be highly devotional to that form. The form should be realised as a form of God. The animals of the zodiac stand as translators between the shapes of the stars and the bodies of the beings on any globe.

The sacrifice of the ram stands as a section of the animal rituals. The ritual describes the details of bringing the ram to the place of ritual and cutting the head of the ram with a pair of scissors. The head is offered to Agni and it

The Vedic Rituals

serves the purpose of the head of the patriarch. As we have seen previously, the patriarch represents the year. The scissors signify the vernal equinox formed by the path of the sun and the path of the equator crossing one another on the equinoxial day. This is the import of cutting the ring of the year to make a new beginning (cutting the throat of the ritualist, the patriarch Daksha, as penalty for not expressing the truth out, because the head represents Aries astrologically). Locating the solar year and its beginning through the aid of astronomical and stellar phenomena forms a separate ritual by itself and the ram sacrifice serves as the complementary to it. By conducting this ritual on a subjective and speculative level, man crosses the ram in him, which represents the rashness and recklessness of his primitive nature.

This ram ritual is subsequently allegorised by the Puranic author Vedavyasa as the story of Daksha performing the ritual without inviting the lord beyond time

BOOK OF RITUALS

and the son of the lord cutting the throat of Daksha, the Prajapati. Further, his head is replaced by that of a ram and the sacrifice is once again conducted. On the astronomical level, this ritual signifies the phenomena of the beginning of the great year when the equinoxes cross the constellation Aries that is formed by the stars Alpha and Beta Arietis. The lord beyond time who cuts the head of Daksha to replace it by the head of the ram that is located in the constellation Aries is termed the lord of the south, or the lord facing the south (Dakshinamurti in the later Puranic allegories). It is further described that this lord sits at the foot of the banyan tree and conveys the import of the word (sacred word) in silence to his own followers. This gives us the ritualistic clue that a student who has Aries prominent in his horoscope should follow this path, during which course his food should be from the banyan tree (the leaves and the fruits of the tree).

9. The Horse Ritual

This has a greater symbolism than the ram ritual. The horse sacrifice is one of the main sacrifices of the Vedic path. The invocation of the fire and Soma also form part of this ritual. The horse symbolism is a grand and a very poetic one that extends from the texts of the Vedas to those of all the Puranas. It is supposed to have been performed by the kings to spread their splendour far and wide. Any man can perform it in the speculative path and becomes the king of his own sphere. The horse is brought, purified, decorated and consecrated to the gods. It is then left to wander freely for a time, during which time it is protected by a band of followers of the ritualist. Then it is brought back and sacrificed at the altar. The sacrifice is fully symbolic in all its detail. Even the number of persons who tie the horse and bring it to the ritual is symbolic. Thirteen people bring it. Twelve of them represent the twelve lunar months of the year while the thirteenth (called the guest)

BOOK OF RITUALS

represents the extra lunar month that occurs once in every three years when we attempt to equate beginning of the lunar year with the solar year. At the same time, it represents a counterpart in the consciousness of the ritualist. That counterpart is the consciousness that brings the symbol of the sacred horse into the conscious levels of man.

The last book of the Satapatha Brahmana abounds with highest speculative passages divulging the significance of the horse sacrifice. The last section of this book is famous as the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. This section begins with the description of the day as the various parts of the body of the sacrificial horse. The first mantram therein reads thus: “The glow before the dawn is verily the head of the horse”. In the astrological symbolism, the whole zodiac is divided into 27 equal parts and the first division is called the lunar mansion having the horse (Aswani). Meditating the day and the year as the horse-

The Vedic Rituals

headed god bestows the best revelations from the astronomical wisdom of the Veda. In the Puranic speculative symbolism, the horse-headed form of the absolute deity presides over the branches of the wisdom of life. The emanation of the red ray at the time of the symbol dawn has a direct connection with this horse-headed god. The sacred tree *Ficus religiosa* is said to contain the horse god within itself. The activity of the whole universe is to be meditated as the abovesaid tree with its roots upwards and branches downwards. Then it forms the gateway between the speculative ritualist and the highest concept of god. This is given in the Vedas and Upanishads and is again glorified by Lord Krishna in the 15th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. The tradition provides us a practical clue in magic that a ritualist in whose horoscope the sign Sagittarius is prominent should take up this path, living upon the leaves of the abovesaid tree and residing under that tree.

BOOK OF RITUALS

In the Puranas, the solar god is said to have followed his wife who came down to this earth in the name of symbol. She came down to earth in the form of a mare and he followed it in the form of a horse. The allegory means that the spiritual sun makes himself visible on the physical plane through his solar symbol (the brilliance of the sun) and the earth receives it as the fire of life. Then again the spiritual sun descends into whatever form that is provided by the brilliance and impregnates it with the spiritual spark that serves as the highest principle above the soul in all the beings to be realised by a man.

In the allegories of the Mahabharata, the horse of the rituals is described as the omnipotent generator of the spiritual sparks that are covered by the souls of the multifarious beings on this earth. It is described to have been going round and round the solar path with the solar lord of sacraments (Indra) on its back. It exists on a level transcending all the sublunary chasms of darkness and even

The Vedic Rituals

beyond the planes of the serpents. The serpents represent the time-bound wisdom concealed in man.

In the Vedas, the horse is described as a form of Agni when it represents the cosmic fire. The jerk in creation from subjectivity to objectivity is symbolised as the ritualistic horse in many places. Thus, in all the levels the horse represents the immanent fire that exists beyond the physical, mental, planetary and solar phenomena of flame. A full comprehension of the flame and fire on the cosmic plane can only be got by a proper study of the extensive thesis of A.A.B. on the cosmic fire. The incorporation of the ever-concealed subjective, spiritual consciousness as a seed of the highest principle in every living being is the whole import of the horse ritual in the Veda. Until the physical concept of flame according to the modern approach of the scientific thought is well transcended through the future decades by means of the would-be advanced nuclear splendours that bridge the gulf between

the space principle and the atom, modern man cannot easily dream of having a full comprehension of the horse symbol and the horse ritual.

10. The Man Sacrifice and the All-Sacrifice

Among all the rituals the ritual of sacrifice is the highest. When man ritualises with a spirit of sacrifice, the ritual becomes a sacrifice. After sacrificing all the animals in him, gradually man transcends his animal levels and becomes conversant with the animals of the zodiac. After transcending their nature (the traits of man stimulated by the twelve signs in his horoscope), he enters into the solar plane of consciousness. Then he comes into contact with the animals in space (the moulds of all beings in space). After transcending this level, he feels the presence of the Cosmic Man who is training him silently all through. Then

The Vedic Rituals

it is the duty of the ritualist to sacrifice the man consciousness in him to merge in the consciousness of the Cosmic Man. Many associations of his past Karma and present Karma should be skilfully neutralised (they should neither be purged nor attacked but neutralised).

Among the associations he comes across in his own nature, the association of the profession and livelihood assumes importance. There is a level in man which makes him accustomed to and fit for a profession or a change in profession. A man chooses his profession or is necessarily driven to his profession. This necessity is created by Saturn in him. In both cases, his associations of the past births work upon his mind in a cumulative manner to make him decide “independently” or reasonably. It is very difficult to transcend this profession consciousness because every man has many layers of his past professions as his associations. The man sacrifice with its various allied sacrifices in the Veda prescribes the sacrifice of various persons of various

BOOK OF RITUALS

professions as victims to be burnt up in the fire. For this reason, we find the list of victims which contains many animals in some rituals and people of many professions in some rituals, each being offered to a god among the cosmic gods. Here the terms “god” and “gods” do not refer to any idea of either monotheism or polytheism, but the gods represent the various forces who fit in as counterparts in the body of the One God. One should contemplate oneself as belonging to one profession and offer oneself (one’s profession consciousness) up to the fire through the medium of the offering material.

This process is repeated to exhaust the list when the ritualist transcends the level of the profession consciousness. The man remains as simply a man ready to offer himself up into the spirit of the Cosmic Man. The process of this last offering is given well in the mystic hymn called Purusha Sukta. The hymn describes the man sacrifice of the Cosmic Man conducted by himself through

The Vedic Rituals

a process of offering himself up into the vastness of the universe through the aid of the various Devas that came out from him. These Devas tied the Cosmic Man up to a vertical pole and made him the sacrificial being. From his flesh and blood came out the pith and marrow of the whole universe. The same description holds good to mean the process of the ritualist tying himself up to the rod of verticality (his vertebral column in the microcosmic scale and the line connecting his noon and midnight on the sacrificial scale) and offering himself up in imitation of what the Cosmic Man did (in due and ancient fashion). The same description once again holds good to mean the process of the father becoming the son when he initiates the son into the mystery temple which is the egg in the mother's womb. Then the construction of the body of the man in the embryo is done by imitating the formula of the body of the parent. Herein comes the need to invoke a new god, Viswakarman, who presides over the shape

BOOK OF RITUALS

consciousness, he being the architect, imitator, copyist and artificer of the metals in the cosmic chemistry. Viswakarman is described as the divine engineer, sculptor, architect and master builder. His role helps to keep the tradition of the father's shape and nature to be inherited by the son.

The same text, the Purusha Sukta, applies to the ritual of man leaving his physical body and coming out (dying) to expand into the likeness and image of the parent man once again. This is the reason why this hymn has got an application in all the ritualistic ceremonies of man on all occasions, the auspicious and the so-called inauspicious. To a speculative ritualist, this hymn offers a complete procedure to conduct the human sacrifice to cross all the barriers of his existence.

Next in order comes the All-Sacrifice, in which the ritualist offers up all the implements of sacrifice into the invoked fire. Herein lies the culmination of the wisdom of

The Vedic Rituals

man. All the motives, purposes, hopes and incentives are burnt up and man lives as an eternal principle, having identified himself with the supra-cosmic principle (the level of existence that is lived by Lord Sri Krishna). The later Hindu concept of Sanyasa has its origin in this ritual. We find this ritual being conducted by people on the occasion of becoming ascetics.

The above set of rituals roughly forms the main syllabus of the Vedic ritualist. Of course, there are many items that are to be covered still but the main outline is present in the abovesaid plan. The remaining rituals mainly include the following items:

1. Vajapeya or the food sacrifice
2. Southramani or the divine sacrifice
3. Rajasuya or the king sacrifice
4. Specific sacrifices to acquire wealth, victory, splendour, cattle, villages, children, etc.
5. The ritual of the preparation of the ground for fire

BOOK OF RITUALS

6. The ritual of bricklaying
7. The ritual for Rudra
8. The piling of the fire altar
9. The Satra rituals
10. The Gavamayana ritual

Among these, the ritual of bricklaying is very significant and symbolic. There is every detail worked out, from the description of the dimensions of the brick up to the arrangement of the bricks in layers, which are mainly five. Various arrangements are found in bricklaying to form various patterns that represent the activities of the creation. The arrangement of bricks in the form of the great eagle (Suparna) is profound and matchless. It contains all the forms and numerical potencies. Each brick and each cluster of bricks is governed by a Deva, a number and a name for invocation.

The Satra is a very noble and enlightening ritual and it includes the gathering of many great scholars renowned in

The Vedic Rituals

many branches. There are many types of this highly speculative ritual and each type differs from another in its duration. For example, there are the Satras of 12, 13, 14, 15, 17 and 21 days. There are also Satras conducted for 12 months, 12 years, 100 years and even 1000 years. Thus, the Satra ritual runs as an inheritance. We find many occasions of the Satras conducted by kings and great sages in the Puranas. The very narration of all the Puranas is done during the ritual of the Satras. Sages used to gather in the forests and cave temples into units of prolonged Satras. The conducting of each such Satra included the composing and the editing of the various books of wisdom. Various points are discussed and problems settled during the Satras. At present, there is going on a grand Satra which began just before the advent of the Kali Age. It runs until the end of the present age and the intention is that the sages wanted to live that sacrifice to tide over the influence of the Kali Age. Various Masters are being trained and hierarchies are being

BOOK OF RITUALS

hatched within the spiritual womb of this Satra. These sages have evolved a mighty rotating wheel of their cumulative thought-form to keep them off the influence of the Kali Age. The various members of this Satra exist in various groups on the seven magnetic centres of this earth. All of them live in group contact and work out the plan of their syllabus from time to time to train the disciples into Masters and Hierarchies of Wisdom. One of these groups exists in a place between Kalapa and Shamballa. Vedavyasa presides over the whole activity and Lord Maitreya came down as the Christ of the present age according to this plan. The concept of the Satra ritual is profound and sublime. We can understand that it is really the grandest of all the Vedic rituals of the speculative order.

The performance of the abovesaid ritual is for the attainment of certain levels and privileges. Those who perform them with the object of any attainment will attain the desired object. The highest aim of such a ritualist is the

The Vedic Rituals

bliss of heaven (the experience of the devachanic plane). The purification of the physical, astral, mental and buddhic planes becomes possible very easily by the performance of these rituals. The student is freed from the bondage of his past associations of his previous Karma. The effect of the good Karma caused by the performance of the rituals is accumulated in one birth. As he leaves the body and goes to the devachanic plane, he experiences the level of that plane as long as the impact of the ritualistic accumulation of good Karma exists. Again, when it is exhausted completely, his evolutionary urge comes to the fore and he again comes down to the comparatively denser levels with his consciousness dispersed among the duties of the various layers. Thus, the effect of the Vedic rituals is only temporary when conducted with a spirit of attainment. There are others who perform the rituals as their duty, without having any motive. The thought of attainment is totally absent in them and yet they perform the sacrifices

BOOK OF RITUALS

simply as a duty. For them, these rituals work out for purification and the result is their liberation instead of any attainment. All the attainments come to them in order according to the law of evolution which is a part of the planetary and the solar Karma. Thus, they have the twofold advantage conferred upon them though they do not take it as an enjoyment. Enjoyment is innate and unconditional with them and no attainment or loss can condition their inner nature, which is the bliss of liberation. These are classed among the highest category of ritualists. Of course, the Vedas include all the levels but it is the duty of the highest student to receive only according to his own right of choice. If his choice is attainment, he is bound by it. If his choice is nothing, he is liberated.

It is said that the performance of these Vedic rituals should be done by a person who is qualified to do it. This qualification is got by certain regular rituals that work as initiations. They are called the sacraments to initiate the

The Vedic Rituals

student. There are quite a number of such individual rituals; they are different from the previous rituals that are conducted collectively. These sacraments are to be conducted to initiate the individual from the time of his fertilisation in the mother's womb during the prenatal period, at the time of birth and during the various stages of his growth. Strangely, they coincide with the biological, physiological, metabolic, psychological and emotional changes of man due to the influence of his age and growth.

One important sacrament is that which is performed by the father just after the birth of the child, even before the cutting of the umbilical cord. The father touches the head of the child and invokes the string of consciousness that links the father and the son by uttering mantrams which mean "You are born from body to body. You are the 'I AM' in me in the form of my child". This invokes the subconscious nature of the child into the path of evolution. It works to develop the gradually unfolding mind in an

BOOK OF RITUALS

orderly way. The mind of the newly born babe is clear as a mirror and receives whatever impressions are made during the first few hours after his birth. These impressions form the basic initiation through which his mind grows into objectivity. The astrologers know that the impressions received by a babe during the first six hours after his birth (90 degrees rotation of the earth on its own axis) will progress into his behaviour through 90 years of span. The planets in the heavens at the time of his birth will receive his twelve houses of the horoscope in various angles and produce a framework of individual Karma to work out for 90 years. This can be sanctified and elevated into nobler terms of translation into the mundane life by performing the abovesaid ritual at the time of birth.

Secondly, there is the ritual of the first haircut with significant mantrams. The import is about the rays of the sun being cut to stimulate the solar consciousness that will be utilised for the brilliance of the inner man (the sun as the

The Vedic Rituals

dweller in man). During the age between 7 and 14 years, the mind of the boy gets a second stimulation. The behaviour is gradually transformed from the imitative faculty to the questioning faculty. During this age, the ritual of the second birth is performed. The boy is familiarised for the first time with the ideas of the existence of a grand universe around him and a centre within him which stimulates the thoughts of man to meet the outer world. Gayatri, the greatest of all the Vedic mantrams, is awakened in the boy. He should meditate that Gayatri is his spiritual mother and the solar god is his spiritual father through the world of the physical path. From that time onwards, the boy is initiated into the mysteries of fire and its rituals. He is expected to leave his house, approach the Guru and get conversant with the Vedas and the allied literature. He is also expected to be simple in his food and rest. Begging for his daily food is imposed upon him as another sacrament.

BOOK OF RITUALS

Next in order, the student attains an age when the polarity of sex begins to have its influence upon him. His intelligence is influenced by his emotion and evolution brings sweeping changes in his personality. At this stage, his marriage is conducted as a sacrament. For a trained soul, sex life is definitely a sacrament and a necessity but never a source of enjoyment or indulgence. It is the duty of a grown-up to aid the creation and the plan of evolution by providing his sex life as an opportunity for the reincarnating souls to take birth. So to the ritualist sex life is a duty and is bound to be within his own mental control. A thorough knowledge of the process of creation and reproduction is provided during the study of the Scriptures at the feet of the Guru.

It is said that two groups of intelligences preside over the whole process of creation. One set belongs to the activity of creation and another set belongs to reproduction. Creation is a cyclic activity of the subtler planes and

The Vedic Rituals

reproduction is an imitation of that activity to produce the grosser planes in the same order and arrangement. All the phallic mechanism of the physical body of various beings is only a copy of the higher implements of creation. The urge of sex is also a copy of the urge of the absolute to come down as creation. These two levels should be well understood and equated by the student. Then only he can live in the reproductive duties without failing to provide the necessary behaviour for the creative planes. If the string is broken, the reproductive activity becomes an end in itself and an enjoyment by itself, due to which man falls into the level of indulgence. Here comes the difference between the duties of a ritualist and those of the ordinary man. The latter is only an animal, responding to the biological behaviour. The difference is that the animal kingdom lacks the intelligence of man and is hence mercifully guided by nature through instinct. Man breaks this link with nature and satiates his appetites without his fitness in nature. This

BOOK OF RITUALS

is the reason for the so many evils man is suffering from. Every biological step, including maternity and childbearing, becomes risky. The health of man gradually decreases. Unlike the animal, he requires the aid of the medical science to protect him at every step. Whereas birth control is natural with the animals due to the specified mating seasons, it becomes a problem to man and he seeks so many debased means to escape the problems confronting him, the problems that are the products of his own misbehaviour. Such a risk is easily tided over by man through a process of ritualising his emotional activity. Once again, the aid of nature is acquired and harmony is established. For so many such reasons, it is imperative that one should be conversant with the functions of the creative and the reproductive activities in him. The Devas who govern the two activities are called respectively Devas and Pitris.

The Vedic Rituals

It is many times misinterpreted by some orientalists that the Pitris of the Vedic literature are the dead forefathers of the individuals that are worshipped in their memory. What a foolish concept of a profound truth! It is true that the Pitris are our forefathers, but not in the individual sense. They are the forefathers of the present mankind in every round. For the present mankind (which belongs to the fifth root-race), the forefathers came down from the present moon globe. This is because the present moon was the previous earth. It was inhabited by a race of mankind who are now promoted to the level of Pitri Devas and who once came down to this earth to people this earth. That is why they still keep up the link between this earth and our satellite moon to conduct the functions of reproduction to aid the evolution of this earth. The evolution of the four kingdoms of this earth has much to do with the intelligences that travel to earth from the moon through the moonbeams. It is a biological fact that any seed

BOOK OF RITUALS

cannot germinate without the aid of the moon phase. The growth of crops has a direct bearing with the moon phase. Every true astrologer knows that the menstrual cycles of a woman, the ovulation, the fertilisation, the parturition and the growth of the foetus are all guided by the activity of the lunations. Verily the moon is the mother force of all the reproductive phenomena of this earth. This much is only about the Pitris of our earth. Similarly, there are Pitris belonging to every planet and even every solar system. They form part of the cosmic intelligences. The Vedic lore has brought much light about the workings of the Pitris.

Among the first races of mankind formed on this earth, there was a time when the human beings had no sex division. There was a race of hermaphrodites trained in the path of evolution under the direct guidance of the solar gods Hermes and Aphrodite (Mercury and Venus). People multiplied by a process of binary fission. Gradually there was the intervention of the Lucifer intelligences who came

The Vedic Rituals

down to earth from Mars. They caused the polarity of sex. Gradually the lower pole was stimulated in man when the construction of the south pole to this earth was complete (See the chapter on Virgo in my previous book, “Spiritual Astrology”). Even then, the higher creative intelligences held the activity of Mars in check and the activity of sex worked only as an occasional necessity to aid the evolution by procreation and it was never a source of enjoyment or indulgence. Gradually the Martian ray gained prominence (in accordance with a higher necessity on the solar plane) and man developed a craving for the sex act irrespective of its higher purpose. It was the beginning of the lower and debased phallic activity in the psychology of man, and of the phallic worship in the religion of certain races. Even today, the ray of Mars interferes with the pure love ray of Venus in the horoscopes of the majority of mankind. Of course, the masters and many spiritualists of white magic are an exception to this. In the zodiacal activity, the two

BOOK OF RITUALS

signs Taurus and Libra that are governed by Venus have their opposite signs Scorpio and Aries governed by Mars in the majority of horoscopes. This shows the nature of the difficulty that a spiritual student comes across while he attempts to neutralise the polarity of sex in him by making the lower reproductive pole passive and the higher creative pole active. The Vedic rituals that formed the sacraments of marriage, consummation, love and reproduction are all skilfully formed by the Hierarchies and seers to tide over the abovesaid complication. The creation of God and the reproduction of man are both compared to the effort to utter forth a semi-subjective concept emerging from subjectivity into an objective word that is impregnated in its turn by the concept itself. The allegory of Brahma creating Saraswati from within himself and following her to impregnate to bring out the creation into objectivity explains the whole mystery to one who can meditate upon the whole phenomenon. The Old Testament of the Bible also

The Vedic Rituals

borrowed a similar story from its original, in which Eve is taken out of the breast of Adam (wrongly translated as a rib in English) and the whole creation came out of Adam and Eve.

The role of the householder after the sacrament of marriage is itself a symbol of man living in his body in the Vedic lore. The body of man is compared to the house of man because house-building is an imitation of man after the model of his acquisition of the physical body through reproduction. The sanctity of marriage and the faithful behaviour of the husband and wife towards one another is itself a part of the Vedic rituals and is intended to keep the purity of the phallic implements of man so that the soul descending into the body undergoes no pollution. To a ritualist the sanctity of sex means much more than a social convenience and a moral conviction. With due apologies to the modern age, it can be said that more than half of the evils of man at the present day are based upon the

BOOK OF RITUALS

carelessness towards the sanctity of sex. Even the trend of thinking of the whole race is leading mankind towards destruction in spite of the advancement of the scientific thought and that is no wonder.

The Vedic literature ritualised the daily life of a householder also and the intended rituals are composed of the formulae in the imitation of the cosmic order. Prayer, worship, duties towards parents, keeping up social relations, preparing food and maintaining the upkeep of the whole house are all ritualised and sanctified. Of course, a man lives in his own level of happiness without any sense of sanctity. Yet if he cares to sanctify his daily routine, he can know the difference in the nature of his experiencing the same life.

Among the daily rituals of a householder, we find the two twilight invocations and the noon invocation most important. They represent the invocation of the chairs in the east, west and south in the modern rituals. The twilight

The Vedic Rituals

invocation is to invoke directly the Lord of the Dawn, who awakens man periodically every morning. It is explained that the dawn is not at all the Sun god but is always relative to the observer. Sleep is compared with darkness and awakening with light. Twilight denotes the link of consciousness that brings us out from sleep to human consciousness. Again, death is compared with darkness and life with light. The dawn denotes the emerging of man from death into life. This linking consciousness is named Savitri (a potency of Gayatri) in the Puranic symbolism dealing with the death and raising of the man as truth bearer (Satyavan). During the twilight ritual, the ritualist offers prayers to this linking consciousness as goddess Gayatri and Savitri.

The preparation of the daily food should be ritualised through an intention of preparing it for some guest at first and the householder to eat next. The very intention changes the nature of man, and the process of preparation is also

BOOK OF RITUALS

necessarily sanctified by being prepared with care. There are five more ritualistic duties to be performed by the householder and they are termed as the five great Yagnas. They include his duty to the Devas, Pitris, humans, animals and elementals. Man is a product of the activity of so many intelligences at work. Hence, he has to pay his homage to those gods in the name of Devas and Rishis. His duty to the Devas binds him to keep the air, water, space, etc. around him free from impurities and if possible, he should decorate them with pure and finer things. The use of incense in a ritual sanctifies the whole atmosphere and even the neighbours may be benefitted by it. His duty towards the Rishis includes the effort of educating himself and his family along with certain disciples and to enlighten them about the intellectual and spiritual work of the great men of the past. In fact, everyone is really indebted to all the great thinkers of the past. His duty towards mankind is to give food and shelter according to his own ability. The

The Vedic Rituals

Upanishad of the ritualistic school (Taittiriya Upanishad) says: “Nobody should be denied any space being provided—man exists in space and space exists in man. Space and man are both matter”. This means that man is always indebted to space, at least that much volume which his physical body occupies. The householder’s ritualistic duty to animals includes his domesticating certain animals and feeding them, besides giving something to the birds. So many ethereal beings and disembodied souls gather around the house of a householder at the time of the feed. They enter into the bodies of animals and birds and return with blessings and unseen favours if they are fed. It is said that the broomstick, the grinding stones, the fireplace and other implements of the householder daily cause some unseen harm to many little living beings in his house. To tide over the evil effect and to repay the compensation to the order of the creation, the Vedas prescribe the abovesaid five great rituals. The morning twilight ritual invokes the

emerging consciousness, and the evening twilight invokes the merging consciousness of man. In-between, there is the noon ritual which invokes the highest point of man's illumination.

11. The Significance of the Cremation Rituals

Every student of Theosophy knows that man does not cease to exist after "death". Scientifically speaking, death is only a disappearance of the temporary physical vehicle of man. Whenever the present physical sheath is worn out by age or disease, which is the result of the evils of the individual or race, the inner man has every right to drop off the soiled vehicle to choose a better one. Hence death is a separation only to the physical senses. Many states of the planetary matter pertaining to the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms are initiated by the embryo into a poise and an

The Vedic Rituals

influx that continues from birth to death. Hence the physical span is only an osmotic pressure of the consciousness that keeps the matter state of spirit well arranged and intact due to the ritualised activity of the Devas and the Pitris. The mind of an average man is not expected to know all these things and to get reconciled with the universal and inevitable truths. Hence there is also an inevitable jerk in the thoughts and emotions of the dying person and the bereaved relatives. At times, this jerk causes an impediment to the progress of the soul on its way to the next step. The Vedic cremation ritual is intended to neutralise this impediment by setting it free from the strangulating sorrowful thought-forms and sentiments of the individual and his relatives.

There is a purificatory sacrament to relieve the disembodied soul from the impurities of the etheric and the astral planes. It purifies the subtler bodies of the subject himself and also those of the relatives that take part in the

BOOK OF RITUALS

ritual. These impurities work as contagion to others in producing gloomy thought-forms and certain diseases to the people around. The materialistic medical science cannot suspect any such thing though the founders of the more advanced medicine called homoeopathy could perceive and give satisfactory explanations about the vital body and the diseases engraved therein. For such reasons, the Vedic path keeps the close relatives of the departed off from touching others during the first ten days after the incident occurs. Carrying the corpse by four men indicates the proper decomposition of the physical body to return into the four kingdoms below in man. The presence of the angels at the four corners of the earth is automatically invoked into these four persons and the work of the four scribes in squaring up the accounts of the completed span is fulfilled.

As soon as the person is dead, the corpse is placed with the head towards the north. Before the life is out, it is

The Vedic Rituals

imperative that the body should be placed on the bare floor. The earth's magnetic current should work through the body, and the local magnetism working should be merged into the total magnetism of the earth. Here it is interesting to notice that a healthy man should sleep with his head towards the south (keep the attraction of his two poles with the unlike poles of the earth). Perfect silence should be kept during the time of departure and the name of God in any language should be invoked by uttering it in the right ear of the dying person. Then it becomes conducive for the proper raising of the inner man from the tomb (physical body) on the doomsday. The implements of masonry are broken (the functions of the physical body are neutralised) and the soul enters into a cave of darkness (the temporary unconsciousness which is the passage of death) only to come out into greater light from the other side.

As soon as the life is out, a lamp is placed near and opposite to his head. This attracts the various subtler forces

BOOK OF RITUALS

of the body and prevents the downward flow of the ethers of man escaping from “the nether regions” (the lower nature of man). Then the body is purified by bath and is properly decorated to be carried by four people on a vehicle constructed in the fashion of a ladder. This vehicle symbolises the ladder of the subtler bodies of man serving as a path to tread from the lower to the higher natures until he reaches the devachanic plane. Fire is carried in the hand of the eldest son, which signifies that fire of life that is handed down from father to son and periodically consumes the physical vehicles and keeps up the tradition of the activities of life. With the same fire, the body is burnt in the cremation ground. The fire in man is the real inheritance of manhood that is concealed amidst the brilliance of Godhood, and this fire is the lamp in the hand of man to show the path of life, from time to time consuming his physical vehicle. This subsidiary process of consuming the physical vehicles includes the promotion of

The Vedic Rituals

the physical atoms into higher planes, by virtue of their serving the various physical tissues of man in the behaviour of the disciples of the inner man. The whole process of ritual after cremation continues for ten days and on the tenth day the soul is said to have secured the path of Swarga (Devachan). The sons of the dead man perform the ritual during these ten days. The mantrams used invoke the intelligences that work out the heredity of man under the direct guidance of the Pitris. The presence of the finest traits of the departed soul should be invoked into the offspring to be handed down to their children.

Every return of the moon to the same point in the zodiac where the moon was at the time of the departure will be observed and ritualised. These monthly rituals will trace the lunar path (the path of the Pitris) along which the departed person takes his journey into Devachan and the counterpart in the offspring traces the reproductive activities of the offspring to reproduce the composite

BOOK OF RITUALS

counterpart in the form of children. Every true astrologer knows the relationship between the position of the moon of the father and the moon of the son. These monthly rituals are conducted during the first twelve months and then the first annual ritual is conducted to denote the return of the spirit of man (enacting the role of the Sun god in the ritual of life) to the same point of the year but more advanced and enlightened. Then the monthly rituals are stopped and the annual rituals are observed throughout the household career of the children. The rationale is highly scientific and it includes the zodiacal mysteries of the solar return and other astrological phenomena. The working detail of all these rituals and the mantrams used are left out here for lack of space and the subject requires an independent treatise.

The Puranic Rituals

There are many Vedic rituals which escaped mention in the present book. Even a sum total of all these rituals forms only a part of the once existed Vedic rituals. Satapatha Brahmana describes some and mentions many of the rituals that are not found in the present texts of the Vedas. Strangely enough, many of them are found in the operative injunction described in the Book of Dzryan (which is not yet given out to the world and which will not be given out until the sacred work of the present Christ is completely free from the political motives of the various Churches of various religions working at present). Some of the rituals are projected in the form of narratives and allegories in the Puranas. The allegories in the Puranas were in vogue long before the composition of the present versions of the Puranas. They were being directly narrated as stories by Gurus to their disciples during the time of the

BOOK OF RITUALS

Vedic initiations. Parasara, the father of the present Vedavyasa, could foresee the trend of the Kali Age. He could know that the chain of the path will be broken among the followers of the one religion. He could also see that the one religion of man will be broken up into many through the imperfections of the rationalistic (non-intuitional) approach of the age. He, therefore, wanted to incorporate allegories in his treatise, the Vishnu Purana.

Vishnu, the Lord of Pervasion, who presided over a grand sum total of the Vedic rituals and in whose name all the rituals of Agni were invoked, is taken as the outline formula or the synthesising personality of the total wisdom. In the model of the ritualistic Cosmic Man of the Veda, Parasara incorporated the Vishnu of the Purana. He initiated his son Vedavyasa into the unity of his life work. Then Vedavyasa gave out the eighteen main Puranas that elucidate the work of his father. Again, he composed his grand work, the Mahabharata, which contained the whole

The Puranic Rituals

Vedic wisdom with all its ritualistic keys. A grand historical incident of the Mahabharata war was taken to serve as an allegory of the whole wisdom. The original version of the Mahabharata was in the form of a grand mystery play to be enacted in the ritualistic enclosures. It still exists in some cave temples and is still being enacted by an order of ritualists. The present version of the epic poem is given out to the exoteric students and scholars of the Kali Age and is edited by the disciples of Vyasa with many extracts of the original version. Of course, the ritual is to be concealed away from the outer world and should be kept in secret because a ritual means the manifestation of a great power and occult phenomenon.

The drama of the Mahabharata is incorporated in the epic as the main story of the war between the Kurus and Pandavas. The Kurus are described as the 100 sons of the blind king (the ego of man, by which man is hoodwinked from the brilliance of the god nature in him). The five sons

BOOK OF RITUALS

of the white king represent the five senses of man, who belong to the light in man. The birth of the five sons marks the death of the father and they are brought up as the sons of the widow (as long as the five senses of man work in the world without a connecting link with the father consciousness in man, he is called the son of the widow). These five children have their fathers among the Devas, though the physical father is their vehicle. Hence the mother nature of man is not a widow in the true sense. The five Devas who preside over the five senses of man continue to guide their sons from time to time until the five children retrace their path to the capital to regain the lost kingdom from the sons of the blind king. In their quest they secure the companionship of Lord Krishna (the highest God principle incarnated in man). The whole kingdom is bifurcated and a new capital is erected by the magic of Lord Krishna through the aid of Viswakarma. Then comes the performance of the grand royal Vedic ritual Raja Suya

The Puranic Rituals

(conceiving a king out of man). It is conducted under the direct guidance of Lord Krishna. It is performed in a big hall erected by Asuramaya and consecrated to the five sons of the widow. The construction of this hall marks the construction of the spiritual body of man, which is the Antahkarana of the Raja Yogis and the higher bridge invoked by Master C.V.V. among his disciples. It is a filling up of the gap between the known and unknown worlds of man. A detailed scientific explanation of the whole process is described under the title “Building the Antahkarana” in the book “A Treatise on the Seven Rays”, Vol. 5, by A.A.B.

After completing the royal ritual, the Pandus lose their kingdom in a gamble with the sons of the blind king. They leave the kingdom and make their exit into the wilderness, showing that the divine principles in man will lose themselves into the objectivity, leaving a full play to the humanised activity of the divine powers. After this, the

BOOK OF RITUALS

Pandus live incognito for one year, keeping all their divine weapons in a corpse tied to a tree. The corpse represents the flesh and blood of man wherein the treasures are buried. The tree represents the tree of evolution. These Pandus live in the kingdom which is named after the great fish. The fish represents the prophecy of the promised land or the divine wisdom that will be once again handed down to man after attaining spiritual levels. At the end of this period, the great war of Mahabharata was fought between the Pandus and the Kurus for eighteen days. Eighteen squadrons partook in the battle. The whole book of the Mahabharata is composed in eighteen volumes. Before the beginning of the battle, there is the initiation of the Bhagavad Gita, the message of the Lord to man in eighteen chapters (eighteen is three-fourths of twenty-four, which represents the rotation of the whole globe through $3 \times 90^\circ$, which includes eighteen lunations in the year). This represents the emergence of the fourfold word of God in its first three planes. When the

The Puranic Rituals

utterance of the fourfold word is applied to the birth and span of man, three-fourths of the year is completed in the mother's womb and the remaining one-fourth is spent as his objective span with a progression of one day corresponding with one year in the span. This is better understood by the astrologers who know the method of secondary progression to read the horoscope of man.

The theme of the abovesaid mystery play, the Mahabharata, includes also the marriage of the five sons of Pandu with a maiden who is the daughter of the ruler of the land where five rivers meet. The middle of the five brothers, Arjuna, who is the disciple of Lord Krishna, represents the man consciousness in man being initiated into God consciousness. A rotating fish is arranged above and Arjuna hits the fish with five arrows while looking at the image of the fish in the waters below. The fish above represents the divine wisdom which is the prophecy of man and the image represents the lower principles of man

BOOK OF RITUALS

arranged in the worlds below as above. By the hitting of the fish, the five sons married a maid. In the zodiac the fish represents the sign Pisces, and the maiden represents the opposite sign, Virgo. Arjuna with his bow and five arrows represents the sign Sagittarius, wherein the passage for initiations is concealed. The whole story is an allegory of the sign Virgo being raised to the level of Pisces when the twelve signs in man are elevated to only six pairs of signs, to represent the activity of the six chakras in man. To such a man who has achieved this through a ritual of the Mahabharata, the sun (the spirit of man) never experiences a fall (debilitation in Libra) after completing his journey. Then he again enters Aries because there are only six signs to him. This means that the Kundalini rises to the chakras above after touching the solar plexus.

In the Mahabharata, there are also the symbolic journeys of the soul allegorised. The pilgrimage of Arjuna for one year after the marriage includes his other marriage

The Puranic Rituals

with a sister of Lord Sri Krishna. This is the mystic marriage of the human soul with divine nature. Then there is the journey of the five brothers into the forests, indicating the wilful journey of the initiated man into the buzzing wilderness of the mundane world. There is also the upward journey of king Nahusha up to the level of king of the Devas and his fall into generation again in the form of a serpent. There is also the upward journey of his son to the same level, his coming down again to his fellowmen and his next upward journey into the eternal path. This represents the march of man into the realms of the ritualistic wisdom, his coming down to serve his fellow beings and thereby attaining the path to liberation. Finally, there is the journey of no return undertaken by the five sons with their wife. Of all the six, only the eldest of the five sons (called the son of death) reaches the goal by not leaving back his father who followed him in the shape of a

BOOK OF RITUALS

dog (the vigilance of man that is controlled by the Dog Star in the Heavens).

All these journeys are being still enacted in the mystery temples by the followers of the order which is called the ancient ritualistic order of the mystery circle. During the next fifty years, some of these rituals will be externalised and published in detail and will be conducted in ritualistic halls all over the world under the direct guidance of the Masters of the Seventh Subray under the Second Ray. This is mentioned in many places by the Tibetan Master in the works of A.A.B. At one place it is mentioned in the following words:

This second group will implement the new religion; by the time they come into control the old theological activities will have been completely broken; Judaism will be fast disappearing; Buddhism will be spreading and becoming increasingly dogmatic; Christianity will be in a state of chaotic divisions and upheaval.

The Puranic Rituals

When this takes place and the situation is acute enough, then Master Jesus will take certain initial steps towards reassuming control of His Church; the Buddha will send two trained disciples to reform Buddhism; other steps will also be taken in this department of religion and of education, over which the Christ rules, and He will move to restore the ancient spiritual landmarks, to eliminate that which is non-essential, and to reorganise the entire religious field—again in preparation for the restoration of the Mysteries. These Mysteries, when restored, will unify all faiths.

Groups of spiritually-minded financiers, who are conscious members of an Ashram will take hold of the world economic situation [...]. The Christ and the Masters are occupied with the task of preparing for the restoration of the Mysteries. This restoration will fall into three phases and will cover and include in its symbolism all phases of

BOOK OF RITUALS

human unfoldment. The story of mankind will be pictorialised. These three phases correspond broadly and in a general sense to the three degrees of the Blue Lodge in Masonry. The analogy is not entirely accurate, owing to the unavoidable degeneracy of Masonry, but with the restoration of the Mysteries, Masonry also will come into its own. These phases are:

1. The stage of a general recognition of light in all departments of human living. This is inferred in the first stanza of the new Invocation. If the ritual of the E. A. is studied in the light of this information the significance will emerge. The poor and destitute candidate emerges into the Light.
2. The stage of complete economic reorientation; in this, humanity is relieved of all economic anxiety and is free to receive its due wages and the right reward of all service rendered in the building of the

The Puranic Rituals

Temple of the Lord; this building proceeds with rapidity.

3. The stage wherein the reward of light is received and the reward of service rendered; spiritual status is recognised through the medium of what is regarded as a major initiation, for which the first two initiatory degrees are only preparatory. This first great initiation will be objectively staged and the general public will recognise it as the major rite and ritual of the new and religious institution of the period.

(“The Externalisation of the Hierarchy” by A.A.B., pages 573-575)

The original dramatised version of the Mahabharata will be ritualised as a set or a succession of rituals with some minor changes made here and there to remove the proper nouns so that the work is understood on the intended broad sense. The whole version will be enacted in English.

BOOK OF RITUALS

There are two more rituals that form part of the mysteries of the Mahabharata. The first is the descent of “the point of light” from the creative levels (Brahma Loka) to the physical plane. This includes the allegory of the fall of Ganga from the level of the creator (appointed God who is the Tetragram or the four-faced deity expressed by the formula of the cross within the square) to the earth. The story is available in all its detail in the first book of the Mahabharata. A lunar king, Mahabhisha (the great divine healer) falls in love with Ganga (the threefold flow or outpouring of spiritual activity). Brahma curses the pair to go down to earth and return after experiencing the life there. In the meanwhile, eight deities among the Pitris are also ordered to take their birth on the earth. Ganga and Mahabhisha come down as Santhanu and Ganga to reproduce the first seven Pitris as dying gods and the eighth to establish himself on earth and cause the birth of the lineage without himself getting married. Satyavati (the

The Puranic Rituals

truth-bearing word or the utterance of the sacred word in its third manifestation) gives birth to Vedavyasa while she was a virgin through the spiritual impregnation by Parasara. Satyavati came out of the belly of the fish and Vedavyasa causes the birth of the blind king and the white king. This forms a grand mystery in itself, though it is a part of the drama of Mahabharata. This gives the initiation of the sacred word as Gayatri and bestows upon the student the capacity to reorganise the whole Vedic wisdom in a fourfold manner for himself.

The second mystery play is the tracing of the lineage in which the highest Lord takes his physical incarnation as Lord Krishna. An ancestor of the Kurus and the Pandus who belonged to the lunar lineage (the order of the Pitris) and who is called Yayati (the pilgrim) marries two virgins: 1. The creative path of the devas or the upward path and 2. The reproductive path of the Pitris or the downward path. The first one is the daughter of Sukra, the preceptor of the

BOOK OF RITUALS

forces. The second one is the daughter of a lower king who belonged to the lower (grosser) lineage of forces. Sukra himself is a Deva (creative force) though he is a preceptor of the Asuras (physical forces). On the human scale, Sukra governs the upward path of the reproductive fluid of man through the path of Rajayoga. The king of the demons, the second father-in-law of the pilgrim, represents the intelligence that governs the lower worlds of man. Yayati begets children through both of his wives, but the inheritance of the objective kingdom is got only by the sons of the Asura wife. The sons of the upward path live to bear their order only as a prophecy of the birth of Lord Sri Krishna in their line.

This part of the mystery play represents the twofold activity of the creation in man and the realisation of the highest God through the upward creative activity. In fact, this forms the main part of the mystery because the five sons of Pandu become his followers and disciples to gain

The Puranic Rituals

victory in the great war of the Mahabharata. Strangely enough, this whole story was fully externalised into the physical historical play and the externalisation was complete by the time of the composition of this work. Vedavyasa happened to be the contemporary of Lord Krishna not only on the spiritual plane but also on the physical plane. He had the opportunity of depicting the historicity of the whole story. For the disciples of the posterity who live in the Kali Age, the ritual is left as an inheritance to make “the Lord walk on earth with man” on the spiritual plane until the return of the Christ and on the physical plane for the time of the return, when thistles shed honey and swords are beaten into ploughs. By that time, the oddities of man are rounded up into the nectar of love, the universal solvent and the unifying principle of all religions, through the work of the Christ. Also by that time, politics becomes out of date and ceases to be a necessity to man. Equal distribution of wealth on the physical plane will

BOOK OF RITUALS

be conducted by the aid of spiritual consciousness expressed through love-wisdom (the activity of the second ray).

It is evident from the above mystic charge of the Mahabharata ritual that the main grand mystery of the return of the Lord to earth is made secondary in the vastness of the whole drama. For this, Vedavyasa has separated this mystery into an independent allegory dealt directly with in detail in three more books of the Mahabharata under the title “Hari Vamsa”.

Again, the whole Puranic approach is given by him as another mystery in which the descent of the Lord forms the main key and into it the others fit in as parts. This is the composition of his last work, the Maha Bhagavata, which is again a dramatised version in its original. The formula of the twelve solar months in the year and the twelve signs of the zodiac formed the basis of the composition of the book in twelve volumes. The highest Deity is first introduced as

The Puranic Rituals

a solar deity (Vasudeva) who is invoked by a mantram of twelve syllables. The birth of the Lord takes place in the 10th volume and his death in the 1st volume. The key to this mystery lies in the zodiacal rituals starting with the meridian or the 10th house and covering the 1st house of the cosmic horoscope as marking the death of god consciousness to give birth to man consciousness. On the physical plane also, man is born into earth in the 10th month of his embryonic development and travels to meet his starting place.

The whole formula of this book is initiated to Vedavyasa by Narada. Narada is the grand Master of all the solar and lunar rituals of creation. He initiated Valmiki into the solar allegories and Vyasa into the lunar allegories. On the cosmic plane, Narada works as an eternal principle (not the name of a person, whose activity is one unit including the activity of Mercury, the planet on the one end, Neptune on the other via Venus). Sanat Kumara is his colleague on

BOOK OF RITUALS

the plane of Venus consciousness. On the plane of Mercury, Narada works as the intelligence to compare and contrast things (figuratively called the bringer of conflict). On the plane of Neptune, he is the founder of the musical hierarchy who bestows the word of the Lord through the power of music. This much is enough for the present to give the proper clues to approach the Puranic mysteries that are rearranged by Vedavyasa to stabilise the Vedic wisdom on earth through the dark age of Kali. Lord Krishna has lost himself into the soul and spirit of Lord Maitreya at the time of the physical departure of Lord Krishna. Hence Maitreya, the present Christ, has taken the burden of renovating the school of the mysteries with the aid of the Masters through their Ashrams in the modern age. Of course, English becomes necessarily the medium of the whole plan of wisdom. For this reason, the phonetical and etymological imperfections of English will be corrected from time to time to prepare it as a language of the initiates and in the

The Puranic Rituals

meanwhile, English is bound to be the world language through political, economic and spiritual reasons.

The cosmic principle Narada comes down to earth and lives as a sage to initiate some seers. Through his initiation, Valmiki reproduced the solar allegory which deals with the mission of the sun god to create the activity of the year on this earth. The solar intelligences come down to earth through many realms that are allegorised in the story of Rama by Valmiki as the many solar kings that came down to earth to produce the incarnation of the Lord as Rama. In the Vedas, Indra, the king of gods, is called Rudra in a particular sense. The rainbow is called the bow of Indra in the poetic imagery of the epic. The water on the earth is raised by the sun's rays to form as clouds upon which the bow is formed. The southern solstice (the sign Cancer, which forms the ascendant of Rama with the Moon, the lord of the sign, in the same place) breaks the bow for the water to come down. The furrow of the flow in the field is

BOOK OF RITUALS

compared with the virgin who is the daughter of the earth, and Rama marries her by breaking the bow. The story of Rama is thus mainly a mystery play having the whole year with the upward and downward paths of water as its theme. This forms the twofold activity of man (coming down to matter and going up into spirit through the solar ritualistic activity). Thus, the story of Rama is an amplification of the ritual of the year and also an initiation into the import of the Gayatri mantram. It is noticeable that the story of Rama is composed in 24000 verses representing the 24 lunations of the year and the 24 syllables in the metre of Gayatri. Towards the end of the book, it is hinted that the whole story is enacted as a drama by a set of Deva intelligences who are trained as actors. This shows that the original form of this book also was a drama to be enacted as a ritual. Valmiki also had the advantage of being a contemporary of the whole story when it occurred on the physical plane as a historical incident. These epics are so powerful in the

The Puranic Rituals

symmetry of their composition and the model of writing that they serve as great mantras to raise the readers into the ritualistic consciousness and work as sacraments to purify the feelings, thoughts and actions.

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

If a student of the ritualistic symbolism of the nations surveys the whole literature concerned, we find certain traditional links sustained and being consistently worked out as an undercurrent of the apparently varying ideology. The differences are due to the difference in time and clime but the undercurrent is due to the innate unity of man which is always the same. It is this innate unity that is to be studied properly by following the similar traits of various ritualistic traditions. Among them, the following aspects appear prominent and demand a careful study of the students.

- a) The tradition of the dying god
- b) The tradition of the eternal fight between the serpent and the eagle

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

- c) The tradition of man vanquishing the serpent
- d) The tradition of bricklaying and building the temple

Now let us survey these four main traditions so that we may have an easy approach towards the basic unity of all religions through the speculative ritualistic key.

a) The Tradition of the Dying God

We find this item in the symbolic man sacrifice that is found in the Veda. Purusha, the Cosmic Man, is said to have sacrificed himself into the ritualisation of the whole universe. All the secondary gods that came from him used him as a sacrificial being. They tied him to the pole and from him they raised the existence of the beings of the whole universe. The passage describing this ritual and its splendours is found in all the four Vedas. In the Upanishads, we find the story of Nachiketa being given

BOOK OF RITUALS

away to the god of death (who is the lord of the south) by the father. The son enters into the kingdom of death, conducts a good conversation with death, gets initiated into the mysteries of the whole creation and returns to the father with gifts and boons. In the Mahabharata, we find that king Pandu dies before the death of his five sons. In his place, Lord Krishna is found by the five sons of the widow. In the same book, we find that four of the sons of Pandu were taken by the god of death. Then the eldest son (who is the son of the god of death) conducts a conversation with the father about the various aspects of creation. Then the four brothers are again raised to life by the same god of death. In the story of Savitri, the Virgin wanted to marry Satyavan. It is prophesied that Satyavan (truth-bearer of the light in man) would die exactly one year after the marriage. When the pair has been to a forest, Satyavan dies at the time of sunset. The god of death takes him to the nether regions but Savitri also follows him. She conducts an

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

elaborate conversation with the god of death and through his favour she receives the boon to beget children. Then it becomes imperative to the god of death to bring Satyavan back to life. Just after midnight Satyavan is brought to life and the pair returns home.

In the rituals of the Egyptians, we find the death and raising at many places. Many myths of the Greek sacred lore contain the stories of death and raising. The story of Jesus in the Christian Bible describes his death by crucifixion and the rising of the prophet as Saviour from the cross to heaven. The rituals of the modern mystic schools contain the story of the untimely death of a builder and an effort to raise him to life again to find out the lost word. The stories of Adonis describe his death in various versions. All these stories mean only one truth, one ritualistic formula and that is the solar mystery.

The Sun god comes from midheaven to set in the west, sacrificing his brilliance to dwell deep into the secrets of

BOOK OF RITUALS

the nether regions at the point of midnight, and again rises in the east every time with a new experience. “Today is again new with its ever new experience” is the ritualistic prayer of the Vedic seers. This gives the formula of the symbolic journey described by the annual sun in the course of the solar year. The vernal equinox marks the exaltation or the brilliance of the annual sun at High Twelve. The summer solstice marks the sunset and the autumn equinox marks the lowest point reached by the Sun god. The winter solstice again marks the dawn. These four points mark the four corners of the cross in the year. Again, the midheaven marks the brilliant spiritual consciousness of man at his High Twelve (the head centre). From that consciousness, man wilfully descends into the matter of creation, touching the mineral kingdom, plant kingdom and animal kingdom to emerge once again into the man of his next round as a leader and saviour of the three lower kingdoms. Thus, the stories of the dying solar god to take up a new birth convey

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

more than one meaning, covering the whole phenomena of the creation, passing through birth and death in the course of a rotation of the great wheel.

The various sets of conversations conducted by the characters with the god of death in these stories contain the highest truths to the mysteries of existence and non-existence. In all these stories, the lord of death is called the Lord of the South according to the Vedic and Puranic tradition. Yama, the lord of death, is said to be the guardian angel of the south. In the rituals, the south is located in midheaven for various mystic reasons. The southern tilt of the earth during the year marks the position of the sun at the northernmost point (towards the north pole) and the midpoint where the sun crosses the equator from south to north is called the annual meridian. For this reason and for so many other ritualistic reasons, the south is located in midheaven. The fact that it is presided by the lord of death proves that the highest wisdom of man includes his giving

away of himself to permeate and enlighten the whole universe. This is the fact that binds the underlying tradition of all similar stories.

b) The Tradition of the Eternal Fight between the Serpent and the Eagle

The bird and the serpent have a similar origin and that is from the stage of the egg. Both the bird and the serpent lay eggs and the young ones are hatched out of the eggs. It is said that the patriarch (Prajapati Kasyapa) who presides over the upper half-globe of the visible space (the vault of heavens to the man on this earth) had two wives, the dawn and the dusk. He offered to confer the gift of children to them. The dusk longed for children with prolonged bodies. She wanted to beget a thousand sons. The dawn wanted two sons who are mightier than the sons of the dusk. He conferred the boon. The sons of dusk learnt to enter the

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

chasms of the earth. The sons of dawn learnt to rise up to the heavens with wings.

This story is evidently a solar myth with many significant points. The serpents who are the children of the dusk represent the time-bound wisdom that is concealed. The birds represent the wisdom liberated from the limitation and brought into light. These are called respectively the lower and the higher activities in man. Wisdom lies in man concealed and buried in his nature at the lower pole. It is to be raised to the higher pole when the conflict of man is solved and the life of man enlightened. The eagle is described in the Vedas as the highest formula of the revealed wisdom in man. The various parts of the body of the eagle are constructed by the systematic arrangement of bricks in the Vedic rituals. The form of the eagle erected by the arrangement of bricks includes all the other arrangements of various shapes of the fireplace with all the possible combinations of numbers into which the

BOOK OF RITUALS

bricks are arranged. The Rig Veda describes the ritualistic eagle as a twofold eagle (the man in man and the god in man) on the tree (the tree of this whole creation symbolised by the seed principle and the expanding principle through germination). The one bird eats from the tree and rejoices while the other bird rejoices without eating. This twofold bird corresponds with the emblem of the ritualist eagle with two heads that is used by the modern ritualists. The story of the mystic bird, the Phoenix, which burns its body in the fire of fuel and comes out again by the fall of the drop of rain on the ashes, is also commonly described in the various Eastern and Western Scriptures. This also signifies the periodical dissolution of the creation and the return of the essence of the creation. This allegory speaks of the immortality of the bird through various bodies. In the allegory of the Mahabharata, the eagle Garuda is said to have brought the drink of immortality from heaven to earth. What a wonderful proof of the basic unity of truth lurking

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

as the subconscious muse of man through ages and religions! The pious mission of the fusion of the East and the West in the modern age definitely requires a careful study of such basic truths.

The eternal fight between the serpent and the eagle in man and the solution are concealed in the sign of Scorpio among the zodiacal mysteries. To an ordinary man, Scorpio represents the genitals and the animal act of reproduction under the instigation of the Martian ray. For this reason, Mars rules this sign in ordinary horoscopes. To an adept, Scorpio represents Scorpio-Taurus. This is because there are only the six higher signs working in his horoscope as the activity of his six chakras. Since the activity of the six lower signs (the signs that mark the downward path of the sun in the year) is sublimated, the adept has the twofold higher nature of each sign. Taurus represents the voice of man and the activity of the lower pole is raised to the level of the well-trained voice to create through the power of the

BOOK OF RITUALS

word raised or regained after it was long lost through births. Among the regalia of the Egyptian high priests, the head dress in certain rituals is decorated by the head of a snake representing the snake of the nether worlds (Kundalini at the base centre) raised to the level of Taurus, the word and the sight of man. The jewel of the emblem with the double eagle decorated his breast plate, indicating that his higher nature, which raised the serpent to the higher levels, is located as the love in his heart. The description of Lord Siva bearing a snake as a jewel in His neck has the same import of the Kundalini raised to the level of the throat centre after returning from the higher centres for the sake of the welfare of this creation.

c) The Tradition of Man Vanquishing the Serpent

The symbolism is much discussed and divulged by H.P.B. in the Secret Doctrine and by many subsequent theosophical writers. We have a general survey of the ritualistic tradition right from the Vedic literature. In the Vedas, Indra, the lord of the Devas, is glorified as the slayer of Vritra. The fight between Vritra and Indra and the final slaying of Vritra by Indra contains almost one-fourth of the Rigvedic mantrams. In many forms, Vritra engulfed Indra and the Devas. Every time Indra conquered Vritra, the serpent outlined Indra in a subtler form. Finally, he caught Indra within and without. Indra and his Devas are all kept in the impregnable darkness. No weapon was found capable of slaying the serpent. Then Vāk (the sacred word) was given as Vajra (the thunderbolt) by Brihaspathi, the preceptor of the gods. Then Indra could strike Vritra with it forever. He then placed the body of the serpent among

BOOK OF RITUALS

the units of time and space (Kāsthas) that served as the chips of fuel that are ever moving.

Indra represents the cognizing aspect of the consciousness of Agni and presides over the fire of all the rituals of the building process. In the Puranic symbolism, it is said that the gods approached the seer Dadhichi (the bearer of the pure buddhic plane) and begged for his vertebral column. He conceded to it and so Indra could slay the serpent with that as his weapon. In the stories about Lord Krishna in the Puranas, He is described to have vanquished the wicked serpent Kaliya, elevated and sent him into the sea with ennobled traits. In a major portion of the first book of the Mahabharata, which forms the prelude to the whole story, we find a number of stories connected with the eternal tug between the seers and the serpents, the gods and the serpents and ultimately the eagle and the serpents. A set of Rishis who belonged to the level of the cosmic and microcosmic Devas who are called by the name

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

of Bhrigus are described to have a constant fight with the serpents until there was finally a compromise through matrimonial relationships between the Bhrigus and the serpents. The Bhrigus are the descendants of Varuna, the lord of the west.

There is a Vedic ritual in the form of a conversation between Varuna, the father, and Bhrigu, the son. It gives the sacrament to initiate the disciple into the details of analysing the existence of man into the physical, physiological, mental, buddhic and the unconditional or blissful planes of his own existence. The characters of the father and son indicate that this ritual takes place while man is coming down through the father into the womb of the mother. In the microcosmic scale, the west represents the activity of the lower pole of man, wherein the son is differentiated through the activity of the sign Libra at the navel (which sign intervenes subsequently between the virgin nature of Virgo and the polarity of sex in Scorpio).

BOOK OF RITUALS

The control of the lower pole is the strength of the spiritualist and hence the west represents strength in the temples of rituals. The Bhrigus fighting the serpents denote the tug between the cosmic consciousness and the time-bound consciousness in man. In the same first book of the Mahabharata, there is the solar allegory of the disciple of a Guru (enacting as the annual solar god conducting the symbolic journey ordered by the Guru) who is deceived by a cunning snake, Takshaka (the etcher or the digger of holes in space). That gradually leads to the colossal incident of the grand serpent sacrifice conducted by the descendant of the Pandus. It was intended that all the serpents in creation should be burnt as holocaust into the sacrificial fire of the ritual. The main target was to eliminate Takshaka from the creation. Many thousands of serpents were burnt in the fire but Takshaka escaped because the ritual was stopped in the middle and was completed only by substituting the remaining portion with

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

a regular recital of the text of the Mahabharata. Many of the divine serpents were also saved by this sacrifice. The sacrifice was stopped due to the noble request of a great seer, Astika, whose father is a descendant of the Bhrigus and the mother a descendant of the serpents.

All these stories form part of the rituals conducted in imitation of the cosmic and microcosmic phenomena which deal with the apparent opposition and the true relationship between the creative activity and the reproductive activity. The activity of the lower pole is an opposed activity of the higher pole to an ordinary man. To a ritualist, the two activities are complementary to one another like the activity of the two poles of a magnet and the two poles of our earth. The polarity between the earth and the moon, the earth and the sun, and also between the moon and the sun, are all mutual complementaries though they appear as mutual opposites. They are like the pairs of heat and cold, night and day, life and death, etc. The

BOOK OF RITUALS

survival of Takshaka in the snake sacrifice shows that the existence and the survival of the lower pole is a cosmic necessity which has nothing wrong or detrimental about it. Man can, at best, transcend it and neutralise it but he can never destroy it. The created universe incorporated in matter is as much true of its god content as the uncreated subtler essence before it came down as creation. The created universe is called the conditioned truth or the definable aspect while the uncreated forms the unconditional or undefined aspect of truth. Here the Veda says “the definable and the undefinable put together form the definition. The aboded and the unaboded put together form the abode. Truth (absolute) and untruth (relative) put together become Truth”. This is the proper approach from the operative level to the speculative level of the ritual of the whole creation in the concept of the Vedic seers. In all the Scriptures of the world, there are the stories of many heroes vanquishing the serpent or the dragon. All of them

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

deal with the process of man transcending the lower pole to neutralise it and elevate it into the higher.

d) The Tradition of Bricklaying and Building the Temple

Every Vedic ritual necessarily includes the building up of the sacrificial enclosure and the constructing of the fireplace with various arrangements of bricks. The fire altar mainly contains five layers of bricks arranged in the ordained fashion. About the shape of the bricks also there are many injunctions. The various shapes of the varieties of bricks with their various names denote the various minor activities of the creation. For example, the bricks of the first layer are called the invisible bricks and represent the invisible outline of the visible creation. There are also the life-bearing bricks in the first layer and they include two varieties, those of Prana and Apana (the activity that is

BOOK OF RITUALS

centripetal and centrifugal). In the second layer there are the Aswini bricks who deal with the working of the twin gods in nature (beginning and ending, life and death, awakening and sleep, etc.). There are also the bricks of the flying span in the second layer. Like this, there are a number of variety of bricks used in the rituals of bricklaying.

Among the shapes of the bricks, two varieties stand prominent and they are the perfect cube (Isha) and the proportional brick (Urja). The Isha brick is the ashlar of the Vedic rituals. It was built with a side of twelve inches representing the twelve months of the year. Each corner of the cube is made up of three sides of twelve inches each, the sum total of the length being $3 \times 12 = 36$, that are equal to the 36 divisions of the year, each containing 10 days. The ten days denote the ten digits of the growth of the Cosmic Purusha (his ten fingers on both of his hands). They correspond with the 36 deacons that stand around the hall

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

in one of the Egyptian rituals whose symbolism is concealed until the days of Greece in the 36 decanates of the horoscope. In the rituals of Egypt and also in some of the Vedic rituals, the 36 deacons encircle the candidate at the time of initiation with drawn swords. As we have previously seen, the cube contains eight corners of three right angles each, the sum total of the right angles being 24, which correspond with the syllables in the Gayatri metre, the lunations in the lunar year and the hours in the day. In some rituals, this brick is analysed into and composed by six pyramids juxtaposed with their vertices arranged at a point. For this reason, this brick contains the symbolism of the triangle (the side of the pyramid), the square (the base of the pyramid or the side of the cube), the point (the vertex of each pyramid), the straight line (the line of the pyramid) and the cube. The ritual conducted as bricklaying with this cube is called the fulfilment (Ishti). The Sanskrit term “Ishtaka”, meaning a brick, is derived from this tradition.

BOOK OF RITUALS

The proportional brick is called the trick of establishment in strength (Urja). It is a cube having its length, breath and thickness in the ratio of 4, 3 and 2. The number 432 forms a major key to divide time into the various ages that mark the periods of the ethereal, geological, biological and historical periods of this earth. This number is found in almost all the world Scriptures in relation to the division of time into ages. For example, the Puranas use these numbers with some zeros to divide the four ages of a Maha Yuga that forms a part of the day of Brahma. The length of the Kali Age is 432,000; the Dwapara Age is twice, the Treta Age is thrice and the Krita Age is four times the magnitude of the Kali Age. All the four put together form the great age, Mahayuga, with $4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 10$ units of the Kali Age and hence 432,000 of the mortal years. There are various types of ritualistic and speculative applications of the numbers 4, 3, 2 and this subject itself can fill volumes.

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

The founders of the various religions and the discoverers of the various spiritual and ritualistic schools are figuratively called the bricklayers of the universe. Polishing a brick is the phrase used to denote the silent spiritual growth of a candidate polishing the ruggedness and the angularities of one's own personality. Every ritualist is expected to give a final finish to his own brick though the brick differs in shape from all the other bricks used to construct the temple of creation. Hence every ritualist is expected to mark his keynote of virtue upon the shape and size of his own brick and he can be sure that someday his brick is also required by the Master Builders to complete building, though it was many times rejected in the first stages.

The process of constructing a building or an enclosure for a ritual also includes much symbolism to be divulged. The land is first to be consecrated to the angel of the rituals and outlined in due and ancient manner. Then the ritualist

BOOK OF RITUALS

has to till the land for himself with sanctifying mantrams which invoke the angel of the plough, the bull and the earth. In these mantrams, the earth is compared with a cow and the bull is compared with the annual solar god fertilising the earth with his masculine solar energy. The evolving ritual is compared with the masculine calf representing the aspect of man in creation. This is a very profound and compound symbolism which should be meditated much. A lunar king named Kuru is said to have tilled a tract of space to cultivate the whole creation and hence the tract is thereafter called Kurukshetra, the field of Kuru. This name is borrowed by the composers of the Puranas and the story of the Mahabharata is said to have occurred in Kurukshetra. It is described as the field of the Law (of existence). “This body is verily called the field for cultivation”, says Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita when He applies the ritual to the microcosmic level. After tilling the field, the stones and thistles are cleared off and the ground levelled with the aid

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

of the level (the sense of equality in man, upon the basis of which two ritualists are expected to meet). Seven points are marked in the middle of the ground and joined in the following manner in three horizontal rows: two in the upper row, three in the middle row and two in the lower row.



By the Vedic ritualists, this figure is called the great ritualistic bird, Suparna, which is the great eagle of the modern ritualists. The two lines above represent the head, the three lines in the middle represent the body and the two lines below represent the divulging tail of the bird. The same figure is worshipped as the emblem of man standing

BOOK OF RITUALS

on two opposite triangles with his arms stretched horizontally to point out the east and the west and form a cross with the meridian and the nadir. Some of the ritualists visualise the figure as the axe to chop off the branches of the tree to be used in the ritual. The bricks of the Egyptian ritualists are generally marked by the figure of the axe. Then follows the construction of the whole ritualistic enclosure around this figure, with the head of the ritual at the fireplace in the east.

The temple of the later Hindus—that is constructed in brick and mortar—represents the Vedic ritualistic enclosure with certain supplementary changes. The main entrance is either towards the east or the north and it has a tapering tower upon it containing seven storeys. Just after the entrance, the path goes round the various enclosures of the inner temple and again leads to the same place where a vertical column is erected. On the column there is the emblem of the great eagle. This represents that man raises

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

himself through the activity of the vertebral column to the level of the eagle from the ground levels. This is done after the first symbolic journey is over and hence the devotee entering the temple is first asked to go round and come to the column of the eagle. The column is composed of various parts, fixed in number, representing the construction of the vertebral column in man. Then he is allowed to enter into the second gate leading into the main hall. Then he has to go round again to cover his second symbolic journey. Then there is the third gate leading into the inner chamber, which is the Sanctum Sanctorum of the later Hindus. Herein the image of God is installed after the required fashion. Again, the devotee goes round the image to cover his third symbolic journey and bows down before the God. This temple in brick and mortar is but an exoteric representation of the sacrificial hall of the Vedic rituals. The inner and the outer halls have only one gate for entrance and exit while the three other sides are closed.

BOOK OF RITUALS

This is the case with the temples of all religions of the world. The whole symbolism was much discussed and divulged by H.P.B. in the Secret Doctrine under the heading “The Holy of the Holies”.

In the temples consecrated to Siva, the zodiacal emblems are also included. After the vertical column and before the second gate, the image of the bull is erected facing the inner chamber. The devotee is expected to come to the tail of the bull and first have a look into the inner chamber through the two horns of the bull. The significance is well discussed in my first volume, “Spiritual Astrology”, in the chapter dealing with the sign Taurus.

The temples of the later Hindus are consecrated to the male aspect and the female aspect of god separately. In the temple worship of the female aspect of god, the aspect is called power (Sakti) and many western Orientalists wonder that power is represented in the feminine aspect. The truth is that the Vedic and Puranic tradition believes that power

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

is feminine while strength is masculine. Power requires a master to steer it both in its mechanical and spiritual aspects. This dependency of power upon strength makes the aspect feminine. In the Vedas also, the power of the word or the utterance is called Devi and Saraswati while the word himself assumes the role of Brahma. The one is not complete without the other and the two form the counterparts of one whole. For this reason, almost all the Vedic and Puranic rituals require the presence of a woman to make manifest and to amplify the light of the ritual. In a mystic sense, these two aspects are explained in their numerical aspect of the ritual of creation by H.P.B. in her Secret Doctrine in the following manner: The number of man is 9 and the number of woman is 10. On the physical plane also, man contains 9 and woman contains 10 functional orifices. In the spiritual and the phallic significance as well, $9 + 10 = 19$, and this number represents the wheel of creation. The two digits 1 and 9 in

BOOK OF RITUALS

the compound number 19, when added together ($1 + 9$), once again give 10, the number of the power to reproduce 1 (God), multiplying into the 9 numerical potencies. This aspect of truth is highly symbolical and requires a profound spiritual state of pondering to visualise the significance of the background.

Temple building bears the same significance in almost all the rituals of the world. The Book of Leviticus in the Christian Bible gives the construction of the pre-Christian Hebrew temple as a modification of the temple of Egypt. Again, the Book of Solomon in the Old Testament gives full details of the construction of a comparatively later model of the temple. Both these temples conceal the wisdom of erecting the moral and spiritual edifices of man in silence without the clinking of a single hammer heard.

The object of the temple rituals of the various centuries and religions is of two types, the esoteric and the exoteric. The esoteric aspect corresponds with the development of

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

the inner side of man; it concerns the purification of the human emotions, the re-arrangement of the mental and the psychic faculties and the neutralisation of the mutually counteracting forces in man. It also concerns the sacrament of invoking the presence of the Omnipresent Light in man. The lamp of the personal and the individual consciousness in man is gradually dimmed by the presence of the light of universal consciousness and the whole mechanism of the inner man is illuminated by the new light. Henceforth man lives as a steward of the property of God. Such a change is aptly called the ritual of man crossing the death. The first step of the temple rituals of the stoic side is the training of the outer layer of human mind, which is the impulsive nature of man. The realm of impulses, reflexes and instincts is to be regularised and the student of ritualism, during the first steps, requires a routine with many details. The detail engages the mind to regularise the impulses. Keeping strict timings to attend the ritualistic temple makes

BOOK OF RITUALS

his mind time-conscious. This gradually identifies him with his own timings, and there comes a necessity to cut short the non-essentials that may sometimes include many temptations and obligations. A minor conflict arises in the mind and awaits to be settled by the awakened will power of the student. This is the reason why the orthodox school of every religion insists upon temple service and worship.

Every shape of the environment has a definite impact upon the subconscious mind of man and it may be or may not be through his conscious mind. The shape of a room and the arrangement of furniture in the room, along with the tiny detail that is present, will definitely influence the mind of the one living within the room. Moreover, the colour sense of man is stimulated by the articles of the various colours in his room. The mind is further influenced by the number of items of any type of article and the number of persons existing in the room. The expression of the personality bears a characteristic mean of all such

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

effects. The number of persons in a family has got such an influence upon the mind of each member of the family that an advanced student of psychism can feel the number by the presence of the person.

All such factors are taken into consideration in the ritual of constructing the temple and the detail of the ritual is arranged in such a way that the maximum advantage of all the above-mentioned factors is derived for the spiritual benefit of the ritualist. The rule that there should be an odd number of persons attending a temple of meditation is a significant one among the ritualistic rules. The reason for this rule is that the divine spark in every man is only one (the first and the last odd number in infinity) and responds favourably when there is an odd number of persons. The impact of the environment upon the five senses of man is properly utilised in the temple through a sense of consecration and sacrifice. The objects of the senses exist in man as associations to make the senses project into the

BOOK OF RITUALS

objective world or the environment. Hence to the esoteric ritualist, the various parts of the temple exist in him as the re-arranged associations. To the ordinary man before undergoing any spiritual training, the whole temple should be constructed to serve as a re-arranged environment. The architecture of the temple is the first to impress upon his mind through the eye; the music of the prayers through the ear, etc. The architecture, brick and mortar bring the shape consciousness in his mind into the required order or symmetry. Gradually the physical temple of the environment leaves its complete print upon the mind when the mental temple begins to unfold into himself. Hence the path is from the architecture to the architect into man. The Entered Apprentice gradually feels the presence of the builder consciousness in him as the architect in him. In this way, the objective temple initiates the ordinary devotee into the process of building the subjective temple. This is true with respect of the shape of the temple not only

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

through the eye, but also through the ear as the music of the prayer, the incantations and the intonations which leave the mind stirred up into a regularised activity through some ennobling meaning. It can be stirred through the sense of smell by the incense used and through the tongue by the taste of the spiritual food eaten after it is offered as a sacrifice in the ritual. The sense of touch is also made use of by the various etheric and astral currents produced in regular order by the teamwork of the ritualist. Thus there is the proper use of all the five senses of man to build the inner temple with the aid of the outer one.

Subsequently, there will be a further development in the degree of consciousness that works through the five senses. The newly awakened and regularised consciousness illuminates the inner temple and its workings. More about the secrets of the five senses and their objects is revealed; unknown truths of known things present themselves to the mind of the ritualist. The

BOOK OF RITUALS

universal consciousness that is present everywhere begins to speak with him. The consciousness that governs the surface of liquids in keeping it perfectly horizontal, the consciousness that keeps suspended objects perfectly vertical and the consciousness that erects the cross of four right angles when the verticals and the horizontals of the creation meet—all such immanent truths reveal their existence and their sway over the whole architecture of the universe. In other words, the architecture reveals the various branches of signs in creation, whereby the ritualist is no more a mere observer of the architecture but a craftsman who begins to work with the tools of the level (of liquids), the plumb (the verticality) and the set square (L) which forms the fourth part of the cross within the circle. The geometry of the globe in which he is living will be understood by him. All the sciences and the arts find their proper place in him. Law and legislature have a new meaning, the meaning of self-imposed discipline to him.

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

These two steps, the first step of the Apprentice and the second step of the Craftsman, will directly lead the ritualist into the inner chamber of the temple, wherein he crosses death. Subsequently he experiences the untimely death of his personality while the seeker within him continues the quest for wisdom that lies within himself as the impression of the disappeared father consciousness.

The temple rituals of the various races include certain shapes and the images of the various living beings, and they serve the purpose of creating the required impact upon the mind of the ritualist. The images of men and various animals that are realistic and at times mythical cannot be condemned as idolatrous. Idolatry has nothing wrong in it as long as it serves to stimulate the required effect by the systematised impact upon the minds of men.

Man lives among the world of idols on the physical and the mental planes. He meets, greets and interacts with other people only through the aid of the physical bodies

BOOK OF RITUALS

which serve as idols of the inner deity of existence. To an untrained man, these idols cause various thought-forms in the mind and lead the mind into a labyrinth of thoughts and emotions that bind him to the mundane level, creating new Karma, being stimulated by the associations of the past Karma. The training of the temple rituals causes a change in attitude so that the ritualist takes these idols as the various symbols of the one truth which is the existence of the one light in all. Meditating upon a mere abstraction without any form is altogether impossible for a man to manage as long as he exists within the frame of his physical body. The images of the temples serve the purpose of sanctifying the already existing thoughts in the mind about the various persons and other living beings on this earth. If an idol can kindle God consciousness in man, there is nothing wrong about idol worship. The various forms of the living beings in this creation are meant for the purpose of training the mind to transcend the various levels and they

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

belong to the art aspect of the creation. The fact that the various races of mankind invent the various forms of art through centuries itself proves that art and beauty are the necessary implements of the ritual side of creation to elevate man from the subhuman to the divine levels. All the fine arts of the ancient races and nations were necessarily consecrated to divine worship and the temple service. Sense of decency and the concept of beauty are the two god-given gifts to man and serve as the fountainheads of the finest inventions and discoveries of man through centuries.

Life exists as vibration, and sympathy is the keynote of life. A healthy man meets a smiling face with a smiling face and a grim face with a grim face. The life in him tries to equalise the levels in him with the levels in the other person. All the good features of a human face are gathered in the mind of a sculptor in a creative synthesis and when the totality is expressed as a beautiful and ennobling

BOOK OF RITUALS

smiling face of an idol, the idol really stands as an image of god and can truly bring out an equally powerful image of god in the mind of the devotee who looks at the image in adoration. This is the reason why the ancient Hindu, Egyptian and Greek temples had images installed.

The images of various animals like the lion, the elephant, the horse and the bull in some temple architectures serve the same purpose of the animals in the sacrificial rituals of the Vedic order and the various other ritualistic orders of the world. Sometimes they represent the zodiacal emblems and sometimes the various evolutionary levels in man that are to be sacrificed or transcended. We also find certain compound symbols in the form of the images with human bodies and the heads of animals. They represent the humanised and ennobled emotions that serve higher purposes in creation. Gods with the heads of an elephant (Ganapati), a lion (Narasimha), a monkey (Hanuman), a horse (Hayagriva), etc. are common

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

among the Hindu temples. The Egyptian, Greek, Babylonian and Assyrian temples also contain such god symbols in abundance. To the average worshipper in the temple, they induce veneration and devotion through a mystifying activity of the mind. To the trained ritualist of the inner temple, they serve as the zodiacal and the archetypal symbols of creation. For example, the image of the goddess Durga in the Hindu temples is found riding on a lion. This represents the activity of the sign Virgo and the previous sign Leo when the direction of the wheel is reversed. The lion-headed god represents the activity of the two signs Leo and Aquarius.

To a true ritualist, the physical temple in brick and mortar represents the splendour of the physical plane of creation with its unity as the law of existence and the origin concealed as a thought-form within the tablet of the subtler planes of matter. Hence the outer temple ritual is only an expression of the activity of the inner temple. The temple

BOOK OF RITUALS

on the physical plane will give the preliminary training to the mind of an ordinary devotee to lead him through the entrance of his subjectivity (inner guard) into the real temple rituals. The Vedic rituals of the various types represent this whole process without ignoring the preliminary steps.

There is a certain stage which marks the completion of the individual spiritual development of man. This is followed by the expansion of man into the outer world in quest of something of which he is not definite. Then he is compared to a wayfarer, a pilgrim. The second phase of his development is therefore ritualised as a pilgrimage (Adhwara). In the tradition of the Vedic seers, the student is expected to travel far and wide on foot, living on alms, after the phase of finishing his education at the feet of his Guru in some hermitage. During this journey, he meets so many great people and witnesses so many wonders of the world. This being done in the outward sense, the soul of the

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

man plays the role of the spiritual pilgrim in quest of something which he does not know, the something which gives him the urge. In the modern rituals this stage is marked as a journey to Jerusalem. By that time, the ritualist is supposed to have completed the building of one temple and is guided by fellow pilgrims who also take the road to Jerusalem. This marks the stage of man trying to do something to the outer world in the name of God after the completion of the proper preparation of the inner man. This marks a stage in the life of a man who wants to ritualise his economic, social and professional activities. He is expected to discover the spirit of service in discharging his own duties to his Master, superiors, parents, wife and children. He is also expected to discover an opportunity to serve through his own money, intelligence and physical strength. In the worship of the exoteric temple, this phase is represented by the distribution of the offered material to those who attended the ritual. The flowers, the incense, the

BOOK OF RITUALS

holy water and the holy food are to be distributed among all those who partake in the ritual and this includes the distribution of the ritualistic light among his fellow beings.

To sum up the whole activity of the esoteric ritualistic order, the ritual in the first stage concerns the individual development of the ritualist. This includes the purification of the emotional, the intellectual and the intuitional levels of man. The purification of the physical, etheric, astral, mental and buddhic planes is covered at this stage. It marks the completion of the building of the first temple. During the second stage, the ritualist applies his purified and ennobled traits to the world with which he is connected through birth, marriage, friendship and profession. He is trained to gain fitness to serve the fellow beings belonging to the above set of his environment. This marks the beginning and completion of the second temple. Then there is a third stage where he leaves the second temple also, to serve the comparatively wider temple of the Universal

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

Lord. He is expected to break off all his ties that specify his relationships with only a set of beings in the world. Symbolically, he is taught to leave off his previous ritualistic duties to enter into the ritual of giving himself up to the beings of the universe at large. He is verily a source of the mother force of creation. At this stage, he represents the pelican feeding its seven young ones with the blood of its own heart. He comes out into the world temple to serve everybody without any distinction. He is neither a father nor a son, neither a husband nor a wife. He has no abode of his own where he can rest his head. His heart is the rose, fragrant with universal love, and he bears the cross (the responsibilities and sufferings) of all his fellow beings. His whole life becomes a ritualistic cup filled with his blood as holy water to quench the thirst of the pilgrims of life. He becomes one with the Saviour to distribute his blood as wine and his heart as bread for the suffering lot.

BOOK OF RITUALS

Such a stage is marked in the Vedic rituals by the rites called the “Sacred Man Sacrifice” and the All-Sacrifice, which were described previously. It includes two stages of the social life: 1) Living in forests (Vanaprastha) and 2) Living wherever he is required (Sannyasa). The advent of this stage is marked by the symbolic rejection of the performance of the previous rituals. All the seers of the Vedic path attained this stage but they never physically left off the rituals. Since the whole process is symbolic, the leaving is also symbolic and it represents the leaving of the mental grip and a change in attitude. “Sacrifice, offering, penance and the duty are not to be relinquished and they are to be performed ever. They are the purificators of the wise men”, says Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. It is imperative that the ritualists should leave off the sense of attainment and not the ritual.

The rejection of rituals by Lord Buddha and the Christ denotes the same term and the teachings thereof are

Various Traditions among the Puranic Rituals

intended only for the inner circle of students who have attained that stage. Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, “Leave off all the laws and take refuge in Me”. Christ says to his disciples, “Leave all your people and come to Me... I am the way”. All these are intended to be understood in their proper spirit and such teachings are never intended for the public in general. They are highly misleading to the common man who abstains from following the purificatory processes of the holy orders. It may be very easy for the many so-called Christians of the modern age to leave off the atonements and the rituals of the Old Testament but the vehicles of man follow their own order in their biological, psychological and astral phenomena. This third stage of rituals marks a relinquishing of the limited sphere of service to enter into an unlimited sphere. His world service is more important than his domestic, vocational and temple services. Such a stage is marked by the special temple ceremonies of the Hindu temples conducted on certain

BOOK OF RITUALS

special occasions corresponding with some astronomical phenomena. Then the image of the temple is brought out of the outermost gate of the temple to be taken round the streets once so that all the people of the town may bow down and worship it in splendour. Among the speculative rituals of the modern ritualists, this third stage is represented by the attainment of the final degrees of perfection that is dependent upon the faithfulness and the service of the person, without any special order of ritual attached to the degree. Blue, red and white are the colours denoted to symbolise the three stages of development described above.

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

These are the two types of rituals adopted by the Hindus of a comparatively later age. The term Tantra means craft and the term Agama means a holy order. There is an extensive literature developed about this branch subsequently. The science of architecture to build exoteric temples of various designs in brick and mortar belongs mainly to this branch. The rituals of this order can be divided into the following groups:

- a) Worshipping rituals
- b) Penitential rituals
- c) Healing rituals
- d) Attainment rituals
- e) Atonement rituals

BOOK OF RITUALS

f) Yogic rituals

These rituals include various mantrams, invocations, incantations, holocausts and worshipping. The daily routine of the ritualist is specifically described for the following up of each ritual. Each Guru follows one of the abovesaid branches of rituals and initiates disciples into his order and the order is maintained through generations. Every order necessarily contains the invocation of the highest concept of God through specific traits that are prescribed so that the traits may capture the mind of the disciple and train it to experience the deity of Omnipresence.

The worshipping rituals mainly resemble those of the invocation of Agni in the Vedic rituals. The ritual starts with the purificatory routine of the ritualist. All the items of the daily routine, starting from getting up in the morning, are included in the programme of the ritual and sanctify the daily routine. The bath is also conducted with invocations

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

to the angels of water, air, fire, earth, the sun and the cosmic plane of the Devas. Then the presence of the deity is first invoked in the pineal gland and the pituitary body by touching the centre of the brow with some powder to mark (wrongly called the caste mark by some orientalists). The presence of the deity is invoked in a handful of water that is sipped to purify the three internal fires of man (intellectual fire, digestive fire and reproductive fire). The sense organs are touched with the fingers while invoking the deity therein. The ritual of Pranayama is conducted by inhaling and exhaling with the invocatory mantram meaning “He is myself and I am himself”. Then the ritualist invokes the space and time in which he is located, describing the various divisions of time and the geographical position on the earth. Then he invokes the mantram of life into the deity to be worshipped that is located in the image. The place is purified, the four corners are sanctified by describing the cross and the square. Then

BOOK OF RITUALS

he decorates the image with the best of flowers and incense and conducts the worship with invocatory hymns. Mentally he chants the mantram belonging to the deity for a specific number of times. He prepares his daily food in the name of the deity with special care and offers it to the deity. The whole family eats the food thus sanctified and they should not eat anything that is not sanctified by the offering. Even then, the food is not considered sanctified if it is not first offered to a guest who is considered to be a living idol of the invoked god. The daily life in its sum total is thus ritualised and gradually one is trained to live as a ritualist.

The penitential rituals are considered to be occasional. The whole routine corresponds with that of the worshipping ritual but the routine includes fasting or living upon liquid food. Whenever a ritualist transgresses the rules of his daily routine, he is expected to conduct the corresponding penitential rituals. The use of certain herbs and specific items of offering by way of charity are also

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

prescribed. Visiting holy places and touching the feet of great persons with spiritual splendour and purity are also prescribed. These rituals are mainly intended to neutralise the associations of bad Karma.

Healing rituals are generally in the form of chanting mantrams in meditation and the offering of various plants having medicinal value into the sacred fire. These include the worship of and the offering to various deities, mainly the planetary angels. These rituals are intended to heal various incurable diseases and ward off the spell of ill-health from the environment. Bathing the invoked image in coconut water, milk, curds and fruit juices is also involved in this process. The planet or planets that are afflicted in the horoscope are invoked and talismans prepared with the herbs and metals corresponding to the concerned planets are offered to ward off the evil effects.

The attainment rituals are intended to invoke the occult powers in man. They also contain the items of

BOOK OF RITUALS

worshipping, meditation, Pranayama and the use of herbs. These rituals are used to stimulate the associations of his good Karma in the past to come to his aid and elevate the will of the ritualist to attain powers. According to the estimate of the ancient seers, these rituals do not come under the desirable category of rituals.

Atonement rituals correspond with the penitential rituals and are used to free the ritualist from the sin of his impure behaviour with regards to food, drink and social values. Bad speech and bad thinking also require these rituals for rectification. Generally, the ritualist repeats the Gayatri mantram for a long time and distributes charitable gifts that are offered in the name of God.

The yogic type of rituals forms the main core of the tantric literature. The many types of worship, prayer, invocation and discipline prescribed deal with the various approaches for training a devotee in the yogic line. The power in man that is termed Kundalini is traced as the same

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

power that is making these worlds work. This power is glorified as the female aspect of the deity and worshipped through many rituals and liturgy. This power is considered to be the aura and the glory of the One God of Omnipresence. God and the power that pervade the worlds are described as the Lord and his wife. In man, the seat of God as creator is located in the head centre (Sahasrara) and the seat of Devi in man where she is latent is located in the base centre (Muladhara) as Kundalini. She is described as the coiled serpent (the potential energy) that is to be roused by the conscious effort of man. The whole path of Kundalini from Muladhara to Sahasrara forms the main content of the description of the inner worlds in the tantric literature. The god who is located in Sahasrara is described as the absolute without any attributes and hence there is no use of approaching him by man directly and the only approach possible is through Kundalini. The power in man is approachable by man through the various powers in man.

BOOK OF RITUALS

Hence it is the duty of man to worship the female aspect of the deity to make an approach to the male aspect (here the terms male and female denote only the absolute and the relative phases of the God of Omnipresence). Hence the path is as follows: The path to the highest God is through the power of the word. The path to the word power can be followed only by following the path of Kundalini. The approach of Kundalini to Sahasrara from Muladhara makes a man able to meet the highest creative God of the whole world. At this stage, man transcends all the personal levels of existence and can live as a realised spark of God. The completion and the culmination of such a realisation lies in the last step of the yogi bringing the pair of principles (that are made to meet in his Sahasrara) back to the heart centre (Anahata) and living there in the presence of this double principle of one God through the power of the universal love-will principle.

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

The practical method includes many Tantric rituals, some belonging to the objective worship and some to the subjective or meditational aspect. This Tantric concept of god is not a later invention since it exists in the various invocatory hymns of the Vedas itself. The concept of Devi as a young lady, as the fountain of a river, as the source of the uttered word, etc., is found in the Rigvedic hymns. The power of the creation that upholds the whole creation, just like the desire to utter a word upholds the emergence of the whole word from man, is described in the Rig Veda as the concept of Saraswati. The threefold aspect of this word power is also described as the three Devis —Ida, Saraswati and Lakshmi. We find this ideology specialised in the Tantric school of worship forming a part of the yogic practices of man. In fact, the Puranic symbolism dealing with the threefold aspect of God (the creating, the supporting and the culminating aspect) with their powers as their wives existing on the tongue (as the expression of

BOOK OF RITUALS

the word), the heart (as the love which preserves the expression through eternity) and as a half of the deity himself, corresponds with the Tantric symbolism of the double aspect of the threefold deity. Gayatri itself is described as the highest God in its female aspect at times. This is done in many places of the Vedic lore. This is because the deity is the sum total of the splendour of the ever invisible sun or the spiritual sun. The visible sun forms only part of the splendours of Gayatri. The Puranas and the Tantras amplified this symbolism into a world of allegories and rituals.

The ritualist who follows this path is expected to worship the splendour and beauty of the whole creation as the female aspect of God. He should hold woman in highest veneration. The motherhood of woman should be remembered even in one's own wife. The ritualistic practices of Kali worship include the training of man to neutralise the polarity of sex and the practice should be

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

started with experimenting upon one's own power (esoterically meaning one's own wife). It is also believed that man is having a woman in his heart and woman is having a man in her heart. This means the god and the power of the worlds are interpenetrating one another and man is the meeting place. The ritualist is asked to use the finest things in the world in his ritualistic worship and test himself if he is above temptation. Even spirituous liquors have their role in some of the Tantric schools. Of course, there are many dangerous deviations from the original school and these are the result of the sensuous and weak-minded slaves of emotions who produced a counterfeit of the Tantric school with its disruptive literature. The original Tantric school of the Rishis deals with the worship of the beautiful things in the world to train the man in overcoming the polarity of objectivity, including the aspect of sex. The approach of Kundalini from Muladhara to Sahasrara is enacted as a pilgrimage in many forms. The

BOOK OF RITUALS

path is described as the path of the seven hills resembling the body of the serpent from tail to head. The seven hills are the six chakras and the seventh is Sahasrara. The whole ritual is objectively conducted by the exoteric pilgrims even today as a journey to a holy place that is beyond seven hills in South India. The tradition seems to exist in many parts of the world. Rome is called the city of seven hills. Beyond the man-made religious differences, truth exists as a tradition through legends and symbols.

All the colours and sounds perceptible to the human consciousness are grouped according to the activity of the spectrum of human consciousness in the Tantric literature. The grouping is according to the planes of consciousness working in man and each group exists as a potency of certain colour effects and sound effects in each of the six chakras of man. Numerical potencies govern the colour sense and the sound sense in man and hence the colours and the sounds at each chakra exist as definite numbers.

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

The symbolic description of each chakra with the number and colour of the petals and the meditative shape as a lotus with its petals conceals the secrets of yogic unfoldment through the Tantric path. A faithful following of the ritualistic practices of the Tantra stimulates the chakra in the required manner and makes each chakra unfold in regular succession so that the activity of the chakras is transmitted into the activity of the lotuses.

During the first steps of preparation, the candidate experiences certain colours presented to his mind's eye. He meditates upon them. Certain sounds are heard by him. The mind hears through the etheric and astral activity produced by the rituals to re-arrange the matter of the respective plane in him. Gradually he locates each chakra on the vertical line that exists about and within his own spinal cord. The existence of a chakra is first located as a new grip that is working at a particular place on the spine. Gradually the grip becomes more prominent and then a pulsation

BOOK OF RITUALS

works to cause a new experience in colour and sound. The student will be able to notice the activity of each chakra by the change of the colours and sounds working as the coloured lights and mantrams in the ritualistic temple of his own subtler body. Even in actual temples where these rituals are conducted on the physical plane, a change in the degree of the ritual can be detected by an advanced student through a change of the colour pervading the whole inner temple. The consciousness of the ritualist shows different types of responses to the objective world when he is existing in different chakras.

Part of the symbolism of the Tantric rituals deals with the origin of the human word and the emergence of the sound link between the consciousness and the sound. The theory proposes that mental sound pre-exists vocal sound in the utterance of a word. The dawn of the effort to utter a word is traced back to the place of Kundalini at the base centre. It exists there as the point of consciousness with its

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

periodical merging and emerging. This phenomenon again serves as a specimen to the original merging and emerging of the point in space in terms of one creation. The periodical merging of the consciousness is compared with Pralaya and the emergence with the next dawn of creation. The circle with a central point is worshipped as an emblem initiating the ritualist into the whole concept. The speculative rituals of the Tantra dealing with the Devi aspect of creation are collectively called “Sri Vidya” or the wisdom of the Goddess. According to this school, the point emerges in three stages. They are respectively the dawn to itself, the shining forth as objectivity and the comprehension or becoming self-consciousness. To represent these stages of light-sound (colour-sound), the ritualist is asked to proceed towards the light in three regular steps. We find the same procedure in the modern rituals also. Then the student is expected to feel the muse of the word in him from the imperceptible subjective level

BOOK OF RITUALS

to the semi-subjective slumber of Kundalini in his Muladhara. Henceforth the utterance of the word is through seven stages that are called the seven levels of utterance and these levels correspond with the sevenfold nature of man's own existence.

The pulsation that governs the respiration and is called Prana is invoked through a conscious inhalation and exhalation of air in a particular process called Pranayama. This links the consciousness with the evolving word from within. The consciousness that is evolving and the consciousness that is experiencing meet. They both serve as the thread of consciousness (Sutra atma) that travels from the centre to build the circumference, and Antahkarana that travels from the circumference to the centre of consciousness. The identifying nature in man is lost into the identity of the world mother and the identity descends into the centre of identification. Henceforth the disciple ceases to identify himself as one different from the

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

rest of the world while keeping his identity. Hitherto there are two circles and two centres to the comprehension of the student. The outer space with its centre forms the one circle. The inner man surrounded by his own horizon forms the second circle with its centre in himself. The ritualistic Pranayama dips his consciousness deep into the one world over and makes the “centres meet”. The individual time expands into the universal time and man ceases to exist in terms of the relative time. All this process is achieved only through a practice of Pranayama and the prescribed meditation upon the origin of the word. “From the unmanifest the point emerges. From the point of existence emerges the point of brilliance. From it the point of comprehension—and from the threefold one point the muse sprouts—from the muse, the variations—from the variations the whole word is uttered forth as this creation in existence”, says a Tantric text. The dawn of the point is the dawn of its circumference. The circumference exists

BOOK OF RITUALS

revealed to the centre as long as the centre exists in man. Before and after the existence of the centre, there was and there will be the “hidden circumference”. As long as the disciple lives in the one centre using his individual centre, his individual horizon lies as a hidden circumference within the bosom of the mother force.

Thus, there is a never-ending array of speculations of the most sublime cosmological significance concealed in the Tantric rituals pertaining to the yogic practices. The symbols used in these ritualistic temples contain mainly the following figures: the circle with the central point, the circle with an equilateral triangle, the circle with the double triangle and the central point, the circle with seven triangles and the central point, and finally the figure of nine triangles, five with apex upwards and four downwards, each having its own circle circumscribed, the whole figure placed within a bigger circle and this circle within a square. This forms the complete tracing board of the Devi rituals

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

of the Tantric school. It includes the symbols of all the cosmic, solar, planetary and microcosmic phenomena. For example, the nine triangles touch the outer circle at 27 places, producing 27 equal arcs. These arcs represent the 27 lunar mansions in the zodiac and their corresponding phenomena on the constitution of the woman, who represents the mother force. The cycles of ovulation and menstruation follow the cycles of the lunar mansions that are traced by the monthly moon. This is only a single example for the application of the symbolism of the tracing board of Sri Chakra.

The ritualist of this path has much to observe in the outer world by way of chastity, equality and charity. The unfoldment comes from within but much of the ritual lies in his behaviour towards his fellow beings.

There is one more aspect of the Agamic and Tantric rituals and this is the application of these rituals in the temple service. This is conducted on a congregational scale

BOOK OF RITUALS

and the effect resembles that of Egyptian temple rituals and the congregational mass of the Christian Church ritual. The whole ritual consists of a path of worship in a temple where many people gather and take part. Mantrams are chanted by the whole group and prayers are uttered to invoke the concealed deity from the minds of all. This causes a cumulative thought-form which brings out the light of spiritual outpouring and it pervades the whole temple. A student with clairvoyant vision can see the flow and the direction of the flow outlined by certain magnetic lines of force. The success of the whole ritual depends upon the teamwork and the spirit of co-operation of all who partake in it. Everyone can attend the ritual without any distinction and can enjoy the benefit of the spiritual force produced. The image of the deity in the inner chamber is the centre of the whole ritual and the procedure of the ritual corresponds with the daily sanctifying routine of man. It contains the items of awakening from sleep, bathing, decoration,

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

receiving the offerings and blessings of those who attend the ritual. Every bit of procedure is sanctified by invocatory passages. The articles that are used for the purpose of worship, sanctification and distribution serve as the media for the distribution of the spiritual light. Incense and camphor are used as the immediate media to distribute the light of the blessing through the sense of smell. Fresh, green twigs of a holy and medically important plant (Oscimum) are used in the worship and distributed to all after the worship is finished. Bells are rung and a type of music is given to attract the minds of the mass into the workings of the etheric and astral currents that are produced and fertilised by the spiritual force. The whole process is called the invoking and the distribution of the light of God (Arcana).

This congregational ritual necessarily includes the lighting up of the sacred flame and the ritual of the fireplace. Both of these are done according to the Vedic

BOOK OF RITUALS

ritual of fire invocation. The distribution of the spiritual light that is produced by such a process confers the minor benefits of not only improving the health and increasing the vibrations of luck, but also creating a tranquil mood in the agitated minds of so many devotees. This has a double benefit; the one is creating tranquillity in the individual mind and the other is increasing peaceful vibrations among the whole crowd. After the first few minutes of the beginning of the service ritual, everyone is charged to emit favourable vibrations and the whole crowd works as a big power station. All the energy that is produced by the presence of the living souls and the spiritual charge that is produced by induction are automatically pooled at the centre without being known to anybody. The light that is thus pooled is again distributed to the benefit of the same people in the mass.

The whole procedure bears a close resemblance with the activity of the sun's rays that gather water from the

The Tantric and Agamic Rituals

pools and rivers through evaporation to form clouds that return pure water to the same pools and rivers. The materials for the worship that are brought by everybody are mixed up and distributed equally. This is once again a symbolic representation of the cosmic sacrifice. The quantity of the spiritual light that is produced depends upon the sincerity and the spirit of submission in those that are present. Flowers and fruits are inevitable for such a mass worship in the Hindu temples. This is because the flower is a true symbol of fruit bearing and the fruit is the symbol of bearing the seed. The life cycle of a tree is a true dramatic representation of the whole creation. The light that is invoked is properly and immaculately reproduced by the presence of the flower and the fruit as the true symbols of creation. Also, the fragrance of some flowers forms a speedy vehicle for the distribution of the light. In the temple rituals consecrated to Lord Siva, the use of the ashes of the wood of certain sacred trees is prevalent. The ashes

BOOK OF RITUALS

of the plant matter and the water used serve as the best condensers of the light thus produced, and they induce good thought currents and hypnotic vibrations even after a long time. Coconut water is also one of the best vehicles of the creative spiritual light that is produced in the ritual. These congregational rituals serve a better purpose in a large scale than the esoteric rituals conducted in the secret temples of initiation. The higher rituals are intended to create spiritual beings on the individual scale and the congregational rituals are used by the created spiritualists to distribute the benefit of a ritual on the large scale.

Rituals and Mystery Compared

The origin of every religion in the world can be traced back to the inner urge of man to know something about the creation. Religious instinct is born with man and the activity of the whole creation remains in the subconscious levels of man as a muse. The human mind has so many layers in which the memories of nature and the memories of the evolution of man through many stages are concealed. A right play of this memory into an orderly recollection is stimulated whenever the atmosphere is congenial. For this reason, the mankind of so many races and centuries originated the ideas of religion independently. Curiously enough, we find that the basic essence of these ideas showed a commonness. This common property of man is attributed to a superhuman soul that always imparts it as a

BOOK OF RITUALS

formula of wisdom through gradual unfolding. In the light of this wisdom, the activity of man is regularised from time to time and the result is the order of the disciplined souls who are later venerated and worshipped through legend as the primitive instructors of mankind. The wisdom that is propagated by such people to their followers includes certain allegories, conversations and dramatic representations. This is because of the abstract nature of the subject, and the conveyance of the commonness of the subject requires an oral tradition and an amount of magnetic charge that is produced by the trained will and soul force of the people who communicated. Later the whole course is formulated into the respective ritualistic formulae which were initiated first in the forests and caves.

The wisdom consisted of the splendour of the sun and the moon, light and darkness, life and death and such phenomena that formed the splendours that filled the space under “the canopy of the heavens”. The terms “Brahma

Rituals and Mystery Compared

Vidya, mystery, Kabbala”, etc. mean the same thing and that is the oral tradition from man to man. The main object of study and teaching was about man himself. Man found his role in the creation as something significant and this concept of his role amidst the other living beings originated the idea of the drama or the mystery play into which man formulated his whole content of wisdom. After a certain time, we find the stage of the enlightened people initiating others into the secrets of the mystery of life. Various secret cults were formed and people were admitted into the schools of the cults, where they were trained to prepare their mind to expand into the mysteries of creation. Among the oldest of these cults, we find the Vedic and the Egyptian traditions, the earliest known specimens to mankind. The Egyptian ritual of the temples of initiation is no doubt the earliest from which all the other subsequent cults are developed. Leadbeater and some other authors of books

BOOK OF RITUALS

about the rituals trace the origin of the Egyptian ritual back to the rituals of the followers of Manu in India.

The rituals of Egypt, like those of ancient India, begin with steps of initiation that cover a period of the preliminary preparation of the candidate. After this initial period of purification, follows a mystic communication of certain secrets of the creation in silence. “From mouth to ear and in a low tone” is the preliminary teaching for the preparation and through silence with the lips closed, the higher secrets are communicated. In the Vedic ritual also, the role of Brahma is always silent though he instructs the other personnel of the ritual to conduct the whole proceedings through the power of his thought. The communication of the secrets included gestures, attitudes, grips and mental words (pass words). These are called “Mudras” in the Indian tradition. Just as an actor produces the required effect upon the mind of the audience through his gestures and action, the preceptor communicated the

Rituals and Mystery Compared

required effect into the personality of the disciple who is to be initiated. When man is roused by certain spectacular scenes into his emotional level, he is found to produce certain gestures automatically and these gestures are imitated by the ritualist (like the actor) to produce the emotions in a systematic way so that the emotions can be filtered and recollected in tranquillity.

After this process of purification, the major content of the mysteries of any nation contains the representative phenomena of the birth of the child (human soul) from the father (the parent source or god nature) through the aid of the mother (the role of nature in creation). Then followed the drama of the evolution of the universes. Then followed the mystery of death and raising (rebirth). All the mysteries of Egypt contained the same theme. Moses went away from Egypt along with his fellowmen and established the same tradition of mysteries with some modifications. Through centuries and nations, the same tradition is maintained in

BOOK OF RITUALS

the mystery schools and we find the same type of initiations entertained by the priests and the rulers of Greece. For example, the rituals of Dionysus, Trophonius, Eleusis, etc. contain the same import through various rituals of various levels. In course of time, the teaching of the mystery schools included the wisdom of the stars and planets, chemistry, biology and a much-misunderstood subject, alchemy. The science to master the elements and the departed souls was also practised.

The evolution of the present mankind gradually elevated the levels of rituals and initiations. A purely metaphysical and spiritualistic turn is gradually given by the Masters of all cults. Pythagoras gathered a number of disciples and renovated the nobler side of the mysteries, initiating his followers into the geometrical and the numerical symbolism of the universe and man. The order is maintained in secrecy without a break from his time up to the present age through the aid of the various Masters of

Rituals and Mystery Compared

Wisdom trying to aid the evolution of man on this earth. One of such masters is the Comte de St. Germain, who initiated many disciples besides Cagliostro into the tradition of the same rituals under new names. About the divine light of the ritualistic initiations and the nature of the man initiated into such a light, St. Germain comments thus: “Then did I hear of the divinity of this temple. I cast my cares upon him. [...] I abode not only with those who are, but with those who were [...] I found it eminently delectable to know all without studying anything, to dispose of the treasures of the earth without the solicitations of monarchs, to rule the elements rather than men. Heaven made me liberal; I have sufficient to satisfy my taste; all that surrounds me is rich, loving, predestinated”. To achieve such an end, the master renovated the ancient order of masonry, rejuvenated the order of the Rose Cross and the knights Templar, and finally established his new order of rituals which he termed

BOOK OF RITUALS

the Holy Trinosophia. He had disciples belonging to the three ritualistic orders to achieve the same end of realisation. Through so many bodies, this Master stands as a mystery figure still presiding over the various holy orders of rituals. The many ritualistic schools of the present day are deeply indebted to him.

In the meanwhile, a separate order of temple rituals was established and followed by the ancient Jews till two thousand years ago. The origin of the order was traced to their previous prophet, who was a pastoral shepherd wandering in the fields playing his musical instruments and protecting sheep, cattle and his followers operatively and speculatively. He promised to come down to earth once again and he gave them the signs to show his return. The sign of the star appeared at Bethlehem when the spiritual birth of a boy took place out of the life of a Jew in secrecy. The birth of this spiritual child (which means the highest order of initiation into the role of a saviour) started the

Rituals and Mystery Compared

ritualistic order of giving a second birth to a disciple into the collective spiritual life of the Christ through soul contact with the aid of mercy and love. The order is maintained till today with god-speed though there are many imitations of the order in a lower religious level in the names of so many Christian churches warring against one another and some other churches which play politics in the name of the Saviour. The original order of Jesus is being secretly maintained in many mystery schools and this will be continued until the false churches disappear into the chaos and hatred created by themselves. Bigotry, conceit and a sense of separation stand as impediments created by the pseudo-Christian Churches in the present time on the way of the working path of the Christ.

Once again, the original form of the ancient rituals and mysteries will be re-established under the guidance of the present Masters of Wisdom. Disciples are being trained at present to achieve the same end and within a period of the

BOOK OF RITUALS

next fifty years the mystery schools will come into existence openly. Children education will also be ritualised and sanctified. The laborious process of teaching and memorising the non-essentials of the various subjects will be removed by the would be ritualists who play an active role in the political, economic and educational fields of the various nations. There will be stunning changes in the curriculum and syllabus of education. The method of soul training through group contact will be established and the science of teaching through impression will be introduced. A thorough ritualisation of the whole activity of man is not far off. Since the present wave of materialism and the wave of false religion are going to end in a war against one another, man will be once again left exposed to the age-old methods of elevating himself through the ritualised values of his life. The gulf between science and spiritualism will be bridged when the aim and purpose of the modern civilisation will be fulfilled. The present Aquarian age,

Rituals and Mystery Compared

which leads man into direct communion with space and its invisible intelligences, is aptly the age of such a fulfilment. The missing link between the nuclear phenomena and space unbound will be filled up and this ends the age of war. Then it is time for the full play of the mysteries of the ancients, which ritualised the whole activity of life in man.

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

The language of any Scripture is somewhat different from the language of any other book. A mystery surrounds the language, the description, the narratives and the composition of any Scripture belonging to any race or nation. A Scripture is the sum total of the subconscious activity of a race. It should be translated in terms of the known things on the conscious plane. Without such an attempt, there is no use of a mere literary approach to a Scripture like the Veda with the aid of grammar, philology and dictionary. Grammar and philology deal with man-made linguistic symbols, but a Scripture is first composed into a subconscious language and then only it is incorporated in terms of the man-made language. The

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

Vedic seers distinguished between the worldly and the divine aspects of the language of the Scriptures.

When taken in the literary aspect, the Vedic mantrams contain but mere descriptions of the various emblems and symbols which denote something else. A true student of the esoteric schools finds certain clues (necessarily ritualistic) to the real unity that is underlying in the whole theme of the Vedas. This unity is called the Veda by the seer. We find the term Veda to denote something different from the literary version of the Vedas and we find this in the very text itself. This underlying unity which they called Veda is introduced as a grand compound emblem that exists in man himself. The import of the Vedic hymns is this unity and the intention is to drive the mind of man towards this unity. At first it is done in an objective manner when the reader tries to comprehend the import objectively. This attempt gives a stir to the inner substratum of the reader to receive the objective import as a reflection upon his mind's eye.

BOOK OF RITUALS

Then the whole activity of the reader is sanctified and ritualised. It is re-arranged and brought within the focus of the already existing unity in him.

It is not proper to expect any consistent meaning to the various Vedic passages. This is because what we call the meaning of the passage is only one of the minor keys of realisation. No doubt we find some detached flashes of poetic and scientific descriptions that form the different concepts of the literary version. They also serve the purpose of unlocking the one emblem of unity that is underlying. The real import of the Vedic passages is but the response of the soul of the individual, in its high rate of vibration, to a set of emblems of thoughts arranged into a story like a sequence. Then there occurs the drama of the soul enacting the various roles of the emblem and experiencing the sequence. Thereby the soul enters into the import, which is a plane of experience (unconditional) and forms the totality of the Veda. The plane of experience

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

aimed at is the product of the chain actions of emotion, thought and feeling that are fused and lost into the oneness of the individual with all. The cumulative effect can be compared with that of a poem or more correctly a drama.

Any exoteric attempt at the explanation or the “meaning” of these passages and emblems on the mental plane is bound to be partial and defective because these emblems mean something eternal. Generally, they are interpreted by the intelligent scholars in the light of the concepts that are common to that age. The field of application and interpretation depends upon the plane in which the consciousness of the scholar is playing. Generally, the level of the scholarly mind represents the level of the day and this level of the day is determined and governed by the stage of evolution of that particular race of mankind. This is the reason why the sacred books of so many races and ages are interpreted in the light of various branches of knowledge in vogue at the time. Some

BOOK OF RITUALS

understand them as primitive prayers of the savages; some as the relics of the material sciences of the past; some as the highest abstractions of philosophy; some as confounded and distorted documents of history or geography and still others as mere speculations. No matter in whatever plane the interpretation is made, these passages live forever from century to century and from language to language and at times from religion to religion under the direct guidance of the Masters of Wisdom. Such books live as living forces to attract, induce and choose certain minds of all ages and these minds are gradually introduced into the higher order of evolution with the aid of the physical, intellectual and spiritual halls of initiation.

Now we can understand why the passages of the Rig Veda do not present any unity of content to a random reader who opens the book for himself without being initiated by any Master. Let him be a great scholar and it is not an excuse. Every Sukta of the Rig Veda contains several

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

passages which do not appear to have a connection between each other. The present grouping and indexing of these Suktas is also evidently arbitrary. The original order lies with the Masters of Initiation like Vedavyasa, Sanat Kumara and Maitreya. A really careful study of the content that pervades the whole text is very difficult but highly interesting. Such a study proves that there is a grand unity running as an undercurrent through the descriptions, narrations and the prayers of the book. We do not find this unity in the contents but we find it through the content. Such a study undoubtedly proves that:

- a) The Veda is different from the Vedic text.
- b) The present text of the Vedas is a part of the original text which must exist somewhere in the hands of somebody.
- c) The purpose of the Vedic passages is not to make us understand any point or points relating to any branch of knowledge. The real purpose is to focus

BOOK OF RITUALS

the personality of the reader upon a higher centre of self-expression.

The abovesaid purpose can be achieved by a gradual re-arrangement of all his objective and subjective centres. The process does not include mainly the reading, teaching or understanding, though they form part of the process. The main course of the object includes an unfolding and an attainment. An approach to the Vedas is called “Adhyayana”, which Sanskrit term means an approach for attainment.

This process of Adhyayana requires an altogether new method of approach. The method is quite different from the known methods of teaching and learning. It has a different language, and the alphabet of this language is quite new to the minds of the present age and as such requires to be familiarised. Number, shape, colour and sound form part of the alphabet. It is necessary to clarify that these four phenomena do not come under the class of man-made

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

symbols. They exist as potentialities in space long before the appearance of man. They bear seed in man and sprout into the tree of human comprehension by the objective stimulation of their counterpart. To the mind of man, they emerge as the primary and secondary patterns of the universe. The individual mind receives them as reflections when it is purified by ritual and initiated into the order. The purificatory process stops the unnecessary activity of the human mind from superimposing the human reflections upon the abovesaid universal patterns. The path of passive objectivity and active subjectivity is bestowed upon the human mind by purifying it through rituals. Then man realises the unity of the whole creation within himself and again around himself. The outline of his vehicle, which hitherto divided the realms of subjectivity and objectivity, will be understood as only an epitome of the outline of the vastness of one creation. Then man experiences the unconditioned existence of the individual in poise. This

BOOK OF RITUALS

state is the state of liberation which is termed “Apurva” and “Swarga” in the Vedas, Mukthi in the Vedanta Philosophy and Nirvana by the Buddhistic followers of the path. The same thing is called the rising after death in the language of the later ritualists. It denotes freedom from self-conditioning. Herein lies the purpose of the Veda.

The descriptions of the Rig Veda give us a thorough understanding of the manifestation of one universe into the light of objectivity from the inner light of subjectivity. The process of the ignition and pervasion of Agni is described as two interdependent splendours of the Lord of Omnipresence. The ignition is symbolised by the emergence of the point and the pervasion as the circle around it. The point is described as being self-willed (Swayambhu) in its emerging and merging. The circle is only relative to the existence of the centre and is called the encircling glow of its own objectivity (Paribhu). The first emblem of the circle with the central point is called Agni-

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

Vishnu (ignition-pervasion). The emblem is said to have been composed of three counterparts: the centre, the circumference and the content in between. The content is geometrically the area of the circle in one plane and the volume of the globe in all planes. Numerically speaking, the centre is called the first or number one, the circumference is the zero from which the one emerges and into which it again merges. The content forms the secondary emanation of the numerical potency of the nine numbers.

In the language of the Vedic hymns, these entities are called the three strides of Vishnu. The secondary geometrical properties of length, breadth and thickness depend upon the primary properties of the rotating globe. For the comprehension of the abovesaid threefold nature of the emblem, the next step is denoted by the shape of the circle with its centre and an equilateral triangle within the circle. According to the explanation of the Aithereya

BOOK OF RITUALS

Brahmana, this emblem contains the key to the unity of the Rig Veda. The import of this emblem is commented elaborately in the last portion of this Brahmana. That school of seers who solved and explained secrets between objectivity and subjectivity is called the Aithereya school. “Ithara” means “the other” in Sanskrit and the term Aithereya (the other-ness of objectivity) is derived from it. Many of the names of the schools of thought in Sanskrit and the names of the seers to whom the authorship of the Vedic formulae are attributed are not proper nouns as is supposed by some. These names are symbolic and they explain the import of the content. They also serve as subheadings to the content of the mantram.

This emblem of an equilateral triangle within a circle is the emblem of the three lines that make up the Gayatri metre. The 24 syllables of the Gayatri metre are divided into three lines of 8 syllables each, as previously explained. These three sides of the triangle are also described as the

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

three utterances of the sacred word in the three subjective worlds to bring forth the fourth state of the word in the objective form. In the activity of the objective universe, this triangular emblem represents the threefold flow of eternity into the three divisions of time (present, past and future) and the threefold activity of the created entities in space (as the doer, the doing, and the done). Three sets of seven scales of sounds and three fires of seven lights (colours) each are said to emanate from the three sides of the triangle. Hence the third phase of this emblem is that each side of the triangle is divided into 7 equal parts, the total being 21 plus the centre divided by 7 (which is the true value of pi). In some mystery halls, this ritual is enacted by three people coming together and uttering the three parts of the sacred word as one. The same is the import of the three Hebrew syllables standing on the circumference of the glory of the Lord that encircles the fireplace in some modern rituals.

BOOK OF RITUALS

The next emblem is the cross and the square within the circle. This is called the four-faced deity, Brahma, who is described in the Puranas and who is said to have uttered the sacred word or the name of God in four syllables. The four points of the cross represent the four states of the utterance of the word. It is uttered forth as the four cardinal points of the day. The Kabbalists call this the sacred Tetragram. The other emblems and the solid figures that come out of the emblems are well described previously. The ritualistic emblems and the instructions, when taken in their essential nature, will be in the following manner:

The first set: Meditate upon a circle with a central point; the circle rotates; a radius is formed; the diameter is formed horizontally. This marks the east and the west with the centre as our earth. The upper half of the circle signifies the day (in the Kabbala the upper half is the angelic face and the lower half is the diabolical face of the rotating deity). Another diameter is drawn, crossing the first

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

diameter and causing four right angles around the centre. Join the four corners of the cross. You get the square. Meditate upon this figure in white line on a black background.

The second set: Place the abovesaid figure horizontally on the altar. Through the centre of the cross, pass another vertical line perpendicularly. The cross becomes the three-dimensional cross. This subtends twelve right angles around the centre. Six are the arms of the figure thus formed. Construct this figure with the aid of three rods, each of twelve inches length. Let the three rods be of three different colours—white, black and red. Construct a globe circumscribing this three-dimensional figure. Join the four corners of the square with the two ends of the vertical column. You get the double pyramid, a solid figure having eight faces and each face describing an equilateral triangle. This whole figure is concealed in a globe.

BOOK OF RITUALS

The third set: Take six pyramids and arrange them so that all of them stand with their apexes touching one another at a point. The cube is constructed. Imagine a globe within the cube and the cube within a globe. This figure contains all the previous measurements of the above three sets. This traces the invisible forces working in space to bring out the whole creation from subjectivity to objectivity.

The fourth set: Construct a brick with the length, breadth and thickness having four, three and two inches respectively. Place the brick upon the cube. Erect the fireplace upon the brick. This will be the altar upon which the sacred book containing the word of God is placed.

The fifth set: Draw three radii within the circle so that they divide the circle into three equal areas. Join the three points and you get the equilateral triangle within the circle. The three sides of the triangle represent the following aspects:

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

- a) Length, breadth, thickness
- b) Past, present, future
- c) First, second, third persons
- d) Subject, verb, object
- e) Emerging, equilibrium, merging
- f) Activity, poise, rest

The threefold nature of the above figure is called:

- a) Bhu, Bhuvan, Suvar
- b) A U M

Numerically, the square is represented by four; the triangle by three; the diameter by two; the circle by zero. Meditate upon the compound number thus formed, 4320. These numbers come out of the zero (circle) and go into the zero in the same order of succession. The centre of the circle is numerically one. It cannot be geometrically or numerically divided into two. Every circle has only one

BOOK OF RITUALS

centre. All lines in the circle start from the centre and diverge. Yet the centre cannot be disturbed. It can never be erased, as long as the circle exists.

The sixth set: In the compound number given above, replace the value of the circle (zero) by the value of the centre (one). You get the compound number 4321. Arrange them in a geometrical pattern in the following manner. You get an equilateral triangle containing 10 points.



Trace them in blue spots on a white background of a circle within the black background of the square. This figure represents a deity with many names in many cults: Padmapani, Dattātreya, Kumara and the Avatar who is to come. The ten points in the figure are called the ten digits

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

of the Cosmic Person in the Vedas, the ten Avatars in the Puranas. They are enacted as the activity of the ten months in the embryonic development of man. This figure is also an emblem representing the scales of time. The one point at the apex represents Kali Yuga; the next row of two points represents Dwapara Yuga; the next row of three points represents Treta Yuga; and the fourth row of four points represents Krita Yuga. The stories of the various world Scriptures dealing with these periods of time and the abovesaid names of the deities reveal the whole set of secrets pertaining to this emblem.

We find an elaborate explanation of many of the above-mentioned emblems and symbols in the Secret Doctrine. For example, the emerging of the point and the arrangement of the numerical potencies in the form of the geometrical representation as the point and the triangle with 10 points is very clearly explained in that book. For

BOOK OF RITUALS

example, on page 187 in the fifth Volume of the Secret Doctrine, (Adyar edition), we find:

The creation [the evolved Universe] is the garment of that which has no name, the garment *woven from the Deity's own substance*. Between that which is Ain or "nothing" and the Heavenly Man, there is an Impersonal First Cause, however, of which it is said:

Before It gave any shape to this world, before It produced any form, it was alone, without form or similitude to anything else. Who, then, can comprehend It, how was It before the creation since It was formless? Hence it is forbidden to represent It by any form, similitude, or even by Its sacred name, by a single letter or a single point.

These sentences are extracts taken from the Kabbalistic book, the Zohar.

Again, the glory of the triangle with ten points is given as the traditional allegory and its meaning divulged on

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

pages 418-419 and 420 of the same book, in the following manner:

...Let the student remember that number underlies form, and number guides sound. Number lies at the root of the manifested Universe: numbers and harmonious proportions guide the first differentiation of homogeneous substance into heterogeneous elements; and number and numbers set limits to the formative hand of nature.

Know the corresponding numbers of the fundamental principle of every element and its sub-elements, learn their interaction and behaviour on the occult side of manifesting nature, and the law of correspondences will lead you to the discovery of the greatest mystery of macrocosmical life.

But to arrive at the macrocosmical, you must begin by the microcosmical, i. e., you must study Man, the microcosm—in this case as physical science does—inductively, proceeding from particulars to universals.

BOOK OF RITUALS

At the same time, however, since a keynote is required to analyse and comprehend any combination of differentiations of sound, we must never lose sight of the Platonic method, which starts with one general view of all and descends from the universal to the individual [...]

Thus the mystic sentence, Om Mani Padme Hum, when rightly understood, [...] contains a reference to this indissoluble union between Man and the Universe, rendered in seven different ways and having the capability of seven different applications to as many planes of thought and action.

From whatever aspect we examine it, it means: “I am that I am”; “I am in thee and thou are in Me”. In this conjunction and close union, the good and pure man becomes a God [...]” (pages 418-419)

The supreme Buddha, or Amitābha, they say, at the hour of creation of man, caused a rosy ray of light to issue from his right eye. The ray emitted a sound and became Padmapāni Bodhisattwa. Then the Deity

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

allowed to stream forth from his left eye a blue ray of light, which, becoming incarnate in the two virgins Dolma, acquired the power to enlighten the minds of the living beings. [...]

Then Padmapāni, “the One in the Lotus” vowed never to cease working until he had made Humanity feel his presence in itself and had thus saved it from the misery of rebirth. He vowed to perform the feat before the end of the Kalpa, adding that, in case of failure, he wished that his head should split into numberless fragments. The Kalpa closed; but Humanity felt him not within its cold, evil heart. Then Padmapāni’s head split and was shattered into a thousand fragments. Moved with compassion, the Deity reformed the pieces into ten heads, three white, and seven of various colours. And since that day man has become a perfect number, or Ten. (page 420)

The three white heads are denoted by the three outermost points of the triangle and the remaining seven represent the spectroscopy of the whole universe, passing

BOOK OF RITUALS

through man into objectivity as his own vision. H.P.B. further explains:

In this allegory the potency of SOUND, COLOUR and NUMBER is so ingeniously introduced as to veil the real Esoteric meaning. To the outsider it reads like one of the many meaningless fairy tales of creation; but it is pregnant with spiritual and divine, physical and magical meaning. From Amitābha—*no colour*, or the *white glory*—are born the seven differentiated colours of the prism. These each emit a corresponding sound, forming the 7 of the *musical* scale. As geometry, among the mathematical sciences, is specially related to architecture, and also (proceeding to Universals) to cosmogony, so the ten Jods of the Pythagorean Tetrad, or Tetraktys, being made to symbolise the macrocosm, the Microcosm, or man, its image, had also to be divided into ten points. (page 420)

After comprehending the full significance of the above quoted passage, which is highly esoteric and ritualistic, one

The Language and the Concepts of the Vedic Hymns

can know the full import of the statement in the Man Sacrifice that “he multiplied by ten digits”. The Cosmic Man is said to have multiplied himself by tens (into ten, hundred, thousand, etc. which are but the repetitions of number 1 or the first cause in the decimal scale).

All the symbols and emblems that are described above and that are to be used in the present and future rituals find their elaborate explanation throughout the Secret Doctrine of H.P.B. We find explanations of the triangle, the cross, the square, the cube, etc. On page 189 of the same book it is said:

...One is the Spirit of the living God...who liveth forever. Voice, Spirit, [of the Spirit] and Word: this is the Holy Spirit.

—and the Quaternary. From this Cube emanates the whole Kosmos. Says the Secret Doctrine:

It is called to lie. The mystic Cube in which rests the Creative Idea, the manifesting Mantra [or

BOOK OF RITUALS

articulate speech—Vāch] and the holy Purusha [both radiations of prima materia] exist in the Eternity in the Divine Substance in their latent state

—during Pralaya.

For further explanations, the reader is requested to read the concerned passages in the Secret Doctrine or their originals which form the commentaries, some of which are in Sanskrit and some are remaining still in the sacerdotal language, Senzar.

The Future of the Rituals

The present set up of humanity is in real need of a ritualistic training. The play of mind has gained a tremendous momentum and has assumed thousands of applications upon the day-to-day problems of man. In fact, the problems are created by the speedy haphazard activity of the mind of the present-day mankind. The evolution of man on the mental and intellectual planes has reached the required area of expansion and even more. Hence the restlessness of the present-day mankind trying to solve the self-imposed problems. War on a colossal scale is an expression of such a stage in evolution. After two grand world wars, the whole humanity is found enmeshed within the ever-expanding network of individual war on the mental plane. Such a war has already set in and the results are gradually making their appearance. The break-up of races and nations into small political units and the break-

BOOK OF RITUALS

up of the institution of the family in a local scale denote the same thing, the unrest, the war and the rushing of man for something which he cannot visualise through his mind and intellect. The political, religious, scientific, social and economic splendours created by man have grown to unveil the myth, and man the creator of these splendours is being crushed under the very splendours. Now it is time that he wants a solution which means the merging of a new faculty in man. The analysing forces and the unifying forces are at the beck and call of man today but the synthesising and creative forces that are in him are concealed from his own comprehension. They still live in him to be rediscovered as the word lost to be regained.

The Masters of Wisdom and their followers know the solution since they are living it as their very life. The secret of liberation, the experience of the elixir of life which is the unconditioned bliss of man, the wealth of no wants still stand as the beacon star of the goal of life to the followers

The Future of the Rituals

of the Masters who live in peace amidst the self-created struggle and panic of humanity at large. They feel it their duty to open the gates of the path of nature for man to approach God within himself. They want to recruit as many members of the human society as possible, but the initiation fee is too heavy for the common man to pay easily. He has to earn his daily wages for many days and save it to pay the gate fee to tread the path. This fee is the self-proposed submission of man to the working of nature. The path of least resistance, a passive dynamism towards the mundane world and an active submission to the spiritual Hierarchy open the gates and bring the student into a direct group contact with one of the concerned persons. Then an actively confused man becomes a passively contained disciple. Since the initiation fee is so heavy, the admission into the mystery schools (in its real sense) is too slow and laborious. Yet nature gives the required urge to the true inner nature of man to retrace the

BOOK OF RITUALS

path of the wheel, to enter into the promised land which belonged to his forefathers and to enjoy the fruits of his own labour.

It is not far off when man leaves greatness and runs for goodness; ceases to conquer and begins to unfold; and fills the brilliant skeleton of his intelligence with the potent flesh and blood of love. The ritualists who have reached the stage of Grand Masters of their own lodges will transmit the magnetism of their cumulative group soul into the wider world. Ritualistic schools will be multiplied in number. Literary art contributes more and more to the form and structure of advanced types of drama than anything else. The power that is activated by money in the present day will be harnessed by some ritualistic personae of very high financial stature, when big financiers on the international scale work for the economic integration of the whole mankind. Some of these followers of the Masters are being reincarnated as the future scientists, artists,

The Future of the Rituals

philosophers and financiers. All these creations of man will be once again re-arranged and dramatised into a well-planned story of the civilisation to come. Of course, much of the present-day evil should be faced by these thankless workers and should be neutralised by the power of their goodwill. They have to face trial, tribulation, persecution and at times murder, but they know and remember that it is all a part of the drama. The fuel for the flame of spiritual light they permeate through them is the spiritual charge produced by the so many regular weekly, monthly and annual rituals conducted by the so many followers during their gatherings in the temples of initiation.

As their work gains some prominence, there will be an astonishing stir in the astral substance around the whole earth. In the light of this changed vibration of the astral matter, it becomes impossible for the common man to amass wealth, material or spiritual benefits. All the spiritual practices on the individual scale will contribute

BOOK OF RITUALS

only to the cosmic benefit so that the immediate occult phenomena and the advantage gradually fade away from the average followers of occultism. Cosmic Kundalini is awakened whenever individual Kundalini is invoked. The less one thinks of oneself, the healthier one is. The span of man will be increased by a decrease in the quantity of the daily food. Such are the effects of the changed rate of vibration in the astral matter of this earth. This change is a necessity in the evolution of the present man and is implemented by nature through the Masters and followers who co-operate with the Great Plan. Gradually every man feels the inner union as an urge of necessity. The urge increases until he is forced to co-operate in his mind with the inner plan. At first, this co-operation takes place in the name of a membership into a political party, a social organisation, a philanthropic society or a religious order. He works in co-operation with the so many activities and gradually trains himself to accommodate with the subtler

The Future of the Rituals

forces of his neighbour. This leads to the level of soul contact and by that time he will be entering the gateways of initiation, even without his own knowledge. The presence of his spiritual associates will be felt by him in the shape of fine impersonal thoughts of a unifying and glorifying nature, in which the individual finds peace and happiness for the first time. He gradually grows self-conscious of the peace and sends his mind in that direction. Now by this time he is already one with the plan. Beyond this, there is not much to be revealed openly through a book at the present stage.

The content of some rituals will be composed in the form of literary dramas of a mystic nature and will be enacted publicly in the theatres. Such literary compositions of the dramatic form are already in vogue though the scholars and the people do not exactly know what to do with them. The minds of certain modern poets will be stimulated into the ritualistic line of thought and they will

BOOK OF RITUALS

obey the instinct to produce such dramas. A beginning is already made through the two celebrated American playwrights, Maxwell Anderson and Thornton Wilder. Maxwell composed the semi-religious and semi-ethical mystery play, “A Journey to Jerusalem”. This contains the contemporary human mind in terms of the biblical story. Wilder has more successfully produced two dramas of the type of the ancient mysteries. The two plays, “Our Town” and “The Skin of Our Teeth”, contain exactly the same theme as that of the mystery dramas of the ritualistic temples of initiation. For example, the main content of the play “Our Town” forms the splendour of the whole day from dawn via noon and sunset. The beginning of the day is declared as practically the ending of the previous day and the end of the drama records the beginnings of the next. The character of the stage manager corresponds with the character of the immediate past master of some rituals. He announces the events of the play from time to time in the

The Future of the Rituals

form of broken conversations. The dawn of the globe and the opening of the day into the detail of the mundane aspect of a village in America is a peculiar attempt to mingle the daily life of man with the ritualistic plan of creation. The birth of the twins, the death of certain persons, a marriage and the daily life of a set of people are all symbolic and the significance should be studied between the lines with the aid of the ritualistic keys. Time sense is transcended in this drama. The first act begins at dawn and runs to noon. The second act begins after noon and runs to midnight. The third act links the night with the next dawn, the periodical beginning of things. The hours of the night are compared with the subconscious nature of man, wherein lie concealed the minds and work of the great thinkers of the past. “9’0 clock Spinoza; 10’0 clock Plato; 11’0 clock Aristotle; 12’0 clock Bible” is an example. At the time of the sunset, there is an order that all the documents should be burnt up, except the Holy Bible and the works of Shakespeare.

BOOK OF RITUALS

These two dramas made their way into the outward world as the first set of the mystery plays that are openly thrown to the public in the modern age. The missing links and the necessary explanations that are required for a slow and proper understanding of the nature of these mysteries will be made possible by the leisurely descriptions that are given in the form of some spiritual fiction. For this purpose, some novels will be written by certain induced minds of a Master or a disciple himself directly. Readers of the most materialistic levels will be allured and attracted by the sense of mystery and wonder that surrounds such plots. They read these books only as imaginary stories, positively disbelieving the truth of the existence of such a line. The impressions that are made upon their mind will work through their subconscious nature and bring the recollection of the past associations of these souls (many of them are necessarily Atlanteans) and prepare the path either in this life or the next. Thus, there is a conscious

The Future of the Rituals

well-planned scheme on the line of literature and fine arts. The language and similes of poetry are also undergoing peculiar changes, leaving the non-essential and leading the readers to the intuitive realms through cryptic writings using archetypal similes. Such a change is predicted by Sri Aurobindo about the future of poetry. A successful example of such poetic composition can be found in the grand cryptic poem, *The Wasteland*, by T.S. Elliot. We will gradually witness the enacting of the ritualistic dramas in open theatres when the aspired benefit is conferred as part of the aesthetic appreciation and the emotional alchemy of the audiences.

The Content and Form of the Future Rituals

The externalisation of the Hierarchy includes the renovation of the ancient rituals as an important item. This is much discussed in the book “The Externalisation of the Hierarchy” written by A.A.B. The Masters and the disciples who have undertaken the activity of the second and seventh rays of initiation will work for this renovation especially. Various schools of initiation will be founded under different names having different orders of rituals, the content being the same. There will be a definite attempt to transcend the differences of the so many outward religions which formed the non-essential part of the spiritualistic path. Such differences are bound to crop up through centuries from time to time due to the differentiation of the work of the Masters. Many of the ritualistic orders

The Content and Form of the Future Rituals

remained above religion from times immemorial though they are temporarily modified by the various exoteric religious missionaries and their political effects. The rituals of the medieval ages and the present age are partly coloured by the local religious influences and partly remain original in their nature. The inner content of the rituals, which forms the theme of the life of man as a drama, remained the same and the names of characters changed according to the local religious nomenclature. The leading rituals of the future age exist as spiritual dramas above religion and form a meeting place of the religion, philosophy and science of man. Hence there will be a wider scope for the people of many walks of life to be initiated into the orders. In the light of the above study one can easily visualise the set of rituals used in future. The scheme will be as follows:

1. The Initiation Ritual
2. The Theme of the Birth of the Father as Son through the Mother

BOOK OF RITUALS

3. The Journey of the Soul
4. The Story of Death and Rebirth
5. Zodiacal and Planetary Dramas
6. The “Day” of Creation
7. The Allegories of Number and Form

The first set of initiation rituals contains three mysteries of oral tradition. The first deals with the training and harnessing of the intellectual and emotional powers of man and man gaining mastery over them. The theory of analogy and the law of correspondences will be revealed to the student in a new light. The student is made to find his place in the universe and the ultimate fitness of things.

The mystery of the father and son deals with the holy trinity and the Brahma-Saraswati mystery of the Vedic and Puranic lore. The causeless cause, its glory and the consciousness that exists in the glory are respectively represented by the father, the mother and the son concepts.

The Content and Form of the Future Rituals

The secret of creation before it is reflected upon mind and matter as the secret of reproduction will be inculcated in all details. The first stage of seerhood is thereby conferred upon the student and he begins to grow and permeate into his objective presence through his consciousness until he meets the consciousness of the spiritual sun (this becomes the subplot of the son going out into the wider world in quest of his father).

The journey of the soul contains the essentials of the theme of the Mahabharata and the Bible. The Exodus of the sons of Israel in quest of the Promised Land and the journey of the five sons of Pandu in quest of their lost kingdom are synthesised to form a grand mystery play. Climbing up the hills, conducting pilgrimages, undertaking a sea voyage in the ark with the aid of the great fish and undertaking air travel on the face of the sun after assuming the form of the eagle taking up the serpents will all be enacted in an organised way.

BOOK OF RITUALS

All the sublime aspects of the various stories of the dying gods will be edited and re-arranged into a drama. This contains the story of Savitri and Satyavan and the story of the crucifixion and raising. Portions of the rituals from the Book of the Dead and the stories of Isis and Osiris will be synthesised. This ritual serves as a sacrament to give a second birth (spiritual birth) which is above death to the student.

Here also the drama of the day is introduced and the whole play has the background of the rotating wheel and the planetary angels coming and going, partaking of the chorus and the circle dance. The stories of various Prajapatis (patriarchs) form part of the drama. There will be twelve zodiacal rituals conducted during the twelve months of the year and each having a different theme. Of course, all the themes are now found as descriptions and

The Content and Form of the Future Rituals

episodes in the Mahabharata and the Book of Revelation of St. John and the Gospel of St. Mark in the New Testament.

The day of creation is a profound allegory dealing with the journey of man along the wheel of life from one birth to the next. All the divisions of the day (the 24-inch scale, the four divisions of six hours each, etc.) are found in a dramatised form. The whole set-up is now found in the opening chapters of the Mahabharata, wherein the life of a man is allegorised into the story of a disciple.