

AGNIYOGA

In the context of the Agniyoga practice of Valentina (Velentina Chmeofeyavona, The Assistant Editor of the Evening Dushanbey, a Republic of the erstwhile USSR and now an independent Nation), I am reminded of the following verses from the Byzantium poems of W.B. Yeats, an English mystic poet of the third decade of this century-

"O Sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre
And be singing masters of my soul
Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity."

After many hours of our discussion, Valentina asked me " Do you know something about Agniyouga? Is the Agniyoga system known and followed in India?"

I told her that a lot of researches and experiments have been made in the field of various Yoga systems in India, but I have not so far come across any system as Agniyoga.

But Vaelentina is unaffected. Her conviction is very firm. She fully believes that Agniyoga is great force of the future. She is of the opinion that the following of this cult will bring about the total emancipation of the human race. She believes that this fire will spread by itself throughout the world within a few hundred years. Actually, this power is going to be instrumental in bringing about 'Satyuga' (a golden era of spiritual awakening) for which the astral bodies of some great Indians are in touch with suitable persons all over the world.

I told Valentina that certain physical postures and exercise, the Raja yoga by mental concentration and the Bhaktiyoga by the purification of the heart know Hath yoga. When we, therefore, talk about Agniyoga, we suddenly tend to conclude that the 'Agni' should have special role to play in this technique. Valentina does not understand English or Hindi. Hearing her pronounce 'Agni' I ask my interpreter Abdul Vahab if she really knows the meaning of the word 'Agni' Valentina immediately strikes a matchstick and says 'Eta Agni'.

It is not only Valentina in Russia, who talks about Agniyoga. Nicholars Villichenko, a silent mental follower of Swami Shivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh for more than twenty five years, told me that a lot literature was available in that country on the subject. The credit of introducing this system to the county does in fact go to one Russian couple who lived about sixty years back in the Himalayas and had some following in the country. But Valentina believes that she is in direct communion with higher souls for receiving this knowledge and her experience does only testify to her claims.

The word " Yoga" as used in the Bhagwada Gita covers a much broader field. Unlike traditional schools of Karma, Jnana, Sankhya and Bhakti yoga, it talks about the Yoga of Repentance, Indestructible Brahma, Rajvidya, Splendour, and Cosmic vision. Three gunas, Superhuman etc. at length. Obviously, yoga here stands for a scientific method of exploring various human faculties.

I tell Valentina that in Kathopanishada the second boon which Nachiketa received from Yam raja was that of the knowledge of Agni. Nachiketa told Yam raja that there is no fear in heaven. There is no death or old age in it. Man lives in eternal happiness in it without any fear or sorrows. "Please, therefore tell me about that fire which is instrumental in carrying us to heaven. Only you are capable of doing it. Please do enlighten me because I have faith in it."

Yam raja said " O Nachiketa, this fire is the means of the realization of numberless high abodes. Cosmically, it is at the root of all creation. You should look for it indeed in the cave of knowledge of the learned people. " Yam raja, therefore explained to Nachiketa the form, the number of bricks used in the rite of sacrifice and also taught him the use of fire in it. Yam raja giving an additional boon said, "This fire will now be known after your name. One who follows the form, number and procedure of putting the fire in the altar of sacrifice, he is redeemed from the clutches of death and thereby lives in happiness without any sorrows or sufferings."

Traditionally, this knowledge of fire has so far been taken to mean to be the knowledge of the rite of the sacrifice. For the first time, perhaps, Lord Krishna, in the Bhagwada-Gita uses the word sacrifice in the sense of an action of knowledge and therefore, unites the ritual action with that of knowledge. Krishna tells here that the sacrifice of knowledge is far superior to the sacrifice of money and the austerities. The offerings of the senses in the fire of self control, the offerings of the objects in the fire of senses and the offering of Prana into Apana and that of Apana into Prana does indeed, therefore, only glorify Agniyoga. Indian philosophy describes five elements namely] air, fire, water and earth, to be very vital in the creation of the world. The six energy plexuses of the human body mentioned in Tantra represent the predominance of the one over the other elements in the center. Earth in Mooladhara, Water in Swadhisthana, Fire in Manipoora, Air in Anahata and ether in Vishuddha are their places. It is believed that the Kundaling awakens only when it transcends these five centers of the five elements. The Manipoora center of fire is the meeting point of the material and the metaphysical planes. As aspirant experiences extra sensory perceptions only after the transcendence of this center.

Agni has an important role in the upward journey of Kundalini, Ida, Pingala and Sushumna nerves of the spinal column in the human body are the vehicle of it. They represent the Moon, the Sun and the Fire respectively. It is only in Sushumna the nerve of fire, that another subtle nerve Brahmanadi exists. The Kudalini is supposed to be moving upward only through this path.

The third eye, existing at the center of the two eyes, does also represent the fire. Adi Shankaracharya, in his Saundarya Lahiri describes the right eye of the Divine Mother as the origin of the sun, the left of the moon and the third symbolizing fire of the setting sun of the evening. It was through this third eye that Lord Shiva burnt Kamadeva.

It should, however, not be taken to mean that the third eye only burns. It is basically indicative of "Shiva" who stands for general well being.

Valentina believes that she is the transformer of cosmic energy. She comes to know in advance about every catastrophe which is to take place anywhere in the world in the future course of time. She feels that the cosmic energy is being passed through her to minimize any devastation. Human calamities have in this manner been either reduced or put to an end. She however, becomes, motionless for sometime but regains normalcy soon.

Valentina informs me that she is continuously seeing some vision,. Sometimes she even starts witnessing scenes of the past or future unnoticed. When I ask her if she is seeing anything ever at the moment of our discussions, she fixes her sight and says, "Yes."

When Valentina has an occasion to look into the picture of the yogic experience of the awakening of Kundalini in the book Atmvijnana by Shri Vyasa Deva, she is overjoyed. She puts her finger on the ringin of the bell associated with the awakening of the "Anahata Chakra" and says that she has heard and experienced it many times. She has also seen the root letters Ham, Om and Chham symbolizing Ajna Chakra. She draws a figure

on a paper and asks, "What is this? I am constantly seeing it: I tell her "It is "OM", which, according to Indian Philosophy, is indicative of Supreme Reality-God."