

Schools of Sahaja or Shajiya and the Sri Ramchandra's Rajayoga

The name Sahaja is not a new coinage. It seems to have quite a long history. All systems claimed that theirs was the natural way of attainment of the ultimate Reality or liberation. This much alone is common to all - their claim to be the natural way.

The question that arises, of course, is what we do mean by the term 'Nature'. Before going to explain this it is better to refer to the several cults called sahaja or natural.

The tantrik buddhism tried to develop the sahajayana, the natural path or method, which could be used by all. It is stated that the middle path, not being extreme either to the right or left, is the natural or mean method that would lead to the ultimate condition of nirvana. The other two methods are said to be the Vajra-yana and Kalacakra-yana. The ultimate state reached by all, which has to be the natural condition, is called Sahaja. In this condition there is neither prajna nor upaya.

Dr. Shasibhusan Dasgupta writes "The sahajiya would never prescribe any unnatural strain on human nature, but would use human nature itself as the best help for realizing the truth. It is for this reason that the path has been always described as the easiest and the most natural. It will be totally wrong to suppose that the question of

moral discipline was in any way less emphasized in the sahajiya school .. the sahajiyas would recommend the transformation and sublimation of them ... The Sahaja-yana aims to realise the ultimate innate nature (sahaja) of the self as well as the dharmas, and it is sahaja-yana also because of the fact that instead of suppressing, and thereby inflicting undue strain on human nature, it makes man realise the truth in the most natural way"1 They discarded formal rules and regulations of religion, such as pratika worship of all kinds which, they hold, leads to confusion.

The pure citta must be attained; that is mahasukha. It is not a matter for discussion or dialectic or explanation. It can only be somehow known from the Guru who would teach, in practice, the several centres within the human body which have correspondential contact with the macrocosmos. Some of them taught the kundalini method which attempts to lift up the kundalini through the middle nerve (susumna). They of course conceived it also as female force (sakti) - Mahamudra in the navel - which is lifted up to the Sahasrara (yuganaddha).

The Buddhist sahajiyas conceived sahaja as Mahasukha which is the unity of the duality represented as man and woman, as upaya and prajna. It is essentially a sexual-yogic symbolism, and in gross forms, sexual-yogic practice as well.

The Vaisnava Sahaja supplied the element of love that transformed the relationship and sublimated it. However the doctrine of parakiya and svakiya - love for the Supreme Other (Para) has been praised as more transforming and sublimating, leading to Mahasukha, whereas the latter may lead to maha-avidya because of its selfish inwardness.

There have been some sahajiyas who have claimed sahaja as rasa, bhajan and so on. As one of the modern expositors of Sri Krsna Caitanya's methodology has stated "Sri Krsna Caitanya had never permitted amorousness. In other words, it is wrong to think that amorousness or voluptuousness is natural at all. It is unnatural. He claims that his sahaja was audarya Lila not madhurya lila, as Ramanand Rai's disciples claimed."2

The sahajiya cult had developed esoteric concepts which are clothed in mystical language. Most mystic bhakti poetry had its roots in the sahaja. But the whole trouble about this mysticism is that it enlightens, or seeks to enlighten, the vulgar terms by importing sophisticated mystical meanings or suggestions, rather than by trying to sublimate them. The result has been disastrous to religious experiences as well as to spirituality.

The original concept of sahaja is that it meant the experience that comes about by living with the Ultimate Reality, rather than what it has been ingeniously derived

as that which arises at the time of the origination of any entity (saha jayate iti sahajah: Hevajra tantra). The natural way of living was said to be the most happy state. The happiest state or mahasukha comes by living in the Divine Nature rather than in the lower Nature. The Purusa in Samkhya is higher Nature and the Prakrti, in its equilibrium, is happier (Prakrti-lina) than the state of being in the modifications of that Nature (apara-prakrti) - such as the outer world, or rather in the sense organs and motor organs, the manas, the ahamkara or even the Buddhi. The conception of the buddhi as an evolute of ahamkara in certain versions of evolution of the categories is not to be overlooked where the living in the ahamkara or the pure ego transcending the manas, buddhi and citta is of course a happy condition. The sahaja, then, can mean the condition adapted to a level of existence. It is therefore a very relative term; and as an absolute term in the context of liberation, rather than in levels of bondage, it means living in the Ultimate Purusa or Reality.

In the Sri Ramchandra's Rajayoga as expounded by Sri Ram Chandra the word Sahaja refers to the life in the Ultimate Zero or Nature which alone can be said to be natural to the liberated being. He considers that, in this Yoga, the life in that Zero makes living in the context of the evolutions of that original Nature or levels also natural. The primal superfine con-sciousness is

submerged in the evolutes or rings of Nature, but it is to be made to flow freely through the whole universe of being, in the microcosm as in the macrocosm, and that makes natural living easier and perfect, and life itself a delight (ananda). When the superfine consciousness of God is fronted, and the lower grosser forms of consciousness are subordinated and supported by it and become inner then Nature is said to function according to its higher lines of Being. **Natural life is divine life, or life in, through and for the Divine**. Its force is the real prana, breath - the upanisadic pranasya pranah - and it is this force that is introduced into the seeker's heart by the Guru who has become the carrier of this pranic force. The function of the Guru is the pranahuti - the offering of the primal superfine consciousness-force or Life itself - that makes for the upward living (ujjivana) in God.

Therefore, as in all Sahaja cults and tantras, the Guru becomes the central figure and personality who does all the work of the Supreme Centre of God in each and every individual seeker after the Divine life or life in Divine Nature. In fact the Guru is an instrument or organ provided by that very Divine Nature to bring its own inner and fundamental spiritual nature out of each and every individual ray of spirit, known as the ego or jiva, which has wrapped itself up in many sheaths out of its (jiva's) own outgoing activity (karma).

In consonance with the Divine view of Reality, bondage

consists in not fronting the Inward Divine, but in bringing it out of oneself in all one's parts, or integrally. Freedom lies in fronting the Divine Force and making all brackets and rings, cakras and granthis, work without impediment and without ignorance of the Inner Divine Primal Consciousness-Force, and that which sustains that force also.³ It is not so much the awakening of the Kundalini at the Muladhara and making it pass through the Susumna (middle nadi) to the Heart and thence to the Sahasrara (crown of the head). It appears more to be the bringing down of the Transcendental Breath of Breaths of the Centre down into each individual heart and then spontaneously perceiving its upward movement to the transcendent levels of being - even beyond the sthula, suksma and linga sariras to the aprakrti Nature that is the real being and status of the spiritual ego.

Dr. S. P. Srivastava, in his address to the annual convention of the Vasant Panchami of Mahatma Samarth Guru Sri Ram Chandra (1962), has thrown some light on this concept of the Natural Path. Sahaj does not mean merely the easy path, for this is oversimplification. It is a state that depends on the supreme surrender to the Beloved Master in which one accepts all that is given by the Beloved - good or bad, painful or pleasant, honourable or shameful, distasteful or delightful. It is of course easy and natural once the Divine Master sheds his grace into the individual. The

word sahaja can be taken to mean, he says, that which is 'born of the difference between Sah (Brahman or He) and Ha (the jiva or pranasakti)'. Perhaps it may be more suitable if it is stated that it is the condition born of the union of That or Ultimate (Sah) or TAM and the jiva or pranasakti, which is what the Master transmits into the seeking soul. It is therefore the path of ascent through the inpouring of the Supreme prana sakti, pranasya pranah of the Upanisadic doctrine, which is called Pranahuti by the Master. This appears to be appropriate. The sahaja, thus, is specially the path, not so much of Grace and its descent, but of ascent of the individual to the supreme state with the aid of the Sakti or Adyasakti or Prana which is poured into one by the supreme adept - the GURU.

Thus, the supremely natural path for the seeker is to be taken up by the Divine Master and lifted up by His supreme Life-Force to live in God, for God and by God Himself.

In this path there is no possibility of deviation or crookedness or delay. It is the open path, the Royal Path - Raja marga and Raja Yoga, or the Divine Way through love, devotion, and faith.