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# SCIENCE, SPIRITUALITY AND TECHNOLOGY – ESSENTIAL AND INTERDEPENDENT

by

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# SCIENCE, SPIRITUALITY AND TECHNOLOGY

## ------ ESSENTIAL AND INTERDEPENDENT

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"*Andhaṁ Tamaḥ Praviśanti Ye Avidyāṁ Upāsate;*
*Tato Bhūya Iva Te Tamaḥ Ya U Vidyāyām Ratāḥ.*
*Vidyām Ca Avidyām Ca Yaḥ Tat Veda Ubhayaṁ Saha,*
*Avidyayā Mṛtyuṁ Tīrtvā Vidyayā Amṛtaṁ Aśnute.*

Those who are devoted to Science enter into blinding darkness; those who are immersed in Spirituality enter into still greater darkness, as it were.

He who grasps both of them, Science and Spirituality, together as one, overcomes death through Science and enjoys immortality through Spirituality."

--- Īśa Upaniṣad (9 & 11) [about 800 B.C.]

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that the modern world is dominated by Science and Technology, but surprisingly enough, not many individuals seem to appreciate the distinction between the two. In general, not only does a person of average education not understand what the words Science and Technology really mean or stand for, but even those who teach and write on these two powerful forces that have already revolutionized human life on this planet are also more often than not confused about the precise definition and scope of either, as well as the extent of their interdependence. This rather surprising state of affairs may be somewhat more pronounced today in the developing African, Asian and Latin American countries, but applies almost equally to the intelligentsia of technologically and industrially advanced countries in Europe and North America.

Spirituality is a word that is yet to gain wide acceptance among educated people all over the world. However, it has been increasingly referred to in recent decades in philosophical, interreligious and even socio-political forums in different parts of the globe and particularly on the Indian sub-continent, where the concepts underlying this word have been propagated effectively and eloquently by some great thinkers of this century like Sri Aurobindo, Vinoba Bhave, Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan and Jawaharlal Nehru. As reflected in the teachings of the great world religions like Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam,

Spirituality has had a powerful impact on human society through religious organisations for well over three thousand years. All the same, its universality and non-sectarian nature, unifying while transcending individual religions, has been appreciated by thinkers in different religious spheres only during this century.

While discussing Science, Spirituality and Technology, words like engineering and religion are likely to crop up and get mixed with one or more of these three entities. Hence there is a great need to define the nature and scope of every relevant word as clearly and unambiguously as possible.

In this paper, apart from defining and discussing the roles of Science, Spirituality and Technology, an attempt is made to highlight the interdependence of these three disciplines or processes and to trace with a few examples the evolution of Technology not only from Science, but also from Spirituality. It is also shown on the authority of Indian texts and experience that the human intellect, referred to generally as Buddhi in ancient Sanskrit texts has to play the crucial role in the pursuit of both scientific and spiritual knowledge. In fact, it thrives and evolves continuously only through the simultaneous pursuit of both types of knowledge.

## 2. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Reference to standard English Dictionaries will show that the word Science is derived from the Latin root 'scire', meaning 'to know' and denoted just 'knowledge' to start with. However, over the years it has come to be

defined as 'systematic and formulated knowledge' or even as 'knowledge ascertained by observation and experiment, critically tested, systematised and brought under general principles.' The word Technology is derived from the Greek root 'techne' meaning 'art' and was first used to mean 'the practical or industrial art' based on scientific knowledge. Later it got defined as 'the practice, description and terminology of any or all of applied sciences of commercial value' or even 'the knowledge and means to produce the material necessitics of a society.' The word 'Engineering' is generally taken as a derivative of the Latin word 'ingenium' meaning 'device' and was first associated with 'the design and construction of military works.' Civil Engineering, as opposed to Military Engineering, was recognised as such somewhat later and got defined as 'the design, construction and maintenance of works of public utility (roads, bridges, canals, gas works etc.).' With progress in technology, the public works came to include 'roads, railways, sewers, bridges, harbours, canals and the like' and different engineering disciplines like mechanical, metallurgical, chemical, electrical, electronic etc. acquired independent status during this century.

It is evident from the foregoing that there has been a gradual evolution in the meaning and scope of the words Science, Technology and Engineering. Of these three, Science is the word that has been most frequently used in governmental as well as non-governmental forums and publications throughout the world. Expressions like scientific temper, scientific approach, scientific methodology and scientific thinking have also been

widely used to highlight the rational, objective and unbiased operations of the free intellect in collecting, codifying and communicating knowledge. Absence of prejudice, avoidance of preconceived notions, eschewing of emotions, openness to others' views and observations, global vision, complete freedom of thought, fearless pursuit of truth etc. have all come to be associated with scientific achievements. There is no other motivation behind Science at its best and purest except the relentless search for knowledge. The use or abuse of the knowledge thus gathered, considerations of material benefits for individuals, groups or nations and the possible application of the knowledge to satisfy one or more human, social, commercial or political needs simply do not figure in the domain of pure Science.

Modern (i.e. post-sixteenth century) Science, which has had its spectacular development mainly in the European and North American countries, has come to be characterized by some special features and may well be considered as distinct in its assumptions, procedures, goals and methods from the earlier sciences in Europe and from the traditional sciences of India and China. The most important hallmark of this Modern Science is a special and subtle combination of reason and experiment, theory and observation, mathematics and measurement, individual imaginative creativity and publicly repeatable verification.

Today the vast spectrum of knowledge, pure and applied, starts with Science at one end, passes through Technology in the middle and embraces

Engineering at the other extreme. Whenever speculations, studies and experiments are concerned with the application of scientific knowledge to satisfy some need or aspiration of individuals, groups or societies, we enter into realm of Technology. Basically there is no great difference in appearance between the laboratories and institutions pursuing Science or Technology. However, there is a basic difference in approach since the technologist is concerned with the application of Science to satisfy or fulfil one or more human or social needs or aspirations, while the scientist pursues knowledge for its own sake. Thus the scientist and the technologist constitute in some respects two different species of knowledge seekers. Their training, motivation and involvement in society vary accordingly, although they have many things in common in their temper, thinking and methodology. A scientist can well understand and appreciate what a technologist is doing and vice-versa, but it is generally not easy for one to play the role of the other effectively.

The technology developed in a laboratory has to satisfy many special requirements and pass through one or more intermediate developmental stages before it enters the realm of Engineering. The establishment of a factory to produce items for consumption by society is primarily the job of engineers, but the latter generally look to technologists for development of the right technology that can be engineered by them. Although technologists may conceive of and develop different processes for the same product, only that process has a good chance of acceptance by engineers, which is viable, appropriate and economical, for which raw

materials as well as capital inputs are easily available and the political climate is favourable and lastly whose products are in demand. Thus while scientists may well work in their 'ivory towers', technologists and engineers have to be fully aware of the currents and cross-currents in the society they belong to and have often to work in close cooperation with administrators, capitalists and entrepreneurs for the successful engineering of an appropriate technology.

It is relevant to note here that in the highly industrialized English-speaking countries, the obvious distinction between Technology and Engineering has got generally blurred in recent years, even in the eyes of practising technologists and engineers. However, there have been notable exceptions. Addressing the Golden Jubilee Session of the Indian National Science Academy on January 16, 1984 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, Dr. Anna J. Harrison, President, American Association for the Advancement of Science, tried to bring out the clear distinction between the three words under discussion in the following words:

> "...I find it helpful to approach Science, Technology and Engineering as processes. -- Each of these processes generates a body of knowledge consisting of a data base, an array of methodologies and an array of concepts. It is the combined body of knowledge that is such a significant resource in the resolution of societal issues.--"

To highlight the difference between Science, Technology and Engineering in another way, scientists are concerned with concepts, theories, proofs and explanations, while technologists tend to emphasize tangible processes, products and results. Engineers worry about designs, costs, productivity, regulatory decisions and patent protection. Thus the interests and objectives of the three groups display fundamental differences. To put it in a nutshell, it can be said that the main base of Science is original thinking, that of Technology innovative thinking and that of Engineering practical thinking.

To cite just one concrete example here from the popular field of nuclear science, technology and engineering, it is Science here when measurements are made of the number and nature of particles emitted in the break-up or fission of the nucleus of a heavy metallic element like uranium or plutonium. It is, however, Technology when this scientific knowledge is applied to develop processes for power generation or nuclear explosion. We get concerned with Engineering when appropriate technologies are then made use of in designing and building atomic power stations or in designing and manufacturing atomic bombs. Science leads to Engineering via Technology and in turn Engineering and Technology support and sustain Science in both its educational and research aspects through their products.

## 3. THE NATURE OF SPIRITUALITY

There has been increasing agreement in recent years among thinkers drawn from different religious traditions that Spirituality is some thing universal like Science, restricted neither to the East nor to the West. It has very little to do with beliefs, doctrines, theological arguments and proofs or even enthusiastic evangelism. The spiritual quest culminates in a new birth, a new person, reflected in physical well-being and stillness, emotional stability and compassion, intellectual clarity and serenity, a new combination of rare qualities that represent a further evolution of the human being.

Spirituality obviously refers to the quality of spirit, as opposed to that of matter, which is the main domain of Modern Science. The relevant Latin root here is 'spirare' meaning 'to breathe'. Spirit is the very breath of life and Spirituality may thus be taken to connote fundamental qualities deeper than those of the body, mind or intellect. According to Vinoba Bhave, genuine Spirituality begins where Science based only on the normal intellect comes to an end, but it will never contradict Science. In going beyond the normal intellect, Spirituality inevitably poses some problems in comprehension and communication at the intellectual level. All the same, it is generally conceded that the assimilation of spiritual knowledge gets reflected in the human personality in several tangible ways through awareness of and sensitivity to every thing in

creation, through love and understanding for others and through service of all without exception. In Sri Aurobindo's words, 'Spirituality is in its essence an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul which is other than our mind, life and body.... and a turning, a conversion, a transformation of our whole being as a result of the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth or waking into a new becoming or new being, a new self, a new nature.'

Science and Spirituality have for long been dealt with as separate and mutually antagonistic entities. The so-called conflict between them as well as the great need for their integration has therefore formed the theme of many a conference or seminar in recent decades. The author himself participated as early as in 1963 in an All-India Seminar held in Patna 'to explore a keynote of the new age, the creative collaboration of Science and Spirituality'. In a message to this Seminar, the Mother, a French lady, at Sri Aurobindo Ashram said, 'Do not divide what is one. Both Science and Spirituality have the same goal--the Supreme Divinity. The only difference between them is that the latter knows it and the other not'. While sending his good wishes to this Seminar India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: 'The future of the world is tied up with the growth of Science, and life becomes more and more dependent on Science. At the same time, life with Science only as its guide and without spiritual basis is very likely to lead to disaster for humanity'. In an interview shortly after this Seminar, Vinoba Bhave

conveyed his views as follows: 'To me Science is equal to Spirituality. One is more concerned with the outer aspect of the world; the other with the inner aspect, and both combined will give us the whole world in ourselves'. As he later put it in a different way, 'Science has force, speed and action, but no direction'. Obviously this direction has to be imparted by Spirituality.

The unanimous view of the Patna Seminar was expressed unambiguously in the following words: 'Although in popular view Science refers to the knowledge of the outer world and Spirituality to the knowledge of man's Spirit or Self, this Seminar is of the considered view that knowledge is one and indivisible. Science has to be understood in its original meaning of 'knowledge', and as such must include both knowledge of the outer world and of man's own nature. The spectrum of Truth has to be recognised as extending on the one hand into the sensory world, which has been the chief concern of the scientist so far, and on the other hand into the world of Spirit. The unwavering pursuit of Science in this sense, and the cultivation of the scientific spirit or approach, even with regard to the study of the nature of man, provides, in the view of this Seminar, the only antidote to the maladies affecting mankind today'.

It is not commonly appreciated that spiritual knowledge can give rise to its own Technology and Engineering, as scientific knowledge does.

Taking Gautama Buddha, the Founder of Buddhism, as a representative of the great explorers in the realm of the Spirit, his experience of the Bliss of Nirvana at the foot of Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya over 2500 years ago was the culmination of a great spiritual quest that lasted for several years. When he desired to place his extra-ordinary spiritual knowledge at the disposal of his suffering fellow human beings so that they could also look for the now-famous Middle Way and seek their supreme fulfilment in Nirvana, the great spiritual scientist became an equally great spiritual technologist. The Buddha's famous first sermon at Sarnath on the outskirts of Varanasi to his five disciples thus heralded the birth of a new spiritual technology viz., the Buddhist Eight-Fold Path to Spiritual Perfection. Later even during his life time, a beginning was made to engineer this unique technology on a large scale for "Bahujana-hitāya, Bahujana-sukhāya" (the good of the many, the happiness of the many) through the establishment of the Buddhist Sangha (the Fellowship of Buddhist Monks). It was left to Emperor Ashoka a couple of centuries later to organize this Sangha on an effective basis and to spread Buddha's new spiritual technology far and wide in the world, thus crowning himself with glory as a spiritual engineer par excellence.

In an age even earlier to that of Gautama Buddha, the Yoga tradition evolved in India as a new spiritual technology deriving its inspiration from the ancient Samkhya philosophy with its extra-ordinary spiritual insights attributed to Sage Kapila, a pre-historic personage about whom

we know very little. The codification and condensation of the vast knowledge of Yoga technology acquired over perhaps a millennium or more was attempted much later, may be around 300 B.C., by Sage Patanjali in his famous Yoga Sutras, considered even today as the foundation text of the Aṣtānga Yoga (the Eight-Constituent Yoga), also known as Rāja Yoga or Classical Yoga. The engineering of this fascinating technology took place in the Indian sub-continent rather slowly, over centuries, because for long its knowledge was kept rather secret and confined to a few small Yoga Centres or Ashrams. During this century, however, its engineering has been taken up and achieved on a large and global scale by a number of centres, institutes, societies etc. in Europe, America and elsewhere.

Today, with our increasing understanding of spiritual phenomena, we may well equate spiritual experience with scientific experiment and consider the knowledge arising from each as adding to the already existing vast reservoir of knowledge under the heads of Spirituality and Science respectively. However, as hinted already, experiential knowledge is more difficult to communicate than experimental knowledge, since the former requires a much more evolved intellect than the latter for assimilation. Even in regard to scientific knowledge, communication of complex and subtle findings to even persons with average or even more than average intellectual attainment and training is often not easy. While on this subject we should not be unmindful of the great differences among human beings as from a dull moron to a scintillating genius in the sphere

of the intellect, or from a sickly person to a magnificent athlete in the physical sphere. In the sphere of Spirituality, the differences are even subtler and profounder touching the very core of a person, and hence it should not come to us as a susprise if the sages, saints and mystics of different spiritual traditions have met with difficulties in communicating to their fellow human beings their experiential or spiritual knowledge. The evolution of spiritual technologies and their engineering on a large scale as evidenced in the rise of religions and their churches in different parts of the world have also been subject to these difficulties in communication, especially when linguistic and cultural barriers have also to be overcome.

## 4. THE INTELLECT AND THE SPIRIT

The intellect is the highest and most powerful faculty that human beings possess and hence it constitutes their main instrument to probe Nature or Spirit i.e., to gether scientific or spiritual knowledge. From the Vedic times and for over three millennia the Indian spiritual tradition has made a clear distinction between Jñānendriyāni (the five senses of knowledge viz., eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin), Manas (the mind or seat of feelings and emotions) and Buddhi (the intellect or the reasoning faculty) in homo sapiens.

As the Bhagavad-Gita puts it:

"Iṇdriyāṇi parāṇyāhur-Indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ Manaḥ.
Manasas-tu parā Buddhir-yo Buddheḥ paratas-tu Saḥ.
The senses of knowledge are referred to as powerful; however, the mind is higher than the senses; the intellect is higher than the mind; and He (the Spirit or Self) is indeed higher than the intellect."(111.42)

In this description the word "mind" refers to the inner instrument or faculty responsible for emotional and aesthetic experiences as well as responses, while the word "intellect" stands for the power of reason, the rational faculty, at its purest and best. The mind can colour, affect or weaken the intellect, if care is not taken to isolate it and ensure its pristine purity as well as inherent strength.

In the Katha Upanishad we have the oft-quoted and popular metaphor of the chariot to distinguish between the different constituents of Man's mental or internal being, the highest or deepest being Ātman (the Spirit or Self):

"Know the body for a chariot and the Self for the master of the chariot; know the intellect for the charioteer and the mind for the reins only. The senses they speak of as the steeds of the chariot and the objects of sense as the paths in which they move; the thinkers call him the enjoyer who has his mind and senses yoked to the Self." (I.3-4)

Thus the ancient Indian texts clearly distinguish between the senses, the mind, the intellect and the Self, the last one occupying the highest position in the spiritual or evolutionary hierarchy.

It is also relevant here to stress the fact that the human intellect is quite capable, according to these ancient Indian texts, of grasping or comprehending or experiencing the Unseen Higher Self or Spirit, once it attains to its own purest and highest level. The supreme joy in realising the Self in its totality is actually experienced only by the intellect and not by the other lower faculties, as the Bhagad-Gita asserts in its description of the highest meditative state:

> "That supreme joy is grasped by the intellect, but not by the senses".(VI.21)

The Katha Upanishad also talks of the realization of the Spirit or Self in a similar vein:

> "This is the secret Self in all existences and is invisible; yet is it seen by the seers of the subtle through their subtle and sharp intellects".(I3.12)

To appreciate the role of the intellect in penetrating the realm of the Spirit, it is also necessary to understand the ancient Indian classification of Knowledge. Vidyā is a Sanskrit word derived from the root "Vid" meaning "to know" and thus has the same derivation as the English word

"Science". From the Vedic times the difference between Parā Vidyā (or often simply Vidyā) meaning Higher Knowledge and Aparā Vidyā (or simply Avidyā) referring to Lower Knowledge was well understood in Indian intellectual circles. The former can be described as the Science of the Unseen or the Science of the Universe within and the latter as the Science of the Seen or the Science of the Universe without. Among recent Western thinkers, Rudolf Steiner of Germany appreciated and stressed this distinction by coining the expressions "Naturwissenschaften" and "Geisteswissenschaften" to refer to what comes in India today under the scope of Avidyā (Modern Science) and Vidyā (Ancient Spirituality). Broadly speaking, we are concerned here with Science and Religion with a capital "S" and "R" respectively, not any particular Science nor any particular religion. The interesting and striking point, of course, is that the intellect has the crucial role to play in the process of "knowing" i.e., collecting, correlating, codifying and communicating knowledge, under both these heads.

Let us now listen to what three very early Upanishads, the Mundaka Upanishad, the Katha Upanishad and the Isa Upanishad, have to say on these two Vidyās or Sciences:

> "Two-fold is the Knowledge (or Science) that must be known, of which the Knowers of the Brahman tell us, namely the Higher Knowledge (or Spirituality) and the Lower Knowledge (or Science), of which the Lower consists

> of the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, the Atharva Veda, the chantings, the rituals, grammer, etymology, prosody and astronomy, and the Higher Knowledge (or Spirituality) by which the Immutable (the Invisible) is known (seen)". (Mundaka Upanishad. I.1. 4-5)
>
> "Far from each other are these, opposite and divergent, the one known as Avidyā (Lower Knowledge or Science) and the other as Vidyā (Higher Knowledge or Spirituality)". (Katha Upanishad I.2.4)
>
> "He who grasps the Higher and Lower Knowledge (Science and Spirituality) together as One, he overcomes Death by the Lower Knowledge and enjoys Immortality through the Higher Knowledge". (Isa Upanishad--11)

The purpose of the above statements is quite clear. There are two types of Knowledge, one complementary to the other, both essential and to be gathered by the human intellect, even though the techniques and methodologies for acquiring them may not be the same. The Higher Knowledge leads to the Spirit or Self, but it is the intellect which has to play the main role here, exactly as in probing the visible Universe and acquiring the Lower Knowledge.

## 5. INTELLECT AND ENLIGHTENMENT

The Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita leave us in no doubt as to the crucial role of the intellect in apprehending the Self. In fact, this should be obvious to any one who ponders over the main difference between Man and all other living species, which lies in his possession of the intellect. Thus, if Man has the power or capacity to see the Unseen, to know the Unknown, to realise the Self, unlike the other living creatures, this power or capacity can only come through his intellect. The clarion call of the Bhagavad-Gita is:

> "Take refuge in the intellect." (II.49)
> "With the loss of intellect the human being is ruined." (II.63)

All spiritual texts and all great teachers in India have without exception highlighted this tremendous potential of the human intellect in the spiritual quest.

How does the intellect proceed to probe and grasp the Unseen? The capacity of the intellect to acquire the two types of knowledge is also dealt with in ancient Indian texts, particularly the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali. To start with, the normal functioning of the intellect is stated as follows by Patanjali:

> "The sources of right knowledge are direct observation, rational inference and verbal cognition." (I.7)

In the light of the recent developments in Modern Science one may broaden the basis of this definition to include experimental observations with sophisticated instruments like the microscope, the telescope etc., as also scientific literature made up of books, journals, conference proceedings etc. However, Patanjali gives us a good and comprehensive listing of the sources of scientific knowledge i.e., the knowledge of the universe that can be comprehended by the senses with or without instruments. However, to gather spiritual knowledge, the knowledge of the Unseen, the Imperishable, the Universe within, the intellect has to be trained and reoriented to apply itself in a different way. Over and above the three sources of knowledge enumerated earlier, it has now to tap another subtler source of knowledge by first silencing the ever-ebullient mind and isolating itself from all extraneons influences. Here new methods and techniques, particularly those dealt with in the Bhagavad-Gita and the Yoga- Sutras, become relevant for cultivating and conditioning the intellect to embark on the new adventure of exploring the secret, complex and vast domain of the Spirit.

While the insights that have resulted over millennia from the researches in the field of Vidyā can be examined and evaluated objectively and critically by traditional intellectual methods, an entirely novel approach

is called for to "see" the "Unseen". According to the ancient Indian texts, the intellect has to be purified and refined through a new way of life characterized by dedication to acknowledged spiritual values like Ahimsā (Non-Injury), Satya (Non-Falsehood) and Asteya (Non-Exploitation). In a luminous passage the Bhagavad-Gita exhorts the seekers of Higher knowledge to qualify for the same first:

> "Know this through extreme humility, persistent enquiry and loving service; the seers who have seen the Supreme will impart the Higher Knowledge to you". (IV. 34)

The above verse lays stress on the fact that the whole body-mind-intellect complex needs purification and homogenization, the body through active service, the mind through an attitude of humility and the intellect through tireless questioning. The practice of Dhyāna (Meditation) is then recommended to raise the intellect to higher levels of perception than hitherto, in fact, to enter into what the Yoga tradition calls the domain of Samādhi (Superconsciousness).

The careful and persevering cultivation of the intellect on the yogic path of Dhyāna gradually attunes it to achieve a direct vision of the realm of the Spirit with ever-increasing power and intensity in new Samādhi experiences at different levels of consciousness. Patanjali highlights the nature of this new vision in the following well-known aphorisms of his Yoga-Sutras:

> "Herein the intellectual cognition bears the Truth. This cognition is different, because of its special context, from the cognitions based on texts and inference." (I. 48 and 49)

Thus the intellect is trained to assume a new role through continuous purification, careful cultivation and systematic conditioning. This vision of the Unseen introduces a new dimension in the evolution of the individual. The access to this new mode of cognition is hailed as the attainment of Prajñā (Enlightenment, Superconsciousness, Wisdom or Illumination) in the Indian spiritual tradition. Prajñā is in fact, the hallmark of Spirituality. Traditional vocabulary is inadequate to describe this superconscious state. However, by this very nature it is accessible to all and may be attained by any seeker, provided he or she fulfils the essential requirements, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, nationality, sex etc.

The Prajñā experience is very real, quite concrete and absolutely convincing to the human being who goes through it but by its very nature this experience cannot be communicated easily to others who have not had it. The Indian spiritual tradition was aware of this problem from the beginning. As the Rig Veda, the oldest of the Vedas, put it, "Ekam Sat Viprāḥ bahudhā vadanti. The reality may be one, the learned will describe it in different ways." The same spiritual realization may thus lead to different technologies (religions, creeds etc.) and different engineering modes (churches, sects, organizations etc.).

According to the Indian tradition, the attainment of Prajñā, this extreme refinement of the intellect that enables it to see the Unseen, does not transform a man physically and mentally in any radical way, from the superficial point of view of his fellow-men. However, subtle changes in qualities and attitudes become visible to those who are close to such a person. The Bhagavad-Gita lists the following spiritual characteristics as natural attributes of the Sthita-Prajñā (Man of Steadfast Illumination):

(i) beyond passion, fear and anger (II. 56)

(ii)devoid of possessiveness and egoism. (II. 71)

(iii)Firm in understanding and unbewildered. (V. 20)

(iv)engaged in doing good to all living creatures (V.25)

(v) friendly and compassionate to all (XII. 13)

(vi)without expectation, pure and skilful in action (VII.14)

What a glorious prospect the foregoing description holds to our restless and care-worn world! The seer of the Unseen becomes a blessing to society through his many rare and desirable qualities, which are natural to the level of his intellectual attainment and are by no means cultivated. Above all, as already highlighted earlier by a verse (VI.21) of the Bhagavad-Gita, the seer of the Self is filled with Ānanda (Supreme Joy) for which there is no parallel in our normal experiences. The Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita assert again and again that such a seer has gone beyond worldly qualities like pleasure and pain and enjoys a bliss that is ever-lasting and unaffected by the happenings in the world around.