CHAPTER 4
TEACHINGS OF KATHAMRITA.

Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita is a full of valuable teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Rather, it may be said that the most significance of the book is its teachings. Though it is not an easy task to classify the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna because, his teachings are sumannayi or synthetic in nature. But for the means of discussion it has been classified in 14 points. Firstly, we will discuss 'Tantra'.

'Tantra'

Non-dualist Sri Ramakrishna did not dwell upon in detail very much regarding Tantra, though at the beginning of his life, practising the disciplines of Tantra; under the guidance of Brahman. He attained fulfilment in 64 types of yogic practices directed by Tantra¹. This tantric practice did not introduce any new current in Bengal. Rather, even many days before the arrival of

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¹ c.f. "In the Hindu Tantras we find that in the Muladhara cakra (which is the lowest of the cakras) remains coiled an electric force known as the serpent power (coiled, like a serpent) or the kula, kundalini sakti, and the Sadhana consists in rousing this Sakti, lying dormant in the Muladhara and making her unite with the Siva in the Sahasrara, and we have seen that the union of Sakti with the siva is, what is meant by perfection in Tantric yoga".

Sri Ramakrishnadev, Bengal was much known as field of Tantric practices, Tantric practices were then thought to be the principal current of spiritual practice. The name of Rāmprasād may be mentioned among Tantric Sādhakas in the eighteenth century. In this context, the remark of a critic deserves recollection - "Śādhak Rāmprasād gave a new form to the devotional practices of power through his Kāli Sādhana. This new form is a comprehensive universal form ... We notice the first attempt in Rāmprasād to give it an all acceptable form by keeping Kāli Sādhana above all sorts of communal boundary. We notice the full manifestation of the voice that was raised for the first time by Rāmprasād in the Sakti-sadhana in Sri Rāmakrishna, the workshipper of 'Bhabatārini Shyāma' at Dakshineswar,1.

"Śādhak rāmprasād thār Kāli sādhanaṁ bhitar diya sakti-sādhanaṁ ekti nābrup dān karīṣchen, ei nābrup haila ekti byapak sārbajanaṁ rup ... rāmprasāder madhye āmārā pratham cēstā lakṣhya kari, Kāli sādhanaṁ sārbapraṇār sampradāyik fandir urdhhe tulia tāhāke ekti sārbajanagrāhāya rup dite, banglā deser sakti sādhoṇāy rāmprasād ei pratham je sur tulilen, dakshineswarer bhabatārini shyāmār pujarī sīrīmā Krishner mahāye āmārā sei sureri purna bikāla lakṣhya karite parī"2

1. Dasgupta, Sashibhusan/ Bhārater Sākti Sādhanā Sakta - sahitya - / 2nd ed. 1372./ P.208
2. Ibid
Thus, it will not be a mistake, if we judge Sri Ramakrishnadeva as the successor of Ramprasad. Because, like Ramprasad, he was also the worshipper of Brahma and at the same time was absorbed in the meditation of the Kali. Because, Kali and Brahma are identical to Sri Ramakrishnadeva. Again, like 'Tantra' he described Sakti as the root of the world. Therefore, to him, Sakti is the source of everything. In this context, he also told - "The devotee assumes various altitudes toward Sakti in order to propitiate her: the attitude of a handmaid, a hero', or a child."  

"taake prasanna karbar janya nanabhābe  
puja - dasibhābe, hīrbhāb, santān bhāb."  

In course of discussing the heroic attitude, he cited a fine example. Women are symbols of power. In the northwest India, at the time of marriage, there is a knife in the hand of the bridegroom, in Bengal, there is the nut-cracker that means, with the help of the bride,
bridegroom will cut the bondage of illusion. This is the heroic attitude.¹

In this context, he also added that he was not a sādhaka of the heroic type. His idea is like that of a son. He also narrated the different names of Kāli. Such as Mahākāli, Nityakāli, Smasāna Kāli, Rakshā Kāli, and Shyāmā Kāli.²

Just as an ideal teacher imparts education according to the mental make-up of the student Sri F amakxishnadev placed religion befitted to the age. He knew that the views of the Vedas are not acceptable in the Kaliyuga', and, so he said, 'In the Kaliyuga, the discipline of Tantra is very efficacious'³

"Kālīte tantrōkLo māt."⁴

As he was conscious of the limited power of the then nay the present society, he realised that the sayings of the scriptures of the Vedas are not acceptable to all.

1. Katha/Vol.3/15th reprint; 1389 / P.24
2. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 / P.42
4. Katha /Vol.2/17th reprint; 1387/1.66
Not only this, the lives of Kaliyuga is dependent on food only. Life is also short. So it is not possible for the worldly man to abide by the rules and forbiddings mentioned in the Vedas. There are many other obstructions in it. For example, we may quote — "Observance of the Vedic rituals is restricted to Brahmanas and Kshatriyas, Sudras and Vaisyas are not allowed to recite hymns. Women are not allowed to go through Vedic Sam-skara."^3

Therefore, he described 'Tantra', following the path of devotion in keeping with the spirit of the age. We know that Tantra is based on "Bhaktimarga". Not only that, in the Tantra, there is no difference between man and woman, races, religions and many other things.

According to some critics —

1. Katha/ Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388/ P.76
2. C.f. "Thus so far as man consists of the essence of food (i.e., the physical parts of man) he is called annamaya".
4. C.f. "The teaching of the Tantras, as of the Jurana, is essentially based on the Bhaktimarga which is regarded as superior to the Karma-marga and jnana-marga of the Brahmanas and Upanisads".

"But Tantra is universal. It does not believe in any distinction on the basis of sex, caste, creed colour and religion. It believes in one humanity and one human society."

He told that one day he realises in the state of meditation that inside all people was the same power, Kundalini, that rises up through the six spiritual centres of the body.

Again he said -

It is said that Mahamaya swallowed Siva, when the six centres in Her were awakened. Siva came out through Her thigh. Then Siva created the Tantra philosophy.

"ei rakam āche je, sei mahāmāya Sibke top kore kheye fallen. Mār bhitare satcakrer jñān hole sib Mār uru diye beriye elen. takhan 'Sib' tantrrer sristi korlen."

In Tantra, Sakti is imagined as separate from Siva. But, Sri Ramakrishna, this power of Sakti and Brahman are identical, just as water and its cooling power.

2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388/P.68
In this context, the remark of some of critics may be compared "god is attached to (illusion) maya. He remains in touch with illusion but that illusion does not touch god. For instance there is poison in snake. The 'pakal' fish is living in mud, but it remains unattached to mud. Though god is the master of 'maya' but he is endowed with the qualities of maya. The idea of 'tantra' is opposed to that, sakti is sometimes exposed and, sometimes concealed. But power or sakti remains attached to the body of siva." 1

"iswar mayopahita, - mayar sansparse thaken, kintu mayadhis, maya iswarke sparsa kare na, Yemon, Saper madhye bis thake, saper kichu hay na, pnakal macch, pnak thake, kintu pnak tar gaye lage na, iswar mayar adhiswar holeo maya gunayukta sagun, tantrer dharam e theke bhinna. Saktir kakhano prakas kakhano aprakas, kintu siber angibhuta hoe sakti thake.2

He also told that 'Satichidananda' is one without a second. But this Satichidananda is described as Brahma in 'Veda', as krishna in Puranas and as siva in Tantra,1 but though he gave full recognition to yogic practice, in the

2. Ibid
3. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388/P.67
path of Tantra, he was opposed to the yogic practice of
the heroic type. Regarding his own yogic practice he
informed that he underwent yogic practice, thinking god
as mother. This type of Tantra Sadhana is good and
easy for all. But he never support the heroic attitude'.
As he was opposed to heroic idea, he warned the devotees,
specially Narendranath, again and again about this path.
Regarding the practice of 'Birbhab' he replied to
Narendranath - "That is not desirable. It is a very
difficult path and often causes the aspirants downfall."¹
"O sab bhalo path nay, bado kathin ār patan prayi hay".²
In this context, quotation may be cited -

"Tantra Śādhanā is a very difficult process. It is
a very risky form of spiritual discipline. A Sadhaka has
always to be very careful and vigilant. Success in Tantra
Śādhanā brings salvation, a mistake misfortune,"³ -
It is probably the main reason of his remarks against the
tantric practices. He knows that everything in the path
of Tantra is not easy, neither, he said, it is very e a n : 1

2. Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint; 1987 / P.8
3. Singh, L.P/Tantra - Its mystic and scientific basis/
"Tantra Sadhana is a very difficult process. It is a very risky form of spiritual discipline. A Sadhaka has always to be very careful and vigilant. Success in Tantra sadhana brings salvation; a mistake misfortune".

But Sri Ramakrishnadev knows very well that reaching that "Supreme Bliss" basing on the body, often becomes abortive. So he uttered this warning again and again. Actually, he told to the devotees to avoid the bāmācār sadhan of Tantra, but nowhere made tantra degrading. In this context, the religious practice of Ramprasad may be compared - "Ramprasad in his poetical composition entitled 'Vidyasundar' himself to some extent gave his views and write the result of his yogic practices...

He did not conceal the fact that this path is beset with danger - "There are various danger in every step". 1

(Vidyasundar p.143)

"ramprasad vidyasundar kavye arsayani tāhār abhimat ebani sadhuphal kiyat purimane lipibadha kariachen, ... i.e. path ye bimdunkul tāhā tini gopen karen nai - "byatekrame bistar bipd pede pede ." 2

Lastly, it can be said that he advanced towards yogic practice, knowing 'Kali and Brahma', identical like Ramprasad.

2. Ibid.
Sri Ramakrishna dwelt on the path of knowledge, path of devotion and that path of action. He, also analysed what 'yoga' is in a different way. By 'yoga' he meant yoga, described by Pāṇini. But the 'yoga' of the Gita is different from that of Sri Ramakrishna.

In course of discussing what yoga is, he repeatedly said that keeping the mind steady is the main thing of yoga.

"Unless the mind becomes steady there cannot be yoga."

1. "Literally "Yoga" means harnessing or yoking - The harnessing or control of ones faculties. ... It is one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu Philosophy. The classical exposition is that of Pāṇini (2nd century) in the Yoga Sutras, a codification of earlier ideas". Encyclopaedia of philosophy. Vol.8 Paul Edwards, P./358 - 359, Pub. 1967.

"mon sthir nā hole yog hay nā,"1 At the same time, he also said that the worldly desires are the main obstacles to yoga. So in this context, he put forward a beautiful but conventional simile. -
"It is the wind of worldliness that always disturb the mind, which may be likened to a candle flame. If that flame doesn't move at all then one is said to have attained Yoga."2

"samsārā hācā monrup dīuke sarbada cancal korche. ei dipta yadi ādepe nā nade, tā hole, thik yoger abasthā hoye yāy".3

In this context it may be compared -
"Yathā dīpo nibatastho nengate sopamā smta yogino yata cittasya yunjato yogamātmānaha".4

That means "As a lamp in a windless place does not flicker", that is the figure used for the disciplined mind of a yogi practising concentration on the self.

Again, in course of discussing about the sign of a 'yogi', he said as the mind of a yogi is always fixed on God, so he is always lost in himself. He wanted to make us understand more precisely the state of yoga through the application of a beautiful simile.

For example -

"His eyes are wide open, with an aimless look, like the eyes of the mother bird hatching her eggs. Her entire mind is fixed on the eggs and there is a vacant look in her eyes."¹

"cakshu fyalfyele, dekhlei bûy[hâ] yây. Yemon pâkhi dime tâ dicche sab montâ sei dimer dike, upare nâmâtra ceye rayche."²

So, also a yogi, though exists in the world is always absorbed in God. On another day, a man sing a song in which described the awakening of the Kundalini and the six centres -

1. Gospel/Vol.1 / 7th ed. Dec. 1980 / p.113
2. Katha/Vol.3 /15th reprint; 1389 / i.15
"Awake, Mother; Awake; How long thou hast been asleep. In the lotus of the Muladhara;"\(^1\)

"Jago jago janani
muladhare nidra
gata katodin gato holo Kulo-Kundolini\(^2\)

He told the disciples by explaining it with reference to the Kundalinis passing through the six centres. He also told these are dealt with in Yoga. There are two kind of Yoga —

Hatha yoga and raja yogo.\(^3\)

In this regard we may quote some lines of "History of Indian Philosophy":

"The Yoga writer Jagisavya wrote "Dharanasasstra" which dealt with Yoga more in the fashion of Tantra than that given by Patanjali. He mentions different places in the body (e.g. heart, throat, tip of the nose, palate, forehead, centre of the brain) which are centres of memory where concentration is to be made."\(^4\)

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /P.50
3. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /P.53
"In some cases we find that there was a great attempt even to associate Vedantism with these mystic practices."¹

Sri Ramakrishna also told —

"There is much similarity between the 'seven' planes described in the Vedānta and the six 'centres' of Yoga."²

"Vedānter saptabhumি, ar yogosāstrer sadcakra anek mele"³.

Though Sri Ramakrishna mentioned only two types of Yoga, but — "The Yogatattva Upanisad says that there are four kinds of Yoga, the Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Hathayoga and Rājayoga".⁴

Regarding "Hathayogi" he did not support it much, because —

"The Hathayogi practices physical exercises. His goal is to acquire supernatural powers, longevity and

3. Katha/Vol.3/14th reprint; 1388 /P.53
the eight psychic powers. These are his aims.¹

"hathayogi sarirer katakguli kasarat kare;
uddesya siddhai, dirgha ayu habe; asta
siddhi habe, ei sab uddesya."²

That means, although the motive of 'Hathayogi'
is the realisation of God, the Sadhaka remains confined
to the body.³ Apart from this he did not support the
supernaturalism or miracle which is a part and parcel
of 'Hatha yoga'.

The seven Yogic practices of the 'Hathayoga' are
the following:

'Pratyahar, Satkarma, asan, mudra, pranayam,
dhyandharana o samadhi. Of these seven yogic
practices, the first five are related to the body.

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /P.53
3. Cf. "Physical yoga (known as the Hatha Yoga
   in the Yoga system) is a preliminary to mental
discipline."

- Encyclopedia of Philosophy /Vol.8/
  Paul Edwards/Edn. 1967 /P.359
The remaining two are helpful to the concentration of the mind. Therefore, Sri Ramakrishna, the son of God, did not support the path of Hathayoga rather, he spoke of the path of 'rajayoga' to be the best one. In his words -

"But the aim of rajayoga is the attainment of devotion, ecstatic love, knowledge and renunciation of these two, rajayoga is the better."¹

"rajyoger uddesya bhakti, prem, jnān-bairagya, rājyog-i bhālo."²

The main theory of 'Raja-yoga' is as follows - when all the power of the mind is concentrated on something, then and then only the real image of thing is revealed. The restlessness is necessary for the Yoga, Regarding six centres he said more in detail :-

'The mind of the yogi passes through these (six centres) and he realises God through his grace.'³

"Yogirā satchakra bhed kore thār kṛpā thāke darsan kare."⁴

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /1.53
4. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /1.56
He also added that there are 'lotuses' in the subtle body. The yogis see them.

Sri Ramakrishna, sometimes, showing the similarity of yoga, to the seventh planes of Veda, has established both of them on the same footing.

One day he explaining the 'Yoga' to Sri M and told —

"Again, take a pair of scales, for example. If a weight is placed on one side, the lower needle moves away from the upper one. The lower needle is the mind, and the upper one, God. The meeting of the two is Yoga." ¹

"nikti ekdike bhar padle, nicer kāta uparer katait sange ek hay na. nicer katati man.
uparer kātātā āswara mere kātātā katar sange ek haoar nam yoga." ²

He also added —

A man attains yoga when he is freed from maya. The supreme self is the magnet; the individual self is the needle. The individual self experiences the state of

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¹ Gospel/Vol.1/7th ed. Dec. 1980 /1.113
² Katha/Vol.3/ 15th reprint - 1389 /1.18
yoga when it is attracted by the Supreme self to itself. 1
Of course the magnet cannot attract the needle if the
needle is covered with clays; it can attracts the
needle, when the clay is removed. Therefore, the clay
of woman and gold must be removed. 2

Again, he said, to Sri M, regarding "Yogi". 3
Although signs of a yogi are visible in many people,
there is possibility of being dislodged from the path
of yoga. So they too should be careful. It is 'woman
and gold' makes them deviate from the path of yoga and
drags them into worldliness. After fulfilling their
desire, they again direct their minds to god and thus
recover former state of mind, fit for the practice of
yoga. He compared the absorption in yoga at the end
of the enjoyment of a man deviating from the path of
yoga to a 'Satka kal' or fish trap. 4

1. Katha/Vol.4/17th reprint; 1387 /F.32
2. Ibid.
3. Cf. "Yogin, in the sense of a person who has lost
himself in meditation is there regarded with extreme
veneration." Radhakrishna: S. - Indian Philosophy,
Vol.1/ed. 1973 /i.227
4. Katha/Vol.3/15th reprint; 1389 /i.19
Like, Jñāna Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga, he has marked the Yoga described by Pātanjalī, as one of the paths for the Śādhakas.

Of course, sometimes he has described the seven planes of Veda and six circles as one and sometimes he has mixed 'Kulakundalini' of Tantra with the 'six circles' of 'Yoga'. This synthetic attitude is noticed in Śrī Ramakrīshna in everywhere.

In this context, it may be mentioned by way of comparison.

"In the uncommunal liberal religious view and the religious practice preached by Śrī Ramakrīshna Paramhansa, the meditation and perception. Śamādhi directed by the ṛṣi Pātanjalī and hearing thinking and meditation directed by non-dual Vedanta - the harmony and the great synthesis of these two are clearly found in his teaching."¹

In this points we will discuss in details of Jnanayoga as one of the path to realise God. In this context, Sri Ramakrishna told that to realise God one has to adopt a means which are three in number. Jnanayoga, Karmayoga and Bhaktiyoga. Further in explaining the path of Jnanayoga he said - "The jnani sticking to the path of knowledge always reasons about the reality saying, 'Not this, not this, Brahman is neither this, nor that ..."'  

"Ye jnani, jnanayoga dhore äche se neti neti ei bichår kare. Brahma e nay, o nay ..."?  

According to Brahmajnani Brahma is real and the world illusory. All these names and forms are illusory like a dream. This Brahma cannot be described. Though the yogic practices of Sri Ramakrishna are established on the basis of the theory of non-dualism, yet his theory of 'non-dualism' is different from 'non-dualism'.

2. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint 1387 /./40
of Shankara. Though he acknowledged the view "I am te\textsuperscript{1}, but we hear him say again and again "the path of knowledge is extremely difficult. One cannot obtain jnāna if one has the least trace of worldliness and the slightest attachment to woman and gold. This is not the path for Kaliyuga.\textsuperscript{2}

"se path, - jnānapath - baḍo kathin path
visay buddhir - kāmini-kāncane āsakti leśmātra-
thākle, jnān hay na - e path Kaliyuger pakshe hay.\textsuperscript{3}

In the theory of Advaitabod of Shankara, only brahma is one and the second to none. To Śri Ramakrishna also Brahma is one and secondless. But Brahma is existence in the created world. Here lies the difference between the two. Śri Ramakrishna did not say this world as illusory, rather he realised the one unparalleled Brahma in each and every thing of this world.

He made different remarks and explained the brahma.

1. Cf. "The statement "That out thou" and this "man is Brahman" attempt to show that the two Brahman and Atmā, God and man, are in reality one".
Radhakrishnan, S.P - Indian Philosophy, Vol.2 ed.1962
/$.439


3. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387	/$.62
One day, he said to Vidyasāgar about 'Brahma' - that it is cannot be described. The he said -

"All things in the world - the Vedas, the Purūnas, the Tantras, the six systems of philosophy - have been defiled, like food that has been touched by the tongue, for they have been read or uttered by the tongue. Only one thing has not been defiled in this way and that is Brahma. No one has even been able to say what Brahman is."

"Ved, Purān, Saddarsan, sabi byākhyā karā hoche, kintu ekti jinis keval ucchista hay na, se jinishi Brahman."

By hearing that Brahman is untouched, Isvar Chand, also, was very much charmed and astonished. In this context he sang a song - "Ke jāne ma Kāli kemon, saddarsane na pay darshan."

That is, God cannot be realised through mere scholarly reasoning.

2. Cf. "Traditionally, orthodox darsans are classified into six systems linked in three pairs, Yoga and Samkhya, Mimansa and Vedanta, Nyaya and Vaisesika". Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.
Again, regarding the attainment of knowledge about Brahma, he said, in a state of samadhi, one has the realisation of Brahma, and a vision of Brahman becomes possible. In that state, judgement totally stops. That is, in a state of samadhi, one losses the capacity to express what Brahma is.\(^1\)

Such as — Once a salt doll went to measure the depth of the ocean. No sooner was it in the water than it melted. So there is nobody to tell the depth.\(^2\) He also added — "The forms and aspects of God disappear when one discriminates in accordance with the Vedanta Philosophy. The ultimate conclusion of such discrimination is that Brahma alone is real and this world of names and forms illusory."\(^3\)

\(^1\) Cf. "We may speak about it, though we cannot describe it adequately or have any logical knowledge of it" — Radhakrishnan — Indian Philosophy — Vol.2/1962 / P. 535
\(^2\) Katha/ Vol.1/ 7th reprint; 1387 / P. 59
"Vedanta bīcārer kāče ruptup ude yā. 1 se bīcārer- 
še sidhānta ei- brāhma satya ār nāmrupyukta jagata 
mithyā." 

In the judgement of Vedanta, the feeling that 
'I am the disciple' becomes false. Here, he added that 
from the standpoint of discrimination the ego of I' 
of the devotee, kept him separated from God. 

He also said - 'Brahma satya, Yagat mithyā' this 
is only for Vedantins. Because if the world is 
vanity, everything is vanity, even one who says this 
is also a vanity, his realization is also a vanity. 

1. Cf. "This world-appearance will also vanish 
when the true knowledge of reality dawns. 
When false knowledge is once found to be false, it 
cannot return again. The Upanisads tell us that 
he who sees the many here is doomed. The one, 
the Brahman, alone is true, all else is but 
dilusion of name and form".
Dasgupta, S.N. - A History of Indian philosophy 

2. Katha/Vol.1 / 17th reprint in 1387/ 61
So he said to Sri M. This is for the sannyāsī advocating Vedanta, not in conformity with those of the householders. Because, according to the Vedantins, soul is detached; evil and woe, virtue and vice can do no harm to the soul. But it may give trouble those having the pride of the body.¹

Citing a simile he said, although smoke makes the wall dirty, it can do nothing to the sky. In this context, he also said—

"Brahman Itself is beyond the three gunas, what Brahman is cannot described. It is beyond words. That which remains after everything is eliminated by the Vedantic process of 'Not this,' Not this,' and 'Not this,' is of the Nature of Bliss, is Brahman."² "brahma - sattva, rajah, tamah - tin guner atit, tini ye ki, mukhe bala yāy nā, tini bākyer atit, neti, neti kore ya bākī thāke ar yekhāne ānanda, sei brahma."³

1. Cf. "The embodied self acts and enjoys acquires merit and demerit and is affected by pleasure and pain, while the highest self has an opposite nature and is free from all evil."
In this context reference may be quoted from Indian Philosophy -

"what this state is cannot be explained by the use of concepts. One could only indicate it by pointing out that it is not any of those concepts found in ordinary knowledge; it is not whatever one knows as this and this (neti neti)".1

Again, the philosopher narrated -

"In this infinite and true self there is no difference, no diversity no meum and tuum. It is like an ocean in which all our phenomenal existence will like salt in water:

"Just as a lump of salt when put in water will disappear in it and it cannot be taken out separately, but in whatever portion of water, we taste we find the salt, so Naîtreyi, does this great reality infinite and limitless consisting only of pure intelligence manifesting itself in all these (phenomenal existence) vanish in then and there is then no phenomenal knowledge. (Brh II.4.12)".2

1. Dasgupta, S.N. - A history of Indian Philosophy Vol.1; Reprint in 1988 / p.60 - 61
2. Dasgupta, S.N. - A History of Indian Philosophy Vol.1 Reprint in 1988; / p.61
Besides this, 'ego', also is an obstacle to the acquisition of knowledge and the only means of eliminating 'ego' is meditation. In his language -

"On attaining knowledge one goes into samādhi, and the ego disappears. But it is very difficult to obtain such knowledge."¹

"Jñānalabh hole samādhistha hay. Samādhistha hole tabe ahām yay, se jñānalabh bado kathin."²

Then he spoke of the seven grounds of the Vedas and also said that if the mind ascends the seventh plane, the ego is dissolved and a state of samādhi is reached. He wanted to make us understand the state of samādhi, by citing the simile of the doll of the salt. The doll of salt sent to fathom the depth of the sea, but as it went down it got melted. In mind also dissolves in the seventh plane and there is a state of samādhi."³

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3. Katha/ Ibid./ / p. 77
Dijoy Krishna said on hearing that the ego is not dissolved without being in a state of *sāmadhi*. If 'ego' exists in the path of devotion, then path of knowledge is better.

But the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna is not mere instruction. He knew that 'although 'ego' is dissolved in a state of sāmadhi, again 'ego' comes. It is not easy to get rid of the bodily sense,¹ so he said to Dijoy - "The path of knowledge is very difficult. One cannot obtain knowledge unless one gets rid of the feeling that one is the body. In the kalyuga the life of man is centered on food. He cannot get rid of the feeling that he is the body and the ego."²

"Jñānayoga bhāri kathin, dehātmābuddhi nā gele jnan hay nā. Kaliyuge annagata prān - dehātmābuddhi, aham-buddhi yāy nā".³

That means 'I am not the body,' not the mind, 'I am above all weal and woe - the awakening of this sort of consciousness is very difficult in kaliyuga.'

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1. Katha /Vol.1/17th reprint, 1387 / .77
3. Katha /Vol.1/17th reprint, 1387 / .77
Sri Ramakrishna was very conscious about the fittest person and one having the right qualification. So, he imparted the instruction of non-dualism to Vivekananda and prevented Sri M from going to that path.

Again, to Sri Ramakrishnadev Jñānayoga is at the highest, there is also another state of knowledge that is Vijnān. For Sri Ramakrishna, Brahman is present in everything and being of the universe. Like the Upanisadic sages, he also says, "all this is Brahman. This does not mean for him that there is no all but only Brahman like Advaitins.

"But for my part I accept everything; Turiya and also the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. I accept all three states. I accept all - Brahman, and also māyā the universe and its living things."¹

"Kām sabi lai turiya ābār jāgrata, svapna, susupti, tin abasthāi lai. brahma ābār māyā, jib jagat ami sabi lai."²

2. Fatha/Vol.1 /17th reprint 1387 / .179
Such was the unique realisation of Sri Ramakrishna that, 'all this is Brahman' that Brahman is the omnipresent reality. He, however, speaks of different degrees of manifestation of Brahman as cited in different things and beings of the universe. For Sri Ramakrishna, however, maya does not mean Brahman's magical power of conjuring up the illusory world and will all its

One day a devotee wanted to know whether the world is illusory or not. He answered the world is illusory, so long as he is not realised. According to some critics - "This view is very original indeed. We have so long been taught that on realisation of Brahman, the aspirant reaches perfection and rejects the world as illusory. Ramakrishna, however, point out that on realisation the world appears very real to the Sadhaka, in the sense that he now finds that god manifests Himself in the things and beings of the world."¹

According to him, we in our ordinary way take
the world as existing by itself and such a world is
obviously false.

Of course, to him Brahman as indeterminate is
the highest reality and the personal god is the form
of Brahman's lila or creative activity, which is real,
but not eternal. From the stand point of Advaita
Vedanta, Brahman as indeterminate is the only reality,
personal god and this incarnations, are unreal.

From the criticism of his teachings this truth
has been cleared that through he stand in the plane
of Advaitavada, but his non-dualism is much differed
from Shankara's nondualism. We find that though he said
Brahma is real and the worlds are unreal, but he never
utter this world as maya or illusion, rather in his
outlook, the whole world is manifestation of the Brahman.
Again it cannot also be characterised as Visistadvaita-
tabada or qualified non-dualism of Ramanuja, because
Ramakrishna believes in the indeterminate Brahman,
which Ramanuja does not admit.

Thus, being the successor of saktism he had
realisation of ultimate reality in the path of
'non-dualism and therefore he accepts all.
KARMAYOGA

Of the four systems of religious practices, stated as the means of the realisation of God by Sri Ramakrishna, the path of Karma is one of them. The work that is done without desiring the fruit of any kind, that is called the Karmayoga. The detached and disinterested action that has been stated by the Gita, is also the meaning of the advice of Sri Ramakrishna.

At the very beginning of Kathamrita we find that

Sri Ramakrishna said -

"when hearing the name of Hari or Rama once, you shed tears and your hair stands on end, then you may know for certain that you do not have to perform such devotions as the sandhyas any more. Then only will you have a right to renounce rituals."¹

"Yakhan ekbar Hari ba ekbar ram nam korle romanco hay, asrupat hay, takhan niscay jago, ye, sandhyadi karma - ar korte habe na, takhan karmatyager adhikar hayeche."²

¹ Gospel/Vol.1 / 7th ed, Dec 1920 /P.77
² Katha/Vol.1 /17th reprint, 1387 /A.16
That means we chanting the name of god is due to realisation, when we fulfilled after the realisation of God, there is no more necessity of uttering the holy name of God or uttering his name.

But, even after the realisation of god, Karma exists. But that is not material action or domestic action. We must perform the obligatory and occasional duties.¹

In this context, we may quote the doctrines of Sāmkar, from Indian Philosophy -

1. Cf. -

"Ramanuja says that the path of duties (Karmayoga) is superior to the path of knowledge (jnana-yoga). The path of duties naturally leads to self-knowledge; so self knowledge is also included within its scope. The path of knowledge alone cannot lead us anywhere, for without work even the body cannot be made to live. Even those who adhere to the path of knowledge, must perform the obligatory and occasional duties (nitya-naimittik)

In this context, we may quote the doctrines of Samkar, from Indian Philosophy -

"Sankar tries to prove that all duties presuppose the multiplicity of the world of appearance, which is due to ignorance or nescience and therefore the sage who has attained the right knowledge of Brahman, the only reality has no duties to perform. Final liberation is thus produced, not by true knowledge along with the performance of duties, but by true knowledge alone. The wiseman has no duties of any kind."\(^1\) But in this context Gita says-

"It has been repeatedly pointed out that the Gita asserts that even the wiseman should perform his allotted duties, though he may have nothing to gain by the performance of such duties."\(^2\)

Gita III./22

Sri Ramakrishna has also given recognition to 'Karmayoga' as one of the paths like 'Bhaktiyoga' and 'Jnanayoga'. In this context he said -

"The world is the field of action, through action one acquires knowledge. The guru instructs the disciples to perform certain works and refrain from others ..."

\(^1\) Dasgupta, S.N./I.P/Vol.2/ Reprint in 19\(\_\)\(\_\) / p.436
\(^2\) Ibid./ / p.439
The impurity of the mind is destroyed through the performance of duty.¹

"amsar karmakshetra, karmakorte korte tabe jnan hay. Guru bolechen ei sab karno karo, ar ei sab karma koro na, ki...... karma korte korte moner mayla kete yay".²

In this context Sankara's Sri Ramakrishna said in this context -

"he (guru) advises the people to perform action without desiring the result"³.

"tini abar niskam karmer upadesh den."⁴

In this reference it may be compared -

"You have only right to do the work, but not its result."⁵

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /F.30
4. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /F.30
5. Sita - 2nd chapter - /F.47.
"Karmanye vadhikaraste, ma phalesu kadaçanam"\(^1\)

In this context, we may quote, Sankara's interpretation of the Gita from Indian philosophy -

"The performance of duties cannot by itself lead to liberation but it leads gradually to the attainment of purity of mind (Satlava-SudhDhi) and through this helps the dawning of the right knowledge with which all duties cease."\(^2\)

He also stated that action cannot be abandoned.

The very nature of man will make him do work. Therefore he said 'work with disinterestedness; don't aspire after the fruit of action'. But at the same time he also said that it is difficult to do disinterested act. One may think that he is doing disinterested action but desires an aspiration crowd around it from somewhere. That means, there is wish or desire behind performing our every task and behind every desire, there is egoism or pride. He also told that in the nature of men, egoism or a sense of pride for mastery is so acute that in doing any work, he wants to assert his individuality.

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1. Gita, and chapter/47.
2. Dasgupta - S.N, Indian Philosophy reprint in 1988 /p.438
He explains the nature of the duties in a detached way—"Before you break the jack-fruit open, rub your hands with oil, so that the sticky milk will not smear them."

"hate tel mekhe knathal bhangbe".

In this regard he also said—"The maid servant in a richman’s house performs all her duties, but her mind dwells on her home in the country. This is an example of doing duty in a detached way."

Bedo manuser dasi sab karma kare, kintu dese man pode thake, eri nam niskam karma."

He added that if all the results of action are sacrificed to God, its results cannot touch men. Although he said, that it is not possible to shun action, he said—

"After a man has attained samadhi all his actions drop away. All devotional activities, such as worship, japa, and the like, as well as all worldly duties, cease to exist for such person."
BSamadhi hole karmayag hoye yay, puja-japadi karma, bisny-karma sab tyag hay.”

Sri Ramakrishna also said that Karmayoga is not suitable path for Kaliyuga. Because, now-adays man cannot follow the scriptural rites in proper way.

In his language -

"Karmayoga is very hard indeed. In the kaliyuga, it is extremely difficult to perform the rites enjoined in the scriptures. Now-adays man’s life is centered on food alone. He cannot perform many scriptural rites.”

"Karmayoga bado kathin, sastre ye karma korte boleche, kalikale kara bado kathin, annagata pran. besi karma caile na.”

Thus he has given recognition of karmayoga as one of path though it is very hard to perform.

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1. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 /F.63
3. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 /F.51
BHAKTIYOGA

The philosophical thought of Sri Ramakrishnadev is produced from a mixed realisation. Although he attained fulfilment in the yogic practice to realise the oneness of God or the formless God, but the religions thought and instruction of Sri Ramakrishna have been nourished from the cult of devotion. Although he gave recognition to the path of knowledge and that of karma as the paths for the attainment of salvation, he marked the path of devotion as the best path for the Sadhakas of all classes.

In the path of devotion, love or attachment to God is grown and that does not exist by adopting any other path. The attachment that a devotee feels for this devotion is mostly absent in the path of knowledge. So he told even the Brahma devotees advocating the formless God by way of instruction that to be devoted to formless God is enough but they should have the attraction of those advocating God with form. That is, the attachment or attraction that exists in Sadhak of bhakti-marg should be accepted by the followers of the path of knowledge. That means, the knowledge of Brahman which attained by the path of knowledge, is obtainable in the path of devotion also.
In this context he said -
"God is all powerful. He may give his devotee Brahman also, if He so wills."¹

"bhagavan sarbasaktiman, mone korle brahmano dite paren,"²

But God is not attained only through the existence of devotion of God. To attain God, "prema-bhakti is necessary."³

In this respect, Sri Ramakrishnadeva classified the 'bhakti' into two classes - "baidhi bhakti" and "prema bhakti."⁴

According to baidhi bhakti, one must repeat the name of God, worship God with prescribed offerings, fasting and soon; by continuing such practices a long time

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint. 1388 /P.7
3. There is a more direct experience of jay in God which is directly of an intensely emotional nature. ... This is also described as bhakti as love (preman).⁵
   - Dasgupta, S.N. - A History of Indian Philosophy Vol.IV/Pub.1975/P.430
4. c.f. "From another point of view bhakti can be divided into two classes - baidhi and raganuga."
   - Ibid. P.424
one gradually acquires ragabhakti. This ragabhakti or premabhakti is to love God like a relative. When this love grows, there is no more custom or convention. Ramankrishna also told that through discussing the scriptures only one cannot attain God. Rather one can easily reach to God if there is ragabhakti or bhakti with love. He also added that the love behind which there is no demand or desire is called 'Ahetuki bhakti'. He also told that 'ragbhakti suddhabhakti - ahetuki bhakti - all are same.'

But there is another type of devotion which is called sakam bhakti, that means bhakti with some desire.

1. Katha /Vol.4/17th reprint; 1387
2. C.f. "All the various duties prescribed in the sastras are fruitful only if they are performed through the inspiration of bhakti, and if they are not performed, one may attain his highest only through the bhakti."

Dasgupta, S.N. / A History of Indian Philosophy/ Vol.IV/ ub.1975 / P.416

3. Katha/Vol.4/17th reprint; 1387
He also referred to this as 'nalin-bhakti'. Of course, he stated that pure devotion or ahetuki bhakti is best one. This ahetuki bhakti makes the disciple free from sin and free from defects. But 'Ahetuki bhakti' is not generally found. One day, Girish Ghosh, desired for 'ahetuki bhakti' then Sri Ramakrishna said in this context "only the Isvarkotis have such love. It is not for ordinary men."2

"ahetuki bhakti isvarkotir hay, jabakotir hay na."3

Then in course of discussion he told Girish Ghosh what is the interpretation of devotion is, It is to adore God with body, mind and words. But in Kaliyuga, the devotion preached by 'Narada is suited, i.e. to chant His name constantly and glories of God. Those who have no time of worshipping God at least morning and evening by whole heartedly chanting His name and clapping their hands.4

1. c.f. "Devotion is said to be four kinds, satvika, rajasa, tamasa and nirguna. Those who want Gods grace and nirguna. Those who want Gods grace and are devoted to Him in order to satisfy their personal jealousy, side or enmity are called tamasa, those who seek Him for the attainment of power fam etc. are called rajasa."

Asgupta, .../A History of Indian Philosophy/Vol.I
Reprint in 1988 / .29


4. Ibid/ .110.
By discussing the teachings and the environment of Kathamrita, it clearly reveal that he imparted instructions according to the mentality of his devotees.

Here also we find the same thing. It was not at all, possible for Girish Chosh to go forward by abiding by the scriptural principles and forbiddings. Even it was hardly possible for him to go forward methodically following the path of devotion. So, ultimately he gave suggestion to him for uttering His holy name.¹

What is 'love' or 'ahetuki bhakti' - He explained it by saying different steps of devotion.

"Nistha leads to bhakti, when mature, becomes bhaba; bhaba, - when concentrated, becomes mahabhava; and last of all is prema."²

"nisthar par bhakti, bhakti pakle bhab hay. bhab ghanibhuta hole mahabhab hay. Sarbasese prema."³

¹ Katha/Vol.3/15th reprint; 1387
³ Katha/Vol.31/15th reprint. 1389
Even, in the Vaisnava philosophy or literature, we have discussion about this love or devotion. Regarding "mahabhava" we find in Indian philosophy:

"From the second stage of 'sadhana' bhakti as raganuga we come to the stage of bhava bhakti, which also evolves itself into ever more intense forms until it reaches the stage of 'maha-bhava...'\(^1\)

There is another class of Bhaktiyoga, that is nithya-bhakti. As for example, he referred to love for Krishna by the Gopies and Hanumans.

Though Sri Ramakrishnadev spoke of jnana Yoga or Karmayoga mentioned in the Gita, he spoke of 'bhakti-yoga' again and again keeping in mind the thought of the ordinary men. He, himself realised that, although it is easy to say "I am He" but its full realisation is difficult. Therefore he called the Bhaktiyoga the best one in Kaliyuga.

"For the Kaliyuga the path of bhakti is especially good. One can realise God through bhakti too."\(^2\)

1. Dasgupta, D.N./A. History of Indian Philosophy
   Vol.IV/reprint in 1988 /P.435
"Kaliyuge 'bhaktiyogi thalo. bhakti dvarao tnakhe paco yay."\(^1\)

He also felt that at the very beginning of the path of practice one should not say, 'Iam He'. but if at the end of the path this realisation comes, then it will be understood that his religious practice has met with fulfilment.

Apart from this, like tantra, he also mentioned 'Bhaktiyoga' as the fittest path in this age. One day he said to Sasadhar Pandit - "For the Kaliyuga the path of devotion is easiest. This is indeed the path for this age." \(^2\)

"Kaliyughe pakshe bhaktiyoga sahaj path. bhaktiyogi yugadharma". \(^3\)

\(^1\) Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /\(¥.28\)
\(^3\) Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint, 1388/ /\(¥.28\)
He has called 'Dhaktiyoga' as the spirit of the age. It does not mean that except a devotee, a man of knowledge and action will have no salvation in the Kaliyuga. By the spirit of the age here, religion befitting the age has been indicated. That is, he who wants knowledge about Brahma can have it if he even pursues the path of bhakti.

One day, 'Moni' or Sri Na wanted to know - is it possible to develop both Jnana and bhakti by the practice of spiritual disciplines?

In reply, he said - "Through the path of bhakti, a man may attain them both. It is necessary, God gives him the knowledge of Brahma. But a highly qualified as may develop both Jnana and bhakti at the same time."

1. "Though the paths of duty and of knowledge are prescribed for certain classes of persons, yet the path of bhakti is regarded as superior; those who are in it need not follow the path of knowledge and the path of disinclination from worldly things." - Dasgupta, S.N./ A History of Indian Philosophy/Vol.IV Reprint in 1988 /P.416

In this context, he also said everything is obtainable through devotion. Those who want "Brahmajnan will have it, if they pursue the path of devotion.

The greatness of the path of devotion lies in the fact that it affords devotion and it can also give full knowledge. In this context we quoted some lines from Indian Philosophy:

"Knowledge is more remote than realisation (jnana-matrasya ka vartta saksad api kurbanti), it is therefore held that bhakti is much higher than philosophic knowledge, which is regarded as the secondary effect of it."²

He also said, those who have not realised Brahma or knowledge, rather the sadhaka of yogic practices, think that love and knowledge are different. But really there is hardly any difference between the two paths.

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1. Fatha/Vol.4/17th reprint: 1387
THE THEORY OF INCARNATION

The meaning of the word 'Incarnation' is descent. But from the religious point of view, the meaning of the word is the arrival of God in human body in the world subject to mortality. Like Hindus, the Christian, also, have faith in the theory of incarnation. They look upon Jesus Christ as an incarnation.

By 'Incarnation', we understand the part of the Visnu. There are stories of the different incarnations in the mythology. Sri Ramakrishna said in connection with incarnation: "He who liberates others in an incarnation of God. The scriptures speak of ten of twenty-four and also of innumerable Incarnations."¹

"abatar yini taran karen. ta/abatar ache
abar asamkhya abatar ache."²

We find in Kathamrita that regarding incarnation, there were controversies among Narendranath, Shirish Chandra and Dr. Sarkar. According to Narendranath, it is impossible to think of eternal God in an incarnation.

² Katha/ Vol. 3/ 15th reprint, 1329 / .216
Because, the eternal can have no part.\textsuperscript{1} In this context, the view of Sri Ramakrishna as follows:

"However great and infinite God may be, His Essence can and does maintain manifest itself through man by His mere will. God's Incarnation as a Man cannot be explained by analogy. One must feel it for oneself and realise it by direct perception."\textsuperscript{2}

"Iswar ananta haun ar yata bado haun - tini iccha korle tnaar bhitarer sar bastu manuser bhitar die aste pare 6 ase. tini ababhore thaken, eti upama diye bujhan yay na."\textsuperscript{3}

Although He exists in every animate object, still He comes as 'Abatar' to teach love, devotion and absolute truth.

Like many others He thought of Buddhadeva, as one of the ten incarnations. That is seeing in incarnation means seeing Him just as touching of the water of the Ganges of any place means seeing the Ganges.\textsuperscript{5}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Vatha/Vol.1/17th reprint, 1387
\item \textsuperscript{2} Gospel/Vol.2/7th ed. Dec. 1980
\item \textsuperscript{3} Vatha/Vol.1/17th reprint, 1387
\item \textsuperscript{4} Vatha/Vol.5/14th reprint, 1388
\item \textsuperscript{5} Vatha/Vol.1/17th reprint, 1387
\end{itemize}
He also said that God is revealed in every animal and He is much manifested in man.

"If you seek God, then seek Him in man; He manifests Himself more in man than in any other thing." 1

"Iswartattva yadi khnoja, manuse khnujbe, manuse tini besi prakas han." 2

On another day, in course of conversation, with the devotees, he informed —

"An Incarnation of God or one born with some of the characteristics of an Incarnation is called an Isvarkoti. An ordinary man is called a jiva or jivakoti." 3

"Abatar ba abaterer anaśa, eder bale isvarkoti ar sadhanar lokeder bole jiva ba jivakoti." 4

The words of God can be heard through 'Abatar'.

Now the question may be raised as to how one who is pure, changeless and devoid of gunas (qualities) to be incarnated as a man who suffers from hunger, thirst, and also from disease and grief?

2. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 / 1.171
4. Katha/Vol.3/15th reprint; 1389 / 1.145
Sri Ramakrishna's reply is -

"Even Brahman weeps, entrapped in the snare of the five elements."¹

"panchbhuter phnade, brahma podo knade."²

Pancabhut means earth, water, fire, air and sky. If God also comes within the jurisdiction of five elements, its influence or pollution will touch him. So, he is subject to all these things like birth and death, old age and disease and weal and woe.

But he also added that it is very difficult to make one 'understand' the "theory of incarnation" in a rational and narrow sense.

How is Iswar and avatar? - question may arise -

Answer is this -

"Whole and Part are like fire and its sparks. An incarnation of God is for the sake of the bhaktas and not of the jnanis."³

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2. Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint, 1387 / 94
In this connection, it may, also, be said, one day Sri R told Sri Ramakrishna that it has been written down about the necessity of incarnation.

Sri Ramakrishna also mentioned 'Chaitanyadev' as abatar. Although Chaitanya was not mentioned as Abatar, but avatar are countless, so Sri Ramakrishnadeve was not wrong in calling Chaitanyas as an avatar. He also told - all persons cannot know him. It was known by some persons only.

In this context it also may be mentioned that although Sri Ramakrishna had faith in avatara and supported the belief in Incarnation but he did not criticise or blame anybody if someone rejected the belief and accepted only the formless 'rahman.

For example -

Knowing that Amrit Lal Sarkar, son of Sahendra Sarkar, had no faith in Avatar, he did not condemn or blame him. Rather he said, without believing avatar or 'Brahman with form if he has faith in formless 'rahman he may realise the same God.'

1. Katha/Vol. 3/15th reprint, 1389
2. Katha/Vol. 1/17th reprint, 1389
The method of instructions of Sri Ramakrishna was dependent on judgement. This truth becomes clear by going through the whole Kathamrita that he used to instruct differently the worldly disciples. Sri Ramakrishna said in the life of both householder in comparison with Sannyasi, the attainment of God is the sole objective. Therefore, he did never disregard to worldly enjoyment, or family life in comparison with renunciation or the Sannyasi life. Personally, the life of Sri Ramakrishna was the life of an ideal householder and also an ideal Sannyasi. But although he realised both the ideals himself, he knew that it is not possible for all and so he imparted instructions differently regarding Sannyasi and householder. First of all, let come to the matter of the renunciation of woman and gold. He knew that woman and gold involve all men in illusion. So we heard him to say, "If woman and gold are shunned mind turns towards God." That is, there are two things for worldly bondage woman and gold. In this context it will not perhaps be improper to say
that our life is regulated by desire and lust. Again Karl Marx said that economics or money is the regulator of our whole life.

That is, it is impossible for us, to get rid of the influence of both of them in any way in the material life. But inspite of having no knowledge about both theories, Sri Ramakrishna knew that woman and gold are the root cause of bondage and so he said as a cause from the liberation of this bondage to give up woman and gold. But this renunciation is meant for the Sannyasi devotees only- "The renunciation of woman and gold is meant for Sannyasi. We must not look even at the picture of a woman." ¹

"Sannyasir paksha kaminkancan tyag.
striloker pat paryanta Sannyasi dekhbe na." ²

Although he did not tell the householders to renounce woman and gold, he told them to give up attachment to woman and gold. Woman and gold are to be shunned in the mind first of all. Then comes the question of external renunciation.

2. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint/ 1387 / .286
He wanted his devotees to be very cautious of woman. If a sage becomes a conquerer of his ownself, still he should not much associate with woman. In this regard he said - "A Sannyasi, even though he may have subdued his passions should follow this discipline to set an example to householders."\(^1\)

"jitendriyo holeo tyagir a sab korte hay."\(^2\)

Actually, attachment to enjoyment tingled with desire and aspiration created the world. So, men, averse to God, cannot realise the glory and sweetness of detachment.

But he also stated that giving up on this world is not for all. The householder will do the renunciation mentally. But the Sannyasi will renounce both internally and externally.

He told the householders to remain indifferent. Just as the maid servant of the house of rich men does all the work, but her mind is left in her own country. It is called renunciation in mind. After attaining the God, if anyone become a householder then only this indifference is possible.\(^3\)

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2. Katha/Vol.4/17th reprint; 1387 / .12
3. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint, 1387 / .112
It is very difficult to have devotional practices remaining in this world. One sustains no loss to be involved in this world after attainment of knowledge and devotion in seclusion. Just as gum does not stick to hand if we take oil before tearing open the jackfruit.¹ Again, he said in this context that our mind is like milk. If we keep the mind in the world, which is like water, then the milk and water will get mixed. That is why people keep milk in a quiet place and so in a secluded place, milk must be kept to have curd and thereby to pickout butter. Likewise -

"Through spiritual discipline practised in solitude, churn the butter of knowledge and devotion from the milk of the mind. Then that butter can easily be kept in the water of the world. It will not get mixed with world."²

"yakhan nirjane sadhan kore monrup dudh thake jnan-bhakti rup makhan tola holo, takhan sei makhan anayase samisar jale rakha yay. se makhan kakhano samisar jaler sange misc yato. ³³

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1. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 /1.105
3. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 /1.106
He said more in this context, there is no more cause for fear if God or Kali, the divine mother is accepted as a talisman for protection. He said, quoting the song of Ramprasad -

"Take a fence with the name of Kali, so your harvest will suffer no damage."¹

"Kali name deore beda, phasale tachrup habe ma."²

He told that if one wants to be a sannyasi, even being a householder, he will be so through this. They are called Guptayogi. But he also said that the householders have duties, debts etc. In this connection he also told that birds and sannyasi do not hoard. He said -

"Paramhansa may not lay things up, but this rule does not apply to householders. They must provide for their families."³

"Paramhansa sancay korte parena eta samsarite pakshe nay, tader paribar der janya sancay korte hay."⁴

¹ Roy Amarendranath - Sakta Radabali - 9th ed. 1971 /p.168
² Ibid.
⁴ Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /p.55
He said while going to ascribe principles and forbiddings to sannyasins - giving a knot, sewing, pulling up the curtain, keeping the box under lock and key, all these should not be done by the mendicant.¹

If the householders give fifteen annas of the mind to God and give one anna to the family, they will sustain no loss. After the attainment of God when he sees God Himself has manifested in everything, then the world does not seem to be false or abortive. He has called that family as the pure family.²

Thus he gave both worldly men and sannyasi the same dignity and also said that both of them acquire the same knowledge at the end of the stage of yogic practices. But restlessness is essential for both the paths to attainment of god. In this context he told to Sri M- "cry to the Lord with an intensely yearning heart and you will certainly see Him."³

"khub byakul hoye knadle tnake dekha yay."⁴

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1. Katha/Vol.4/17th reprint; 1387 /P.203
2. Katha/Vol.3/15th reprint, 1389 /P.143
4. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 /P.23
He also said, God can be easily attained through good company and restless prayer. Of course, so long as there is disbelief or doubt, God can hardly be attained. In reply to what kind of belief is necessary, he said, "Belief like that of a boy."  

Although the householder and the Sannyasi are entitled to the same wisdom, he praised the householder much to remain in the path of religious practices, because the Sannyasi leave the world to attain God. So, calling God is their only duty. But he who calls God in the different obstacles and difficulties of the world, that is, he is the real man who invokes God by pushing a stone weighing twenty maunds.

Thus he encouraged and inspired those who were householders, yet real bhaktas like Sri M and the honourable master Mahasaya.

1. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint, 1388 /p.65
Almost everywhere in the Gosels of Sri Amarkrishna, the thing we get, is the confluence of Purusa and Prakriti. Of course, this Purusa and Prakriti are identical. Although, this Purusa and Prakriti are synonymous with the Purusa and Prakriti of Samkhya but it does not follow the Samkhya philosophy exactly. In the Samkhya of Kapila, Purusa and Prakriti have been referred to as something different, but Sri Amarkrishna described both of them as identical.

1. Purusa is the vital sentiment Truth that sets in action the entire Prapancha. This Purusa is supreme among the Supreme, beyond comprehension without form, colour, name, without origin, growth, change and... "

2. Prakriti (matter) is one of the basic factor for production of Prapancha (the visible world which is scene of manifold action). The root cause of this world is Prakriti, the equability of Sattva, Raja and Tamas.

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Ramakrishna said repeatedly -

"He who is Brahman is the Adyasakti, the primal energy, when inactive. He is called Brahman, the Purusha; He is called Sakti or Prakriti, when engaged in creation, preservation and destruction."\(^1\)

"Yini Brahma, tinie adyasakti, yakhan nisriya, takhan tnake Brahma bale, purus bale, yakhan. srsti sthiti, pralay ei sab karen tnake sakti bali, prakriti bali."\(^2\)

Again he narrated this -

"These are the two aspects of Reality, urushe and Prakriti. He who is the Purusha is also Prakriti. Both are the embodiment of Bliss".\(^3\)

"urus and Prakrti, yini purus, tinie prakrti. anandamay ar anandamayi."\(^4\)

This guessing of difference in identity, is something like manifesting the glory of power or nature.

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2. Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint; 1387 / 74
4. Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint; 1387 / 74
In this context, it is comparable, "Laktiman (Brahma) and the Sakti identical. Yet, to express the glory of Brahma, the power of Brahma has been predominantly shown. In spite of the identity of Laktiman and the Sakti itself, in the expression of glory of power, by imagining the difference in identity lies the seed of Indian Saktism."¹

"Laktiman O Sakti abhed, tathapi brahman mahima khyapaner janyai yeno brahmasthekei pradhan karir dekhno haiache. ei ye, sakti O Laktimaner mul abhedatva satya evade ved kalpana karir saktir mahima prakas eikhanei bharatiya saktibader bij."²

He also added that this identity or the identity of purusa and prakriti will not be realised so long as full knowledge is not attained.

He also told -

"The primordial power and Supreme Brahman are identical."³

"ei adyasakti ar parabrahma⁴ abhed."⁵

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2. Ibid.
4. Parambrahman is aumurta (formless, incorporeal). He Amurta rahman is known by such names: aumra rahman, Paramatma and nirgun rahma.
5. Uramic encyclopaedia/Fab. 1989 / 567
He wanted to make us understand its identity by citing some examples. He told that they are like the gem and its brilliance. One cannot think of the brilliance without the gem or of the gem without its brilliance. Again, it is like the snake and its wriggling motion. Same way, nobody can think of the wriggling motion without the snake or of the snake without its wriggling motion.

That is when Brahman manifests Himself throughout the universe being attached to three gunas (qualities) like 'sattva', 'Raja' and Tamas, it is regarded as 'prakriti'. Again, when Brahman being devoid of all gunas manifests himself as pure-consciousness, it is called Brahman which is synonymous with the purusa of Sankhya.

In Ramayan also, the identity of Ram and Sita, i.e. Ram as absolute Brahman and Sita as Sakti have been imagined as identical. Once, one of his devotee asked him - 'What is Yogamaya?' In reply he said - 'Yogamaya' means the conjunction of purusa and prakriti. 1, 2

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1. Katha/Vol.2/17th Reprint, 1387 /p.73
He also said that Sri Krishna is the purusha and Radha the Prakriti, the citsakti, the Adhyasakti.²

Sri Ramakrishna merged Purusha and Prakriti with flow of Sahajiya Vaisnavism. According to some critics - "These principles of the enjoyer and the enjoyed are known in the Sahajiya school as the purusha and prakriti manifested on earth as the male and the female.²

He also tells us the same thing about the joint images of Siva and Kali. Purusa is inactive, so Siva has become a corpse. Prakriti is doing everything with the help of God.³

He sometimes, imagined Purusa and Prakriti as Brahma and Sakti, sometimes as Rama and Sita and as Radha and Krishna identified. This conception, if not available in the Samkhya philosophy, it is easily available in the stream of Indian Saktism.

1. Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint; 1387 /P.160
In this context, it may be quoted -

"But mythology, very easily identified purusha and prakriti of Samkhya, with Siva and Sakti of Tantra and with Bishnu and Lakshmi of Vaisnava, As a result, in the Purans, in the hymn to Lakshmi, described in mythology, Visnu and Lakshmi, Brahma and maya of Vedanta, Purusa and Prakriti of Samkhya Siva and Sakti of Tantra, leaving their individuality, have stayed assuming a dual form closely mingled." ¹

"kintu puran ati sahajei samkhyer purus-praktike tantrer sibsaktir sahit O baisnabaner visnu-laksmir sahit ekebare abhinna kariache. Pale, purane, puranbarnita lakshmi, stabe, visnu O laksmi, vedanter brahma O maya, samkhyer purans O prakriti, tantrer sib O sakti sakale nijeder svatantra parityag karia misia ek yugal murti dharan karia basia ac on." ²

Thus we find that sometimes he thought brahman identified with Radha, Kali, Sita and Sakti and sometimes tells us identified with formless God of Vedanta. Such as -

"He and his power Brahman and its power - nothing else exists but this." ²

¹ Dasgupta, S.B. Sri Radhan Namabika - Amsane o sakhyo braha 16
² Ibid
³ Gospel/Vol.1/7th ed; Dec.1980 /p.287
"tini ar tnar sakti, brahman ar sakti - bai ar kichui nai."¹

But that Brahma which he told as identical with Sakti, is endowed with virtue and sportive.

Abhedananda discussed God as Mother or Prakriti in his books - "we may call this self-existing, intelligent, eternal cosmic energy, the Mother of the universe... This eternal energy is called in Sanskrit, Prakriti."²

To Sri Ramakrishna, the dual images of Sadha and Krishna have become one mixing with Purusha and Prakriti.

In this context, it may be compared -

"Elements of Samkhya thought are found in two Upanisads which have a theistic tendencies and predominantly in the Bhagavat Gita. Medieval Vaishnavism made use of cosmological ideas derived from Samkhya."³

Sri Ramakrishna did not impart instruction by going through Indian Philosophy. But his Gospels contain the history of philosophy.

¹ Katha/Vol.3/15th reprint; 1389
² Abhedananda/Vedanta philosophy/2nd ed. Copyright/1906
³ Encyclopaedia of philosophy/Paul Edward/Macmillan & Free press/Pub. 1967/Vol.4
As a result of the synthetic thought of Sri Ramakrishna, he mingled his idea about surusa and prakriti with the local current.

The writings of some critics - "may be compared in this context. "The decision regarding this, in the minds of the populace is very simple and clear - the decision is that surusa and prakriti are the transformation or another name of siva and shakti."

"janasadharaner mone e sambandhe siddhanta sti saral ebar pada; se siddhanta ei, purusprakriti siksaktiri rupantar ba nanantar."

2. Ibid.
SIDDHAI

Inspite of being a believer in religious rites and rituals, and methodical devotion (baidhi bhakti) and idolatry, Sri Ramakrishna had no respect for miracle or attainment of Siddhi of any type. Rather, he expressed different views against attainment of Siddhi. Because attainment of Siddhai is a bar to the realisation of God.

One day he said with reference to 'Hathayoga' that the object of Hathayoga is to acquire Siddhai i.e., Supernatural power. He said - "The hathayogi practice physical exercises. His goal is to acquire supernatural powers, longevity and the eight psychic powers."¹

"hathayogi sarirer katakgulo kasarat kore; uddesya - siddhai, dirgha ayu habe, asta siddhi habe;"²

Eight siddhies mean, 'Anima,' Laghima, Mahima, prapti, prakamya, bositva, Isitva, and yatramab-sayitva -

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /i.53
These eight Siddhi or Siddhai which is derived yogic practice, are obstacles to the attainment of God. But they help him in attaining name and fame to some extent and these name and fame help him in attaining self-establishment, though Siddhai is a bar to the attainment of emancipation, he also said that through this people are benefitted a little. In his own words -

These give only a little power. With healing and the like one may do only a little good to others.¹

"ektu sakti hote pare, tabe loker ektu upakar hay."²

But practically, he was against Siddhai. He demonstrated that attainment of Siddhai is the cause of troubles. But the movement of religion is very subtle. Religion is a thing of realisation and feeling, that means self-realisation is the pith and marrow of religion.

In this context he told -

"Attainment of supernatural powers and so on - these are desires. Krishna once said to Arjuna - 'Friend you cannot

2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /P.88
natural powers.**

"animadi siddhi - esab kamana. Krishna arjunke bolechilen - bhai animadi siddhai, ektio thakle iswar labh hay na;**2

That is, God is not attained if there is desire. Thread easily passes through the eye of a needle but it is very difficult to pass a thread through a needle, if there is a part of thread attached to it. So, also, it is impossible to attain God, so long as there are desires.

The clear remark made by Sri Ramakrishna regarding siddhai is that only mean-minded men want siddhai, to cure disease, to make one win a case, to walk over water etc. But those who are real devotees crave nothing but the lotus like feet of God and attainment of Siddhi is an actual bar to the attainment of self knowledge. In this context it is stated in the songs of Kamalakanta -

"Parasmani is great treasure, it can afford immense wealth. At the dance door of cintamoni(God) such innumerable gems are lying scattered."3

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /1.58
3. Roy, Amarendranath - Sakta padabali/9th ed.; 71 /1.177
"param dhan parasmani, ye asamka dhan dite pare, 
emon kato moni pade ache, cintamonir nachduare."

The commentator of Kathamrita said in this context—

"Eight kinds of Siddhi constitute the dance door of 
cintamonii, i.e. outer yard, and in the inner portion, 
cintamonii exists."

"astasiddhi cintamonii bhagabanen naeduar kina 
bairer uthan, ar antahpur - yekhane cintamonii 
bhagaban biraj karen."  

By the word 'Katomanii' it explains eight kinds of Siddhi 
which are objects of obstacles to the path of Siddhi in yogic 
practices. In this regard he also added that body, mind and 
soul through which God can be attained, should be tempted to 
ordinary things. And therefore, Sri Ramakrishna never devoted 
his attention to swastayan or curing of disease and also 
never supported it. So he is heard to say —

1. Roy, Amarendra Nath - Saktapadabali  
9th ed. 1971, /P.177


2. Ibid.
"O Mother I don't want name and fame.
I don't want the eight occult powers.
I don't want a hundred occult powers."¹

"ma, ami lokmaya cai ni ma,
astasiddhi cai na ma, O ma,
sata siddhi cai n- - ²

Thus Sri Ramakrishna always avoided siddhi or miracle and tried to rouse the consciousness of the people immersed in siddhi.

² Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint; 1387 /p.167
Sri Ramakrishnadev discussed differently regarding 'Samadhi' at different times to different men. In course of imparting instruction, the things as to what 'samadhi' means and its classification, have come again and again.

The 'samadhi' about which Sri Dev said, is also included in the yogic scripture described Satajali, referred to it as synonymous with the extreme state of a wise soul of the Vedanta. As a matter of fact, the last stage of hearing, thinking and meditation of the Vedanta may be said synonymous with the 'samadhi' of yogic scriptures.

1. "There is no consciousness of subject, object or thinking, but the mind becomes steady and one with the object of thought. This is called 'Samadhi'.

In addition he (S.N.D) also told that the word 'samadhi' cannot properly be translated either as 'concentration' or by 'meditation'.

In course of discussing the theory of 'samadhi' he said —

"with the realisation of satchidananda one goes into samadhi."¹

"satchidananda labh hole samadhi hay."² ³ ⁵

In that state i.e. in a state of samadhi, he said in reply to as to whether ego exists or not. "Generally a little of it remains. However, hard you may rub a grain of gold against a grindstone, still a bit of it always remains."³

"amar pray ektu ahan thake, sonar kana yeman sata ghosleo ektu kana thake."⁴

The samadhi about which Sri Dev stated here is the 'savikalpa samadhi. In this state the sense of ego exists. So in this samadhi, though knowledge about Brahman remains, yet a slight sense of ego exists."⁵

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2. Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1388 /A.13
Then, he referred to the second type of *samadhi.
In that *samadhi, the sense of ego is lost. Sometimes
that little bit of knowledge is also, effaced by him.
It is called "Jada *samadhi or nirvikalpa *samadhi."¹

He also said that then all the sense is lost.
That experiences cannot be described. Moreover he
wanted it to be understandable with the help of a tale.

"A salt doll went to measure the depth of the
ocean, but before it had gone far into the water it
melted away. It became entirely one with the water of
the ocean."²

"nuner *putul samudra *mapte gichilo, ekta *nemei
*gole gelo, *tadakarkarita."³

In this context, we may quote -

"Immersion of the mind means losing of 'sankalpa'
and 'vikalpa' - the two state of the mind. Then mind
is transformed into consciousness and becomes one with
the sea of *Brahma consciousness. In the Vedanta philo-
sophy it is called, assumption of the form of that,
'Tat *akarita', that is assuming the form of *Brahma
*Brahma consciousness."⁴

¹. *Katha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387; /P.85
³. *Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 / .85
P.20
Although Sri Ramakrishna stated about two kinds of samadhi, he referred to some other kinds of samadhi. Although they are different in name, practically they are almost one. As for instance, -

One day he said -

"The Jnani experience jada samadhi, in which no trace of 'I' is left. The samadhi attained through the path of bhakti is called 'chetan samadhi.'"¹

"Jnanir jadasamadhi hay - ami thake na.

bhaktiyogcer samadhike cetan samadhi bole."

Here, probably by 'chetan samadhi' he meant 'avikalpa samadhi', or Samprajnata samadhi. He also added that even after attaining samadhi, Narada and Sukdeva came back for the education of the people.² But Jadabharat and Battatraya, after seeing Brahma could not give information.³ Because after the attainment of the knowledge of Brahma, if a state of samadhi is reached, the sense of 'I' is totally dissolved. But Sukdeva and Narada even

¹ Gospel/Vol.1/7th ed; Dec. 1980 /$4.78
² Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint; 1387 /$1.80
³ Katha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 /$0.90
after the attainment of the state of samadhi came back for popular education. But that 'I' is not 'raw I' but 'paka I'. In this respect, he also said that none but the "Iśvar Kotis" can return to the plane of relative consciousness after attaining samadhi. Ordinary man can reach upto samadhi, through spiritual discipline, but they do not come back\(^1\).

Besides these Sri Ramakrishnadeva mentioned another two types of samadhi - sthita samadhi and unmana samadhi.\(^2\) The thought of matter prevents the mind from being lost in 'samadhi', when the sadhaka is totally free from material thought, he attains a state of "sthita samadhi.'

He, also, stated about another kind of samadhi, which is called 'Unamana samadhi' i.e., picking up of the scattered mind. He also, added that state of samadhi does not exist for a long time. The material thought puts an end to the attachment of a 'yoga'. The duration of this 'unmana samadhi' is very short.

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1. Katha/Vol.2/17th reprint; 1387 /I.57
In the history of Indian philosophy, there are mainly two types of samadhi:—

"In all these stages there are objects on which the mind consciously concentrates, these are therefore called the "samprajnata (with knowledge of objects) types of samadhi. Next to this comes the last stage, of samadhi called the 'asamprajnata' or nirodha samadhi, in which the mind is without any object."¹

On another day, he said about the feeling of 'samadhi'. His own spiritual experiences tally with the words of the Sadhu of Brishikesh. He also told that sometimes he feels the rising of the spiritual current inside his body like that of a monkey, sometimes, like that of a fish, sometimes like that of a bird, sometimes like that of an ant, and sometimes like the wriggling of a snakes, the Mahavayu rises till it reaches in the Sahasrara, and he goes into samadhi.²

Though the Vedantic view and the Yoga scriptures are poles as under, still Sri Ramakrishna informed that there is similarity of six circles with the seven grounds of Vedanta.

². Katha/Vol.3/15th Reprint; 1329 / .258
Though most of the followers of non-dualism think that there is no relation of yogic practice with the practice of non-dualism. But restraining the propensity of the mind in yoga, also, just as realisation of one's self is possible, so also, it is possible in the practice of non-dualism. In the words of critics - "Although there is no exact similarity or harmony of the practice of Vedanta with yogic practice, but there is a sense of harmony between them .......

Apart from this, it is also understood that there is no real difference between "badh samadhi" of Vedanta and the 'laya-samadhi' of Yoga."  

As a matter of fact, the two words, Badh and Saya separately bear synonymous idea. But the meditation (nidadhyasan) of Vedanta becomes possible through knowledge. And the samadhi of 'yoga' takes place as a result of the union of Jivatma and Paramatma.

One day, he said regarding the Samadhi that it is stated in the Vedas, when the mind reaches the seventh

1st ed. Jany. 1985        F. 203/204
planes, one attains Samadhi.\footnote{1} He also added -

In the first three planes the mind generally exists. Then the mind is immersed only in wordliness. A man sees the divine light when his mind dwells in the plane of heart. The next plane is the throat, then one wishes hear and say about the words of God. When the mind reaches the forehead or between the eyebrows the form of Satcidananda is seen. But one cannot touch it. When the mind reaches the seventh plane, then the ego vanishes completely and the man goes into samadhi.

Though the seven planes is the highest stage, but regarding himself he said - he wants to remain in the path of devotion even after realising the feeling of the oneness of God of the path of knowledge. He also said, inspite of reaching the seventh plane, he did not agree to remain there for a long time. Because 'a real devotee does not want to be sugar, he is fond of tasting sugar'.\footnote{2}

\footnote{1} Katha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 \footnote{1} 76
\footnote{2} Katha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 \footnote{2} 79
Thus, although he told that 'Nirbikalpa' samadhi is the highest but he gave same importance to the 'Savikalpa samadhi or Sabija samadhi. Therefore, he told -

"It is better to make the mind go up and down between the fifth and sixth planes, like a boat racing between two points"¹."

'pancam ar sastha bhumir majhkhane bach : khelano bhalo." ²

². Katha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 /p.79
PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THE WORLDLY LIFE

In spite of being the thought of Sri Ramkrishna regarding the conception of world in keeping with those of all, it is different from the views of others. It has been contemplated differently regarding the conception of world in different streams of Indian Philosophy. He, wholly imitated now. Like Sankaracarya, he said that Brahma is real, world is real. But at the same time he told world is illusory so long as the inner reality of Brahman is not realised. But after the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman, Brahma is real, so also, the world is real.

One day we heard to say -

"As long as one has not realised God, one should renounce the world, following the process of Neti, etc. But he who has attained God knows that it is God who has become all this." 2

"yataksan iswarke na paco yar, tataksan neti neti kore tyag korte hay, thake yara peseche, thara jane ye, tinie sab hoyechen." 3

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1. Katha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 / i.122
3. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint;1387 / i.115
In these lines, he explain the conception of world as qualified-non-dualism. But he did not follow the qualified-non-dualism by Ramanuja. In his view although Brahma and the world are stated differently, in reality, they are one and indivisible. Therefore, like the dualism of Madhava, he did not state Brahma and the world as completely different. He spoke both of Brahma and its changeable form as real. To Sri Ramakrishna, world is the sports of Brahma, and so, in every object of this world, he saw the manifestation of Brahma. He repeatedly said -

"The phenomenal world belongs to that very reality to which the Absolute belongs; again, the Absolute belongs to that very reality to which the phenomenal world belongs."\(^1\)

"Janari nitya, tvarali lila, ynari lila, tnari nityn."\(^2\)

Therefore, he told that at the preliminary state of meditative activities, he told us to think the world as unreal. In this context he is often heard to say -

"Why should it be unreal? what you are asking is a matter for philosophical discussion. ..."

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After realising God, one sees that it is He Himself who has become the universe and the living beings.\(^1\)

"Jagat mithya keno habe? O sab bicarer katha, tnake darsan hole takhan bojha yay ye tinie jiv-jagat hayechen.\(^2\)

In this regard, he cited examples, such as -

The stairs are to be crossed one after another to go up the roof. Again after the ascending the roof, it is found that the roofs and the stairs are made of the same stuff.\(^3\) That is, after the attainment of knowledge, it is found that the absolute Brahman has manifested Himself through the world.

Question naturally arises in the mind that if everything is sports. Of Brahman why there is so much difference, sin and sufferings? On the occasion of controversy between Vijoy Krishna and Keshab Sen, he wanted to solve the problem. He said to Keshab Sen that he thinks all these are necessary. Again he explained,

2. Katha/Vol.4/17th reprint; 1387 /:\:35
3. Katha/Vol.4/17th reprint; 1387 /:\:34
when Sri Krishna, Himself God Incarnate, played with the gopis at Vrindaban, trouble-makers like Jatila and Kutila appeared on the scene. Question may arise, what is the necessity of this? He also gave the answer -

"The answer is that the play does not develop without trouble-makers. (There is no fun without Jatila and Kutila)."¹

"Jatila Kutile na thakle lila postal hay na.
Jatila-Kutile na thakle ragad hay na."²

He, also, acknowledged all these conflicts and quarrels, because, there must be in creation an opposition of two forces, of which, one is good, and the other evil, and as a result of this conflict between the two, all the pain and misery come into being.

Why does man become forgetful being involved in this world? In reply, to this he said, "the world becomes an illusion, if divine pleasure is attained once and so the creation meets with destruction. Therefore, both Vidyamaya and avidyamaya are helpful to the sport.

¹ Gospel/Vol.1/7th ed. B.1980 /P.141
² Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 /P.48
If God is not attained, that is so long as there is egoism in man there are good and bad, virtue and vice, and all these things. Had there been no sense of vice in us, we would have done evil acts all the while, in the name of God. This would have resulted in the increase of sin and injustice. But as there is sense of virtue and vice, along with egoism, we are bound to take the responsibility of it.

Thus Sri Ramakrishna called both Brahma and the world as true, although he regarded the world as the sport of Brahma, which is though true like Brahma, but not eternal.
The egoism of individual is responsible for all types of bondage of men. This has been stated by again and again. The difference between individual's absolute soul is due to the existence of the 'ego' in the middle.

In the language of Sri Ramakrishna - 'he' that makes one a worldly person and attaches one to woman and gold is the 'wicked I'. The intervention of this ego creates the difference between jiva and Atman'.

'ye amite sansari kare, kamini kanchane astha kare, sei ami kharap. Jiva o Atman praved hoyeche, ei ami majkhane ache bole.'

That is, ego or ignorance has separated a person to god. He has been compared this illusion or ego with clouds. The sun remains visible owing to the slight existence of clouds. The sun becomes visible with the elimination of clouds.

2. Katha//Vol.1/17th reprint;1327 / .77
3. Katha//Vol.1/17th reprint;1327 / .75
Although he told us to shun 'ego', yet at the same time, he told us that it is very difficult to shun 'ego'. 'ego' is of two types. One is 'lower I', which was called by Sri Ramakrishna as "raw I" (Sanchara I), and the other is the 'Higher I' which has been called as "matured I" (Sancho ami).

In this regard we heard to say - "Master - it is true that one or two can get rid of the 'I' through samadhi; but these cases are very rare. You may talk in thousands of reasoning, but still the 'I' comes back. Therefore, if the 'I' must remain, let the rascal - who is the 'servant I'?

"dui ekti loker samadhi hoye abaci yay bate, kintu pray yay na. hazar bicar karo, amphere ghure ese upasthit. .... ekanto yeni ami yate na, tabe thak sala 'das' ami hoye."

That means although the e is ego, it is out of the sense of mastery.

2. Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint; 1387 / .77
In this context, he said, "Sankaracharya said the ego of knowledge for the sake of the education the people. He also explained that "raw I" means, "I the master," "I am educated," "I am rich" and all other things, and the 'matured I' that is the 'servant' - the 'devotee I' and the ego of knowledge etc.

Regarding Jiva he said - "there are four types of human beings: the bound, those aspiring after liberation, the liberated, and the ever perfect."\(^1\)

"Jiva car thak boloche - baddha, mumukshu, mukta, nitya."\(^2\)

Baddhajib means, those who are in bondage, those of the enjoyment of happiness of the world as their extreme end as they are absorbed in the material things, they do not remember God even through mistake.

Man seeking liberation are eager to the free from 'ego' or ignorance. But it is not a fact that everyone becomes successful in this path. They are called "mumukshu jib". Liberated souls or mukta jib are those which do not harbour 'ego' in them. They also do not think themselves as masters. They are always absorbed in the thought of God.

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2. [Satha/ Vol.1/17th reprint; 1987 / .63]
As the 4th class, the name of the 'nitya-jiva' may be mentioned. Although they remain in this world, money, happiness, nothing can touch them. We refer Narada and Sankaracarya as 'nitya-jiva'.

By the bye, he told the story of Homa-bird of the Vedas and he compared Varendra to 'homa-bird'. He also added more that he never becomes involved in the world.

That is, for the realisation of 'jiva is nitya' one needs the dissolution of ego. The path of knowledge or the path of devotion, whichever path you follow, the purpose of individual life is the elimination of the 'raw I'.

In a word, it may be said that Sri Gaurkeshi told that man should do religious practices to get liberated from the 'ego' so that they think themselves indentified with Brahma. He told us in different ways that getting rid of that ego is the accomplishment of human life.

1. natha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 / / .71
2. Ibid. / .29
3. natha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 / / .213
4. Ibid.
Regarding free-will, he informed that the meaning of keeping free will is that so long as there is a sense of ego, there is good and bad, virtue and vice and all such things. Because, but for the existence of all these things, if there is 'will of God' we would have been involved more in wanton activities to gratify our sense of ego, and this would have enhanced more sin and injustice. But if we acknowledge the expression, 'free will' its virtue and vice fall on particular man.¹

In this context, the remark of a critic regarding Sri Ramakrishna may be quoted —

"He acknowledged in slightly different way the current of rationalistic individualism of the nineteenth century. According to him, the pride of this free-will, is for the necessity of removing these wanton activities. Otherwise, vice would have increased more."²

"unabingsha satabdir yuktibad byaktisvatanter dharake akto anyabhabe tini svikar korechen. tnar mate, ei svadhin icchar abhiman manuse; yathechchar nibaraneri prayajane, naile mate. aro briddhi hoto."³

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1. Katha/Vol.1/17th Reprint; 1387 /f. 242
2. Ghose, Pranabranjan / Sri Ramakrishna & Sangha / 1382 /f. 268
3. Ibid.
God is doing everything and there is punishment for sin - apparently this may seem contradictory, because, the desire to act freely remains so long as God is not attained. After attaining Him, there remains nothing as free will. Then the real divine work begins. At that stage, there nothing remains good or bad any more. But so long as, there is egoism, the fruit of action gets involved in egoism.

Thus Sri Ramakrishna has given recognition to free will and again recognised virtue and vice, justice and injustice. But he told us that to rise above everything is the ideal and goal of human life.

YATA MAT TATA PATH

A circumspection of the life of Sri Ramakrishnadeva will clearly reveal the truth that not only his gospel bore the sayings of synthesis, but his entire life was harmonising. It was the prime objective of his life to safeguard the solidarity existing in the views of all religious. He himself had religious practices in the various path of religion. And he showed in his own life that same God can be attained through all the religious practices and the outcome of his practices "Yata mat tata path."

In mythologies and scriptures, we have talk about religious links. But Sri Ramakrishna proved the authenticity of the words of scriptures by practising it through his own life. Sri Ramakrishna p said views are only paths. They can never be the ultimate goal. In this context he told - "God can be realised through all paths. All religions are true."¹ "Sab path diye thake paoa yey sab dharma satye."²

He wanted to explain the fact that, "

² Katha/Vol.5/14th reprint; 1986/p.14
is attainable through the adoption of all paths, with the help of different similes. Just as the water of the same pond is called by different men by different names.

"It is like the water in a lake. Some drink it at one place and call it, 'jal', others at another place and call it 'pani' and still others at a third place and call it 'water'. "3

"Yemon pukure jal ache ek ghater lok balche, ar ek ghater lok bolche water, ar ek ghater lok bolche pani - "4

Thereby, the difference of water is not proved. That is, with the difference of name, the thing does not suffer any change. Therefore, he said that there is one God, but 'He' has many names. He knew it from his own experience that starting from worshipping God without from all these help us inreaching God as 'saccidananda' but the rationalistic mind of Sri M, following keshab Sen did not want to believe in idolatry or worshipping God with form. Then Sri Ramakrishna told -

"You are talking worshipping the clay image. Even if the image is made of clay, there is need for that sort of worship,"¹ "tumi matir pratima puja bolchile, yadi matirir hay, se pujate prayojan ache."²

Because, the clay image of God is only a symbol, through which the indivisible formless can be worshipped and not the idol of clay.

He added more that if there is any mistake in image worship. Does 'He' not know that he is being involved?

"He who is the Lord of the Universe has arranged all these forms to suit different men in different stages of knowledge."³

"yar jagat tinie e sab karechen — adhikari bhede, yar ya pete say, ma seirup khabar bandobasto korechen."⁴

That means the idea about God without form is not for all. Mind is not entirely fixed on formless God. At the initial stage, the idea of God with form is good.

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², Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint 1387/P, 21.
⁴, Katha/Vol.1/17th reprint 1387/P, 21.
In this context, once, he told to Sri M -

"Now you see that the mind cannot be fixed, all of a sudden, on the formless aspect of God. It is wise to think of God with form during the primary stages."

"dekhle ? nirakare ekebare mon sthir hay na, pratham pratham sakar to bes." To explain to the Brahmā devotees he told - Think of Brahmā, Existence-knowledge Bliss—Absolute (Saccidananda), as it were, a soreless sea, but through the humidit, of devotion, the different places of water assume the form of ice. In other words God assumes various forms for his devotees. But with the rising of the sun of knowledge the blocks of ice melt. Then one doesn't feel any more that God is person.

He also explain it by telling that the same Brahma is called by different names such as priest cook. Therefore he said "He, who is Brahma is verily Atma and again, He is the Bhagavan." "Yini Brahma, tinie atma, tinie bhagavan."
That means the Reality is one and the same. The difference is only in names.¹

One day in course of explaining to the Brahma devotees about the identity of formless God and God with form he said:

"He who is called Brahman by the Jñānis is known as Atman by the Yogis and as Bhagavan by the bhaktas."²

"Brahmajnanir Brahma, Yogir paramatma bhaktar bhagaban."³

In Puran also, we get the similar idea.⁴

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1. C.f. "God is called by different names, e.g., Brahman, Paramatman and Bhagavan, but by whatever name. He may be called. His pure essence consists of pure formless consciousness (arupasya cidatmanah) (Bhagavat puran, 1.3.30) Dasgupta, S.N./I.P./Vol.IV/Reprint in 1988/P.12.


4. C.f. "Now this reality is called Brahman by some, Bhagavan by some and Paramatman by other, when this reality, which is of the nature of pure bliss, is experienced by sages as being identical with their own selves......and when no distinction between itself and its power is realised, it is called Brahman. .... But when this reality is realised by the devotees in its true nature as being possessed of diverse powers in their distinction from the former, He is called by the name Bhagavan."

Sri Ramakrishna knew very well that views are only paths. In this regard it may be said that if the realisation of God, had been the objective, then the adoption of any path would have sufficed. But he resorted to religious paths, one after another, and attained fulfilment in them. All the paths lead to the same truth or Goal. He wanted to preach this in the human society and this was the gist of his teaching. We know that he told again and again that he had practised not only in paths of Tantra, Vaisnab and Vedanta, the various paths of Hinduism, but the Mahammadan and Christian also.

Now, let us come to Dualism, non-dualism and Qualified non-dualism. In the Indian Philosophy there are conflicts and differences of opinion among these three views.

But to Sri Ramakrishna, these three paths are not vehicle to opposite ideas. Because, Brahma, according to him is with form and virtue, and at the same time, formless and without any virtue. To a devotee, he is endowed with form, because a devotee wants to have God in name and form. Again a Jûâni thinks 'Brahma is real and everything is unreal.' So he does not think God as a person. But to Sri
Ramakrishna both are true. Even he did not say that path of devotion is vile in any way the path of knowledge. With reference to God with form he said -

"It is possible for a man to see the forms of God, or to think of Him as a person, only. So long as he is conscious that he is a devotee."¹

"Yatakshai am bhakta ei abhiman thake, tata-khsane iswarer rup: darsan ar iswarbe byakti bole both sambhab hay."²

But according to vedantic judgement, this form and aspects of God disappear -

"The ultimate conclusion of such discrimination is that Brahman alone is real and this world of names forms illusory."³

"Se bicerer ses siddhanta ei - brahma satya, ar namrupyikta Jagat mithya."⁴

In this context, he also said that through dualism we may reach the goal of non-dualism. But he also said, that non-dualism is not the last word. Because after non-dualism, there is Qualified Non-dualism. At this a man sees that not only Brahman is

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true; even the world with its all things are true. Because he sees that everything is Brahma. But this view is not in conformity with that of Ramanuja there is a slight difference.

In this context, he said that it is very difficult to say the lost word 'about God.' In Vedas also, 'He' is called both formless and endowed with form. It is undoubtedly true that God comes down to earth like Krishna, so also, the formless God also true.'

This generosity, itself, made him an advocate of synthesis. So, he said that both forms of God and formless God are true. Apparently, it seemed conflicting, he never deviated from the main flow of Hinduism. Because, in the scripture, the apparent conflict is visible. As a matter of fact the conflict is in the explanation of the scriptures. And Sri Ramakrishna gave recognition to the idea of everybody to be true.

Again, he told us that it is meaningless to enter into conflict about Siva, Rishu, Kali and Krishna. He was very much conscious about the conflict existing between vaisnava and Sakta.
With a view to liberating from the narrowness of bigotry, he said. God can be had through all religions if one is sincere. So, nobody should be envied. In this context he told -

"The dogmatist says, "My religion alone is true, and the religions of others are false. This is a bad altitude.""

"amar dharma thik ar sakaler mithya e buddhi kharap."  

In this reference he also told that just as the rivers mix with the sea from different side, so also the different paths lead us to the same goal.

"Opinions are but paths. Each religion is only a path leading to God."  

"Mat -path ek ekta dharmer mat ek ekti path - iswarer diye loye yaw."  

Thus he told repeatedly that way may be different but our goal is same. In Indian philosophy also we get the similar comment.¹

Sri Ramakrishna also said that the truth established in the Vedas, the Puranas, and the Tantras is but one Satchidananda. The one Satchidananda is called Brahman, krishna and Siva.²

To remove the conflict existing in Hinduism, Islamism and Christianiyby he said -

1. C.f. "Thus it was that though there were many differences among the various systems, yet their goal of life, their attitude towards the world and the means for the attainment of the goal (sadhana) being fundamentally the same, there was a unique unify in the practical sadhana of almost all the Indian systems."


"I had to practise each religion for a time - Hinduism, Islam, Christianity. Furthermore, I followed the paths of the Saktas, Vaisnavas and Vedantists. I realised that there is only one God toward whom all are travelling; but the paths are different."

"amay sab dharma ekbar kore nite hoechilo - hindu, musalman, khristan - abar sakta, vaisnab vedanta, e sab path diyeo aste hoeche dektam sei ek iswär-tiär kachei sakale asche-bhinna bhinna path die."

As a cause of these various views, he said that man can choose his path according to his nature. He also told that it is not wise for all to have religious practices in the same religious path.

The age in which Sri Ramakrishna deva flourished, narrowness or difference of opinion on religion was frequently held.

The society was full of conflicts of creeds and cultures, dogmas and doctrines and the relation between any two religious sects was embittered by intolerance and jealously only. He sternly blamed all this thing and told dogmatism is not at all good.

But one may have sincerely in a particular religion, even after respecting the various sects. He also says that one may salute all, no doubt but loves one whole—heartedly is called sincerity or nistha.

In the context of "ananta path ananta mat", the remark of a famous philosopher and commentator of the Kathamrita may be referred to—

"He flourished such a conflicting time of the nineteenth century then all the religious views and the religious communities gave rise to and gave expression to conflicts, troubles and superstitions. The necessity of creating a peaceful atmosphere with unified sweet equality was felt. So Sri Ramakrishnadeva had religious practices, centring Dakshineswar as a great holy place and realised one God with and an absolute theory—there are as many paths as there are views, realising all religious views and all faiths." ¹

¹tini unabinsa sataker emani ek dvandamay ebani sakal dharmamet ebani sakal dharmasadayer madhye srsta o prakasita sanghatmay badhabighnasankul

1. Swami Prajnananda - Bani O Bicar
But the harmonising policy of Sri Dev was not the policy of unifying and collectivising all religions faiths and religious paths and practically acknowledging the singular opinions that ultimate result was one and second to none. This may be called the gist of the gospels of Sri Ramakrishna.