

YOGIC TRANSMISSION IN SAHAJ MARG

OF THE

SHRI RAM CHANDRA

MISSION: A RELIGIO-HISTORICAL STUDY

by

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SUMMARY

In this dissertation the phenomenological method together with the hermeneutical concepts of experience, devotion, constant remembrance and transmission focus on yogic transmission in Sahaj Marg of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission. Sahaj Marg is an adaptation of Raja Yoga. Sahaj Marg emphasises the practical approach and calls for the aspirant to follow the teachings and methods of the spiritual Master. Yogic transmission is the unique feature of this system. Preceptors have been trained by the Master to aid in the spiritual evolution of humanity. Pranahuti is defined by the Master as a forceless force for the spiritual transformation of humanity. This system can be followed by all aspirants, the only qualification being a willingness to follow the practice. Sahaj Marg has been created for the present day aspirant to achieve liberation in the quickest time possible.

KEY TERMS:

MASTER, ABHYASI, PRECEPTOR, SAMSKARAS, MEDITATION, YOGA, CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE, ZERO/NOTHINGNESS , YOGIC TRANSMISSION, PRANAHUTI

PREFACE

This dissertation is an examination of Yogic transmission in Sahaj Marg of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission. The central hermeneutical idea is to experience the yogic transmission (*pranahuti*). Transmission, meditation and the teachings of the Sahaj Marg are aids in the aspirants spiritual growth. Sahaj Marg is an adaptation of Raja Yoga, which has been moulded to meet the needs of present day aspirants.

In Raja Yoga it is necessary for an aspirant to have a teacher to guide him/her on the spiritual path. The Master with the aid of preceptors, uses *pranahuti* to help aspirants to overcome the barriers on the path to the goal ie. a state of negation - Centre/Nothingness.

The Centre is the primary cause of the entire manifestation and to which everything will ultimately return after *Maha Pralaya*. Dissolution is necessary for the return to the original. Thus the aspirant strives for an individual dissolution of all coverings around the individual soul. Then the soul would have secured a place closest to the Centre.

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CHAPTER ONE**METHODOLOGY****1.1 AIM**

The aim of this dissertation is to describe and explain the concept *pranahuti* (yogic transmission) in Sahaj Marg of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission. The emphasis of the Sri Ram Chandra Mission (henceforth the Sri Ram Chandra Mission will be referred to as the SRC Mission) is to aid the individual's evolution in spiritually in order to gain liberation in this lifetime.

In this chapter (chapter one) a discussion of the hermeneutical approaches used in the study are outlined.

1.2 APPROACH- PHENOMENOLOGICAL

The methodological stance taken in this study is the phenomenological approach. This approach is appropriate for it prescribes a sincere, independent and attentive attitude so that the researcher may "penetrate to the core of things " (Kruger 1982:18). Phenomenology aims to re-establish contact with the raw material of life, in an effort to rediscover and re-experience life itself. The phenomenological approach calls for the investigator to present things as they are (Kruger 1982:17). The role of the researcher is thus essentially a descriptive one. A description of the historical, doctrinal, technical and structural dimension of the SRC Mission are undertaken.

The phenomenological approach treats religion as a distinct phenomenon deserving study on its own terms. It seeks to "encounter" the things themselves and sets aside prejudgement. The phenomenological approach undertakes to account for the subject's experience of their world, by focussing on things as they appear in human consciousness (Kruger 1982:18). Phenomenology addresses the religious phenomenon of this study in order to discover the role of the Master and his method, and it attempts to explain the meaning of the religious phenomena.

The phenomenological approach will help to research and discover how the adherents respond to all religious data. Careful analysis and an empathetic attitude on the part of the researcher will make it possible to describe the religious experience and "see" the "real" inner meaning and essence of religious phenomena as it is experienced by the adherents. The investigator thus ensures that a complete account of the adherent's experience of life in its totality is made (Kruger 1982:17).

The phenomenological approach is a sincere attempt by man to open oneself to experience the world as it appears in the fullness of one's being (Kruger 1982:20). This concept of openness encompasses essence, intentionality and epoche'.

1.2.1 ESSENCE

The inner meaning, the intrinsic value of religious phenomena constitutes the essence of the phenomena. It is the essence that highlights ones understanding of the uniqueness of religious phenomena as it appears in religiousness. The main concern of this dissertation is to highlight the effect of religious phenomena on the religious aspirant.

Essence within the theme of religious action, ie. ritual cleaning, code of conduct, meditation and transmission, together with the religious state are of concern to reveal the role of *pranahuti* in Sahaj Marg.

1.2.2 INTENTIONALITY

Intentionality attempts to penetrate the actual life world of the religious person, for it asks the investigator to describe "how people themselves experience their own world out there" (Kruger 1982:17). An individual is not a passive recipient of data but an active participant in the data collection process. Therefore we say that the individual's experience of the world is intentional ie. every person has a different perspective when experiencing the world.

Accounts are constructed from the perspective of the subject. Attempts to explain in terms other than those adopted by the subjects are regarded as reductionism. The drawback of this technique, is that the researcher tries to describe the experience of the member in the member's own terms. The assumption is that, such moments can be only understood through direct experience (Proudfoot 1985:xiv/51).

It has to be remembered by the researcher that religion is a deeply personal phenomenon. According to Eliade one has to approach the object of study from the viewpoint of the person who regards it as meaningful. One has to place oneself in the person's situation as the person experiences it, so that we can experience the person's world as he/she does (Michell 1985:39).

Every mental activity of an individual is directed towards the world as it is experienced by that individual. Intentionality focuses on how people themselves experience their own world. The way aspirants define their experiences of *pranahuti* and view their relationships with the Master, God and the world are closely tied up with intentionality.

1.2.3 EPOCHE'

In the phenomenological approach nothing is taken for granted. Thus the beliefs and the theories of the researcher have to be suspended in order that pure description (experiences of adherents of SRC Mission) can take place (Kruger 1982:21).

An awareness of ones beliefs and theories enables the researcher to have a greater awareness of one's subjectivities. Epoche' entails the suspension of one's assumptions - to remain open and sensitive to what occurs in the research environment.

The researcher through sensitive observation becomes aware of what he/she was unaware of. If epoche' is not borne in mind there is the danger of focusing on issues not central to the interest and experience of the respondents. Instead the researcher focuses on, what one thinks, is of interest to the respondents.

Religious language is an expression of mystical experience but the expression is not independent of thought and belief (Proudfoot 1985:36). Thus the researcher needs to take into consideration the thoughts and beliefs of the subjects being studied in relation to their accounts of mystical experience.

1.3 HERMENEUTICS

Modern hermeneutics views interpretation as a dialogue. The relationship between the researcher and the phenomenon being interpreted is a circular one. In questioning we enter into dialogue either with the text or the persons being studied (Michell 1985:30).

The task of hermeneutics is to understand the text. Understanding involves placing oneself in a tradition and then allowing the texts (events of the tradition) to speak to you. We study the historical moment in the present (Palmer 1969:185).

To understand the historical moment in a sentence, we have to understand a word in context of a sentence, and the sentence's meaning depends on the individual words. Thus we can say the hermeneutical circle operates on a linguistic level. The nature

of experience, thinking and understanding are linguistic. Words are written to express a happening or feeling, therefore the inference that language cannot be divorced from thought (Palmer 1969:203). Individuals thus share a shared medium of understanding, whereby all who communicate are bound by it. The hermeneutical circle suggests an area of shared understanding (Palmer 1969:87).

The hermeneutic experience is an encounter between text and the horizon of the interpreter. Language is the medium of transmission. Experience does not occur prior to language rather it occurs through language (Palmer 1969:207). Although language cannot adequately express every experience and situation it attempts to do so to the best of its ability.

Hermeneutics outlines rules for interpreting observed aspects of behaviour by allowing, "communication between people in which both speak and both listen to each other" (Kruger 1982:21). Hermeneutics affords the researcher the opportunity to understand the religious meaning of phenomena as it is seen acted out by the adherent. Hermeneutical tools enable one to discover and recover the hidden meanings of religious phenomena as displayed through the action and behaviour of the adherents.

1.3.1 KEY HERMENEUTICAL NOTIONS:

The key hermeneutical notions in this study are experience, constant remembrance, devotion and transmission.

1.3.1.1 EXPERIENCE

With experience as a guiding hermeneutical notion the study of the SRC moves away from the text to the inner spiritual experience. Since religious experiences cannot be seen we have to rely on the accounts of aspirants of their emotions and feelings. Feelings, expressions in language and behaviour are according to Schleiermacher more reliable indicators of character than explicit statements of belief or individual actions (Proudfoot 1985:75).

In Schleiermacher, one sees a move away from language oriented hermeneutics to psychologically oriented hermeneutics. Now the task of hermeneutics is to transcend language to get to the inner process (Palmer 1969:93). Sahaj Marg meditation aims to bring the aspirant to a stage of inner understanding and balance.

The SRC Mission like many religious organisations urge their prospective members to engage in rituals or disciplines before they acquaint themselves with the supporting doctrines of the society. The belief that practice achieves true knowledge and spiritual states is emphasised in the SRC Mission. Once an individual is engaged in the activities of the group, one becomes more susceptible to the beliefs of the mission (Proudfoot 1985:112).

Gadamer regarded knowledge not as something acquired, but as something in which one participates. In these proceedings one allows oneself to be directed and possessed by knowledge (Palmer 1969:164). We find that the emphasis in the SRC Mission is on practice (meditation and cleaning) rather than on the study of the texts. The *abhyasis* thus gain their knowledge through participation.

According to Schleiermacher our insights into our own attitudes, emotions, beliefs and desires are arrived at, by the observation of our behaviour as well as our bodily states (Proudfoot 1985:117). In the SRC Mission members are encouraged to observe any changes in their behaviour and their mental state. A spiritual diary is essential for all *abhyasis* and preceptors. These diaries are sent to one's preceptor or spiritual Master for analysis.

1.3.1.2 CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE

During meditation an hour or so is spent in the total thought of the Master/God. Meditation is the process which leads one to constant remembrance. Constant remembrance entails remembering the Master/God while being engaged in all activities ie. meditation, work, prayer and cleaning. While working the aspirant must think, you are not doing an activity for yourself, instead think that the Master is doing the task for himself. Love for the object of devotion, leads automatically to constant

remembrance. When one loves something/someone, the object of thought comes constantly to the forefront of one's mind. Love at the highest stages, is when even this consciousness of love and remembrance is lost.

Constant remembrance (twenty four hours of the day) leads to actions causing no impressions at all. Thus the information of the *samskaras* cease and one is no longer a reactive but rather creative, in ones thoughts and actions.

1.3.1.3 DEVOTION

In order for constant remembrance to be efficient one has to be devoted to the object of remembrance. In the early stages of devotion the aspirants are conscious of their feelings towards the object of devotion but in the higher stages there is no consciousness of this feeling of love. At the final stage of devotion there is no awareness of total self-surrender. In the SRC Mission the spiritual Master is regarded as the personification of the Supreme (Chandra 1989:352). The aspirant in self-surrender is totally resigned to the will of the Master. Love and devotion for the Master, is regarded as necessary for liberation and realisation. Love and devotion play an important part in the way aspirants act out their roles in the spiritual, religious, social and ritual aspects of their lives.

1.3.1.4 TRANSMISSION

Transmission in Sahaj Marg is the transmission of the spiritual

energy of the guru for the spiritual transformation of man. Since transmission is via the medium of the mind, it cannot be seen. However, it can be felt and its effects can be experienced by the aspirant. This transmission works from within the heart of the aspirant outwards. All changes take place from within. The aspirant is brought closer to a state of Divinity.

Transmission is regarded as vital in this system, for *sadhana* (meditation and cleaning) alone will not achieve quick results. The old system of Raja Yoga is regarded as ill suited for present day aspirants.

1.4 SUBJECT OF STUDY

The subject of study of this dissertation is: Sahaj Marg as a movement within Hinduism. The Sahaj Marg system is an adaptation of Raja Yoga or yoga of the mind. Raja Yoga is one of six orthodox systems followed by the great rishis and saints of India, to help them in the realisation of Self/God. Sahaj Marg does not exemplify orthodox traditional Hinduism; instead it sees itself as a progressive movement within Hinduism.

In the SRC, Raja yoga has been remodelled to suit the needs of present day aspirants. The old methods of penances and austerities are regarded as ill-suited to present day life. The distinct feature of this system is that practice (*sadhana*) in conjunction with normal worldly living.

In Sahaj Marg, the Master's support is essential in the pursuit

of realisation. The Master assists the aspirant through the process of yogic transmission. Yogic transmission awakens and accelerates the dormant forces in the aspirant and directs the Divine currents towards the heart. The aspirant advances spiritually through this *pranahuti*, simply by meditation and receiving transmission. The hard labour of the old Raja yoga is avoided and achievements occur quicker (Chandra 1989:303).

1.4.1 DIASPORA

The South African *abhyasis* are a diaspora community as the mission headquarters are in India. The Master and the teachers (preceptors) of the SRC Mission thus seek to create a "common world of understanding" (Michell 1985:8). This common or shared horizon of meaning is created, when the texts of the Mission are translated, within the South African context, into English. The fact that the Master of the Mission and the majority of South African Indian (diaspora) associates share a common philosophical and religious background makes their understanding simpler.

Since the texts of the Mission are written in English there is no problem with regard to language. The texts all contain glossaries explaining foreign terminology. However aspirants whose first language is not English, may find gaps in their understanding.

1.5 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The sources of information of this study include the texts of the SRC Mission, respondents interviews, participant observation, letters from SRC Mission research institute, videos of visits of the Master (Babuji), tape recordings of talks given by the present spiritual head and finally attendance at seminars held in South Africa conducted by the Master (P Rajagopalachari). I have attended two of these seminars, one in April 1993 and the second in April 1994.

The research project commenced with a thorough study of the texts of the SRC Mission. The most popular texts of the Mission are, Reality at Dawn, Efficacy of Raja Yoga in the light of Sahaj Marg, Commentary on Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg and Principles of Sahaj Marg Vol 1-8. All the talks of the Master are recorded, therefore new books are being constantly published. Newsletters are being produced by the various centres of different countries. Newsletters give aspirants an opportunity to follow events in the Mission.

This was followed by the interviews of *abhyasis* and preceptors of the Mission in South Africa. A dialogical, open-minded approach was used in the interviews. The respondents were made aware of my role and position as a researcher. Informants were chosen from different centres to give an overall feel of the research situation.

Thereafter the participant observation technique was employed.

Participant observation has been afforded me the opportunity to observe the adherents of the Mission over a two and a half year period. I now have an insider's view of the Mission and its workings ie. knowledge of their world through their eyes. The long time spent, observing this group has enabled me to place the study in context.

My attendance at the seminars in South Africa enabled me to observe and understand the relationship that the Master and the members of the Mission enjoyed. His behaviour, discourses and answers to the questions of aspirants gave me a better understanding of his teachings.

1.6 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The first chapter deals with the methodology employed by the researcher in this dissertation. The concepts of essence, phenomenology, hermeneutics, intentionality and epoche' are discussed.

The second chapter is the historical dimension. Here the roots of the SRC philosophy are traced ie. Samkhya and Yoga. These systems are discussed in relation to the research topic.

Chapter three is the doctrinal and technical dimension. Key concepts of Sahaj Marg are discussed. Emphasis is placed on the means employed by the mission to attain the goal. The Master, the method and the way are the unique features of this system.

Chapter four, the structural dimension is the description of the workings of the Mission. The administrative functions of the various members are outlined. South Africa and its mission are the focus.

The fifth chapter is the interpretative dimension. This chapter should give the reader a critical insight into the concept: Yogic transmission in Sahaj Marg of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission.

The final chapter is the conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO**2. THE HISTORICAL DIMENSION**

Man is always seeking to re-establish the lost relationship between himself, the Absolute Reality and the cosmos. Indian philosophy and Yoga are primarily concerned with man and his final destiny. In this chapter Indian philosophy and its relationship with Yoga is traced. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, expounds an experimental way in which man can make sense of his reality. Since Patanjali's Yoga Sutras provides the philosophical backing for Sahaj Marg, it is discussed in greater detail.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy and religion in India have developed concurrently in Indian thought. Since both are concerned with the problems of man they have sought ways to solve the problems of man, often influencing and collaborating with each other. Yoga has been used as a means of attaining, confining and testing the results of philosophical investigation. Yoga has also been used by religion and philosophy to approach the transcendent. The Yoga method of experience seeks to be independent of religious teaching and philosophical speculations (Werner 1977:15).

2.2 THE VEDIC PERIOD

The oldest source of Indian views are found in the Vedas. During the Vedic period, Samkhya (providing the metaphysical foundation for Yoga - which plays an important role in the SRC) did not emerge as a defined separate philosophy. However a number of trends emerged which were to form the final doctrine. The dualism of *purusa* and *prakrti* is even implicit in the Rigveda hymn [X.129,3-5] (o'Flaherty 1981:25). In the Rigveda [X.90] *purusa* is defined as the cosmic male (o'Flaherty 1981:30). While in the Atharvaveda, part 1, verses 3-4 *purusa* is conceived as the root of consciousness and cosmic order (Easwaran 1987:125).

2.3 THE UPANISHADIC PERIOD

The Upanishads like the earlier Vedic period is a product of several thinkers and schools of thought. The main concern of the Upanishads is the doctrine of *Brahman* and *atman*. The Upanishads were concerned with metaphysics and contemplation. While Yoga used meditation practices and asceticism to understand the Absolute.

Samkhya philosophy of principles (*tattva*) which correlate between the constitutive elements of man and the universe can be found in the Taittiriya-Upanishad 17, and Brhadaranyaka-Upanishad 11.5 (Hulin 1978:129). Seventeen of the twenty-three elements of *prakrti* are mentioned in the Brhadaranyaka-Upanishad 1V.5.12. Included are the five material elements, five organs of sense, five organs of action and the *buddhi* (Vasu 1974:582-583).

The Vedic and Upanishadic speculations contain elements of Samkhya philosophy, with the exception of the notion of the five subtle elements. In approximately the 4th century B.C.

(Katha-Upanishad) and the first century A.D. Samkhya philosophy began to take shape. Samkhya gained a more distinctive character and became closely aligned with Yoga. In the Katha-Upanishad the hierarchic scale of *tattvas* is mentioned: sense-organs - objects - *manas* - *buddhi* - Great Self-unmanifested - *purusa* - nothing/final limit. In this classical Samkhya period, the hierarchic scale seems to correspond to the levels of yogic elevation (Nikhilananda 1963:75).

In the Svetasvatara Upanishad the *purusa* has the definition of the one Supreme. This *purusa* encompasses nature. Samkhya and Yoga are presented as complementary means to achieve the supreme *purusa* to obtain liberation. Terminology found in the Samkhyakarika is also noticed in the Svetasvatara-Upanishad for the first time: *pradhana* in 1.10 (Nikhilananda 1963:128). *Prakrti* in 1V.10: *guna* in V.7 and *ahamkara* in V.8 are noted in the succeeding chapters respectively (Nikhilananda 1963:137-138).

The Prana-Upanishad, question three, distinguishes the five subtle elements from the corresponding gross elements (Easwaran 1987:162), while in the Maitri-Upanishad the division of *prana* into five parts is described in fuller detail.

The Maitri-Upanishad tries to describe the functioning and role of the *buddhi*, *ahamkara*, *manas* and the *gunas* (Sandal 1974:18). The knowledge of these elements and their functioning is regarded as necessary for liberation according to Samkhya. Knowledge of the Self is a common theme of Yoga and the Upanishads.

11. "Who knows that both these sacrificial works and knowledge about the gods, are to be performed concurrently by one through sacrifices crosses the effects of natural works, and through knowledge get partial immortality by attaining to the condition of a deity.

12. Those who worship the unmanifested nature go to regions of blind darkness: to a greater darkness than that go they who are devoted to the worship of the manifested nature as *Hiranyagarbha*" (Vasu 1974:44-45).

In the Isa Upanishad, knowledge of the self is discussed. The dominant avenues of deliverance and liberation were Upanishadic knowledge, yogic practice and *bhakti*. These avenues were slowly integrated in the Upanishadic period and gained greater cohesion in Indian philosophical and yogic systems.

The yogic path is expounded as the best means to attain Reality. The Third Mundaka Upanishad, Second Khanda, verse three says:

"Not through discourse, nor through the intellect. Not through study of the scriptures can the Self be realised. The Self reveals Himself to the one who longs for the Self. Those who long for the Self with all their heart Are chosen by the Self as his own" (Easwaran 1987:117).

According to this explanation the first step towards the Uitimate is the willingness to adopt the path of Yoga (Gough 1975:135).

2.4. BHAGAVAD GITA

The Mahabharata (Moksadharma and Bhagavad-Gita) enables us to trace the development of Samkhya as their writings extended over a long period of time. The Moksadharma is considered to be the work of several authors, therefore the doctrines are entangled.

While classical Samkhya uses the term *purusa* to name Spirit, the Moksadharma uses a variety of terms. *Atman* and *ksetrajna* as synonyms attest to a consolidation of the dualistic tendencies latent in proto-Samkhya. The Moksadharma makes a distinction between a Yoga method and a Samkhya method, for in the Mahabharatha it is said those who follow Samkhya praise it as the best, while those who follow Yoga praise their method as the best. The fact that the text insists on the validity and unity of both methods suggests an opposition of these two schools of thought (Hulin 1978:134).

The atheism of classical Samkhya is opposed to Patanjali's system of Yoga. *Anisvara* which translates as soul, literally means he

who has no God or for that *purusa* for whom *Isvara* is irrelevant. Yogis are therefore sceptical of atheistic Samkhya followers gaining liberation (Hulin 1978:135).

It is for this reason that the Bhagavad Gita shows less development of Samkhya than the Moksadharma. The Gita speaks (chapter three) of Samkhyayoga as a way of knowledge as opposed to the Raja Yoga and Karma Yoga. The theistic orientation does not allow duality, for *purusa* is Krishna the supreme *purusa* himself, whose "inferior nature" (*maya*) is the eightfold *prakrti*. In chapter XIII and later chapters the descriptions of Samkhya doctrines conform more to the classical schema, wherein (chapter XIV. 5-21) *guna* is presented as having psychological qualities and constituents of Nature (Hulin 1978:135).

The Bhagavad Gita, a major addition to the Mahabharata, ascribes to Yoga great honour. The Bhagavad Gita is a synthesis of the major paths to God realisation. However *bhakti* is given the greatest honour in this Vishnuist tradition (Eliade 1975:145).

2.5 SAMKHYA

2.5.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Michel Hulin in *Samkhya Literature*, divides the history of Samkhya philosophy into three loosely divided periods:

1. Pre-Samkhya starting with the Vedic hymns to the Christian era.
2. The classical period of Samkhyakarika with its commentaries.
3. The late Samkhya (Hulin 1978:128).

During the classical period of Samkhya no known work can be positively attributed to particular author. Some of the teachers may have been mythical while others may have been heads of certain Samkhya schools. Kapila is supposed to be the founder of the Samkhya system, however most modern scholars consider him a mythical being. The contradictory viewpoints prior to the Samkhyakarika testifies to the diversity of the Samkhya thought (Hulin 1978:137).

According to Larson the Jain doctrine of individual *jivas* probably influenced the emergence of the Samkhya notion of plurality of *purusas*. However Samkhya propounds the individuality of each *purusa* since they have individual *karmas* (Larson 1979:93).

2.5.2 THEORY OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

Samkhya says the cause changes into effect. The Samkhya premise is that effect exists in material existence before the effect is produced (Tigunait 1983:123). An effect must exist in its cause before it is produced ie. the life-force cannot be produced from

anywhere, it had to be present in the individual. Samkhya holds that one cannot convert non-existence into existence; nor can that which exists be destroyed (Tigunait 1983:124).

2.5.3 PRAKRTI: THE UNCONSCIOUS PRINCIPLE

Samkhya is a dualistic philosophy that acknowledges two aspects of reality *prakrti* and *purusa*. According to Samkhya the entire world depended upon, is produced by a combination of effects. This Ultimate cause is *prakrti* (Tigunait 1983:125).

The origin of the world is due to the inherent nature of *prakrti*. The first to evolve from *prakrti* is intelligence in its cosmic aspect, *mahat*. *Mahat* produces *ahamkara*, which in turn evolves into the five elements, the five sense organs and the five organs of action respectively. Lastly *ahamkara* produces the *manas*. This schema give the idea of the spirit being not necessary. However in classical Samkhya the category of the *purusa* is introduced. Release from bondage can be gained by individual souls realising their true identity ie. difference from matter (Brockington 1981:100).

In the dichotomy between *prakrti* and *purusa*, the world is regarded as existing for the sake of the *purusa*. The world is regarded as irrelevant a mere distraction to which the *purusa* is an inactive spectator. Once the performance is over, identification ceases and liberation takes place (Brockington 1981:100).

2.5.3.1 GUNAS

The intrinsic nature of *prakrti* is the three *gunas* ie. *sattvas*, *rajas* and *tamas*. *Prakrti*, the ultimate cause of creation, creates when it is in a state of imbalance (Tigunait 1983:126). The three *gunas* constituting *prakrti* subsist in the unmanifest form of matter and pervade the manifest world. The evolution of the world led to an imbalance being created between the three *gunas* (Brockington 1981:101).

The individual thus uses the *rajas* to transform his life. Since *rajas* is a life-force it can be used to create a greater state of *sattva* or *tamas*. Samkhya recommends bringing the *rajas* into balance, by emphasizing the *sattvic* actions and thoughts. The purity and lightness of *sattva* ie. *buddhi* will thus reflect the peace and lightness of the pure consciousness - *purusa*. After a long time there is an reabsorption of the cosmos. In this state of involution all the gross elements dissolve into their subtle elements, which dissolve into their origin- *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* (Tigunait 1983:129).

2.5.4 PURUSA-CONSCIOUSNESS

Purusa is the conscious principle present in each body, which is different from the body, senses, mind and intellect - *prakrti*.

Purusa is both the subject and the object of knowledge. *Purusa* as pure consciousness is unchanging, uncaused and eternal. Ignorance occurs when *purusa* identifies itself with the objects of the world.

In its entanglement it mistakenly believes itself to be subject to pain and happiness (Tigunait 1983:130).

2.5.5 LIBERATION

Liberation according to Samkhya can only be achieved by correct knowledge of reality. Final freedom is attained by one who knows that *purusa* is subject to bondage or liberation because *purusa* was never really in bondage (Werner 1977:82).

2.5.6 THE CONCEPT OF GOD

This concept is controversial amongst Samkhya supporters as Samkhya Karika did not discuss God. This led to one group of scholars, arguing that God was not necessary for human beings to discover the hidden potential within them. The other group said that God was a factor in man's liberation. The practical aspect of Samkhya is the Yoga system which recognises the existence of God (Tigunait 1983:147).

2.6 PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS

Yoga has been practised from the earliest times by seers to validate the knowledge of other seers as well as to gain direct knowledge through a process which is beyond perceptual, speculative and conceptual analysis. In Buddhist meditation an individual is not given a clear indication of stages in development, the process of meditation calls for an inner consciousness of everything as it is. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras are clearly more theoretical in nature. It discusses the nature

of the mind, its modifications, its impediments and the methods of obtaining the goals.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras have been built into a coherent pattern from several texts. The different starting points attest to the existence of different schools. Yoga as a system of philosophy absorbed most of the Samkhya cosmology. The yogi was considered to reverse the evolutionary process outlined in Samkhya and return to the original, unitary state (Brockington 1981:102). Thus we can say that Samkhya provides the metaphysical basis of Yoga.

Samkhya does not do away with the suffering, it denies it as a reality, by denying it has a relationship with the self. The destruction of the personality is the way to achieve this according to Samkhya and Yoga (Eliade 1958:34). Patanjali does not believe that metaphysical knowledge alone can lead to liberation, for it only prepares one for freedom. Yoga aims to do away with normal consciousness through practice of a physiological technique, suppressing the state of consciousness. A state of heightened consciousness is aimed to gain the intuitive metaphysical knowledge (Eliade 1958:36).

Yoga is experimental in character, therefore different states of consciousness may arise. These states fall in the following three categories:

- (1) Mistakes and illusions eg. hallucinations, dreams or errors in perception.
- (2) A sum total of normal psychological experiences eg. all things perceived, thought and felt by an a non-adept of yoga.
- (3) Parapsychological experiences as a result of yogic practice . Patanjali's Yoga seeks to abolish the first two categories and replace it with *samadhi*, to gain total independence (Eliade 1958:37).

Vasanas/subliminal forces feed the psychomental consciousness and are difficult to control. They condition the character of an individual in accordance with his *karma* and heredity. The acts committed in the present are a result of these *vasanas*, which in turn instigate subliminal latencies (Eliade 1958:43). Therefore the subconscious opposes every act of renunciation for fear that these latencies may not manifest themselves. Yoga believes that the subconscious can be known and conquered.

The essential differences between Samkhya and Yoga are:
 Samkhya is atheistic whereas Yoga is theistic, and according to Samkhya, the only path to liberation is metaphysical knowledge. Patanjali was chiefly concerned with co-ordinating Samkhya philosophy around technical formulas for concentration, meditation and trance (Eliade 1958:7).

Pantajali's Yoga Sutras are divided into four sections:

samadhi pada, sadhana pada, vibuthi pada and kaivalya pada.

Since Deshpande is one of the more recent commentators on the Yoga Sutras I have used his work largely as the basis of my study. I have followed the divisions of the Yoga sutras.

2.6.1 SAMADHI PADA

Deshpande regarded the first four sutras as providing the essence of Yoga. The first sutra calls upon the aspirant to attend to learning, for learning calls for total attention. This attention is required here and now (Deshpande 1978:19).

2. "Yoga is that state of being in which the ideational choice-making movement of the mind slows down and comes to a stop." (Deshpande 1978:19).

Yoga is equated with *citta-vrtti-nirodha*. Choice involves identification with the past, as the past triggers one's responses. Freedom from the past and ideational choice-making can only be obtained when the mind slows down and stops the choice-making process. Freedom means not only to choose but also the freedom not to choose. The negative act of not choosing will stop the cycle of *samskaras* leading to *nirodha* (Deshpande 1978:21-22).

3. "Then [when the movement of the mind comes to a stop] the seer gets established in his existential identity."

(Deshpande 1978:19).

Man is a pure seeing entity, however being conditioned by the past, sees through experiences. Experience is always coloured by the structures of the past (Deshpande 1978:23). Yoga is the means used to obtain a mind free of attachment, a mind that is ultra-cognitive. When there is no object to cognize "the seer stands in his own nature" (Patanjali 1974:9). This is a state of perfect freedom. In this state the *purusa* is unaffected by the modifications of the mind.

4. "In all other states of being, identification with the ideational choice-making movement reigns supreme."

(Deshpande 1978:19).

Choice-making generates tensions, conflict and unhappiness. The opposite trend is to be freedom-orientated, whereby not-choosing leads one to being, perception-orientated. *Nirodha* thus leads to the seer getting established in one's existential identity. Man no longer looks at events through the conditioning of past experiences (Deshpande 1978:23).

Sutras five to eleven deal with the five-fold *vrttis*. The five-fold *vrttis* (choices/likes) are obstacles on the path of the yogi. Identification with these five-fold *vrttis* obscures pure perception. When *vrttis* slow down, their hidden motivations become evident to the seer (Deshpande 1978:30).

These *vrttis* can be slowed and eventually stopped through *abhyasa* and *vairayga* [sutra 12]. *Abhyasa* (practise of yoga) and *vairayga* (non-interest in the future) firmly establish the yogi on the path of *samadhi*. When the yogi opts for *citta-vrtti-nirodha*, these *vrttis* become instruments for new discoveries. (Deshpande 1978:31-33).

The sutras speak of two streams of consciousness. One is propelled by ideational choice-making incapable of discriminative intelligence, while the other is freedom oriented. 'Non-choosing', as an option allows one to see the mind clearly, freeing the mind from conditioning as no choices have to be made (Deshpande 1978:36).

17. "The cognitive Trance is accompanied by the appearance of philosophical curiosity, meditation, elation and egoism."
(Patanjali 1974:32).

This sutra clearly indicates that there is progression in *samadhi* whereby, freedom and discriminating intelligence leads from the first to the fourth stage of *samadhi*. However all these *samadhis* are qualified, as they need something to support them- *samprajnata samadhi*. They all have the thread of I-based intelligence through it.

In order to rise above the I-based *samadhi*, *abhyas* has to be practised. This results in an empty interval devoid of any thoughts/impressions. It is the beginning of 'pure seeing' for the I-centre has been removed (Deshpande 1978:38).

In the state of *samadhi* the three *gunas* are in a state of equilibrium. *Prakrti* is the source of all psychical and physical phenomena. Its development is manifested as *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. *Prakrti* is always self-evolving due to the nature of *rajas*. In its original state there is an equilibrium of the *gunas*, thus *prakrti* is unmoved yet the mother of all movements.

The *gunas* are regarded as substantive entities though characterised as qualities of manifestation, obstruction and mutation. Evolution occurs when one *guna* is more predominant than the others. In the state of *samadhi* there is a predominance of the *sattva* quality. *Prakrti* is eternally linked to *purusa* and as such serves *purusa* through its changes, to bring about freedom (Dasgupta 1989:170-171). Yoga is the means adopted to bring about freedom to the *purusa*. Practise and discrimination in Yoga leads

toward a move-away from the ego-centred approach to life, toward one that is all-inclusive with man and the world in harmony. Sutras 23 to 39 suggest alternatives to the above way of obtaining *citta-vrtti-nirodha* and *samadhi*.

Sutras 23-39 deal with God-awareness as a means to gain *vrtti-nirodha* and *samadhi*.

26. "He alone is the Guru of all by-gone gurus, because unbound by time." (Deshpande 1978:41).

Guru the "God" is not bound by time, and is a timeless source of energy, that brings enlightenment to man's being. The word *guru* in the conventional sense means one who performs purificatory ceremonies and instructs pupils in sacred knowledge.

The role of the *guru* is to purify and prepare the aspirant for learning. In esoteric terms purification means the awakening of the "seeing awareness", the purification of the mind and liberation from some *samsakaras*. Once purification has taken place 'true seeing' begins (Deshpande 1978:44). Constant awareness of God finally leads to *samadhi*.

There are many impediments on the path of the yogi [sutras 30-33]. *Abhyasa* is suggested to ward off inertia, doubt, idleness, illusionary visions and a scattered mind. This *abhyasa* will lead to purity and clarity of thinking (Deshpande 1978:46). The aspirant strives to obtain *samadhi*. The mind in *samadhi* reflects everything, within and without, unsullied by these reflections. However the yogi still strives to go one step further ie. from seed-based to seedless *samadhi*.

A seeded trance has a gross or subtle object of meditation. This seeded trance has to be conquered if one is to obtain a seedless trance. "All being suppressed, by the suppression of that too comes the seedless trance." [sutra 51]. The mind disappears with its potencies which leads to absolute freedom. Once the mind has achieved its purpose, it along with its potencies ceases to act. The *purusa* thus remains in its own true self- absolutely free (Patanjali 1974:85-86).

2.6.2 SADHANA PADA

Although Part one of Patanjali's Yoga could be considered complete, the study needs more explanation for the student of yoga.

1. "Austerity, self-study and God-awareness, together constitute Yoga in action." (Deshpande 1978:73)

The first step is internal and external purity. Study under a guru assists the aspirant further. Patanjali's recommendation that God be made the motive of action means that a true yogi cannot be an atheist (Patanjali 1974:88).

The role of God (*Isvara*) is explained by Patanjali in the following way. Patanjali's sutras admit countless souls, *prakrti* (consisting of the three *gunas*) and the omniscient *Isvara*. *Isvara* is a special *purusa*, for he is always free. *Isvara* adopts a pure body from *prakrti* to act as a saviour for his devotees.

At the end of each *pralaya* his body merges into *prakrti* and at the beginning of each creation he appears once again. His relationship with *prakrti* is that he can remove barriers or speed up the evolution of *prakrti* for the liberation of individual *purusas* (Dasgupta 1989:170).

Yoga differs from Samkhya in making *Isvara* responsible for development of *prakrti*, in the service of *purusas*. *Prakrti* is influenced by *purusas* to be of service to them, as it lacks intelligence to gain freedom. *Isvara*, by a mere wish, is able to remove obstacles leading to the freedom of *purusas*. Samkhya however does not see the necessity of an outside force - *Isvara* (Dasgupta 1989:171).

Yoga, [sutra 3-9] challenges the world's view that the material world and the personal knowledge are true. Every act born of a conditioned mind is an act, born of tensions, which colour man's world view. These acts further generate tension (Deshpande 1978:80). Avidya (illusionary knowledge) is the chief tension that afflicts man. The means of removing tension is meditation. "Awareness of the fact that the contact between the 'seer' and the 'seen' is at the root of sorrow enables one to discard it" (Deshpande 1978:85).

The realisation that the world is one of sorrow, anguish and existential despair is what man has to arrive at. When man accepts this existential situation, he sees how the feeling of self-importance seeks self-perpetuation (Deshpande 1978:87).

Sutras 20-25 explain the reason for the relationship between the 'seer' and 'seen'. The 'seen' exists so that the 'seer' discovers his identity. The objective world continues to exist for all other souls which have not obtained liberation (Deshpande 1978:91). The reason for man's existence is for man to experience the world. The world exists to offer *bhoga* (experiences) for man. Right awareness of these experiences will enable man to live freely from tensions and conflict. The discipline of Yoga frees the mind from ideational choice-making movements (Deshpande 1978:96).

29. "Restraint, observance, posture, regulation of breath (*Pranayana*), abstraction, concentration, meditation and trance are the eight accessories of yoga." (Patanjali 1974:155).

The eightfold path of Patanjali's sutras has a definite purpose. The first two groups, *yama* and *niyama* serve to purify the human state. Restraint is in word, thought and deed [sutras 30,31]. The observances are cleanliness, contentment, purificatory action, study and making God the motive of action (Patanjali 1974:159). Those who are already in an advanced stage do not have to go through the initial steps. Instead they may begin with contemplation and restrain themselves from worldly experience.

Asana produces a steady posture and allows the mind to concentrate more easily. While *pranayama* makes respiration as slow as possible [sutra 50]. The 'yogi claims that the link between the mind and the body is *prana* which in its grossest form is manifested as breath. The control of the rope of *prana* will lead an individual to reach freedom. To attain subtle perceptions you will have to begin with gross perceptions ie. the gross manifestation of *prana* is breath. Through knowledge and control of the subtle currents in the body, the mind is set in motion (Patanjali 1974:172-173).

Prana is carried through the body by subtle invisible chords called *nadis*. There are 72 000 *nadis* in all. The most important are *susumna*, *ida* and *pingala*. The yogi aims to bypass the *ida* and *pingala* and make the current flow in the *susumna*. In order for the *prana* to move easily through the *susumna* the *nadis* have to be purified ie. by the practise of *pranayama*. Continued practice of *pranayama* results in the yogi taking the *kundalini shakti* from the lowest *chakra* to the highest at the top of the head (Elaide 1975:190).

The *kundalini* can be aroused by the love of God, mercy of perfected sages and the power of analytical will. Thus a fulfilment of prayer comes from one's own nature ie. the awakening of the life-force. Vivekananda says "Raja Yoga is the science of religion, the rationale of all worship, all prayers, forms, ceremonies and miracles" (Vivekananda 1897:55).

The *karma* of the yogi is destroyed through the practice of *pranayama* [sutra 52]. The purificatory action of *pranayama* allows the light of discriminatory knowledge to shine. *Pranayama* also makes the mind fit for concentration (Patanjali 1974:177). The fifth *anga* of yoga is abstraction [sutras 54-55]. The process of restraining the senses and the mind means all the forces are recollected. In this stage the yogi's autonomy to outside stimuli and the subconscious allow the yogi to practise *samyama* (Patanjali 1974:176).

2.6.3 VIBHUTI PADA

Concentration leads to meditation which in turn leads to *samadhi* (when the self is lost and the object of meditation alone remains in the mind). *Dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi* are collectively called *Samyama* (Patanjali 1974:179-181).

11. "The trance modification of the mind is the destruction and the rise of all pointedness and one-pointedness respectively". (Patanjali 1974:187)

When the scattering tendency of the mind stops, the mind awakens into one-pointedness. This mind is now able to see things totally, at a glance. This one-pointed tendency leads to a third transformation. The experience of quietude on the one hand, and the other action from it mutually balance. The three transformations also bring about a change in the body and senses of the yogi (Deshpande 1978:119-120).

The yogi by directing some *Samyama* towards various things within and without, obtains in the knowledge of them. The rest of chapter three from sutras 14-44 describe the psychic powers that can be obtained through *Samyama*. None of these *siddhis* (extraordinary powers/psychic powers) are as a result of any egocentric effort. They are born of *Samadhi* and *Samyama*. *Samadhi* according to sutra 45 of Part two, states that *samadhi* only results, due to the grace of God - it is not an achievement. These *siddhis* arise when *Samyama* is directed towards certain things. This

direction takes place spontaneously, without egocentric effort (Deshpande 1978:134).

48. "Mastery over the senses results in a mindlike swiftness of bodily movements; in the ability to move freely from the origins to the termination of things irrespective of time, space and circumstances; and in mastery over the main essence of being [*pradhana*] (Deshpande 1978:133)

The purity of the Will-to-be is obtained once the impurities of the *rajas* and *tamas* have been destroyed. When consciousness of power is at its highest, the yogi makes a distinction between Objective-Essence and Consciousness. The 'qualities' ie. nature of things and the power of existence present themselves as a whole to the knower. Supremacy over the states result in the *karma* of the yogi being destroyed (Patanjali 1974:254-255).

At the higher stages, the perfected yogi's mind [sutra 53] obtains knowledge through one's own prescience and not by learning. The vital power and the mind are two aspects of *prana*. The highest action of *prana* is thought. When the mind is freed of the senses it can travel beyond all confines in the quickest time. *Prana* is used to push the mind beyond intellect and reason onto a higher plane ie. super consciousness. This knowledge is obtained in *samadhi* or through discriminative knowledge (Patanjali 1974:264).

The yogic means of knowledge (*samadhi* and intuition) are regarded as superior to Samkhya's perception, inference and testimony. Intuitive knowledge eventually becomes all encompassing knowledge (Dasgupta 1989:174).

Each *purusa* has a separate *citta*, which lasts until emancipation. The gradual purification of the *citta* and *samadhi* leads one closer to the true nature of *prakrti* and *purusa*. From meditation on subtle objects he/she proceeds to meditation (*asamprajnata samadhi*) without object. The *buddhi* becomes almost as pure as the *purusa*, thus giving a true reflection. Now that the *citta* has served its purpose, it dissolves into *prakrti*, leaving the *purusa* totally independent (Dasgupta 1989:173-174).

Finally when the purity of the Objective-Essence and that of the *purusa* become equal, *kaivalya* is attained [sutra 55]. This is the goal that the yogi has striven for and the goal that all aspirants wish to achieve i.e. total freedom (Deshpande 1978:136).

2.6.4 KAIVALYA PADA

Part four is called *Kaivalya Pada*. Yogic freedom is not a mental notion or freedom from anything. *Kaivalya* means 'aloneness'. Man is intrinsically alone in the midst of objects and beings around him. Despite man's aloneness, he lives with everything that constitutes the other. He has to experience at all times the world around him, which is vital for his existence. The necessity of experiencing the other forms the essence of

togetherness (Deshpande 1978:143).

Purusa is that which reposes in one's body, but is distinct from it. The perception of this distinctness is to be truly human and intelligent.

The only possible means to break the chain of tendencies and habits is through *jnana*. When the mind's *vrittis* appear and disappear, one becomes aware what intelligence (*buddhi*) means. Intelligence is objective ie. the mind does not identify with the *vrittis*. Objective intelligence enables man to see objects in their existential authenticity. Now that perception is pure, the mind is still and without any movement. The mind exists not for itself, but for the benefit of the *purusa* [sutra 24] (Deshpande 1978:155-157).

When the mind has understood this, the yogi's mind moves between neither the 'seer' nor the 'seen', the two poles of existential existence. The understanding and assimilation of this knowledge leads to a new vision. This vision brings to an end the sense of I-ness and Man becomes freedom-orientated (Deshpande 1978:159-160).

29. 'Having no-interest left even in the Highest-Intellection there comes from constant discrimination, the trance known as the Cloud-of-Virtue' (Patanjali 1974:307).

Jnana consists in the discrimination between the *citta* (instrument) and the Self. In the state of highest knowledge, a manifestation of the attributes of the spirit takes place ie. *Dharma-Megha-Samadhi*. Such an individual is above all afflictions and *karma* [sutra 30] and nothing lies beyond his/her scope [sutra 31]. This individual is a boon to all creation (Patanjali 1974:308-309).

2.7 THE ROLE OF THE GURU/GOD

In Patanjali's Yoga sutras, God's role is dialectic. Although Patanjali's Yoga Sutras are based upon Samkhya Philosophy, there are certain differences. Samkhya says that there can be no God, for God must have a soul ie. a soul that has a desire to create or a desireless soul creating. Samkhya says that nature explains the reason for evolution. The God of Patanjali's Yoga, (Chapter 1, sutra 24) is a God of yogis. He can help the aspirant to arrive at *samadhi* quicker, if he (*Isvara*) is taken as the object of concentration (Patanjali 1974:41).

This divine aid is a feeling of compassion between *Isvara* and the *purusa*. Vyasa's commentary on Patanjali's sutras, propounds that *Isvara* has always been free. However he does not explain why *Isvara* deems to assist the yogi, except for a metaphysical

sympathy. Samkhya affirms that *prakrti* collaborates in the deliverance of man (Patanjali 1974:46).

Isvara's role as a teacher is given much significance. He is the first teacher, the teacher of the ancients. The name of God connotes Him [Chapter 1, sutra 27], and as such has great power. The power of *mantra* ie. repetition of "word" and its meaning [chapter 1, sutra 28] removes obstacles and leads to understanding (Patanjali 1974:50-51).

In Chapter two of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras [sutra 1], the yogi is urged to surrender the fruits of action to God, as a means of obtaining quick liberation. This action results in the yogi gaining neither credits or discredits. The chapter on the practice of yoga [sutra 45], asks a yogi to sacrifice his powers to *Isvara*, resulting in the yogi having perfect *samadhi* ie. seedless *samadhi* (Patanjali 1974:169).

" When the presiding-deities invite, there should be no attachment and no smile of satisfaction; contact with the undesirable being again possible." [Chapter 3 sutra 50]

According to Vyasa (commentator on Patanjali's yoga sutras), there is great similarity between yogis at the stage of *siddhis* and certain gods in the celestial regions. These gods and yogins have not achieved perfection. Aspirants on the yogic path are entreated not to fall prey to *siddhis*, celestial beings and

gods. The yogi should aim to go straight to the goal (Patanjali 1974:256).

"When the purity of the Objective-Essence and that of the *Purusa* become equal, it is absolute independence."

[Chapter 3 sutra 54] (Patanjali 1974:267)

Swami Vivekananda's commentary describes *kaivalya* as a state of perfection wherein the soul realises that it does not need anything in the universe, from gods to the lowest particle (Vivekananda 1897:205).

The fourth chapter, On Independence, sutras 24 to 33, deal with discriminative knowledge. Through the practice of discrimination, the mind realises that the *purusa* is happiness in its own nature. The yogi who gives up the fruits of discriminative knowledge gains "the cloud of virtue." The yogi realises that knowledge lies within, resulting in involution ie. *kaivalya* (Patanjali 1974:307).

2.8 BHAKTI

Consciousness in the individual entails, 'constant awareness' of the Master/God. An individual who is constantly aware has great *bhakti*. All aspirants on the path of liberation are urged to develop this love. Development of *bhakti* requires the aspirant to practise the method of realisation faithfully and regularly.

In this chapter the historical background of Sahaj Marg system of Raja Yoga was traced. Chapter three deals with the doctrinal and technical dimension of Sahaj Marg. This system's emphasis is on meditation, yogic transmission and love for the Master.

In the Sahaj Marg system the Master, the method and the Mission have to be followed for an aspirant to make progress. The Master is said to be directly connected to God/Nothingness/Absolute, therefore followers are asked to surrender themselves to the Master. Before this surrender can be effected, faith and love for the Master have to be developed. Faith and love for the Master is developed, through close association with the Master and by following the teachings of the system. Thus the aspirant learns and grows through persistent self effort and the efforts of the spiritual Master.

We thus see an emphasis on renunciation of actions as the noblest path of a yogi. Surrender entails great *bhakti* for the Master/God, for an aspirant will only surrender if great faith and love is felt for the Master/God. The impurities of the *nadis* are thrown out by the Master, by *dharana* the impurities of the

mind, by *pratyahara* impurities of attachment and by *samadhi* all obstacles are removed, so that the Ultimate can be revealed.

CHAPTER THREE**3. DOCTRINAL DIMENSION****3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Samarth Guru Maharaj Shri Ram Chandra Ji of Fategarh (UP) was the founder of this new approach to spirituality. He rediscovered the ancient method of yogic transmission which was lost for centuries. Lalaji, as we shall now address Shri Ram Chandra of Fategarh, was a householder with an average income. He led a frugal life and spent his spare hours in the training of aspirants (Chandra 1973:10).

Lalaji's teachings were simple and he did not ask his followers to give up anything. He advised the reduction of wants. Lalaji was against idol worship, instead he advocated meditation on the heart. For spiritual perfection the following three qualities had to be inculcated : a. love for Master b. *satsang* with the Master c. obedience to the Master. Training was imparted according to the capacity of the aspirants (Chandra 1973:15-17).

Though Ram Chandra's (Lalaji's) teachings and method are based upon Vedic foundations, his method was new as a result of his innovations. His method had perfection being achieved in one life, following the householders lifestyle. Lalaji said that the trials of family life were the sacrifices for spiritual attainments. His refined system of Raja Yoga came to be called Sahaj Marg.

His successor Shri Ram Chandra (Babuji) of Shahjahanpur further refined this system. According to Lalaji, the Truth is Eternal, but the method has changed for Humanity has changed. As evolution has taken place on the material and social spheres, so to must evolution take place in the spiritual sphere (Chandra 1977:23).

The Master declared that a *sadhak* (disciple) could achieve realisation in the same lifetime or even within a shorter time. The proof can only be validated through experience. God, according to Babuji, can be sought best in one's heart, rather than in the solitude of the forest. Renunciation of worldly duties is not advocated. The *sadhana* of Sahaj Marg enables man to carry out both worldly and spiritual duties (Chandra 1989:302).

The Mission's aim is to introduce this system to awaken the masses to Divine consciousness. The old and difficult methods are to be replaced by simple natural methods. Babuji said that all the sages agreed that the Raja Yoga alone ensures success up to the final limit of human approach. The special feature of Sahaj Marg is the Master's support through *pranahuti*. All the aspirant has to do is to make himself deserving and capable of receiving it (Chandra 1989:303).

3.2.1 ULTIMATE REALITY

The Ultimate Reality or God has to be defined according to the conceptions of individuals over the ages. Philosophy accepts the concepts of *nirguna brahman* and *saguna brahman*. *Nirguna brahman* is regarded as the ultimate cause of existence and centre of the entire manifestation. Next is the idea of God as the supreme controller and creator of the universe - *saguna brahman*. Both these conceptions are misleading for God is beyond *nirguna* (indeterminate) or *saguna* (determinate) ie. God is God (Chandra 1989:306).

To reach realisation one has to go beyond the limits of religion. Sahaj Marg says that the end of religion is the beginning of spirituality; leading to Reality and finally bliss. When bliss is gone, one has reached the destination. The Absolute is almost inexpressible in words (Chandra 1989:307).

The Ultimate Reality is conceived as the 'centre' or 'base'. No *prakriti* or creation can stand without this base. The backing for this base is the Ultimate Reality. Babuji revealed that knowledge of Reality could be found in the sphere of *tam* (state we were in when the world was born) alone. In this state one is in complete ignorance, having no knowledge of one's condition. When *sat* (reality) is applied to this state, one gains awareness of one's condition (Chandra 1989:310).

3.2.2 COSMOLOGY

Before creation, Divinity existed in it's original state devoid of grossness, wherein every object in it's essence was merged in it. Prior to creation, the latent motion around the Centre had the idea of creation. The first thought or vibration - *kshobha* was the ultimate cause of creation (Chandra 1989:311).

This *kshobha* created force which heated up the subtlest particles. Heating resulted in the motion of these particles. Grossness developed and layers formed around each particle. Action and reaction occurred resulting in the formation of individual forms. As time evolved all the objects, both animate and inanimate, came into existence.

Prakriti evolved due to the revolving motion around the Centre. This primary motion led to creation and the same root-force descended in every human being. In man it is known as the mind. Thus the human mind is closely identical to the original root-force of which it is a part. The deduction is thus made that the functions of both are similar (Chandra 1989: 313).

3.2.3 JIVA AND BRAHMAN

Originally *jiva* and *brahman* were almost akin, it was the individuality of the *jiva* which effected a difference between them. *Jiva*, the soul, was bound within ego and individuality.

The atmosphere also cast it's effect on the soul, resulting in greater grossness. When *jiva* comes into contact with one which

reminds it of its true nature and origin, it begins to cast off its coverings. Since *jiva* possesses motion; it is cognisant of the creator ie. *Brahman*. Thus the function of the two are the same, except that *Brahman* covers the whole universe; while *jiva* is confined to the sphere of the ego. Thus *Brahman* like *jiva* has its limitations, the difference being that the bondage of the *jiva* is grosser than that of *Brahman* (Chandra 1989: 316-317).

3.2.4 PARALLELISM IN NATURE

Before creation came into existence, only Divinity in the original state with every thing in essence form merged into it existed. The process of manifestation began with *kshoba*, which stirred the churning motion in the sphere of the latent motion. This action though in consonance with Divinity appeared different as it had taken a course of manifestation. It may be denoted as the line of humanity, because of its close association with the formation with man.

Divinity and humanity lines run parallel to each other since creation was the primary object at the root, the line of humanity gained predominance and everything assumed a subtle form. The line of humanity became the base of the entire structure, however, its actions remained subject to the dormant actions of the line of Divinity, running parallel to it (Chandra 1989:317).

Actions went on multiplying and all life forms began to assume grosser and grosser form. Everything falls under the line of humanity, with Divinity at the root of everything. Thus it is

said that God is within man and one's ultimate purpose should be to link the line of humanity with that of Divinity (Chandra 1989:318).

3.2.5. **EXTINCTION OF PARALLELITY BETWEEN THE HUMAN AND THE DIVINE**

The composition of man is the same as that of the universe. Behind the solid exterior of the universe there are innumerable fine forms of existence (sheaths). Man with the innumerable forms from the finest to the grossest is a true copy of the Universe or entire manifestation of God. Represented by a complete circle from the outermost circumference to the innermost centre, man's existence and that of God's manifestation are the same. That is why sages say that the realisation of the self and God are the same. Both the universe and man evolved from the same point - zero (Chandra 1989:330).

Our ultimate purpose is to link the line of humanity with the Divine. The human line can be brought into line with Divinity by introducing moderation in the life of man. Meditation aims at restoring the balance. When parallelity disappears Divinity and humanity become almost one. The effect of meditation in Sahaj Marg reduces the line of humanity and Divinity gains ground (Chandra 1989:331). When parallelity is gone and humanity with its force of creation is almost diminished, the expanse of the self becomes unlimited.

3.2.6 GOAL OF LIFE

The problem that concerns aspirants of the SRC Mission is to find the solution for their lives. Since the cycle of birth and death continues continuously, we need to attain liberation from the bondage of *karma* and find a solution not only for this life but for all the lives we have had. Our existence in the present form is the result of a slow evolution, from the soul's existence as a naked separate entity to its present state. The subtle and gross coverings around the soul prevents the soul from obtaining realisation. Realisation means that the soul returns to its original state ie. a separate entity without subtle and gross coverings (Chandra 1988:13-14).

The cycle of *karma* ends once an aspirant has secured liberation, which means the end of pain and unhappiness. It is the natural longing of the soul to be free from bondage. However, liberation is not our goal. One still has to cross many spheres before one reaches the final goal.

The goal of life is God/Ultimate realisation. According to Yoga philosophy, Raja Yoga alone can lead man to the highest state. Sahaj Marg advocates that our means should be simple and subtle as God is a subtle and simple concept. The first sitting of the aspirant is regarded as the infusion of the seed of Reality. This seed is watered by constant remembrance (Chandra 1989:336).

The highest point of human approach is where every kind of force, power, activity and stimulus is nought and the individual enters a state of negation - Nothingness (Zero). At this stage one is nearest to the Superactive Centre or Zero, which is the original cause of all manifestation and to which all will return after *Maha Pralaya* (final dissolution). This according to the Master Babuji is the highest or the final goal of life (Chandra 1988:17)

3.2.7 **ATTAINMENT OF GOAL**

Attainment of the state closest to the Centre, means we have to become Zero/Nothing. The Centre is the primary cause of all existence and is the state to which everything will ultimately return after *Maha Pralaya*. We would in the natural course of time reach this state. However, by becoming Zero, one would save oneself from innumerable lives. *Maha Pralaya*, is essential for the return of all existence to the origin. Similarly our return to zero, means bringing about a dissolution of all things of our making (Chandra 1988:21)

The Master, Babuji, advocates that one gets rid of all ones belongings ie. *samskaras* and effects. These impressions need to be rubbed off. Suffering and miseries are obstacles. The soul possesses consciousness as a result of God's will to effect creations. Thus the soul as consciousness leads minds to create, therefore misery comes into existence. Steadiness of the mind, so that circumstances and surroundings will not affect it, is striven for (Chandra 1988:22)

Since desires cause misery, aspirants must lessen desires by fixing their minds on the Real Goal. Thus the world of *maya* will lose its charm. Suffering is however necessary in our lives as we learn to endure the problems of life with patience. A solitary life in the forest is not the means of liberation adopted by the Master (Chandra 1988:24).

3.2.8 GOD

The highest idea of Godhead in Hinduism is something abstract ie. Nothingness. Out of this Nothingness all things emanate. In science we have a similar concept of the "Big Bang" - an atom exploding and it's resulting expansion. Therefore if we have to come from Nothing we have to return to Nothing/Nothingness (Rajagopalachari 1988:57).

One does seek God, instead one has to realise God, God is within every individual. Individuals should stop the search for God in places of worship and rituals and instead concentrate on the journey within (Rajagopalachari 1990:148).

God cannot be taught, God is the subject of inner experience ie meditation. The goal is to become one with God and to love God for God's sake. In Sahaj Marg the ultimate union of the individual soul and the Universal soul is what they call God/Ultimate (Rajagopalachari 1989:62).

3.2.9 NON-ATTACHMENT

The main cause of our suffering is the undue attachment to possessions or relationships. However if we do everything in life thinking it to be our duty without any attraction or repulsion, we are free from worldly ties. Renunciation means non-attachment to worldly things and not the non-possession of things.

Since the majority of aspirants are householders, the Master asks that all our possessions and attachments are entrusted to him. A householder's life is no impediment to the way of renunciation and realisation. Babuji says renunciation is a state of constant consciousness and discrimination of all acts of our minds. When an aspirant's view is fixed on Reality, seeing everything as eternal; it means freedom from attraction or repulsion (Chandra 1988:25).

When true renunciation is achieved, freedom from desires is attained. The formation of *samskaras* are stopped as we are content with our lot. All that remains is that one undergoes the effect of the previously formed *samskaras*. Nature provides the field for *bhog* in order to remove the impressions from the casual body. When these coverings melt away one begins to assume a finer form of existence (Chandra 1989:338).

Pleasure and pain both contribute to misery. The only remedy for overcoming this misery is to devote oneself wholly to Godly thought. Thus one should perform one's household duties and at the same time be busy with Godly devotion. This will lead to one

becoming disinterested in one's own self. The individual will thereafter lose body-consciousness and subsequently soul-consciousness as well (Chandra 1989:339).

3.3 TECHNICAL DIMENSION.

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Man's instrument to create this meeting point of illusion and Reality is the technique of imaginative visualisation. Habits and personal self-image create the barrier to knowledge of the Self. The mind is used to transcend itself through *Tantra* and *Yoga*. *Tantra* is the energy restorer while *Yoga* is the goal setter. In living, energy is depleted and we need energy sources to continue on the journey of life (Mehta 1987:96).

Images are the language of thought and this power of thought opens the mind to fresh absorption of energy from Nature. Nature is the storehouse of the inexhaustible and renewable source of energy, which the Master uses to bring about the transformation of the individual. The incomplete experiences of the past (desires) prevents us from meeting the challenges of the present with a totality of openness. The unfulfilled desires and attachments bar the individual's way to joyful living (Mehta 1987:121).

3.3.2 MEDITATION

Control of the mind entails an understanding and knowledge of the workings of the mind. The individual mind is a powerful instrument which can be used to effect the greatest changes. In Sahaj Marg the mind is used to mould and regulate the activities of the aspirant (Chandra 1988:27).

Man came to the conclusion that a creation of contraction similar to that of *Pralaya* had to be created in oneself. To initiate an individual *pralaya* contraction takes place from below. The feet and body are brought to a steady posture (*asan*) paving the way to the Ultimate. The posture adopted at the beginning must always remain the same (Chandra 1989:347).

Under the Sahaj Marg system of Raja Yoga, aspirants start from the seventh step of Patanjali's Yoga. The previous steps come in automatically as one practises meditation. Thus much time and labour is saved (Chandra 1989:340).

Meditation in Sahaj Marg starts with meditation on the Divine light in the heart and this leads us further. This is in accordance with ancient knowledge (*shastra*) ie. the only way to reach the Ultimate Reality is through the *Antaryamin* in your heart. Each *abhyasi* has to discover for himself/herself the path ahead. Meditation is the instrument Sahaj Marg uses to achieve constant remembrance.

If the *abhyasi* feels light then it means progress. Light means the loss of weight of one's thoughts. Misdirected emphasis guided by the *abhyasi's* own desires and preconceived notions can prove injurious. Therefore the only object of attachment held, should be realisation of the Ultimate. The real solution to controlling the mind lies not in suppression and restraint but in its gradual moulding (Chandra 1989:344).

Meditation on the heart on the point where it beats is regarded as the most beneficial. Since the heart is taken as the point of meditation, the blood that runs through one's system is affected. The solidity of our thoughts and actions melt away. Meditation develops the discriminatory ability and gathers the individual mind (force) at one point. The subtle force works in the heart for the descent of the divine energy. If our thinking joins this subtle energy and is directed toward Reality, the solution is found (Chandra 1989:345).

The heart is the field of action of the mind. The mind is always as it is. It is the heart which has to be set right. At the heart the currents flow either upwards or downwards hence it is an appropriate point for meditation. *Trikuti* could be taken as a point for meditation however it requires more labour from the *abhyasi* (Chandra 1989:346).

At a certain point of development of faith in the *abhyasi* stress is made upon meditation on human form. The precept is in accordance with Patanjali's 37th sutra, (Chapter 1) - "Or the

mind having the desireless, for it's object" (Patanjali 1974; 64).

Most critics consider it hazardous for spiritual advancement. However the Master says that if the individual comes down from Immaterial Absolute or has attained the level of evolution required, then it is acceptable (Chandra 1989:346).

Worship of the Master means not only his outer form but his inner self. Those who worship the outer form only create grossness for themselves. Babuji says that however if the Master is merged in Reality, meditation on his form is advantageous. Such a Master's form is as subtle as his inner self. Eventually even the form of the Master will disappear (Chandra 1988:78-79).

Meditation is an act of communion with the Ultimate Reality/God. In Sahaj Marg meditation is on the abstract, formless and nameless. According to Ram Chandra (Babuji) God can only be experienced by his presence. *Abhyasis* try to experience his presence in meditation and try to become more like God so that we can know God. We can only truly understand something by becoming and experiencing it (Rajagopalachari 1988:154).

3.3.3 CHAKRAS

The *chakras* interconnect the sheaths in the body. The innermost *chakras* are closely related to the innermost sheaths. During individual sittings the preceptor cleans the individual *chakras*. The *chakras* are slowly opened and brought into balance.

According to the Yoga point of view, one who is ill is unable to distribute their energy properly through the centres. The *chakras* are points where the *pranic* levels have their highest concentration. Since the *chakra* is a point of intersection between the various sheaths, mental factors are also important (Rama 1976:222)

During our spiritual march we pass through the *chakras*. These *chakras* are centres of concentrated energy of the real power of Divine force inherited by man. As we pass through the *chakras*, there are entanglements of the intermediary layers. We have to stay there for some time to undergo the effects of *Bhog*. *Bhog* is the effect of *samskaras* and the process of unfolding the intricacies of that particular point. Our stay at these points would be long were it not for the assistance of a capable Master to push the disciple up, using his own force. A Master who has gained negation of self would be able to have that power at command (Chandra 1989:46).

Proper meditation at each successive *chakra* results in a new level of integration. The synthesis at the navel region has to do with the resolution of the issue of domination and submission.

Integration at this level results in one acting dynamically in the world. Integration at the heart *chakra* brings the ability to experience compassion and selfless love. Synthesis at the throat region gives one the ability to grow and to be creative. At the *ajna chakra* integration results in the opening of the third eye. This gives one the ability to have inner vision. Lastly synthesis at the crown *chakra* results in cosmic consciousness (Rama 1976:274).

The meditation on the heart assists in the cleaning of impressions and grossness around the heart. The heart as the centre of the mind is thus the natural place from which to begin work. The heart should not be confused with the *anahata-chakra* of the centres of *Kundalini yoga*. The centre of the mind is thus tamed and directed on the right path. Shri Ram Chandra (Babuji) said that a downward path of the Central force to the heart formed a heart region. The formation of the heart region leads to the expansion and illumination of the centres of the body (Varadachari 1989:2).

Since the blood from the body moves throughout the body, we say that the heart region extends from the top of the head to the tip of one's toes. As the knots/*granthis* within the heart region begin to untangle, we begin to pass this region.

The preceptor works in the subtle body of the *abhyasi*. The subtle body is made up of the *manas*, *buddhi*, *chit* and *ahankar*. Changes effected in the subtle body result in changes in the physical

body. The knowledge of each body is attained by the faculties of each body (Chandra 1973:46).

The five senses enable the gross body to obtain knowledge. Inference, thinking and reasoning are the means for the subtle body obtaining knowledge. According to Lalaji, the gross body must be involved in actionless action, the subtle body in contemplation while the casual body needs bliss to exist (Chandra 1973:47).

SRC philosophy defines the casual body as the *atman* (soul). *Ath* means movement, while *ma(na)* means reasoning and thinking. The soul is *Brahman*. *Brahman* is defined as developing and thinking creation for *bruha* - means to grow and *man* - to think (Chandra 1973:52-53). According to the law of nature, *jiva* experiences no reward or punishment for movement, contemplation and happiness. *Jiva* is both *atman* and *brahman*- thinking and movement and thinking and growing. While thinking and movement is limited, thinking and growing is unlimited (Chandra 1973:53).

The inner cleaning of the *chakra* is done by transmission of the Master's power. The preceptor uses thought power, under the guidance of the Master to remove the complexities and entanglements which hamper one. A force is transmitted to keep the aspirant on the spiritual path. A capable teacher/Master is able to create a permanent and deep rooted effect, wherein the mind is permanently in touch with the Supreme power and every act

is an act of remembrance of God. This constant remembrance leads to inner vibrations of the heart being felt. This is a beginning of the state known as *Shabda/Ajapa* (Chandra 1988:59-60).

These vibrations remain in the heart and gradually develop over the *chakras* and finally the entire body - reaching the state of *Anhad*. In the practise of meditation one must ignore the meanderings of the conscious mind and be busy with meditation with the subconscious mind. In time both the conscious and the subconsciousness mind will be in harmony. The result is deep rooted/lasting calmness (Chandra 1988:60-61).

Suppression of thoughts is not advocated, for this will lead to greater discord within the individual. An aspirant ,must feel lighter in mind and spirit then he/she will know if they have received the right spiritual progress. To obtain that state the aspirant must surrender to the Master with full faith and trust (Chandra 1988:62). Thus we see there is a rejoinder/clause attached to one obtaining this liberation. Surrender for liberation, one cannot be obtained without the other on this path.

The state of "I am *Brahman*" (*Aham Brahmasmi*) is not the goal. Reality is a stage where everything ends including this *Aham/I*. This state of mind appears at every stage of spiritual progress in their forms : "I am *Brahman*" ; All is *Brahman*" ; "All in *Brahman*". This unity in diversity appears in gross form in the *Pind Desh*, in *Brahamanda Mandal* it becomes finer/subtle and in

the *Para Brahma Mandal* very subtle. All these conditions according to Babuji end in the first of the sixteenth circles in one's march to the Centre (Chandra 1988:64-65).

3.3.4 CLEANING

In Sahaj Marg the technique of visualisation is used in the following way. At the end of each day the *abhyasi* spends approximately 30 minutes cleansing the mind of all impressions. One visualises that the impressions are leaving the body in the form of smoke, through the backside (Chandra 1981:15)

The suggestion that the impressions are being brushed away is suggested to the mind once. Thereafter the *abhyasi* watches passively as the smoke/impressions leave the mind. In order for visualisation to be efficacious, the *abhyasi* must believe that the Master is cleaning the impressions, while the mind is the passive onlooker. In our normal lives, an event is fulfilled but not the experience. In cleansing when the experience ends, the event withers away leading to a feeling of completedness (Mehta 1987:125).

As soon as the Master finds the *abhyasi* free of foreign matter, the *abhyasi* would be asked to change or stop the method of cleaning. The *abhyasi* will soar up awakening the *chakras* and finally the *Kundalini* as a result of the spiritual Master's help (Chandra 1981:15).

3.3.5 PRAYER

In Sahaj Marg an aspirant is likened to a coconut in a shell. The Master's duty is to break open the shell and release the Master within. Babuji says that prayers to God evoke no response as God has no mind. Therefore prayers are addressed to the guru/Master (Rajagopalachari 1989:216). The Sahaj Marg prayer addresses God as the Ultimate transcendent existence. While prayer to the Master within, results in the individual aspiring and growing.

Aspirants of Sahaj Marg offer a prayer at bedtime and thereafter meditate on it. The *abhyasi* in prayer implores the Supreme Master with a heart filled with love. Prayer is the unfailing method of establishing a link with the Divine. When a prayer is offered in love, a state of vacuity is created in the aspirant to receive the flow of Divine grace (Chandra 1989:348).

Prayer remains the unfailing means of success. When the world emerged into the present state, the central point was already there. The central point, being part of the Supreme turns our attention to the source. In prayer it is possible to reach the central point by resigning ourselves to the Divine will. When an individual creates a strong craving for the Absolute, that person is in such a state of prayer, that the wish is granted. It takes practice to reach this state of prayer. Once achieved, all that remains is remembrance; in an unconscious way (Chandra 1989:349).

3.3.6 CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE

Constant remembrance is the consciousness of God twenty four

hours a day. This consciousness of God enables the *abhyasi* to carry out every activity without the thought of resulting reactions. Devotion creates the channel for Godly current. Meditation is only a temporary connection, while constant remembrance of God keeps one in contact at all times (Chandra 1988:76).

One must feel mentally connected with the Supreme power during every moment of activity. If one regards all actions and work to be part of the Divine duty, constant remembrance becomes easy. According to the Master practice and experience will prove that this method is practical in daily life.

The idea of the *guru* as the supreme Divine Force is helpful, if the *guru* happens to be merged in the Ultimate state of Realisation. If one imagines that the *guru* is a superhuman being, to whom one dedicates everything, it will be beneficial to the aspirant. While doing something think that one is doing it for the Master, better still think that the Master himself is doing it for himself. If one's attention is drawn away from the sacred thought, one should think that the Master is being distracted and one will be in touch with the sacred thought again (Chandra 1989:351).

In Sahaj Marg philosophy the handing over of all actions and their results is of vital importance. The *abhyasi* believes that the Master is doing the work, the Master is doing the cleaning, the Master is meditating on his own form etc. This act of handing

over is called *pratyahara*. Withdrawal of the mind results in the withdrawal of the senses.

In this act of constant remembrance there is silence of the observer. *Dharana* is the holding of the mind in a state of constant awareness, a witness watching the movement of thought without disrupting it (Krishnamurti 1973:168).

Samadhi is a state of continued communion with the Self/*Brahman*/Centre/Reality. In integration evolution has taken place. The Master now communicates the secret of self-transformation for the change in the individual heralds a change in society. *Pranahuti* and meditation are the secrets of evolution leading the *abhyasi* to Reality/Self. Perception of Reality is the transformation of self, followed by the transformation of society.

In the Sahaj Marg path of spirituality, the aspirant is asked to seek guidance from the Master and verification from inside for all answers are within. This advice is no different from all the religions which ask the aspirant to "seek within".

3.3.7 DEVOTION

Constant remembrance gains efficiency once the aspirant is devoted to the object of meditation or constant remembrance. The fire of love/devotion has three states. The first two states are subject to exposure, due to the combustible matter in the air. When the solidity which hampers burning is removed by the effect

of inner heating, the final stage starts. There is an electric fire which bypasses these two states and appears in the final state minus smoke and vapour (Chandra 1989:352).

In the final stages of devotion the devotee may be conscious of feelings towards the object of love; but at the higher stage there is an almost total loss of awareness at the Ultimate stage. This devotion may be spoken of as self surrender, from which all awareness has been withdrawn. It is said that one can love one's own species best, therefore Babuji chose as the object of his love his Master. Mergence in his Master was his goal (Chandra 1989:353).

3.3.8 SURRENDER

The easiest and best method to attain success is to surrender oneself totally to the Great Master/God. Surrender must develop automatically without stress and strain. If surrender is cultivated by forced means it is not genuine. Once one has surrendered, nothing remains to be done. In this state the *abhyasi* will remain in close touch with Reality all the time. The surrender of one's heart to the Divine Master is regarded as the fittest offering for gaining the goal-Realisation (Chandra 1989:354).

To surrender one's heart, all that is needed is an act of will. Self-surrender is the total resignation to the will of God or Master. A permanent stay in this state leads to the beginning of

the state of negation. The individual only thinks and does that which the Master's will ordains. Surrender begins after complete negation of all senses and faculties has taken place. Submission to the Master, thinking of Him as superhuman being follows. Thereafter the *abhyasi* tries through love and devotion to gain the Master's attention and favour (Chandra 1989:355).

3.3.9 EVOLUTION OF THE ASPIRANT

An aspirant on the spiritual path is studied thoroughly by his/her Master. After a full study of the aspirant's desires, internal image, evolutionary cycle and intensity to achieve, the Master decides to accelerate the aspirant's evolutionary cycle.

Prana, the vital force, causes the evolution to work. Through yogic practices the evolution can be accelerated or slowed down. Mental, intellectual and sub-conscious evolution takes place because of the vibration/agitation of *prana*. Therefore acceleration of the vibration of *prana* of one's mind results in a step towards a higher level of evolution (Kanniah 1981:26).

When *prana* flows in the central *nadi* the mind is immersed in higher thoughts and is disinclined towards any activity. This Yoga clears away the impressions and ignorance and one begins to know the self. The practice of meditation with *pranahuti* results in the mergence of the self with the Ultimate/Self.

The whole body is pervaded by *prana*, which is controlled by the mind via the brain. *Prana* is distributed by the nervous system

and its centres/*chakras*. The sum total of *prana* in the human body constitutes the etheric/Vital body. *Prana* manifests itself on five planes. These are :

1. Atmic plane
2. Buddhic plane
3. Mental plane
4. Astral plane
5. Physical plane

(Bailey 1927:328-329).

Pure energy in the *pranic* sheath manifests in both the mental and physical spheres. There is an interrelationship between the level of energy in the physical body, the energy constitution of the person and energy on the mental plane.

Due to an interrelationship existing between the three, changes in one sphere effects changes in the others. Meditation on a certain point in the body shifts and alters the total balance of the body .

Sahaj Marg concentrates on altering the energy levels on the mental sphere. An aspirant begins to notice subtle changes in himself/herself if stillness and sensitivity is developed. Control of the mind results in conservation of energy.

3.3.10 SADHANA

Sadhana has two aspects, the *abhyas* and the Master's help ie.yogic transmission(*pranahuti*). *Abhyas* is to create the inner

condition to attract the flow of divine grace. In the earlier stages the *abhyasi* is only able to feel the flow of Divine Grace/*pranahuti* through the medium of the Master. As long as the aspirant cannot gain it directly, it rests upon the Master to bless him with it. When the *abhyasi* is able to draw it direct, the function of the Master is to keep watch over the aspirant (Chandra 1981:122).

Pranahuti aids the spiritual evolution of the *abhyasi* in the shortest possible time. In the Sahaj Marg system the aspirant connects the mind with the power of the Master, thus regulating the *abhyasi's* mental tendencies (Chandra 1981:124).

The selection of a Master is a very significant factor. God alone is the true *guru*, and we all get true light from Him alone. An individual who has cleaned the heart to the extent that knowledge comes from within is no longer in need of a Master. Common man is engrossed in the material manifestation, therefore a fellow-being of higher calibre can help man on the quest for realisation (Chandra 1981:125).

The goal of *sadhana* is to obtain liberation. Liberation is a state when all impressions of the past are cleared. A *guru* is sought to lead the aspirant on this path of self discovery. Ram Chandra says that having once found the *guru/guide/Master*, one should surrender totally to him (Chandra 1981:435).

The external Master's duty is to link or lead the aspirant to the

Master within. "Seek in you and you will find Him in yourself. The Master is there. But when? Only when you are not there". (Chandra 1981:435). These lines provide a vital clue to the aspirant of Yoga ie. the surrender of self (ego) unveils the Master/Self.

The Master renders spiritual and physical assistance to the aspirants on the path to Realisation. The attainment of a perfect Being is considered the attainment of God by the Master (Babuji). If it is not possible to merge with God in a human manifestation, because the Special Personality is not present, the aspirant has to settle for the next best ie. the Master/Guru. The Master of the highest calibre is one who is merged in Reality (Chandra 1981:128).

3.3.11 TRANSMISSION

The age old practice of yogic transmission was lost for many years in the land in which it originated. Lord Krishna used yogic transmission/*pranahuti* to bring Arjuna to the state of higher knowledge/Realisation. It was only possible for Lord Krishna to give this knowledge by means of *pranahuti* (the recitation of the Gita takes several hours). *Pranahuti* brought Arjuna to a higher state and purged him of undue attachment (Chandra 1981:357).

This ancient technique was rediscovered by Samarth Guru Ram Chandra (Fathegrah). Lalaji was the first to adopt this technique. His successor, Shri Ram Chandra (Babuji) further refined this ancient technique. According to Babuji spiritual

training for the attainment of higher stages is only possible through yogic transmission (Chandra 1989:54).

Paramanus (fine particles) should not be mistaken for transmission. *Paramanus* radiate from everyone be they good or evil, therefore the company of a saint would induce calmness. The effect of such a radiation lasts for a short while and disappears when one is away from it. Therefore it is an often heard complaint; that once the people go home they forget all that they learnt. It is the teacher who should be blamed for he/she lacks the power of transmission (Chandra 1989:55).

Power of transmission is a very high yogic attainment. A yogi can infuse by his/her will force, the yogic energy within anyone and remove any obstacles to the aspirant's spiritual progress. This power can be exercised far or near, and at any time. The power of transmission can create a condition of mind far ahead of the aspirant's existing condition of mind (Chandra 1989:56).

There are three types of transmission. A *guru*/Master can transmit his *prana*/energies in one of the following ways; through sight; touch and thought power. In the case of transmission by a glance of the *guru*, one has to be in the actual presence of the aspirant. A *guru's* energies can also be transmitted by touch eg. a touch can transmit the love of *guru* to disciple.

A true *guru* is able to transfer the psychic energy to an aspirant who is ready. After receiving the psychic energy/yogic

transmission initiates, the beginning of change. The relationship is nourished as the association with the guru grows (Glick 1983:482).

Yogi Desai noted that direct contact with the guru is not essential for the transmission of yogic energy. The energy/*shakti* is present all the time in nature and it can be used by anyone. However Yogi Desai stressed that in order to use the full force, one had to be connected to a guru (Glick 1983:483).

In Sahaj Marg the guru uses his thought power to transmit the life force/energy into the aspirant. In order for the aspirant to get the benefit from this *pranahuti*, a link has to be established between the guru/master and the aspirant/*abhyasi*. It is for this reason that *abhyasis* of Sahaj Marg are initiated into the movement. At the first three sittings the cleaning of impressions and grossness takes place. Thus a pathway to the Self is created by the Master.

3.3.12 YOGIC KNOWLEDGE

Yogic knowledge is unmediated knowledge - non-sensory and non-mental. The attainment of this condition of knowing is what an aspirant on the spiritual path strives for. According to Shri Ram Chandra (Babuji) Hatha Yoga and *pranayama* will not enable one to reach the Ultimate Reality. In Sahaj Marg one begins from the opposite end ie. the Central force is brought into activity. To bring this force into activity one needs someone to start it or give it an impulse from the central point of oneself (Varadachari

1966:104).

This central force/original vibration is in a continuous flow of vibration throughout the organic existence of oneself. A person who has knowledge of this vibration/prana is the knower of the secret of existence and Reality. The yoga of inner stimulation can be done by one who is merged in the original vibration/*Ksobha*. The *guru* according to the Master is a Godhead - he is all knowing and knows the path of inner ascent (Varadachari 1966:104).

Once the transmission of the central force into the heart has taken place, *dhyana*/meditation may begin. Transmission makes the *abhyasi* aware of the true goal, which slowly uncovers itself. The Zen and other methods of conscious awareness leads to the strain of one's system according to Sahaj Marg philosophy. The aspirant has to guard against experiences being hallucinatory projections or pseudo-enactments (Varadachari 1966:105).

The *Brahmanda* (heart) and *para-Brahmanda* (mind) regions brings one to the Central Region. It is a region beyond truth, dualities and conflicts. The Central Region is that of Supreme Divinity. Here one is not aware of the fact that they have power for all resistances have naturally disappeared. The Master (Lalalji/Babuji/Chariji) uses a forceless force from this region. This force/transmission is automatic and causes no violent experiences. Transmission is defined as the Master's love which dissolves the resistance to Realisation (Varadachari 1989:20).

Unlike other teachers Ram Chandra (Babuji) advocated a greater need for the Master's help in higher levels. He said that, the power of the Master alone can help one to enter the Central Region. In Sahaj Marg an *abhyasi* becomes totally integrated with the Master and experiences no separation. Transmission makes it possible for man to be liberated while being within a body (Varadachari 1989:21).

After crossing the seven rings of splendour one enters the ocean of the Centre. This ocean is supposed to be so vast that the original *rishi* who began swimming in it, is still doing so. The Centre is God, which is motionless. It is a state of Nothingness yet it maintains the latent power adjacent to it. Shri Ram Chandra contends that the latent motions generate power which form egg-like cells. Each egg-like thing is a cell and the master of one world. The Master cell is connected to all the other cells and controls them. Earth seems to be directly connected to this Master cell and as such has all the powers that go with it. Thus we have a trinity - the Centre, the latent motion and the Master, which are adjacent to each other (Varadachari 1989:22).

Meditation finally leads to the Central Region - the Centre and the Master cell. Thus the goal of realisation is to return to one's original, pure and true state.

The experience of the highest consciousness is felt by an *abhyasi* when he/she is connected to the *guru* by the force of transmission. The heart which is the centre of the emotional and

instinctive thought is the centre for the transmission. Most *abhyasis* expect to feel some drastic change at their first sitting eg. a feeling of an electric current. In most cases the *abhyasi's* first experience is of the "silent mind" even when thoughts are running through the objective mind. This feeling of stillness is unlike deep concentration wherein outside distractions are cut out, instead it is an all pervading accompanying silence. This experience develops into an experience of an omnipervasive presence/constant remembrance of the Master (Varadachari 1966:107).

3.3.13 PRANAHUTI / YOGIC TRANSMISSION

Man is the instrument of nature. The mind owes its origin to the first "Stir/Kshobh", which came into effect by the will of God. According to Sahaj Marg philosophy, the power of the mind belongs to man as God does not possess any mind. God only has a mind, when He descends on the earth as an *avatar*. God then possesses a mind, having descended with a specific task to fulfil. The mind that such a super-human personality has is in it's absolute state, almost the same as the Divine power in the form of *Kshobh* (Chandra 1981:391).

3.3.14 SPIRITUAL TRAINING THROUGH PRANAHUTI

Pranahuti is effected through the power of will. The trainer/preceptor uses his/her will to mould the mind of the

trainee. The power of *pranahuti* is used to weaken the lower tendencies of the mind, and plant the seed of Divine light in the inner recesses of the *abhyasi's* heart (Chandra 1981:422).

The preceptor is the mere instrument of this power, which belongs to the Master. In consciousness of this Divine Unlimited Power, the preceptor focusses his/her will power (Chandra 1981:423). At one's first sitting for transmission, one generally does not feel anything. The reason for this is that we are accustomed to feeling through our senses, while the Divine power is beyond the senses.

In the Kena Upanishad the *rishi* says to the student that life exists by the existence of a higher life. The Master, Ram Chandra (Babuji) said that while the body lives by the soul, the soul exists by the Ultimate life force. In Sahaj Marg, the Master endows this power into the heart of the *abhyasi*. The preceptors are only able to transmit by virtue of the Master, for without the Master there can be no preceptors (Rajagopalachari 1986:44).

The Master transmits his own spiritual energy (a yogic accomplishment obtained under his Master). Since this energy is connected with the Divine source, this energy is limitless. The transmission that we receive is watered down, so that aspirants can receive it safely. The Master transmits his own energy (*prana*) into the hearts of *abhyasis* helping them to grow. The

abhyasi now becomes dependant on the Master instead of on himself / herself (Rajagopalachari 1986:66).

Illuminating the lower man is possible through the right control of the *pranas*. When the body is motionless in meditation either a withdrawal of the mind to a higher plane or knowledge is brought down to the lower levels (Bailey 1927:225).

The Sahaj Marg system of Raja Yoga is a rapid means of obtaining the goal. Transmission allows the *abhyasi* to grow rapidly without the limitations/impressions of the past. Cleansing of all impressions (good and bad) and the infusion of spiritual energy (*pranahuti*) enables limitless development of the *abhyasi*. The Master (Babuji) says that for an earnest aspirant the goal can be reached in 7 months (Rajagopalachari 1986:67).

Although all *abhyasis* ought to reach the Ultimate goal after a period of three years, this is not so in the Mission. Lack of achievement is attributed to lack of co-operation. It is necessary for aspirants to sit in meditation and to allow the Master to work on them. Initially a measure of trust is asked of the seeker. *Abhyasis* through association with the Master and experience came to have faith in Him. This faith eventually ripens into surrender (Rajagopalachari 1986:68).

The practical aspects of the Sahaj Marg consists of meditation, cleaning and transmission. Sahaj Marg is the hastening of the process towards realisation. Acceleration of this process of

realisation is as a result of the cleaning and the simultaneous transmission of spiritual accomplishments. Meditation is practised to develop concentration and constant awareness (Rajagopalachari 1986:180).

The Master, Ram Chandra (Babuji) said that *pranahuti* is used to fill the *abhyasi* with spiritual force. The greater the love for the Master, the greater will be the love (*prana*) flowing into him (Chandra 1981:426).

3.3.15 TECHNIQUE

The thought power of the Supreme Master via the preceptor is transmitted into the heart of the *abhyasi*. This technique of transmission is felt by the *abhyasi* at the sitting. *Pranahuti* according to the Master has a total effect upon the *abhyasi*. Firstly worry and indecision leave the mind, followed by fear. Fear which is deep-rooted takes a longer time to leave. Under this system fear, worry and frustration give way to courage, faith and an all pervading sense of peacefulness in one's daily life. The *abhyasi* is now capable of depth of thought. All actions are carried out courageously and skilfully in a spontaneous manner (Rajagopalachari 1987 a:7).

These vital personality changes are effected without any effort on the part of the aspirant. Since the aspirant had no knowledge of the changes occurring within, renunciation is naturally effected. Transmission / *pranahuti* achieves permanent changes in the nature of the aspirant. All that is asked of the aspirant is

to allow the transmission to work on him/her (Rajagopalachari 1987 a:8).

In the consciousness of the Divine power, the preceptor focuses the Master's love to bring about change. *Pranahuti* is unlike mesmerism and hypnotism, which weakens the will of the hypnotised person and leaves him weakened after the state of hypnosis. *Pranahuti* is the Divine power working through the channel of a pure mind. A pure mind exists when it is permanently connected to God (Chandra 1981:424).

This aspect of allowing the Master to effect changes is very important in a system or path towards realisation. Openness is vital for any further progress on this path. Openness leads to a more reality-based view of one's self and one's world. This growth is followed by perceptual changes of one's life view.

According to Shri Rajagopalachari, transmission is a forceless force. He says this, because love is not a force. Love is thus able to transcend time, space and distance. Therefore transmission is able to act on a soul even when it is devoid of a body ie. after liberation of the soul (Rajagopalachari 1987 b:74).

The Master defines transmission as *Pranasya prana* - life in life. Therefore in some *abhyasis* greater egoism is found after starting *sadhana*. Transmission and the Master make the aspirant more aware of the self. Sahaj Marg asks that the *abhyasi* surrender this new

life to the Master as He created it, therefore this life belongs to Him. The act of surrender means that the Master is now responsible for the spiritual growth of the *abhyasi* ie. to make him/her into a Master (Rajagopalachari 1990:101-102).

3.3.16 **ROLE OF THE MASTER**

A Master is essential for aspirants on a spiritual path. Cases of persons who surrender directly to God are extremely rare, for it is a very difficult course of action. The *guru* is the connecting link between God and man. The *guru* is the medium and power that helps the aspirant on the spiritual path. During our spiritual march we have to pass through the various *chakras* in the human frame. The intervening spaces between the *chakras* are characterised by many entanglements (Chandra 1988:38).

Bhog entails not only undergoing our past actions but also passing through the intricacies at the point at which one has arrived. To disentangle oneself from these buffers by mere self effort becomes impractical in the higher stages due to the slippery nature of the point. The capable Master, using his will force, is able to push the aspirant through the entanglement onto the next stage. Thus it is essential that the Master one chooses is worthy of the task. The Master who has this power is one who has obtained perfection or the negation of the self (Chandra 1988:39).

The test for a real *guru* is not the miracles or the manners of the teacher but the practical achievements on the spiritual path.

The *guru* ought to be dwelling in a permanent state of self-negation. Babuji believes that knowledge is an achievement of the brain whereas realisation is the awakening of the soul (Chandra 1988:45).

Lord Krishna is said to have transmitted the condition of realisation into the heart of Arjuna. Every word that Arjuna heard, produced a permanent effect on his heart. The failures of *gurus* to do this, is due to their inability to transmit this information. The conditions of the mind discussed in the Gita, are really stages experienced in a man's quest on the path of spirituality (Chandra 1988:46).

An aspirant needs the *guru* to effect the awakening of the soul and needs his/her support on the spiritual quest. Therefore one should submit to a *guru* who is free of bondages. If one submits oneself to a *guru* who has pride, one will inherit the same defects. Liberation will not be possible in this case (Chandra 1989:53).

Liberation, peace and bliss are stages on the path to perfection. The final stage cannot be described in words for words are inadequate. This stage has neither weight nor bliss. The *guru* who permanently abides in this condition has the power and capacity to use yogic transmission. The *guru*, using his/her will force, transmits the spiritual state into the heart of the *abhyasi*. None below this level are fit to impart spiritual training to others (Chandra 1989:54).

3.3.17 ROLE OF THE PRECEPTOR

Previously the science of transmission was only known to adepts. In Sahaj Marg the preceptor is prepared carefully before he/she is fit for transmitting. Only those who have crossed the lower regions and have attained a high degree of psychic subtlety can transmit the highest consciousness. In other yogic systems the aspirant is prepared for his/her task by observing austerities to bring about purification. In Sahaj Marg the Master contends that purification of the physical and astral forms is achieved by transmission. Transmission of the superconsciousness starts the process and prepares the individual for becoming a medium (preceptor) for this force/*prana* (Varadachari 1966:116).

Transformation is achieved in Sahaj Marg by bringing the grosser levels under the control of the subtler levels. However the whole process is supposed to be done by the highest consciousness itself. In transmission the Master's superconscious force from the central region is directed towards the heart of the *abhyasi*. This leads to the heart yearning towards its own central region. The inverse circular movement at the *chakras* is not initially felt by the aspirant. Owing to the human organism being connected there is at each point a direct impulse-giving reflexive experience. Thus transmission reveals simultaneous experiences at more than one point (Varadachari 1966:117).

All yogas aim to transcend the *manas*, to be free from the cycle of *samskara* and achieve freedom. In Sahaj Marg *pranahuti* brings about the immediate calming of the mind without passing through

samadhi. The psychic body is supported by the Centre and one transcends the *manas* from the very beginning (Varadachari 1966:118).

3.3.18 DUTIES OF THE PRECEPTOR

The Master has prefects and preceptors to aid him in his spiritual mission. Both prefects and preceptors are chosen by the Master. A prefect is a provisional preceptor. The Master watches his/her progress and prepares him/her to take on greater responsibility. There is no difference between the transmission of a prefect and a preceptor. The greater the love of the *abhyasi*, the greater the transmission.

The preceptor is chosen for his/her capacity to do the work. The potential candidate must have the time to spare, the premises to work from and the willingness to help the Master. Once an individual is chosen as a preceptor, he/she is provided with the capacity to do the work. There is no limit to the responsibilities and self-development of a preceptor. The Master seeks to bring all preceptors and *abhyasis* to the level of Masters (Rajagopalachari 1980:176-177).

Preceptors should extend to the *abhyasi* sympathy, love and understanding as they fulfil the need on the human level ie. to be a friend (Rajagopalachari 1980:183).

A preceptor is primarily concerned with the cleaning of the *abhyasi*. When transmission is given 80% of the time spent, is spent cleaning. The rest of the session is spent transmitting the love of the Master. The preceptor is primarily concerned with the spiritual welfare of the *abhyasi*. The privileges go with the responsibilities of being a preceptor. The greater the work that preceptors do, the closer they get to the Master.

There are degrees of transmission, thus time does not matter. The preceptor transmits according to the needs of the *abhyasis*. A sitting can last from a few minutes to half an hour. In the case of the Master and preceptors who have reached the goal, they only need to transmit for a few seconds or minutes to an aspirant.

At individual sittings the preceptor does specific work. A preceptor is mainly concerned with cleaning of the heart region and the opening/loosening of the *chakras*. Through the transmission of energy at certain centres a reaction is effected at another.

The transmission of energy at the base of the spine goes to the head (Bailey 1927:310). This is why aspirants experience an upward rush of energy to the crown of the head. At the first and second sittings, the preceptor only does cleaning. Usually at a third sitting, preceptors transmit energy at the base of the spine to open the passage of the *Kundalini*.

This yogic transmission is always at the disposal of the preceptor at all times. Using his/her will power and the mere suggestion that the Master's transmission is working, the preceptor transmits.

Shri Rajagopalachari, the present Master of the Mission says that transmission is always the same. However since the receiver is individual, his/her experiences will be different. This fact is due to our *samskaras* which act as filters to our experience (Rajagopalachari 1980:108).

The purpose of transmission is the transformation of the individual's personality and restoring the individual to his/her original nature ie. repose in God with love, faith and surrender (Rajagopalachari 1987 a:8).

3.3.19 GROWTH AND EVOLUTION IN SAHAJ MARG

According to Sahaj Marg the only problem in spirituality is yourself and every problem on your path is from within you. If you love yourself, you will be able to love the Self. By loving the Self, discipline, practice and loving becomes easy (Rajagopalachari 1990:222).

Growth in spirituality entails an element of uncertainty for one is stepping into the unknown. The ego resists all change and often enacts a pseudo-growth to resist growth (Rama 1976:189). The path of spirituality is often called "treading the razor's edge", for it is fraught with difficulties.

Real evolution is characterised by uncertainty, pain and disappointment every step of the way. Giving up the struggle to improve followed by a true appraisal of the self precedes any effective change. Change is gradual for detachment is only achieved after giving up of both likes and dislikes

(Rama 1976:192).

In Sahaj Marg evolution is rapid due to the Master's use of yogic transmission/*pranahuti*. Transmission, meditation and cleaning results in the *abhyasi* giving up attachments without any struggle. The *abhyasi's* energies are directed to higher planes of existence because of the meditation and constant remembrance.

The Master's/God's wish is that every *abhyasi* become a Master/God for one's own sake. Consciousness tends towards evolution once the denser levels of existence are broken. The preceptor begins work from the heart region which is the field of the mind. Thereafter the Master works in the mind and higher regions. When all attachments to all states are broken the highest state of pure consciousness is reached. Absolute freedom comes when the seer is established in it's own nature.

Every mission needs a structure within which to operate and realise its aims and objectives. Therefore the Master of the SRC Mission has set up centres and training branches throughout the world, for the spiritual upliftment of humanity.

The next chapter discusses the structural dimension of the SRC Mission, with special emphasis on South Africa.

CHAPTER FOUR**STRUCTURAL DIMENSION**

In order for a society /movement to operate efficiently and according to the precepts of the founders, a structure within which it can operate has to be formed. The structure of a society consists of the branches /centres and its management personnel. The members of the movement look upon the head and office bearers to guide them in the proper functioning of the society and for assistance with problems encountered in the pursuit of its ideals. The head of the organisation is in a unique position, for he is both the spiritual head and the president of the Mission at the same time. The organisational and administrative functions are decentralised keeping in mind the legal structure of each country that must be complied with. The head or President is one irrespective of the formation of the organisation in the respective countries. The Founder President orders that the headquarters cannot be removed to any other place.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Samarth-Guru Shri Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh reintroduced a remodelled form of Raja Yoga to the masses. He trained people in spirituality, using his power of transmission to make their task easier in their pursuit for the Ultimate. He trained seekers in spirituality at informal gatherings at his home. After his *Mahasamadhi* (passing away) , Shri Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, declared himself successor and spiritual representative of his Master.

The Shri Ram Chandra Mission was founded in 1945 by Shri Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur. He named the Mission after his spiritual Master, Shri Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh. It was his gift as *Guru Dakshina* (repayment to his Master) to form an organisation to help humanity towards spirituality.

The Shri Ram Chandra Mission is a registered organisation. It has been registered in its country of origin as well as in the countries to which it has spread. In 1978 a formal and clearly defined constitution with bylaws was formulated. A copy of the constitution has been attached as an addendum.

4.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the mission are: education in spirituality; promotion of universal love; encouragement of research in the field of yoga; establishment of charitable institutions and the maintenance of structures for the activities of the Mission.

Education in the science of yoga is regarded as vital. Mankind needs the training and education in spirituality which will allow it to cope with the stresses and challenges of modern life. It is not possible for the masses to retreat to the mountains to study at the feet of the Masters. Sahaj Marg is the method devised by the Master to educate the masses in spirituality, while they lead secular lives. Raja Yoga calls upon an aspirant to follow strict rules with regard to celibacy, diet, morals etc. The Mission has amended these rules to suit the conditions and

needs of present day society.

The Mission aims to propagate its teachings through the preceptors and its members. The preceptors who are specially trained for the task of transforming man and therefore society, recruit individuals who show an interest in changing their life patterns. In the branches/centres established members aim to develop universal love and brotherhood amongst the group and thereafter in society at large. The Centre-in-charge or the preceptor delivers discourses on topics based on spirituality and related topics of human values.

The Mission does not only confine itself to the needs of its members. Research is conducted in yoga and assistance is given to organisations or persons carrying out research in this field. The Shri Ram Chandra Mission has an established research institute in Hyberbad¹

A legal change in the constitution will occur, if the laws of the country do not allow a certain act. Any legal problem has to be referred to the President.

4.3 ORGANISATION-HEAD QUARTERS

The head of the organisation is the spiritual head and the President of the society. This results in the policy of the mission being always uniform - the President has total veto over all matters. The President is in charge of establishing branches, societies and training centres. All are affiliated to the head

quarters in matters of organisation and control²

4.3.1 CONSTITUTION AND WORKING

The President selects a working committee from amongst the members of the Mission to assist in the control and organisation. The following office bearers are appointed by the President: Secretary, Joint Secretary; Treasurer & Auditor, Office-Bearers are appointed or removed at the discretion of the President.

The President presides over these meetings except in the case of an emergency. These meetings are called at his discretion and his decisions in all matters are final. The President may nominate from amongst his spiritual disciples any person as his successor. The successor will enjoy all power and authority vested in the President.

The Head-Quarters of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission is under the direct control of the President, with regard to it's workings, organisation, control and methods of training etc³

4.3.2 FINANCE

All finance is under the direct control of the President and no withdrawal may be made without the sanction of the President. In this way the President obviates the problem of mismanagement. The sources of income are listed and the funds are divided into: a. reserve fund, b: general fund. 10% of the Mission's income goes into the reserve fund, to be used in cases of dire emergency. Ordinary expenses are met by the general fund. Withdrawals from

both have to be made by the order of the President. Funds may not be used for business or monetary gain. All funds shall be wholly applied for the promotion of the objectives of the society⁴

4.3.3 MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all persons, desirous of spiritual development, irrespective of caste, colour or creed. This is subject to the approval of the President. An individual may be refused membership in the case of mental illness or immoral character. A membership list is kept at the main centre of the country of it's members. Head Quarters have a complete list of all members belonging to the Mission. Members are asked to furnish the Mission with two photographs - one is kept in the local centre while the other is kept at Head Quarters. The President looks at these photographs when transmitting to individuals when they are not physically present.

No subscription fees are made. However donations from members are accepted to promote the aims of the Mission and to ensure the smooth operation of the Mission⁵.

4.3.4 DUTIES OF OFFICE-BEARERS

4.3.4.1. SECRETARY

The Secretary has to convene all meetings in consultation with the President. A record and upkeep of all proceedings of meetings is maintained by the Secretary. The Secretary at Head Quarters is responsible for the general supervision and correspondence of the Mission, in the manner prescribed by the President. An amount of cash will be available for petty expenses.

4.3.4.2 JOINT SECRETARY

In the absence of the Secretary he/she will discharge the duties of the Secretary. The Joint Secretary is responsible for duties in common with the Secretary⁶.

4.3.4.3 TREASURER

The treasurer is responsible for all funds. An account of all income, expenditure, deposits and withdrawals will be kept. The Treasurer works under the orders of the President.

4.3.4.4 AUDITORS

Auditors audit the accounts of the Mission at least once a quarter and submit a report to the President. They may check on the accounts, funds or books at any time⁷.

4.5 BY-LAWS

By-laws with regard to the proper administration of the Mission have been drawn up. The Head Quarters are under the direct control of the President and the Secretary supervises in

consultation with the President.

4.5.1 ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT- BRANCHES, SOCIETIES AND TRAINING CENTRES

To encourage social, moral and spiritual upliftment the President establishes branches and training centres. Members are appointed when they are deemed fit to impart the spiritual values and carry out the work. At his discretion appointments are made in writing to fulfill the instructions from Head Quarters. These heads of branches and training centres are called preceptors and prefects respectively.

The Head Quarters have total control over organisation, maintenance and training of the branches and training centres. Instructions from Head Quarters are sent to branches and they in turn instruct training centres. All decisions have to be vetoed by Head Quarters.

Training centres and branches send monthly reports to Head Quarters about training. This practice develops a closer relationship between the preceptors and the President of the Mission. It enables the President to have knowledge of all works and to issue instructions if necessary.

The President may close or suspend a branch or training centre if he sees that no useful purpose is being served. Preceptors and prefects are held accountable for the spiritual welfare and growth of the *abhyasis* under their care. Prefects or preceptors

may be removed if they contravene the laws or do not carry their duties according to the principles of Sahaj Marg⁸.

4.5.2 MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL- POSSESSIONS OF THE MISSION

The possessions are controlled by the working committee in consultation with the President. The working committee is responsible for construction, maintenance, extensions and repairs to its properties⁹.

4.5.3 WORKING COMMITTEE- MEMBERS AND OFFICE BEARERS

They are required to do the duties entrusted to them by their superiors and are liable to be removed if their duties are not carried out properly. All office-bearers and functionaries of the Mission will hold Office for a term of four years, unless removed earlier by the President. Six months before the end of the term, each person will suggest to the President names of people suitable for the job¹⁰.

4.5.4 SPIRITUAL AND MISSIONARY PROPOGANDA OF THE MISSION

The working committee is responsible for the maintenance and promotion of the spiritual and missionary ideals of the Mission. The President in consultation with his working committee helps to promote any society or institution having similar aims as the SRC Mission. In this way a broader field for spiritual restructuring is created. Public lectures, informal discussions and pamphlets are the chief means of disseminating information¹¹.

4.5.5 MEMBERSHIP

When an individual wants to be a member of the Mission, that individual will have a sitting in the *satsang* like any other brethren for some time. When an individual is considered fit to be a member, they are then enrolled, with the necessary formalities as prescribed by the President¹².

4.5.6 PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT

The President nominates three or more members of the Mission to constitute a sub-committee. They organise and maintain the publications of the Mission under the orders of the President¹³. All the lectures of the President are recorded on the tape and thereafter transcribed into print. The publishing department prints only after they are checked by the President. These lectures and Sahaj Marg philosophy are published as books. Video recordings and tape recordings of the Master's visits and discourses are also available to the *abhyasis*. These may be borrowed from the centres in the respective countries.

4.6 STRUCTURE OF MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.6.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa there are training centres established at various towns . The first official centre in South Africa was established in 1976, at the home of Khoosal Kanjee of 190 Rose Avenue, Lenasia, Johannesburg.

The home town of each prefect was thereafter regarded as a training centre. Since the majority of the *abhyasis* were from Lenasia, this became the first centre. Simultaneous development took place in Johannesburg city, Azaadville, Port Elizabeth and Laudium. Visits by prefects were made to Durban and Cape Town. However the lack of a prefect being on hand in Cape Town and Durban, led to the decline in interest and participation. Subsequently all the *abhyasis* dropped out and there was no Mission activity for a long time thereafter.

The Mission proceeded with some success until the *Mahasamadhi* (passing away), of its founder Babuji Maharaj. The period 1983-1988, was one of conflict and doubt in the minds of *abhyasis* all over South Africa, as to the true successor of Babuji. Dissension occurred in the Mission in South Africa and in other Missions all over the world. One group of followers accepted, the appointed successor Chariji, while another group did not.

The *abhyasis* in South Africa after trying on their own, met with little success. In the year 1988, Rassik Kanjee went to India to meet the Spiritual Head and successor of Babuji. Upon meeting Chariji, he was convinced that he was indeed the true and only successor of his Master. Rassik Kanjee was one of the chief opposers to Chariji in South Africa at that time.

His total acceptance and conviction in Chariji, led to some followers in South Africa believing him. In July of 1988, Rassik Kanjee and eight *abhyasis* decided to visit Chariji in France. However the problem of all *abhyasis* not accepting Chariji, lead to confusion. Slowly the members of the Mission came closer towards unification. In July 1990, an attempt to resolve the matter was made once again. The visit to France resulted in the Master refusing to visit South Africa until there was a total representation of all *abhyasis* of the South African Mission.

The Secretary of the Mission Shri SA Sarnad and an associate Shri G Mujumdar visited the country upon the orders of their President. They concluded that the *abhyasis* had to a large extent come closer towards being a unified group. In April 1991, the President visited South Africa and issued the first Presidential Order. He also formulated the working committees during his visit.

4.6.2 ORGANISATION

4.6.2.1 NATIONAL CENTRE-IN-CHARGE

The Centre-in-Charge is the person who organises the activities of the centre. He/She is in charge of the spiritual welfare of the *abhyasis*. In 1991, Mr Rassik Kanjee was declared Centre-in-Charge by the Master. He submits quarterly reports on the Mission and he has to update name lists of the *abhyasis*¹⁴.

The Centre-in-Charge is in constant contact with the preceptors of the Mission. Preceptors may ask for advice on spiritual or administrative issues. If he/she notices that *abhyasis* in a particular area need help, arrangements are made to visit those in need. Individual sittings and *satsang* are given to the members. *Abhyasis* may also request that a preceptor or Centre-in-Charge visit, for spiritual rejuvenation of the group.

Abhyasis may send their spiritual diaries to their preceptor or to the Centre-in-Charge. He/She will make suggestions and also note the progress the *abhyasi* has made. The *abhyasi* is at all times encouraged and monitored.

4.6.2.2 NATIONAL SECRETARY

In 1991, the President declared Jagdish Naran and Chandu Patel as Secretary and Joint Secretary respectively. The Secretary has to submit a quarterly report on the Missions working. Decisions taken at the committee meetings are not valid until they are approved in writing by the President¹⁵.

4.6.2.3 REGISTRATION OF THE SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

The South African Mission was registered in 1989, as a non-profit organisation.

4.6.2.4 DIVISION OF THE MISSION INTO REGIONS

The Mission in South Africa is divided into centres as per Presidential Order 1950 of 1991.

Cape Province - 1. Cape Town 2. Port Elizabeth

Transvaal - 1. Azaadville 2. Benoni 3. Fordsburg

4. Klerksdorp 5. Laudium 6. Lenasia

7. Venda

Orange Free State - None.

Natal - 1. Pietermaritzburg 2. Ladysmith¹⁶

4.7 DEVELOPMENT OF THE MISSION

The first centre was situated in 190 Rose Avenue, Lenasia, a suburb of Johannesburg. This is the residence of Mr Rassik Kanjee. The main weekly sittings are held in a hall nearby. Weekly sittings are held in Lenasia on Sunday between 10.00 and 11.00 am. The sitting is for one hour. In addition to the general weekly sitting, a second sitting is held at the various centres from 7.30 to 8.00 pm. on Wednesdays. The members of the centre may decide on the day suitable for the majority of its members. During the major functions of the Mission, a nearby communal hall is used for meditation. The Mission has purchased land in Lenasia to serve as an *ashram*. *Abhyasis* arrange for individual sittings at the home of the preceptor or the *abhyasi*.

4.8 CELEBRATIONS

The annual birthday celebrations of the Masters are held at a national level. So far no celebrations have been held at an international level. All celebrations at the national level have been held at the National Centre in Johannesburg.

During the visits of the Master in April 1993-1994, a school for the disabled (Lenasia-Johannesburg) was hired by the Mission. Accommodation was provided for local and overseas *abhyasis* at nominal rates. *Abhyasis* and preceptors from United States of America, France, Switzerland, Germany and Madagascar attended the seminars (spiritual camp). Each day *abhyasis* listened to discourses by the President and other *abhyasis*, either before or after a group meditation session.

Abhyasis returned after lunch for individual sittings by preceptors. Afternoons were often spent, walking around the premises with the President and the *abhyasis*. This was followed by a lecture by the President and a group meditation session. During this two week period *abhyasis* enjoyed a spiritual revival.

4.9 MEETINGS

Meetings are held annually. They are: financial; preceptors; and general .

All meetings are conducted at the National Centre in South Africa. During the visit of the President, preceptors meetings were held with all preceptors present. At these meetings

preceptors are updated with their knowledge. Manuals on technique are also made available.

4.10 PROPAGATION OF THE MISSION

The preceptors and the *abhyasis* are the chief sources for dissemination of information. They introduce the movement to their friends and family. In South Africa the growth of the Mission is slow. The celebrations are not advertised and written information is not disseminated. No conferences or Open houses have been held. However whenever an interest is shown in a community, by an individual/s the preceptors visit the area, to hold the public meetings to which all are invited.

Regular public meetings are held in various towns. Public are informed by means of newspaper articles. So far the Mission has gained no media exposure in South Africa.

Preceptors are held accountable for the spiritual welfare of *abhyasis* under their training at their centres.

4.11 **ROLE OF THE SRC MISSION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The recent visit of the President to South Africa introduced some new changes in the running of the Mission. The following ammendments were made to the Presidential Order of 19 April 1991. At a meeting held on the 20th and 21st April 1993 changes were made.

The monthly report submitted by preceptors stating the number of sittings given enables the President to guage the productivity of the preceptor. At the same time the President gets to know which *abhyasis* are earnest and which are not. Problems mentioned in the reports are solved by the President either directly or indirectly.

A greater intergration is being sought by the South African Mission and the centres worldwide. Since the South African Mission was not in contact for some years, they had to be reintroduced to their sister centres. Contact with these centres will result in the local centre being in line with current trends, globally . Information has to be disseminated in order for members to be aware of the activities taking place (local and abroad). The first newsletter (**Kshob**) was published in South Africa in 1993. It will be a quarterly publication to which members can subscribe to. Articles from overseas newsletters and contributions from the local publishing committee will be made. *Abhyasis* are invited to make suggestions on the newsletter as well as to submit articles.

A new working committee was formed. Previously the working committee consisted of all the preceptors of the South African Mission, now has been reduced to ten members. Decisions taken by the committee are binding on its members after they have been ratified by the President. The working committee is committed to the propagation of the movement and to the service of people in South Africa.

Preceptors are called upon to make a greater contribution in the propagation in the Mission in South Africa. Their chief duty is to promote Sahaj Marg amongst the people. They have to organise more meetings and to recruit members for the Mission. The role of the preceptor entails that he/she improves the spiritual welfare of all individuals in the country. This is possible through the changes effected in oneself ie. first the individual must change then one can bring about change in others.

Techniques outlined in the preceptors manual serve as a source book. This ensures that the method is always the correct one. Preceptors in the SRC Mission speak different languages and come from diversified cultures. Verbal instruction can always be misinterpreted, hence a written manual for guidelines.

Absentia sittings have been discouraged since the last visit of the President. When the *abhyasi* is in the presence of a preceptor, the preceptor is able to give a better sitting. At the sitting there is discussion between the preceptor and the aspirant. Personal contact ensures a closer relationship between

the two, with the aspirant feeling free to discuss personal or spiritual problems. However absentia sittings are given when written permission has been obtained from the President¹⁷.

The next chapter deals with the interpretative dimension. Here the writer examines what remoulding and remodelling has taken place in Sahaj Marg to differentiate it from Raja Yoga.

FOOTNOTES

1. Constitution & Bylaws of SRC Mission 1978:2
2. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:2
3. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:3
4. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:3-4
5. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:4
6. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:4
7. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:5
8. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:5-6
9. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:6
10. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:6
11. Constitution and Bylaws 1978:6
12. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:8
13. Constitution & Bylaws 1978:8
14. Presidential Order 1950 of 1991
15. Presidential Order 1949 of 1991
16. Presidential Order of 1950 of 1991
17. Extract of ammendments and revisions of the Presidential Order of 19 April 1991, minuted in the meeting of Preceptors 20, 21 April 1993

CHAPTER FIVE**INTERPRETATIVE DIMENSION****5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The dissertation now takes the path of interpretation by utilising the hermeneutical notions of experience, constant remembrance, devotion and transmission.

5.2 HISTORY

The SRC's Mission philosophical basis is the Samkhya/Yoga system. The aspirant's goal, like that of the yogi of Yoga and the seer of Samkhya, is to return to the original unitary state. This original state is one of balance wherein all three *gunas* are in balance. According to SRC philosophy all entities are moving towards the state of *Maha Pralaya*, however this system helps aspirants to reach that state (everything dissolved into original cause) in a quicker time.

While Samkhya believes that metaphysical knowledge leads to liberation, Raja Yoga and Sahaj Marg argue that metaphysical knowledge prepares one for freedom/liberation. Emphasis is on the *samadhi* state whereby intuitive metaphysical knowledge is gained.

The SRC are the historical inheritors of the Samkhya/Yoga system. Reinterpretation of the Samkhya/Yoga historical tradition has taken place. Thus certain similarities and differences are noted by the writer.

In Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Yoga deals with the modification of the mind as in the SRC. Both aim to stop the process of *vrittis* influencing decisions made by the aspirant. *Citta-vritti-nirodha* is obtained when *abhyas* and renunciation are followed.

Sahaj Marg like Yoga regards God as necessary for the liberation of man. *Isvara* of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and the Master of the SRC Mission are regarded in the same light ie. a realised soul, who leads aspirants on the path of realisation.

Surrender to God/Master/*Isvara* is regarded as the ideal in both Yoga and Sahaj Marg. Surrender ensures that the aspirant does not get ego-bound due to the powers that he/she acquires. Renunciation of all actions, possessions and powers leads to the real goal ie. absolute independence.

Both Yoga and Sahaj Marg which is an adaptation of Raja Yoga require God being the motive of action. The aspirant in the SRC Mission believes that since the (*guru*) Master is linked to God, union with the *guru* leads to union with God. The means adopted by both are meditation, devotion and surrender.

In Sahaj Marg purification involves yogic transmission which purifies the aspirant and makes them fit to receive the Divine grace. The yogi who has obtained realisation has mastery over himself/herself and the world. This concept of transmission is in accordance with Patanjali's sutras.

The following remodelling has taken place in the Sahaj Marg system . The first six steps of the eight limbed Yoga (Sadhana Pada) are discarded. The aspirant in Sahaj Marg starts from the seventh step (meditation) of Patanjali's yoga. The previous steps are said to develop naturally as the aspirant continues on the yogic path. Raja Yoga has been remodelled to suit the conditions of the present day.

The niyama of purity is not followed by this system.

"Observance of purity brings about aversion to one's bodily urges and a disinclination to touch another body"
[sutra 40] (Deshpande 1978:102).

Sahaj Marg enables married and unmarried aspirants to follow Raja Yoga. The only qualifications for an individual to follow Sahaj Marg are a willingness to follow the path and a moral lifestyle.

The householder's lifestyle is regarded as ideal for it gives one the opportunity to experience the joys and miseries of life. An abhyasi said, " the miseries are to be accepted as gifts. By doing so, one will love the Master more after experiencing the miseries." Celibacy is not a precondition of practice of yoga in Sahaj Marg. Sahaj Marg is designed for the householder, the Master is a householder and so are the majority of the aspirants.

While *asana* is practised, *pranayama* is not. *Pranayama* (the control or slowing of breath) occurs naturally when one practises meditation. In yogic practice *pranayama* is used to awaken the *kundalini*. This is not so in Sahaj Marg. Transmission is used to open the psychic centres of the aspirant. These centres are not the *chakras* or the *kundalini* of conventional yoga.

The Master alone uses his *prana* to elevate the aspirant's evolutionary cycle. Yogic transmission is the use of the Master's *prana* for the spiritual transformation of humankind. Sahaj Marg brings about the desired goal through the use of yogic transmission. In addition aspirants of the system have to meditate and follow the ten maxims of Sahaj Marg¹. This results in the moulding of the mind whereby the follower becomes detached from one's emotions and passions. The balancing of spirituality and materiality results in moderation.

The means of obtaining this realisation is following the path of Sahaj Marg to restore balance in one's life. Babuji said that a balanced life entails neglect neither of the spiritual nor the material aspect. A neglect of either half leads to frustration. If you are too materially inclined, the spiritual half of your life will suffer. Too much emphasis on the spiritual, results in the lengthening of the material life (Rajagopalachari 1977:127).

In Sahaj Marg meditation is done on the supposition of the Divine light in the heart. Meditation on the Divine light (*atman*) destroys the impurities allowing the *atman* to shine in all its purity. This light acts as space /*akasa* which transforms into any form (Patanjali 1974: 63).

Many of the *abhyasis* of the SRC Mission said that, during meditation they imagined Babuji present in their hearts.

One aspirant remarked, " I imagine Babuji is present in my heart and He is performing my *abhyas*." This act of meditation on the human form of the guru is only accepted, if the image of the guru appears naturally, otherwise aspirants ought to continue with meditation on the idea of a Divine light in the heart.

This meditation on the human form is in accordance with Patanjali's 37th sutra. " Or the mind having the desireless , for its object" (Patanjali 1974:64). These personages who have reached the goal are said to be desireless. Their function in Nature to lead the struggling souls to liberation.

The Master is said to be such a soul. If one cannot find such a Master then the aspirant has to settle for the next best ie. a *guru* who has knowledge and experience in the spiritual field. The role of the *guru* is vital in Raja Yoga, for the aspirant cannot learn from books. Direct contact is necessary as meditation is something that has to be taught practically.

In Sahaj Marg it is said that the guru should possess the power of transmission, to be regarded as a true guru. An effective teacher shows results, similarly so should an effective guru. Since the guru/ Master cannot be physically present with every aspirant, the preceptor acts as a guide/ friend in lieu of the Master. However the aspirant is always in contact with the guru/Master, for the yogic transmission of the Master, is working through the preceptor within the aspirant. Everything in the composition of man falls under the line of humanity, with Divinity at its root. The purpose of life is to link these two lines- Divinity and humanity, restoring man to his original state. The way to do this is to introduce moderation in the line of humanity ie. the practice of meditation (Chandra 1989:318).

5.3 YOGIC TRANSMISSION/PRANAHUTI

Pranahuti reinterprets classical Raja Yoga. The phenomenon of pranahuti is regarded as vital for the spiritual growth and elevation of the aspirant. In order to benefit from this yogic transmission one has to be connected to a guru. Spiritual energy can be transmitted from one individual to another. Spiritual energy is transmitted to the disciple when the guru feels that the student is ready for it. This is done through touch (bird sits on eggs to hatch them), sight (fish watches eggs while they are being hatched) and will (tortoise concentrates on her eggs while they are being hatched). The guru elevates the student's mind through this thought power (Sivananda 1982:315).

Spiritual transmission is possible when an individual possesses a high degree of spiritual consciousness. Transmission bathes an individual in cosmic energy and lifts one to a higher level of being. This *prana* can be sent to individuals thousands of kilometres away (Keni 1986:26).

Pranahuti needs will power and energy to work. This energy (*prana*) can be used in different ways - multi-purpose. It is used according to the will power of the preceptor. *Abhyasis* related that they felt stronger transmission from some preceptors than others. An aspirant noted that the preceptors from overseas gave very strong sittings, compared to the South African preceptors.

The purpose of transmission is to clean the aspirant of all grossness, allowing the *citta* to become pure and reflect the *purusa* in its purity. The stabilisation in meditation and becoming established in the line of transmission pushes one, from one psychic state to the next. Transmission is yogic energy used for the spiritual upliftment of mankind.

There are degrees of transmission. Therefore the Master need only transmit for a few minutes to bring about a change. Generally most individual sittings last for half an hour, while a group sitting lasts for 45 minutes to 60 minutes. During a

group sitting the preceptor transmits to each aspirant for a few minutes. One preceptor explained that, "time does not matter, transmission is according to the *abhyasi*."

On being questioned how transmission is done, another explained, "a suggestion is made, that the Master is giving a sitting." Faith in this knowledge allows the preceptor to work.

Transmission is unlike hypnosis, which forces the mind. After hypnosis the individual feels heaviness due to being subjected to pressure. Transmission, the forceless force, cannot be felt except if there is grossness present.

Transmission/energy moves freely until it encounters a barrier. Friction results and we are able to feel vibrations. In the early stages of transmission one feels through the senses. The changes become more and more subtle as one progresses. Individuals react to transmission into their systems in different ways. Mystic experiences, according to Murthy, may in initial stages be in the form of : vision; audition; olfaction; gustatory; vibration; thermal; temporal; spatial; electrical; kinaesthetic; gravitational or magnetic experiences (Murthy 1979:201).

The fact that there is some type of sensory, intellectual and subjective means, infers that the experiences are initial steps on the long trek to the goal. A practitioner may experience some of the psychic experiences or none at all (Murthy 1979:202).

One must be attentive during meditation. Another aspirant said, "If you are sensitive you know where the preceptor has worked. You know your condition, not your position." Sensitivity allows one to better monitor one's progress.

The aim of Yoga is to get rid of the accumulated *samskaras* thus making it possible for the seeker to progress. These impressions can be categorised as a. archaic, b. cumulative and c. recently acquired. The obstructions/ impressions in ones system can be thrown out or burnt through "heat" produced by an individual during penance. This cleaning can be achieved by extraneous meditation of a competent person or through the help of a *guru*. The *guru* removes the grossness with the help of transmission of cosmic energy (Murthy 1979:192-193).

The seeker after a little time starts experiencing the transmission of cosmic energy or cosmic consciousness. The perceptions experienced vary from individual to individual. All experiences of meditation despite the differences in method or culture reveal a common ground of experience. Thus meditation experiences can be validated or shared by others (Murthy 1979:184).

Suresh Chandra² says, "Transmission, like electricity, has been described through its feeling and effect upon *abhyasis*." Each *abhyasi* experiences transmission differently due to their *samskaras* being different.

No specific time period can be fixed for these experiences, for they depend on the aspirants capabilities and sincerity to the method and Master. But certain experiences of *abhyasis* are generally felt within the first three months of practice. According to Suresh Chandra they are, "tranquility, relaxation, peace, buoyancy, brightness and so on" ³.

A senior preceptor remarked that, transmission makes individuals into what they ought to be. He said, "Master transmits his energy slowly so that we become like him."

5.4 THE GURU

The Vedas say, "The man who has a Guru, knows." (Sivananda 1982:263). The injunction that knowledge of the guru is equal to knowledge of the Absolute, is followed in the SRC Mission. In the course of my interviews, the majority of the aspirants said that their goal was to become one with the Master.

Since the Master is connected with the Centre/God/Ultime, one would be automatically merged with the goal. The Master of the SRC Mission is revered as God (the Sahaj Marg prayer is addressed to God/Master). Gods or *gurus* are said to manifest themselves whenever *dharma* is disturbed⁴. The purpose of incarnation is to fulfil a specific purpose, God has no mind, however when God as an avatar descends on earth, he has a mind. Now the restructuring of the universe can take place. An avatar/Special Personality appears according to a specific

timetable. In the meantime messengers of God may appear with certain missions.

When an *avatar*/Special Personality is not present, the next best is the *Sadguru*. In Sahaj Marg there is a great emphasis on the need for a spiritual Master. The Master assumes a status higher than God, when an *avatar* is not present. God is limited having no mind, a Master having a mind is able to answer devotees requests and assist aspirants on the path of spirituality. Therefore the need for a Master⁵.

The backbone of all religious quests has been the guidance of a *guru*, faith, devotion and self-surrender. The implicit faith in the *guru* is what the *guru* wants from the devotee. Babuji said that he wanted devotees who came willingly to him. They must want their goal to make all other choices non-existent (Rajagopalachari 1988:182). Therefore a true devotee has total faith in the goal, the *guru* and his teachings.

A *guru* is necessary in spirituality. Just as an individual needs to learn under a senior cook to become a cook, so to must an aspirant learn from an adept in the field of spirituality. The *guru* serves as a religious model, someone to emulate and to follow. Those who practise independently, come across obstacles and do not know how to overcome them. Then they begin to look for a Master.

The Master's duty is to guide the seeker on the path. The seeker

is taken gently by the hand and led down the precipice to the source. The courageous jump off, however the majority are afraid to take this step. "In order to go back to the source, one has to go forward to reach the goal - not backwards." ⁶.

The Master has to be understood on two levels - human and Divine. "Those who think of him as Divine only are fools. Those who think of him as only human are bigger fools" ⁷. Thus the behaviour of a Master should not be judged like an ordinary mans'. Truly speaking only a Master can judge another Master.

5.5 THE PRECEPTOR

The Master needs associates to help him with his work. Although the Master is involved with work in the cosmic level, he needs associates for human transformation. Human beings offer great resistance, thus the Master emphasises the need for continual cleaning. Cleaning the heart region (area where all impressions of the mind are recorded) results in one reaching the cosmic region (Rajagopalachari 1980:182).

The SRC Mission is unique in that it allows ordinary individuals access to working with yogic transmission. The preceptors are chosen and prepared by the Master to work in the spiritual field. Often when the system is introduced to a new community, the preceptor/prefect is one whom has practised the system for a short time. The preceptors are given instructions (manuals) in this science.

The reason for this system of preceptors is to make Sahaj Marg as wide spread as possible throughout the world. It is not possible for all aspirants to leave their homes and study at the feet of the Masters. Therefore the Master makes himself as accessible as possible to aspirants through the preceptors of the SRC Mission. The preceptor does not take the place of the Master, he/she is simply the medium for this yogic transmission/*pranhati*.

Individuals are made preceptors either for their own spiritual growth or for the needs of the *abhyasis*. One of the preceptors interviewed felt that he became more earnest after becoming a preceptor. Perhaps being in a position of responsibility, has made these preceptors more accountable to their associates and the Master. Another preceptor reiterated that, "earnestness comes in Mission work".

The Centre-in-Charge outlined his duties as follows: to promote the system; help the preceptors and *abhyasis* and ensure the smooth running of the Mission. He did not attribute any importance to himself, for he said, "the preceptor-in- Charge is chosen for his capacity to do the work".

The preceptor needs to have complete faith in the Master. When this faith is present he/she is able to work fearlessly, and take upon any responsibility. The preceptor through concentration and belief, is able to read the condition of an *abhyasi*. A senior preceptor expounded that "reading ability comes from love for the

Master. The preceptor must use the Master's glasses to read the writing." Preceptors are able to guide aspirants. He disclosed further that, "it is easy to understand the condition because I went through the condition." Problems or conditions which are not understood are referred to the Centre-in-Charge or the Master.

The Master is concerned with making Masters of aspirants. This has the hazard of strengthening the ego, which is an obstacle on the path of God Realisation. The Master says that, "a perfect preceptor is one who does not exist" (Rajagopalachari 1980:179). Preceptors must take sittings from each other. This prevents a preceptor becoming inflated with self importance, since he/she is also an *abhyasi* on the path.

5.6 THE ABHYASI

According to Chariji one is ready for spirituality when one hands oneself over to the Master saying, "Master do whatever you want with me." ⁸. Total surrender to the Master is regarded as the quickest and safest way to reach the goal.

Many of the *abhyasis* said that on initially joining the movement they were not as earnest. This earnestness only resulted a few years later when they became more mature. The daily programme of meditation, cleaning and prayer were not as easy to follow once the novelty wore off. After a break of a few years they returned to the *abhyas* as they felt there was no fulfillment in

their *abhyas*. The earnestness in *abhyas* is not present when there are impediments on the path of Yoga. These impediments are sickness, inertia, doubt, idleness and *maya*. Both Sahaj Marg and Yoga suggest one-pointed *abhyas* as the means to remove the impediments on the path (Deshpande 1978:46).

Many of the South African aspirants found it difficult to accept Chariji as the successor to Babuji. Doubt as to whether, he was the Master for them was the main impediment. When they started to accept Chariji, the removal of impediments on the spiritual path took place. One of the aspirants described the differences between the two Masters, "Chariji speaks and is more visible outside India, while Babuji was silent at most times and due to poor health had to restrict his travels." Adjustment to personality type had to therefore take place.

An aspirant related that her first impression of Chariji was a poor one. She felt ignored, however on the last day of her visit a change of attitude occurred. She said, "I experienced a total change of attitude and accepted Chariji without any reservations. I feel an intense feeling of love for Chariji and I want to be constantly in his presence."

She subsequently made many visits to the Master. It is the desire of many of the *abhyasis* and preceptors to visit the Master whenever possible. The visits serve the purpose of renewing their energies and strengthening the bonds of love. Each encounter between aspirant and Master has effects that cannot be

immediately be seen or felt. Often the results of these visits were experienced by aspirants much later. The reason for this, is that transmission works from within outwards (transmission is on the light in the heart), thus changes were noted only some time later.

Preceptors have to develop a reading capacity while *abhyasis* have to develop sensitivity. Aspirants are to sit for a few minutes after meditation or transmission and brood over their condition. It is incumbent upon all aspirants to keep a spiritual diary. The diary enables one to look back and examine one's condition. An aspirant divulged, "I check to see if it was a projection or was a result of the Master." Aspirants are asked to send their diaries monthly to their preceptors. They will provide the aspirant with feedback on one's progress.

The gatherings of *abhyasis* serve a dual purpose. Firstly cleaning and improvement takes place. Secondly they learn to accept and love their fellow *abhyasis*, leading to a common brotherhood.

Most of the aspirants interviewed, experienced some changes after joining the system. The most common response was that they were more serious about self improvement and spirituality. A new *abhyasi* said that he no longer had the desire to eat meat and he felt that his time must be spent in spiritual pursuits. Another new aspirant remarked, "my family notices that I am calmer and no longer so easily flustered." The most noticeable changes,

cited by the majority of the aspirants interviewed were a change in lifestyle and goal, after joining Sahaj Marg.

According to Suresh Chandra the following changes were generally experienced by aspirants: "relaxation, restfulness, harmony within and peacefulness. The gradual transformation led to greater self assurance and expanded consciousness."⁹

It is the ideal that ones entire living be moulded according to the ten maxims of Sahaj Marg.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ten Maxims
 - a. Rise before dawn. Offer your prayers and puja at a fixed hour preferably before sunrise, sitting in one and the ~~same~~ pose. Have a separate place and seat for worship. Purity of mind and body should be specially adhered to.
 - b. Begin your puja with a prayer for spiritual elevation with a heart full of love and devotion.
 - c. Fix your goal which should be complete oneness with God. Rest not till the ideal is reached.
 - d. Be plain and simple to be identical with Nature.
 - e. Be truthful. Take miseries as Divine blessings for your ~~own~~ good and be thankful.
 - f. Know all people as your brethen and treat them as such.
 - g. Be not revengeful for the wrongs done by others. Take ~~them~~ with gratitude as heavenly gifts.
 - h. Be happy to eat in constant Divine thought whatever you ~~earn~~ with due regard to honest and pious earnings.

- i. Mould your living so as to rouse a feeling of love and piety in others.

- j. At bedtime, feeling the presence of God, repent for the wrongs committed. Beg forgiveness in a supplicant mood, resolving not to allow the repetition of the same.

2. Director of Sahaj Marg Research Institute

3. Communication through a letter sent to the writer

4. Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 4, verse 7

5. Chariji's speech 11.04.93 - The water-cycle analogy was used to illustrate that all things return to the source. So the movement forward is an apparent one.

6. Chariji's speech 11.04.93

7. Chariji's speech 11.04.93

8. Chariji's speech 11.04.93

9. Communication through a letter sent to the writer

CHAPTER SIX

6 CONCLUSION

The Sahaj Marg system has been historically inherited from the Samkhya/Yoga systems. This system has been developed by the Master, for he regarded the old Raja Yoga as ill-suited for the present day aspirants. The old system of Raja Yoga took long for one to attain liberation. Secondly it requires intense study at the feet of a *guru* while living in seclusion. This meant that a vast majority of society will not be allowed to follow Raja Yoga.

The Master (Babuji) believed that just as evolution occurred in the material field so too, must evolution also occur in the spiritual field. Therefore the introduction of Sahaj Marg.

Changes are constantly taking place as the spiritual head remodels the system to best suit the needs of the aspirants. The Master is not fixed in his teaching, thus we find contrary statements in his teachings. Advice is given according to a specific situation, reflecting the dynamism of Sahaj Marg.

Training branches and centres have been set up to make spirituality more accessible to ordinary individuals. The Master uses preceptors as mediums in the spiritual transformation of humanity. The Master's support i.e. yogic transmission and *abhyas* are the means for the aspirant to gain liberation.

During the period of my research the following were noticed by the writer: the visits of the Master have led to closer bonds being developed between aspirant and Master; the effects of transmission were not immediately noticed in aspirants and the Mission is making greater efforts to become a permanent part of spiritual society (building of an *ashram*).

The SRC Mission is firmly committed to introducing a new system and way of thinking in spiritual circles. The present Master (Chariji) of the system is continuing with the legacy left behind by his Master (Babuji). The forays into new territories have been tentative by the preceptors of the Mission.

The uncertainty of life and the future often makes individuals turn to religion and spirituality. In South Africa the changing political situation will definitely lead to the growth of all spiritual groups and missions. Raja Yoga with its call for greater involvement on the part of the aspirant is sure to become more popular amongst individuals seeking a solution to life.

GLOSSARY

Abhyas	Practice.
Abhyasi	Aspirant who practises Yoga in order to attain mergence with God.
Ahamkara	Egotism.
Ajna Chakra	The point between the eyebrows.
Anubhava	Intuitional perception or personal experience in the realm of Nature or God.
Asana	Posture.
Ashram	A spiritual retreat used for meditation and prayer.
Atman	Soul.
Avatar	Divine incarnation.
Avidya	Ignorance.
Bhakti	Devotion.
Bhog	Process of undergoing effects, impressions, experience, enjoyment Brahman - Creator or God.
Buddhi	Intellect.
Chakras	Centre of Super-vital forces located in different parts of the body.
Chit	Consciousness.

Darshan	Vision of someone's inner Reality.
Dharana	Mental focus (sixth limb of Patanjali's Yoga).
Dhyana	Meditation (seventh limb of Patanjali's Yoga).
Granthi	Knot.
Grihastha	One who leads a worldly life, a householder.
Gunas	Three qualities of Nature in Hindu philosophy : Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.
Guru	Master, who transmits light, knowledge: a spiritual teacher.
Indriyas	Ten senses/ organs of Indian philosophy.
Isvara	Determinate Absolute.
Japa	Repetition of mantra.
Jiva	Individual soul.
Jnana	Path of knowledge leading to Realisation.
Jnani	One who has Divine knowledge.
Karma	Action
Kshobh	Stir caused by the will of God to effect creation.
Kundalini	Power coiled at the base of the spine.

Laya	Dissolution.
Maha Pralaya	Complete dissolution of the universe when everything merges with the Centre.
Mahamaya	Subtle energy used by the Divine.
Manas	Mind.
Mantra	Sound repeated over and over again.
Maya	Illusion.
Moksha	Liberation.
Nirguna	Without attributes or qualities.
Nirguna Brahman	Indeterminate Absolute . The Ultimate cause.
Nirodha	Mental state of perfect self-control.
Nirvikalpa Samadhi	Samadhi without consciousness.
Niyama	The second limb in Patanjali's Yoga.
Para Brahmanda	Supra- cosmic consciousness.
Paramanus	Subtle particles.
Prakriti	Nature.
Pralaya	State of dissolution, applied not to the whole universe but only to a part of it.
Prana	Life, breath.

Pranahuti	Yogic transmission. Offering of the life force by the Guru into the disciple's heart.
Pranayama	The regulation of prana.
Prathyara	Inner withdrawal of the mind (fifth branch of Patanjali's Yoga).
Raja Yoga	Yoga of the mind.
Rajas	One of the gunas. Action.
Rishi	Saint or seer.
Sadguru	Guru capable of giving knowledge of the truth.
Sadhak	Disciple.
Sadhana	Spiritual practice.
Saguna Brahman	God with attributes. Determinate Absolute.
Sahaj Marg	Natural path.
Sahaj Samadhi	Conscious state of total inner absorption.
Samadhi	State in which one is attached to Reality. Original condition.
Samarth Guru	Perfectly balanced guru.
Samskaras	Impressions .
Sannyasi	Celibate individual who has renounced the world.
Sat	Reality.

Satpad	In Sahaj Marg state of neither light nor darkness. A reflection of Reality which is still further.
Sattva	One of the three gunas. Virtuous conduct.
Shabda	Inner vibration.
Siddhis	Miracles or powers.
Tam	Real state of being.
Tamas	One of the three gunas. Inertness.
Vairagya	Detachment.
Vedas	Ancient Indian scriptures.
Viveka	Discernment.
Vrittis	Subtle desires or stimuli coming up in the mind causing action.
Yogi	One who practises Yoga.

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ADDENDUM

PREAMBLE

The life of Samarth-Guru Mahatma Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh marks a new era of spiritual awakening. Through his efforts the famous system of Raj Yoga which had hitherto been quite unknown and obscure to the masses in general was brought to the light of the day. He trained people in spirituality through Yogic methods, remodelled and improved to suit the need of the time and the capacity of the people utilising his own power of transmission to save them from undergoing hard and tedious practices to affect their making.

The mission, named after the great master, was founded in 1945 by his successor and representative Mahatma Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur at the earnest request of some of the disciples and associates, of the Samarth Guru in order to fulfil the sacred mission of the master and serve humanity in an organised way.

RULES AND CONSTITUTION

1. Name and Foundation

The mission is founded by Mahatma Ram Chandraji of Shahjahanpur and shall be called " SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION" after the name of his Master Samarth Guru Mahatma Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh U.P., the founder of " SAHAJ MARG " system of attaining spiritual perfection.

2. Aims and objects.

The aims and objects of the mission shall be -

- (a) To Educate and propagate amongst the masses the Art and Science of Yoga, made easy to suit present day conditions and needs (Sahaj Marg)
- (b) To promote the feelings of mutual love and universal brotherhood irrespective of any distinction of caste, colour, creed, religion nationality, sex, etc. etc.
- (c) To conduct research in the field of 'Yoga' and establish research institutes for the purpose.
- (d) To encourage research in 'Yoga' including granting of assistance to the persons interested in carrying out this work.
- (e) To establish charitable insitutions of public interest like Dispensaries, Libraries, Reading Rooms, etc. etc.
- (f) To acquire, maintain, constuct and dispose off moveable and immoveable property/properties, necessary for the purpose of carrying out the object of Mission.
- (g) To do all such acts as are incidental and necessary for the furtherance of the Mission's aims. The Mission will, however, have nothing to do with politics or any other activity subversive of law and order.

3. Organisation.

- (a) The mission shall have its Head Quarters at Shahjahanpur.
- (b) It shall work under the sole guidance and control of the founder or his spiritual representative in the direct line of succession and he shall be the president of the Mission.
- (c) The president may at his discretion, establish branch, Societies and training centres affiliated to the Head Quarters of the Mission in all matters of organisation and control,

at other places as well, to promote the cause of the mission.

4. Constitution and Working.

- (a) The president shall select a working committee from amongst the members of the mission to assist him in all matters pertaining to the control and organisation of the mission.
- (b) The president shall appoint the following office bearers from amongst the members of the working committee -
 - (I) The Secretary
 - (II) The Joint Secretary
 - (III) The Treasurer &
 - (IV) The Auditor

The president, at his discretion or as the situation demands, may appoint any office bearers other than the above, who may or may not be members of the Working Committee of the Mission and he may entrust any duties, as he deems fit, to such Office-bearers.

- (c) Necessary changes in the frame work of the committee and the duties of the office bearers and members may at any time be made by the president at his own discretion.
- (d) A member already entrusted with any office cannot take up the duties of another office simultaneously, except in most urgent or emergent cases.
- (e)
 - (i) The President shall preside over the meetings of the Committee and of the Mission.
 - (ii) In case of emergency he may appoint another member to act for him for the time being but the orders, decisions and actions of such a nominee shall be subject to the final approval of the president.
- (f) The President may call a general meeting of the Mission at any time and at any place at his own discretion. He may also at his own sweet will invite the public in general or in particular, in any such meeting.
- (g) He shall have free choice in matters of appointment and removal of members including the office bearers. His decision in all matters shall be final and he shall have the power of veto in all matters of the Mission.
- (h) He shall nominate from amongst his spiritual disciples any person as his representative who as such will enjoy all the power and authority vested in the president.

5. Finance.

- (a) The finance of the Mission shall be under the direct and sole control of the President and no withdrawal shall be made from the funds except with the previous sanction of the president.
- (b) The sources of the income of the Mission are as under:-
 - (i) Voluntary contribution from the members.
 - (ii) Donations from the public.
 - (iii) Income from the deposits and
 - (iv) Misc. Sources.
- (c) The funds shall be divided under two heads:-

- (i) The Reserve Fund
- (ii) The General Fund.

Ten percent of the income of the Mission or as the funds allow shall go to the Reserve Fund and withdrawal from it shall be made only in the case of grave emergency by the president.

Ordinarily expenses of the Mission shall be metted out from the general fund and the withdrawal for the same will be made under the orders of the president.

- (d) The funds of the mission in part or in whole shall in no case be laid out in any kind of business for material or monetary gains.
- (c) The funds of the mission shall be wholly applied for the promotion of its objects and shall not be utilised for any other purpose.

6. Membership.

The membership of the mission shall be open to all persons, desirous of spiritual development, irrespective of caste, colour or creed subject to the approval of the President.

The membership does not force the person concerned to pay any subscription but it will be open to persons of generous mind and sincere devotion to the cause of the Mission, to donate whatever they like or can afford easily, for the maintenance and smooth running of the Mission. It will, however, in no case be obligatory or compulsory for any subscription to be paid to the Mission.

7. Duties of the office bearers.

- (a) President:- The duties of the President shall be as mentioned in paras 3,4 and 5 supra.
- (b) Secretary :-
 - (i) He shall keep all record of the proceedings of all meetings and will be responsible for the proper upkeep of all the ministerial records of the Mission.
 - (ii) He shall convene all the meetings in consultation with the President.
 - (iii) He shall adopt adequate and proper means to increase the funds of the Mission
 - (iv) He will have a small amount as imprest money, dully sanctioned by the President at his disposal, to meet petty expenses in anticipation of the sanction of the President. He will be responsible for regularisation of such transactions by having covering sanction of the President and for re-imbursing the imprest money.
- (c) Joint Secretary.
 - (i) In the absence of the Secretary he will discharge the duties of the Secretary.
 - (ii) He will be responsible for all the duties in common with the Secretary. He will keep proper record of all the inventory items.
- (d) Treasurer.

- (i) He shall be responsible to keep the funds in safe custody under orders of the President.
 - (ii) He shall keep a proper account of all income and expenditure of the Mission and make deposits and withdrawals according to the orders of the President.
- (e) Auditors.
- (i) He shall audit the accounts of the Mission at least once in a quarter and submit the audit report to the President for necessary action.
 - (ii) He may also check the accounts at any time, if necessary.
 - (iii) He will also check the funds and stocks etc, of the Mission.
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BYE LAWS

1. Head Quarter - management of

The Central office and the Head Quarters of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission will be at Shahjahanpur and will be under the direct control of the President, in matters of its working, organisation, control and methods of training etc. The orders of the President who is the highest authority of the Mission, will be final in all matters.

- 2. (a) The Secretary shall be responsible for the general supervision of the Head Quarters and its office etc, and will always act in consultation with the President.
- (b) He shall be responsible for all the correspondence of the Mission in the manner prescribed by the President from time to time and will see that no undue delay etc, is made in the same.

3. Branch, Societies and Training Centres - Organisation and management of.

- (a) To encourage the public for social, moral and spiritual attainment the President will establish branches and training centres of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission Shahjahanpur at his discretion.
- (b) When a member is considered capable of imparting spiritual training is so authorised, is also deemed fit to carry on the work conducive to attainments of the aims and objects of the Mission, the President may at his discretion appoint him in writing Head of a branch or training centres as the case may be to carry out the programme of the Mission under instructions from the Head Quarters. Such Heads of Branches and Training centres will be called Preceptors and Prefects respectively.
- (c) The Head Quarters of the mission at Shahjahanpur will have full control in matters of organization, maintenance or methods of training etc. of the branches and training - centres, and will issue instructions to them, from time to time for their proper guidance which will be followed strictly in every case. Training centres will be controlled by the branches, which in its form will act according to the instructions issued from the head Quarters. No independent action on the part of the Branches and Training centres will be considered desirable, unless previously approved by the Head Quarter.
- (d) Branches and Training centres will send monthly reports to the Head Quarters about their training in the manner prescribed by the President, to enable him to have the first hand knowledge of the works done by them and issue instructions if necessary.

- (e) The President may close or suspend a branch or a training centres if he sees that no useful purpose is served by such branch or centre in the furtherance of the aims and objects of their Mission. Likewise a Preceptor or a Prefect may also be removed from his office by the President, if he contravenes or disobeys any order or orders of the Head Quarters or in any way falls short of the requirements of his ranks.

4. Possessions of the Mission - management and control of.

- (a) Lands, buildings, furniture and fittings, accessories and appertenances thereto, printing press, books, periodicals, journals and other publications and the copyright thereof, and all the movable and immovable property acquired by or belonging to the Mission, or to any of its branches, training centres or any other affiliated institution, shall be owned, held and possessed by the Shri Ram Chandra Mission, Shahjahanpur U.P. and shall be managed and controlled by the Working committee in consultation with the President.
- (b) The working committee in consultation with the President shall construct and erect new buildings and shall maintain, alter, extend, repair improve in every respect whatsoever and manage the buildings, landed and other movable or immovable property belonging to, or in the charge or custody or control of the Mission.
- (c) In case of winding up of the Mission its properties and assets, after meeting the liabilities if any, shall be transferred to some other institution having similar objects and shall not be used otherwise by its members or office bearers.

5. Working Committee-members and office bearers of.

- (a) Members of the Working Committee and office bearers are expected to do the duties entrusted to them by their superiors. Every member of the Working Committee or an office bearer is liable to be removed from the committee or his office by the President, if he is satisfied that a particular member or an office bearer is not true to his duty and ideals of the Mission or in any other way falls short of his requirements as such.
- (b)
 - (i) To cope up with the increased work, if required, the President may add more members to his working committee and may appoint further office bearers than those given in Rule 4(b) of the "Rules and Constitution of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission."
 - (ii) The President, in his discretion may further constitute any council councils, committee or committees as the Case may be. He may decide the period for which such a council or committee is formed. He may also remove a member or members of such a council or committee and may replace them with others, if he deems proper at his discretion, at any time, or may dissolve any existing council or committee, whenever he so chooses.
- (c) Being an office bearer will not preclude the person from being appointed as a preceptor or a prefect or on any other job, except holding offices simultaneously in the Working Committee. Cases of urgency or emergency referred to in Rule 4(d) of the " Rules and Constitution of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission, will be decided the President.
- (d) The president may depute and maintain Preachers and Missionaries of the Mission to different parts of the World to spread and propogate the teachings and ideals of the Samarth-Guru Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh, (U.P.).
- (e) Bye-law No 5 (e) Every office bearer and functionary of the Mission will ordinarily hold office for a term of four years from the date of appointment, unless removed earlier by the President.

Six months before the expiry of the term, each such person will suggest to the President the names of three persons for the office held by him, which in his opinion could be suitable to shoulder the said responsibility.

6. Meetings - how to convene.

- (a) When calling of a meeting is considered necessary the Secretary in consultation with the President will issue a notice to the members giving place, time, date and agenda of the meeting at least a fortnight before. Any member who wants to put up a resolution or something of the sort for consideration in the meeting will give information of same in writing to the Secretary at least 4 days before such meeting.
- (b) Anything which is to be put up for consideration in the General meeting will have first to be decided and agreed upon in a meeting of the Working committee.
- (c) In urgent or emergent cases of the President will call a meeting giving at least 24 hours notice. Notice of such meetings will contain the same information as required vide Bye-law 6(a) above. In such cases information regarding resolutions etc., to be put up by the members for consideration, in the meeting will reach the Secretary at least 6 hours before such meeting.
- (d) The quorum of a meeting will be considered complete when five or 30% of the members whichever is greater are present in the said meeting.
- (e) Completion of quorum will not be considered necessary for meetings which have been adjourned twice before for want of quorum being complete.

7. Power of Veto- how to exercise

Vide Rule 4 (f) of the Rules and Constitution of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission, the President enjoys the power of veto. If a certain point has been decided and agreed upon in a meeting of the Working Committee or of the General body, council or any other Committee or committees, and the President does not agree with the decision or he is of the opinion that such a decision will jeopardise in way harm the object in view or the ideals of the Mission, he will veto such decision by declaring his disagreement with the decision arrived at, with or without reasons of his disagreement and will write "Vetoed" in his own handwriting and under his full signature, in the minute book. Vetoing a certain point arrived at decision will mean making it null and void.

8. Holy Places- discovery of.

The President may discover, develop and proclaim before the world places which are or may be held sacred by the Mission and which may not be known to the world hereto before and restore, develop and improve the places so held sacred.

9. Other Societies and Associations - amalgamation of.

The president in consultation with his Working Committee may help promote, contribute or amalgamate with the mission, either in whole or in part, subject to the name, aims and objects of this Mission, remaining what they are, any other institution, society, association and organisation etc, whether incorporated, registered or unregistered having objects similar to those of this Mission or likely to promote its aims and objects.

10. Spiritual and Missionary propoganda - Maintenance and improvement of.

The Working Committee of Shri Ram Chandra mission will maintain and improve the Missionary propoganda and spiritual activities carried on by the Mission, to ensure that the aims and objects of the Society may not fail or deviate in anyway from the standard set up by Samarth Guru Shri Shr Ram

Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh U.P.

11. Improper & Evil practices- stoppage of.

The Mission will discourage and stop by legal and constitutional means (through persuasions, writings and lectures etc.) improper and evil practices or mistaken and wrongful ideas in the name of Spirituality or in any way thwarting, degrading, suppressing, minimising, injuring or affecting the cause or standard of Spiritualism of the Mission.

12. Documents, Records & its Accounts etc.- maintenance of.

- (a) Registers, files, papers and other documents etc. pertaining to the work of the mission shall be maintained at the Head Quarter branches and training Centres in the manner as the President may prescribed from time to time.
- (b) The Secretary will maintain records books and accounts etc. and issue reports of the work done and transactions and proceedings of the Mission and will forward them to publication Dept of the Mission for compilation and publication in the manner as may be prescribed and required by the President.

13. Library- maintenance of.

- (a) There will be a library attached to the Head Quarter of the Mission. The Librarian, whosoever is nominated by the President, will be responsible for its maintenance under orders of the President, which he will issue from time to time as the occasion may demand.
- (b) There may be other libraries attached to the branches or Training centres and their management and maintenance will be done under instructions of the Head Quarter.

14. Finance of the Mission.

- (a) All matters regarding finance must be dealt with in writing, verbal orders or reports etc. will have no value and as such should always be avoided. The Treasurer must have proper authority from the President or the Secretary, in writing, before taking any action of expenditure of the Mission money. This must well be borne in minds of all concerned that the Mission money is sacred money and all possible care should always be taken to safeguard it from improper use.
- (b) The accounts which stand to the credit of the mission or any matter with regard to its financial position should be kept a closely guarded secret, in the interest of the mission itself.

15. Membership.

When a person wants to be a member of the mission, he will have sittings in the Satsang like other brethren for sometime and when he is considered fit to be the member he will be enrolled as such, with such formalities as prescribed by the President.

16. Publication Dept - organisation and maintenance of.

- (a) The President will nominate three or more members of the mission to constitute a sub-committee which will look after, organise and maintain the Publications of the mission, under instructions of the President which he may issue from time to time.
- (b) The Publication Dept, will establish, maintain and work printing presses or will transact other business to further the cause of the mission. It will edit, compile, annotate, translate and publish scriptures etc. or other books, bulletins, pamphlets, newspapers,

magazines and periodicals in any language and in any part of the world for furthering the aims and objects of the Mission and will distribute or sell the same for promulgating and advancing the teachings of the Mission.

- (c) Issue of any publications what-so-ever from the side of any member of the Mission regarding matters pertaining to it, will not be made unless previously approved by the publication Deptt, in consultation with the President.

17. General :-

- (a) There will be an emblem of the Mission, commonly agreed to by the president and his working committee, which shall be displayed on every important paper and publication of the Mission.
- (b) The President in consultation with his Working Committee will do all such other things as may be conducive to the attainment of the aims and objects of the Mission or as may be useful and beneficial to the social interest of the public such as opening of Dispensaries, Libraries, Reading Rooms etc.
- (c) The President is empowered to enact any Rules and Byelaws in addition to these or make any change in the above or may delete any of them at his own discretion or as the exigencies of any situation may demand, except Rules No 1 & 3 of the Rules & Constitution of the Mission.

THE EMBLEM



What prevailed all over before the creation came into being, may be expressed as darkness. Darkness means no light and vice versa. What exists where there is no light ? Darkness we may call it. What is to be found where every thing ends ? It may but be expressed as " Nothingness." Still the expressions "Darkness and "Nothingness" contain a latent idea of something in existence, hence far from the real sense. " No light and no darkness" may possibly fit in to denote the thing referred to above, which is unchanging or Eternal. Now such is the pure and absolute state from which our present existence has evolved out. It may be denote, as the Sphere of Eternal Peace which is shown in the top-most portion of the Emblem. There is neither Light nor Darkness. Below it is the sphere known as Sat-Pad, where truth is predominant and is consequently a region of light though in a very fine state.

The Swastika mark near the bottom is the point we start from. It is sphere of forms, rituals and practices of various types we proceed in our spiritual pursuit by the path denoted as Sahaj-Marg, cut through mountains of difficulties and obstructions Nature herself. We march on passing through different spheres of light and shade of varying grossness far far above the sphere of the moon and the sun, growing finer and finer at every step till we attain the highest point of approach. The light of the rising sun denotes the new spiritual era started by His Holiness Samartha Guru Shri Mahatma Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh. It spreads all over the Space, commanding the regions we start from and pass through during our march along Sahaj-Marg.

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