

Ascetics and Administration

(An Overview of Ascetics in Modern Politics With Comparison to Ancient Cultural Heritage)

Paper Submission: 10/11/2021, Date of Acceptance: 21/11/2021, Date of Publication: 22/11/2021

Abstract

This paper is a clear indication about the role of Sonia see in ancient time and in modern times I have just tried to find the things that an ascetic can perform as an ascetic in the field of politics as we know about the great politicians like Chandraswami Satpal Ji Maharaj and now Yogi Adityanath we have a clear example of ascetic Kautilya serving as the Prime Minister of Mauritius and written the great work *Arthashastra* which deals with the political scenario of that time. I hope that this study of mine will definitely be a remarkable thing in the field of research.

Keywords: Asceticism, Administration, Shankaracharya, Mahavir, Gautam Buddha, Yagyavalkya, Maitri, Gautami, Rgveda, Upanisad, Yogi Adityanath, Chanakya, Chandraswami.

Introduction

Om Namo Narayana is the motto of a great and established system Dashnami Sanyasi. Now we can find traces of great asceticism in doing well in the political itself. So here in this paper I would like to throw some light on our ancient practice of Asceticism and our modern practical of ascetic administration and politics.

We all know the name of Chandra Swami in the politics of India. Then we heard the name of Satpal ji Maharaj in the politics. Now in the Uttar Pradesh Our Chief Minister most liked Yogi Adityanath is doing a commendable job in the politics. So I am very impressed with the doing and performance of Yogi Adityanath in the politics. As we see, the concept of asceticism is central to that of magical power and creative power, and it is this *tapas* which gives prestige and importance to the ascetic in the Indian tradition. Asceticism is mentioned several times in the older Upanishads-it could even be said that Upanishadic literature is a creation of ascetic hermits. And in that sense the opinion of Dumont is correct, in India the creator of values is the anchorite. The Upanishads are part of the Aranyakas, the forest books, that is to say, the books composed in the forest by men retired in the forest, that is *vanaprasthas*. These maintain certain sacrificial rituals and give the sacrifices a mystical interpretation. They live as hermits sometimes together with other ascetics, and they develop the theories of the fundamental identity of *atman* and *Brahman*, that is to say the theories of bondage and liberation, *samsara* and *moksha*.

Asceticism is a complex of a number of traits the principal ones may be distinguished as celibacy, austerity, concentration and ecstasy. To take the last first, it should be noted that the Vedic Aryans were fond of an intoxicating drink called Soma. They could describe themselves as having become immortal and as having discovered the gods.⁴² In some passages⁴³ 'Muni' is described as in ecstatic trance. During its continuance the 'muni' is described as having attained the fellowship of the deities of the air and as being able to travel with them in their course because of his miraculous powers. The following observation of Albert Schweitzer⁴⁴ brings out the significance of *Rgveda* passages like the one referred to above for the history and development of asceticism. " In these hymns we encounter men who know they are uplifted above this world. They are the shamans and medicine men- later called Yogins- who get themselves into a state of ecstasy through drinking the intoxicating Soma by mortification of the flesh. This consciousness of being uplifted above the world which is experienced in ecstasy is the condition determining Indian world and life negation (Samnyasa)... They regard this state of being uplifted above the world as

Anita Goswami
Associate Professor,
Dept. of History,
S.M.p. Govt. P.G.
College, Meerut,
U.P., India

something that only came under consideration for themselves because they possessed the capacity of attaining to community with the gods."

It is only in Indian civilization, which is undoubtedly the mother of asceticism and of monastic order, that asceticism is laid down as the last stage in an individual's life. Celibacy cannot form a rational and cogent element in the theory of four Asramas. Asceticism or Samnyasa is entered into not only after sex is satisfied but also after its urge has subsided. The question of celibacy in the samnyasa Asrama or the fourth stage has no practical significance. It is only when ascetic life is undertaken in youthful years, whether one is married or unmarried, that the problem of celibacy assumes practical significance.

Vardhamana Mahavira, the first historical personage to have renounced the worldly life in pursuit of spiritual endeavour, was a Naisthika Brahmacari. He took to ascetic life without ever becoming a householder. Buddha, the second historical personage to renounce the world and to take to ascetic life, did so sometime after a son was born to him. In the *Brhadaranyak Upanisad* 47 we see that Yajnavalkya when about to become a *parivrajaka* (a-wandering ascetic) tells his wife Maitreyi that he was going to leave home and that he wanted to divide whatever wealth he had between her and her co-wife Katyayani. This shows that a *parivrajaka* had even then to leave home and wife and to give up all belongings. In *Brahadaranyaka upanisad* 48 Yajnavalkya proclaims that for Brahma realization wise men straight way take to the life of mendicants, without becoming householders, as the right path for self-realization,⁴⁹ it means that 'naisthika brahmacharya' or asceticism from before the time of sex-indulgence was looked upon as the proper course of spiritual endeavour.

It should be clear from all these facts that, first of all, sacrifice came to be realized as inadequate for spiritual benefit. Austerity, 'Tapas', and its allies, the yogic practices, were thought to be more efficacious than sacrifice in the search for Brahma. 'Brahmacharya', not only as an aspect of austerity but owing to its detachment from life, also as an opportunity for the persistent pursuit of knowledge, came to replace mere physical penance as a mode of spiritual endeavour. The need for moral qualities in this endeavour could not long remain undiscovered. In the last two passages quoted, we therefore find the moral qualities of faith and truth given equal weight along with austerity, knowledge and Brahmacharya. 'Naisthika Brahmacharya' thus is a fairly ancient institution, and is the form of asceticism earliest known and practiced.

It has been debated, as we have stated above, whether samnyas, asceticism, as the fourth stage of life is at all ancient. Sharma⁵⁰ came to the conclusion that the first three Ashrams are ancient and that the fourth Asrama came to be recognized to accommodate the dissenters, who had lost faith in sacrifice even before the rise of Buddhism. P.V. Kane⁵¹ concludes that the fourth Asrama, though later in origin than the other three, is pre-Buddhist. By implication all the four Asramas may be taken to have been formulated before, though they are specifically named for the first time in the *Jabala Upanisad* (4). In the *Mundka Upanisad* (111, 2,6) final salvation is declared to be achieved by yatis of pure spirit, who have cultivated Vedanta knowledge and practised Samnyasa. We may conclude that asceticism or Samnyasa had come to be recognized as a necessary step in the endeavour of self realization and that it had come to be treated as the fourth and final stage in the orthodox scheme of individual life.

In Upanisads we come to know about some Paramahansa who were well known as ascetics they are Uddalaka Aruni, Svetaketu, Nachiketa, etc. Here we should like to refer to the puranic tradition about Dhaumya and his family, so instructive in our quest of ascetic origins, Besides the two Brahmrealizing Paramahansas, Uddalaka Aruni and Svetaketu, there are only three other Paramahansas in that list about whom some information is available, namely Jadabharata, Durvasa and Dattatreya.

In the Rgvedic Muni, we seem to have the familiar figure of the shaman of the primitive society. The descriptions of his abandoning the body, divining the thoughts of others, flying in the air, roaming at will indifferent regions suggest that he was as an ascetic who has acquired magical powers (siddhis) very similar to the primitive medicine man. The prescriptions of the Atharvaveda which have a whole collection of magic, indicate that some classes of Aryan society believed in

magic practices. The vedic hymns were used as having a peculiar magic property; it was thought that if correctly used in sacrifices they brought about desired results. Sacrifice was invested with magic.

The *rata* and *satya* were believed to have sprung in the beginning of creation from *tapas*; similarly the primeval principle described as neither *sat* nor *asat*. Just as this mysterious principle controlling the whole universe could be known through sacrifice, so it came to be believed that the ascetic was able to control nature and gods by the force of his *tapas* and also obtain supernatural powers. Thus originated *tapas* from the acquisition of magical powers or siddhis. At the same time at the idea to achieve *ajās* seems to have been dominant with many ascetics an essential condition for the attainment of celibacy and the highest spirituality.

There are some reasons which we may draw for a man to be an ascetic : A troubles, to propitiate the Unseen Powers. A longing on the part of the intensely religious to follow in the footsteps of their *master*, almost invariably an ascetic. A wish to work out one's own *future* salvation, or emancipation, by conquering the evil inherent in human nature, i.e. the flesh. A yearning to prepare oneself by purification of mind and body for entering into *present* communion with the Divine Being. Despair arising from disillusionment and from defeat in the battle of life. And lastly, mere vanity, stimulated by the admiration which the multitude bestow upon the ascetic.

This ideal of renunciation came to be practised as the result of many forces like : intellectual craving for a higher life and thirst for spiritual wisdom; the fear of present ills and the unending cycle of births and rebirths, the inadequacy of *tapas* for self-realisation, the emergence of anti-hedonistic tendency, the impermanence of the world and a mood of psychological uneasiness and insecurity - all resulting into a pessimistic view of life.

Viewed cross-culturally, the variety of ascetic forms is limited. Virtually universal are (i) fasting, (ii) sexual continence, (iii) poverty, under which may be included begging, (iv) seclusion or isolation, and (v) self-inflicted pain, either physical or mental. More difficult to define, but perhaps also more significant, is what may be termed an "inner asceticism" consisting essentially of spiritual rather than physical discipline. Such asceticism involves not detachment from or renunciation of any specific worldly pleasure but rather detachment from or renunciation of the world per se. It is reflected in the biblical attitude of being "in the world, but not of it," or in the *Bhagavadgita's* "renunciation in action, rather than renunciation of action". It appears in almost every major religion yet has no equivalent in primitive thought. In addition to the universal forms indicated, specific not must also be made of that set of practices or techniques (e.g. specific postures, chanting, breathing techniques) that make up the yogic and meditative complex indigenous to the Indian subcontinent. Yoga, although an asceticism of the body, is an inner asceticism as well.

All theistic traditions virtually develop a mystical movement wherein the individual, through an ascetic program, seeks a personal union with the deity. This desire for personal experience of the deity may be seen as a reaction against doctrinal abstraction or ethical formalism. Even theistic traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, in which the gap between creator and creature is perceived to be unbridgeable, have produced ascetics in pursuit of such mystical union. So virtually all mystics in a theistic tradition therefore, make it clear that the state of apparent union with the deity is only momentary and, at best, a foretaste of that salvation yet to come. According to the Hindu philosopher Samkara (788 - 820CE), the body and personality with which we habitually identify ourselves are revealed to be no more than *maya* or illusion. The Jain monk, through the most rigorous of ascetic techniques involving total passivity and detachment from the world, seeks to purify and eventually liberate his true self (*jiva*) from the material defilements that most actions produce. An ascetic life of monastic simplicity and celibacy, an ascetic program of detachment, and a meditative effort to cultivate a selfless state lead the Theravada monk to realization of nirvana- "extinction" of "liberation".

Awareness of one's *atman* in Hinduism or of one's *purusa* in Samkhya (i.e., a philosophical system associated with traditional Yoga) or of one's Buddha nature

in Zen is enlightenment or salvation. Unlike the theistic religions, nontheistic systems frequently affirm that salvation is attainable here on earth. One become, "Liberated in life" as in tantrism, or one realizes, as in Zen, that one was never bound.

In both theistic and non-theistic systems asceticism may be seen as a meritorious form of behaviour, a good work, or a laudable course of action left to ensure or facilitate a preferred condition after death. Self-denial is considered to be a way of earning, posthumous reward. In non-theistic traditions ascetic works are more appropriate. Through self-denial for example, one can burn out bad Karma (the effect of past deeds) and improve one's future state in the on going round of transmigration.

In both theistic and nontheistic systems, acts of self-denial-particularly self-inflicted pain-may serve as a form of penance of previous misdeeds. The objectives of self-flagellation is merely forgiveness, in theistic systems asceticism as a form of penance has enjoyed a less problematic rationale than has asceticism as a way of achieving salvation itself. This is particularly true when ascetic acts are seen as an expression of repentance rather than a means of earning it.

So first of all I would like to through some lights on the historical evidences of Ascetics who were greatly involved in the politics. I can proudly acclaim the Name of very famous figure Chanakya or Kautilya who we find as First ascetic who were greatly involved in politics and even wrote the great scholarly work. Arthashastra, which is a great source of information for the ancient Monrays period. He was not only involved in politics but shaped the future of India also by which a strong foundation first empire of great India was layed down and it continued hundreds of years. This was all the Affarts of Chanakya that we can have brave and intelligent ruler of Mauryan Empire. Ashoks the great was one of them who is Sarnath pillar edict we adopted as our national emblem of India after Our independence.

Chankya was the person who shaped the future of Chandragupta and later Chandergupta with the help of Chankya shaped the future of India. Chankya was the person Responsible for the decline of nanda dynasty by making Chandragupta a tool of his revenge from dynasty. It was Chankya who teach and trained Chandragupta to make him a dynamic and strong ruler with all qualities of an established ruler who can rule over the world.

Now if we find some important features of asceticism we can find that Yoga, Austerity, Tapas, Renunciation from worldly affairs were the main characteristics of Asceticism. We know that there were Rishis in the Veda and Puranic Period. We know that there were Rishis or ascetics who were various in Upanishads and Purana's. They were mainly Udalak Aruno, , Janak, Yagyavalkya, Barampati, Narad and many more. Then we name Sraman and Bhiku in Jainism and Buddhism respectively. Then we come to know about Aadi Guru Shankaracharya who denoted the whole life for re-establishment of Hinduism and Santana Dharma.

Adi Shankaracharya was the person who established four Dhama in all over the country from south to north, and east to west. He established again the Gurukul and Math Parampara in 8th and 9th century. A.D he wrote Bhashya and gave the theory of monism Vedanta Darshan by his efforts only this Sanatan Dharma is the flourishing all over the world.

Now I would like to find some points over Yogi. Adityanath . He is a need of baba Gorakhnath Dham. He is a follower of kanphata yogi cult or type of ascetics who follow certain ruler of bear kundals all time, do Pray and perform rituals also.

Kanphata jogi are in a huge number in all over India and this cult of ascetics Tradition. In matha there artists perform yoga havan, do prayers do chanting of mantras with various rituals by themselves.

So yogi Adityanath also do the all rituals and rights as custom of the kanphata yogi cult aran ascetic he is open a very strict yogi but as a chief minister also he does the same. He is a icon for the youth and as well as inspiration for many as he perform all the work related to the politics in very organized and planned way here we can proudly acclaim that even as being an

ascetic yogi Adityanath has performed commendable political work and system is real very much inspired by his culture no good politician can do this as well as yogi Adityanath is doing ever being an ascetic. Moreover he never gave up as his responsibilities as an ascetic and a mathadhish of Gorakh Sadhna.

Keywords

Ascetics and Administration.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this paper is to deal with the importance of monastic ideals. The objective of my study is to show the role and importance of an ascetic in the modern time as well as in the ancient time which is a unique study and in my knowledge no new study has been done in the present scenario so I hope it will be a remarkable research and I can say that this is the first research under my knowledge in this field .

Conclusion

In this way we can see that the ancient wisdom has been perfectly hold by yogi Adityanath in modern times with all the glories of modern work under his guidance to make this world more beautiful and a state of welfare for all citizens .

References

1. *Satapatha Brahmana*, 10.4.4.1.2. Tr. J. Eggeling, *Sacred Books of the east*.
2. *Macdonell*, pp. 108-09; *Keith*, I, p. 168; *Vedic Index*, II, 479.
3. *R.V.*, X, 136; VII, 56, 8.
4. *Indian Thought and its Development*, 1936, p. 22
5. *Br. Upanishad*, IV, 4, 22.
6. *Prashna Upanishad*, I, 1, 2, 4, 9.
7. *Br. Upanishad*, II, 4.1.
8. *Br. Upanishad*, IV, 2, 1; 4, 22, III, 5.
9. *Kane, P.V., History of Dharmasastra*, vol. II, Part II, p. 931.
10. *Sharma, op.cit.*, p.20.
11. *Kane, P.V., op.cit.*, vol. II, part 1, p. 422.
12. *Cambridge History of India*, vol. I, pp. 158-159.
13. *Cambridge History of India*, vol.1, p. 153.
14. *Bhandarkar, R.G.*, p. 42.
15. *Indian Philosophy and Modern culture*, p.11.
16. *Oman, Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India*, London, p. 13.
17. *Basham, A.L., The wonder that was India*, pp. 3-4,9.
18. *ERE.*, vol. VIII, p.803.
19. *Bloomfield, Religion of the Vedas*, p. 264.
20. *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. *Mircea Eliade*, 1987, vol.1, p.443.
21. *Sorokin, Social and Cultural Dynamics*, vol. 1., pp. 119-120.
22. *Kane, P.V., op.cit.*, p. 975.
23. *Oman, J.C., Mystics; ascetics and saints of India*, 1903, p. 271; 'it is the ascetic profession that time out of mind has been a preeminent dignity in the eyes of the Indian people.'
24. *Bhagat, M.G., op.cit.*, p. 61.
25. "Phaedo" 81e, in *Plato (Loeb) I*, 285.
26. "Phaedo" 83d, (Loeb) I, 291.