



## Shree Jagannath Consciousness

Prof. A.V.P.R.Rao

The awareness of Self / Brahman as experienced by us at different stages of activities, like waking, dreaming and sound sleeping is called consciousness. The General Consciousness in the light of Shree Jagannath is referred to as Shree Jagannath Consciousness. We shall now discuss Mandukya Upanishad before we come to Shree Jagannath Consciousness.

Mandukya Upanishad says :

*“Sarvah etat Brahmayamatma Brahma  
Swayamatma Catuspat”* (2nd Sloka)

(All this is surely Brahman. This self is Brahman.  
The self as It is possessed of four quarters)

Isa Upanishad also says :

*“Isa vasyam idam servam yat kim ca.  
Jagatyam jagat”* (1st Sloka)

(There is no place in this world where there is no self / Brahman).

Brahman permeates through prakriti / Jagat. Brahman appears to be different at every stage because of ‘Maya’. Brahman, if pointed out directly and specifically is “Ayam atma Brahman”. It means self is Brahman.



The very self is signified by ‘Om’ and exists as higher and lower Brahman. It is chatuspat, possessed of four quarters as mentioned earlier.

Prajna connects outer world with inner Brahman. It is mass consciousness. It is threshold to other quarters, Viz. Viswa / Vaisvanara and Taijasa on the side of mundane world while it can absorb, “Turiya” on the inner self.

Prajna, if reached through the path of jnanam, is not bound by mind and vital force (Hiranya garbha) and hence it remains in its natural free state. We can coin this state as *yoga nidra* or divine sleep. It is contrary to deep sleep where self is enveloped in Maya. We are now discussing Prajna in its natural free state.



Mandukya Upanishad describes prajna as :

*“Esha sarveshwarah, Esha Sarvajya, Esha Antarjami Esha Yonih sarvesyahi prabhava-apyayau bhutanam”* (Sloka 6)

Prajna is the Lord of all and it is omniscient. He directs every thing, staying inside the heart. He is the sustainer of entire universe. He is the origin and also dissolution of all beings. Thus he is the Sarveswarah.

He is Purushotham as described in Bhagawad Gita. In chapter XV, it is said,

*“Na tad bhashyate surya  
Na Sasanka na parakash”.*

Prajan Brahman at this stage is said to in yoga nidra / Divine sleep) Sri Ranganath Swamy of famous Srirangam temple, at Srirangam on the banks of beautiful Kaveri river in Tamil Nadu is “Maha Vishnu” in the posture of divine sleep, carved on shining black stone. On Vaikunta Ekadasi Tithi the doors of sanctum sanctorum, commonly known as swarga dwaram (door) are opened in *brahma muhurtam* at early 4 0' clock in the morning when Sri Ranganath Swamy makes his divine presence before his devotees, waiting from midnight in a long queue for these auspicious moments to have a glance at him which is considered as *maha bhagyam* (blessed opportunity), taking one direct to Vishnu Lokam after one's demise.

Srirangam is an important one among one hundred and eight punya sthalas (sacred places) to be visited surely according to Vaishnavism.

During the waking state, one experiences external world with sense organs. It is full of activity. It is the cause and effect. Vedas say it is represented by right eye.

Tajasa is also cause and effect and enjoys internal things within mind. Vaisvanara merges into Tajasa and Tajasa into deep sleep, known as 3rd quarter, Prajna state about which we have already discussed. The fourth quarter of consciousness is Turiya. Mandukya Upanishad describes it -

*“Nantah Prajna Na bahish prajna  
Na prajya ghanam.....”* (sloka 9).

Turiya is neither conscious of internal world nor external world, nor both the worlds, nor mass of consciousness nor unconsciousness. It is seer of every thing. It is inner witness (sakshibhutam).

‘Om’ is comprised of three letters ‘a’, ‘u’ and ‘m’ known as three quarters. The waking state, Vaisvanara is denoted by ‘a’. The second letter, ‘u’ indicates the dreaming state, Tajasa. The third letter ‘m’ indicates *prajna*. It amounts to saying that Prajna state absorbs first two stages, Vaisvanara and Tajasa. ‘There is a gap of silence between the end of one syllable ‘Om’ and beginning of second one. This gap is known as ‘Turiya’, the IVth quarter.

Turiya is partless ‘Om’. It is culmination of three states, viz, gross, dream and deep sleep. The knower of Brahman /Self enters into ‘Self’ by burning away third state of latency of creation,



Prajnam state. This is Turiya State. So while practicing ‘Om’ with its meaning, there will be gradual merging of 1st quarter into 2nd one, 2nd into 3rd and 3rd merged completely into silence, i.e. Turiya.

It should be remembered that ‘Om’ is not ‘Self’. But it is a vehicle to take individual ‘Self’ into ‘Self’ / Brahman.

Now let us discuss Shree Jagannath consciousness. Shree Jagannath temple and its idols — their shape and placement in sanctum sanctorum — the rituals and customs and having no bar for the idols being touched by anybody irrespective of caste, creed and faith all clearly reflect how Shree Jagannath / Brahman

permeates into our lives through different stages of consciousness.

The act of taking original idols of Lord Shree Jagannath, Shree Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra is famous and unique “Pahundi Yatra”, a classic example of its own and found nowhere in any Vaishnava temple, strikingly reminds you the practical demonstration how Self / Brahman diffuses into gross world, crossing different stages of consciousness. Similarly the idols, going back to sanctum sanctorum in return car festival seems to us as if 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters of consciousness merge one another into Turiya state. Now Shree Jagannath is only Sakshibhuta or witness “whose vision can never be lost:” as Brahadaranyaka Upanishad pinpoints out.

