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The science of transformation (Yoga) and sacrifice (Yajña)

The discipline of Yoga undertaken for transformation, cannot be fulfilled without the intervention of a subtler and higher level through Yajna, that demands a sacrifice of the lower.

Insights

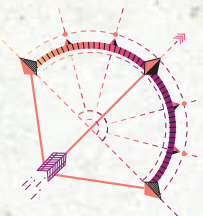
Yoga must be undertaken to become the right actor, but the discipline of yoga cannot be fulfilled unless there is an intervention from a subtler, deeper, higher level through yajña or sacrifice.

The root of the word 'sacrifice' is 'to make sacred' (sacre facere in Latin) which requires the involvement of a sacred level. What is required to be sacrificed is my attachment to what I am. This idea is found across all spiritual traditions.

The Christian doctrine of vicarious atonement states that Christ's sacrifice can help all of mankind.

Shvetāshvatara Upanishad: All human realization is a combination of tapas prabhāva and deva prasāda (the effect of effort and the benediction of the devas).

In contrast to the post renaissance doctrine of humanism, the success of an action also depends on 'daivam' or the intervention of the devas representing the higher forces.



Exploration

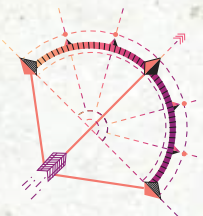
Have you had moments in your life when you voluntarily gave up something so that another person or situation could benefit? How do you understand this in terms of both 'yoga' and 'yajña'?

Looking at the lives of people like Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama, would you say these are lives that were engaged in yajña? What makes you think so?

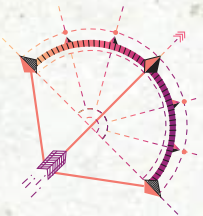
Look back over some of the most significant turning points of your own life. What part was played by you in the process and what part by forces other than you?

Glossary

Word/Shloka	Meaning	Context
Yoga	Integration, union, the art of yoking, joining, attaching; discipline	Preparation of conscience
Yajña	Sacrifice; collaborative activity between humans and devas	
Sacre facere	In Latin - for 'to make sacred	Needing the intervention of a higher level
Christian doctrine of Vicarious Atonement	A doctrine that the sacrifice of Christ can help mankind	
yajña bhuvanasya nābhi Rigveda 1.164.35	Yajña is the navel of the cosmos	
sarva-gataṁ Brahmā nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam	(Action originates from Brahman and Brahman from the Imperishable.) Therefore, the all pervading Brahman is ever established in yajña. BG-RR (pg 60) Although Brahmā is all pervading, it is especially established in yajña	karma brahmodbhavaṁ viddhi brahmākṣhara-samudbhavam tasmāt sarva-gataṁ Brahmā nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam Bhagavad Gita 3. 15



Word/Shloka	Meaning	Context
Deva	Celestial being, god; subtler level of energy	
Shvetāshvatara Upanishad	This Upanishad belongs to the Krishna-Yajurveda. It gets its name from Rishi Svetāsvatara who taught the truth contained in it to his disciples. It presents a mixture of Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga tenets.	
Tapas prabhāva	Effect of effort	All human realization is a result of a subtle combination of tapas prabhāva (effect of effort) and deva prasāda (benediction of a deva). BG-RR (pgs 172, 241) tapaḥprabhāvād devaprasādāt brahma ha śvetāsvataro 'tha vidvān atyāśramibhyaḥ paramaṁ pavitraṁ provāca samyag ṛṣisaṅghajusṭam Shvetāshvatara Upanishad VI.21
Deva Prasād	Benediction of a deva	
Daivam	Will of the devas, fate, destiny	
Humanism	Everything understood only in human terms	



Word/Shloka	Meaning	Context
Berlin Wall	Came up after World War II with the division of Germany. It was later dismantled in parts through 1989-90.	https://www.berliner-mauer-gedenkstaette.de/en/mauerbau-46.html
Sacrifice	Borrowed from Old French sacrifice, from Latin sacrificium (sacrifice), from sacrificō (make, or offer, a sacrifice), from sacer (sacred, holy) + faciō (do, make)	Sacre facere - In Latin - 'to make sacred'

