



SPIRITUALITY STUDIES

Volume 4 / Issue 1
SPRING 2018





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Issue content

Editorial 1

Martin Dojčár

Hadewych of Brabant: The Most Perfect Life One Can Attain on Earth 2

Hanneke Arts-Honselaar

Ātma-jñāna – Melting into Being 16

Gejza M. Timčák

Logotheoretical Understanding of Existential Sources of Bullying Behavior 26

Mária Dědová

Education as Spirituality of John Bosco: Loving Kindness 32

Marek Wiesenganger

Spirituality Studies 4-1 Spring 2018

Publisher: The Society for Spirituality Studies

Published in partnership with Monastic

Interreligious Dialogue

and European Union of Yoga

Available online: www.spirituality-studies.org

Editor-in-Chief: Doc. Dr. Martin Dojčár PhD.

Graphic Design: Martin Hynek

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ISSN 1339-9578

← Cover: *Christ Giving His Blessing*

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Editorial

It has always been around.

The question about the sense. What is the meaning of my life – what is its purpose, the aim?

The answer depends.

It depends on our conditioning in its multiple forms – whether biological, social, cultural or religious. Thus, it differs. Not only from individual to individual, but also from society to society, from culture to culture, from religion to religion.

However, the answer matters.

We all as humans necessarily rely on the meaning, the purpose, the aim. Not only the particular one giving sense to a particular situation of our lives, but sometimes, maybe, also the one, which goes beyond all particular meanings and liberates us in an act of self-transcendence.

Despite all conditioning one is capable to be autonomous. One can act autonomously, but moreover one can uncover and be aware of one's own unconditioned being hidden in and beyond all conditioning.

And this is the underlying motif of the 2018 Spring issue of the Spirituality Studies Journal. Four authors present here four views of the sense: Hanneke Arts-Honselaar on an example of a medieval Christian mystic Hadewych of Brabant, Gejza M. Timčák in regard with ātma-jñāna in the Indian traditions of Yoga and Advaita Vedānta, Mária Dědová when dealing with logotheoretical understanding of bullying behavior, and Marek Wiesenganger with regard to education as a sort of spirituality according to a modern Catholic saint and educator Don Bosco.

Let me wish you, dear reader, that you will find an inspiration for your own search for the sense here on the pages of Spirituality Studies.



Cordially
Martin Dojčár

Hadewych of Brabant: The Most Perfect Life One Can Attain on Earth

Received March 31, 2018

Revised April 13, 2018

Accepted April 16, 2018

Key words

Hadewych, Minne (love),
medieval women's mysticism,
Trinity, Unity

The Brabant Mystic Hadewych, which lived possibly around 1240 in Antwerp, Belgium, is the author of the oldest mystical lyric in vernacular in Western Christian tradition. While the Hadewych research previously did mainly concentrate on philological and literary aspects of her writings, in my dissertation I intended to investigate some theological implications of this research in regard to fundamental concepts of the Hadewych's theology (Arts-Honselaar 2006). This article provides a brief presentation of my thesis along with the analysis of the Letter XVII, which contains Hadewych's mystical perception of the Trinity, and also marks a radical change in her religious awareness when describing how she came to the understanding that the "*most perfect life we can attain on Earth*" (*volmaectste leuen dat men hebben mach op ertike*) consists not only in "serving", as she thought before, but in the synergy of "serving" and "resting". Like the "Deity" (*godheit*) that is at the same time "pouring out" (*ute gheue*) and "giving back" (*op houde*), a human is called to keep rest in the action and to be available for action while keeping rest.

1 Presentation of the Research

My thesis *Ende that manen es eweleke euen nuwe* examines the formulation of content and significance of the Trinity concept in the Letters of Hadewych. In addition, it situates Hadewych's Trinity concept in relation to the theology and mysticism of her time.

Hadewych is an exponent of medieval women's mysticism. Dinzelbacher notes in his *Mittelalterliche Frauenmystik* that the texts of these religious women were used mystagogical (Dinzelbacher 1993, 308). To understand the texts of these religious women it is therefore of great importance to involve the experiences of these women as is described by themselves in their texts. Because the reading of the texts of Hadewych, and the previous study on the concept of self-respect (*fierheit*) in her works (J. T. Arts-Honselaar 1997), has made it clear that Hadewych's mysticism is dynamic in nature. I therefore searched for a method that could optimally express this dynamism. This required a method that would ensure openness to the dynamism of the text. To this end, it was chosen for the hermeneutics of Gadamer as applied by Philip Sheldrake to the interpretation of spiritual and mystical texts (Sheldrake 1991, 172–175).

The basic rules of this hermeneutics and its application within the dissertation can be described as follows:

1. Understanding of a historical spiritual text can only be successful when the one who interprets this text both the historical genesis of the text, its effect in tradition and its own interpretation horizon involves in the process.
2. Spiritual texts may be seen as classical spiritual texts that contain an "excess of meaning". This meaning goes far beyond the original and time phased intention of authors.
3. The structure of the text is the key to how the text works because the structure is closely linked to the dynamics that are embodied by a text.
4. A spiritual text is a precipitation of an experience. The text itself seeks to recall this experience with the reader.
5. The text itself plays a normative role within the discussion that is being conducted with the text. Regarding to the reading of the text, this means that the text itself determines the questions to the text.

In order to ensure the above mentioned methodical guidelines the research was carried out in two movements: a *sub-*



About the author

Dr. Hanneke Arts-Honselaar (1970) graduated in theology and religious studies at the Catholic University of Nijmegen (Holland) with special interest in Dutch Mysticism. She was a research coordinator at the Theology Faculty of the University of Tilburg and PR employee at the Catholic Association for Ecumenism (Katholieke Vereniging voor Oecumene). She contributed at research projects of the Dominican Research Center (Dominicaans Studiecentrum) and the Tilburg School for Politics and Public Administration (Tilburgse School voor Politiek en Bestuur). She was a staff member of the project group "Belief and economical participation" at the rural desk DISK and office manager of the Sint Jan in 's-Hertogenbosch. At present she is the owner of the Het Bezinningsbureau, www.bezinningsbureau.nl. Her email contact is Hanneke@bezinningsbureau.nl.

stantive-theological analysis and a *comparative historical synthesis*. These two movements are carried out after an initial situating of Hadewych in her time and a description of her legacy.

In view of the *substantive-theological analysis*, the inner textual relations were brought to the surface by which Hadewych describes the Trinity. The Letters XVII, XVIII, XXII, XXVIII and XXX were taken into account because of their consistent and worked-out view of the Trinity. At the beginning of each Letter, a structural analysis of the relevant Letter was also presented to this effect.

From these analyses the fundamentally dynamic character of the Trinity concept into the Letters of Hadewych came to the surface. It uses five dynamics to describe the Trinity. These dynamics were then placed in the context of the entire oeuvre

2 Works of Hadewych

Today are counted among the writings of Hadewych 31 Letters, 45 Poems in Stanzas, 14 Visions, the List of the Perfect ones, and 16 Poems in Couplets. Their number and chronology have been widely debated in the 19th century. The question of the literary unity of these scriptures is therefore a complicated one that encompasses many aspects. I am trying to show this discussion in a nutshell.

Four manuscripts with work by Hadewych are known: A, B, C, and D. The manuscripts A, B, and D are kept in the Royal Library of Brussels under the numbers 2879–80 (A), 2877–78 (B), 3093–95 (D). Manuscript C is kept in the university Library of Ghent under number 941. The extent and the ordering of the works are in handwriting A and C differently. Also, they contain many text variants. Therefore, both manuscripts are probably independent of each other and perhaps different source texts have been used. Handwriting B can be a copy of handwriting A, however, with texts that are also known only from handwriting C. However, these texts are not taken from handwriting C. Another, to us unknown source, has been the basis of this. Because of the differences between these manuscripts, it is already possible to decide that the Poems in Couplets 17–29 should not be counted as Hadewych's oeuvre. On the basis of word comparisons, it has also been decided that the *Tweevormich Tractaetken* should also be excluded. The manuscripts are not dated. In this article we have used the translation made by Mother Columba Hart, O.S.B. (Hadewijch 1981). For her translation, the Hadewych texts edited by Van Mierlo have been utilized. Van Mierlo used for his text edition handwriting C because this is

of Hadewych. By using this method, it was avoided that pre-defined concepts were pushed forward. In this way we aimed to uncover the inner dynamics of its own Trinity view and to avoid that the text itself would lose its normative role. Efforts were made to create the widest possible openness for the own understandings of Hadewych's experiential horizon. The analysis is based on signals in the text that suggest dynamic. Hereby paradoxes are understood as a dynamical signal.

The *comparative historical synthesis* was finally performed by exploring Hadewych's own site with regard to her Trinity concept within the context of the 12th and 13th century Theology of the Trinity. For this purpose, thinkers and mystics such as Hildegard of Bingen, Bernard of Clairvaux, William of St. Thierry, Richard of St. Victor and Beatrice of Nazareth were chosen as comparison material.

a very precise version and it comes the presumably original dialect of Hadewych closer than Handwriting A. Handwriting D contains a collection of text fragments of Hadewych, as well as Fragment E and handwriting R.

The Letters of Hadewych, 31 pieces, can be characterized as treatises or sermons. However, the boundary between Letter, treatise or sermon is very difficult to draw. It concerns shorter or longer texts aimed at one or several persons.

In a few Letters, edited texts by other authors are found. So, for example, in Letter XX and XVIII, edited texts of Richard of St. Victor and William of St. Thierry are found. Hadewych may have encountered these texts and processed them in her texts because they would be illustrative of her own thinking. However, it is also possible that others have asked Hadewych to explain these text portions to them.

3 Letter XVII

1–15

*Be generous and zealous for every virtue,
But do not apply yourself to any one virtue.
Fail not with regard to a multitude of things,
But perform no particular work.
Have good will and compassion for every need,
But take nothing under your protection.
This I wished long since to tell you,
For it lies heavy on my heart;
May God give you to understand what I mean,
Solely in the one nature of Love.*

The things I order you in these verses were ordered me by God. Therefore, I desire in my turn to order you the same things, because they belong perfectly to the perfection of Love, and because they belong perfectly and wholly in the Divinity.

16–23

The attributes I mentioned here are perfectly the divine Nature. For to be generous and zealous is the Nature of the Holy Spirit; this is what is his proper Person. And not to apply oneself to a particular work is the Nature of the Father; through this he is the one Father. This “pouring out” and keeping back are the pure Divinity and the entire Nature of Love.

24–43

*Fail not with regard to a multitude of things,
but perform no particular work.*

The first of these verses expresses the power of the Father, whereby he is God almighty. The second verse expresses his just will, with which his justice works its unknown mighty works. These works are deep and dark, unknown and hidden for all who, as I said, are below this Unity of the Godhead but nevertheless render service (and, indeed, chivalrously) to each of the Three Persons, according to the verses I placed first in each Couplet:

*To be favorable and zealous for every virtue,
And not to fail with regard to a multitude of things,
And to have compassionate good will for every need.*

This seems indeed to be the most perfect life one can attain on Earth. And you have heard this continually, for I always recommend it above all; and I also experienced it above all and rendered service accordingly and worked chivalrously until the day it was forbidden me.

1–15

*Te alre doghet wes onstich snel;
En onderwinter di niet el.
En ghebreect in ghenen dinghen,
En werct te ghenen sonderlinghen.
Te alre noet hebbet onste ende ontfermen,
Ende en nemt niet in v beschermen.
Dit haddic di gherne langhe gheseghet;
Want mi wel groet op therte leghet.
God doe v kennen wat ic mene,
Jnder enegher Minnen naturen allene.*

Dese dinghen waren mi van gode verboden, die ic v in desen worden verbiede. Daer omme beghericse v voert te verbiedene, om dat si volmaecteleece ter volcomenheit van Minnen behoren, Ende omme datse inder godheit volcomeleke ende gheheeleke behoren.

16–23

Die wesene die ic daer noeme, die sijn volcomeleke hare nature: Want gheonstech ende snel, dat es de nature vanden heileghen gheest; Daer met es hi proper persoen. Ende niet sonderlinghe te onderwindene, dat es die nature vanden vader; daer met es hi enich vader. Dit vte gheuen ende dit op houden: dit es pure godheit ende gheheele nature van Minnen.

24–43

*Ende ghebreect te ghenen dinghen
Ende en werct gheen sonderlinghe.*

Dat eerst woert es die cracht des vader, daer hi al mogende god met es. Dat ander waert es sijn gherechtte willen, daer sine gherechticheit hare onbekinde moghende werke met werct, Die diep ende doncker sijn ende onbekint ende verborghen al den ghenen die beneden deser gheenechtheit vander godheit sijn, Aldus alse ic segghe, ende die nochtan den personen properleke dienen ende ouerscone, Alsoe na die eerste waerde, die ic seide:

*Te alre doghet onstich ende snel te sine
ende in ghenen dinghen te ghebrekene
ende te alre noet ontfermeleke onste te hebbene:*

Dit schijnt nochtan dat volmaecste leuen datmen hebben mach op ertriike. Ende dit hoerdi altoes dat ict altoes gheraden hebbe bouen al; Ende oec leuede ict bouen al, ende diende daer inne ende wrachte ouerscone tote dien daghe dat mi verboden wart.

44-77

The verses that come second in each of the three Couplets I have composed express the perfection of the Unity and of Love, and according to justice treat of Love as one being, one sole Love, and nothing else. *O Deus!* This is a frightening being who, at one and the same time engulfs in unison such hatred and such charity!

Have good will and compassion for every need.

That was the Son in what is proper to his Person. He was purely this and did purely this.

But take nothing under your protection.

Thus, his Father engulfed him in himself; this cruel great work ever belongs to the Father. Yet it is the Unity of purest love in the Divinity: so that this Unity is also just with the justice of love and includes this Devotion, this Manhood, and this Power; nor would it have anyone left in need. And it includes one's charity and compassion for those in hell and purgatory; for those unknown to God, or who are known to him but still stray outside his dearest will; and for loving souls, who have more sorrow than all the rest, since they lack what they love. Justice takes up all this into itself. And yet each Person separately has given out what is proper to him, as I have said.

But the just nature of the Unity, in which Love belongs to Love and is perfect fruition of herself, does not seek after virtues, virtuous tendencies, or particular works, however pure or of however pure authority they are; and it does not give its protection, out of mercy, to any need, mighty though it is to enrich.

For in that fruition of Love there never was and never can be any other work than that one fruition in which the one almighty Deity is Love.

44-77

Die drie andere waert die ic segghe die enicheit ende Minne volcomen maken, Ende na gherechticheit haer selues pleghen in enen persone al ene Minne ende el niet. Ay deus, wat vreseleker wesene es dat dat selc haten ende selke caritate in een verslent!

Te alre noet hebbet onste ende ontfermen.

Dat was de sone in properen persone; Dat was hi scone ende wrachte scone.

En nemt niet in v bescermen.

Daer met verslantene sijn vader: dat wrede grote werc es emmer sine. Ende dat es de alre scoenste enicheit vander Minnen der godheit; soe dat si daer es alsoe gherecht van gherechticheiden van Minnen, dat si op nemt dien ernst ende die menscheit Ende die cracht daermen nieman bij ghebren en woude. Ende sie nemt op die caritate ende die ontferm herticheit die men hadde op die vander hillen, Ende op die van purgatorien, Ende op die ombekinde van gode, Ende op die bekinde die dolen buten sinen liefsten wille, Ende op die minnende die wee hebben bouen al dit want si dies daruen dat si Minnen. Al dit nempt gherechticheit in hare seluen. Nochtan gaf elc persoen besondere tsine vte, alsoe ic gheseghet hebbe. Mer die gherechte eneghe nature, daer Minne haer seluen met Minne Ende volcomene ghebrukesesse es, sine onderwint hare noch doechde, Noch onste der doechde, noch werke sonderlinghe, Die soe scone sijn Noch van soe scoenre auctoriteit; Noch sine bescermet bi ontfermicheiden ghere noet, die si so moghende es rike te makene: Want in dat ghebruen van Minnen en was nie noch en mach ander werc sijn dan dat enighe ghebruen, daer die eneghe moghende godheit Minne met es.

78–100

What was forbidden me (as I told you it was forbidden) was to have on Earth any undueness of love; that is, to stand in awe of nothing outside of Love, and to live in love so exclusively that everything outside of Love should be utterly hated and shunned; therefore for those outside of Love, to have no inclination and no virtuous acts, to perform no particular works that might assist them, and to have no mercy that might protect them, but to remain constantly in the fruition of Love. But when this fruition grows less or passes away, all three of the forbidden works should indeed be performed, as justly owed. When anyone seeks Love and undertakes her service, he must do all things for her glory, for during all this time he is human and needy; and then he must work chivalrously in all things, be generous, serve, and show mercy, for everything fails him and leaves him in want. But when by fruition man is united to Love, he becomes God, mighty and just. And then will, work, and might have an equal part in his justice, as the Three Persons in one God.

101–122

These prohibitions were laid upon me on Ascension Day, four years ago, by God the Father himself, at the moment when his Son came upon the altar. At this coming, I received a kiss from him; and by this token I was shown what follows. Having been made one with him, I came before his Father. There the Father took the Son to himself with me and took me to himself with the Son. And in this Unity into which I was taken and where I was enlightened, I understood this Essence and knew it more clearly than, by speech, reason, or sight, one can know anything that is knowable on Earth. This seems wonderful indeed. But although I say it seems wonderful, I know indeed it does not astonish you. For Earth cannot understand heavenly wisdom. Words enough and Dutch enough can be found for all things on Earth, but I do not know any Dutch or any words that answer my purpose. Although I can express everything insofar as this is possible for a human being, no Dutch can be found for all I have said to you, since none exists to express these things, so far as I know.

123–135

Although I forbid you some works and command the others, you will in either case have to serve much. But lack of discrimination regarding the things I have said, this I forbid you as those works were forbidden me by God's will. But you must still labor at the works of Love, as I long did, and as his friends did and still do. For my part I am devoted to these works at any hour and still perform them at all times: to seek after nothing but Love, work nothing but Love, protect nothing but Love, and advance nothing but Love. How you are to do or omit each of these things, may God, our Beloved, teach you.

78–100

Dat verbot dat ic v gheseghet hebbe dat mi verboden was, dat was ongherechtheit van Minnen te hebbene op ertrike Ende niet te spaerne dat buten Minnen es, Ende soe na der Minnen te pleghene, dat alle dat dat buten Minnen es si ghehaet Ende daer ouer ghewroken, soe dat menre andere onst toe en hebbe, Noch doghet, Noch sonderlinghen werc vore en doe, hen met te verdraghene, Noch ontfermicheit hen met te bescermene, Mer slach ouerslach in ghebrukenessen van minnen. Mer in dat faelieren Ende in dat sincken van ghebrukene, dan werctmen wel alle drie de verbodene werke bi scoude ende bi rechte: alse men Minne soeket ende hare dient, dan moetmen alle dinc doen om hare ere; Want alle die wile es men mensche ende behouende; Ende dan moetmen te allen dinghen scone werken ende onnen ende dienen ende ontfermen, Want hem ghebrecht alles ende behoeuet. Mer in ghebrukene van Minnen es men god worden moghende ende gherecht. Ende dan es wille ende werc ende moghentheit euen gherecht. Dat sijn die drie persone in enen god.

101–122

Dit wert mi verboden, dies was te ascentien.iiij. laer, van gode den vader selue in dien tide dat sijn sone comen was ten outare. Bij diere comst werdic van hem ghecust, Ende te dien tekene werdic ghetoeent; ende quam met hem.i. vor sinen vader. Daer nam hi hem ouer mi ende mi ouer hem. Ende in die enicheit daer ic doen in ghenomen was ende verclaert, daer verstondic dit wesen ende bekinde claerlikere dan men met sprekene ocht met redenen ocht met siene enighe sake Die soe bekinleec es in ertrike bekinnen mach. Doch schijnt dit wonder. Mer al segghe ic dat dit wonder schijnt, Jc weet wel dat v niet en wondert: Want hemelsche redene en mach ertrike niet verstaen; want van allen dien dat in ertrike es, mach men redene ende dietsch ghenoech venden; Mer hier toe en weet ic gheen dietsch noch ghene redene. Nochtan dat ic alle redene can van sinne alsoe mensche connen mach, al dat ic v gheseghet hebbe, dat en es alse gheen dietsch daer toe: want daer en hoert gheen toe dat ic weet.

123–135

Al verbiede ic v some die werke ende ghebiede de andere, Ghi sult noch vele moeten dienen. Mer sonderlincheit van dien dat ic v hebbe gheseghet verbiede ic v voert, alse mi verboden sijn inden wille gods. Mer ghi moet noch arbeiden inde werken van Minnen, alse ic langhe dede Ende sine vriende daden ende noch doen, Ende ic een deel enen tijt hebbe ghedaen ende noch allen tijt doe: El niet te onderwindene dan Minne, El niet te werkene dan Minne, El niet te bescermene dan Minne, El niet in staden te stane dan Minne; hoe ghi elc doen selt ende laten, dat moet v god wisen, onse lief.

4 Structural Analysis

Even though Hadewych, compared to the later Ruusbroec, which is almost over-structured, has only a lean structure in her texts, the structure of this Letter can be called clearly.

Rule 1–15: The Poem

Serving people:

1. Be generous and zealous for every virtue (Holy Spirit)
2. Fail not with regard to a multitude of things (the power of the Father)
3. Have good will and compassion for every need (the Son)

Refrain from serving people:

1. But do not apply yourself to any one virtue (nature of the Father)
2. But perform no particular work (the power of the almighty Father)
3. But take nothing under your protection (his Father engulfed him in himself)

Mission of Hadewych to her readers.

Rule 16–23: The First Stanza

The first Stanza of the poem stated:

“be generous and zealous”; nature of the Holy Spirit; (“pouring out”)
“do not apply yourself to any one virtue”; nature of the Father; (“keeping back”)

Rule 24–43: The Second Stanza

The second Stanza of the poem stated:

“Fail not with regard to a multitude of things”; power of the Father; (“pouring out”)
“perform no particular work”; justice of the Father; (“keeping back”)

Rule 44–77: The Other Verses:

The other three verses of the poem explained:

“Have good will and compassion for every need”; nature of the Son; (“pouring out”)

“But take nothing under your protection”; engulfing of the Son by the Father; (“keeping back”)

Feedback to the human soul;

The Unity of the three Persons in the Deity.

Rule 78–100: The Human Soul in the Unity

The Unity in relation to the human soul; Be in the fruition; When this fruition grows less or passes away: the works should indeed be performed, as justly owed.

Rule 101–122: The Vision

The vision in which Hadewych receives the communication of God;

The “new knowledge” cannot be expressed in language.

Rule 123–135: Postscript

Postscript to the readers: reception of the order.

5 Substantive Analysis

Rule 1–15:

*Be generous and zealous for every virtue,
But do not apply yourself to any one virtue.
Fail not with regard to a multitude of things,
But perform no particular work.
Have good will and compassion for every need,
But take nothing under your protection.
This I wished long since to tell you,
For it lies heavy on my heart;
May God give you to understand what I mean,
Solely in the one nature of Love.*

The things I order you in these verses were ordered me by God. Therefore, I desire in my turn to order you the same things, because they belong perfectly to the perfection of Love, and because they belong perfectly and wholly in the Divinity.

From these phrases it becomes clear that something was forbidden to Hadewych by God. The things that were forbidden to her, she forbids in turn to her readers:

Be generous and zealous for every virtue, (order)
But do not apply yourself to any one virtue. (prohibition)
Fail not with regard to a multitude of things, (order)
But perform no particular work. (prohibition)
Have good will and compassion for every need, (order)
But take nothing under your protection. (prohibition)

When the structure of the middle Dutch text is viewed closely, it is said that these rules consist of three orders and three prohibitions. This creates a combination of things that need to be done and things that need to be left. The orders call for action and give to this action a specific direction. They shall indicate how to act.

To gain insight into the correct relationship between orders and prohibitions, Hadewych appeals to God Himself: “*May God give you to understand what I mean, solely in the one nature of Love*”. It is clear here that Hadewych means a mystical insight. Only inside the one nature of the *Minne* can the readers discover how the tension between order and prohibition should be understood.

As has already been said, and by the mouth of Hadewych herself, “these things” are Hadewych forbidden by God. It can be concluded that the orders are also entrusted to her by God; They are being performed in combination with the prohibitions. On her turn, Hadewych wants to present her readers what she has been informed of by God. Not because she wants to determine the life of her readers as a tyrannical woman. She forbids her readers what she has been forbidden because the follow-up of these prohibitions is absolutely necessary in order to reach *Minne* in its wholeness.

From this, it is clear that Hadewych wants her readers to reach *Minne* in its fullness, she teaches her readers in the way of *Minne*. On the other hand, it becomes clear that Hadewych knows that these prohibitions lead to the fullness of *Minne*. Thus, she shows that she has gained insight into the being of God. She knows that these prohibitions “*belong perfectly and wholly in the Divinity*”. What this means is gradually becoming clear in this Letter.

Rule 16–23: The First Stanza

The attributes I mentioned here are perfectly the divine Nature. For to be generous and zealous is the Nature of the Holy Spirit; this is what is his proper Person. And not

to apply oneself to a particular work is the Nature of the Father; through this he is the one Father. This pouring out and keeping back are the pure Divinity and the entire Nature of Love.

Hadewych’s insight into the essence of the Deity and in the nature of *Minne* predominates in this phrase. The tension, which was previously called the tension between “order” and “prohibition” in relation to the human soul, she now calls in respect to the essence of the Deity and the nature of *Minne* “pouring out” and “keeping back”. Both together form the pure Deity and the whole nature of *Minne*.

What is entrusted to Hadewych by God is the essence (*wesene*) of the Deity itself. Hadewych is instructed to become similar to the Deity, similar to the three Persons in their individuality and in their Unity. To understand these orders and prohibitions to the human soul, to gain insight in it, Hadewych first describes how they are inside the Deity itself. The Deity means both the Unity of the three Persons as individuals, and this in unison. The orders and prohibitions at the level of the Deity say something about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Regarding the Persons, Hadewych does not speak any more about orders and prohibitions, at the level of Deity she speaks of “pouring out” and “keeping back”.

The Holy Spirit is a Person within the Deity. This individuality contains in a way that determines his nature. This “way” is according to Hadewych: “*generous and zealous*”. It is the nature of the Holy Spirit to be generous and skillful. It is thus the nature of the Holy Spirit to “pour out”.

The Father also has his individuality within the Deity. His nature is “*not to apply oneself to a particular work*”. It is his way, the nature, of the Father to work nothing in particular. It is the Father’s nature to “keep back”.

“Pouring out” and “keeping back” is “*the pure Divinity and the entire Nature of Love*”. The essence of Deity is at the same time “pouring out” and “keeping back”.

Rule 24–43: The Second Stanza

Fail not with regard to a multitude of things, but perform no particular work.
The first of these verses expresses the power of the Father, whereby he is God almighty. The second verse expresses his just will, with which his justice works its unknown mighty works. These works are deep and dark, unknown and hidden for all who, as I said, are below this Unity of the Godhead but nevertheless render service (and, indeed,

*chivalrously) to each of the Three Persons, according to the verses I placed first in each Couplet:
To be favorable and zealous for every virtue,
And not to fail with regard to a multitude of things,
And to have compassionate good will for every need. This seems indeed to be the most perfect life one can attain on Earth. And you have heard this continually, for I always recommend it above all; and I also experienced it above all, and rendered service accordingly and worked chivalrously until the day it was forbidden me.*

The first rule (*Fail not with regard to a multitude of things*), so says Hadewych, means the power of the Father, making him the almighty God. In the previous Stanza, Hadewych assigned “keeping back” to the Father, in this Stanza it is “pouring out”. This confirms the earlier statement that both “pouring out” and “keeping back” together make up the pure Deity and the whole nature of the Minne. “*Not to apply oneself to a particular work*” proved to be the nature of the Father. “*Fail not with regard to a multitude of things,*” as shown in this paragraph, is the power of the Father, making him the almighty God. There is therefore a difference, according to Hadewych, between the nature of God and his strength. The nature of God is “keeping back”, the power of God is “pouring out”.

The second rule (*but perform no particular work*) is, according to Hadewych, the justice of the Father. Only those who are in Unity with the Deity can understand these incomprehensible works of righteousness. People who serve the Persons in a very clean manner are not given the understanding of these works of righteousness, only those who are in Unity with the Deity can understand it. Hadewych describes the actions of the people who serve very clean but who are not in Unity with the Deity. They are people who serve “only” but do not know that in the Unity with the Deity serving and resting coincide, serving is there coming to rest. As the “pouring out” and the “keeping back” belongs to the essence of the Deity and Minne, so “serving” and “refraining from serving” fundamentally belong to each other to be able to get united with the Deity in Minne. The “*chivalrous working*” belongs to it but when one is absorbed in the Unity one must refrain from serving.

Hadewych describes in this passage a radical change in her own religious consciousness. She hints at what path she travelled before. She lived a life in which she served, until the moment it had been forbidden to her by God. Until that moment she had thought that serving was the most perfect way of life. She always lived in that way. Now, however, she has understood that in order to get into the essence of the

Deity, it is necessary not only to serve and work, but also to abandon them.

The essence of the Deity is “pouring out” and “keeping back” together in one. To be unified with this essence, it is necessary for man to become a kind of blueprint of this essence of the Deity.

This is evident from the fact that to the human soul, personified by Hadewych, is entrusted what the “essence” of the three Persons is. The “pouring out” and the “keeping back” at the level of the Deity corresponds on the level of the human soul with the orders and prohibitions.

The human soul can appropriate himself, through the follow-up of the orders and the prohibitions, the mode of being of the three Persons. Thus, he can be incorporated (passively) into the Unity of these Persons, the Deity. Yonder is only “*pure Divinity and the entire Nature of Love*”. How this togetherness looks like, Hadewych has tried to make clear in the poem of Rule 1–10. She understands, however, that her words are inadequate and that God himself must help her readers to truly understand what she means with this togetherness.

44–77: The Other Stanzas

The verses that come second in each of the three Couplets I have composed express the perfection of the Unity and of Love, and according to justice treat of Love as one being, one sole Love, and nothing else. O Deus! This is a frightening being who, at one and the same time engulfs in unison such hatred and such charity! Have good will and compassion for every need. That was the Son in what is proper to his Person. He was purely this and did purely this. But take nothing under your protection.

Thus, his Father engulfed him in himself; this cruel great work ever belongs to the Father. Yet it is the Unity of purest love in the Divinity: so that this Unity is also just with the justice of love and includes this Devotion, this Manhood, and this Power; nor would it have anyone left in need. And it includes one’s charity and compassion for those in hell and purgatory; for those unknown to God (Mathew 25:12; Luke 13:25), or who are known to him but still stray outside his dearest will; and for loving souls, who have more sorrow than all the rest, since they lack what they love. Justice takes up all this into itself. And yet each Person separately has given out what is proper to him, as I have said.

But the just nature of the Unity, in which Love belongs to Love and is perfect fruition of herself, does not seek after virtues, virtuous tendencies, or particular works, however pure or of however pure authority they are; and it does not give its protection, out of mercy, to any need, mighty though it is to enrich. For in that fruition of Love there never was and never can be any other work than that one fruition in which the one almighty Deity is Love.

In “*The verses that come second*” Hadewych refers to the Stanzas 3 to 5 from the poem at the beginning of this Letter. What is remarkable is the separation that Hadewych has made in the text. The structure of the poem does expect that Stanza 1 to 3 will be explained together and after that Stanza 4 and 5. However, Stanza 3 is joined to Stanza 4 and 5. Does Hadewych have a special intention by doing so? I do think so. Because of this separation Hadewych strongly emphasizes these last three verses. “*Have good will and compassion for every need but take nothing under your protection.*” This Stanza applies Hadewych a little further in the text to the Son. “*The verses that come second in each of the three Couplets I have composed express the perfection of the Unity and of Love.*” To achieve the Unity and the perfect Minne it is necessary to experience the essence (*wesene*) of all three Persons, however the experience of the essence of the Son, makes the Unity and the Minne utterly complete. In Minne the three Persons are one. Minne is the unifying principle. But not only the three Persons are one, also those who dedicate themselves to Minne become one with the three Persons who are one. In Minne, everything is united. So, everything is one and nothing else.

Apparently, Hadewych has been aware of this insight for a long time, “[t]his I wished long since to tell you, for it lies heavy on my heart.” There must have been a reason why she did not speak before. According to the following rules, it could be suspected that she has kept quiet because she knew that she would not be able to say what she really wanted to say. But the silence began to weigh her too heavily, and now she must speak, but with an appeal to God himself to make her readers understand what she really means. She knows that a good understanding of what is meant can only be obtained in the one nature of Minne alone. This means that the readers can only gain insight in the movement of Minne, and in this movement it is Minne itself who gives insight.

Hadewych’s sighing about hating and charity (“*O Deus! This is a frightening being who, at one and the same time engulfs in unison such hatred and such charity!*”) is based on the experience of the unison of “pouring out” and “keeping back”. How can anyone pour out himself completely and keep back ev-

erything at the same time? Hadewych does not answer this sigh. It is a kind of rhetoric question that raises the tension between “pouring out” and “keeping back” again. It is precisely this inconceivable fact, this new understanding of how the Deity is in its essence, that Hadewych wants to bring to the attention of her readers.

In the next paragraph, Hadewych relates the third Stanza from the poem to the Son. Again here, now in relation to the Son, the “pouring out” returns. This “pouring out” exists in “[h]ave good will and compassion for every need”. After all, “*He was purely this and did purely this*”. In having affection and compassion the Son exists as an actual Person, like the nature of the Holy Spirit exists in being “*generous and zealous*” (“pouring out”) and the nature of the Father exists in “*doing nothing in particular*” (“keeping back”). The “keeping back” of the Father appears again in the phrase: “*But take nothing under your protection. Thus, his Father engulfed him in himself; this cruel great work ever belongs to the Father.*” By the fact that the Son himself cannot take anything in protection (he must surrender completely, that is the self-gift of the Son) devours the Father him. The Father thus keeps back, yet it is “*the Unity of purest love in the Deity*”. From this sentence it appears that devouring the Son by the Father happens through Minne. In Minne the Son is devoured by the Father, this is the “keeping back” of the Father and the surrender of the Son, his self-giving. This work is cruel and great because in the Minne everything is reclaimed, but at the same time the Unity of purest love in the Divinity is realized.

So that this Unity is also just with the justice of love and includes this Devotion, this Manhood, and this Power; nor would it have anyone left in need.

The term “this Unity” refers to the situation in which the Son was devoured by the Father. In this being devoured the Unity is just with the justice of Love. This justice ensures that the Unity includes this Devotion, the Manhood and the Power. It is about the Devotion, the Manhood and the Power of the human soul. This can be concluded because Hadewych is talking about “*those in hell and purgatory*” in the next line. Hadewych changes the perspective here. Where she first spoke about the Son who was devoured by God, she now relates this to the human soul. Through the justice of love his zeal, humanity and strength are included in the Unity. This zeal, the human being and the strength are the means by which nobody would have left in need. They are the means to reach the Unity. But in the unison, itself the work has fallen silently, although it is still present, it is indeed included. Precisely because it is absorbed and becomes part of the Unity in Minne, the unison of “works” and “refrain from works” are

recreated. In the unison there is no “work” in the active sense of the word, only in the latent possibility to. The “refraining from work” occurs in the unison in the foreground.

And it includes one's charity and compassion for those in hell and purgatory; for those unknown to God, or who are known to him but still stray outside his dearest will; and for loving souls, who have more sorrow than all the rest, since they lack what they love. Justice takes up all this into itself.

In one sentence, the first three verses of the poem are summarized here, now from the perspective of the unison.

And yet each Person separately has given out what is proper to him, as I have said. But the just nature of the Unity, in which Love belongs to Love and is perfect fruition of herself, does not seek after virtues, virtuous tendencies, or particular works, however pure or of however pure authority they are; and it does not give its protection, out of mercy, to any need, mighty though it is to enrich. For in that fruition of Love there never was and never can be any other work than that one fruition in which the one almighty Deity is Love.

In this passage it becomes clear where Hadewych wants to go: in the unison cannot be any “work”. “For in that fruition of Love there never was and never can be any other work than that one fruition in which the one almighty Deity is Love ... And yet each Person separately has given out what is proper to him, as I have said.” In the unison there isn't any work, there is only the fruition of Minne. The Unity does not engage with virtues, neither with the affection to virtues, nor with certain works, no matter how clean they are or of any excellent authority whatsoever. Also, it does not give its protection, out of mercy, to any need, mighty though it is to enrich.

In God “pouring out” and “keeping back” coincide. The Persons in their individuality work the works as described above, the Persons in their Unity remain in unison and this at the same time. It is this difficult insight that Hadewych wants to clarify to her readers. Because she understands she can't do this without the help of God she appeals to him for a proper understanding for her readers. Hadewych is of the opinion it is important that her readers understand what she has seen because this insight has a great impact on the human soul. The human soul is called to the fullness of Love. To grow into this fullness is only possible when the human soul recognizes itself in the ways of the Persons. Because of this it was necessary for Hadewych to first describe how the orders and prohibitions, given to her by God, also exist at the level of

the Persons as “pouring out” and “giving back”. Thereafter she could describe how they result in the Unity of the Persons and in which way the human being becomes part of this Unity. The human soul is incorporated into the Unity and is thus given the fullness of Love.

Rule 78–100: The Human Soul in The Unity

Now that Hadewych has made this clear, she can return to the human soul and its mission. For this she also takes herself as an example:

What was forbidden me (as I told you it was forbidden) was to have on Earth any undueness of love; that is, to stand in awe of nothing outside of Love, and to live in love so exclusively that everything outside of Love should be utterly hated and shunned; therefore for those outside of Love, to have no inclination and no virtuous acts, to perform no particular works that might assist them, and to have no mercy that might protect them, but to remain constantly in the fruition of Love. But when this fruition grows less or passes away, all three of the forbidden works should indeed be performed, as justly owed. When anyone seeks Love and undertakes her service, he must do all things for her glory, for during all this time he is human and needy; and then he must work chivalrously in all things, be generous, serve, and show mercy, for everything fails him and leaves him in want. But when by fruition man is united to Love, he becomes God, mighty and just. And then will, work, and might have an equal part in his justice, as the Three Persons in one God.

This passage shows two sides of only one mirror: the “remaining in fruition” on the one hand and “working” on the other hand. The “remaining in fruition” consists in, as is described in respect of the Unity, “to stand in awe of nothing outside of Love”. Hadewych describes how she commissioned to cease all work and dedicate herself to Minne alone. The only thing that she had to do was remaining in the fruition of Love time and time again. What is beyond Minne must be hated and offended. Hadewych summarizes here the poem from the beginning of this Letter in the sentence: “*What was forbidden me (as I told you it was forbidden) was to have on Earth any undueness of love*”. This “undueness” exists in losing oneself in virtuous works as described in the prohibitions of the aforementioned poem. The soul must remain in the fruition of Love time and time again.

However, this cannot be manipulated by the human soul: “*But when this fruition grows less or passes away*”. If this is the case, then “*all three of the forbidden works should indeed be per-*

formed” as described in the poem of Rule 1–10. “When anyone seeks Love and undertakes her service,” this is where one is not in the enjoyment, “he must do all things for her glory, for during all this time he is human and needy”. When one enjoys Minne, one has become God, one is included in the Unity in which work and “refraining from work” coincide. This soul gets part in the properties of God, mighty and just. In this Unity his will and work and power are equally just. Here his will and work and power are included in the Unity and made righteous by the righteousness of Love. In the human soul, therefore, “work” and “refraining from work” coincide: “then will, work, and might have an equal part in his justice, as the Three Persons in one God”.

Rule 101–122: The Vision

These prohibitions were laid upon me on Ascension Day, four years ago, by God the Father himself, at the moment when his Son came upon the altar. At this coming, I received a kiss from him, and by this token I was shown what follows. Having been made one with him, I came before his Father. There the Father took the Son to himself with me and took me to himself with the Son. And in this Unity into which I was taken and where I was enlightened, I understood this Essence and knew it more clearly than, by speech, reason, or sight, one can know anything that is knowable on Earth. This seems wonderful indeed. But although I say it seems wonderful, I know indeed it does not astonish you. For Earth cannot understand heavenly wisdom. Words enough and Dutch enough can be found for all things on Earth, but I do not know any Dutch or any words that answer my purpose. Although I can express everything insofar as this is possible for a human being, no Dutch can be found for all I have said to you, since none exists to express these things, so far as I know.

In this section, Hadewych describes how and when she received the orders and prohibitions from God as described in the poem of Rule 1–10. It was at Ascension Day, four years ago, during the Eucharist, more specifically; During the Eucharistic prayer, when the Son came upon the altar. Upon that coming, Hadewych was, as she says, kissed by him. The mystical kiss occurs in many mystical writings. It symbolizes the fusion of the active and the passive element and is as such a sign of association with the Deity, “and by this token I was shown” (for whom or to whom is not clear). “I was shown” is indeed: the fusion with the Son: “Having been made one with him, I came before his Father ... There the Father took the Son to himself with me and took me to himself with the Son.” From this sentence it becomes clear that Hadewych experienced that she was one with the Father through the Son.

“And in this Unity into which I was taken and where I was enlightened, I understood this Essence and knew it more clearly than, by speech, reason, or sight, one can know anything that is knowable on Earth.” In the Unity a certain insight is conducted to Hadewych. Here she makes clear how she has come to this insight. In the Unity in which she was engulfed and glorified (being engulfed is at the same time being glorified, this refers again to the fruition associated with the unison, as described above), she understood the essence of God, who is three and yet one, and she learned to know it in a way that cannot be matched by human language, with human reason and with human perception. It is a new, more intensive way of knowing. This new way of knowing belongs, according to Hadewych, substantially to the unification. It’s a mystical way of knowing.

This seems wonderful indeed. But although I say it seems wonderful, I know indeed it does not astonish you. For Earth cannot understand heavenly wisdom. Words enough and Dutch enough can be found for all things on Earth, but I do not know any Dutch or any words that answer my purpose. Although I can express everything insofar as this is possible for a human being, no Dutch can be found for all I have said to you, since none exists to express these things, so far as I know.

In this section, Hadewych explains the form of mystical knowing she means. She calls her strange. However, she believes that her readers will not be surprised. “For Earth cannot understand heavenly wisdom.” Hadewych assumes that her readers have some experience of knowing this language of heaven, even if she denies the possibility to that at the same way. The continuation of the sentence makes it clear that, however, it is not so much about the understanding of the language of heaven, but much more about speaking the language of heaven: “Words enough and Dutch enough can be found for all things on Earth, but I do not know any Dutch or any words that answer my purpose.” In comparison to what is of the Earth, for what is of heaven there is no language that can say what should be said, namely what was perceived as heavenly. “Although I can express everything insofar as this is possible for a human being, no Dutch can be found for all I have said to you, since none exists to express these things, so far as I know.” It is possible that Hadewych here hints at the fact that she has had a thorough education as a woman of a prominent family. She understands all forms of meaningful speech. Behind this remark a developed woman can hide. But despite of the fact that she understands all these forms of meaningful speech, it is not possible for her to put into words what happened to her as “heavenly”. No Dutch is possible to express this knowing because there is no Dutch

that belongs to it, Hadewych says. Here the problem is raised that so many mystics put into words, namely the impossibility to bring the experience of God into words. It is also for this reason that Hadewych in the beginning of this Letter wishes that God himself will make her readers understand what she intended to say. She realizes that she cannot put into words what happened to her, only God himself can give the right insight into this. Hadewych knows that this insight can only grow by getting involved with Minne. Minne herself will entrain her readers to the insight that has happened to her. Yet she tries to articulate what she can't articulate; an inner force drives her to do so. After all, as it says in Rule 7 and 8: *"This I wished long since to tell you, for it lies heavy on my heart"*. Hadewych can no longer hold it back. Because she would like to bring her readers to this insight, or because her heart is full of what she has experienced and urges her to communicate herself? Probably it's a mixture of both, although we only find confirmation for the first option in this Letter. After all, she writes, *"[t]herefore I desire in my turn to order you the same things, because they belong perfectly to the perfection of Love, and because they belong perfectly and wholly in the Divinity."* (13–14). The impossibility to give a precise expression to her experience did not cause mutism to Hadewych but a flood of words to circumscribe what happened to her, aware of the fact that the actual experience can never be grasped.

Rule 123–135: Postscript

Although I forbid you some works and command the others, you will in either case have to serve much. But lack of discrimination regarding the things I have said, this I forbid you as those works were forbidden me by God's will. But you must still labor at the works of Love, as I long did, and as his friends did and still do. For my part I am devoted to these works at any hour and still perform them at all times: to seek after nothing but Love, work nothing but Love, protect nothing but Love, and advance nothing but Love. How you are to do or omit each of these things, may God, our Beloved, teach you.

In this passage, Hadewych focuses directly on her readers. She reminds them that before they come to the experience of Unity, they will still have to serve much. However, she directly infuses again the insights she communicated in this Letter. She says: *"Although I forbid you some works and command the others"*. Here it becomes clear that the poem of the beginning of this Letter indeed consisted of orders and prohibitions, as was previously noted in the analysis of this Letter. Hadewych here again appeals to the divine authority of these orders and prohibitions. Her readers must endeavor as she has done,

and the friends of Jesus are still doing. But they must also do what she does since she has gained the understanding of the essence of Deity: *"[T]o seek after nothing but Love, work nothing but Love, protect nothing but Love, and advance nothing but Love. How you are to do or omit each of these things, may God, our Beloved, teach you."* How these things are done and should be left, for that understanding Hadewych does an appeal to God, their Beloved. Again, Hadewych hints here that she cannot put into words what the actual experience has been. Only in Minne itself the human soul comes to insight.

6 Conclusions

The Letter XVII provides a first entry to the imaginary field that Hadewych uses in relation to the triune God. It distinguishes between God in his essence (Unity) and in his Persons (the Father, the Son, and the Spirit):

- God in his essence is first experienced by her as a principle of Unity ("keeping back");
- The Person's own activity ("pouring out") forms a mirror for human action;
- The activity of the Persons ("pouring out") is mirrored in man by working the virtues and serving God;
- However, from the divine Unity, every moment a call is made to man to enjoy the Unity (at Divine level "keeping back").

The new understanding that is given to Hadewych includes the understanding that the most perfect life one can attain on Earth not exists in only activity (at Divine level "pouring out") or only fruition (at Divine level "keeping back"), and also not in the alternation of these, but in the simultaneous existence of these two, action and rest (*contemplation*). As the Deity at the same time is "pouring out" and "keeping back", so a man is called to preserve rest in action and in rest always be prepared for action.

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Ātma-jñāna – Melting into Being

Received November 30, 2017

Revised January 9, 2018

Accepted January 14, 2018

Key words

Ātma-jñāna, yoga, Patanjali,
Ramana Maharshi

The paper surveys a selected set of literature and discusses the issue, whether a *jñāni (muktī)*, when “melting into Being” opens a life at the level of existence called *Janaloka* or *Satyaloka* or simply merges his being into the Absolute, whatever is perceived by the rest of people, who may continue to see him as before. Then the key points of *sāadhanā* leading to enlightenment are discussed. Further it is discussed why enlightened yogis cannot communicate information that is beyond the “veil of *ānanda*”. The points discussed are illustrated also graphically.

1 Introduction

The question of *liberation*, “*mukti*”, and its implications is a very important subject for everyone, who is a *sādhaka* and does everything that is in his power to reach *samādhi* and *mukti*, even though these concepts and their context are shrouded in secrecy. This is because there seems to be no way to communicate about these phenomena in ways that involve the usual working of the mind.

Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutras* deals mainly with the states of *chitta*, the “working space of mind”. He states that yoga is “*chitta vrtti nirodhah*” (Patanjali 1986, I:2, 93) that means that when the mind does not project any information into the *chitta*, then *samādhi* happens. This is why Vyasa, perhaps the most renowned commentator of the *Yoga Sutras* declares that “*Yoga is samādhi*”. The state of *samādhi* is described in the next verse: “*Then the seer rests in his own true nature*” (Patanjali 1986, I:3, 114).

Still, there are questions regarding the “protocol” of this process, namely how can *samādhi* be reached practically and whether *samādhi* or “melting into Being” annihilate any further manifested existence or shifts the manifested existence into a higher level within the seven levels of the Indian tradition. These and related questions are investigated below.

2 The Process to be Understood

Śrī Śankarācārya in his *Drṣya Drshya Viveka* declares: “*The form is perceived, and the eye is the perceiver. It (the eye) is perceived and the mind is its perceiver. The mind with its modifications (vrtti) is perceived and the Witness (the Self) is verily the perceiver. But it (the Witness) is not perceived (by any other).*” (Shankaracharya 1976, 1).

The “true nature” is usually interpreted as the absolute Being. Some schools declare that *samādhi*, even *nirvikalpa-samādhi* is only a step towards *sahaja-samādhi*. *Sahaja-samādhi* means that the *jñāni* is in a state of permanent *samādhi*, but simultaneously is aware also of the “outer world” as his *karma* may need to keep his body but is not affected by the happening in the world created by Maya.

The Svarupa Spanda of the *Spanda Karikas* (Unknown 2005, I:17, 86) declares: “*The fully enlightened has always and incessantly, the undeviating knowledge of the Self (Sat) in all the three states; the other one (the partially enlightened), has it only in the beginning and the end of each state.*”



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The *Siva Sutras* define it as: “Even during the three different states of consciousness in waking, dreaming and profound sleep, the rapturous experience of the I-consciousness (*sambhava*) of the fourth state (*turiya abides*.” (Vasugupta 2007, I:7, 36).

There may be some doubt regarding whether a *jñāni* has or does not have karma attached to him. By *karma* one may take all the processes and states that cause the absolute Being to manifest in the world of *maya* and be tied into it. Ramana Maharshi in his *Spiritual Instructions* declared the following (Maharshi, chap. III, verses 9–10):

Is it possible to overcome, even while the body exists, the karma (prarabdha) which is said to last till the end of the body?

Yes. If the agent (doer) upon whom the karma depends, namely the ego (ahamkāra), which has come into existence between the body and the Self, merges in its source and loses its form, will the karma which depends upon it alone survive? Therefore, when there is no 'I' there is no karma.

As the Self is existence and consciousness, what is the reason for describing it as different from the existent and the non-existent, the sentient and the insentient?

Although the Self is real, as it comprises everything, it does not give room for questions involving duality about its reality or unreality. Therefore, it is said to be different from the real and the unreal. Similarly, even though it is consciousness, since there is nothing for it to know or to make itself known to, it is said to be different from the sentient and the insentient.

The absolute Being is described in different schools differently, but the essence is the same. Thus e.g. in the *Vijnana Bhairava* (Unknown 2002, verses 8B–9A, 14) it is declared:

Whatever is known as the composite form of Bhairava (absolute Being), that oh Goddess, is deceptive like magic, because it has no essence. This state of Bhairava is free from the limitations of space, time and form. It is not particularized by a specific place or designation. In reality it is inexpressible, because it cannot be described.

The definitions of the state of *liberation (mukti)*, which is the consequence of achieving *Ātma-jñāna*, the “non-dual state of being” that depends on the notion that the *ahamkāra* is “dissolved” or made to “die”. This is assumed to be necessary as the *ahamkāra* contains all information on the personality and the various types of the individual karma.

The notion of putting *ahamkāra* to death is a recurring idea, but it is impossible to do by any effort or will. It will happen

when the *jīva* (individual) melts into Being as it is described by Kannutaiya Vallalar (2013). Up and until that time, the *ahamkāra* is the holder of the direction of our life path.

There is a vast literature on the philosophical models of the created universe like there are many ways of describing the path of a yogi towards liberation. The number of practices is almost innumerable. It seems to be necessary for any yoga practitioners interested in yoga (and in greater depth that just in *āsanas*) to go step by step and to know better his tools of existence in this world. Ancient *Hatha Yoga* gurus like Gheranda, Gorakhnath, Swatmarama and others defined tens of practices to reach *samādhi*, just like Patanjali.

A more radical approach from the point of view of *sādhana* strategy is represented e.g. by Ramana Maharshi (1966, 1–2) in his *Nan Yar*:

If I am not anyone of these (dhātu, senses, prānā, mind, avidyā), then who am I?

After ascertaining the non-identity with the above entities, by the process of not this, not this, that Consciousness, which remains – that is the I.

This is a part of the *ātma-vichāra*, a “searching” for the “I” in its absolute state. As it is evident from the texts above, a search is impossible, as the absolute Being cannot be perceived, as it is only through its projections that we can perceive, using the software of the mind, what we conceive as the “objective” world.

In the *Sad Vidyā* (Maharshi, 1998, verses 6–7, 2) it is said: “*The world is nothing more than an embodiment of the objects perceived by the five sense organs. Since, through these five sense-organs, a single mind perceives the world, the world is nothing but the mind. Apart from the mind, is there a world? Although the world and the knowledge thereof rise and set together, it is by knowledge alone that the world is made apparent. That Perfection, wherein the world and knowledge thereof rise and set, and which shines without rising and setting, is alone the Reality.*”

If we sum all this up, the model with which we work here is that there is the absolute Being, then the *ahamkāra*, the mind-body system which appears to exist in this world that is perceived by the senses through the mind. The mind is aware only a fragment of all the available information (Fig. 1). All this is made perceptible by the individualized consciousness becoming aware of it in the *chittakasha*, the “working space of mind”.



Fig. 1. The world as perceived by the mind. The partial prānic flow (on the left) sustains the world we see, and our world seems to be isolated from the rest of the Existence. There is however an opening to the unlimited Existence (on the right), but in order to get there one has to leave the ordinary life (drawing by G. M. Timčák 1974).

This seems to be in a way a binary system. One is either in a state of *avidyā* (taking the apparent world as real) or in a state of *vidyā*, where the individual consciousness gets divested from all the attributes and is liberated from any associations with them, even if apparently that being is still visible to the outside world.

Still, there is an aspect to be resolved. *The Purna Gayatri* reminds us of the seven upper levels of existence. The upper ones are called *vyahrtis*. They are described in the *Vishnu Purana* (Unknown 1840, book 2, chap. 7, 217). They range from *Bhuloka* (the Earth), to *Bhuvarloka*, *Swargaloka*, *Maharloka*, *Janaloka*, *Tapoloka*, and *Satyaloka*. The *Janaloka* level is the level where humanity originated. *Ahamkāras* of humans were created by *Mahat*, the great principle (Patanjali 2015, 33–35; Unknown 1840, book 2, chap. 1, 14–15). The work *Spirit, Force, Matter* of Adelma von Vay (1924 18, 74–78) reflects a model that during the processes of creation broadly two types of beings were created: the first-born ones and the humans – the second born ones. Fig. 2 shows the hierarchy of the first-born beings (Fludd 1617, 45, 90, 210).

Not too much is known about the formal hierarchy of the first-born ones apart from what Adelma von Vay (1924, 66–68), and Dionysius the Areopagite (Dionysius 1897), or Fludd (1617) write about them (Fig. 2). In the Indian system of thought the abodes of *devas* – or shining ones – and other beings are described e.g. in *Vishnu Purana* (Unknown 1840, chap. 5, 42–44), but it is quite complex and difficult to interpret within the discussed frame.

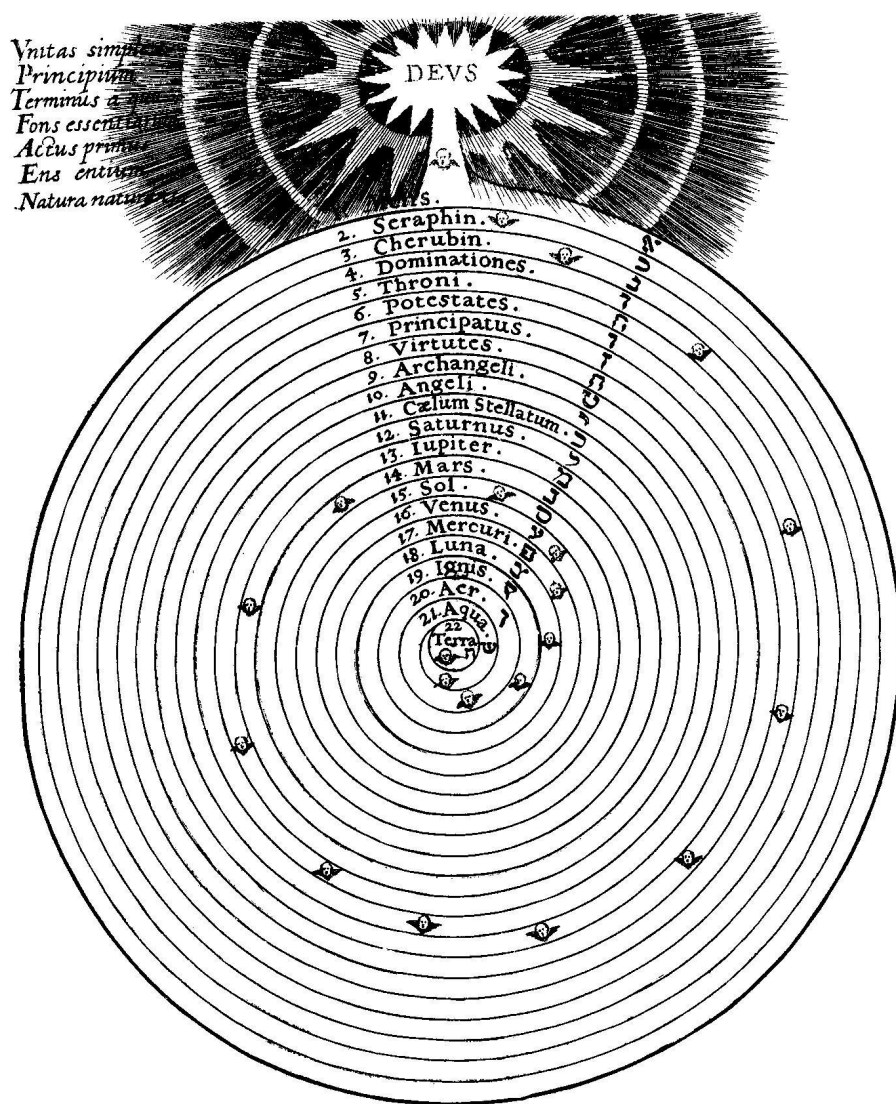


Fig. 2. The Celestial Hierarchy: God; Unitas simplex; Principium; Terminus a quo; Fons essentiarum; Actus primus; Ens entium; Natura naturalis; 1. The Divine Mind; 2. Seraphim; 3. Cherubim; 4. Dominions; 5. Thrones; 6. Powers – Maiestatis; 7. Principalities; 8. Virtues; 9. Archangels; 10. Angels. After that the planetary system follows down to the Earth, the present home of humankind (R. Fludd 1617). Dionysius Areopagite (Parker 1897) describes the hierarchy of beings as: Seraphim – Fiery ones; Cherubim – Fullness of knowledge; Thrones – Divine seats, purifiers; Dominions – order an justice; Virtues – grace and valour; Powers – providential aid; Principalities – Divine Lordship; Archangels – imprinters of the Divine Seal; Angels – purify and uplift.

As indicated above, humans were created on *Janaloka* (Unknown 1840, book 2, chap. 7, 212–214). Adelman von Vay (1924, 74–78) relates a more in-depth spiritual history of events that led to the appearance of humans. The flow of events is so complex that it would not be possible to detail it here. Still, we can work with the model that up to a point, freshly appearing humans were living in accordance with the plan of the Creator (thus in a fully dharmic way), they did not need an *ahamkāra*, as they did not create *karma*. However, after some of the humans (just like some of the first-born ones) started a life that was in discord with the original plan, they started creating *karma* (Vay 1924, 80–84). The *ahamkāra* that was created by Mahat at the *Mahar* level of existence (Unknown 1840, book 2, chap. 1, 14–15; chap. 7, 212–215) enabled a record of *karmas* and personality traits, specially as with the increasing volume of *karmas*, the humans had to start working on their *karmas* on a lower and lower level of existence, which was a process similar to the evolution scheme of the evolving creation from *Parasamvit* to the

appearance of the 24 *tattvas* – used by some schools of philosophy (Woodroffe 1978; Timčák 2004). Thus, at a point the *kanchukas* came to effect and at the *Bhuloka* the degrees of freedom available to humans became very limited and people are very much governed by *karma*.

The Indian tradition knows about humans who after enormous effort, *tapas*, could become deva-like, but within the hierarchy shown in Fig. 2, it is not known that a human could become an angel or other higher being. On the other hand, there are hints that an angelic being could incarnate to the *Bhuloka*. Some rishis and yogis, who would not need to incarnate on the earth do so in order to help *sādhakas* and the world. Similarly, Messiahs also incarnate for the same purpose.

So, it is interesting to rethink, whether *samādhi* or *jñāna* means a transfer into *Janaloka* or it goes beyond the *lokas* into the Absolute. Thus, the question is – would humans be

able or be enabled to go beyond the level of existence where from they started? In the *Tattva Shuddhi sādhanā* (Unknown 1913; Woodroffe 1990, 108–115; Satyasangananda 1992) in essence the *sādhaka* starts a process of un-creating himself, by merging the *tattvas* from *prithivi tattva* to *ākāśa tattva*, then this *tattva* to *ahamkāra*, then *ahamkāra* to *Mahat tattva*, *Mahat tattva* to *Prakṛti* and *Prakṛti* to *Puruṣa*. Subsequently the *sādhaka* gets re-created by an opposite process. Here there is no mention of the various *lokas*, apart from *Mahat* related to *Maharloka*.

A similar process is described by Patanjali: “*te pratiprasava-heyah sukshmah*”, what is translated in a number of ways. Karambelkar renders it as: “*They (kleśas) can be curbed down and done away with by the process of counter-evolution (and are) subtle.*” (Patanjali, II:10, 176–177). Satyananda renders it as: “*Those kleśas are reducible by involution when they are subtle.*” (Patanjali 1979, 103).

Swami Veda Bharati favours the following translation: “*Those afflictions (being made progressively) subtler are to be abandoned through the process of dissolution as devolution is reversed.*” (Patanjali 2001, 111). Patanjali defines the way it is to be done: “*dhyāna heyas tad vṛttayah*”, that is “*through dhyāna – meditation, which reduces, eliminates and eradicates the vrittis*” (Patanjali 1979, II:11, 103).

The reversing of the evolution that otherwise causes the creation of a greater and greater mass of information useless from the point of view of enlightenment is an analogous process to *tattva shuddhi*, with the exception of return to the *Bhuloka* and to the body, because the *Yoga Sutra* ends with the state of *Kaivalya*: “*Kaivalya is the involution of the gunas because of the fulfilment of their purpose, or it is the restoration of the Puruṣa to his natural form which is pure consciousness*” (Patanjali 1979, IV:34, 258).

The difference of models of spiritual advance and enlightenment (here one reflexes the gradual up-going path, the other a “quantum jump”) are interesting from more points of view:

1. The yogic literature (e.g. Saradananda 1952, 596–597; Nikhilananda 1952, 931–945) indicates that yogis after *nirvikalpa-samādhi* may or may not stay on the Earth or may choose to reincarnate here again. It means that a trace of *ahamkāra* is still tied to their being. The *Spanda Karika* (Kallata 2015, 170) describes some of the related processes. Sources like the *Bhagavad Gita* (Vyasa 1948, 235–257) and Vay (1924, 33–36, 47–50) communicated that some highly evolved souls may decide to incarnate on Earth or other existential levels in order to help the beings living on that level to get to a higher level. This would also indicate that the path to higher understanding and higher levels of existence is gradual.

2. The earlier cited texts reporting on a sudden “jump” to “melting into Being” seem to avoid this gradual process and they seem to indicate that *mukti* is a “meltdown” into the absolute state of being.

3. The process of *tattva shuddhi* (sometimes called *bhuta shuddhi*) seems to combine the two as it is gradual, but half-way through the *sādhanā* it melts into the Absolute, then after restoration brings back the *sādhaka* to his original environment.

Swami Vireshwarananda (in 1980) related an event from the life of Śrī Ramakrishna that when his disciples asked him to describe to them what does he experience when *kundalini* rises through the *chakras*, he fell into *samādhi* and said that above *Viśuddha chakra*, “*his tongue was tied*” and could not speak about his experience. Thus, those yogis, who live in *sahaja-samādhi*, may also melt into information fields that are not transmittable and thus cannot be articulated. As Patanjali speaks about a curtain of light that prevents seeing beyond it (Patanjali II:52, 626), the *ānanda* associated with the Absolute (*Sat-Chit-Ānanda*) may prevent an articulated understanding of laws that regulate this issue and covers that which is behind *ānanda*.

Thus, the *jñāni* is overwhelmed, like in the *Avadhut Gita* of Adi Śankarācārya (Shankaracharya 1968, 15–17), and communicates his *ānandic* meltdown, but not the “technical” details:

3 The Sādhanā

*I know not Shiva
How can I speak of Him?
Who Shiva is I know not,
How can I worship him?
I am Shiva, the only Reality,
Like space absolute is my nature,
In me is neither unity nor variety,
The cause of imagination also is absent in me.
Free from subject and object am I,
How can I be self-realisable?
Endlessness is my nature, naught else exist,
Truth absolute is my nature, naught else exists.
Ātman by nature, the supreme Reality am I,
Neither am I slayer nor the slain.
On destruction of a jar,
the space therein unites with all space.
In myself and Shiva I see no difference
when the mind is purified.
Brahman alone is, as pure consciousness.
In truth there is no jar and no jar-space,
no embodied soul, nor its nature.
From subtle substance (Mahat) down to formed creation,
There is nothing but Brahman;
Most clearly do I see this.
Where then is the division of caste?
How shall I worship that Ātman great
Which is neither personal nor impersonal.
Taintless, above love and aversion, uncreated,
All-pervasive, of the form of the universe,
Having no attributes, yet not attributeless,
That all-bliss Shiva, my Self.*

The atmosphere of Ozhivil Odukkam (Vallalar 2013, verse 111, 160) is similar: “Should you succeed even for a split second in reaching the state of absorption in the Self (nishta), which, as the pure state in which the discriminating consciousness has fallen away, is free of all limitation, ah! I am at a loss to describe it! Is the bliss that rises up then a thing of little account? It would be as if one accessed the (vast) ocean of milk through the tiny hole in a teat!”

The usual recommendations for the yogic *sādhanā* are well described in yogic literature. Depending on the orientation of the *sādhaka*, he can choose from an enormous pool of practices. In relation with his nature, he may choose light, mild, medium or strict *sādhanā*. All usually goes well up a point, when a medium *pratyahara* and *dhāranā* is mastered. *Pratyahara* is difficult to will. It happens when the attention is brought under control by our intention. That in turn made *dhāranā* to occur. This phase of meditation will open the *Brahma granthi* (situated in *Mūlādhāra*) and also *Vishnu ghranti* (situated in *Anāhata*). When the *dhāranā* is nearing in quality to *dhyāna*, then *Rudra granthi* (in *Ājñā*) opens. Here is a crucial point mentioned by a number of authors (Vallalar 2013, 160; Timčák 2017, 1–5) – not only the *vrittis* or *kleśas* are to be relaxed from, but the *attention*, which is the most crucial function of the mental structure, is also to be relaxed, so that it does not attempt to present information from the other parts of the mind to the *ahamkāra* and also does not attempt to try to “explore” the areas between the mind and *ahamkāra*. If this is achieved, then the *sādhaka* has an even more difficult task: to relax from the individualized sense of consciousness and to melt into the Absolute. *Ramana Gita* (Ganapati 1966, IX:3, 88) relates that “the association of the Self with the body is called the *granthi*. By that association alone one is conscious of his body and actions.” This is one of the challenges beyond the *Rudra granthi*: To let go all associations with the mind and body (Fig. 3). This, according to *Mah-anirvana Tantra* (Unknown, 1913), leads to unity with absolute Being.

Vijnana Bhairava (Unknown 2002, verse 82, 96) speaks about a similar process: “Either sitting on a seat or lying on a bed one should meditate on the body as being supportless. When the mind becomes empty, and supportless, within a moment one is liberated from mental dispositions.”

Lakshman Joo comments that “this means when the mind is dissolved, he (the yogi) enters in the mindless state of God consciousness ... Imagine, you have thrown away the body as if it is nothing. There is no support for this body. Then, when thoughtlessness arises, the yogi enters in an instant in the thoughtless state of God consciousness.”



Fig. 3. The strategy for getting beyond the perceived world (maya) and ahamkāra. The usual direction of attention (Attention 1) is outward. Pratyahara (Attention 2) withdraws the attention from the world (including the body). Then manas and buddhi became almost inactive. The next step is to render the attention completely inactive (dissolving attention). In this way the whole world as we know it, including the personality (with the various databases of the ahamkāra) is given up. Then the non-individual Being “swallows” all what was felt as existence before. In this way jñāna emerges. The previous references (time, space etc.) cease to manifest for the jñāni.

The exact protocol at this point is unknown for the reasons stated earlier, but the result could be seen on a great number of yogis. Ramana Maharshi had a number of proposals for reaching union with Brahman. One of the best known is the verse given in *Ramana Gita* (Ganapati 1966, II:1):

In the Heart cavern, the Brahman alone, in all its elemental purity, shines as ‘I,’ ‘I,’ the Ātman, and is within the direct reach of experience. Enter the heart (hridayam, the main gate for importing the ‘I’ experience into the mind-body); search for it with the mind, or dive deep within, or control the movements of the breath and abide forever, in the Ātman.

Śankarācārya in his *Aparoksha-anubhuti* (Shankaracharya 1982, verses 127–128, 69) gives the following help: “While practicing the path to samādhi there appear unavoidably many obstacles, such as lack of inquiry (anusandhan), idleness, desire for sense pleasure, sleep, dullness (tamas), distraction (viksepa), tasting of joy and the sense of blankness. One desiring the knowledge of Brahman should slowly get rid of such innumerable obstacles.”

Thus, when the attention is turned “inward” for a while, then before it becomes useless, all the individualized parts of a being are becoming powerless and the individual consciousness is melted into the universal consciousness – Ātman.

It remains a secret, whether this process takes an individual to the original home of humankind – the level of the second born (*Janaloka*) or to the *Satyaloka*, where he would live as an enlightened individual, or directly to a meltdown into the Absolute with no manifested form.

It is also a fact that a yogi living in *sahaja-samādhi* – in the view of others living on the Earth – is an important help for *sādhakas* that are qualified for making this last step on the “*journey back to the Source*” (Kannutaiya 2013, 7).

4 Conclusion

Thus, we could not be certain regarding the answer to the proposed question, as the relevant information appears to be made inaccessible from our levels of existence. Still, historical evidence has shown that yogis, who have reached the state of various *samādhis* or “melted into Being” are not only “reference points”, but as they have the key to these forms of being, and can help *sādhakas*, who are prepared to take these formidable steps towards “melting into Being”.

The Yogataravali (Shankaracharya 2009) explains what also the *Bhagavad Gita* (Vyasa 1948, II:69, 76) indicates – that a *jñāni* sees what others do not see, but his mind is not disturbed by anything that others see as given in the verses below:

For the yogi in this extraordinary state, the old patterns are completely cleansed, the state of yoga nidra arises, and the yogi is totally devoid of any interest in this world. Through appropriate practice, done steadily when all thoughts and intentions are completely rooted out, when we are freed totally from the web of karma, then the yogi reaches and remains in the state of yoga nidra. Resting in the bed of the turiya state, higher than the other three states; always having the vision of the highest (Ātman) my dear friend! Enter and remain in the nirvikalpa state, the state of yoga nidra.

When the light of the paramātma glows, the darkness called avidyā is destroyed totally; then the yogi who perceives everything clearly, does not see anything in this world.

Ozhivil Odukkam of Vallalar voices a concordant note: “Know that only he is the jñāna guru who, with a glance, brings the disciple to absolute stillness, having perceived [in him] the state of maturity wherein becomes harmonised [with the Self] as that which is false gradually disappears, so that he dissolves into the waves [of the ocean] of bliss of union [with the divine], in which he exists as Reality itself.” (Vallalar 2013, 13).

A friend of mine – a yoga teacher – was asking a yogi (a *pramukh* of a South Indian ashram) what is necessary to do in order to achieve enlightenment. The yogi gave a description of suitable practices and with a wink of his eye added: but there is still a small gap on the way to enlightenment and that can be bridged only by a guru (Fig. 4). But because my friend is an action-oriented person, he missed the last point as there was no doing involved. Only time will show, whether he will find the bridge covering this “small” gap, or that he will come to a realization that a guru is needed. Let us hope that there will be always yogis who could help to mature *sādhakas*, as it is shown in the story below.

In 1977 a small group of Europeans guided by the late Aviyogi Suren Goyal, went to see Prabhudatta Brahmachari and he guided them to Deoraha Baba. One of the group members, a young German lady, had the view that a guru (here Deoraha Baba) has to know her problem and offer help. The others tried to convince her that unless she presents her problem to a guru, he will not take action. On the day when the group had to leave, when they were with Deoraha Baba, she mentally switched to a mental request for help. The same moment an orange thrown by Deoraha Baba hit her at her forehead, and her meditation problem got resolved. Now the distance between Deoraha Baba and the lady was about fifteen meters and thus Deoraha Baba must have pre-cognised the change as the time the orange was flying towards the lady was longer than the moment between her change of attitude and the moment when her forehead was hit by the orange (throwing oranges at the people around him as a *prasad*, “gift”, was a usual habit of Deoraha Baba).



Fig. 4. At the crucial point of the *sāghanā*, the *sādhaka* has to realize that he needs a help. Thus, help comes after the body, manas and buddhi are all attuned to receiving the help. On the 3rd level the knower and the known are starting to be felt separate. The help, though not visible, lifts the energy level of the *sādhaka* and making *jñāna* temporarily available to the him. It facilitates the exit from the world of *ajñāna* (drawing by G. M. Timčák, 1977).

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Logothetical Understanding of Existential Sources of Bullying Behavior

Received March 4, 2018

Revised April 9, 2018

Accepted April 11, 2018

Key words

Logotherapy, aggression,
bullying, self-detachment,
self-transcendence

The approach of logotherapy is one of many approaches how to understand man. Logotherapy sees a human being in his complexity, as a three-dimensional unity of somatic, psychic, and noetic dimensions. Through logotherapy, man discovers the possible sources for not loving himself and others. The logothetical approach points out that individuals involved in bullying present un developed noetic dimension. This becomes a source of existential frustration or existential vacuum leading to the occurrence of various forms of pathological behavior including bullying. It emphasizes that aggressors present insufficient development of two fundamental capacities of the noetic dimension allowing the contact with other people: self-detachment and self-transcendence. The uniqueness of this approach lies in the search for answers to one's existence that bring more than just a temporary satisfaction. Uncovering existential sources of bullying behavior could be instrumental in finding solutions to prevention and intervention of bullying.

1 Aggression and Bullying in the Context of Logotheoretical Concept

Behavior aimed at harming another individual can vary in forms and intensity. Aggressive behavior may range from ostracism to aggressive, violent, or bullying behavior. Aggressive behavior is defined as “*an intentional action causing harm to another person or a group of people, where important is the intention and not the fact whether the act was really committed or not*” (Lovaš 2010, 12). Aggression means also intentional harm inflicted upon the victim with the aim to cause damage (Čermák 1999), or destructive behavior aimed at physical, verbal or symbolical attack against another individual (Spurný 1996). Aggression can be categorized as either reactive or proactive and, from the perspective of purpose, as affective and instrumental. Bullying is a special type of specific interpersonal aggression (Craig and Pepler 2007, 87), which involves significant power asymmetry between the aggressor and the victim and the repetition of aggressive behavior. Bullying is a form of behavior with an intention to physically, psychologically, socially, and emotionally harm the victim (Smith and Brain 2000, 1). A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students (Olweus 1997, 496). Understanding mechanisms of bullying requires knowing how the aggressive behavior works.

The approach of logotherapy is one of many approaches to understanding of man. It perceives human being in his complexity, as a three-dimensional unity of somatic, psychological, and noetic dimensions. The objective of such approach is to avoid all forms of reductionism in relation to understanding human being, and to find answers to existential questions about the value and meaning of life. The uniqueness of this approach lies in the search for answers to one's existence that bring more than just a temporary satisfaction. The very essence of man is in his freedom, responsibility, and self-transcendence. Logotherapy emphasizes the self-transcendence of man when he reaches beyond oneself and acts towards the pursuit of selfless goals and values.

Logotheoretical concept of existence introduces an integral understanding of man in the process of being, becoming, direction, and relationships. It is a conception in which the subjective attributes and the activity of an individual are integrated into the process of personality structure and individual existence formation (Popielski 2005, 27). Central to logotherapy is seeing man as being in three dimensions (Frankl 2006), as a unity of biological, psychological and,



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specifically human, spiritual dimensions interwoven with one another. The *somatic dimension* of the human being involves all of the bodily phenomena. It comprises the biological and physiological bodily functions including the physical and chemical processes. The *psychological dimension* is the realm of consciousness, instinctual feelings, instincts, affects, and desires. It also encompasses emotions and cognition, intellectual abilities of man, acquired patterns of behavior and social interactions. The *spiritual dimension* encompasses a free attitude towards the physical being and existence, independent willful decisions (*intentionality*), artistic interests, creativity, religion and moral feeling (*conscience*), understanding one's values and love (Lukas 2009, chap. 1). Logotherapy emphasizes the spiritual dimension and thus broadens the understanding of the personality structure. Literary sources on psychology (Frankl 1999, 2006) refers to this specifically human dimension as to a "*noetic or noological dimension*" or a dimension invoking human spirit. Frankl operationalized the noetic dimension as that in which man reaches beyond his psychophysical being, responds to his psychosomatic conditions, and exercises some degree of freedom from his determination by external and internal conditions. It is a dimension (Popielski 2005, chap. 2), which defines the existential being, becoming and functioning of a human being, sources of motivation and subjective-personal dynamics of existence. The essence of the noetic dimension is in realization of values and orientation toward the meaning presented in diversity, self-distancing, self-transcendence, freedom, and responsibility. Underdevelopment of noetic dimension results in existential frustration or a vacuum, which then leads to various forms of pathological behavior, with bullying being one of them. Researches (Dědová 2010) showed that aggressors present a lower level of noodynamics, which is closely related to the ability of being in control of one's own thinking, experience, and behavior. Aggressors with lower levels of noodynamics did not express enough interest in others and were unable to express emotional closeness. According to Popielski (2005, chap. 2), persons with undeveloped noodynamics are less spontaneous in their relationship with others; they are less open towards other people and are unable to cooperate. These individuals tend to break the rules and behaviors and do as they please.

Psychoanalysis perceives man as a being driven by the will to pleasure. Adlerian psychotherapy focuses on man driven by the will to power. Logotherapy, however, perceives man as a being driven by the will to meaning. Psychotherapy has come a long way since the time of Freud, characterized by two stages: the first led from the automaticity of existence towards the existence itself, the second one from the autonomy to transcendence. On one hand, the human existence

does not disperse itself in the sheer image of a bundle of instincts or an automaton of reflexes; while on the other hand, the image of the human being steps beyond the horizon of immanence. The logothetical approach does not agree with seeing aggression as some kind of energy that drives a person to look for someone else to vent his anger. In logothetical approach, we let the aggression transform.

On a human level, aggression is aimed either on something or on someone one hates. Love and hatred are human and intentional phenomena that explain the reasons behind one's behavior (Frankl 2006). If man is led to believe that there is no reason for hatred, the hatred itself becomes absurd. On the contrary, however, when man is being convinced that he is endowed with a potential aggression, which he must somehow let out, we only create the delusion that violence and hatred are one's inescapable fate. Man, however, has no fate because he is a co-creator of everything in his specifically human dimension. He is not left at the mercy of aggression. Man resorts to aggression when he is constantly reminded that he is not a creator of his own life, but a victim of innate biological or societal conditions.

Logotherapy draws attention to existentially more profound sources of aggressive behavior that contribute to onset of reactive, instrumental aggression. These sources are also behind the aggression per se, that type of aimless aggression with hostile intent and manifestation of recurrent power over others (Aluede *et al.* 2008; Arseneault, Bowes and Shakoor 2010) that is typical for bullying.

2 Undeveloped Capacity of Self-Detachment and Self-Transcendence in the Act of Bullying

One of the possible explanations of bullying behavior is the characteristic of aggressors involved in bullying. Their behavior is dominated by selfishness and self-centeredness. Bullies think that the world revolves around them and they adjust the rules to suit their own needs. They are only concerned with themselves and are insensitive to what their behavior causes others (Kolář 2011, chap. 4). Aggressors have a strong need to dominate and behave aggressively (Olweus 1995; Rigby 2002); they display a low level of empathy (Gajdošová and Herényiová 2002, chap. 9). They have no conscious feelings of guilt; they are not bothered by the fact that they have hurt someone. They lack the ability to identify their behavior

as immoral and they refuse to see themselves in the negative light.

Theory of mind reflects and describes this fact at aggressors. It emphasizes the role of social-cognitive competences through two different models (Sutton, Smith and Swettenham 1999). The first one presumes existence of a deficit in the processing of information in social context, which results in insufficient ability to process and interpret information coming from social interaction with peers and thus to create adequate social interaction. The second model describes bullying as successful aggression of clever individuals, which comes from understanding of mental states of others and abusing this ability to one's own advantage. Here we speak about qualified social manipulators. The results of a study (Gini 2006, 535) confirms the model of a "manipulator" in the role of the aggressor, who lacks emphatic reactivity toward peers and emotions of the victim (Arsenio and Lemerise 2001, 69). Also, the by bullying achieved popularity has an important positive influence on bullying others (Caravita *et al.* 2010, 161).

Another typical trait of aggressors is the inadequate self-assessment. Bullying behavior is linked with either high level of self-esteem (O'Moore and Kirkham 2001; Bendl 2003) or with the feelings of inferiority, insecurity, and low self-esteem (Olweus 1995; Řičan 1993; Gajdošová 2006), which are then compensated by aggression. Aggression can also be a result of disappointment and resentment at the fact these individuals are not who they think they are; and they are somehow subconsciously aware of that. In order to silence this subconscious voice, the person resorts to aggressive behavior (Sedláček 2015, 268). When the family history and relationship towards the father are concerned, we can observe the following: children from early father-absent homes tend to be less obedient, whereas boys whose fathers left home later in their lives tend to be more aggressive. Additionally, the level of aggression was higher among the individuals whose parents divorced in comparison to those whose fathers died (Sedláček 2010, 43). The behavior of aggressors shows that these individuals present underdevelopment of two capacities within their noetic dimension responsible for the contact with other people: self-detachment and self-transcendence. The uniquely human capacity of self-detachment allows the person to detach from himself and review either own or other person's attitudes, motives and behavior from a certain distance. The ability of self-transcendence allows the person to reach beyond himself, to forget, and ignore himself and devote his life to something or someone other than the self (Frankl and Lapise 2009). Logotherapy sees the essence of the human existence in self-transcendence – a capacity to reach

beyond oneself toward something that is not the self – toward something or someone – be it a meaning to fulfil or another human being to encounter in love (Lukas 1997, 25; Frankl, 2006). Observing the aggressor's behavior, we can point out to insufficient development of the self-detachment capacity, which is presented by one's thinking about his or her own unfulfilled needs, interests, individual subjective wellbeing, and even the pleasure that bullying might bring. In addition, there is no elementary experience with self-transcendence, in a sense of giving oneself to something or someone beyond one's own self-centered interests. Aggressors also lack the behavior aimed at something greater than their own profit.

They are unable to transcend boundaries of the self and be open to others and their needs. Insufficient development of self-transcendence prevents the bullying individuals from working on their own imperfections. At the same time, it will not let them see their classmate's needs. It prevents them from giving up their selfish motives such as: the desire for power or a certain status, experiencing the suffering of their victims or even killing boredom.

The structure of human existence brings up man's desire for something that transcends him, something that is not the self. Self-transcendence of human existence is realized either in service to something or in love towards another human being. To be human means to go beyond oneself, to be intentionally oriented toward someone and devoted to another human being he or she loves (Frankl and Lapise 2009). Being able to give up something for another human being out of one's own will shows one's inner maturity. The perpetrators of bullying do seem to lack this ability too.

3 Denial of Freedom and Responsibility in Bullying Behavior

At the very essence of the human existence lies freedom. Although man is not free from his dispositions and conditions, he is free to choose to take a stand on whatever conditions might confront him. Human being chooses whether he wants to give in to the conditions (Frankl 2006, 166) or what choices he might make. There is a possibility for man rising above his conditionality and entering the uniquely human dimension. Human behavior is, under all circumstances, realized through decisions and it is not dictated by the conditions. On one hand, the free will protects us from denial of deterministic and automatic aspects of human ex-

istence. On the other hand, it also protects us from denial of freedom, which let the human being rise above all of these aspects. In doing so man becomes more than just a free man, he also assumes responsibility. In his responsibility, man has an option to choose for what he understands to be free, and for what or against what he is deciding (Frankl 2007, 71). Logotherapy points out to the dynamics of human being who realizes himself both as an individual of his own kind and as a personal subject. The human being becomes a co-creator and author of his own existence and so the self-realization occurs.

Bullying behavior is induced by the pressure of group norms resulting in man not knowing what he ought to do and what he really wants. That is why he focuses on what others do (conformism) or he does what others want him to do (totalitarianism). Aggressors' aim is to achieve a high status within the group (Sijtsema *et al.* 2009; Bizová and Gubricová 2011); to be accepted and respected by their classmates and to gain popularity among their peers (DeBruyn and Cillessen 2006; Olthof and Goossens 2008). Conformism is based on the adaptation mechanisms of social accommodation (Grác 2009).

A conformist complies with the norms and rules of behavior, which exert the greatest pressure upon him; and it is not important whether these norms are imposed on him openly or secretly. Man denies the freedom of choice; he renounces himself as a self-regulatory personality and shifts the responsibility for his own behavior to the external factors, things, and social institutions. A conformist is often affected by the authoritative parenting style and the strict upbringing in a form of some kind of a drill. Such parenting style does not take into consideration the child's opinions and attitudes. Similar parenting style can be observed in the families of aggressors involved in bullying. They encountered the authoritative parenting style, physical punishment and maltreatment from their parents (Espelage, Bosworth and Simon 2000; Shields and Cicchetti 2001), especially from mothers (Papanikolaou, Chatzikosma and Kleio 2011). It is also linked to the physical absence of fathers showing no interest in upbringing of their children.

The research results (Schore 2001b, 208) also show that behavior disorders may result from negative experiences in childhood caused by mental deprivation, inadequate attachment, which disturbs the development of the brain that helps coping with stress stimuli, emotional regulation and maintaining of personal relationships. The results show direct association between attachment, non-effective regulation of the right hemisphere and maladaptive mental health (Schore 2001a). The child's developing right hemisphere is

deeply connected to the limbic nervous system and plays a dominant role in reacting to stress. This means that inadequate attachment hinders progress in development of child's coping strategies. The hostile and aggressive behavior of bullying aggressors possibly suggests an uncertain-avoiding attachment, which is connected to disorders at increased mental burden as a result of absence of behavioral patterns that would help to cope with traumas, and thus forms a threat to further mental development (Brisch 2011; Hašto 2005).

In their behavior, aggressors tend to evade their responsibilities, justify their bad behavior, and suppress the consciousness of responsibility instead of taking responsibility for that behavior. In order to evade the responsibility, they use their victims and classmates to hide behind. They often use expressions such as "*but he was provoking me*", "*we were just messing around*" or "*we all were having fun*". They talk about their parents, teachers, their environment, and various circumstances in which they find the "source" for justification of their behavior.

4 Conclusion

During his lifespan, man comes to terms with taking full responsibility for his behavior and actions. He knows his rights, but he is not that eager to accept his obligations. One will never cease to hate another human being if subhuman mechanisms and impulses are still used to explain behavior. One will never be able to stop the hatred toward another human being unless he changes his personal attitude towards others. As for aggression, man is free and, at the same time, responsible for his own choice to either identify with or distance himself from that aggression. Our behavior is grounded upon free will, weighing of alternatives, in which peer pressure doesn't justify. It is important to have the ability to take a distance from one's self and develop the ability of self-transcendence, which focuses our view from ourselves to another, to perceive and understand of someone else's situation. So, we open ourselves to the possibility to be there for others and be respectful to ourselves and to others.

Acknowledgement

The paper was created with the support of Vega grant no. 1/0305/18.

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Education as Spirituality of John Bosco: Loving Kindness

Received March 16, 2018

Revised April 21, 2018

Accepted April 23, 2018

Key words

John Bosco, education,
loving kindness,
supervising love

The article provides an analysis of the tradition of spiritual view of education as established by John Bosco (1815–1888) with a special focus on the loving kindness as the one of three essential principles of Salesian’s education. It discusses the centrality of this unique form of love based on the analysis of three key writings of Don Bosco: *Memoirs of the Oratory, The Preventive System in the Education of the Young, and The Letter from Rome.*

Education wasn't just a social or relational activity for John Bosco. It was a principle, source and, at the same time, a consequence of a spiritual experience. In general, we may say that through education John Bosco is experiencing God (Chavez 2014). One of his most important autobiographical, spiritual, and pedagogical texts entitled *Memoirs of the Oratory* (Bosco 2011) describes education as an apparition, mission, and prophecy of one's life. It actually was a space for a radically new spiritual experience and a specific spiritual discretion.

The fundamental story of a "prophecy dream" (Wiesenganger 2017) shows specific features of Don Bosco's spiritual experience. As a boy he is invited to cease such a relationship with God, which is based on the strict compliance of orders. His relationship with God doesn't have to be based on the duties and justice but on the glamorous beauty and gentleness. The same is true for education, which he gets as the mission: it is not based on the curd commands, instead it is a mission aimed at the inner conversion, where the commands cannot penetrate. Such an educational mission also becomes the way of his personal spiritual conversion, a space of permanent searching for God's identity. His shiny presence has two sides: blinds and attracts at the same time.

The apparition given to John Bosco is also a prophecy about himself. It is God, who doesn't command but attracts through His presence and causes changes. In this way John is able to recognize not only the identity of the youth, but also of himself. Education isn't only the correction of deficiencies; it is a way of life, by which is enabling the one to be a friend of God or even his son. Thus, a personal spirituality is fulfilled by education. It is the way how one can perceive God's presence.

It is important to recognize that Bosco's view of education is based on the following three principles, "*reason, religion, and loving kindness*" (Bosco 1877), while the loving kindness can be considered the first of the three (Braido 1999). However, Pascual Chavez (2013) clarifies that the loving kindness is in the tradition of Salesian educational "*without doubt a characteristic trait of his pedagogical method ... But it cannot be reduced to simply being a pedagogical principle but needs to be recognized as an essential element of his spirituality.*" This is the essential principle of spiritual view of education at John Bosco. In this article we will discuss some aspects of this unique principle of his spiritual view of education.



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1 Loving Kindness in the Prophecy Dream

The first time little Johnny Bosco was given an educational mission to achieve spiritual change in a group of boys was in a dream when he was nine. It is to be found in the well-known text *Memoirs of the Oratory* (Bosco 1877). A noble stranger told him in the dream: “*You will have to win these friends of yours not by blows but by gentleness [note It. mansuetudine] and love. Start right away to teach them the ugliness [note It. brutezza] of sin and the value [note It. preziosità] of virtue*” (Bosco 2011, 4). We can highlight three very important words: “friends”, “gentleness” and “love”.

When the nobleman says that the boys are Johnny’s “friends” that is a radically different interpretation from that presented by Johnny. The same boys who were fighting and swearing a few minutes before could not be beaten into silence. The fact that the boys he used to beat into shape were his friends required a new approach. The principle of justice that “*evil needs to be corrected justly*” must be replaced by a new principle, which surpasses it. It is impossible to make friendship on the basis of justice. The new principle passed on to little Johnny was the principle of gentle love. Here love represents a new objective towards which Bosco’s action should head. His mission is not redemption, or the end of evil, but the value of virtue. Love represents the main aim and the essence of the new educational approach entrusted to him. How is

gentleness related to it? In a way we can say that this concept expresses a unique definition of love. Gentleness expresses meekness, and thus refers to one of the main virtues – mildness. The task of mildness was to deal with anger the right way. Anger was causing a reaction to evil and thus prevented the awareness of the presence of good. Thus, gentleness expresses the power of love when love is expressed even in conflictual situations. *Friendship* expresses the quality of the relationship. *Love* is the first principle upon which friendship can exist and be developed. *Gentleness* expresses a specific way love can be shown. The distinction between love expressed by gentleness and that which is not means that not every love has the power to change a human being. The power and the effectiveness of gentleness is depicted in what happens to the group of boys. At the beginning of the story the boys fight and swear, then they gather around the noble man, subsequently around the noble woman and in the end, they change into lambs and bleat joyfully around them. Gentleness attracts and brings about change. It is the kind of love that is able to change a human being effectively. Gentleness embodies love that has the potential to bedazzle and result in desire. These ideas are fully developed in other key texts of Don Bosco, *The Preventive System in the Education of the Young* (Bosco 1877) and *The Letter from Rome* (Bosco 1844).

2 Loving Kindness in The Preventive System in the Education of the Young

In his work *The Preventive System in the Education of the Young* (1877) John Bosco presents loving kindness in the context of two educational systems. These systems present two paths to the same destination and have one fundamental principle. The aim is a godly life and the principle is love. An essential difference is just in the way this aim is achieved. It means two forms of education. Bosco calls the first one “repressive”. It “*consists in making the law known to the students and then supervising them in order to detect transgressions, inflicting, wherever necessary, the merited punishment. Using this system, the words and the appearance of the Superior must always be severe, and somewhat menacing, and he himself must avoid all friendly relationships with his dependents. To give greater weight to his authority, the educator would need to be seen but*

rarely among his subjects, and generally speaking only when it was a question of punishing or threatening.” (Bosco 1877).

The second one, which he calls “preventive”, “*consists in making the law known to the students and then supervising them in order to detect transgressions, inflicting, wherever necessary, the merited punishment. Using this system, the words and the appearance of the Superior must always be severe, and somewhat menacing, and he himself must avoid all friendly relationships with his dependents. To give greater weight to his authority, the educator would need to be seen but rarely among his subjects, and generally speaking only when it was a question of punishing or threatening.*” (Bosco 1877).

It is very important to note that John Bosco understands these two modes of education as two forms of love. While both educational systems represent “universal” love as the principle and the way to the objective, it is only preventive education that represents loving kindness as a special form of love. This fundamental difference is shown in the next short story from *Memoirs of the Oratory* (Bosco 2011).

On the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (December 8, 1841), I was vesting to celebrate holy Mass at the appointed time. Joseph Comotti, the sacristan, seeing a boy in a corner, asked him to come and serve my Mass. “I don’t know how,” he answered, completely embarrassed. “Come on,” repeated the sacristan, “I want you to serve Mass.”

“I don’t know how,” the boy repeated, “I’ve never served Mass.”

“You big blockhead,” said the sacristan, quite furious “if you don’t know how to serve Mass, what are you doing in the sacristy.” With that, he grabbed a feather duster and hit the poor boy about the head and shoulders.

As the boy beat a hasty retreat, I cried loudly, “What are you doing? Why are you beating him like that? What’s he done?”

“Why is he hanging round the sacristy if he doesn’t know how to serve Mass?”

“But you’ve done wrong.”

“What does it matter to you?”

“It matters plenty. He’s a friend of mine. Call him back at once. I need to speak with him.”

“Tuder, tuder!” [note It. rough, uneducated] he began to shout, as he ran after him. Promising him better treatment, he brought the lad back to me. He came over trembling and tearful because of the blows he had received.

“Have you attended Mass yet?” I asked him with as much loving kindness [note It. amorevolezza] as I could.

The important key to understanding this story is that both men (the sacristan and John Bosco) are priests and represent the same universal Christian love in two forms: the first one represents “supervising love” and second one represents “assisting love”. For the sacristan the identity of the boy is defined only through his help with “serving the Mass” and he makes sure this task is completed. For Bosco, however, the boy is a friend. Friendship is the first fact of education, the principle of educational interpretation of our life. This is the same as in “the prophecy dream” in which the noble man says to little Johnny: “You will have to win these friends of yours not by blows but by gentleness and love” (Bosco 2011). The ability to help (serving Mass) is not initially important for Bosco. The “assisting love” that Bosco represents, means,

that the educator “*makes a friend of the student, who in the assistant sees a benefactor who gives him good advice, wants to make him good, to shield him from unpleasantness, from punishment, from dishonor. The Preventive system offers the student previous warning, in a way that the educator can still speak to him in the language of the heart, whether during the time of his education or later. The educator, having won the loving respect of his protégé [note It. guadagnato il cuore del suo protetto], will be able to greatly influence him, warn him, counsel him, and also correct him, even when he is employed, whether it be in the civil service, or in commerce ... The practice of this system is all based on the words of St Paul, who says: Love is patient, love is kind ... it bears all things ... hopes all things endures all things. (1 Corinthians 13:4–7)*” (Bosco 1877).

These are the reasons why Bosco asked the boy with as much loving kindness as he could.

For the boy a new life starts with that loving kindness. The text of *Preventive system* and the story in the church show one of the most essential traits of loving kindness. Only this form of love is really effective in the spiritual view of education, only loving kindness is an effective way of influencing someone. It also confirms the fundamental fact that it is not just a pedagogical method, but a real spiritual experience because of its apparition and prophecy for the children. Loving kindness is incarnated in God as someone who is patient, kind, helpful etc.

3 Loving Kindness in The Letter from Rome

The last text presented here is one of Bosco’s most famous letters. It is known as *The Letter from Rome*. This text clearly shows the difference between universal love and loving kindness. The whole text is a dialogue between John Bosco and two pupils of the Oratory in its early days. The boys represent two periods of the Oratory: the beginning and nowadays.

This is the description of the first period of the Oratory: “*It was a scene full of life, full of movement, full of fun. Some were running, some were jumping, some were skipping ... There was singing and laughing on all sides, there were priests and clerics everywhere and the boys were yelling and shouting all round them. You could see that the greatest cordiality, and confidence reigned between youngsters and superiors*” (Bosco 1884).

The following description of the present situation of the Oratory is not so positive.

“But no more could I hear the joyful shouts and singing, no longer was there the lively activity of the previous scene. In the faces and actions of many boys there was evident a weary boredom, a surliness, a suspicion, that pained my heart” (Bosco 1884).

That situation is the reason for John Bosco’s question: *“But how can we bring these youngsters to life again so that we can get back to the liveliness, the happiness, the warmth of the old days?”* (Bosco 1884). The dialogue after this question defines a special form of love.

“With charity!”

“With love? But don’t my boys get enough love? You know how I love them. You know how much I have suffered and put up with for them these forty years, and how much I endure and suffer even now. How many hardships, how many humiliations, how much opposition, how many persecutions to give them bread, a home, teachers, and especially to provide for the salvation of their souls. I have done everything I possibly could for them; they are the object of all my affections.”

“I’m not referring to you.”

“Then to whom are you referring? To those who take my place? To the rectors, the prefects, the teachers, the assistants? Don’t you see that they are martyrs to study and work, and how they burn out their young lives for those Divine Providence has entrusted to them?”

“I can see all that and I am well aware of it, but it is not enough; the best thing is missing.”

“That the youngsters should not only be loved but that they themselves should know that they are loved.”

“But have they not got eyes in their heads? Have they no intelligence? Don’t they see how much is done for them, and all of it out of love?”

“No, I repeat: it is not enough.”

Love is not enough. Being martyrs of love and care is not enough because this love is unable to open the hearts of children. Bosco’s education begins with confidence and confidence needs familiarity. *“How then are we to set about breaking down this barrier?”* asked Bosco (1884).

“By a friendly informal relationship with the boys, especially in recreation. You cannot have love without this familiarity, and where this is not evident there can be no confidence. If you want to be loved, you must make it clear that you love. Jesus Christ made himself little with the little ones and bore our weaknesses. He is our master in the matter of the friendly approach... One who knows he is loved loves in return, and one who loves can obtain anything, especially from the young. This confidence creates an electric current between youngsters and their superiors.

Hearts are opened, needs and weaknesses made known” (Bosco 1884).

As we can see, loving kindness expresses the fact that in order to create an effective educational relationship it is necessary that the young are not only loved but that they know that they are loved. It is a special style of relationships and affection that awakens in the hearts of the young all their potential and makes it mature even into the ability of total self-donation. That is exactly the meaning of the prophecy dream. Love must be present and at the same time enchanting, beautiful, tender, cordial etc. In the experience of John Bosco only loving kindness is *“authentic love because it draws its strength from God; it is love which shows itself in the language of simplicity, cordiality and fidelity; it is love which gives rise to a desire to correspond; it is love which calls forth trust, opening the way to confidence and to profound communion (‘education is a matter of the heart’)”* (Chaves 2013).

4 Conclusions

In the educational spirituality of John Bosco, the “form” of love is the basic condition of truly encountering God and at the same time of effective education. Loving kindness is the expression of affectivity based on love. It is not something individual and private. In this sense, affectivity is aimed at another person. It is the recognition of good in others; it is the discovery of good and participation in it. Thus loving kindness as “affective love” forms the right education and brings effectiveness. Only it allows a real encounter with God. At the same time, it is true that loving kindness becomes a *sign* of the love of God, and a means of re-awakening his presence in the hearts of those who are reached by Don Bosco’s goodness. From this comes the conviction that the apostolic spirituality of the Salesian Family is characterized not by a generic kind of love, but by the ability *to love and make oneself loved* (Chaves 2013).

We conclude our reflection with a poem. Its author is a child who tells his mother what is going through his mind and stays in his heart as he watches what she does.

When You Thought I Wasn't Looking

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator
and I immediately wanted to paint another one.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I saw you feed a stray cat,
and I learned that it was good to be kind to animals.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking
I saw you make my favorite cake for me
and I learned that the little things can be the special things in life.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I saw you make a meal and take it to a friend who was sick
and I learned that we all have to help take care of each other.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I saw you take care of our house and everyone in it
and I learned we have to take care of what we are given.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I saw how you handled your responsibilities, even when you didn't feel well
and I learned that I would have to be responsible when I grow up.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I saw tears come from your eyes
and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it's all right to cry.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I saw that you cared
and I wanted to be everything that I could be.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I learned most of life's lessons that I need to know
to be a good and productive person when I grow up.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking,
I looked at you and wanted to say,
"Thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking."*

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Mission

Spirituality Studies welcomes original contributions from various academic fields reflecting the phenomenon of spirituality in its multiple forms as well as cultural and religious contexts.

At the same time, the journal provides a forum for sharing personal spiritual experience of spiritual practitioners of various backgrounds elaborated in a form of a scholarly article, essay or poetry. By combining both academic and experiential aspects of spirituality Spirituality Studies aims at providing an original and exceptional multidisciplinary and multidimensional platform for constructive dialogue between a variety of viewpoints, approaches, and methodologies in the study of spirituality.

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