

# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

*By Helen Latham*



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (1863 - 1902)

*"A religion which will give us faith in ourselves, a national self-respect, and the power to feed and educate the poor and relieve the misery around me. . .*

*If you want to find God, serve man!"*

*"There is no religion higher than the command to serve mankind."*

## INTRODUCTION

Swami Vivekananda was a complex, gifted and extraordinary personality who dedicated himself to Indian and world service. A dynamic and practical mystic, prophet, educator and social reformer, he was a herald of spiritual humanism and universalism; and is regarded in his motherland as the patron saint of Northern India and the father of modern Indian nationalism.

He was born Nalendranath Datta (meaning "Lord of Men") in Calcutta, India, on January 12, 1863. His family was well-known for its affluence, philanthropy, scholarship and independent spirit. From his agnostic but erudite father and his wise and pious mother he received a most liberated education and a disciplined upbringing. From early childhood he felt a spirit of greatness within himself, had prophetic visions, showed a spontaneous inclination towards God, wandering monks and meditation, and was adept at meditation before he was six. He excelled at all studies and sports, and throughout his boyhood was admired for his exceptional intelligence, courage, honesty, kindness, straightforward simplicity, leadership ability and passion of purity.

He became more serious in his adolescence, devouring all newspapers, reading books on both Eastern and Western philosophy and culture, attending public meetings and debates, and graduating from high school in the first division in 1879. He received his Bachelor of Arts in 1883, having specialized in Western Logic and Philosophy, and the ancient and modern history of the different European nations. His Western studies challenged his Hindu spiritual beliefs, and from the age of 18 to 21 he underwent a violent intellectual crisis and nearly became an atheist. For a while he joined the Brahmo Samaj -- a progressive intellectual group that applied rational

Western thought to the problems of Hinduism; by focusing on the spiritual essence and removing the superstitions, image worship and unnecessary rituals. However, it failed to satisfy his skepticism, and his desire to actually "see" God and realize the goal of religion.

Seeking "*The Teacher*" who could help him in his spiritual struggle, he met Sri Ramakrishna in 1881. The latter instantly recognized in Vivekananda his chief disciple and future messenger. It took Vivekananda a long time to accept Ramakrishna as his teacher and to be guided from anguished doubt to spiritual certainty. But after several years he renounced worldly life and became a monk. Under Ramakrishna, Vivekananda studied all teachings and religions, and by personally following their methods realized the one and only presence of deity in all of them -- that all religions "*are the radii of the same truth, the expression that variety of minds requires.*" He finally accepted and worshipped the Goddess Kali (the Divine Universal Mother)-- symbol of life and death, love and terror, creation and destruction -- and whom I speculate to be akin to the Destroyer Aspect of the Mother of the World. Before he died in 1886, Ramakrishna passed over to Vivekananda his spiritual powers and instructed him to teach the remaining disciples.

After several shorter pilgrimages between his teaching work, Vivekananda spent four years from 1889-93 wandering on foot throughout India, the Himalayas and Tibet, and witnessed firsthand the heart-rending condition of the Indian people. He underwent great hardships at this time, but gathered numerous disciples through his vast learning, strength and magnetism. He became what he termed "a condensed India" and his life mission gradually took form in his mind.



## HIS LIFE MISSION

Vivekananda lived at a time of India's national disintegration, with "millions gradually sinking lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance." He saw a major part of his mission as being to regenerate and reorganize India's social, moral and spiritual consciousness; and to prepare her for independence by encouraging pride in her vast and cultural inheritance, and by awakening the people's will so that they would improve their conditions and stand up for themselves.

This required regeneration of the inner man: for he believed that "the strength of the whole nation depends upon the strength of the individual" He summarized his mission as "Man-making" He laid the greatest stress on character-building; on developing strength and will, fearlessness, faith and self-confidence, He sought to eradicate paralyzing fears and superstitions, and to stimulate the soul-consciousness that would set people free. He espoused renunciation as the highest ideal.

On strength, for example:

*"strength first, religion afterwards. . .strength is life. Weakness is death...independence is happiness. Dependence is misery... become Gods and help others to become Gods."*

To his fellow workers he advised:

*"Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel, inside which dwells a mind of the same material as that of which the thunderbolt is made, strength. Manhood. We (India) have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men."*

On fearlessness:

*"If there is one word that you find coming like a bomb from the Upanishads, bursting like a bombshell upon masses of ignorance, it is the word FEARLESSNESS. And the only religion that ought to be taught is the religion of fearlessness. Either in this world as in the world of religion, it is true that fear is the sure cause of degradation and sin. It is fear that brings misery, fear that brings death, fear that brings evil."* He said that fearlessness arose from soul-consciousness.

On faith:

*"He is an atheist who does not believe in himself. The old religions said he was an atheist who did not believe in God. The new*

*religion says that he is an atheist who does not believe in himself." "Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith in God -- this is the secret of greatness. If you have faith in the 330 millions of your mythological gods, and in all the gods which foreigners have introduced in your midst and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. Have faith in yourselves and stand upon that faith and be strong."*

He was particularly concerned about the education, uplift and equalization of Indian women, saying that, "*The bird of the spirit of humanity cannot fly with only one wing.*"

He championed the poor and oppressed in all countries, and claimed that true worship of God was expressed in loving service to humanity. To this end, he revolutionized India's monastic order by shifting the emphasis from personal meditation and liberation to active service for others.

Practical and realistic, he believed it futile to preach strength and religion without first addressing poverty and hunger. Aiming for a blend of material well-being and spiritual welfare, he believed that India's material backwardness could be remedied by Western scientific methods and money, while her spiritual insights could balance the West's materialistic tendencies. It was this idea of communication and cross-fertilization between East and West, and the opportunity to seek aid for India that led him to speak at the Parliament of Religions in America in 1893, when he was just 30. It was there that he achieved international fame, virtually overnight.

In an international gathering of religious representatives extolling their own sects and ideals, Vivekananda spoke of the validity of all beliefs within a Universal Religion, of international brotherhood and cooperation, of unity and tolerance, and of the inherent harmony of religion and science (with their common aim of attaining Truth). He strove to promote peace and human brotherhood on the spiritual foundation of the Vedantic Oneness of Existence. It was "*a powerful call to spiritual synthesis.*" (3 p. 354)

He was hailed as the greatest figure at the Parliament of Religions, became front page news across America, and was sought everywhere -- not only as a religious teacher, but as an extraordinary personality. He also

attracted many jealous and virulent critics who slandered him for the rest of his life -- most notably the Theosophists and the more bigoted sectarian Christians. However, he successfully gave daily lectures and classes across America for two years, and in England and Europe for a further year, sending any earnings back to his brother monks in India for the commencement of the Indian work.

He closely observed Western society, admiring its basis of equality, justice and freedom (particularly the emancipation of women), where people had the opportunity to develop their potential, and most lived in relative material comfort. It was a sad contrast to India. He later became very disillusioned with it, seeing that *"its progressive spirit was composed for the most part of greed and selfishness, and the struggle for privilege and power"* (1 Vol. 2. p. 559). He realized that India's regeneration and liberation would have to come from within and not be reliant upon foreign aid. He hoped to inspire the educated classes to uplift the masses economically and culturally. However, he gained many fine disciples in the West and trained them either for future work in India or to carry on his work in America. Some of his fellow Indian monks came to teach in America and England, and he started magazines and newspapers to disseminate his ideas.

In 1897 he returned to India "a hero and prophet greatly admired by his own people for his achievements on their behalf. He traveled and lectured extensively in Northern India, and then commenced the arduous task of organizing the Indian work proper. He founded the Ramakrishna Mission Association -- to promote brotherhood between different faiths; to carry out educational, religious and philanthropic projects for physical, mental and spiritual advancement; and to bring about a better understanding and closer relationship between India and foreign countries. Under his guidance, his fellow monks and disciples founded learning centers throughout India and opened famine relief centers.

In 1899 he established the Advaita Ashram at Mayavati in the Himalayas. This was to be a work and meditation center for the training of his Eastern and Western disciples, and for the education of the Indian hill children.

He spent 1900 traveling and lecturing in Europe, establishing ashrams and study groups in America and checking on the work's progress.

In rapidly declining health, he spent the last 18 months of his life in India giving public lectures, doing a pilgrimage of holy places, and establishing convents for the education of Indian women along national lines.

Having always prophesied that he would die before he was 40, he died on July 4, 1902, at the age of 39 -- allegedly from heart failure or apoplexy; or, as predicted by Ramakrishna and believed by fellow monks, by voluntarily giving up his body by an act of will through yoga.

### ASSESSMENT

While he did not directly attain the foreign finances and technological knowledge to uplift India, he was successful in his role as India's first spiritual ambassador to the West and gained for India great overseas goodwill and respect. He initiated the first real association of the East with the West, and the blending of religion with humanism -- towards a universal religion that believes in the physical and mental elevation of man. Through his lectures and outstanding written treatises on Hinduism, he interpreted, clarified and made accessible India's complex spiritual culture for the Western mind. He was an indefatigable letter writer to his many friends and disciples. The Ramakrishna Order of Monks became the most outstanding religious organization of modern India.

His rich, profound and complex personality wonderfully influenced his countrymen, many of whom were inspired to serve their country with great spirituality, intense activity and an increasing spirit of nationalism. When India gained her independence 45 years after his death, many of the political leaders openly acknowledged having received their inspiration from Vivekananda. After independence, thousands of Indian students went to America and Europe to acquire scientific and technological knowledge, and American money was then sent to improve India's material condition. The commencement of the uplift of India's masses was Vivekananda's legacy.

*"He breathed into millions of people the spark of invincible courage, stern*

*determination, unrelenting will to be in the right, despite all odds...he stands out as the beacon light showing us how to free ourselves from fear.*" (4 p. 176).

While his public work extended for a brief period of only 10 years, the range and expression of his activities drew upon a number of Ray energies that will now be explored.

### PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

His physical appearance is consistently described as leonine and handsome (note sun and Venus conjunct his ascendant). Physically rather powerful, he was tall, strongly built, muscular, athletic, vital, inclined to stoutness; and of indomitable stamina, striking carriage and commanding presence.

His eyes were his most striking feature. Large, dark, prominent and luminous, they apparently "flashed like lightning" and exuded great power and magnetism.

Dignified, graceful, swift of movement, his appearance and regal bearing made him conspicuous wherever he went, and caused enormous interest abroad (particularly when clothed in the colorful apparel of the sannyasin). Ramakrishna noted upon first meeting Vivekananda that the latter seemed "rather careless about his clothes and general appearance:

For most of his adult life, he suffered chronic ill health. He had numerous and violent attacks of malaria, nearly died of diphtheria, and in late adolescence developed the diabetes (for which there was then no known treatment) that proved so debilitating and caused great fluctuations in his body weight. Towards the end of his life, he was prone to suffocating attacks of asthma.

His enormous expenditure of energy dangerously compromised his health and brought an early death at the age of 39. He had earlier said of himself "*I am really tired from this incessant work. Any other Hindu would have died if he had to work as hard as I have to...*" (1 Vol. 2 p. 53)

Although of great dignity, grace and beauty, I think only a Ray 3 body could have been the vehicle for Vivekananda's great energy and acute physical hardships.

### THE PRESENCE OF RAY 1

Vivekananda's Ray 1 characteristics were apparent from early childhood. He was aware even then of an "inexhaustible force arising in him," which caused bouts of irrepressible restlessness and turbulence during which he was beyond control and wore out his family. Dynamic, adventurous, strong-minded, utterly truthful and fearless, self-sacrificing in his courage, he was the undisputed Leader of his friends, never failed to stand on principle, always showed independence of thought and action, and was loved as "a sort of life giving spirit to everyone in the locality." (1Vol.1p.36).

As he matured, his character was dominant, magnetic, proud, ambitious, resolute, fiery, pure, outspoken, self-reliant, self-controlled and commanding. He had an iron will, enormous inner strength unflinching faith and an uncompromising commitment to truth. "*I stand for truth. Truth will never ally itself with falsehood. Even if all the world should be against me, truth must prevail in the end.*" (6 p.140). He detested weakness in any form, as he did narrowness, sentimentalism and inertia. Conscious of the infinite power of the spirit within, he was supremely defiant of authority and restraint, demonstrated an infinite working capacity, powerful speech and action, and an unflagging -- even violent -- energy which created more energy around him. He could galvanize others into action.

He had a great desire for solitude and silence (largely unrealized due to his commitment to service) and experienced much inner loneliness and sadness. Ramakrishna always said that no one would ever fully understand Vivekananda. Even his fellow monks could not fathom or understand his true nature. Beneath his colorful outward personality, he was inscrutable and austere. (Note Capricorn sun and ascendant). "When serious, he struck awe in his companions. When he was absorbed in his own thoughts he could surround himself with such repelling reserve that no one would dare approach him. In fact, intense aloofness was one of his striking traits." (1 Vol. 1 p. 144).

Possessed of deeply penetrative spiritual insight into the essence of things, he was determined to master underlying principles, and became himself the embodiment of these ideas and principles. He had a profoundly

synthetic understanding of "oneness" and unity. He was a particular admirer of Akbar, Asoka, Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, Napoleon I and Ghenghis Khan (all Ray 1 types) saying that the last three "*were not vulgar aggressors. . .but inspired by the thought of unifying their world through political conquest.*" (1 Vol. 2 p. 361).

His lectures were characterized by bold, straightforward, direct and even militant force of speech. His replies apparently came "like flashes of lightning." When he lectured "it was as though his soul force became visible." (4 p. 168) One of his disciples wrote that, "while he spoke, oftentimes a consciousness of what he was came over him and then he would literally shake big audiences into a strange spiritual oneness with his own spirit." (8 p. 51) Another wrote, "But whoever heard of a powerful saint? The power that emanated from this mysterious being was so great that one all but shrank from it. It was overwhelming. It threatened to sweep everything before it." (4 p. 161). And another: "On occasions, this innate majesty of the swami could assume almost superhuman proportions. It would be impossible for me to describe the overwhelming force of (Vivekananda's) presence. He could rivet attention upon himself and when he spoke in all seriousness and intensity -- though it seems well nigh incredible -- there were some among his hearers who were literally exhausted. The subtlety of his thoughts and arguments swept them off their feet. In one case I know of a man who was forced to rest in bed for three days as the result of a nervous shock received by a discussion with the Swami. His personality was at once awe-inspiring and sublime. He had the faculty of literally annihilating one if he so chose." (1 Vol 2. p. 89). There are many such accounts of his electric effect upon people who were "prostrated by his radiant power." He was always aware of a great power working in and through him, and on a number of occasions, when he felt it most strongly, actually cancelled lectures in case he harmed his audiences.

Ramakrishna, who described Vivekananda as "an open sword", had but one initial concern about his disciple; that he may misuse his great power, because "he could have created havoc in the world with his excessive energy." For in his youth Vivekananda could be

prideful, impervious, haughty, stubborn, rebellious, impatient, stormy, exacting and dominating, with a tendency to "pulverize his opponents." It took years for Ramakrishna to "tame" Vivekananaha with his infinite patience, love, vigilance, insight and forgiveness. But he said of him later, "His strong faith in himself will be an instrument to re-establish in discouraged souls the confidence and faith they have lost. And the freedom of his conduct, based on mighty self-mastery, will shine brightly in the eyes of others, as a manifestation of the true liberty of the Ego" (i.e., the One Divine Being) (7 p.10).

Vivekananda said of himself that he was no organizer: "*I have begun the work. Let others work it out.*" He was an initiator, an awakener. He had the power to cut across barriers and to awaken people, encouraging them to reach their potential heights. He taught from his own experience. "*One knew he spoke truth, for he spoke with authority, and not as a scholar or as a priest. He brought certainty with him, he gave assurance and confidence...*" There is a distinctly Morya-like quality to his writings -- a poetic, stern, brief and direct "call for action."

He delighted in shocking conventionality and hypocritical respectability. He raised a storm of controversy wherever he went, attracted many enemies and created world sensation in a very short time.

His fellow monks consistently likened him to Shiva, the Destroyer aspect of the Hindu Trinity. His mother had had a vivid dream before he was born that Shiva would incarnate through him. Typical epithets of him include the Warrior Prophet, the Prophet of Strength, the Napoleonic Monk, the King of Monks, the Cyclonic Hindu, the Lightning Orator, and Avalanche from the Beyond, a Thunderbolt of Thought, a Storm and a Hurricane; a Soul on Fire, and the Awakener or Tamer of Souls.

## THE PRESENCE OF RAY 2

In his compassion and kindness, his deep spiritual insight and wisdom, his vast knowledge, and his capacity as a teacher and educator, he expressed the 2nd Ray.

By his own admission, he developed patience, sympathy and mellowness of heart on his four-year pilgrimage around India. Ramakrishna said of him, "The day when

## THE PRESENCE OF RAY 4

(Vivekananda) comes in contact with suffering and misery, the pride of his character will melt into a mood of infinite compassion." (7p.10). Vivekananda said of himself, "*My heart has grown much, much larger and I have learnt to feel the sufferings of others. Believe me, I feel it very sadly.*" It was at this time that he committed himself to the disinterested service of humanity, particularly of the poor and downtrodden.

"*Feel from the heart,*" he said. "*What is the intellect or reason? It goes a few steps and there it stops. But through the heart comes inspiration. Love opens the most impossible fates: love is the gate to all the secrets of the universe...it is the heart that conquers. Everyone can understand the language of the heart.*" He was consistently large-hearted, generous, loving and sincere, rarely refusing anyone who showed the desire to learn and grow.

He was deeply reverent of the Christ, and a great devotee of the Buddha (whom he revered above all else) and was frequently likened to him.

Popular and well-loved, he had immense personal magnetism, charm, and attractiveness. He was known for his "sweet and loving patience"; his warmth and spiritual radiance; his profound tranquility; his sense of humor, fun and playfulness; his tolerance and unselfishness; and his humility about his own spiritual stature. He shunned fame and self-importance.

A philosopher and mystic, he was intensely studious -- with a profoundly erudite knowledge of both Eastern and Western philosophy and culture, music, science, mathematics and metaphysics. His comprehensive, inclusive study of as many facets as possible before arriving at a synthetic overview was a 2nd Ray approach. "*I was born for the life of a scholar -- retired, quiet, poring over my books. But (a higher force) dispensed otherwise. Yet the tendency is there.*" (6 p. 251); He believed his development lay along the lines of intense learning, and it was this depth of learning through which he gained the respect and acceptance of his contemporary Western thinkers.

Vivekananda was a man of multiple personality, and mood changes, and could appear to be quite different people at different times.

Richly imaginative, he had a colorful Bohemian temperament, enormous charm and a highly developed aesthetic sense. "He was an artist through and through even in the simple acts of his life. From the very highest insight and erudition to the commonplace incidents of life -- under his masterly touch all became magnetized with a certain richness of personality, directness of appeal, and literary beauty." (8 p.51). He deeply loved nature and beauty, could draw well, and was an excellent creative chef.

During his conflict-ridden skeptical years, music was his solace, as it could move him more deeply than could anything else. From childhood he was classically trained in both instrumental and vocal music under expert teachers. He could play many instruments, but excelled at singing and became widely known as an accomplished singer. He composed songs, many of them devotional, and through his music brought great joy and inspiration to others. He was also a learned musical theoretician and wrote on the subject. He was able to exert great influence by the power, beauty and musicality of his speaking voice, which was likened to a "rich bronze bell." One disciple wrote, "We are trying to take notes of all that he says, but I find myself lost in listening and forget the notes. His voice is wondrously beautiful. One might well lose oneself in its divine music." (1 vol. 1 p. 29).

He was also a writer of inspirational poems. (Note Mercury Venus conjunction sextile Neptune in 3rd house). This combination of poetry, music, power and beauty enabled him to hold audiences spellbound by his powerful, eloquent and persuasive oratory. In his time, he was regarded as the greatest public speaker India had ever known and an "orator by divine right." He excelled at conversation and debating, was an excellent raconteur and mimic, and possessed a sparkling wit. He was, in addition, fluent in five languages -- Hindu, Bengali, Sanskrit, French and English -- and sang songs in many more.



Impetuous, spontaneous, vibrant, resonant, he concealed much under his outwardly jovial nature. There was much conflict in his life; particularly his "skeptical years" when he was at war with himself, e.g. conflict between his skeptical proof-seeking mind and his desire to have faith; between desire to conquer and dominate, and his desire to renounce; between pride and love; particularly between his (lifelong) almost equal desires for independence/freedom and service.

He expressed a strong urge for harmony; most strikingly in his hopes for a cross-fertilization of East and West. His problem, as he saw it, was "*how to harmonize everything without renouncing anything.*" (7 p. 83). (There is here, perhaps, a Ray 1 synthesis and a Ray 4 harmonious blending of opposites.)

He said of himself "*There are others again, with high strung nerves, tremendously imaginative, with intense feeling -- always going high and coming down the next moment. For them there is no happiness. They will have to run between ecstasy and misery. But of these alone what we call geniuses are made....if they want to be great, they must fight to be so -- clear the deck for battle...no encumbrances...no undue attachments to anything except the one idea and live and die for that. I am a person of this sort.*" (6 p. 202) It is hard to account for such color and artistry with a Capricorn sun and ascendant.

### THE PRESENCE OF RAY 5

His exceptional intelligence was apparent from early childhood and his university professors later regarded him as an intellectual genius. When he commenced his American and European lecture travels, he gained "*a world-wide reputation as one of the most thoughtful scholars of the Age. Even his worst critics admired his speculative boldness, his clarity of reasoning and his wonderful scholarship*" (4p.166).

His indomitable mind was characterized by prodigious thought, interminable powers of concentration, intuitive penetration and phenomenal memory. His vision was both profound and general, accurate and minute. He was highly analytical, rational and skeptical; lucid and incisive; inventive and innovative; broadminded, philosophical, inquisitive and encyclopedic; unwaveringly honest and

mercilessly critical of untruth. He stood for truth. He did not mince matters. He could "tear to shreds" others' unquestioning beliefs. He had great powers of discrimination and sound judgment.

He demanded rational proof and direct evidence before accepting any conclusion as valid (encouraging others to do the same) and regarded personal life experience as the best teacher. For years he was skeptical about the existence of God. "His rational mind put up a tremendous fight against his inborn spiritual tendencies." (6 p.36). He was highly skeptical of Ramakrishna's visions and revelations, and openly ridiculed them as the illusions and hallucinations of a madman. "He closely watched the Master for five years never allowing himself to be influenced by blind faith, always testing the words and actions of Sri Ramakrishna as the guru and the ideal of his spiritual life. But when the acceptance came, it was wholehearted, final and irrevocable." (6 p 28). Vivekananda "yearned sincerely for knowledge-sure, real, permanent and satisfactory. He wanted to get out of the quagmire of doubt and uncertainty." (1 vol. 2 p.III). His period of agnosticism caused him much stress. He was also severely self-critical (Ray 5 and strong Capricorn).

However, it was the triumph over his own struggles with doubt that enabled him to speak with such authority. "He always applied rigorously the laws of right reasoning and never shrank from his conclusions" (4 p. 166). His realizations were achieved via reason and direct intuitive experience.

He had the ability to interpret higher abstract concepts in such a way that made them clear, accessible and practical for others. He was highly critical of superstition and lower psychism. While he himself possessed psychic powers (he could read the past, present and future in the minds of those who came to him) he deliberately refrained from using them.

There can be no doubt that Vivekananda had a Ray 5 mind. This is supported astrologically by Mercury in Aquarius (Ray 5) conjunct Venus (Ray 5). It is also significant that the name "Vivekananda" is Sanskrit for "the power of discrimination; a preeminently 5th Ray quality.

## THE PRESENCE OF RAY 6

Vivekananda said of himself that he was "unsympathetic, uncompromising fanatic at twenty," and had only later "broadened out into a more universal love." Also, that "a mantle of intelligence covered his inherently devotional nature." It is worth noting that his devotionalism was allowed expression *only* after his skeptical mind was satisfied that the being or ideal was pure and truthful; Ramakrishna and the Divine Mother (Kali) for example. He never confused devotionalism with genuine spirituality.

Ramakrishna praised Vivekananda's extraordinary devotion, his eagerness and his boundless enthusiasm. Others wrote of his exuberant rich emotions, his volcanic feeling, his sudden passionate outbursts; his powerful fieriness, high-spirited insistent and consuming impetuosity of temperament; his idealism and aspiration, and his "burning urge" for renunciation; his dauntless loyalty and intense patriotism (in the sense of "identification of the self with the country" or of looking upon all human beings as members of one family.)

Most of his songs and poems were devotional in nature. He was very idealistic about women, whom he worshipped as expressions of "the Divine Mother." (Note, Moon opposite Neptune). He was prone to visions. He was, however, acutely aware of the pitfalls of what we would term "Ray 6" tendencies. He counseled sternly, for example, on the dangers of faith "breeding fanaticism and barring further progress," and of, "enthusiasm multiplying creeds"; or that love may die away in meaningless sentimentalism." He was *not* sentimental. He is described as having a "controlled fervor of feeling," and is I think a good example of a disciplined Ray 6 emotional nature controlled by a rational, skeptical mind.

He was renowned for "fervid eloquence." Through his inspiring writings and speeches he gave direction; aroused the nobler emotions; generated optimism, hope and enthusiasm, and implanted faith. His capacity to inspire and uplift others was his positive expression of Ray 6, as was his intense sympathy for, and selfless service in, relieving others' sufferings; his idealism expressed in practical philanthropy.

## CONCLUSION

I believe Rays 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 to be the dominant Ray energies expressed by Vivekananda. I have no hesitation in assigning to him a Ray 5 mind, Ray 6 emotional nature and Ray 3 physical body. Assigning rays to his soul and personality is more problematic.

At the outset of this project I was interested in choosing a subject who was assuredly a disciple. Now I see the pitfalls of such a choice. A person of advanced spiritual age may be accomplished in many fields, making a specific ray of influence difficult to pick. Also, with a soul-infused personality it may be difficult to distinguish the soul and personality rays. In Vivekananda's case, for instance, were his extraordinary number of talents expressive of Ray and/or astrological energies? Or, rather, the accomplishments of spiritual age and its accumulated experience? i.e., Was Ray 4 actually present or not? (As an astrological aside, it is of interest to note that his sun [personality] and Venus [higher mind and also the hierarchical ruler of Capricorn] are both conjunct his ascendant [soul] in Capricorn [the sign of the Initiate]).

There can be no doubt that he was profoundly Ist Ray. But at what level? As he was certainly a soul-conscious initiate disciple. He could have been:

- (a) a 2nd Ray soul expressing through a powerful soul infused Ist ray personality
- (b) a Ist Ray soul expressing through a compassionate and studious 2nd Ray personality or a creatively gifted and stormy 4th Ray personality or given his advanced spiritual age,
- (c) a Ist Ray monad expressing through a compassionate and studious 2nd Ray soul.
- (d) a 2nd Ray monad expressing through a Ist Ray soul.

His conflicts of pride and desire to dominate and be free versus love and service could have been either the taming of a Ray 1 soul, or the emergence of a Ray 2 soul from a Ray 1 personality. When he was in social situations of philosophical discussions, it was the gentleness, charm and humor of the 2nd or 4th Ray that were apparent. Yet, it was said that he concealed much under a jovial



- (3) Agni Yoga Society, 1954. "*Letters of Helena Roerich*" Vol. 11929-38.
- (4) Ahluwalia, B.K. & Shashi, 1983. "*Vivekananda and Indian Renaissance.*"
- (5) Avinashilingam, T.S., 1964. "*Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda.*"
- (6) Nikhilananda, Swami, 1953, 1987. "*Vivekananda -- A Biography.*"
- (7) Rolland, Romain, 1931. "*The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel.*"
- (8) Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1989. "*Swami Vivekananda: the Wisdom and the Bliss: 125th Birth Anniversary Commemoration.*"