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**Reports and Interviews: Abhishiktananda Society: Retreat--
Seminar: Mysticism -- Saiva and Christian: Rajpur, India November
1-6, 1990**

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FROM OCTOBER 31 - November 7, 1990, the Abhishiktananda Society of Delhi called together some 26 men and women, Hindu and Christian, for a shared life of meditation and study around the chosen topic. The Rajpur Retreat and Study Centre, near Dehra Dun in the foothills of the Himalayas, provided the setting for such a venture which must surely have rejoiced the heart of Swami Abhishiktananda himself (Dom Le Saux). Furthermore, the Swami, the sale of whose books enabled us to have the physical enjoyment of such a location, must have been delighted that the moment had come for such an encounter of spirits, a sharing of that "unique splendour of the Self where no one is left in its presence to exclaim How beautiful it is! "or, as John of Ruysbroeck wrote: "Here the man possesses the essential and supernatural unity of his spirit, as his own dwelling-place and as his own eternal, personal heritage."

Our worship and silent meditation together provided the setting for our common life. The subjects of the papers read will give some idea of the stretching involved for hearts and minds, a process which was helped by the response to each paper being made by someone of the "other" spiritual family.

Śaktipāta or Grace in Kashmir Śaivism.

Mysticism of Śaiva Siddhānta and an insight into its sannyāsa tradition.

Unknowing and personalism in the theological tradition of the Christian East.

Hadewijch of Antwerp and Hadewijch II: mysticism of being in the thirteenth century in Belgium.

The mysticism of Jesus.

The active mysticism of St. Ignatius Loyola Divine recognition: Pratyabhijñā.

Śāmbhāvopāya.

Enclosed in God, the joyful surprise of "one-ing" Reflections on the experience of Julian of Norwich.

On letting God be God: Meister Eckhart.

Mysticism in the Periya Puranam.

Ecstasy and Samādhi: the encounter, John of the Cross and Patañjali.

Gentle guidance was provided by Raimundo Panikkar as chairman and Swami Nityananda Giri of Tapovanam as a wonderful aid in the movement from discussion towards communion, while always at hand was Bettina Bäumer, the one whose labour of love made the whole seminar possible.

It is the intention of the Abhishiktananda Society to publish the papers given. There was, some of us felt, one lacuna: how is our concern for mysticism related to the problems of the world today? Can a genuine mystic of any tradition exist without some level of prophecy, of compassion for the oppressed and suffering millions? Was our deep sharing around mysticism not related to the tragic communal riots taking place at that very time and not so many miles from where we were gathered? That dichotomy between the "inner" spiritual and "outer" responsibility was never faced. Might that lack indicate the need for another gathering on that very subject, which was never far away from the life and concern of Swami Abhishiktananda himself?

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