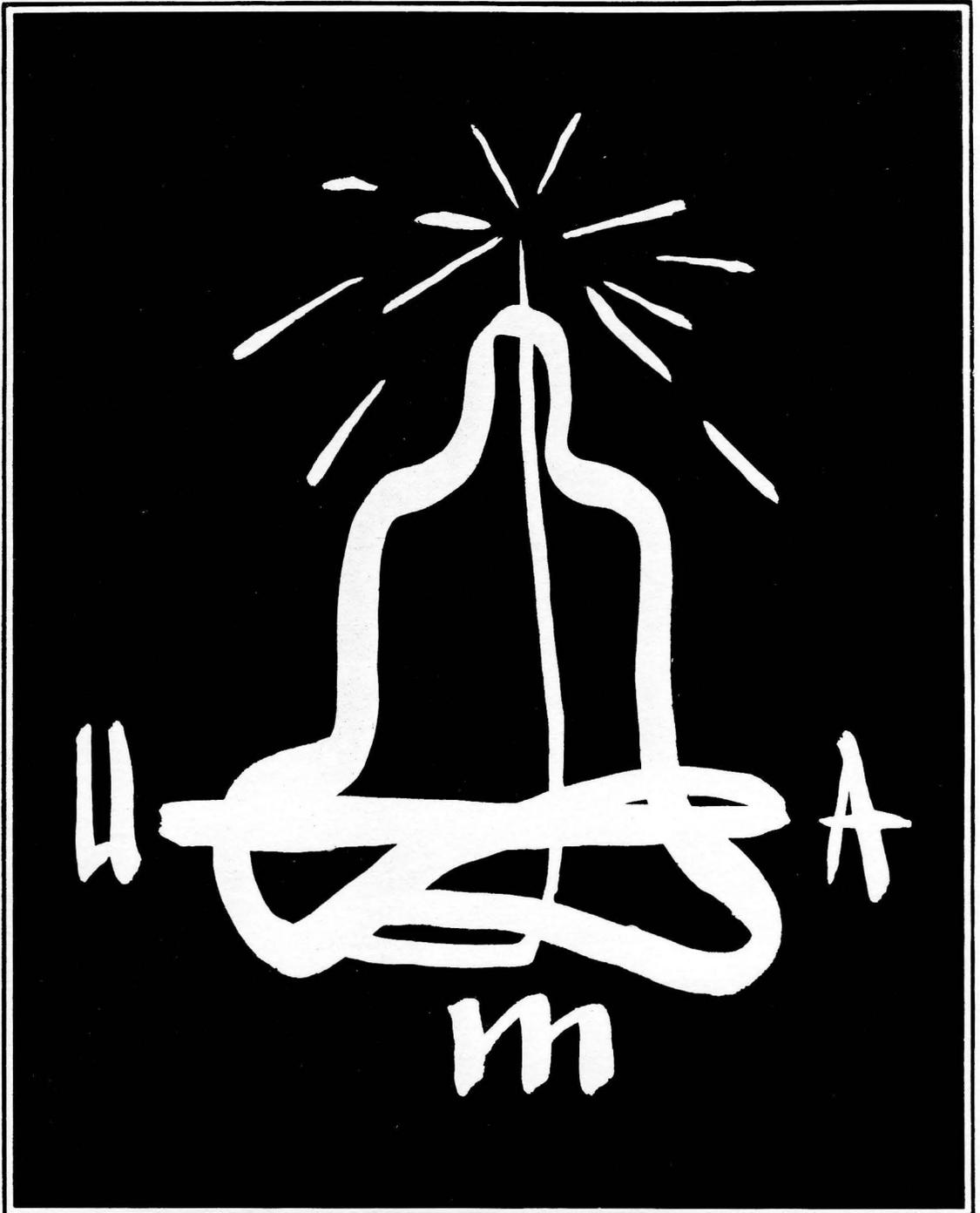
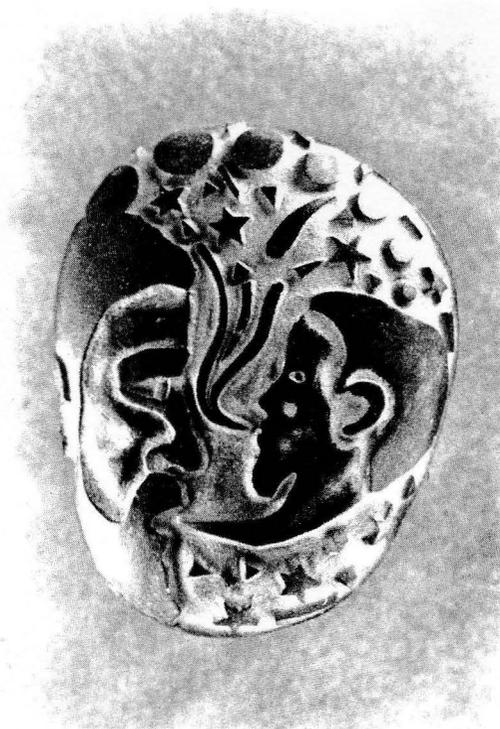


GURUKULAM

VOLUME I • 1985

FOURTH QUARTER





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GURUKULAM

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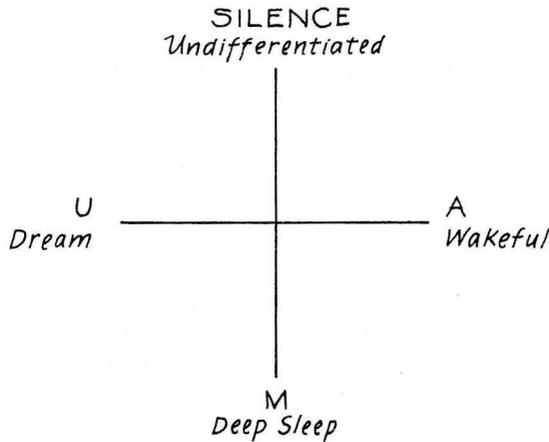
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A Personal Map of the Universal



Many areas of human endeavor are guided by non-verbal schemes of correlation, such as maps and blueprints, which enable a number of factors to be integrated with clarity and simplicity. From initial cost estimates through all the stages of a construction project, a builder organizes his work with the aid of architectural drawings. The captain of an ocean liner repeatedly refers to navigational charts to guide the ship to its destination. In our endeavors to know ourselves, to find fulfillment, to make positive contributions, and to live in harmony with others, we can also be benefitted by the use of a pictorial scheme which enables us to more clearly visualize ourselves and the world around us.

In our common search for happiness, we all experience frustration with ourselves and friction with others. Sometimes we are at war with ourselves with conflicting interests vying for satisfaction. Sometimes our actions are upsetting to another or other's actions are disturbing to us. Such conflicts bring confusion, sadness and anger. We feel as though we are lost, wandering through threatening landscapes, or as though our world lies shattered in disconnected pieces. We need a map which can help us chart a safe course, a blueprint which will aid us in structuring a world of purpose and beauty.

In ancient India, a seer of truth shared his vision with the world through the composition of a group of mystical verses which are known to us as the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad. In those verses the author developed a scheme to guide those who seek a unitive wisdom which incorporates all aspects of human life. Although the seer's language may seem archaic to the modern ear, his message is timeless. In describing the states of consciousness through which we cycle every day - wakeful, dream, deep sleep and undifferentiated - the Upaniṣad heightens our awareness. Nataraja Guru showed how these states can be pictured together as the four limbs of the axes of Cartesian coordinates:

On this scheme, we can map out our values, locating those which pertain to our objective, transactional life at "A," those which pertain to the inner, subjective realm at "U," those which pertain to the unconscious, causal factors emanating from our life force at "M," and those which pertain to the transcendent realm of pure consciousness at "silence." Of course, any value may be relevant to more than one aspect of consciousness, and can be placed accordingly on the scheme, reflecting our experience of its position in our lives. As we undergo the process of creating such a map of ourselves, we

enter into our values more deeply, gaining a more precise knowledge of their dynamics and their meaning to us. This process also enables us to see each aspect as part of an integrated whole instead of as disparate forces.

The same basic scheme can be used to understand the correlation of those we hold before us as models when we map them out according to what they represent to us. We can also include the perspectives of others along with our own, which aids us in focusing on a shared central value instead of remaining in conflict over varying modes of expression.

In this issue, Guru Nitya explains the value of this scheme in the development of one's personal philosophy of life. Just as in the use of any tool, the more we develop our familiarity with it, the more it will aid us. Step by step, we can gain deeper understanding of those with whom we interact, of our wellsprings of creative imagination, of that which inspires us and leads us on. Including both a horizontal and vertical axis, the scheme can help us understand the ways in which our focus and activities can become horizontal, ricocheting between objective reality and our inner responses to it. It also serves as a reminder that one source feeds us with energy for all our undertakings and that the central goal of happiness threads through every moment.

Guru Nitya's translation and commentary on the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad begins in this issue, unfolding the meaning of the ancient mystic's word in modern language. Each verse commentary is a beautiful meditation which settles our mind and heightens our awareness of the inner light which constantly illuminates our world of infinite variety. These meditations are important guides which enable us to go beyond a mechanical reliance on this scheme which is necessarily limited. When our friend Jimmy Walker sailed solo across the Atlantic Ocean from Africa to America, there were times when his charts became useless because clouds obscured any sight of sun or stars by which he could determine his position. As a last resort, he pulled out his compass, only to discover that it was again and again pulled to a certain point in the ocean which he later discovered was an island with a very strong magnet. There are times in our lives when even the most useful tool is not reliable. Then we turn with gratitude and hope to a factor beyond reckoning, the ever-present Grace and Mercy which guides and protects us. Through Guru's commentary we are brought to the profound understanding that the scheme is only a representation of a reality in which that which we seek and the world in which we seek are merged into one.

Nancy Yeilding

The Māṇḍūkya Upanisad

Translation and Commentary by

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

INVOCATION

ōm bhadraṃ karṇabhiḥ śṛṇuyāma devāḥ
bhadraṃ paśyemākṣabhir yajatrāḥ
sthirair āṅgais tuṣṭuvāmsas tanūbhir
vyaśema devahitam yad āyuh

śvasti na indro vṛddhas śravaḥ
svasti naḥ pūṣā viśvavedāḥ
svasti naḥ tārksyo ariṣṭanemiḥ
svasti no bṛhaspatir dadhātu

ōm śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

Oh Gods, may we hear with our ears what is
auspicious.
May we, who are engaged in sacrifice, with
our eyes see what is auspicious.
May we, singing praises, live with healthy bodies
and with perfect limbs our allotted days.
May Indra of great fame, most ancient of wisdom
listeners, be gracious unto us.
May the all-knowing, all-illumining nourisher
(sun) be gracious unto us.
May Aruṇa and Garuḍa be gracious unto us.
May Brhaspati, the Lord of the Word, be gra-
cious unto us.

Aum Peace Peace Peace

ōm bhadrām karṇebhiḥ śṛṇuyāma devāḥ

Oh gods, with our ears may we hear what is auspicious.

An individual person has a physical body, every cell of which is animated by the principle of consciousness. Consciousness can be compared to light. Although it is the same light of consciousness that illuminates the senses, it is experienced differently according to the structural and functional purpose of each part of our body. With our eyes we see and with our ears we hear. The ancient seers of India did not bother to give a precise description either of the structural mechanism of the body or its metabolic function. Their approach to the entire subject of life was very much that of a poet. Modern people may accuse them of anthropomorphism; however, an Indian may not find that there is anything to be ashamed of in seeing this same light enshrined in all living beings. It is believed that St. Francis of Assisi called his body his 'brother ass.' Sharing the same attitude, the Indian yogi calls an ass his brother. It is a localization of a universal energy that gains for it a certain status and identification. For this reason, the wise poets of ancient India saw gods residing in all their limbs and vital organs. These supervising gods are asked to take good care of the function of whatever organ they are presiding over. Hence it is only appropriate to address the gods: devāḥ.

How do we hear? Is it only because of sound waves vibrating in the air? Certainly not. The air is replete with all kinds of sound waves and radio waves. We do not hear most of them with our naked ears. Even when we think we hear a sound we recognize it as the honking of a car, the barking of a dog, the buzzing of a mosquito, the banging of a window shutter, the singing of a bird, and so on. All these are affective voices. Some are pleasing and some are jarring. In either case they are sounds that are encoded, structured and to a very great extent classified. That means there is a selective structuring going on within us. Whoever is the agent of receiving, formulating and interpreting sounds as affective voices should be asked to discern properly and to bring us only sounds that are pleasing, enlightening, inspiring, instructing, consoling, and generally helpful to maintain one's peace and beatitude. It is with this intention that the seer invokes the attention of the gods of hearing to make every sound that is audible auspicious.

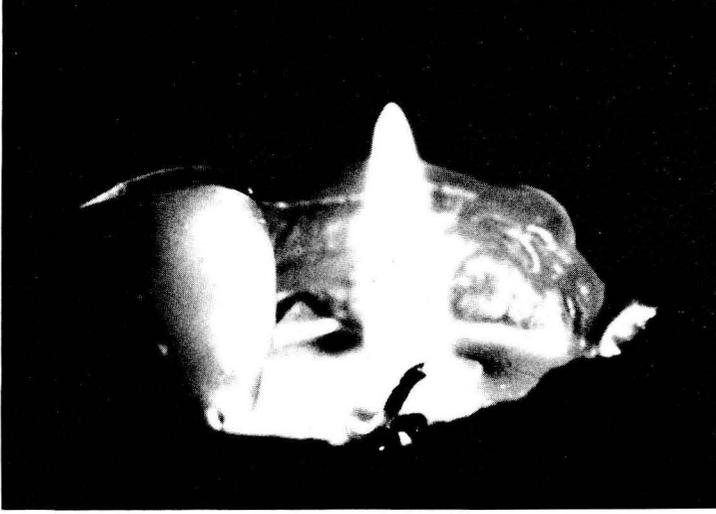
There is a story repeated both in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad and the Chāndogya Upaniṣad to justify such a prayer. The motorsensory system which is favorably conditioned to attune the individual psyche to seek after the higher imperishable and sublime values of life is allegorically called deva. It is believed that there is a counter force which is negative

and compulsive by which one is pushed more and more into the hedonistic and masochistic forms of search. This demonic force is called asura. Just as Freud thinks of the ambivalent alternation of the libido between eros and thanatos, the Indian rishis think of a perennial struggle going on between the devas and the asuras. According to the story, the shining ones thought of overpowering the demons by consecrating the ear with the divine vibrations of AUM. When the demons came to know of this intention they filled the ear with inauspicious sounds. From that day, man hears with his ear both the auspicious and the inauspicious. What is said about the ear is also true of the eye. So the rishi prays:

bhadraṃ paśyemākṣabhir yajatrāḥ

May we, who are engaged in sacrifice, with our eyes see what is auspicious.

When we think, meaningful concepts come and link in our thoughts in a meaningful way. When concepts are revived they bring to our mind visual images which are to be attributed to our sight. Just as we see in pictures, we also think to a large extent with meaningful pictures. The world is too big to take as one piece so the artist in us breaks it up into ensembles. Each ensemble is seen as a gestalt. This aspect of seeing in pictures is developed today as a special school of psychology. The Royal School of Science in Britain was adamant in saying, "We believe only what we see." Now it is commonly understood that we see what we believe. From a chaotic plethora of light and shade one can figure out an inspiring or awe-filling form and can turn that vision into an exquisite piece of art. Another person seeing the same conglomeration of light and shade may see in it ghastly demonic forms and may even pass out. Who is it or what is it that sits behind our visual faculty and decides what we should see? We do not know that unknown agent even when we want its full cooperation, so we pray for seeing whatever is auspicious. We are not static dumb pieces sitting here and mirroring the play of light and shade outside us. We are active participants in the game of life that is going on. We are burning out like the sacrificial fire; the candle that burns radiates its golden beams and the incense stick that burns gives away itself in fragrance. We burn out and become this civilization: mankind. Such is its history, art and literature, science and technology and everything that goes to posterity. It is in this sense that the rishi calls himself a man of sacrifice. He is not praying to a god outside. The prayer is addressed to the best in him to give him both direction and encouragement.



He does not know for how long we are decreed to live on this earth. He presumes that we will live as long as the gods permit us, so he prays:

sthirair aṅgais tuṣṭuvāmsas tanūbhir
vyaśema devahitam yad āyuh

May we, singing praises, live with healthy bodies and with perfect limbs our allotted days.

Let anything be the span of one's life. What is important is to use the allotted term of life fully and in the right manner. To the governor of life he also prays that our limbs and body be made firm and strong.

The Vedic or Vedantic concept of God is not identical with the Christian or Islamic understanding of an intimate God who is deeply interested in the personal life of man. Instead of using one word to represent God, in the Sanskrit philosophical literature there are so many words which refer only to some special aspect of the Absolute. Although the sound 'deva' is philologically linked with the idea of light as a philosophical term, it suggests the unavoidable and fateful dithyrambic zigzag of life where one alternately touches glory and tragedy. In epics like the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, this aspect of God, where He is mentioned as vidhi, seems to have a certain capacity which does not permit a man to know why he is mercilessly pushed into the abyss of tragedy. Life is not viewed by the Hindu as a single visitation to this earth. For him every birth is

a birth among a million births and so is his death. As he is a forgetful being, he needs an all-computerizing God to keep track of all his good and evil deeds so that he will always be led to an appropriate womb from where he can gather all the instruments and incentives to continue his karma. All the same, the rishi does not think that the interlinked Divine is callous. He can receive guidance and support through prayer. Both the followers of Vishnu and Śiva think that this body, senses and mind are given only to serve the will of God. The individual is willing to make a good job of it provided the instruments are operationally efficient. Hence, his prayer for a strong body and dextrous limbs.

Now the seer turns to Indra, the most ancient among wisdom listeners. The senses are called indriyas and the mind, being master of the senses, is identified with Indra, the king of the shining ones. He is invoked to make our life on earth rich and peaceful :

svasti na indro vṛddhas śravaḥ

May Indra of great fame, most ancient of wisdom listeners, be gracious unto us.

The mind is both fickle and persistent. In the Kena Upaniṣad we come across the story of Indra, Agni and Varuṇa becoming scared of the indiscernable power of an unidentified spirit. In spite of Indra's initial failure, he persisted in his search for Truth and finally succeeded in obtaining wisdom instruction from Umā, the daughter of the snowy mountain. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad there is another story of how Indra went to Brahmā with the intention of knowing the secret of the Self. With him there was also a demon as a co-student. Brahmā outwitted both Indra and the demon Virocana with faulty teachings. Virocana gave up but Indra persisted until obtaining the highest truth from the supreme creator. In the next stage of the prayer, the eyes are lifted to the heavens and the god of the solar orb is invoked for the continuous showering of his nourishing energy. The link between the cosmos and the individual is traced through the element of fire that is present in the sun, in the prāṇa, vital breath, the Word, vāc, and the sacrificial fire with which man conducts his daily rounds.

svasti naḥ pūṣā viśvavedāḥ

May the all-knowing, all-illuminating nourisher (sun) be gracious unto us.

Next come the twin brothers born of Vinatā, Aruṇa, the charioteer of the sun, and Garuḍa, the celestial eagle. These are two beings who became immortal by their prowess. Unlike the devas, who secured their immortality by partaking of the divine nectar amṛta, the best models before man for life's highest accomplishment are Aruṇa and Garuḍa. With his own prowess and wisdom, puruṣārtha, man can cross over the duality of birth and death. Recognizing the uniqueness of man, the rishi prays:

svasti naś tārksyo ariṣṭanemiḥ

May Aruṇa and Garuḍa be gracious unto us.

Finally he closes this beautiful invocation with a prayer for grace from Bṛhaspati:

svasti no bṛhaspatir dadhātu

May Bṛhaspati, the Lord of the Word, be gracious unto us.

Both for his interpersonal programming of life and interpersonal participation with his fellow beings, man needs the continuous aid of words. A wrong word which drops out from his lips at a wrong hour can ruin his entire life. On the other hand, sweet and truthful words which can inspire and console will gain for man the entire world. Bṛhaspati is the Lord of the Word and hence he is invoked.

In conclusion, we want to have peace from the world of our transactions, the world of our subjective ideation, and the deep-rooted urges and incentives of life. The prayer, therefore, closes with:

ōm śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

AUM peace peace peace



The Kaṭha Upaniṣad

Translation and Commentary by

Narayana Prasad Swami

Every Upaniṣad teaches Brahma-vidyā, the Science of the Absolute, in one way or another. The ultimate aim of Brahmavidyā is to free everyone from the tangles and the resultant sufferings of everyday life. This ultimate freedom is called mukti or mokṣa in India. The most intimate attachment we feel is to our own body. Leaving this body is quite acceptable to no one unless one is philosophising. Leaving the body means to die. When we say "leaving the body," we are not clear in our mind as to who leaves what. Actually, no one knows what it is to die. But everyone wants to avoid death which it is unavoidable. It is around this paradoxical aspect of life, called death, that the teaching of the Kaṭha Upaniṣad is built up. In it the god of death himself comes to teach Nachiketas, a young seeker, the secret of death.

All the Upaniṣads are appendices added to one or another of the four Vedas, namely the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda and the Atharva Veda. There are two systems under Yajur Veda called Śukla (white) and Kriṣṇa (black). The present Upaniṣad forms part of the Kriṣṇa Yajur Veda.

Vedantic teachings used to be treated as an excuse for escaping from the actualities of life. This Upaniṣad is composed in such a way that the necessity of teaching higher wisdom arises as part of actual life.

Vedānta is a compound word consisting of two words, veda and anta. Veda means knowledge and anta means end. Thus Vedānta means 'end of knowledge,' implying the knowledge knowing which nothing remains to be known. In another sense, the word Vedānta means

the Upaniṣads themselves as they form the last part of the Vedas. That is to say, Vedānta has the Vedas as its natural background, of which it is an offshoot.

The Vedas are mainly concerned with rituals such as burnt sacrifices. Although these sacrifices are highly symbolic of pure wisdom, over time they degenerated into mere rituals and those who performed them were completely oblivious to their meaning. It is as a dramatic offshoot of the culmination of such a ritualistic context that this Upaniṣad is presented. One of the burnt sacrifices is named viṣvajit (conqueror of the cosmos). It is customary that the sacrificer should give all his worldly belongings to the priests at the end of the sacrifice. In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad the story is told of a demon called Vājaśravas who conducted the Viṣvajit sacrifice. At the end of it he gave the priests as dakṣhina, free gift, cows which were barren and too old to eat, drink or give yield. This shows the degeneration of the Vedic rituals. Giving away the useless cows as free gifts relieved the demon of a burden and at the same time satisfied Vedic instruction. Here Vājaśravas was taking advantage of the instructions for his own vested interest. Such a possibility is there in all rituals. Only a seeker uncontaminated by worldly interests could save man from this possibility which becomes a vicious circle. Only an uncontaminated mind is able to see truth as truth without any prejudice. Nachiketas, the young disciple of the Upaniṣad, is the representative of such an innocence and straightforwardness. Little children have the full freedom to

attain the kingdom of God as brought to light by Jesus in the Biblical context. Thus the Kaṭha Upaniṣad attains a unique position in the history of Indian thought, both in its historical and philosophical sense.

ॐ सह नावतु
 सह नौभुक्तु
 सह वीर्यं करवावहै
 तेजसि नावर्धतस्तु
 मा विद्विषावहै
 ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

AUM SAHA NĀVAVATU
 SAHA NAU BHUNAKTU
 SAHA VĪRYAM KARAVĀVAHAI
 TEJASVINĀVADHĪ TAM ASTU
 MĀ VIDVIṢĀVAHAI
 AUM ŚĀNTIḤ ŚĀNTIḤ ŚĀNTIḤ

*Together may we two be protected.
 Together may we two be saved.
 (Together may we two enjoy.)
 May the teaching be illumined
 for both of us. May there be no
 hatred between us. May there be
 appeasement of the three kinds
 of sufferings (self-caused, caused
 by others, and caused by God.)*

Wisdom teaching normally takes place between a master and a disciple. In other words, it is in a dialectical situation in which a master and a disciple are counterparts that the secret of wisdom becomes illumined. This bipolarity happens only between a man of wisdom, a guru, and a true disciple, a sat sisya, who is properly qualified, adhikāri. The place of this rapprochement between the master and disciple in the imparting of wisdom has been explained in detail by Nataraja Guru in his The Word of the Guru in the chapter entitled "Guru and Sisya." The establishment of such a bipolarity is a rare event. We could say that God's grace as a favorable chance element also has to be there. The above peace invocation is a prayer for strengthening this bipolar relation in order that the teaching may become illumined. The prayer is made by both the master and the disciple.

The attainment of wisdom becomes possible only for one who seeks it for its own sake so intensely that he or she won't be satisfied with anything less than the awareness of ultimate Truth. Even such a vigorous seeker need not necessarily gain wisdom. The circumstances in which he or she happens to live also need to be favorable to this end. There are many who do not attain it even if they have all the right circumstances. They fail only because their desire and will power are not strong enough. Even true seekers who happen to be in favorable circumstances often get disappointed as they do not find a true guide. It is only by chance or by God's grace that all these elements come together, so in the peace invocation God is prayed to for grace.

The wisdom of a master remains a secret and of no value until it is imparted to a true seeker. In another sense, we can say that the unimparted wisdom of a Guru is a brightness shrouded by darkness. But darkness can never conceal brightness. Likewise a master can never remain concealing his wisdom. He necessarily has to expose himself or his Self. This exposition is actualized in the transmission of wisdom to one who really seeks it. Thus the teaching becomes illumined, the teacher becomes self-satisfied in having played his true

role, and the taught experiences the fulfillment of life in having gained what he yearned for. The master and the true disciple thus pray together for such a fulfillment and illumination.

The main elements in the bipolar relationship between the master and the disciple are the love and compassion of the master for the disciple and the trust of the disciple in the Word of the Guru. A disciple who is suspicious of the veracity of the teaching of the Guru actually doubts the Truth itself and one who is suspicious of the Truth never attains it. It is the wholehearted trust in the truth, as indicated by the Guru in the beginning, and an earnest and dedicated attempt on the part of the disciple that enables him to attain it. One who doubts the truth or the ultimate end itself wanders in his or her search aimlessly in the wilderness of words. In the words of the Bhagavad Gita, "one who is doubtful perishes." The prayer here is also to save the master and the disciple from the lack of mutual trust and the resultant hatred.

Wisdom is sought for nothing else than the peace that it brings. According to Indian philosophy, three kinds of suffering will be appeased as a result of gaining wisdom. These sufferings are the self-caused ones, ādhyātmika, those caused by another, ādhibhautika, and the ones caused by God or caused as a natural event, ādhiyaivika. The prayer is for the appeasement of these sufferings by wisdom.

FIRST VALLĪ

(Vallī, literally meaning creeper, here stands for chapter.)

I.

Desirous (of the fruits of the sacrifice called Viṣvajit), the son of Vājaśravas gave away all that he possessed (after the sacrifice), it is said. He had a son by the name Nachiketas.

The Kaṭha Upaniṣad begins in the setting of a Vedic ritual in order that the contrast between the relativistic and absolutist values, represented by Vedism and Vedantism, can be brought to light. Vedic rituals are observed with a view to enjoy earthly and heavenly pleasures with the blessing of the gods to whom the rituals are offered. The value of these rituals is relativistic while the wisdom that is going to be revealed in the Upaniṣad is absolutist in value, aiming at immortality and transcending both birth and death. It is customary that the sacrificer should give away everything that he possesses as a free gift to the priests. We see that even the Vedic injunctions are followed here only to make others believe and not with a wholeheartedness. This shows that rituals can become vitiated. The wisdom teaching that follows is not subject to this kind of degeneration as its benefit and value rely on one's own Self-awareness. Śankara says that the Upaniṣad begins as a parable in order to praise knowledge, vidyā, as against necience, avidyā.

Here the name of the sacrifice is also very meaningful. The word vāja means food and one who becomes famous as a giver of food is known as vājaśravas. The present sacrificer is the son of such a vājaśravas. There are two kinds of action recommended in the scriptures. One is Vedic rituals. The other is doing beneficial works such as distributing food, making public wells and planting shade trees. These actions are called iṣṭāpūrta karmas. Vājaśravas was a man famous for his iṣṭāpūrta karmas; those who do these karmas do not give away all their possessions but do something for the public utilizing only the leftover after satisfying their own needs. It is not to be expected that the son of such a man will give away everything even to fulfill the Vedic injunctions. Despite performing these injunctions only to make others believe, the son has the deep-rooted belief that he is bound to do Vedic sacrifices to attain benefits and glory in life. That is why he conducted the sacrifice called viṣvajit in which he is bound to give away everything at the end. The word viṣvajit means that which conquers the whole universe. It was the desire for glory that tempted

Vājaśravas to perform the ritual and not the understanding of the spirit of it. When there is lack of understanding, there is always the possibility of falsehood and dishonesty. Here the dishonesty creeps into a sacrificial situation and that paves the way to pure knowledge. The torchbearer to such an end is the innocent youngster named Nachiketas.

II.

As the gifts were being taken to the priests, faith entered into that good youngster. He thought.

Śraddhā means faithfulness to the teaching of the scriptures and to the teaching of the master. These teachings are not based on any relativistic consideration but on the realization of the truth in oneself as one's Self. Only a whole-hearted faith in such a truth and its realization will save us from all falsehood. Such a faith is natural to innocent minds which are not yet rigidified by social prejudices. Nachiketas is the representative of such a mind.

Nachiketas sees the gifts that are being handed over to the priests and his innocent mind becomes filled with a natural interest for honesty. He feels that the behavior of his father is not true and he wants to dissuade his father from this falsehood. But according to Indian tradition, sons and daughters are not supposed to correct their parents. Obedience is what is expected of them. So it is only natural that a son does not dare to correct his father. Feeling this inhibition, Nachiketas is in a predicament. His state of mind is brought out in the next mantra.

III.

Those who give away as gifts cows which have stopped drinking water, stopped eating grass and stopped yielding milk go to those worlds known as joyless.

Vedic rituals are performed with worldly pleasures in view. They also have their own scriptural injunctions in the form of instructions and taboos. Vājaśravas does not fully respect those scriptural injunctions. Even though he gives gifts to fulfill the formalities, the gifts are useless to the receiver and at the same time relieve him of a burden. How far from the ultimate Truth will be those who are not able to be honest even in their actions for worldly benefits! Their life will be lead away from the world of real happiness. So Nachiketas thinks that his father will be going only to the joyless world. It is only natural that he does not wish this to happen. So he approaches his father and says as follows.

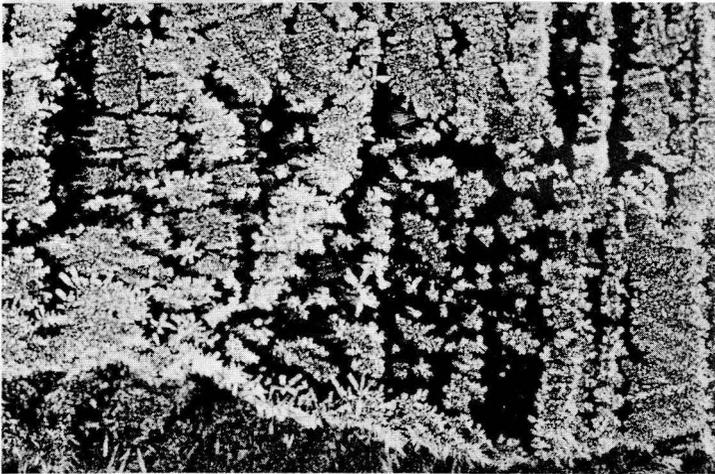
IV.

He said to his father, "Oh father, to whom are you going to give me?" He repeated the same a second and a third time. Then his father replied thus: "I will give you to death."

As Nachiketas was not able to correct his father he reminded him of the meaning of giving away everything one possesses in an indirect way. A man considers his son as everything he possesses, sarvasvam. Giving away a son means giving up everything. So he asks his father, "To whom are you going to give me?" Thus he wanted to save his father from his predicament. Here we see the desire of Nachiketas to correct his father while being a dutiful and obedient son. His purity of mind and righteousness are also evident. But his father's mind is too conditioned with relativistic considerations to understand the innocence of Nachiketas. A father will always want to keep his son with him at any cost. So he does not answer at first. But on seeing that Nachiketas is persistent, he becomes somewhat irritated and answers, "I'll give you to death."

(To be continued)







My Personal Philosophy of Life

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Over the years I have taught the philosophy of Narayana Guru, the philosophy of Nataraja Guru, the philosophy of the Gita and a gist of the philosophy of other Indian teachers. Here I am discussing the way in which a person can develop his or her own philosophy of life. My experience of formulating a philosophy to guide my personal life by studying many philosophers, by sitting at the feet of various masters, having been instructed by my own Guru for a quarter of a century, contrasting his teachings with the teaching of others, and comparing various schools can serve as an example to others. I think it is absolutely necessary for everyone to have a clear idea of how they are living, why they are living, what they are living. Then life becomes very meaningful. If we have not answered these fundamental questions for ourselves, life can be very muddled. We won't have clarity. Many things remain vague, which is not a pleasant experience. That is why I think every person should have a clearly elucidated philosophy of life. In sharing my philosophy with you, I am not passing it on to you or asking you to copy it. I am only letting you know what I have formulated so that you can compare your philosophy or other philosophies with it. It can be very gratifying if you compare your philosophy of life with my philosophy of life. Then you can ask questions.

To begin with, I conceive of everything as unitively belonging to one total force. I have no objection to using the English word 'Absolute', but a word which I like much better than 'the Absolute' is the simple English word 'All'. Curiously, the spelling of the English word 'All' agrees with the

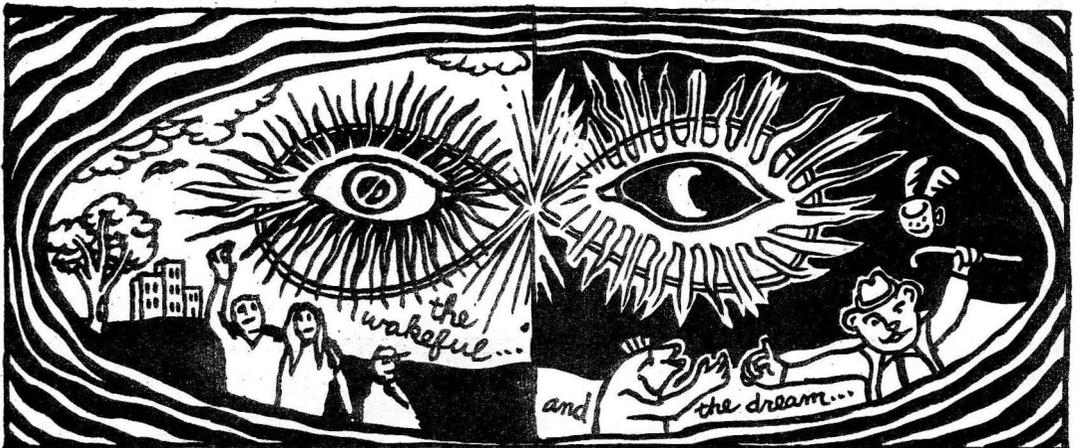
Malayalam word Allam. In Malayalam, all words are given an ending of 'm', so all would be pronounced as allam. Allam means 'all'. I have some reservation about using words like Brahman because they are connected with Hindu Philosophy. I prefer to use this word which has no coloration - 'All'. My first postulate is All. Then I want to qualify that All. All also means the ground of all potentials. What ever is possible arises from that All. What is known to me and what is not known to me, what I am conscious of and what I am not conscious of - all these are included in this concept of All. I am in it, the world is in it, all experiences are in it, the past, the present and the future are in it. Nothing is excluded.

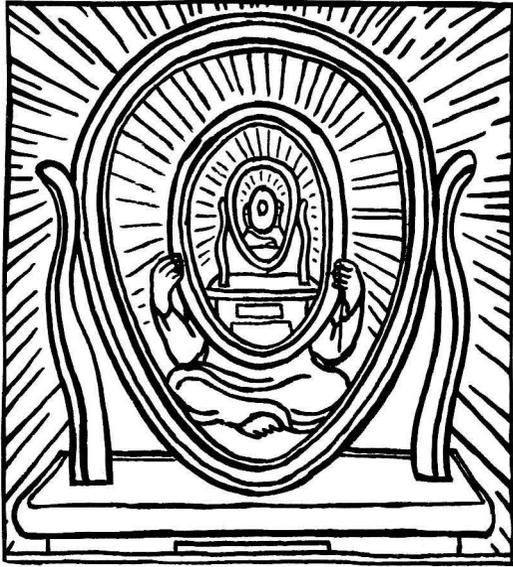
Thus, All is my starting point. I bring in two concepts, objectivity and subjectivity. When I open my eyes and see whatever they can perceive, I understand that I see only a part of this grand universe. I suggest the rest to my mind. The world does not stop where the horizon stops. Something similar to what I see continues from the horizon infinitely or, at least, beyond where my mind and senses can reach. The objective world does not come and stand as a mere object which I experience with my senses. I identify all objects by reading meaning into them. Some subjective embellishment is required for any objective factor to present itself to me. Therefore, the objective world or the cosmological world out there, which includes my body, is only one half. The other half is everything I experience with my eyes closed, with my senses withdrawn. If I am not looking out at the external world, I am in a world of ideas and subjectivity. But, in the world of sub-

jectivity, every form that I perceive and every concept I apply are influenced by whatever I have noticed in the objective world. So the objective world is not completely objective and the subjective world is not completely subjective.

There is an interiorization of the subjective and objective into each other which creates an amalgam of the external with an emphasis on the objective and an amalgam of the internal with an emphasis on the subjective. The center of the area where they overlap each other and interlace is the central focus of my consciousness. In the heart of it I experience the I-consciousness. When I say: "I know," "I feel," "I see," — seeing is external, feeling is internal, and knowing is centrally placed between them. Between the cosmological and the psychological, I place myself as part of consciousness very much affected by non-conscious elements. I am always within the brackets of objective appearance and subjective appearance. I say 'appearance' because close examination of what is presented reveals that there are inner and inner layers of greater reality which were not seen at first sight, whether objective or subjective. So the primafacie status of our experience is one of appearance. That does not mean it is unreal. To me, all experiences are real experiences but their status is not that of a perennial, eternal entity but that of a transforming, changing entity within the ground of the All. The All has within it the possibility of becoming as well as being — it's a being, becoming entity, without any contradiction.

However big this world is, and however independent the existence of one single little organism like my mind, my world — my world of experience cannot be there unless I preside over it. Everything is to be centrally located through a point of reference in me. I can know only from that point of reference. If I efface it, I become disoriented. For the orientation of experiencing my world of consciousness, there has to be a central entity called 'I'. That does not mean that in my unconscious state, things cannot happen within me without design. In fact, a large percentage of actions — metabolic changes and vital life functions — are happening without any reference to the central locus of I within me. So the I is mainly banked upon for transactional purposes in the wakeful world of everyday life and also to recognize and appreciate the world of dreams. Apart from those two states, there are other states within me such as deep sleep and the unconscious and autonomous functions of my body. By virtue of my "spiritual-exercises", I sometimes go into states about which I cannot say anything because the subject — object relationship within me comes to a narrow point where subject and object mutually efface one another. Then I transcend time consciousness, space consciousness and body consciousness. When I am free from it, I can fill up the gap between the beginning of that state and the termination of the state as one of continuity. That continuity can be recognized as an undisturbed state, a state which cannot be qualified with any of the known qualities of mind such as joyous or depressed or



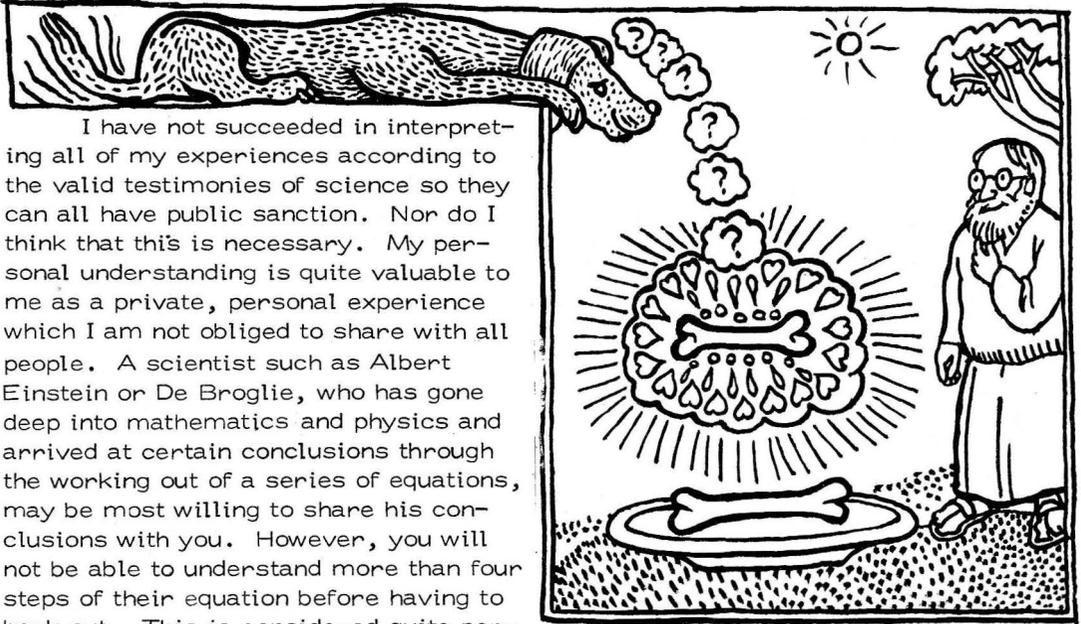


any such thing. I am a little hesitant to call it transcendental because of the associations of that word with many movements in the world but the nearest word is something like that - I would call it an unaccountable state. This is the second stage to which I've developed my philosophy.

Then I share my world with my fellow beings, if I say I know something then they ask me to describe it, how I came to know it, when I came to know it, for how long I have had that knowledge, and what changes I have undergone, etc., and how my knowledge can all be reduced into one thing. This is our world of interaction, knowledge and the measurements of knowledge. As soon as we accept that something can be measured we are introducing a norm, a standard, a criterion. Certitude comes when you have a norm with which to measure. Certitude is absolutely necessary to hold on to knowledge with conviction. Fact and fiction are so interlaced that man has to sort out fact from fiction. Fact is decided upon by its measurability. There are many methods of measurement and many norms that can be applied. This is the third stage of development: I have before me a cosmological world, which is slightly overlapped with my psychological world; in between is the knower of the two worlds; and that knower should know and share that knowledge with his fellow men. For that sharing, he has to give a testimony. Without testimony,

it is only an opinion. Here, knowledge is further classified into a private opinion and a public statement. You can have any number of private experiences about which you can say: "It is inexpressible." Then you keep them to yourself. They are not invalid simply because you cannot express them or share them, but public validity comes only when you have a measure which is shared by others. There has to be a common consent. When common consent crosses the checkpoint of national boundaries and language boundaries, it is called scientific knowledge. Out of the vast realms of unexamined knowledge only a portion is examined. And only a portion of examined knowledge can be normatively evaluated - measured, calculated, tabulated, classified, categorized, with nomenclature appended to each item and then passed on to the rest of the world. When a piece of knowledge is normatively adjudged, everybody is not going to re-examine the testimony and look for proof because of something called authenticity. A number of scientific institutions in this world, as a result of applying scientific methodology for many years, earned a certain name and trust. Just as religious people put their faith in a religious institution, those who care for proof and norms put their trust in certain public institutions such as MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), or a science book produced by a scholar, an academician of Stanford, Harvard or Oxford. When you know that a professor or dean of Oxford University has written something, you don't bother to repeat all the tests that he did. A credibility is established in the scientist, established on faith, just like religious faith, or sometimes even worse than religious faith. Credibility is established and we hope that nobody is playing games with us, but sometimes they do.





I have not succeeded in interpreting all of my experiences according to the valid testimonies of science so they can all have public sanction. Nor do I think that this is necessary. My personal understanding is quite valuable to me as a private, personal experience which I am not obliged to share with all people. A scientist such as Albert Einstein or De Broglie, who has gone deep into mathematics and physics and arrived at certain conclusions through the working out of a series of equations, may be most willing to share his conclusions with you. However, you will not be able to understand more than four steps of their equation before having to back out. This is considered quite permissible in the world of science - unless you have studied physics, mathematics, chemistry or the given discipline, and have acquired a certain degree of proficiency in it, you will not know certain necessary steps. That can be so in spiritual matters too. Unless you yourself have gained a certain sharpness, sensibility, and the high intuitive ability of your inner consciousness, and break through certain psychological barriers, you will never attain the experience or insight of a Ramana Maharishi, a Narayana Guru or a Sri Ramakrishna. But they are all somehow dubbed as religious and their insights often dismissed as guesswork which does not deserve the same sanction that is given to a scientific prediction. This attitude is born of prejudice. I have shed all such prejudices. I say some knowledge can be publicly shared, but much cannot be shared. I do not consider that vast area which cannot be shared as invalid. I consider it respectable enough, but there is still scope for further examination which will allow things which were not accounted for yesterday to be accounted for tomorrow. I am optimistic. I do not draw a thick line between science and non-science or religious experiences. There is no such impenetrable wall between them. There is lack of experience and understanding on our part which we can attack from both sides.

The fourth phase of development relates to the faculties in me which operate between my private realm of understanding and the public knowledge of science. If you examine the texture of my writing, you will find that it bristles with many logical statements. I write: "therefore," "because of this," "and so," "whereby." These are all logical ways of persuading you to come to a certain conclusion. I am presenting things according to a cognitive science. When we encounter the presented world, cognition happens. I gain a better sense of the process of cognition by using the Sanskrit word, asti (it is). When it becomes possible to say, "yes, it is," and an "is-ness" is affirmed, cognition has started. The first hand encounter with the given, the presented, immediately awakens my mind. My mind starts struggling to give meaning to whatever has been encountered. This is connotation - giving a meaning to what has been cognized. Cognition is followed by connotation, which is always followed by affection. In Vedanta these three are called: "asti," "bhakti," "priyam." My mind does not stop with an encounter but flows into a process of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. For that, it is necessary to give meaning to the experience. A meaning is visualized in order to coordinate, correlate and combine many things into a structure which generates a total picture.

The agent that is cognizing is identified with the central "I". After every cognition, I ask this question: "What is that? - What sense do I make of it?" Then I wait as if I am consulting someone. This consultant is not outside - it is the storehouse of my previous memories, quotes, and meanings. Concept after concept arises from that storehouse. Each concept is asking, "Is it this?", "Is it this?", "Is it this and this put together?" Many concepts have to come and cling together to make sense. Then I say "Yea, this is it, this is it." I feel somewhat thrilled with the joy of a discoverer. "I have discovered the meaning, I got it, eureka!!" So there is a promotion from one 'eureka!' to another 'eureka!', one discovery to another discovery. At each stage you are rewarded with an affection, a sense of joy, a sense of satisfaction. Or you can be punished. If you do not get the right meaning, you can be depressed, you can feel confused, you can feel surrounded with darkness. Once Nataraja Guru was writing a scheme for unified thinking in which he was attempting to inter-relate the disciplines of physics, biology, botany, and other sciences with literature, art, poetry, dance and music. He was developing one common language for all these disciplines, not the common word but a device by which they could share a common epistemology and methodology. He was trying day after day after day. One day, after I had read out to him everything which he had asked me to type, he was almost at the point of leaving the whole thing in desparation, feeling it could never work. Usually he had great control over his emotions, so he said, "Keep it there. I will read it again in the morning. You go to bed. I am feeling this is impossible; this will kill me." In the morning when I came in, he was so bright. He dictated the whole thing again from another angle. It was very appealing to me, too, and he was very happy. Later he received a message from Paris about another professor who had also been requested to accomplish the same task by the Belgian Royal Commision. The professor had failed and died of heart failure. Where Nataraja Guru came to an impasse, the other person also came to an

impasse, but Nataraja Guru survived it while the other man died of heart failure. This kind of award and punishment is evoked by the evaluative aspect.

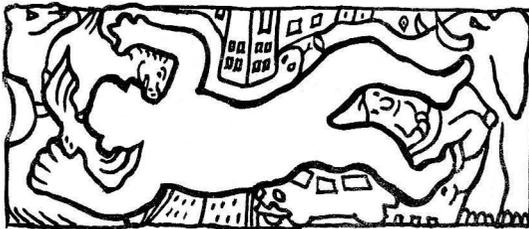
With cognition, the connotation and the evaluation go hand in hand. To promote my philosophy I have decided to give a central place to what comes to the cognitive field, surrounded by many other possible awarenesses in the periphery or in the dark which are all waiting to be presented. To whatever is presented, I should give a meaning which is acceptable to my logic. This should fit in with everything I have studied and arrived at so far. If I have piece-meal understandings held separately in my mind, they are of little worth to me and that approach can be very destructive. I have to undergo this labor of relating and structuring everything so that the knowledge I have had from the first day of zero age to the present day is all woven into a tapestry. Then I will find a relevant pattern in what I cognize today, a pattern that will mesh with the rest of the designs. If it fits with absolute harmony, I am satisfied. Where there is a lack of harmony, I postpone it until the next day. There has to be a suspension of judgement and evaluation from time to time. In David Hume's Dialogue Concerning Natural Religion, the religious opponent presents the argument of intelligence and value. Philo, the chief philosophical sceptic, does not deny it, but says, "Let us suspend judgement." In a number of things, you have to suspend your judgement. That does not mean that you have failed, but that you need more time, better understanding, and greater clarity. You need to re-examine the testimonies you have used, and your method of normalizing and structuring is to be re-studied and re-applied.



This brings me to the fifth level of my enquiry. At the fifth level, I segregate you from me. I say, "I am," and "you." But we are standing face to face and you are looking into my eyes. I am quite related with you; we are in an encounter. But you are not me, and I am not you. I draw a line here, a tentative line, because there is the possibility that I could become you, and you could become me. I don't know. For the time being I say, "I am myself and you are there." Then I ask, "what is that word - 'my'?" My idea of truth, my idea of goodness, my idea of beauty, my experience - this is me. My hand, my body, my home, my money, my country - I can go on expanding the realm of the "mine." I can also include some of you into 'mine' - my wife, my child, my Guru, my father. Even though it is another person, the person is somehow tucked into "me" and "mine". He or she is a little further from you, and I do not see them now, but I know that they are behind you. It is the other - you are the other and behind you there is the 'she', 'he' and then I know there is an inanimate thing sitting there - 'it'. I have to relate with you, I have to relate with him, I have to relate with her, I have to relate with it. This assigns to me the task of finding appropriate relationships. There are many kinds of relationships: sociological, psychological, emotional, intellectual, mathematical. I weigh more than you, I am shorter than you, taller than you, fatter than you, I know less than you, I know more than you, I love you, I have great confidence in you. The world of relationships is intrinsically related with things. That is why the Indian philosopher, immediately after mentioning things, thought of attributes. The pad-

arthas, are followed by the gunas.

Then we come to an interrelated world. From where things surround me on all sides.



The All that I was first speaking of had nothing in it - it was like a clean slate. But I knew that clean slate was deceptive because all possibilities were in the All. Now the possibilities have sprung up from all sides, creating the innumerable relationships in which I am bogged down. This is something like Rousseau saying that you are born free but you are everywhere in chains. You start recognizing the chains around you. I see something white and crystalline and I presume that it is sugar because it looks like sugar that I have eaten in the past. Then, in all good faith, I tell someone that this is sugar. My friend believes me, puts it into tea, sips and then spits and says, "It is salt". The piece of information that I passed on to my student, that this is sugar, is called a priori. I have received many instructions from my teacher, from my friends, from books, which were all a priori - prior to experience. After the experience comes a posteriori knowledge. The experience proves or does not prove or proves the opposite. Our approach to new experiences are a priori postulation. Whether I am a purely spiritual man or a purely materialistic man, I am studying with a scientist or I am studying with a Guru, there are a priori postulations. The spiritual man as well as the non-spiritual man approach the truth from the a priori through experience to a posteriori evaluation. Conviction comes only after experience. The teacher comes and says, "You are That." I know I am myself, how can I be that? But the teacher says I am That, and perhaps by putting myself to several tests, I will finally come to That, and I may say, yes, I am That, I am the Absolute - aham brahma asmi.





Now there is a new fact coming in between - nothing is instantaneously revealed to you. If I am in search of Truth, several Truths in this world will take time to prove themselves to reveal themselves. There is a gap - a time gap, a space gap, an experience gap - between knowledge and the verification of knowledge, a priori knowledge and its verification. When Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, "jñānam along with vi-jñānam, I shall teach you," I see the value of that. Krishna is saying, "First I will give you jñānam, a a priori knowledge, then I shall put you in situations where you can move towards the application of it. Through the application you will come to verification and then you will be convinced." Many people say "I am intellectually convinced but still I do not know." In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, Nārada goes to Sanat Kumār and gives a complete catalogue of everything he has read and studied. Then he says: "I am still unhappy." Sanat Kumār says, "Nārada, you know all this by name, but not through fact." It's just like the difference between *de jure* and *de facto*. There has to be a bridging of this gulf, a breakthrough to be made from the a priori to the a posteriori. I was hesitant to teach until I had a good number of a posteriori convictions. My teacher did not have enough time for me to verify each of his teachings, before going on to the next. So he went on teaching, I went on collecting and put them all in my bag. Then I took each teaching one by one to see how I could apply it in my life. Only when I live it in my life does it become my knowledge. Of my knowledge, some is examined and some is unexamined. I have not examined everything

which my Guru said or the Shāstras say. But I have applied some of this knowledge and I found it very yielding, very factual, so I recommend that also to others.

That leads me from my sixth point to the seventh. In India, if an Indian is going to an unfamiliar city, say Bangalore, and wants to find somebody on Infantry Road, house number 47, he drives to Bangalore City and then asks a man on the street "Do you know where Infantry Road is?" and so on. But in Western society, there are road maps, and the driver won't ask anyone. It is felt to be shameful to ask anyone where to go. You just look at the map and the index and find out. You drive and look for all the indications in the map. A map is an absolute necessity in order to find your way. This is so in regards to Truth also. You need a map, a scheme of consciousness. One of the earliest Upaniṣads a Vedantin will study is the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad. This Upaniṣad is commented upon by the teacher of the teacher of Śankara. Śankara's teacher was Govinda. Govinda's teacher was Gauḍapāda. Gauḍapāda commented on the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad which presents a scheme of consciousness. Just as I cannot now do all the experiments which Newton did, or Einstein did, I also do not want to go to the beginning of the tapasya of the Māṇḍūkya rishis. I just accept the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, I accept Gauḍapāda's kārikā, and Śankara's bhāṣya. Therefore, I accept the useful scheme that has come to me. In that scheme the method of correlation is established on the basis of a vertical axis and a horizontal axis. This vertico-horizantal scheme is called chātur-padam -

the four-limbed scheme. In the four-limbed scheme one limb refers to wakeful, transactional consciousness. Its counterpart is subjective dream consciousness. There is also a vertical scale which begins with a deep unconscious from where concepts come to the subjective world and identification comes to the objective world. When a transaction has been completed, the concepts which I used for identification, as well as the experience that I had on the transactional level, both disappear into my unconscious. I can also go beyond the objective and the subjective to a transcendental stage. Thus my consciousness has four limbs - jagrāt, svapna, suṣupti and turiya or transcendental. These are all a priori designations, but I accepted them on the recommendation of my Guru. When I accepted his recommendation, it was also only a priori. Through years of application, I have found that this teaching has an a posteriori validity. We need a scheme to take us across the gap between the a priori and the a posteriori.

I have compared this scheme to the cartesian coordinates which are mainly used in modern science. I have also looked into another aspect of it. A scheme is a static thing, while life is a moving thing. In life, we are going from one state of transformation to another state of transformation. There is an eternal flux of becoming. If we try to measure something by standing on the earth and holding out a measuring rod to something moving at a very fast speed, like light, you will not be able to apply your measurement. If your measuring

rod is also going with the light the structure of the measuring rod itself will be affected and it will not be an accurate measuring rod on earth. We have to take into account all the properties and qualities of the situation, the nature of the situation in which the measuring rod and the measurer are superior. We have a certain method to measure the area of a triangle, a circle, a square, or an angle which is on a plane surface. Suppose we take a deflated balloon and draw a triangle on it. The three angles of the triangle will add up to 180 degrees. But if we inflate the balloon, at every moment of the inflation the surface will change and the triangle will change its form and its angles will not equal 180 degrees. What should we do? Scalars, vectors, tensors - these are introduced into the scheme. There are vectorial and tensorial scales. Plane mathematics needs to be supplemented with topological mathematics. When I pass from the realm of physical science to the realm of psychological science, the norms which are very valid for physical laws are to be altered and supplemented. But people hold on to a set of norms which they know and they are too fanatical to accept new modes of measurement which are required for special situations in which they are placed. So here I part company with some of the orthodox adherence to what they call physical science. I want to have a more flexible mind, a more intuitive mind, a more generous attitude which allows me to experience greater empathy with the flux of nature and the flux of consciousness.

(To Be Continued)

All life, and more especially the inner and outer life, has to be equated, balanced, or cancelled out to lead to samadhi, which is none other than the supreme state of equality, bliss or peace.

A contemplatively harmonized woman is not beautiful but she is Beauty itself.

The interplay of subjective and objective value factors results in that neutral state of happiness called nirvana, which represents a positive and absolute value. The content of this value is none other than what the modern man would call Freedom with a capital letter.

The word yoga implies the equalization of ambivalent tendencies in the spirit. It is a cancelling out or an equipoise arrived at through the equality of contemplative counterparts.

Unitive understanding and universal brotherhood are corollaries of a good life understood contemplatively in the light of sound human common sense which has to be necessarily though tacitly based on what is called wisdom or the the Science of the Absolute.

As the dewdrop slips into the shining sea, so the flickering firefly of wisdom is lost in the brightness of the Value of values in the Absolute.

Nataraja Guru





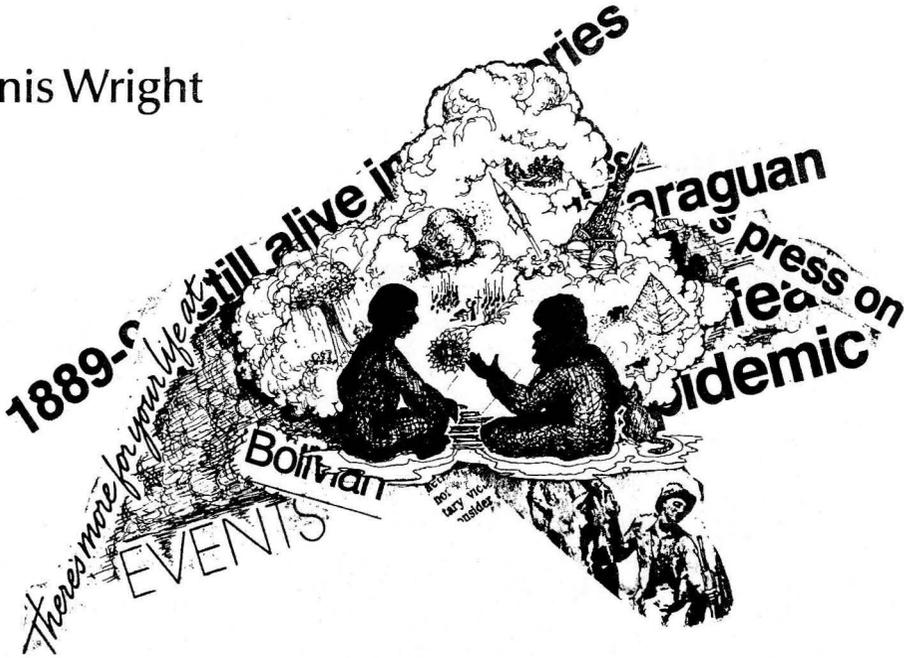
MOON LIGHT

Moon-like Light
illumes the vision
in Silver-blue cast.
Silver-blue pink
Silver-blue blue
Silver-blue Silver
shimmering through
staring holes
burned in reality.
No time/space sequence
of movement
only the memory of
contentment,
contentment!
Being the Silver-blue
and the Silver-blue being.

Steve Weckel

A Belated Answer

Denis Wright



The mail has come. I have a dozen pressing things to do, but amongst the letters is the new Gurukulam. This must be left until I have time to enjoy it, for Gurukulam is a delight. Each contribution, which comes distilled through the mind but very much from the heart, should be savoured and contemplated. Still, I open it, just to look at the menu.... My pressing business melts away as I read. And continue reading. Mental images of the writers come to mind, some as real as memories can be, like those of Nitya with his aura of loving kindness, and gentle Nancy, whose company we all remember so vividly when they were here in Armidale with Diann (was it really all those years ago?) Others, half-real through the photographs in Gurukulam, and yet others, whose physical being takes on some sort of form in my mind through the power of their words. I read on. Nitya's Four Jews dissect humanity in the manner of the three blind men identifying the elephant by touching its various portions. I have come to the end of the issue as our weak winter sun slants its last yellow rays across my desk.

I recall that first meeting with Nitya. Diann had brought him to my little study at the University. You teach history, Nitya observed. I wonder if you could tell me the origin or meaning of the word 'history'?

It was a very simple question, but I was disturbed by the fact that I could not confidently give an answer. For more than a decade I had been studying and teaching this subject, but was unable to answer the most fundamental question on its nature. I can't recall now what I said, but whatever it was, it can hardly have been edifying. I think I related it to 'histo-', meaning 'organic tissue'. History is about life, organic structure in society through time - I said something of the sort, without much conviction. At that moment I was acutely aware of my ignorance of something important; that I ought to know a good deal more about what I am as a historian if I am to have some measure of my outward self.

Soon after Nitya left the room, I looked at the word 'history' in the dictionary. It told me no more than I knew already. I looked at 'historian', to see if it could tell me a little more about what I am supposed to be. 'A

writer of history, especially in the higher sense.' What is this higher sense? Presumably it implies that I have a special insight into one sort of truth. But dictionaries can be misleading. On the same page is the word 'Hinduism'. Hinduism is 'a religious and social system..., with belief in reincarnation, worship of several gods, and caste as a basis of society.' True only as far as it goes, but possibly misleading, even allowing for the enforced brevity of the entry. One cannot really trust dictionaries, for words are defined only in terms of other words and concepts, the product of our limited sensory-intellectual consciousness.

Several weeks later I asked our resident comparative philologist the etymology of the word 'history'. Nitya may remember this man, Alan Treloar, because he once attended a lecture on the Upaniṣads given by Alan, and praised its scholarship very highly. Alan told me that the word's origin is very simple. It comes from 'story'. His (pronoun) story (noun). What a non-sense this revelation made of my convoluted stab-in-the-dark response to Nitya's question!

So history is a story. My story. I was comforted by this because I had long known that the historian can only tell one story, of which there are a myriad, and all of which have some

claim to relative or qualified truth. I have been telling my story of India's past for fifteen years, painfully aware of the gaps, the yawning chasms in my knowledge and the limits of my insights. It's one I never tire of telling, for all the failings. It shines like a light, however feeble, on the great Vedic literature – the epics, the Gita, the Upaniṣads and a host of other writings, which many of my students have felt inspired to explore further by themselves.

This continues to be my self-appointed task, perhaps not so much as a historian after all, but as a person who has some little influence during one year of university life over the direction of other peoples' thoughts. I look at a world overshadowed by poverty, wars and disasters, and the looming threat of nuclear destruction, hanging like the sword of Damocles over the heads of all beings on this planet. I am horrified that humans have the means, no further away than the fingertips of two men, to decide the fate of life – not just lives – on this earth. If I am able, in however tiny a way, to open peoples' minds to the truths understood by our ancient forebearers, then perhaps the rising collective consciousness of humanity can bring us closer to the harmonious world order that is the only real hope for humanity.

A Response

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

History is a creative composition of a chronicler who narrates the story of a land or people, mainly based on the normative notions of Justice, Goodness and Beauty (their creation or destruction), substantiated by the factual memory of both the collective consciousness and the unconscious by which the present is given its functional perspectives and spatio-temporal orientation.

The inner dynamic of history is an irregular but rhythmic ambivalence of an ever active nucleus which causes the chimera of geodialectical organization and disorganization of life patterns that confirms the ceaseless persuasion of the vertical unfoldment of values and the horizontal truncation and withering away of actualized values.

East-West University Seminar

Peter Oppenheimer

THE DIMENSIONS OF PEACE: An Exploration and Cultivation of Peace at the Personal, Interpersonal, International and Transpersonal Levels

Second Dimension-Interpersonal Peace

According to the Bible, God is said to have animated humankind by breathing His own spirit into us. In that light it comes as no surprise that "being conscious of one's breath" was mentioned by several Dimensions of Peace workshop members as holding a key to the establishment and maintenance of inner peace. In fact, the Latin word spiritus means breath. It is no coincidence that inspiration and respiration are so closely related, with both having their roots in the spirit of the Divine and both finding their most intimate expression in the simple act of breathing. Inspiration is truly an inward activation of spirit and respiration refers to a repeated activation of spirit.

We not only inspire and respire, but, being the social animals that we are, we also conspire. In this sense a conspiracy is literally a breathing together or an activation and commingling of the spirit within two or more people. With this in the back of our minds, we move very naturally from reflections upon the Spirit's Peace through personal peace to the issue of interpersonal peace. As our group sat together in silence at the beginning of our second session dedicated to the exploration and cultivation of peace, we simply harmonized our breathing and contemplated our "conspiracy" of peace.

And yet, just as there are many factors within the self (e.g., desire, attachment, and anger) that seem to mitigate against the maintenance of inner personal peace, there are a number of factors basic to the social setup that threat-

en the prevalence of interpersonal peace. For example, there is often a contradiction inherent in the urge to autonomy on the part of individuals and the needs and demands of community on the other hand. How this and other contradictions are resolved determines to a large extent the degree of interpersonal peace in any situation.

We began our discussion by raising and responding to a series of four questions:

1. What do we seek from interpersonal relationships?
2. When does interpersonal conflict arise for us?
3. What is our role in the development and resolution of conflict (or peace)?
4. What has been the nature of the interpersonal relationships which have had the most significant impact on our life and values?

These are not academic questions but rather are meant to help turn the fertile soil of one's own experience. Hearing the responses of other people is bound to be somewhat less edifying than reflecting upon one's own responses. Of course, going through the process in a group does have the added benefits of feedback, clarification and comparison of one's own experience with that of others.

Some of the qualities that were mentioned as being what we seek from interpersonal relationships were: connectedness, comfort, sharing, expansiveness, reinforcement, continuity, trust, similarity, variety, humanness,

acceptance, depth, support, and sympathetic vibration. This list could probably be added to endlessly but even as it stands it provides a compelling picture of the immense value to be gained from interpersonal relationships.

As to how conflict arises and peace becomes disturbed in the interpersonal realm, we discussed a number of very basic dynamics. Certainly one of the most common elements that time and again mitigates against harmonious relationships is the same factor that we found disturbs one's personal peace, and that is desire. In interpersonal relationships desire most often rears its head as expectation. I immediately put our relationship on shaky ground as soon as I make my evaluation of it dependent upon any expectations of mine that I want you to live up to. One of our group members brought and read the following quote in this regard: "Loving without any demands is unconditional love. Any anger, suffering or disruption in a relationship tells me to look for the hidden (or open) demands that I am making."

Not taking responsibility for one's own feelings and desires is another contributing factor to disharmonious relationships. The same group member quoted above dramatically enunciated this truth with the statement, "I am responsible for my own feelings. I cannot ever have my feelings hurt or be made angry by anyone else."

One of the most insidious habits almost all of us have to some degree is that of viewing the responding to other people as objects rather than as subjects or, ultimately, part of our own subjective self. This was forcefully brought home to me once on an early morning walk with my teacher (Guru Nitya). I was casually mentioning that I missed a certain girlfriend whom I hadn't seen for a few months. His response was, "You shouldn't treat people as objects of your enjoyment. The degree that you miss someone when they are not physically presented to your senses is the degree that you view that person as an object. This is the seed of all exploitation. Not only is that person most precious as their own



subjective self that knows no increase nor decrease, but beyond that this person now constitutes a beloved facet of your own subjective self, which also knows no coming nor going." Those words remain with me today as the echo of a shock therapy which forever put me on the alert to the subtle and gross ways in which people tend to treat others as objects. Indeed all oppression and exploitation and much interpersonal conflict has this very basic error as its root.

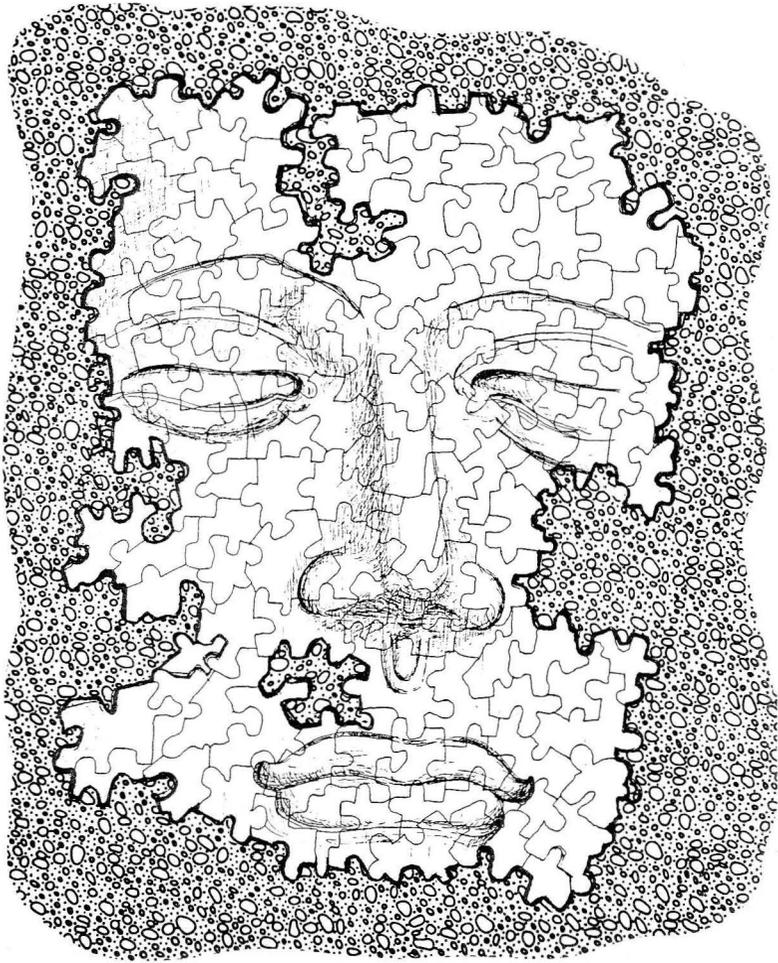
Treating another person as a subject rather than as an object has the two broad facets alluded to above. The first is affirming and respecting the other as his or her own unique individual subjective self, and the second is identifying the other as ultimately comprising a part of one's own greater subjective self, the self of all. In the first instance, by way of affirming and respecting the ground of the other in every interaction, we have much to learn from the Native American Indians. In a small book entitled Valuing the Self: What We Can Learn From Other Cultures, it is written, "Among the Dakota and other Indians, one man would not address another whose back was turned; because how can he know that the man is ready and willing to be addressed unless he can look at him and observe the expression of his face? Unless he senses consent? As the speaker has the right to choose to speak, so does the hearer have the right to choose to hear." Along the same lines, among the Navajo to ask another a direct question was considered an aggressive act. Without wanting to suggest that we necessarily adopt the specific forms of these customs, it seems that the spirit of the respect for the sanctity of the other person implied in them is well worth considering.

Still more subtle and perhaps more crucial in the determination of harmony or disruption in interpersonal relationships is the second issue of Identity versus Alienation. Once again it is with regard to the culture of the Native American Indian that this distinction can be illustrated. The following passage was read out from the same book quoted above:

"With the Wintu Indians the open

self is expressed in terms of interpenetration of the experience of self and other. For example, in a tale I recorded a man, speaking of his sick son, added a suffix to the verb: I am ill and now said, 'I am ill my son' and later, 'I am recovered my son.' With the aid of this suffix a chief haranguing his people about the coming of the Whites was quoted as saying, 'You shall hunger your children, you shall hunger your horses.' When this suffix occurred with a verb such as I ate, I found it easy to translate the phrase as 'I fed my child.' But here I was probably violating the meaning of the Wintu speaker. I fed presupposes a separate, bounded self acting upon another separate bounded self; I did something, whether desired or not, to someone else. If there is consistency in the meaning of the suffix, I believe it must always be translated in such a way that it expresses some kind of immediate participation in the experience of the other; so that I do not feed my child, but rather, 'I eat in respect to my child.' 'I hunger in respect to my child.' 'I am ill in respect to my child.' That is I am open to the experience of my child."

East Indians (Asian) also have a deep culturally reinforced pattern of seeing the other as an integral aspect of one's own greater self. This manifests in countless ways, but perhaps none more striking to the person raised in the West than the reluctance to say 'thank you.' To a Westerner it is considered rude to neglect to say thank you for any favor done, whereas for the Indian it is shocking to be thanked. When I asked Guru Nitya about this discrepancy, he offered the following explanation. When you cut your left hand, your right hand will immediately attend to it by washing and bandaging the left hand. When that has been taken care of, your left hand does not shake or stroke your right hand in fond appreciation. It is simply assumed that as both hands belong to the same self they will naturally work together. A person raised in India may help a stranger with the same sense of self-identity as the right hand helps the left. In fact, a "thank you" may be shocking to the ears of the helper as it implies a sense of separation and that the one helped might have expected less.



It is not that an Indian does not feel gratitude, but rather that all gratitude is directed to the one self of all or to God as some refer to that all-pervasive self of which we are all a part.

To illustrate the difference which relating to something as inner or outer, as part of one's self or part of the non-self, can make in the way we feel about it and respond to it, I devised a crude experiment. First, work up some saliva in your mouth and swallow it...okay? Chances are you found that quite easy and even pleasant. Next consider spitting some saliva into a paper cup and then swallowing it...chances are this time that the idea seems somewhat repulsive in spite of the fact that the saliva remains the same. And finally, if you imagine a friend spitting saliva into a cup and yourself swallowing it, you possibly will feel downright disgusted. This inelegant illustration is meant to indicate the direct correlation between the degree to which a thing (or person) is considered an 'inner' fact or an aspect of oneself and the degree we find it acceptable and of value. I believe this to have direct implications for how we treat other people as well.

Our group discussion revealed that one of the most pervasive and persuasive forces in our society that disrupts the peace and harmony that can normally arise in interpersonal relationships that would otherwise be based on identity and sympathy is competition. The competitive posture towards one's fellows that is fostered in school and highlighted almost everywhere in our present socio-economic set-up alienates person from person even to the extent where one revels in the failure of another. For example, regardless of what child A's test score is in school his or her grade and class standing will be enhanced accordingly the lower is child B's score. Can we actually expect to foster interpersonal peace and cooperation through a system where each is set against the other and made to hope for the other's failure?

Competition is a cultural rather than a universal value. Again an alternative can be found in most Native American traditions. I reported the experience of a friend who spent several years teaching in U.S. government run schools

on the Navajo reservation in Arizona. He told me that one of the biggest problems was cheating during tests. It seems that the Navajo children could not grasp the competitive individualistic concept that one might gain if one left one's neighbor to flounder. It was most natural for each of them to want to help the other, and it went against the grain of their social fabric to refuse whatever help was requested or could be offered.

A passage was read out in the group from a book entitled The Meaning of Anxiety by Rollo May, which dramatically underscores the impact of our competitive ethos on both personal and interpersonal peace.

"Anxiety arises out of the interpersonal isolation and alienation from others that inheres in a pattern in which self-validation depends upon triumphing over others, which was already discernable in many of the powerful and successful individuals of the Renaissance. Anxiety like wise arises out of the intra social hostility produced by competitive individualism. This attitude not only distorts one's criterion of self-worth by making it contingent upon a kind of success which can be threatened by one's neighbors' counter-successes. This augments one's feelings of vulnerability, helplessness, and powerlessness.

"Moreover, 'vicious circle' mechanisms operate in the individualistic competitive pattern which tend to make anxiety self-increasing. The culturally accepted method of allaying anxiety is redoubling one's efforts to achieve success. Since intrasocial hostility and aggression can be expressed in the socially approved method of competition, the anxious individual increases his competitive striving. But the more competitive, aggressive striving, the more isolation, hostility, and anxiety. Thus the methods generally used to allay anxiety in such a constellation actually increase anxiety in the long run."

The recognition of the pivotal role played by the opposing perspectives of Identity vs. Alienation in the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal peace leads to a universal ethic which actually transcends the shifting sands of morality. The basis of this ethic is beautifully presented in an ancient verse from India:

"He who sees his own self in all
beings/ And all beings in his
own self,
He alone truly sees."

This is again echoed in the exhortation of Jesus Christ to, "Love your neighbor as your own self," which of course presupposes that you first recognize your neighbor as your own self. Only such a unitive vision guarantees that the happiness of one can never be supposed to be enhanced through the unhappiness of another, a supposition which is at the heart of most, if not all, interpersonal conflict.

The evening's lively and stimulating discussion was concluded with the reading of a passage about this universal ethic and its cultivation, selected from Neither This Nor That, But...Aum by Guru Nitya.

"When two people have their separate likes and dislikes, a clash or a conflict of interest arises between them. When the same people find their union at a deeper level, such as in their beingness, their conceptual identities undergo a radical transformation so that their knowledge can be in tune with their beingness. For instance, when a person loves

another person intensely, even though the other person's habits and preferences are contrary to his dislikes and likes, the sheer love for the other acts like an alchemy; it blends their lives in such a way that both of them come to appreciate the same values. This is not happening from above by making rational programs of unifying their interest, but it happens almost unconsciously from beneath, as it were.

The discovery of the full worth of one's life is accomplished by returning to the one beingness to which everything and everyone alike belongs. In this rediscovery, one learns to appreciate that his happiness is implied in the happiness of all, and the happiness of others is as much his concern as his own happiness."

It was agreed that our 'homework' would be to apply these ideas to our own lives and observe the roles each plays in the creation and disruption of interpersonal peace.

The next Gurukulum will include a report on our seminar's extension of our discussions concerning the Dimensions of Peace into the international arena.





THE GOAL

*To be one with the one in all
is the hope and prayer and effort
in my life.
Nothing more.
Nothing less.*

INNER WINDS

*Inner winds
blow me back
onto course.*

VISION OF REALITY

*This body of mine
that seems so hard
and substantial...
is in reality
nothing but particles of light
at the feet of a star.*

A STEP ALONG THE WAY

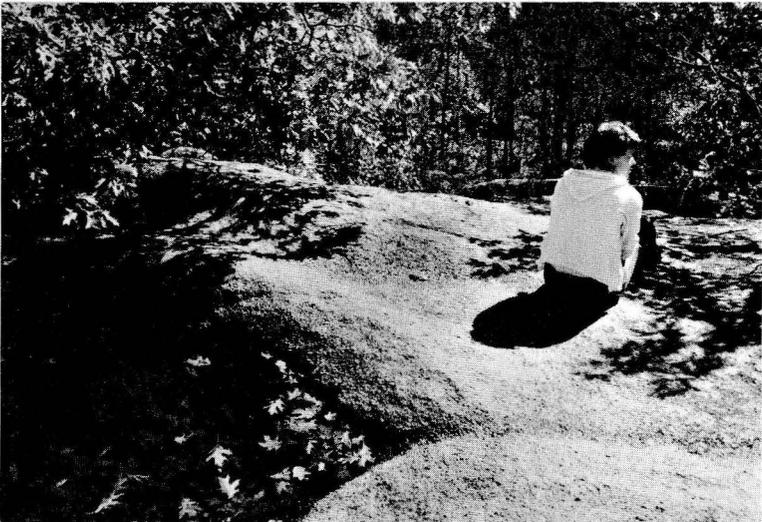
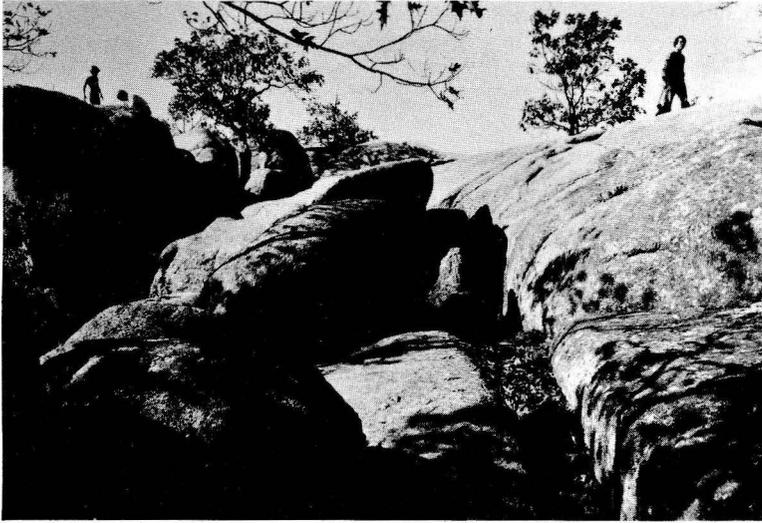
*I am
the radiance
that I feel
from within.*

*I am the sun
that I feel on my skin.*

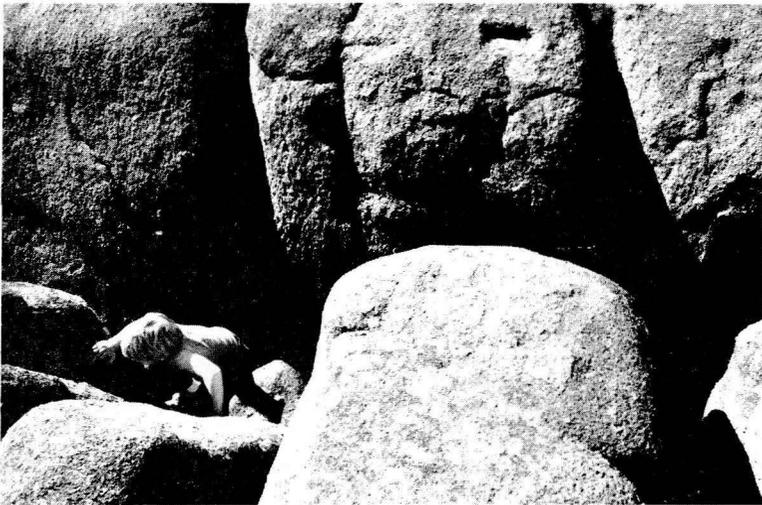
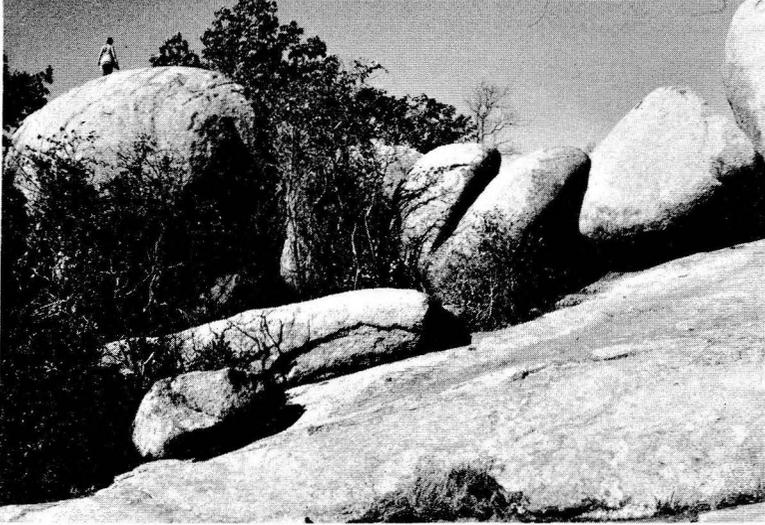
*I am that, and surely
I am this: firm,
unshakeable,
unending
bliss.*

Peter Moras









Musical Mandalas

Scott Teitsworth

Op. Tschai'kovsk



Last month our family spent a few days visiting my mother at the beach. She has a gift subscription to Gurukulam under the theory that even if one's writing is really awful, at least Mom will tell you how wonderful it is. She waited until the end of our time together (so as not to spoil anything), then drew me aside confidentially.

"You know, I really enjoyed your first article," she said. (Good old Mom). "But I didn't like the second one at all. I felt like you were condescending to people like me." So much for the one person I could count on! Humiliated, I realized too late that I had made deprecating remarks about one of her favorite works, Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite.

I bring up this story not to apologize for poking fun at any sacred cows, but to reestablish the meaning of that excellent verb, to condescend. It is a great word, remarkably specific in our generally vague language. 'Con' means joined, with, together; 'descend' to go down. The word refers to an overt or covert stooping from a superior position to an inferior one. Although the first definition is pure, it is more frequently used in the negative sense nowadays, since anything 'superior' must be falsely so. We picture a bloated egotist making a great effort to associate with those he really considers beneath his dignity.

While claims of elitism, snobbery, or callousness might be justified, there really was no condescension in the article. Why I irritate people is precisely that I don't condescend, by paying lip-service to the time-honored notion that good and bad are actually equal. Instead I made a value distinction between popular and profound music. While they are

generally different, there is no absolute dividing line somewhere, and most of us will admit to enjoying both. Certainly the distinction rests with each person, but wherever you draw your line we maintain that popular music is made to pass the time and entertain, while profound music is for contemplation and inner exploration.

In America there is great disdain for the value judgement. We are unable to admit that there are variations in the value of things even when they are equal in absolute terms. Because of this our culture is in a steady decline. What began as an avowed belief in equality has become a search for the lowest common denominator. We go out of our way to avoid appearing to have made a decision that would set us apart in any way, and a paragraph of explanation must follow any sentence implying value judgement. I call this the 'California backstroke' after it's country of origin, because it looks to the observer like the person is swimming backwards rapidly in the attempt to erase any impression that he or she might have an opinion.

This is not to imply that I don't consider condescension a legitimate and serious problem. On the social and political levels, phony or half-baked ideas to help "the poor" or "others" are very familiar to us. The problem is even more serious to the spiritual aspirant. Precisely because one makes so many choices between good and bad or right and wrong, it is easy to look down on others who have not made the same decisions as we have. It is important to keep in mind that such choices are not spiritual in themselves, but are only dualistic tools to help free a person already caught in the ambit of

duality. We are not suddenly right when we make a choice, and everyone else wrong. Choices segment the world, and even increase the dualism, if one becomes attached to one leg over the other. When unrestrained, this attitude leads to the vicious warfare seen among religious groups through the ages, or, at a lesser extreme, the swaggering, self-righteous arrogance recently personified by Ma Anand Sheila of the Rajneeshees. It is paradoxical that when one discriminates between 'absolute' and 'relative' as a seeker of the Absolute, one is being relativistic. What we need to remember is that an absolutist embraces all sides of an issue, while still making the correct choice for herself or himself at the synthesis of an argument. Then we will condescend rather than condescend.

Originally I had planned to spotlight another large, complex work with a weighty philosophical message, but the other day at the piano I had a sudden change of mind. Casually running through my repertoire I was once again struck by the limpid beauty of Debussy's Children's Corner Suite. The six short pieces in the Suite, so simple sounding with their 'childish' orientation, are frequently overlooked in this day and age even by lovers of Debussy's music. But as they have done year after year for my entire life, these pieces touched my heart. With their purity and directness they sneak past one's defenses and pretensions to commune directly with the soul. They remind one that while philosophy is mostly words and complex extrapol-

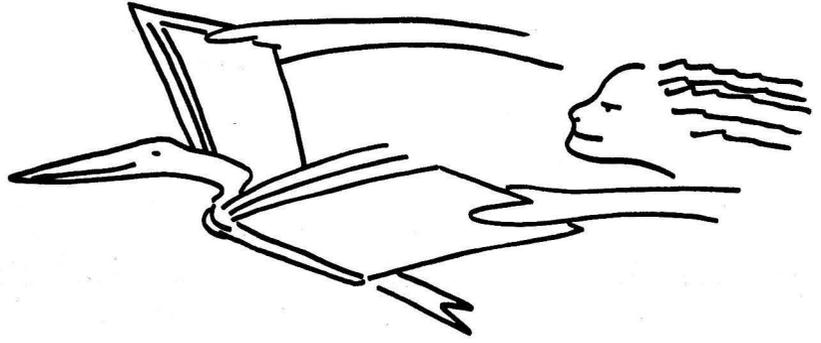
ations, the spiritual essence is something grasped at once with no intervention of judgment. Simplicity is another way of saying directness, immediacy. This philosophical idea is well known, but often simplicity has come to mean 'lack of features'. The less you think, the simpler things are. This is the simplicity of the clam, a happy but unappetizing creature. Simplicity as a spiritual ideal means a balancing of forces so that their sum is unified motion. This is the simplicity of the deer, and also the simplicity of Debussy. It is the mandala seen from a distance, where the complexities blend together in our eye to make a larger, more general pattern.

The music of the Children's Corner Suite sounds simple, affects us simply and peacefully, and yet it is tricky, modulative, and technically demanding. The essence of the French soul floats above clouds and shimmers of notes, filling us with fairy magic and mystical landscapes. After 80 years it is still fresh and free of any hint of cliché.

At one time these pieces were well-known, but today even musical parents do not share them with their children. I have found that children readily appreciate them as musical pictures, and they do not become annoying after a few hearings as so many songs for children do. In fact, adults enjoy them better than kids, finding them more accessible and less abstract than most of Debussy's music. And condescending to the level of children is beneficial to the soul.



Book Review



THE STAFFS OF LIFE by E.J. Kahn.
Boston: Brown and Little and Company,
1984.

In a college undergraduate class on contemporary politics in China, our professor began concentrating on agricultural yields and the factors necessary to sustain and increase them. We, as sophisticated and radical students, exchanged quiet snickers: we were much more interested in the "real" issues, the political details of revolution and the transference of power. Our self-assurance was quickly cut short, however, with a curt, "Your disinterest in agricultural statistics shows how very American you really are." That assertion was one we found hard to accept, yet it was quite accurate and pointed directly to the great discrepancy between our lives and those of most of the world's population. We take an abundance and variety of food for granted, whereas to many people food is of central importance in their thoughts and actions.

It is these agricultural actions and their accompanying supplications - as well as the plants that occasion them - that E.J. Kahn examines in his book The Staffs of Life. Kahn has selected corn, potatoes, wheat and soybeans as his main characters: they have been the foods that throughout history have sustained the human population. Under these botanical headings, major themes are explored: the biological history of these particular plants, especially their recent development through hybridization; the culture that grows out of and supports a plant's cultivation, including the religious significance of these plants; their diffusion from society to society; and the political

aspects of food cultivation and exchange and transportation. None of these topics is taken up in isolation but interwoven throughout the chapters on the different plants. In the stories of each of humankind's staffs of life, we see the same problems, paradoxes and resolutions surfacing again and again, tying together not just the individual plant foods but underscoring the interrelatedness of all agriculture.

Kahn's background research is exhaustive and he is never at a loss for statistics and facts on a particular grain. It is to his credit that these details never overwhelm. Throughout the book one remains fascinated with these simple, unprepossessing plants. Again and again there emerge the stories of how certain peoples treated these grains that gave them life. Even though Kahn, as a thoroughly urbane writer, tends to have a certain bemused attitude over many of the rituals that people use, still the beauty and mystery of humans' husbanding stands out. One feels commonality with the Balinese who use rice to protect an area from evil spirits and with the ancient Aztecs to whom corn was both deity and daily companion. One reads of the Chinese and Japanese emperors who used to hand cultivate their sacred crops of rice so as to ensure their peoples' successes and one feels empathy and respect. It is these very rituals, done in propitiation and gratitude, that convey to us the central importance these foods have had to people.

Contemporary plant breeders appear as the modern heirs to all the earlier agricultural priests. One of them replied to an accusation that he talked to his wheat plants: "No, they talk to

me." All of the major geneticists profiled by Kahn have become absorbed by their study of a particular plant. They are like the old Mayans of whom it was said, "They do not grow corn to live but live to grow corn." At the international rice institute in the Philippines a Chinese scientist from Taiwan is in charge of caretaking the world store of rice germ plasm. When the rice crop and all rice stores were devastated by war in Cambodia, it was this institute's stock that provided the necessary germ to begin cultivating Cambodian rice for new plantings; within eighteen months, after intensive growing in another country, rice was ready for the farmers who wanted only their own traditional rice.

Plant genetics does not exist in isolation, however. The directions in which plant breeders work and what their results are have important political consequences. Many new varieties grow only with large amounts of fossil fuel based fertilizers and pesticides; planting these new varieties entails questions of trade payment and international loans. The overriding political issues that emerge, though, are those of distribution and access to food. In earlier cultures that Kahn cites, the Mayan and early African ones, food enough was stored away to avert famine when the crops failed. Today the irony is that enough grain is grown worldwide to supply each person with 3000 calories per day while the striking reality is that the average intake is around 600 calories (the minimum for health maintenance is 1500). Some of the problems of matching food to mouth are unintentional (almost irrational, one is tempted to say): lack of transport trucks or lack of storage facilities. Other reasons are less benign: the decision of a colonial power or multinational agribusiness to grow an export

cash crop rather than a local self-sustaining one. And then there is the problem not of changing agriculture but of changing tastes, most especially of the demand for wheat products in non-wheat producing countries where scarce national capital is spent on importing food that replaces locally grown produce.

Kahn states many of the more prominent features of these problems but does not usually follow through with implications and relationships. Two books which complement Kahn's in the political area are The Merchants of Grain and Food First. Both of these books deal in the specifics of the decisions that decide who goes hungry. One important issue that Kahn skims over is that of the effect of modern developed agriculture on the world ecosystem and whether it is really a self-sustaining agriculture to be imitated. The book The One Straw Revolution concentrates on this problem and one solution to it by a former plant pathologist in Japan.

As I read through the essays in The Staffs of Life I was both intrigued and charmed by the individual plants. Their yields are crucially important, yet I could never think of them as so many bushels. Every time I read about corn, I wanted to bake corn fritters or tamales. With wheat it was bread. The chapter on potatoes had me digging in the garden for some. It was as if I could participate in the lifegiving principle that each plant embodied by growing and eating it. As M. S. Swaminathan is quoted, "We live in this world as guests of green plants."

Deborah Buchanan

East-West University Report and Narayana Gurukula News



In September Guru Nitya visited Calcutta to participate as keynote speaker at the Calcutta Sree Narayana Seva Sangham celebrations of Narayana Guru's birthday. From there he traveled through West Bengal to the foothills of the Himalayas in Sikkim. Throughout October, November and December, he will be alternating between the Fernhill Gurukula and Kerala where he will be giving a number of classes. These will include talks at Calicut University, lectures in Cannanore on "Looking at the Public Mind as it Pertains to the Gita," and a ten day course at Kanakamala Gurukula on "Mind as it Occurs in Yoga Shastra" (teachings on Yoga). At the end of December he will be at the Varkala Gurukula for the annual convention, to be followed by a ten day stay at the southernmost tip of India, Kanyakumari.

Recent projects include a major article exposing the illness in India's allopathic medical system and follow-up discussions with doctors, psychiatrists and medical students. Guru Nitya's main project at present is to evolve practical means for looking upon Narayana Guru as an example and applying his philosophy as a guideline in developing a culture which can free people from the very many cults which are polluting the loyalty of people with ethnic stresses and narrow, static religious allegiances.

Narayana Prasad Swami has recently returned to Varkala from Singapore where he led the celebration of

Narayana Guru's birthday at the Singapore Gurukula and gave a series of classes on Isavasya Upanisad, Guru Stotra and the Peace Invocations (Shanti Parva). Recent projects include translation of his Malayalam commentary on Katha Upanisad into English and a study of Western philosophy in the light of Eastern philosophy.

Mangala Press at Varkala has completed five new Narayana Gurukula/ East West University publications to be released in Calicut October 5th. These include Guru Nitya's Arivu (Knowledge) and Beyond Cause and Effect and Nataraja Guru's Vedanta Revalued and Restated, which can be obtained from Narayana Gurukula, Varkala.

Students at Island Gurukula Aranya, Washington, are beginning a new study guided by Guru Nitya's lectures on the Analysis and Discipline of Altering Consciousness. The East West University series of classes has been continuing with Nancy Leedy leading discussions on the dynamic factors involved in teaching/learning situations. Steve Bryson is a new resident at the Gurukula and Nancy Yeilding is currently traveling with Guru Nitya in India.

On September 1st Nancy Yeilding was guest speaker at the celebration of Narayana Guru's birthday given by the Sree Narayana Association of North America in New York. The invitation of the Association inaugurated a mutually helpful collaboration in applying Narayana Guru's wisdom to the issues of contemporary life.

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